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**THE ROLE OF SOCIAL SUPPORT AND ADOLESCENTS' ADJUSTMENT
TO DIFFERENT CUSTODY ARRANGEMENTS**

A Thesis

Presented to

**The Faculty of the Department of Child Development
San Jose State University**

In Partial Fulfillment

**of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts**

by

Paula Patricia Pfau

August 1996

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ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL SUPPORT AND ADOLESCENTS' ADJUSTMENT TO DIFFERENT CUSTODY ARRANGEMENTS

by Paula Patricia Pfau

This study investigated whether adjustment, sources of social support, and satisfaction with social support of adolescents in sole or joint custody arrangements differed from that of adolescents in intact families, and if social support was associated with adolescents' adjustment to divorce. Participants included 268 10th-, 11th-, and 12th-grade students. One-hundred and ninety-two lived in intact family structures, 47 lived in sole custody arrangements, and 29 lived in joint custody arrangements.

Adolescents from intact and joint custody family structures scored significantly higher on some adjustment items. Joint custody adolescents' adjustment was only slightly lower than adolescents from intact family structures. More sources of social support were available to adolescents living in intact and joint family structures and their satisfaction with social support was significantly higher when compared to adolescents from sole custody arrangements. Furthermore, a significant positive relationship was seen between social support satisfaction and items from the adjustment measures.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Research has investigated the role of social support (the help received from others) in the adjustment processes of children and adolescents from different types of family structures. Much of this research has revealed that social support can be useful for children and adolescents of divorce (Bouchard & Drapeau, 1991; Cowen, Pedro-Carroll, & Alpert-Gillis, 1990; Frost & Pakiz, 1990; Hetherington, Cox, & Cox, 1982; Lustig, Wolchik, & Braver, 1992; Sandler, Wolchik, & Braver, 1985; Wolchik, Ruchlman, Braver, & Sandler, 1989; Wyman, Cowen, Hightower, & Pedro-Carroll, 1985). Other research on divorce has shown that social support is often lacking for children and adolescents faced with parental divorce (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). What is missing from the literature is information as to whether social support helps children and adolescents adjust to divorce, and if their adjustment differs based on their custody arrangement. Such information could help families of divorce make informed choices as to how to best handle their divorce and subsequent custody arrangement, so as to ensure optimal adjustment for their children.

Children of all ages living in different family structures are brought up in different ways with different life experiences. Those who are not living in a traditional two-parent nuclear household may have experienced the major life crisis of divorce and have had to participate in the reorganization of their family unit. Often, when a family undergoes a life-changing event such as a death in the family or the birth of a baby, social support is readily available to them (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989). Unfortunately, this is not always true when a family experiences a divorce. In fact, it is surprising how little social support children may receive, even from their own parents, as Wallerstein and Kelly (1980) found in their study of children of divorce:

Adding significantly to the widespread distress of the children [of divorce] is the fact that many of them face the tensions and sorrows of divorce with little help from their parents, or anyone else, for during the critical months following the separation parental care often diminishes, not because parents are necessarily less loving or less concerned with their children during divorce, but because the radical alterations in their lives tend to focus their attention on their own troubles (p. 36).

However, it is possible that social support could be available to children and adolescents who are experiencing family transitions and that social support can be a great resource and can make a difference in their successful adjustment to the divorce (Hetherington, Law, & O'Connor, 1993).

Divorce and Custody Arrangements

Although the rate of divorce doubled between the 1960's and the 1980's, it has since leveled off, and even decreased slightly within the past 10 years (Hetherington et al., 1993). However, this decline in the number of divorces has not necessarily lessened the impact on our children. Many children and adolescents are still affected by the experience of a divorce and family transition. Three out of every four divorces in the United States involve children under the age of 18, resulting in more than 1.2 million children and adolescents being affected each year (Brody, 1993; Kelly, 1994). It has been estimated that in the United States, 38% of white children and 75% of African-American children will experience the divorce of their parents before their 16th birthday (Hetherington et al., 1993).

Although many parents will go through the pain of divorce with the hope of improving their lives and those of their children, some children are often left feeling sad, angry, lonely, frightened, or rejected. Still others, left feeling vulnerable by the separation of their parents, may even fear abandonment by their custodial parent (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). In addition, due to feelings associated with

change and uncertainty from their new environments caused by the divorce, children or adolescents may feel overwhelmed by stress (Hetherington et al., 1982).

Divorce is not just a single event (Maccoby, Mnookin, Depner, & Peters, 1992), rather, it is a part of a series of changes within the family structure (Hetherington et al., 1993). The emotions that children and adolescents experience are just the beginning of what they might feel as a consequence of all the subsequent changes a divorce brings with it:

Divorce can be a profound catalyst for psychological, social, and economic change. It can also be a stumbling block against such change or the beginning of psychological, social, and economic deterioration. Divorce opens up or closes off a multitude of opportunities. As ever, the journey begins with the first step - and the direction of that first step governs each step that follows. (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989, p.4)

It is important to remember that the effect divorce has on children and adolescents will depend on a variety of circumstances, including the steps leading up to the divorce, and those following it. The responses by parents, children and adolescents to the divorce...

will be influenced by individual adjustment and the quality of family relationships before the divorce as well as circumstances surrounding and following the divorce. In many families, divorce may trigger a series of adverse transactional factors such as economic decline, parenting stress, and physical and psychological dysfunction in family members. For others, it may present an escape from conflict and an unsatisfying marital relationship, a chance to form more gratifying and harmonious relationships and an opportunity for personal growth and individuation. (Hetherington et al., 1993, p. 208)

Before a divorce, children and adolescents are enmeshed in an intact family structure that "supports their psychological, physical, and emotional ascent into maturity. When that structure collapses, the children's world is temporarily without supports" (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989, p. 11). Not only do children and adolescents need to deal with the feelings that occur as a result of the divorce, but they will also need to adjust to a new family structure after the divorce occurs. They will find themselves in a different type of

custody arrangement. Children usually will have visitation with one parent, while spending most of their time in the other parent's home. In most cases, the mother will become known as the custodial parent (Maccoby et al., 1992; Marafiotte, 1985; Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989). Visitation with the non-custodial parent can occur every once in a while, such as on holidays or vacations from school, or it can occur quite frequently, as with joint custody arrangements where both parents see their children often throughout each month. The existence of such a range of options for post-divorce families raises the issue of which situation is best for the child or adolescent. Might joint custody provide a child or adolescent with more social support? Can social support facilitate children and adolescents' adjustment following a divorce?

Social Support

Social support consists of supportive behaviors that are offered to us by people in our midst whom we can comfortably and consistently call upon for help or guidance. These people are otherwise known as our support network (Sarason, Levin, Basham, & Sarason, 1983). The behaviors people in our support network engage in consist of "specific acts generally recognized as being intentional efforts to help a person, either spontaneously or upon request" (Vaux, 1988, p. 29). Social support is an important aspect of our lives. It is a valuable resource because it can facilitate adjustment to difficult situations by increasing aspects of one's self-esteem, confidence or understanding (Meehan, Durlak, & Bryant, 1993; Sarason et al., 1983).

The Main Effect Model of Social Support

Researchers have proposed two different, yet related, models to explain the role of social support. The main-effect, or direct model, of social support proposes that the social support network can be called upon in times of crisis or harmony and affects one's well-being irrespective of stressors (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Vaux 1988). Using this model, the

perceived presence of social support may be why some adolescents will not perceive a potentially stressful event (such as divorce or custody arrangements) as in fact stressful.

Furthermore, the individual's level of satisfaction with his or her social support plays a role in how helpful it can be to them. In a study examining the link between social support satisfaction and adolescents' well-being and perceived control over positive life events, Meehan et al. (1993) found that adolescents who felt satisfied with social support reported better subjective mental health. Positive correlations were also found between adolescents' satisfaction with social support and their perceived control of events.

The Buffering Model of Social Support

The second model of social support is the buffering model. This model proposes that social support is helpful *only* to those experiencing a stressful situation. The buffering model presumes that social support will lessen the negative effect that stress has on one's psychological well-being (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Vaux, 1988). Using this model, it would seem that the greater the amount of social support individuals perceive themselves to have when they are experiencing a stressful situation, the better their adjustment will be to the stress.

Types of social support. Social support comes in different forms, and each of these types of support can act as stress-buffers (Cohen & Wills, 1985; see Table 1). First, *esteem support* allows for someone to feel valued and accepted despite any of their perceived faults. *Information support* helps someone understand situations or events by clarifying or defining issues, or helping one cope with unpleasant events. *Instrumental support*, or tangible support, consists of the provision of financial or material resources. Finally, Cohen and Wills (1985) believe that *social companionship*, or affective support (Vaux, 1988), encompasses one's need for affiliation, belonging and contact as a

Table 1

Types of Social Support Within the Buffering Model

Esteem Support	Allows an individual to feel valued and accepted despite any perceived faults.
Information Support	Helps someone to understand situations or events by clarifying or defining issues or helping them cope with unpleasant events.
Instrumental Support	Consists of the provision of financial or material resources.
Social Companionship Support	Includes the meeting of one's need for love, affection, identity and belonging through socializing opportunities, as well as can distract one from worries or problems.

(adapted from Cohen & Wills, 1985)

consequence of spending time with others and engaging in activities that offer relaxation, entertainment or recreation. This form of support can distract one from worries or problems, and can promote a more favorable mood. Social companionship support has proven to be helpful through peer relationships. Peer relationships which are successful, prosocial, and supportive can be helpful to children and adolescents who have experienced a change in their family environment because they can provide a buffer to help against the negative effects of the new environment (Hetherington, Anderson, & Hagan, 1991).

Statement of the Problem

Divorce has had a significant impact on our society. It has added a new aspect of family structure diversity into our culture. More research is needed in an effort to understand the different lifestyles that children or adolescents may experience after their parents have divorced. Each family structure can affect a child in different and important ways. Different family structures may provide children with different amounts of social support by giving them different people to turn to for help and support, all of which might either help or hinder a child or adolescent's adjustment to divorce. It could be advantageous to bring to light the differences children and adolescents of divorce may experience from those living in intact family structures. This knowledge can provide us with information to best help children and adolescents in the event of divorce, and in the years following a divorce.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine adjustment differences between adolescents of different family structures, as well as to investigate whether the availability of social support and the satisfaction adolescents' felt with that social support was different based on family structure. The goal was to examine the role of social support in facilitating the adjustment of adolescents in different custody arrangements after a divorce. It is

important to analyze differences in adolescents' social support, because the amount of perceived social support and satisfaction with that social support could affect their adjustment to their parents' divorce and subsequent custody arrangements.

Research Questions

This study investigated three hypotheses based on three different research questions:

1) Does the adjustment of adolescents in single or joint custody arrangements differ from that of adolescents in intact family structures? It was the hypothesis of this study that joint custody arrangements would be associated with a healthier adjustment to divorce than would sole custody arrangements, due to the adolescents' ability to maintain a relationship with both parents in a joint custody situation. In addition, it was hypothesized that the adjustment of adolescents from joint custody situations would be more proximate to that of adolescents from intact family structures.

2) Do the sources of social support or adolescents' satisfaction with social support differ between adolescents in different family structures? It was hypothesized that adolescents from intact family structures or who were involved in joint custody situations would have more access to social support, and thus, would feel greater satisfaction with the social support available to them.

3) Are higher levels of satisfaction with social support associated with better adjustment to divorce? It was hypothesized that the more satisfied adolescents were with their social support, the better their adjustment would be to the stress which can be caused by divorce.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Historical Perspective

Societal views and policies regarding custody arrangements after a divorce have changed significantly throughout the past millennium. Major milestones and turning points are discussed and listed in Table 2. This chapter reviews the history of divorce and custody arrangements as well as discusses present day issues. Furthermore, the role of social support for children and adolescents of divorce is also reviewed.

Prior to the 19th Century

From antiquity through the Middle Ages, children were considered property of their father (Derdeyn, 1976). The father was allowed the "absolute power to sell his children and enter them into enforced labor" (Kelly, 1994, p. 121) or even condemn them to death (Derdeyn, 1976). Mothers had no entitlement to their children even in the case of a father's untimely death. This held true until the mid-19th century under English law.

Until the 19th century, under English law, marriage and divorce were handled within religious courts (Coltrane & Hickman, 1992; Einhorn, 1986; Fidler et al., 1989). This is important, because English law was the foundation for American law. Thus, in America, until the 19th century, marriage and divorce were affiliated with religion. The husband had complete control and ownership of property and belongings involved in the marriage which included children (Einhorn, 1986; Derdeyn, 1976; Kelly, 1994). Divorce was rare, but when it occurred, the ecclesiastical courts usually granted custody of the children to the father because it was believed that this was his natural right (Coltrane & Hickman, 1992), since it was a father's "legal obligation to protect, support, and educate [his] children" (Kelly, 1994, p. 121).

Table 2

Historical Changes in Divorce Over Time

1700's	parens patriae	<p>Doctrine providing courts the ability to decide on children's welfare.</p> <p>Doctrine held that father had a right as provider of his children to maintain custody.</p>
1839	Talfourd Act	<p>British law enabling courts to award maternal custody of children under age seven.</p> <p>Children over seven years could return or remain in father's custody.</p>
1899	Tender Years Doctrine	<p>United States law similar to the Talfourd Act.</p> <p>It was believed that only a mother could provide tender, loving care that children needed during their young childhood years.</p>
1925	Guardianship of Infants Act	<p>England law stating mothers and fathers had an equal right to custody of their children.</p> <p>Courts decided custody based on which living situation was deemed most suitable for the child.</p>
1974	Uniform Marriage and Divorce Act	<p>Legislation supported idea of the best interest of the child when determining custody arrangements.</p>
1979	California Civil Code	<p>Enactment of joint custody as presumption in custody arrangements.</p> <p>Joint custody considered first choice of court system in divorce cases.</p>

Table 2 (continued)

Historical Changes in Divorce Over Time

1981	California Statute	Requirement by courts for mediation to assist lawyers and judges in making custody decision.
1988	Senate Bill 1306	Changed regulation of joint custody by requiring each custody case be examined independently. Joint custody no longer a preference.

The courts had the authority to make decisions regarding the welfare of children in divorce proceedings under the doctrine of *parens patriae*. This doctrine gave the courts the right to "protect all those who have no other protector" (Derdeyn, 1976, p. 1369) and do what was considered to be in the best interest of the child. Eighteenth century courts held that a father had the right, as provider for the children, to maintain custody regardless of the mother's emotional or physical condition. It was the father who was "burdened with the care, education, [and] support of the [children, so]... the law gives him the right to the earnings, services and work of the child" (Einhorn, 1986, pp. 126-7). Even if the father died, the mother was still not necessarily entitled to custody of her own children. A guardian could be assigned to the children instead (Einhorn, 1986).

The 19th Century

The Talfourd Act. During the 19th century, new divorce laws were enacted by the states which diminished a father's natural and superior right to the custody of his children. In 1839, a British law entitled the Talfourd Act enabled the courts to consider maternal custody. This act emphasized the suitability of maternal custody for a child under the age of 7 years, based on the idea that there was care only a mother could provide for a very young child, such as sustenance (Derdeyn, 1976; Kelly, 1994). However, even the initial enactment of the Talfourd Act did not keep the courts from continuing to award custody to the father (Derdeyn, 1976). Fortunately, the Talfourd Act also enabled mothers to obtain visitation rights from the court (Kelly, 1994). This legislation began the slow rise of awarding custody to mothers. However, there were still other differences from modern custody arrangements. In the instance that the mother was granted custody, the father was no longer bound to support the separated family. The concept of child support did not begin to develop until the early 1900's (Derdeyn, 1976).

Until 1899, the father was considered the child's natural guardian, especially for those older than age 7 (Einhorn, 1986; Derdeyn, 1976; Kelly, 1994). Prior to that time, few women won custody of their children. Nevertheless, two specific cases stand out in the literature. In 1813, one of the first women to win custody of her children did so due to her husband's desertion of the family. However, this ruling was reversed upon his return 2 1/2 years later, when the previously absent father was granted custody of his children (Derdeyn, 1976). In 1817, another man lost custody of his children. He was denied custody because of his "vicious and immoral atheistic beliefs" (Derdeyn, 1976, p. 1369).

Toward the end of the 19th century, courts were showing a willingness to award custody to the mother if the father was deemed "unfit" because of committing adulterous behavior, abandonment of the family, or disorderly or violent conduct (Einhorn, 1989). These behaviors prompted the courts to look at each situation independently, rather than applying the same custody guidelines in every divorce (Fidler et al., 1989). In addition, women were gaining greater legal status in the United States toward the end of the 19th century and throughout the 20th century (Kelly, 1994). Courts began to attempt to assess the parents' character and examine their relationships with their children (Einhorn, 1989). Custody was often awarded to the innocent party in the divorce, particularly in the cases of adultery, because it was thought that the child would be better treated by the "innocent" parent (Derdeyn, 1976; Einhorn, 1989).

The tender years doctrine. The idea of a child's "tender years" was first introduced in the United States in 1899 as a rationale by which mothers could gain custody of their young children, especially their daughters (Einhorn, 1989). During this time, psychological and psychiatric studies of infants and children were producing results in support of the importance of the mother-child relationship for a child's healthy development. Based on this research, the "tender years doctrine" established that children

between the age of birth to 7 years, much like the Talfourd Act, needed the tender, loving care that only a mother could offer her infant or young child (Coltrane & Hickman, 1992; Derdeyn, 1976; Fidler et al., 1989). A father was not considered capable of this tender love; hence he was deemed less fit to care for children under the age of 7. The tender years doctrine was one of the first legal arguments in support of a mother's rights to her children's custody in America. However, the father could regain custody once the "tender period" had passed, just as the Talfourd Act had declared. It was believed that once the tender years had passed, the "time for moral training and impressions [had] arrived" (Derdeyn, 1976, p. 1371). These moral lessons were the father's responsibility to teach to his children. The tender years doctrine was widely accepted during the early 1900's.

The 20th Century

A father's natural right to the custody of his children was nearly abolished and replaced by the tender years doctrine during the first two decades of the 20th century. The doctrine was often used as a "tie-breaker" in custody disputes, such that if both parents sought custody of their children, the courts could use the idea of maternal love as superior, and a reason to award custody to the mother (Einhorn, 1989; Fidler et al., 1989). In 1925, the Guardianship of Infants Act was enacted in England which stated that both mothers and fathers had an equal right to the custody of their children (Derdeyn, 1976). The Guardianship of Infants Act allowed the court to decide custody based on which living situation was deemed to be in the best interest of the child (Fidler et al., 1989). Within a short time following the implementation of this law in England, courts in America also began awarding mothers custody of their children (Derdeyn, 1976; Fidler et al., 1989). By the 1930's, mothers had proven their worthiness as childrears, and maternal preference for custody had all but abolished the prior preference for fathers (Kelly, 1994). Most courts believed that the mother was now the best parent to support, educate, train,

rear, and care for her children. In 1942, a Kentucky state law maintained that mothers had greater parental devotion than fathers did (Einhorn, 1989). A mother's "superior" ability to love and care for a child overruled her fault or blame for the divorce; she could be awarded custody as long as her behavior "[did not] reflect on her moral character..." (Einhorn, 1989, pp. 130-1).

Great changes in custody arrangements began to take place during the 1950's, 1960's, and 1970's. The courts were dealing with more custody disputes than they did in earlier times because the prevalence of divorce was rising dramatically (Kelly, 1994). Compared to an estimated 10,000 divorces in 1867, there were 913,000 divorces in 1973, just over 100 years later (Derdeyn, 1976). The 1960's was a decade of change and liberation in attitudes as well. The concern was raised that historically, custody rulings had been based on unfair gender stereotypes (Einhorn, 1989). Before the 1900's, most fathers were granted custody while during the 1900's only 1% of fathers were awarded custody (Einhorn, 1989). The tender years doctrine was deemed as discriminatory, and slowly began to give way to the concept of "the best interest of the child" as a deciding factor in custody disputes (Fidler et al., 1989).

The best interest of the child. Although the tender years doctrine was still used in many courts in the early 1970's, it began to receive a great deal of scrutiny. Thirteen states enacted legislation that abolished the tender years doctrine (Coltrane & Hickman, 1992). Some courts were beginning to believe that this philosophy was "based on outdated social stereotypes rather than on rational and up-to-date consideration of the welfare of the children involved" (Derdeyn, 1976, p. 1373). There were individual cases where fathers began winning custody awards based on the decision that they were more capable of childrearing than were their ex-wives. Ten to 20 years earlier, this probably would not

have happened because the mothers would not have been thought of as unfit to care for their own children.

In 1974, the Uniform Marriage and Divorce Act was enacted. This legislation contained three different facets all aimed at the idea of the best interest of the child (Derdeyn, 1976). The first facet was that once custody was awarded, there could be no litigation to modify it for two years, unless there was evidence of misconduct to the child. The second aspect was that children could be appointed attorneys of their own to represent their best interests. The third facet of this law was that the court had the right to order an evaluation of both parties involved to help in the decision of awarding custody. This last aspect was of great help to judges in the consideration of what was in the child's best interest.

The idea of "the best interest of the child" gained a strong foothold during the 1970's (Fidler et al., 1989). However, there was no basic definition of what the "best interest of the child" meant in practice. Judges used the idea of the best interest of the child at their own discretion, although it often involved parental ability, emotional ties to the children, and the children's wishes. In addition, judges did not always believe that they had the ability to make this decision on their own and hence began to accept clinical assessments as an aid in deciding what was in the child's best interests. Frequently, a judge found both parents to be capable of serving the best interests of their child. Research also pointed out that sole custody restricted contact with the non-custodial parent, which negatively affected children's adjustment to the divorce (Fidler et al., 1989). These problems gave way to the emergence of joint custody.

Joint custody. The concept of joint custody evolved in the 1930's when an "unusual" decision was made in a custody case in the state of Kentucky. This decision stated that "...parents are proper and suitable...and each should be given the right of custody for as

nearly equal a period as is practical and compatible with the welfare and convenience of the children" (Einhorn, 1986, pp. 132-3). In the early 1970's, the joint custody movement was headed by a small number of fathers who wanted and felt it necessary to continue their relationship with their children after a divorce (Kelly, 1994). Joint custody appeared to be the best way to keep the family as intact as possible. Just because a divorce had occurred did not mean that a child and a parent should be kept from one another. In this way, the relationships between a child(ren) and both parents could be maintained. Joint custody would lessen children's feelings of abandonment, allow them more role models and stimulation within their world, and lessen the demands placed on individual parents (Fidler et al., 1989).

Issues of Joint Custody

The interest in joint custody increased in the late 1970's and continues today. Society has become aware that children need to maintain relationships with both parents. Fathers' rights advocates played a large part in beginning this battle based on their belief that fathers, too, had entitlement to their children (Coltrane & Hickman, 1992; Kelly, 1994). Many attempts were being made by activists such as fathers' rights groups, to encourage states to choose joint custody as the preferred custody arrangement, as it was said to be in the best interest for the child.

California joint custody law. California was among the first of eight states to enact a joint custody presumption in 1979 under California Civil Code Section 4600 a (Coller, 1988; Coltrane & Hickman, 1992; Cook, 1980; Fidler et al., 1989). This legal statute meant that joint custody was the first choice of the court system in custody cases because it was thought to be in the best interest of everyone involved. In California, it is only required that both parties agree to joint custody as specified in California Civil Code 4600.5 (Cook, 1980). The court may deny joint custody if it is not considered to be in the

child's best interest. However, joint custody is considered a preference by the courts (i.e., which means that it is looked at first), even if parents have not requested joint custody, but all other custody choices are considered as well (Bruch, 1992; Coltrane & Hickman, 1992; Fidler et al., 1989; Folberg, 1984). There is one other type of joint custody statute, called the option statute (Coltrane & Hickman, 1992; Johnston, Kline, & Tschann, 1989). This gives judges the authority to order joint custody in a situation as they see fit. Since 1975, many legal provisions for joint custody orders have been enacted throughout the United States. As of 1988, 34 states had adopted joint custody into their legislation (Coltrane & Hickman, 1992).

As mentioned by Cook (1980), California's Civil Code of joint custody (California Civil Code 4600 a) was created to assure a child frequent contact and an ongoing relationship with both parents. It was also hoped that this legislation would encourage the parents to continue to share their parenting responsibilities because this arrangement is considered to be in the best interest of the child. The law also states that if children are at an age where they can logically express their wishes regarding with whom they would like to live, the court will take those wishes into consideration. The older the child, the more weight is placed on his or her wishes (McIssac, 1991). Older children would usually be placed in the parent's home with whom they choose to live.

Cook (1980) goes on to say that section 4600 (b) (1) of California's Civil Code for joint custody states that if one parent is awarded sole custody of the child, then that parent must allow the child to have frequent visitation and contact with the non-custodial parent, in order for the child to maintain a relationship with both parents. It is also stated that the decision to grant sole custody cannot be based on the parent's gender.

California's custody laws have a series of provisions that accompany it to ease potential misunderstanding of joint custody awards (Bruch, 1992). The first is that unless

specified by the court, each parent may act alone, at their discretion, and in the best interest of their child. Another is the statement in each family's order of how to resolve conflicted issues without returning to court. For example, the award might state that if the parents cannot agree on which school they will enroll their child in, then the child will be enrolled in the school closest to the primary residence.

Joint custody law today. During the 1980's, joint custody law was broken into two parts. The first was *joint legal custody* which is the right given to both parents for major decision-making regarding the child including such issues as schooling, medical care, education and religion. Under this form of custody, the child physically remains in the custody of one parent with frequent visitation with the other. The second, and most common, is *joint legal and physical custody*, which gives both parents the right to make major decisions and to take part in the daily care, have control of and responsibility for the child (Bruch, 1992; Coltrane & Hickman, 1992; Derdeyn, 1976; Fidler et al., 1989). Joint legal and physical custody does not mean an equal 50/50 time-share between parents. In fact, it seems that a completely equal scenario would be rare. The amount of time with each parent, the frequency of visitation, and the transitions between homes can differ greatly depending upon each individual family's situation (Fidler et al., 1989). For example, children or adolescents may transition between homes every 3 to 4 days, once a week, or only on weekends.

A new statute was enacted in California in 1981. This statute proposed a requirement of mediation by the court systems to assist the lawyers and judge in making a custody decision (Coltrane & Hickman, 1992). California was the first state to do this. Eighteen states have followed suit since that time. Mediation includes the observation and evaluations of both parties by a qualified neutral third party. If joint custody is not the type of custody arrangement that is found by the third party to best fit the needs of the

family, then sole physical custody is usually awarded to the parent who has shown the most willingness to provide the child with an ongoing relationship with the non-custodial parent maintained through frequent visitation (Johnston et al., 1989).

In 1988, another change occurred in California's joint custody law. Senate Bill 1306 was passed and became effective in 1989 (McIssac, 1991). This bill changed the regulation of joint custody by requiring that each custody case be examined independently of others. In addition, joint custody was no longer considered a preference, but rather the parents were given responsibility to select what they believed to be the parenting plan which would be in the best interest of their child. If they were unable to do so, then the courts would order a parenting plan for them.

In California, most of joint custody arrangements include both parents having joint legal custody while only one, typically the mother, has physical custody (Bruch, 1992; Maccoby et al., 1992). Some states even shift the power that comes with legal and physical custody alternatively between parents (Bruch, 1992). Typically, this is called either *divided* or *alternating custody*. This means that each parent would have legal and physical custody solely to themselves for a period of time. Then custody would switch to the other parent for an equal amount of time. This type of arrangement would leave the non-custodial parent completely powerless over what happens to their child while in the other parent's custody. This "powerlessness" could be detrimental not only to the child, but also to the parents involved. On the other hand, most joint custody orders give an equal amount of power to the parent that is not considered the primary caregiver. This might also be detrimental because of the non-custodial parent's ability to use their equal share of the power against the primary parent's choices, feelings, and beliefs about their differing childrearing practices. In essence, this gives power to the parent who is not

significantly involved on a daily basis with parenting responsibilities. A complete list as well as definitions of custody arrangements can be found in Table 3

Family Structure Today

Due to the growing trend of divorce, we have become a culturally diverse society in terms of family structure. Families which have not experienced divorce (e.g., traditional nuclear families), consisting of two parents and their offspring, are considered to be an intact family structure. However, after a divorce occurs, a variety of family structures can be created due to different forms of custody arrangements. These structures range from single-parenting to joint-parenting to blended families; each offering a different family culture for the child or adolescent to grow up in by way of modeling different values, morals, ideals, attitudes, and life experiences. Some studies have shown that children and adolescents growing up within these various family structures may be differently affected (Hetherington et al., 1982).

Sole Custody

Initially, children and adolescents of divorce may find themselves living with only one parent, which is usually the mother (Hetherington et al., 1993). They will customarily still see their other parent, but this might include inconsistent or infrequent visitation (Coller, 1988; Kline, Tschann, Johnston, & Wallerstein, 1989; Sandler et al., 1985).

Unfortunately, the disadvantage of sole custody arrangements seems to be the relative absence of one of the parents in a child's life. This absence has been associated with deficits in social development and in cognitive ability of children (Coller, 1988). In addition, research has shown that adolescence is more difficult for both children and parents growing up in single-parent homes because not only is raising a child (or children) alone physically and emotionally exhausting but it is often associated with a decrease in

Table 3

Types of Custody Arrangements

Legal custody	The right given to one or both parents to make major decisions regarding the child, such as school, religion, and health care.
Physical custody	The right given to one or both parents to have physical responsibility of the child.
Sole custody	One parent has legal and physical custody of the child. Non-custodial parent often receives bi-monthly visitation rights.
Joint legal custody	Both parents are given the right to make major decisions regarding their child. Only one parent retains physical custody while the other parent has frequent visitation rights.
Joint legal and physical custody	Both parents given legal and physical rights over daily care, decisions, and responsibility of the child.
Divided custody	One parent has legal and physical custody of the child solely to themselves for an extended period of time, after which, this same responsibility is handed over to the other parent. Non-custodial parent is powerless while the child is in the other parent's custody.

standard of living (Hetherington et al., 1993) and fewer resources to help with problems or in times of emergencies (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989).

Most children and adolescents of divorce will spend at least 3 to 5 years in a single-parent household, since about half of single parents will remarry after 3 years (Hetherington et al., 1993). Because of this, questions about social support come to mind for the children and adolescents within single-parent families. For instance, what social support can be utilized by these children and adolescents in sole custody living arrangements to help ameliorate the negative effects of divorce? Do the children and adolescents perceive social support to be as helpful as do children and adolescents from intact or joint custody living arrangements?

Joint Custody

Joint custody has become a common solution for families in the event of a divorce. Although little is known about how parents in this situation manage co-parenting, joint custody allows both parents to continue their parenting responsibilities, and allows the child(ren) or adolescent to maintain relationships with both parents (Maccoby et al., 1992). According to Hetherington et al. (1993), "joint custody is based on the premises that continued contact with both parents is desirable and that noncustodial parents with joint custody will be more likely to maintain contact and financial support" (p. 213). It is for this reason that joint custody is considered by some experts to be in the best interest of the child (Bruch, 1992; Collier, 1988; Johnston et al., 1989; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980).

Joint custody also seems to be a healthy alternative in the event of divorce because it can lessen children's feeling of abandonment and allow more role models into the children and adolescents' environment. In addition, the parents may not feel that parenting is as heavy a burden since they will still continue to share that responsibility (Fidler et al., 1989). However, if there is conflict between the parents that the children are aware of,

the continued contact brought about by joint custody could have adverse effects on the children (Hetherington et al., 1993; Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989). The conflict that children are exposed to could make them feel caught between their parents. The feeling of being caught between parents has been found to be quite devastating to children, and to have an adverse effect on their behavior and psychological well-being (Buchanan et al., 1991; Hetherington et al., 1993)

Within joint custody arrangements, it would seem that children and adolescents would have a greater amount of social support available to them due to the maintenance of their relationships with both parents. The question then is if this greater amount of social support available to these children and adolescents is utilized, and if so, does it truly benefit them? In addition, how does this support differ from the social support that is available to children and adolescents in sole custody arrangements? Does more social support equate with better adjustment?

Joint versus Sole Custody

In recent years, research has been conducted to compare children in joint custody and sole custody arrangements. Most of this research has focused on children's social-emotional adjustment to divorce. Some studies report that, as of yet, no significant differences have been found in children's adjustment to either joint or sole custody situations (Benjamin & Irving, 1989; Kline et al., 1989). Conversely, some researchers suggest that children's adjustment to joint custody situations is either the same as or better than children or adolescents' living in sole custody arrangements (Maccoby et al., 1993). Other studies suggest that joint custody is the better choice for children's adjustment to divorce (Benjamin & Irving, 1989; Bruch, 1992; Coller, 1988; Johnston et al., 1989; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). These results are inconsistent and do not allow us to conclude that either sole or joint custody is in the best interest of the child.

However, children and adolescents living in a new custody arrangement might discover that their parents are not able to parent them as well as they previously did (Hetherington, et al., 1993; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980), and may also be witness to continued or new bitterness between their parents. Seeing a parent's anger, unhappiness, or bitterness toward the other parent can be a great cause of stress within a child or adolescents living in either a sole or joint custody situation (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980).

The Blended Family

After a while, one of the child's or adolescent's parents may remarry creating a new family structure, that of the blended family. Stepsiblings could become part of the family by way of the new stepparent or other children may be born, adding half-siblings into the family structure. Children and adolescents now need to cope with another reorganization of their family structure. They also need to adjust to the changed role of their custodial parent, usually the mother, and the additional role of a stepparent (Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1995). The impact of social support is an area which has been "largely unexplored" (Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1995, p. 249) in blended family structures. It is for this reason, and for the many added variables that come into play for children and adolescents living in this type of family structure, that this study did not look at social support from stepparents or other members specific to blended families.

Social Support and Divorce

In recent years, research has begun to examine the social support available to children and adolescents of divorce and its role in their adjustment. Many of these studies have analyzed the relationship of social support and children's social-emotional and psychological adjustment to divorce (Cowen et al., 1990; Wyman et al., 1985). Social support has also been examined in relation to the stress which can be felt by children of divorce (Wolchik et al., 1989), in relation to the effect social support has in the years after

divorce (Bouchard & Drapeau, 1991) and in relation to the types of social support offered to children during and after a divorce (Frost & Pakiz, 1990; Hetherington et al., 1982; Lustig et al., 1992; Sandler et al., 1985; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). The sections that follow offer a summary of the research.

Social Support and Psychological Adjustment

In a study examining the impact of divorce on children's perceived competence, self-esteem, anxiety, and social support, it was found that children of divorce report higher anxiety, lower perceived competence, and fewer opportunities for social support than children from intact families (Wyman et al., 1985). In other research analyzing the relationship between social support and adjustment among children of divorce, it was found that children who had a considerable amount of social support scored lower on an anxiety scale than children with less access to social support (Cowen et al., 1990). Specifically, these researchers found that a total score of strong social support was related to lower anxiety, lower post-divorce problems, lower amounts of worry, greater awareness within the child that he or she could not alter the divorce, greater amounts of openness in discussing the divorce and more positive personal resources. In addition, the results showed that children were more open in their discussions of divorce with peers. Furthermore, results indicated that children who perceived their mothers as a reliable source of social support had a higher perception of self.

Social Support and Stress

Research has also shown that social support can be of help to children and adolescents in their adjustment when they perceive life events, such as divorce, as stressful. Researchers discovered that social support was helpful to children and adolescents between the ages of 8 and 15 years who felt an increase in the amount of stress in their lives after a divorce (Wolchik et al., 1989). The children and adolescents

who felt a high degree of change in stress and who received a high amount of social support had fewer adjustment problems (based on lower scores of measures assessing their depression, anxiety and aggressiveness) than children and adolescents who received lower levels of social support.

Social Support During and After Divorce

An important question to ask children and adolescents of divorce is how social support helps them during a divorce and in the years following. Are they satisfied with any social support they receive? Few research studies have investigated the role of social support in different family structures in the years after a reorganization of the family. The findings of studies that do exist are somewhat inconsistent.

In Wallerstein and Kelly's California Children of Divorce Project (1980), participants were recruited by offering a preventive 6-week divorce counseling service, which suggests that these families could have been experiencing problems prior to the study. The children and adolescents who participated ranged in age from 2 to 18 years old. The researchers found that parents were basically not available to their own children and adolescents for support. Half of the children and adolescents in their research felt their fathers were not aware of their distress over the divorce, while one-third of the participants felt this way about their mothers. Only 10% believed their fathers showed some sensitivity or understanding to their distress while 15% felt this sensitivity from their mothers. In addition, "one-third of the children experienced moderate to severe deterioration in their mother's day-to-day care for them" (p. 42). Older children and adolescents were more aware of the change in parenting and felt neglected.

Overall, the children and adolescents in this study felt a sharp decrease in the amount of time that their parents spent with them. They also discovered that they had to spend many hours home alone and do many things by themselves such as eating dinner,

preparing for school, and going to bed. In addition, many children and adolescents reported that they did not consider their siblings as helpful, although they conferred with them frequently. Probably the hardest part of all for these children and adolescents was that they had no transitional period to get used to the changed patterns and lack of support within their home. Usually these changes were implemented quickly after one parent moved out of the home.

As for support outside of the home, children and adolescents from Wallerstein and Kelly's study (1980) found few resources to help with their feelings and understanding of the divorce. Three-fourths of them did not receive any support from their extended family, although some grandparents were quite helpful. Those participants who had support from their grandparents seemed to benefit considerably from the time spent with them. Overall, less than 10% received help outside their home, and this was primarily from people within their community, or family friends. School proved to be helpful primarily by offering the routine of attending class on a regular basis. Unfortunately, only 50% actually received some form of support, such as nurturance, from their teachers.

Furthermore, the children and adolescents in this study did not feel that friends could be considered as an option for emotional comfort, but rather as a source of activity to separate themselves from their troubled home, especially for older boys. Within this study, social support was not perceived to be readily available to the children and adolescents of divorce. For those who felt some sort of support, it seemed to prove helpful to them at times, such as in taking them away from their troubled homes, but overall they did not seem to receive help in their understanding or adjustment to the divorce.

Alternatively, Hetherington and her colleagues (1993) suggested that extrafamilial support can be quite helpful to adolescents in the wake of a divorce. Attending school can

be a form of social support because it can "provide [a] warm, structured, and predictable environment [and] can offer stability to children experiencing a rapidly changing family environment, chaotic household routines, an altered parent, and inconsistent parenting" (p.220). Within the school environment, adolescents can find support in their peers and teachers, because "...responsive peers and school personnel can validate the self-worth, competence, and personal control of the adolescent who has access to these extrafamilial supports" (p. 220). Unfortunately, trouble in school or with their peers seems to increase any behavior problems they might be having. It appears that, depending on the situation of the individual, social support is available outside of the family environment and can be useful for an adolescent in adjusting to a divorce.

In studies on how social support affects children's and adolescents' psychological adjustment in the years after divorce, researchers have assessed psychological adjustment during the first year of their parents' separations (Time 1), and then again one or more years later (Time 2). One particular study was designed to compare the psychological adjustment of children from divorced families to that of children living in intact family structures. This research study found that 1st- through 6th-graders from divorced families had a social network with fewer sources available than children from intact families at Time 1, but it increased in size 2 years later (Time 2) (Bouchard & Drapeau, 1991). The researchers suggest that this difference was due to the breakdown of intimate relationships the children once knew, and the addition of new sources of social support after a divorce. Furthermore, results showed that girls perceived greater instrumental support from their school (i.e., aid and explanations to increase understanding) and more recreational support from their peers. These results imply that girls might be more open to receiving support from sources at their school and from their peers during the first two years after a divorce than boys are.

Children from divorced homes also reported that they received more emotional support from their baby-sitters than from other sources of social support. This could be due to an increased amount of contact with the sitters after the separation of their parents. Some children also reported greater negative interaction with teachers, which could be due to problems at school stemming from the children's adjustment with the divorce.

Overall, Bouchard and Drapeau (1991) suggest that there is a breakdown in a child's social support network after a divorce, and that this breakdown does affect the children involved. However, 2 years after the divorce occurred, social support seemed to rebuild to a greater extent than the children felt immediately after the divorce. In a measure used in their study to examine different components of social support, children from intact family structures consistently scored higher. This implies that the children from intact family structures have social support networks with greater density and, thus, are offered greater support. Another implication could be that these children have no need for such support because they live in a stable home environment.

Types of social support after divorce. In research analyzing the types of social support that children and adolescents from divorced family structures perceive to be available, Sandler et al. (1985) analyzed data gathered from children and adolescents between the ages of 8 and 15 living in divorced family structures. The purpose of their study was to examine where these children and adolescents looked for different kinds of social support, and if the structure of their support network was related to their satisfaction with the support they received. The researchers were especially interested in the following five types of social support: emotional, recreational/play, advice/information, goods/services, and positive feedback.

Results from Sandler et al.'s study (1985) showed that children and adolescents overwhelmingly reported mothers to be a source of each kind of social support. They also

found that children and adolescents who had more contact with their fathers reported them less often as a source of negative feelings in comparison to the children and adolescents who had occasional or no contact with their fathers. In addition, children and adolescents also reported that the larger they perceived their social network to be, the more satisfied they were with their overall support. In a similar study examining the effects of divorce on nursery school aged children 2 years after the separation occurred, it was found that no "support system was as salient as a continued, positive, mutually supportive relationship of the divorced couple and continued involvement of the father with the child" (Hetherington et al., 1982, p. 280).

Overall, in Sandler et al.'s study (1985), it was discovered that children and adolescents had the most support for recreation and play but had very little support for: positive feedback; advice and goods/services; and, especially for emotional support. The fact that the children reported the least amount of support available to them in the form of emotional support is of great concern, because children and adolescents who have lived through a divorce, or who are in the process of going through it, will experience a rash of emotions. It seems that emotional support is the type of support that is most needed by children and adolescents who have experienced this crisis, yet it is perceived by both children and adolescents to be the least available.

The time of the divorce and gender may also play a role in adolescents' perceptions of available social support. Frost and Pakiz (1990) found that adolescent girls who had experienced a divorce after the age of 10 were more dissatisfied with their social network than adolescent girls from intact family structures. Specifically, these girls were dissatisfied with general assistance and the sharing of personal information in comparison to intact girls and girls who experienced a divorce in elementary school. On the other hand, adolescent boys who had experienced a divorce after age 10 reported less

satisfaction than boys from intact family structures or boys who had experienced a divorce at any earlier time in their lives. Interestingly, these same groups of boys and girls reported a lower need of material support than adolescents who had experienced a divorce in elementary school. Other research has shown that, when looking at friendships as social support, adolescents over the age of 12 report greater amounts of social support from friends and fewer adjustment problems (Lustig et al., 1992).

Summary

The importance of social support has been made clear through research investigating the role of social support with children from intact family or divorced family structures. Children who perceive more social support available to them and find it more helpful are better adjusted overall, and those from divorced family structures have a better adjustment to the divorce. However, what is not clear is how social support differs for children in different custody arrangements, or in a blended family. So, results from most studies on social support cannot be generalized to our culturally diverse population because we still are not sure of the differences children might face from different custody arrangements or in a blended family as compared to children from a two-parent nuclear family structure. It is possible that social support offered to children in joint custody arrangements would be similar to that available to children in intact family structures. Children in single-parent homes with low contact with the non-residential parent may receive only a portion of the social support than what they once were used to or now need.

More studies need to investigate the differences between children and adolescents in different family structures in order to provide understanding of the needs of these children and adolescents. Children and adolescents from different family structures are brought up in different ways (Hetherington et al., 1982), and most have experienced different life events. Research needs to be designed to measure these differences in relation to social

support, so that we as a society can understand how children and adolescents who are raised within these diverse family structures differ. The present study investigates the social support available to adolescents who live in different family structures and whether there are differences in the type of social support they perceive and their level of satisfaction with that support. In addition, this study analyzed whether there is a difference in adolescent adjustment based on family structure and/or social support.

The purpose of this study was to examine adolescents' adjustment to divorce in addition to analyzing differences in adolescents' social support. The hypothesis was that the amount of perceived social support and the satisfaction with that social support could affect adolescents' adjustment to stressful life changes such as divorce and subsequent custody arrangements. The goal of this research was to discover if adolescents' adjustment after divorce differed based on sole or joint custody arrangements, and if their adjustment differed from that of adolescents from intact family structures.

Chapter 3

METHOD

Participants

Eleventh- and 12th-grade students from a San Francisco Bay Area public high school as well as 10th-grade students from a public high school outside of Los Angeles participated in this research. Both schools were in middle-class neighborhoods. The majority of the students who completed questionnaires were enrolled in required classes at their respective high schools. The 11th- and 12th-grade students were enrolled in economics, government and advanced and regular psychology classes, all of which, except for psychology, were required classes for the students to take in 12th-grade. The psychology students consisted of advanced and regular placement 12th-graders as well as twelve 11th-grade advanced placement psychology students. There were no advanced placement classes for the government and economics students that participated in this research. The 10th-grade students were enrolled in either an advanced or regular placement English class, a required class for 10th-graders.

A total of 302 10th-, 11th-, and 12th-grade students completed questionnaires. However, 24 of these students were removed from the sample population before data analysis, because they had experienced the death of a parent, their parents had never married and were not living together, they were living with adults other than their parents or they filled out the questionnaire incorrectly. Thus, usable data was available from a total of 278 students, 137 10th-graders and 141 11th- and 12th-graders. However, in data analyses examining family structure, which were the main analyses for this study, another 10 participants were excluded because their parents were recently separated and were not involved in an official custody arrangement yet, so they could not be placed into one of the family structure groups. This yielded a total of 268 participants throughout most of the

analysis. The group of adolescents whose parents had recently separated was included in the analyses looking at the differences of social support based on grade level, since the need for social support based on their living arrangement would be relevant for this analysis ($N = 278$).

Within the total group of participants, 155 were female (81 10th-graders; 74 11th- and 12th-graders) and 123 were male (56 10th-graders; 67 11th- and 12th-graders). The sample was ethnically diverse in that 48% were Caucasian ($n = 133$), 24% were Asian-American ($n = 66$), 11% were Chicano, Latino, or Hispanic ($n = 31$), 10% reported themselves as being of mixed ethnic heritage ($n = 28$), and 5% were Armenian ($n = 15$). In addition, two students were African-American and three were Native-American.

Furthermore, 192 participants were from intact family structures while 76 were from divorced families, and 10 participants' parents were not living together. The adolescents from divorced families were separated into two groups: 29 were involved in joint custody arrangements, and 47 were living in sole custody arrangements. Please refer to Table 4 for a complete breakdown of the participants' gender and family structure.

Procedure

During one class period, students who had returned consent forms granting permission completed a questionnaire packet administered by the researcher. Consent forms had been handed out 3 to 4 days earlier, and students from both schools were administered the questionnaire within 3 weeks of each other. The questionnaire contained demographic information and standardized measures which took approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete. Confidentiality was maintained as the students did not need to provide their names, and questionnaire feedback was anonymous.

Table 4

Frequency Table Representing Participants' Gender and Family Structure

	Tenth-grade		Eleventh- and Twelfth-grade	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Gender	56	81	67	74
Family Structure				
Sole custody	9	10	15	13
Joint custody	5	10	6	8
Intact	41	59	43	49
Parents Separated	1	2	3	4
<u>n</u>	137		141	

Measures

The questionnaire packet contained items on participants' demographic information, family structure, custody arrangements if applicable, parents' feelings about the custody arrangement, participants' feelings about being caught between their divorced parents, perceived amount and satisfaction with social support, and social and emotional adjustment. In this study, adjustment was operationalized as having positive social and emotional adjustment within the family context as well as a lack of physical or psychosomatic symptoms of depression or anxiety. In order to properly examine adjustment as defined in this research study, a variety of adjustment measures were used and are explained below.

Demographic Information

Questions were created to give the researcher an accurate description of the adolescents completing the questionnaire. Items in this section asked students about their gender, ethnicity, age, and family structure. In order to assess socio-economic status, students were asked if they participated in a lunch program at their school as well as what the highest educational level was for each of their parents (see Appendix A).

Divorce Information

If participants were from a divorced family structure, they also completed information about their custody arrangement which included: the type of custody arrangement they lived in; who they lived with the most; who lived with them in their house; how often they saw the parent they did not live with; and whether or not their parents had remarried. They also answered questions about their perceptions of their parents' satisfaction with the custody arrangement (see Appendix B).

Feelings of Being Caught Between Parents. This measure was answered only by adolescents who reported that they lived in a divorced family structure. It was originally

used by Buchanan et al. (1991) in their study investigating adolescents' adjustment and experiences in divorced family structures. This measure was designed to discover how often adolescents felt that they were caught in the middle of conflict between their divorced parents. It includes such questions as "How often do you feel caught in the middle between your mother and your father?," "How often does your mother/father ask you to carry messages to your father/mother," and "Does your mother/father ever ask you questions about your father's/mother's home that you wish she/he wouldn't ask?" Participants answered these items using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from (1) never, (2) once in a while, (3) fairly often, to (4) very often (see Appendix C).

The Social Support Questionnaire

The types of social support investigated in this study include esteem, social companionship, instrumental and informational support. Sarason, Levine, Basham, and Sarason (1983) believe that two components are necessary for adequately measuring the aspect of social support within people's lives. The first element is an individual's perception of who is available to him or her as social support. The second is how satisfied a person is with the support received. The original measure created by Sarason and his associates (1983), the Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ), was designed with those two elements in mind, and has been found to be a reliable instrument. Since then, a revised version with fewer social support items has been created from the original. The condensed version was designed to be administered in a shorter amount of time while still correlating highly with its longer version. The researchers compared the shorted version to its longer version with three different samples which revealed reliability ranging from .95 to .97 (Sarason, Sarason, Shearin, & Pierce, 1987).

The Social Support Questionnaire Short Form (SSQSR) measures social companionship and esteem support. It includes questions such as "Whom can you really

count on to be dependable when you need help?" and "How satisfied [are you with this support]?" (Sarason et al., 1987) A modified version of the Social Support Questionnaire Short Form was used in this measure. This version includes questions added by the researcher from the long version of the Social Support Questionnaire (questions 11 and 12) as well as newly created questions (questions 7, 8, 9, 10, and 13) to measure instrumental and informational support.

In addition, the original measure allowed participants to name sources of social support by their initials. In this research, the type of people who were available for social support were important, so sources of social support were created for the students to choose from consisting of the following choices: (a) mother; (b) father; (c) sibling; (d) maternal relative; (e) paternal relative; (f) friend; (g) stepmother; (h) stepfather; (i) teacher; and (j) other. The second part of each question asked how satisfied the participants were with their overall support and was answered using a 6-point Likert type scale ranging from (1) very dissatisfied, (2) fairly dissatisfied, (3) a little dissatisfied, (4) a little satisfied, (5) fairly satisfied, to (6) very satisfied (see Appendix D).

The Children's Divorce Adjustment Inventory

A modified version of the Children's Divorce Adjustment Inventory (CDAI) was used (see Appendix E). The CDAI was designed by Portes, Haas, and Brown (1991) specifically to examine children's and adolescents' between the ages of 8 and 16 years social and emotional adjustment to divorce. It was created to assess adjustment and family functioning within the context of divorce. Reliability analyses assessed by Brown, Portes, and Smith (1995) of the CDAI with the McMaster Family Assessment Device and the Bloom Family Assessment Scale, both of which measure family functioning, ranged from .54 to .72.

The CDAI measure assesses children's adjustment to divorce using a 5-point Likert type scale on which children answer that they either (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) are not sure, (4) disagree, or (5) strongly disagree with a statement. For the analysis, all items were coded in a positive direction with a higher number representing more positive adjustment. The CDAI includes statements such as "Since the separation I have had problems in school." The modified version was created by the researcher to examine adolescents' social and emotional adjustment from both intact and divorced family structures. Questions have been altered by removing the phrase, "Since the separation..." and changed to "I have had problems in school."

Additional Adjustment Measures

Questions from measures examining adolescents' feelings of parent-child emotional closeness, depression and anxiety, and parental agreement were used. These measures were also originally used by Buchanan et al. (1991) in their study.

Parent-child emotional closeness. A modified version of the Parent-Child Emotional Closeness scale was used to measure the adolescents' perceived emotional closeness to their parents (see Appendix F). It includes questions targeting how well the participants feel that they get along with their mother and father, how openly they can talk with them, how careful they need to be when they talk to them, how comfortable they are admitting their doubts and fears to them and if their mother or father shows affection or liking for them. The participants answered on a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) are not sure, (4) agree, or (5) strongly agree with each statement in regard to their parents separately. As with the CDAI coding scale, for the analysis, all items were coded in a positive direction with a higher number representing more positive adjustment.

Depression/anxiety scale. A modified version of the Depression/Anxiety scale was included (Dornbusch, Mont-Reynaud, Ritter, Chen, & Steinberg, 1991). This measure assesses adolescents' depression and anxiety in a general way asking questions in regard to mental and physical symptoms such as, "In the past month, how often have you had a headache" or felt "low or depressed." Students answered using a 4-point Likert type scale ranging from (1) three or more times, (2) twice, (3) once to (4) never (see Appendix G).

Parental agreement. The final instrument was a composite variable created by Buchanan and her team of researchers (1991) from five items designed to assess the level of agreement between adolescents' parents on certain parenting issues. These questions were modified for use in the present study (see Appendix H). Items covered such issues as how likely it is that the adolescents' parents would agree on how much time they each can spend with him or her, as well as how likely it would be that the parents would agree about rules, discipline, privileges, and how much money their sons or daughters should have. Students answered using a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from (1) not at all likely, (2) a little bit likely, (3) somewhat likely, (4) quite likely, to (5) very likely.

Chapter 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Preliminary AnalysesDemographic Findings

This research was concerned with adolescents' adjustment and social support within the three different family structures of sole custody, joint custody, and intact families. Fifteen students did not fall into one of these three categories because their parents were either never married and not living together ($n = 5$) or were separated, but not divorced ($n = 10$), which left a total of 268 students participating in the main analyses of this study. Overall, there were 47 (24 males; 23 females) adolescents in sole custody arrangements, 29 (11 males; 18 females) in joint custody arrangements, and 192 (84 males; 108 females) living in intact family structures. Participants were placed into the joint custody group if they reported that they visited their non-custodial parent more than 2 days every 2 weeks (including one overnight), spent two to three overnights every two weeks, spent half of each week, every weekend, or if they reported that they could see them as often as they wanted. Of the adolescents living in sole custody situations, 32 lived with their mother (14 male; 18 female) and 15 lived with their father (10 male; 5 female). Distribution of participants by family structure, gender, and grade levels is described in Table 5.

A chi-square analysis revealed a statistically significant difference between family structure and ethnicity, showing that a large percentage of joint custody adolescents (69%) and sole custody adolescents (60%) were Caucasian, $X^2 (12, N = 268) = 25.07$, $p < .05$. In addition, most of the Asian-American participants (89%) were from intact family structures. A complete breakdown of ethnicity based on family structure can be found in Table 6. Data were not analyzed for differences by ethnicity or gender of the

Table 5

Frequency of Participants by Family Structure and Grade Level (N = 268)

Family Structure	Tenth-Grade			Eleventh- and Twelfth-Grade			Total
	Male	Female	<u>n</u>	Male	Female	<u>n</u>	
Sole Custody	9	10	19	15	13	28	47
Joint Custody	5	10	15	6	8	14	29
Intact	41	59	100	43	49	92	192
<u>n</u>		134			134		

Table 6

Distribution of Participants by Ethnicity and Family Structure

Ethnicity	Family Structure		
	Sole Custody	Joint Custody	Intact
Caucasian	28	20	82
Asian-American	7	0	55
Chicano, Latino or Hispanic	8	3	17
Armenian	0	2	13
African-American	1	0	1
Native-American	0	0	3
Mixed Ethnic Heritage	3	4	21
<u>n</u>	47	29	192

custodial parent because of the small sample size in some conditions.

Furthermore, of the adolescents living in joint custody homes, 10 of their mothers had remarried and 10 of their fathers had remarried. Twenty-two of the adolescents living in sole custody situations had mothers who had remarried and 26 of their fathers had remarried. However, because of many variables that the remarriage of a parent adds to an adolescents' life, stepparents were not included in the analyses of this research.

Differences by Grade Level

The two age groups of participants were almost equal with 137 adolescents in 10th-grade and 141 in 11th- and 12th-grade. In order to determine if there were differences in adjustment based on the grade level of the participants, *t*-tests were performed using grade level as the independent variable and all three adjustment measures, the modified Child Divorce Adjustment Inventory, the modified Parent-Child Emotional Closeness Survey and the Anxiety/Depression Scale, as the dependent variables. However, in looking at differences in adjustment (but not social support) based on grade level, the group of students whose parents had recently separated was excluded from the analyses, changing the total number of participants to 134 within each grade level. An alpha level of at least .05 was used for all statistical tests.

This analysis revealed only two significant differences between the two groups. Adolescents in 12th-grade ($M = 3.55$) wished to spend significantly more time with their fathers than did 10th-graders ($M = 3.15$, $t(262) = 2.67$, $p < .01$), whereas 10th-graders reported more frequently feeling sad ($M = 2.00$ vs. 1.74 , $t(265) = 2.41$, $p < .01$).

There were no statistically significant differences between the age groups on the Parent-Child Emotional Closeness questionnaire. However, there were a few statistically significant differences revealed between the two grade levels on the depression/anxiety measure. Eleventh- and 12th-graders were found to be significantly more overtired

($\underline{M}$ = 1.31 vs. 1.63, t (268) = 3.29, $p < .001$), to have more colds or other illnesses ($\underline{M}$ = 2.75 vs. 3.19, t (268) = 3.98, $p < .001$), and to have experienced more times of feeling low or depressed ($\underline{M}$ = 2.11 vs. 2.46, t (267) = 2.42, $p < .05$), than had 10th-graders (see Table 7). Given that the grade level differences found between the students were not significant when analyzed by family structure, analyses of the research questions in the study were performed with all students across grade level.

In addition, t -tests were run to examine any differences between grade level and satisfaction with social support, and chi-square analyses were performed to investigate if there was a relationship between grade level and the availability of different types of social support. The t -test revealed no significant differences with satisfaction by grade level, however quite a few statistically significant results were revealed in regard to the availability of different types of social support. Tenth-graders found maternal relatives to be significantly more available than did 11th- and 12th-graders for 11 out of the 13 items on the social support measure, see Tables 8 - 11. In addition, 10th-graders found their mothers to be significantly more available as a source of social support for purchasing supplies for school, X^2 (1, N = 278) = 4.62, $p < .05$, and they reported that their teachers were significantly more available to tell them thoughtfully how they could improve in some way, X^2 (1, N = 278) = 5.38, $p < .05$. On the other hand, 11th- and 12th-grade adolescents found their fathers to be significantly more dependable, X^2 (1, N = 278) = 7.76, $p < .01$, revealed that their siblings were a more significant source available to them when they needed to get away from home, X^2 (1, N = 278) = 4.53, $p < .05$, and that their friends were a more significant source available to give them a ride, X^2 (1, N = 278) = 11.71, $p < .001$). These differences could be due to the fact that since 12th-graders are older, their friends are more likely to be able to drive, and their older siblings would be more likely to live away from home.

Table 7

Grade Level Differences in Depression/Anxiety

	Grade Level		
Anxiety/Depression Items	Tenth	Eleventh-Twelfth	t-ratio
Overtired			
<u>M</u>	1.63	1.31	3.29***
<u>SD</u>	0.87	0.68	
Colds/Illnesses			
<u>M</u>	3.19	2.75	3.98***
<u>SD</u>	0.83	0.98	
Low/Depressed			
<u>M</u>	2.46	2.11	2.42*
<u>SD</u>	1.17	1.14	
<u>n</u>	134	134	

* $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 8

Percentage of Adolescents by Grade Level Who Report the Availability of Esteem Social Support

Social Support Items	Grade Level		X^2 value
	Tenth	Eleventh-Twelfth	
Accepting			
Maternal Relative	37%	23%	6.36**
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	4%	23%	6.36**
Caring			
Maternal Relative	42%	23%	11.42***
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	5%	23%	24.13***
Helps you feel positive			
Maternal Relative	37%	24%	5.53*
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	4%	17%	19.22***
<u>n</u>	137	141	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 9

Percentage of Adolescents by Grade Level Who Report the Availability of Social
Companionship Social Support

Social Support Items	Grade Level		X^2 value
	Tenth	Eleventh-Twelfth	
Always dependable			
Dad	63%	78%	7.76**
Maternal Relative	37%	26%	4.42*
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	4%	22%	23.90***
Help you feel better			
Maternal Relative	26%	11%	9.92**
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	5%	23%	24.93***
Help you relax			
Maternal Relative	25%	11%	9.64**
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	5%	25%	23.37***
Offer comfort			
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	5%	24%	23.52***
<u>n</u>	137	141	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 10

Percentage of Adolescents by Grade Level Who Report the Availability of Instrumental Social Support

	Grade Level		
Social Support Items	Tenth	Eleventh-Twelfth	X^2 value
Offer money			
Maternal Relative	34%	20%	7.49*
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	3%	20%	22.95***
Offer a ride			
Friend	44%	64%	11.71***
Maternal Relative	40%	23%	9.64**
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	4%	20%	19.84***
Help purchase school supplies			
Mom	94%	87%	4.62*
Maternal Relative	23%	11%	7.23**
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	2%	9%	7.22*
Offer place to stay			
Sibling	12%	21%	4.53*
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	4%	19%	17.31**
<u>n</u>	137	141	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 11

Percentage of Adolescents by Grade Level Who Report the Availability of Informational Social Support

Social Support Items	Grade Level		X^2 value
	Tenth	Eleventh-Twelfth	
Offer helpful information			
Maternal Relative	36%	18%	11.57***
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	4%	19%	20.30***
Tell thoughtfully how to improve			
Teacher	19%	9%	5.38*
Maternal Relative	23%	11%	6.89**
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	3%	18%	5.38*
<u>n</u>	137	141	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Also statistically significant was the availability of "other" social support for all thirteen social support questions. The "other" category of social support that the adolescents listed consisted primarily of boyfriends or girlfriends, with the 11th- and 12th-graders reporting them as significantly more available than did the 10th-graders. Other sources were reported as social support, although rarely, and included people within the adolescents' religious context, counselors, cousins, or adult friends (such as a coach).

Research Question #1

Does the adjustment of adolescents in sole or joint custody arrangements differ from that of adolescents in intact family structures? It was hypothesized that joint custody arrangements would be associated with a healthier adjustment to divorce than would sole custody arrangements, and this was supported by some items in the analysis. In addition, it was hypothesized that the adjustment of adolescents from joint custody situations would be more closely proximate to that of adolescents from intact family structures, which was also supported by some of the items in this analysis.

Family Structure Differences in Adjustment

Analyses were performed to examine the relationship between family structure and all three adjustment measures. The results reveal that adolescents from intact family structures fare better than those in joint custody, and both fare better than adolescents in sole custody. Furthermore, adolescents from joint custody situations fared significantly better than adolescents from sole custody situations, especially in regard to the emotional closeness between the parent and adolescent. Overall, scores for the individual groups of family structure were rarely low, suggesting that, for the most part, adolescents from the three family structures were moderately to well adjusted. In addition, a non-significant trend was found throughout this analysis showing that joint custody adolescents'

adjustment was close to that of intact adolescents, with sole custody adolescents almost always reporting significantly lower adjustment than the intact or joint group.

Child Divorce Adjustment Inventory. A one-way analysis of variance and Duncan Multiple Range Tests were used to measure the three family structures as the independent variable and the adjustment items from the modified Child Divorce Adjustment Inventory as the dependent variables. Overall, adolescents from sole custody situations scored significantly lower than both the joint custody and intact groups of adolescents (see Table 12). Joint custody adolescents had significantly fewer problems in school than adolescents from sole custody arrangements, and felt their mothers understood them significantly more than adolescents from both sole custody arrangements and intact family structures. Adolescents from intact family structures felt that their parents got along and agreed on their behavior significantly more than adolescents did from the other two family structures. In addition, adolescents from intact family structures also felt that their mothers did not mind them spending time with their fathers and that they got along with their fathers' friends significantly more than did adolescents from sole custody arrangements.

However, sole custody adolescents and adolescents from intact family structures reported being significantly busier with school and church than joint custody adolescents, and sole custody adolescents reported that they spent significantly more time with their friends when comparing them to adolescents from intact family structures. One reason for this difference could be that adolescents from sole custody arrangements and intact family structures could find more time for school and church given that they do not have to transition between households. Unfortunately, this difference could also suggest that adolescents living in sole custody do not have someone at home with them that will spend time with them, so instead, they spend more time with school and church activities and friends. In a *t*-test performed to examine the differences between adolescents from the

Table 12

Family Structure and Adjustment as Measured by the Child Divorce Adjustment Inventory

Adjustment Items	Family Structure			F Value
	Sole	Joint	Intact	
No problems in school				
<u>M</u>	3.09a	3.72b	3.41ab	2.54
<u>SD</u>	(1.37)	(1.33)	(1.23)	
Spend time with friends				
<u>M</u>	4.36a	4.27ab	4.13b	3.23*
<u>SD</u>	(0.64)	(0.53)	(0.58)	
Mom understands me				
<u>M</u>	2.58a	3.41b	2.90a	4.22*
<u>SD</u>	(1.17)	(1.30)	(1.24)	
Parents get along				
<u>M</u>	2.70a	3.13a	4.17b	34.04***
<u>SD</u>	(1.49)	(1.36)	(1.03)	
Busy with school/church				
<u>M</u>	2.91a	1.97b	3.11a	8.09***
<u>SD</u>	(1.56)	(1.09)	(1.43)	
Parents agree on my behavior				
<u>M</u>	2.89a	3.17a	3.72b	13.09***
<u>SD</u>	(1.11)	(1.28)	(1.04)	

Table 12 (continued)

Adjustment Items	Family Structure			<u>F</u> Value
	Sole	Joint	Intact	
Mom is fine when I am with Dad				
<u>M</u>	4.07a	4.34ab	4.59b	6.13*
<u>SD</u>	(1.13)	(1.08)	(0.76)	
Get along with Dad's friends				
<u>M</u>	3.53a	3.86ab	4.00b	3.69*
<u>SD</u>	(1.25)	(1.16)	(0.95)	
<u>n</u>	47	29	192	

Note. Values sharing no common subscripts differ significantly ($p < .05$) by Duncan Multiple Range Tests.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

two types of custody arrangements, it was revealed that adolescents from sole custody arrangements perceived their mothers to criticize them significantly more ($M = 3.33$, $t(74) = 2.00$, $p < .05$), than did adolescents living in joint custody arrangements ($M = 3.97$).

Parent-Child Emotional Closeness Questionnaire. To further explore the possibility of differences in adjustment based on family structure, a series of one-way ANOVAs and Duncan Multiple Range Tests were performed to examine the relationship between the three levels of family structure as an independent variable and emotional closeness as indexed by the items on the Modified Parent-Child Emotional Closeness Questionnaire as the dependent variables. The results revealed that adolescents from joint family structures agreed that they were closer to both of their parents significantly more than did adolescents from either a sole custody or intact family structure (see Table 13). For instance, joint custody adolescents reported getting along with and feeling affection from their mothers and fathers significantly more often than did adolescents from sole custody arrangements. In addition, joint custody adolescents felt that they could talk openly with their mother, and talk to her about their father significantly more than did sole custody adolescents. Joint custody adolescents also felt that they could admit their doubts and fears to their mothers significantly more than adolescents from intact family structures.

The significant differences found among family structures could be due to the difference in the adolescents' relationship with their parents. Joint custody adolescents are able to spend time alone with each parent without interference from the other. In addition, they have all gone through the experience of the divorce together and were able to maintain a relationship throughout. Another reason adolescents from joint custody arrangements might be closer to each of their parents could be related to parental effort. Since they only see one another for the amount of time that their visitation is scheduled,

Table 13

Family Structure and Parent-Child Emotional Closeness

Adjustment Items	Family Structure			<u>F</u> Value
	Sole	Joint	Intact	
Get along with mom				
<u>M</u>	3.76a	4.31b	4.24b	5.20**
<u>SD</u>	1.14	0.97	0.85	
Get along with dad				
<u>M</u>	3.34a	4.07b	3.98b	7.09**
<u>SD</u>	1.33	1.03	0.97	
Talk openly with mom				
<u>M</u>	3.13a	4.14b	3.52ab	5.69**
<u>SD</u>	1.26	0.95	1.26	
Can talk about dad with mom				
<u>M</u>	2.82a	3.52b	3.08ab	2.69
<u>SD</u>	1.35	1.24	1.24	
Can admit doubts/fears to mom				
<u>M</u>	3.55ab	4.10a	3.38b	4.87**
<u>SD</u>	1.14	0.98	1.27	
Mom shows affection for me				
<u>M</u>	4.00a	4.52b	4.33b	3.77*
<u>SD</u>	1.04	0.74	0.75	

Table 13 (continued)

Adjustment Items	Family Structure			<u>F</u> Value
	Sole	Joint	Intact	
Dad shows affection for me				
<u>M</u>	3.35a	4.34b	4.11b	11.85***
<u>SD</u>	1.42	0.86	0.95	
<u>n</u>	47	29	192	

Note. Values sharing no common subscripts differ significantly ($p < .05$) by Duncan Multiple Range Tests.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

the parents may put a higher degree of effort and time into their visit with their teenager.

This might result in a stronger bond between these adolescents and their parents.

Regardless, joint custody adolescents' relationship with their parents is quite different from the relationships that adolescents from sole and intact family structures have with their parents.

Depression/Anxiety Scale. In order to complete the analysis of the adolescents' overall social and emotional adjustment, one-way ANOVAs and Duncan Multiple Range Tests were used to examine the relationship between adolescents' family structure (the independent variable) and their responses to the items from the modified Depression/Anxiety Scale as the dependent variables. Only two significant differences were found. The intact students, when compared to the adolescents living in sole custody experienced significantly fewer stomach aches ($M = 2.61$ vs. 2.15 , respectively, $F(2, 267) = 3.45$, $p < .05$). Both adolescents living in joint custody and adolescents living in intact structures, had significantly less trouble sleeping than did the adolescents living in sole custody arrangements ($M = 2.86$ and 2.72 vs. 2.24 , respectively, $F(2, 267) = 3.56$, $p < .05$). The small number of significant differences between family structures on the depression and anxiety scale suggests that divorce did not significantly contribute to adolescents' anxiety or depression in this study.

Adolescents' feelings of being caught between parents. In order to determine if adolescents involved in custody arrangements felt as if they were caught in the middle of their parents, t -tests were performed using type of custody (sole versus joint) as the independent variable and the items from the Feelings of Being Caught Between Parents measure used as the dependent variables. This analysis revealed a statistically significant difference between adolescents in joint and sole custody situations and the frequency in which one of their parents asks them to carry messages to the other parent. Joint custody

adolescents reported that they had to carry messages significantly more often from their mother to their father, $t(29) = 2.00, p < .05$, as well as from their father to their mother, $t(29) = 3.15, p < .01$, than did adolescents from sole custody arrangements. This difference is probably due to the fact that these adolescents transition between households more often than adolescents in sole custody do, and thus, are more involved in carrying messages back and forth. However, the means for the joint custody adolescents were quite low ($M = 2.00$ vs. 1.59, and 2.00 vs. 1.41, respectively) signifying that their parents only asked them to carry messages once in a while.

Parental agreement. Another way to examine whether adolescents might be feeling caught between their parents is to look at the extent to which their parents agree on time spent with their child, rules, discipline, privileges, and how much money the adolescents should have. The items from the Parental Agreement Measure were used as the dependent variables in this t -test. Only two statistically significant differences were revealed between the joint and sole custody adolescents. Joint custody adolescents reported that their parents were significantly more likely to agree on rules ($M = 3.38$ vs. 2.58, $t(29) = 2.40, p < .05$), and privileges ($M = 3.14$ vs. 2.44, $t(29) = 2.07, p < .05$), than were sole custody adolescents' parents.

The small number of statistically significant differences between joint and sole custody adolescents and the items from these two measures suggests that the adolescents in this study did not feel caught between their parents. One possible reason for this could be that the parents involved in joint custody arrangements were not involved in conflict before the divorce, and thus were more responsive to a joint custody arrangement. However, since adolescents from both groups of custody arrangement did not report statistically significant differences, this implies that the adolescents may not have been exposed to a lot of parental conflict in either situation.

Research Question #2

Do the sources of social support or adolescents' satisfaction with social support differ between adolescents in different family structures? It was hypothesized that adolescents from intact family structures or those who are involved in joint custody situations would have more sources of social support, and thus, would feel greater satisfaction in regard to the social support available to them. This hypothesis was supported in the analysis, specifically in regard to the availability of the adolescents' mothers and fathers as sources of social support.

Family Structure and Sources of and Satisfaction with Social Support

In order to examine the relationship between family structure and adolescents' perceived amount of and satisfaction with social support, one-way ANOVAs and Duncan Multiple Range Tests were performed, as well as chi-squares. Family structure was used as the independent variable and the social support variables were used as dependent variables within each analysis.

In order to examine the relationship between the family structure the adolescents lived in and who was available to them to offer different types of social support (e.g., esteem, social companionship, instrumental, and informational social support), chi-square analyses were performed. The results are broken down into the different types of social support and who was reported to be available for these types of social support based on family structure. Stepparents were excluded from this analysis.

Sources of esteem social support. Esteem support is the type of support one needs to feel valued and accepted despite any perceived faults an individual feels he or she may have. In this research study, three specific questions were asked in regard to esteem support centering on feeling accepted, feeling cared about, and feeling that one has something positive to offer to others. Mothers and fathers were found to be significantly

more available to adolescents within the intact family group and within the joint custody group when compared to sole custody adolescents (see Table 14). Although not significantly different, adolescents from each type of family structure looked to their friends quite often for esteem social support. Siblings, maternal and paternal relatives were also considered as a source of esteem support, but not as much as mothers, fathers, or friends. Throughout most of this analysis, joint custody adolescents' perceived availability of esteem social support was most similar to adolescents from intact family structure.

Sources of social companionship social support. Social Companionship support occurs when one's need for affiliation, contact, and belonging are met. Four specific questions were designed to measure social companionship support. Students were asked about which individuals they could depend on, who would help them to become relaxed, feel better, or offer comfort. Significant family structure differences emerged for each of these questions. Again mothers and fathers were significantly more available in the joint and intact adolescent groups (as can be seen in Table 15). In this analysis, paternal relatives were perceived to be significantly more dependable, and siblings were found to be significantly more available to offer comfort for joint and intact adolescents. In addition, in a chi-square analysis examining differences between adolescents of different custody arrangements, sole custody adolescents found their friends to be significantly more dependable than joint custody adolescents did, $\chi^2 (1, n = 76) = 3.96, p < .05$.

Throughout this analysis, joint custody adolescents' perceived availability of social companionship social support was similar to that of adolescents from intact family structures. Occasionally, joint custody adolescents reported specific sources of social support to a higher degree, such as mothers and father for helping them feel better, than did adolescents living in intact family structures. Furthermore, friends were reported to be

Table 14

Percentage of Adolescents by Family Structure Who Report the Availability of Esteem
Social Support

	Family Structure			
Social Support Items	Sole	Joint	Intact	X^2 value
Accepting				
Dad	66%	68%	72%	10.81**
Mom	70%	83%	81%	2.79
Sibling	45%	45%	55%	2.39
Friend	70%	69%	77%	1.58
Maternal Relative	21%	24%	33%	2.91
Paternal Relative	15%	21%	29%	4.15
Teacher	15%	10%	10%	0.98
Caring				
Dad	43%	79%	83%	33.24***
Mom	71%	90%	93%	13.03**
Sibling	43%	52%	58%	3.64
Friend	70%	70%	68%	0.07
Maternal Relative	26%	31%	34%	1.38
Paternal Relative	15%	24%	30%	4.63
Teacher	6%	0%	6%	1.82

Table 14 (continued)

	Family Structure			
Social Support Items	Sole	Joint	Intact	χ^2 value
Helps you feel positive				
Dad	34%	72%	67%	19.88**
Mom	64%	90%	78%	7.13*
Sibling	26%	24%	38%	4.14
Friend	51%	66%	66%	3.50
Maternal Relative	23%	28%	33%	1.70
Paternal Relative	13%	14%	25%	4.41
Teacher	17%	24%	25%	1.30
<u>n</u>	47	29	192	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 15

Percentage of Adolescents by Family Structure Who Report the Availability of Social
Companionship Social Support

	Family Structure			
Social Support Items	Sole	Joint	Intact	X^2 value
Always dependable				
Dad	43%	76%	76%	20.73***
Mom	57%	76%	86%	19.37***
Sibling	43%	38%	55%	4.68
Friend	85%	66%	72%	4.34
Maternal Relative	28%	31%	32%	0.30
Paternal Relative	11%	17%	27%	6.01*
Teacher	11%	7%	14%	1.18
Help you feel better				
Dad	15%	45%	43%	13.10***
Mom	28%	72%	55%	16.69***
Sibling	23%	41%	39%	4.34
Friend	81%	76%	81%	0.42
Maternal Relative	21%	17%	18%	0.30
Paternal Relative	9%	7%	13%	1.54
Teacher	9%	4%	4%	1.62

Table 15 (continued)

	Family Structure			
Social Support Items	Sole	Joint	Intact	χ^2 value
Help you relax				
Dad	19%	31%	45%	11.68**
Mom	26%	59%	56%	14.61***
Sibling	23%	21%	34%	3.63
Friend	83%	73%	80%	1.27
Maternal Relative	21%	7%	18%	2.81
Paternal Relative	11%	0%	13%	4.38
Teacher	9%	0%	5%	2.83
Offer comfort				
Dad	26%	24%	44%	7.86*
Mom	36%	76%	63%	15.04***
Sibling	17%	24%	36%	6.81*
Friend	68%	59%	69%	1.15
Maternal Relative	23%	14%	16%	1.63
Paternal Relative	9%	0%	12%	3.90
Teacher	4%	3%	5%	0.10
<u>n</u>	47	29	192	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

helpful for adolescents from each family structure throughout this analysis. Siblings, maternal and paternal relatives, and teachers were also available at times.

Sources of instrumental social support. Instrumental support was the third type of social support investigated in this research. This type of support occurs when someone helps with financial or material means, such as money for school or rides to the airport. Four questions examined instrumental social support focusing on offering a ride to the airport, money for concert or movie tickets, purchasing supplies for school, or to offer a place to stay away from home. Once again, significant differences were noted among the levels of family structure (see Table 16). Mothers and fathers were again listed as the primary sources of social support. The percentages of adolescents from joint and intact family structures reporting the availability of instrumental social support were quite similar, and significantly greater than sole custody adolescents on all items except for the item about having a place to stay away from home. The responses on this item were low for intact adolescents, obviously because both of their parents are at home with them. Once again, as with the other types of social support, responses from joint custody adolescents were more similar to adolescents from intact family structures, than to those from sole custody arrangements. In addition, friends were perceived to be more available than siblings, maternal or paternal relatives, and teachers. However, all sources provided some instrumental social support, only to a lesser degree.

Sources of informational social support. Finally, information social support was the fourth type of social support examined in this research. Information support consists of someone helping an individual understand something or helping to clarify or define an issue. Two specific questions were asked in regard to whom someone could ask for helpful information, or who could tell them thoughtfully how they needed to improve in some way. Once again, significant family structure differences were found for each

Table 16

Percentage of Adolescents by Family Structure Who Report the Availability of
Instrumental Social Support

	Family Structure			
Social Support Items	Sole	Joint	Intact	X^2 value
Offer money				
Dad	36%	83%	80%	46.33***
Mom	55%	83%	88%	27.31***
Sibling	26%	31%	42%	5.34
Friend	49%	52%	55%	0.95
Maternal Relative	26%	28%	27%	0.46
Paternal Relative	13%	17%	23%	3.12
Teacher	2%	0%	2%	0.97
Offer a ride				
Dad	34%	83%	86%	66.50***
Mom	55%	79%	90%	32.66***
Sibling	26%	21%	31%	1.71
Friend	66%	52%	51%	3.53
Maternal Relative	34%	31%	30%	0.26
Paternal Relative	17%	7%	22%	3.88
Teacher	4%	0%	2%	2.11

Table 16 (continued)

	Family Structure			
Social Support Items	Sole	Joint	Intact	X^2 value
Help purchase school supplies				
Dad	38%	83%	86%	49.31***
Mom	72%	80%	97%	31.83***
Sibling	15%	7%	18%	2.45
Friend	13%	14%	17%	0.52
Maternal Relative	13%	17%	17%	0.55
Paternal Relative	6%	3%	11%	2.26
Teacher	0%	0%	2%	1.61
Offer place to stay				
Dad	19%	31%	4%	28.29***
Mom	15%	28%	5%	16.62***
Sibling	21%	17%	16%	0.78
Friend	83%	83%	78%	0.50
Maternal Relative	34%	45%	42%	1.16
Paternal Relative	11%	21%	35%	11.87**
Teacher	4%	7%	2%	2.26
<u>n</u>	47	29	192	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

question (see Table 17). Joint and intact adolescents were similar and significantly higher in their ratings of the availability of their mothers and fathers for this type of social support. However, sole custody adolescents were similar to intact adolescents when reporting the availability of a friend for helpful information and significantly higher than adolescents from joint custody arrangements. This could be due to joint custody adolescents' time being consumed with their transitions between households, leaving them less time for friends than adolescents who do not need to transition from one household to the other.

As with the other types of social support, friends were considered to be available for most of the adolescents in this study. Maternal and paternal relatives were also reported to be available for informational social support. However, the students' perceived availability of teachers as a form of social support was found to be highest for informational social support when compared to the other types.

Furthermore, as with the items measuring social support for esteem, few respondents listed anyone else as providing informational social support. For those that did, they primarily listed boyfriends or girlfriends as a source of informational social support. However, none of these were statistically significant in this analysis.

Satisfaction with social support. In order to investigate whether there were family structure differences in adolescents' satisfaction with social support, ANOVAs and Duncan Multiple Range Tests were run with family structure as the independent variable and satisfaction with the different types of social support as the dependent variables. These analyses revealed that adolescents from both joint and intact family structures were significantly more satisfied with two aspects of social support, one within esteem social support, the other within instrumental social support, than were adolescents from sole custody arrangements (see Tables 18 - 21).

Table 17

Percentage of Adolescents by Family Structure Who Report the Availability of Information Social Support

	Family Structure			
Social Support Items	Sole	Joint	Intact	X^2 value
Offer helpful information				
Dad	38%	76%	69%	17.16***
Mom	51%	86%	75%	13.98***
Sibling	36%	31%	42%	1.46
Friend	70%	45%	70%	7.36*
Maternal Relative	26%	21%	27%	0.54
Paternal Relative	9%	17%	21%	4.15
Teacher	26%	17%	35%	0.25
Tell thoughtfully how to improve				
Dad	40%	69%	60%	7.32*
Mom	57%	69%	75%	6.07*
Sibling	30%	21%	35%	2.37
Friend	64%	55%	55%	1.36
Maternal Relative	17%	14%	18%	0.29
Paternal Relative	11%	4%	13%	2.12
Teacher	13%	7%	15%	1.51
<u>n</u>	47	29	192	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 18

Family Structure and Satisfaction with Esteem Social Support

Family Structure				
Social Support Items	Sole	Joint	Intact	<u>F</u> Values
Accepting				
<u>M</u>	5.09a	5.41ab	5.43b	2.62
<u>SD</u>	(1.02)	(0.98)	(0.89)	
Caring				
<u>M</u>	5.24a	5.66b	5.52b	3.31*
<u>SD</u>	(0.74)	(0.48)	(0.78)	
Helps you feel positive				
<u>M</u>	5.30a	5.66a	5.35a	1.33
<u>SD</u>	(1.00)	(0.67)	(1.06)	
<u>n</u>	47	29	192	

Note. Values sharing no common subscripts differ significantly ($p < .05$) by Duncan Multiple Range Tests.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 19

Family Structure and Satisfaction with Social Companionship Support

Social Support Items	Family Structure			<u>F</u> Values
	Sole	Joint	Intact	
Always dependable				
<u>M</u>	5.13a	5.56b	5.41b	2.72
<u>SD</u>	(0.99)	(0.57)	(0.82)	
Help you feel better				
<u>M</u>	5.22a	5.38a	5.39a	0.55
<u>SD</u>	(0.89)	(1.18)	(0.97)	
Help you relax				
<u>M</u>	5.30a	5.31a	5.25a	0.08
<u>SD</u>	(0.78)	(1.11)	(0.95)	
Offer comfort				
<u>M</u>	5.36a	5.04a	5.29a	0.75
<u>SD</u>	(0.80)	(1.51)	(1.13)	
<u>n</u>	47	29	192	

Note. Values sharing no common subscripts differ significantly ($p < .05$) by Duncan Multiple Range Tests.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 20

Family Structure and Satisfaction with Instrumental Support

Family Structure				
Social Support Items	Sole	Joint	Intact	<u>F</u> Values
Offer money				
<u>M</u>	5.17a	5.49ab	5.48b	2.57
<u>SD</u>	(0.87)	(0.83)	(0.88)	
Offer a ride				
<u>M</u>	5.41a	5.66a	5.62a	1.42
<u>SD</u>	(0.80)	(0.86)	(0.78)	
Help purchase school supplies				
<u>M</u>	5.16a	5.75b	5.61b	5.47**
<u>SD</u>	(1.00)	(0.44)	(0.91)	
Offer place to stay				
<u>M</u>	5.50a	5.21a	5.28a	0.95
<u>SD</u>	(0.78)	(1.40)	(1.06)	
<u>n</u>	47	29	192	

Note. Values sharing no common subscripts differ significantly ($p < .05$) by Duncan Multiple Range Tests.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 21

Family Structure and Satisfaction with Informational Support

	Family Structure			
Social Support Items	Sole	Joint	Intact	<u>F</u> Values
Offer helpful information				
<u>M</u>	5.38a	5.59a	5.41a	0.62
<u>SD</u>	(0.65)	(0.87)	(0.89)	
Tell thoughtfully how to improve				
<u>M</u>	5.13a	5.21a	5.27a	0.36
<u>SD</u>	(0.88)	(1.45)	(1.00)	
<u>n</u>	47	29	192	

Note. Values sharing no common subscripts differ significantly ($p < .05$) by Duncan Multiple Range Tests.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Joint custody adolescents and adolescents living in intact family structures felt that they were more satisfied with the type of social support where people let them know they are cared about, esteem social support ($M = 5.66$ vs. 5.52), as well as those helping them purchases school supplies, instrumental social support ($M = 5.75$ vs. 5.61), significantly more than did adolescents from sole custody arrangements did ($M = 5.24$ and 5.16 , respectively).

Although only two significant differences were found in the ANOVAS, Duncan Multiple Range Tests revealed several additional statistically significant differences in satisfaction with social support between levels of family structure at the .05 level (as indicated in Tables 18-21). Adolescents from intact family structures reported significantly greater satisfaction with acceptance social support ($M = 5.43$) and for the item of social support where financial assistance was offered for movie or concert tickets ($M = 5.48$) within the esteem and instrumental types of social support, than did adolescents from sole custody arrangements ($M = 5.09$ and 5.17). In addition, adolescents from both joint custody ($M = 5.56$) and intact family structures (5.41) reported significantly greater satisfaction with dependable social support (social companionship) than did adolescents from sole custody arrangements ($M = 5.13$).

Although joint custody adolescents were not always significantly different from adolescents within the other two family structures, the means for joint custody adolescents appeared to be moving in the same direction as did the means for the adolescents from intact family structures. Furthermore, each of the means within this analysis were above 5.00, indicating high satisfaction for social support items within each level of family structure, suggesting an overall positive satisfaction rating for social support regardless of family structure.

Research Question #3

Are higher levels of social support satisfaction associated with better adjustment to divorce? It was hypothesized that the more satisfied adolescents from divorced family structures were with their social support, the better their adjustment would be to the stress which could have been caused by divorce. In order to examine the hypothesis, Pearson product-moment correlations were performed between satisfaction with social support and the adjustment measures for all divorced adolescents (e.g., those from both sole and joint custody family structures). Results revealed that the hypothesis was supported by the significant positive correlations found between divorced adolescents' satisfaction with social support and specific items from the adjustment measures.

Satisfaction with Social Support and Items from the Child Divorce Adjustment Inventory

Specific Pearson product-moment correlation analyses revealed positive relationships between divorced adolescents' satisfaction with social support and some of the adjustment items. The results were broken down and compared based on types of social support and those adjustment items that were found to be significantly different between family structures in the main analyses of this study. However, additional adjustment items were also examined because of their inter-relatedness to significant items. For example, the item about an adolescents' mother understanding him or her was found to be significant in the analyses investigating differences in adjustment based on family structure, and thus was included in this analysis. The item investigating adolescents' fathers understanding him or her was added into this analysis because of its similarity to the first question about mothers, even though it was not found to be significant in the analysis which examined adjustment based on family structure.

Adjustment and satisfaction with esteem social support. Statistically significant positive correlations were found between divorced adolescents' satisfaction with different

types of social support and some adjustment items (see Table 22). Adjustment items that involved aspects of adolescents' parents were especially associated with the adolescents' satisfaction with their social support. For instance, the adjustment items about divorced adolescents' fathers understanding them ($r = .35, p < .01$) and that their parents get along ($r = .29, p < .01$) were correlated positively with the divorced adolescents' satisfaction with caring social support (an element of esteem support). This suggests that the more adolescents are satisfied with this type of support, the more likely they are to feel that their fathers understand them and that their parents get along.

Significant positive correlations were also found between divorced adolescents' satisfaction with accepting social support and the adjustment item which states that their mothers and fathers are fine when they spend time with the other parent ($r = .28$ and $.29, p < .01$, respectively). The divorced adolescents' ability to get along with their fathers' friends ($r = .34, p < .01$) was also found to be significantly and positively associated with their satisfaction with esteem social support. These results suggest that divorced adolescents who feel that their parents do not mind them spending time with one another, or those who get along with their fathers' friends, are more satisfied with esteem social support.

Adjustment and satisfaction with social companionship support. Similar results were found in the correlations between the adjustment items and divorced adolescents' satisfaction with social companionship social support (see Table 23). Adolescents' satisfaction with social companionship support that helped them with their ability to feel relaxed, feel better, or where comfort was offered was significantly and positively associated with having no problems in school ($r = .26, .25, .26, p < .05$).

Table 22

Correlations Between Sole and Joint Custody Adolescents' Satisfaction with Esteem
Social Support and Specific Items from the Child Divorce Adjustment Inventory (n = 76)

Adjustment Items	Social Support Satisfaction		
	Accepting	Caring	Help you feel positive
No problems in school	.17	.20	.11
Spend time with friends	-.03	-.06	-.02
Mom understands me	.06	.14	-.00
Dad understands me	.21	.35**	.17
Parents get along	.20	.16	.10
Busy with school/church	-.04	.14	-.06
Parents agree on my behavior	.10	.29**	.18
Mom is fine when I'm with Dad	.28**	.11	.18
Dad is fine when I'm with Mom	.29**	.13	-.00
Get along with Dad's friends	.34**	.22	.08
Get along with Mom's friends	-.01	-.06	.05

**p < .05.

Table 23

Correlations Between Sole and Joint Custody Adolescents' Satisfaction with Social
Companionship Social Support and Specific Items from the Child Divorce Adjustment
Inventory (n = 76)

Adjustment Items	Social Support Satisfaction			
	Always dependable	Help you relax	Help you feel better	Offer comfort
No problems in school	.17	.26*	.25*	.26*
Spend time with friends	-.00	.04	.02	.01
Mom understands me	.02	.09	-.07	-.17
Dad understands me	.19	.11	-.03	-.06
Parents get along	.23	.11	.07	.04
Busy with school/church	-.06	.20	.00	.09
Parents agree on my behavior	.14	.11	.05	.05
Mom is fine when I'm with Dad	.24*	.07	.09	-.04
Dad is fine when I'm with Mom	.29**	.18	.14	.02
Get along with Dad's friends	.15	.16	.25*	.11
Get along with Mom's friends	.19	-.05	-.01	.11

*p < .05. **p < .05.

Adjustment and satisfaction with instrumental social support. In this analysis, similar positive correlations were revealed (see Table 24). All but one item were related to the adolescents' parents understanding them or getting along or the divorced adolescents' ability to get along with their parents' friends. The item not directly related to parents was related to school. A significant positive relationship was revealed between divorced adolescents who were satisfied with instrumental social support (specifically help to purchase concert or movie tickets) and not having problems in school ($r = .25$, $p < .05$).

Adjustment and satisfaction with informational social support. Three significant results were found in this analysis (see Table 25). The results revealed a positive relationship between divorced adolescents' satisfaction with informational social support (where available sources are able to thoughtfully tell the adolescents how they could improve) and whether adolescents felt that they got along with their fathers, that their parents got along, or that they got along with their fathers' friends ($r = .26, .25, .25$, $p < .05$, respectively). No significant results were found between divorced adolescents' satisfaction with helpful information and specific adjustment items.

Satisfaction with Social Support and Parent-Child Emotional Closeness

Pearson product-moment correlations were also performed between the divorced adolescents' satisfaction with the four types of social support and the second adjustment measure, the modified Parent-Child Emotional Closeness Measure. This analysis revealed that many items within the adjustment measure were positively and significantly associated with the divorced adolescents' satisfaction with each type of social support (see Tables 26 - 29). The results from this analysis suggest that the more satisfied the adolescents are with their social support, the more divorced adolescents feel that they get along with their respective parents, can talk openly with them, can talk about the other parent with them,

Table 24

Correlations Between Sole and Joint Custody Adolescents' Satisfaction with Instrumental Social Support and Specific Items from the Child Divorce Adjustment Inventory (n = 76)

Adjustment Items	Social Support Satisfaction			
	Offer money	Offer ride	Offer place to stay	Offer to purchase school supplies
No problems in school	.25*	.20	.16	.21
Spend time with friends	.17	.15	.05	-.05
Mom understands me	.02	-.03	-.12	.02
Dad understands me	.29*	.20	.03	.27*
Parents get along	.27*	.25*	.15	.16
Busy with school/church	-.06	.01	.09	-.05
Parents agree on my behavior	.22	.10	.10	.15
Mom is fine when I'm with Dad	.22	.15	.08	.30*
Dad is fine when I'm with Mom	.09	.10	.04	.07
Get along with Dad's friends	.24*	.21	.22	.12
Get along with Mom's friends	.15	.24*	.00	.08

*p < .05.

Table 25

Correlations Between Sole and Joint Custody Adolescents' Satisfaction with Informational Social Support and Specific Items from the Child Divorce Adjustment Inventory (n = 76)

Adjustment Items	Social Support Satisfaction	
	Offer helpful information	Tell thoughtfully how to improve
No problems in school	.03	.00
Spend time with friends	.11	-.02
Mom understands me	.04	.02
Dad understands me	.22	.26*
Parents get along	.19	.25*
Busy with school/church	.09	.12
Parents agree on my behavior	.21	.19
Mom is fine when I'm with Dad	.15	.20
Dad is fine when I'm with Mom	.18	.13
Get along with Dad's friends	.14	.25*
Get along with Mom's friends	-.00	-.01

*p < .05.

Table 26

Correlations Between Sole and Joint Custody Adolescents' Satisfaction with Esteem
Social Support and the Parent-Child Emotional Closeness Measure (n = 76)

Adjustment Items	Social Support Satisfaction		
	Accepting	Caring	Help you feel positive
Get along well with mom	.17	.29**	.29**
Get along well with dad	.08	.28*	.08
Talk openly with mom	.18	.44***	.32**
Talk openly with dad	.16	.31**	.25*
Can talk about dad with mom	.14	.15*	.11
Can talk about mom with dad	.26*	.20	.18
Can admit doubts/fears to mom	.09	.23*	.11
Can admit doubts/fears to dad	.26*	.44***	.22
Mom shows affection to me	.15	.20	.25*
Dad shows affection to me	.16	.35**	.15

*p < .05. **p < .05. ***p < .001.

Table 27

Correlations Between Sole and Joint Adolescents' Satisfaction with Social Companionship
Social Support and the Parent-Child Emotional Closeness Measure ($n = 76$)

Adjustment Items	Social Support Satisfaction			
	Always dependable	Help you relax	Help you feel better	Offer comfort
Get along well with mom	.39***	.10	.14	.03
Get along well with dad	.11	-.01	.11	.08
Talk openly with mom	.21	.29**	.16	.04
Talk openly with dad	.18	.13	.21	.24*
Can talk about dad with mom	.03	.08	-.01	-.06
Can talk about mom with dad	.21	-.00	.07	.10
Can admit doubts/fears to mom	.20	.26*	.20	.17
Can admit doubts/fears to dad	.17	.29**	.24*	.19
Mom shows affection to me	.20	.08	.19	.15
Dad shows affection to me	.12	.15	.22	.14

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 28

Correlations Between Sole and Joint Custody Adolescents' Satisfaction with Instrumental Social Support and the Parent-Child Emotional Closeness Measure ($n = 76$)

Adjustment Items	Social Support Satisfaction			
	Offer money	Offer ride	Offer place to stay	Offer to purchase school supplies
Get along well with mom	.27*	.38**	.11	.30**
Get along well with dad	.22	.15	-.02	.07
Talk openly with mom	.28**	.29**	.15	.36**
Talk openly with dad	.25*	.24*	.21	.18
Can talk about dad with mom	.23*	.06	.03	.19
Can talk about mom with dad	.26*	.14	.09	.21
Can admit doubts/fears to mom	.13	.25*	.17	.21
Can admit doubts/fears to dad	.20	.16	.27*	.22
Mom shows affection to me	.28*	.35**	.14	.35**
Dad shows affection to me	.26*	.14	.12	.20

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$.

Table 29

Correlations Between Sole and Joint Custody Adolescents' Satisfaction with Informational Social Support and the Parent-Child Emotional Closeness Measure (n = 76)

Adjustment Items	Social Support Satisfaction	
	Offer helpful information	Tell thoughtfully how to improve
Get along well with mom	.20	.22
Get along well with dad	.18	.25*
Talk openly with mom	.32**	.32**
Talk openly with dad	.32**	.28*
Can talk about dad with mom	.13	.14
Can talk about mom with dad	.16	.17
Can admit doubts/fears to mom	.28*	.22
Can admit doubts/fears to dad	.26*	.33*
Mom shows affection to me	.32**	.23*
Dad shows affection to me	.12	.24*

*p < .05. **p < .05.

can admit their doubts and fears to them, and feel that their mother and father likes them.

Satisfaction with Social Support and Depression/Anxiety

A final analysis was conducted in order to completely examine the divorced adolescents' overall adjustment and its relation to their satisfaction with social support. Another series of Pearson product-moment correlations were performed with the divorced adolescents' satisfaction with each type of social support and the Depression/Anxiety scale. Significant positive correlations were found between some of the items on the scale and the adolescents' satisfaction with social support (see Tables 30 - 33). It is important to remember that in this analysis, a higher number represents a positive response to the item. For example, the higher the number is for the item of "overtired," the less overtired the adolescent reports to be.

Eight out of the 15 depression and anxiety items on the Depression/Anxiety scale were significantly and positively related to the adolescents' satisfaction with social support. Specifically, items such as nervousness, depression, irritability, and feeling bored or alone were consistently associated with divorced adolescents' satisfaction with the four types of social support. Physical symptoms of depression or anxiety that were found to be associated with these adolescents' satisfaction with social support consisted of stomach aches, colds, physical injury, trouble sleeping, and loss of appetite.

The results revealed a positive relationship showing that adolescents who are more satisfied with their social support do not feel as nervous, worried, low, depressed, tense, irritable, or alone as others. Furthermore, the results also reveal that the greater the adolescents' satisfaction was with social support, fewer physical symptoms of depression and anxiety were reported.

Table 30

Correlations Between Sole and Joint Custody Adolescents' Satisfaction with Esteem
Social Support and the Depression/Anxiety Scale (n = 76)

Adjustment Items	Social Support Satisfaction		
	Accepting	Caring	Help you feel positive
Overtired	.11	.16	.10
Headache	.16	.12	.07
Stomach ache	.29**	.22	-.04
Cold or other illness	.16	.24*	.22
Physical injury	.23*	-.09	.07
Nervous or worried	.17	.31**	.15
Low or depressed	.36***	.22	.20
Tense or irritable	.32**	.29**	.19
Skin problems	.06	.17	-.02
Trouble sleeping	.05	.08	.09
Lost appetite	.05	.09	.08
Felt apart or alone	.21	.14	.17
Eat too much	.03	.11	-.00
Bored	.23*	.03	.17
Think about running away	.02	.12	-.09

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 31

Correlations Between Sole and Joint Custody Adolescents' Satisfaction with Social
Companionship Social Support and the Depression/Anxiety Scale (n = 76)

Adjustment Items	Social Support Satisfaction			
	Always dependable	Help you relax	Help you feel better	Offer comfort
Overtired	.18	.17	.02	.09
Headache	.18	.20	.10	-.02
Stomach ache	.13	.16	.13	.16
Cold or other illness	.21	.14	.22	.24*
Physical injury	.06	.27*	.18	.10
Nervous or worried	.15	.10	.22	.31**
Low or depressed	.21	.19	.19	.19**
Tense or irritable	.23*	.24*	.26*	.32**
Skin problems	-.00	.07	-.08	-.09
Trouble sleeping	.11	.13	.20	.30**
Lost appetite	.05	.08	.17	.21
Felt apart or alone	.11	.31**	.37***	.23
Eat too much	.03	-.12	-.08	-.12
Bored	.12	.10	.14	.33**
Think about running away	.01	-.13	-.11	-.14

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 32

Correlations Between Sole and Joint Custody Adolescents' Satisfaction with Instrumental Social Support and the Depression/Anxiety Scale (n = 76)

Adjustment Items	Social Support Satisfaction			
	Offer money	Offer ride	Offer place to stay	Offer to purchase school supplies
Overtired	.20	.13	.13	.23
Headache	.21	.23*	.22	.22
Stomach ache	.00	.07	.11	.13
Cold or other illness	.28*	.28*	.12	.37***
Physical injury	.05	.03	.00	.06
Nervous or worried	.24*	.21	.28*	.31**
Low or depressed	.27*	.25*	.29**	.32**
Tense or irritable	.25*	.30**	.35**	.31**
Skin problems	.03	-.03	-.13	-.10
Trouble sleeping	.19	.23*	.18	.22
Lost appetite	.10	.13	.20	.28*
Felt apart or alone	.22	.37***	.30**	.23
Eat too much	-.00	.02	.07	-.03
Bored	.10	.08	.19	.15
Think about running away	.02	.03	-.04	.06

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 33

Correlations Between Sole and Joint Custody Adolescents' Satisfaction with Informational Social Support and the Depression/Anxiety Scale (n = 76)

Adjustment Items	Social Support Satisfaction	
	Offer helpful information	Tell thoughtfully how to improve
Overtired	.22	.06
Headache	.13	.12
Stomach ache	.10	.07
Cold or other illness	.11	.13
Physical injury	.19	-.05
Nervous or worried	.23*	.16
Low or depressed	.24*	.21
Tense or irritable	.35**	.27*
Skin problems	-.05	.22
Trouble sleeping	.02	.05
Lost appetite	-.05	.05
Felt apart or alone	.21	.12
Eat too much	.00	.18
Bored	.07	.18
Think about running away	-.07	-.09

*p < .05. **p < .05.

Overall, based on the results from the Pearson product-moment correlations with each of the adjustment measures, strong support for the hypothesis has been revealed. Divorced adolescents' satisfaction with social support is associated with their adjustment.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

Summary

The results of this study indicate that, for the most part, joint custody adolescents are quite similar to adolescents from intact families in regard to their adjustment, sources of social support and satisfaction with social support. Furthermore, adolescents from both intact and joint custody family structures have significantly higher adjustment, sources of social support, and satisfaction with social support than do adolescents from sole custody arrangements. These results suggest that adolescents from divorced families report better adjustment if they are involved in joint custody situations. Joint custody adolescents' greater number of sources of social support and their higher level of satisfaction with certain types of social support, appears to be associated with their better adjustment.

Past studies have indicated that living in a sole custody situation is disadvantageous due to the absence of a parent, or inconsistent or infrequent visitation with the other parent (Coller, 1988; Kline et al., 1989; Sandler et al., 1985). Research also suggests that joint custody allows for a healthier adjustment to divorce because of the continued relationship with both parents (Benjamin & Irving, 1989; Bruch, 1992; Coller, 1988; Johnston et al., 1989; Maccoby et al., 1992; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). The results from the present study support those findings. The presence of both parents may increase the availability of social support to the adolescent.

Some researchers suggest that children and adolescents of divorce cannot count on their parents as a primary source of social support (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). However, in this study, adolescents of divorce reported each of their parents as a significant source of social support, with joint custody adolescents' availability of social support being quite similar to that of adolescents from intact family structures. Adolescents from sole custody

arrangements did not report their mothers and fathers to be sources of social support to the same extent that the other adolescents did, but parents were still their primary source of social support. This finding is especially true of mothers, just as Sandler et al. (1985) reported in their study. Mothers and fathers of adolescents were shown to be the primary source of social support in this study, and were reported at a much higher level for joint custody adolescents when compared to adolescents of sole custody arrangements. In addition, it was the adolescents from these joint custody situations who also fared significantly better, at times, than adolescents from sole custody arrangements according to their responses on the three adjustment measures, especially in regard to parent-child emotional closeness. The results from the present study suggest that parents are indeed considered a primary source of support to adolescents of divorce.

Furthermore, Wallerstein and Kelly (1980) report that children and adolescents of divorce do not have many sources of social support available to them outside of the home, such as friends or grandparents. Yet, the present study's results revealed that the percentage of friends reported as a source of social support was high for adolescents from each type of family structure. Approximately one-half to more than three-quarters of the participants within each family structure reported friends as a source of social support. The present study also found that approximately one-tenth to one-third of the adolescents from each type of family structure reported their maternal and paternal relatives as a source of social support, suggesting that adolescents from divorced family structures, do indeed have sources of social support available to them outside of their immediate families within each type of social support: esteem, social companionship, instrumental, and informational.

Other researchers have found that children and adolescents who have higher amounts of social support report fewer adjustment problems (Wolchik et al., 1989). The present

study supports these findings based on the results which revealed that joint custody adolescents were similar to adolescents from intact family structures in that they had significantly more sources of social support available to them than did adolescents from sole custody arrangements. These same adolescents reported significantly higher levels of adjustment on some adjustment items, especially those relating to emotional closeness to their parents.

Some researchers have suggested that conflict between parents plays a negative role in adolescents' adjustment to divorce, because it can make children and adolescents feel caught in the middle between their parents (Hetherington et al., 1993; Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). Fortunately, in this study, the lack of conflict between parents of the adolescents from divorced family structures suggests that divorce and custody arrangements do not inevitably imply that there will be ongoing conflict between adolescents' parents, or that the adolescents will be aware of it. The results from this research suggest that joint custody arrangements are associated with better adjustment, sources of social support, and satisfaction with social support for the adolescents involved, not that conflict between parents was increased or interfered with their adjustment.

A significant difference between adolescents of joint custody arrangements and those living in sole custody or intact family structures was that of joint custody adolescents reported spending significantly less time with friends, or participating in outside activities (such as activity with school and church groups). These results suggest that the downside to living in a joint custody arrangement is the limited time the adolescents have for outside activities and friends. These activities are what the adolescents might need to give up in their efforts to successfully adjust to transitioning between households.

Limitations

The measures used in this study had to be modified for the present study and compiled into one questionnaire because they were designed for other types of research studies focusing on either divorce or social support, but not both. For further research, a measure designed so that adolescents from any family structure can respond to each item would make an easier and possibly more thorough application. In addition, in this study the intact group of adolescents was considerably larger than the other two family structure groups, making comparisons difficult to examine.

It is also important to realize that each one of the adolescents living in joint custody situations saw his or her parents for different amounts of time and had different lengths of duration between visits between their parents. Some of the adolescents in a joint custody arrangement reported that they saw each of their parents every day while others said they saw them as much as they wanted. Some spent half a week at each parent's house, while others spent up to 4 overnights every 2 weeks at their other parent's house. For future research, it would be beneficial to create a cleaner definition of what the frequency of visitation is within joint and sole custody arrangements.

Furthermore, a larger sample of participants would allow for a more thorough analysis of the sub-groups, such as differences with ethnic groups, differences based on the frequency of visitation, or differences based on gender of the adolescent and gender of the custodial parent. Analyses such as these could not be performed in this study because of the small cell size that resulted when the sample was broken down to those levels.

Moreover, qualitative aspects of divorce were not examined in this research. Issues such as the nature of the parents' divorce, parental attitude toward the divorce, parental attitude toward the other parent, as well as length of time since the divorce and age at the

time of divorce are important aspects that could play a role in the adolescents' adjustment to divorce.

Future Research

This research reveals promising results for children and adolescents of divorce by showing some positive affects of joint custody arrangements. Further research could benefit by taking a more detailed look at the variables surrounding the issue of adolescents adjustment to divorce and the availability of social support. Parental remarriage is an important aspect in an adolescents' life due to the change it may or may not bring with it. It is possible that the remarriage of a parent could bring with it either increased social support, increased emotional turmoil, or no change into the environment of an adolescent. Remarriage and stepparents should be included in future research in order to see if and how remarriage affects children and adolescents in regard to their perceptions of the availability and satisfaction with social support, as well as how it affects their overall adjustment. Other important variables to consider for future research on this issue include gender of the adolescent, gender of the custodial parent, and age at the time of divorce.

Overall, the present study revealed that adolescents who have experienced a divorce, especially those in joint custody arrangements, are more similar to adolescents from intact family structures than they are different. The results from this study are valuable because they suggest that joint custody arrangements may be better, in some cases, for adolescents' adjustment and social support networks, than are sole custody arrangements. Joint custody is a growing trend for families of divorce, and studies such as these, show that it can be a positive step for divorcing families to take to promote their children or adolescents' well-being, if they can do this without undue conflict. Joint custody allows for a continued relationship with both parents, which was revealed in this study to be important for the continuity of the adolescents' social support network.

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Appendix A

Demographic Information

INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer each question by circling the letter that best describes you.

1. What is your gender?
a) male b) female
2. How old are you?
a) 13
b) 14
c) 15
d) 16
3. Are you part of a lunch program at your school? If so, what kind?
a) no lunch program
b) free lunch
c) reduced lunch
4. What would you describe as your ethnic group? (Circle all that apply)
a) Caucasian (white)
b) African-American
c) Asian-American
d) Chicano, Latino or Mexican-American
e) Native-American
f) other _____
5. What is the highest educational level achieved by your birth father (not step-father)?
a) some high school
b) high school graduate
c) trade school graduate (Mechanic, Plumber, Legal Assistant, etc.)
d) some college
e) college graduate
f) some post-graduate education
g) graduate degree (M.A., M.S., Ph.D)

6. What is the highest educational level achieved by your birth mother (not step-mother)?
 - a) some high school
 - b) high school graduate
 - c) trade school graduate (Mechanic, Plumber, Legal Assistant, etc.)
 - d) some college
 - e) college graduate
 - f) some post-graduate education
 - g) graduate degree (M.A., M.S., Ph.D)
7. Are your parents:
 - a) divorced
 - b) not living together
 - c) never married and not living together
 - d) married and living together
 - e) my parents are not together because one of them passed away

If you answered "a", "b", or "c" to question 7, please complete questions 8 - 23. If your parents are married or if one of them passed away, please skip to Section Two.

Appendix B

Divorce Information

1. How old were you when your parents stopped living together?
 - a) 2 years or younger
 - b) 3 to 6 years
 - c) 7 to 10 years
 - d) 11 to 13 years
 - e) 14 to 16 years
2. What type of custody arrangement do you live in?
 - a) live with mom only
 - b) live with dad only
 - c) parents have joint custody
 - d) live with mom and step-dad
 - e) live with dad and step-mom
 - f) live with foster family
 - g) live with relatives other than mom or dad
3. Who lives with you in your house? **(Circle as many that apply)**
 - a) mother
 - b) father
 - c) brother(s)
 - d) sister(s)
 - e) step-parent
 - f) step-siblings
 - g) maternal relatives (relatives from mom's side of the family such as mom's parents)
 - h) paternal relatives (relatives from dad's side of the family such as dad's parents)
 - i) other _____
4. If your parents have joint custody, who do you live with the most?
 - a) mom
 - b) dad
 - c) my parents do not have joint custody

5. How often do you visit the parent you don't live with?
 - a) contact is rare or absent
 - b) 2 weeks or more of vacation time, but low contact during the school year
 - c) at least 8 hours of daytime contact or one overnight every 2 weeks during the school year
 - d) two or three overnights every 2 weeks during the school year
 - e) holidays only
 - f) summers only
 - g) other _____
6. My mother is satisfied with the custody arrangement.
 - a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
 - e) strongly disagree
7. My father is satisfied with the custody arrangement.
 - a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
 - e) strongly disagree
8. If your mother has remarried, how long has she been remarried?
 - a) 1 year
 - b) 2 to 3 years
 - c) 4 to 5 years
 - d) 6 to 7 years
 - e) 8 to 9 years
 - f) 10 or more years
 - g) my mother has not remarried
9. If your father has remarried, how long has he been remarried?
 - a) 1 year
 - b) 2 to 3 years
 - c) 4 to 5 years
 - d) 6 to 7 years
 - e) 8 to 9 years
 - f) 10 or more years
 - g) my father has not remarried

Appendix C

Caught Between Parents

1. How often do you feel caught in the middle between your mother and your father?
a) never b) once in a while c) fairly often d) very often
2. How often does your mother ask you to carry messages to your father?
a) never b) once in a while c) fairly often d) very often
3. How often does your father ask you to carry messages to your mother?
a) never b) once in a while c) fairly often d) very often
4. Does your mother ever ask you questions about your father's home that you wish she wouldn't ask?
a) never b) once in a while c) fairly often d) very often
5. Does your father ever ask you questions about your mother's home that you wish he wouldn't ask?
a) never b) once in a while c) fairly often d) very often
6. When your mother is around, how often do you hesitate to talk about things concerning your father?
a) never b) once in a while c) fairly often d) very often
7. When your father is around, how often do you hesitate to talk about things concerning your mother?
a) never b) once in a while c) fairly often d) very often

Appendix D

The Social Support Questionnaire

INSTRUCTIONS: The following questions ask about people in your environment who provide you with help or support. Each question has two parts.

FOR THE FIRST PART: circle all letters that match the people whom you can count on for help or support in the manner described. If someone is not listed, please circle the letter for "other" and then fill in the blank (Teacher, Priest, Counselor...).

FOR THE SECOND PART: circle only one letter that matches how satisfied you are with the overall support you have received in the manner described.

OTHER INFORMATION:

1. If you have no support for a question, leave it blank, but still rate your level of satisfaction.
2. A maternal relative means someone that is related to you through your mother's side of the family, such as your mother's mom and dad (your maternal grandparents).
3. A paternal relative means someone that is related to you through your father's side of the family, such as your father's mom and dad (your paternal grandparents).

1a. Whom can you really count on to be dependable when you need help? (Circle all that apply)

a) mother	b) father	c) sibling	d) maternal relative
e) paternal relative	f) friend	g) step-mom	h) step-dad
i) teacher	j) other _____		

1b. How satisfied are you with their overall support? (Circle only one)

a) very satisfied	b) fairly satisfied	c) a little satisfied
d) a little dissatisfied	e) fairly dissatisfied	f) very dissatisfied

2a. Whom can you really count on to help you feel more relaxed when you are under pressure or tense? (Circle all that apply)

a) mother	b) father	c) sibling	d) maternal relative
e) paternal relative	f) friend	g) step-mom	h) step-dad
i) teacher	j) other _____		

2b. How satisfied are you with their overall support? (Circle only one)

- a) very satisfied b) fairly satisfied c) a little satisfied
d) a little dissatisfied e) fairly dissatisfied f) very dissatisfied

3a. Who accepts you totally, including both your worst and your best points?
(Circle all that apply)

- a) mother b) father c) sibling d) maternal relative
e) paternal relative f) friend g) step-mom h) step-dad
i) teacher j) other _____

3b. How satisfied are you with their overall support? (Circle only one)

- a) very satisfied b) fairly satisfied c) a little satisfied
d) a little dissatisfied e) fairly dissatisfied f) very dissatisfied

4a. Whom can you really count on to care about you, regardless of what is happening to you? (Circle all that apply)

- a) mother b) father c) sibling d) maternal relative
e) paternal relative f) friend g) step-mom h) step-dad
i) teacher j) other _____

4b. How satisfied are you with their overall support? (Circle only one)

- a) very satisfied b) fairly satisfied c) a little satisfied
d) a little dissatisfied e) fairly dissatisfied f) very dissatisfied

5a. Whom can you really count on to help you feel better when you are feeling generally down-in-the-dumps? (Circle all that apply)

- a) mother b) father c) sibling d) maternal relative
e) paternal relative f) friend g) step-mom h) step-dad
i) teacher j) other _____

5b. How satisfied are you with their overall support? (Circle only one)

- a) very satisfied b) fairly satisfied c) a little satisfied
d) a little dissatisfied e) fairly dissatisfied f) very dissatisfied

6a. Whom can you count on to comfort and console you when you are very upset?
(Circle all that apply)

- a) mother b) father c) sibling d) maternal relative
e) paternal relative f) friend g) step-mom h) step-dad
i) teacher j) other _____

6b. How satisfied are you with their overall support? (Circle only one)

- a) very satisfied b) fairly satisfied c) a little satisfied
d) a little dissatisfied e) fairly dissatisfied f) very dissatisfied

7a. Whom can you turn to when you need helpful information? (Circle all that apply)

- a) mother b) father c) sibling d) maternal relative
e) paternal relative f) friend g) step-mom h) step-dad
i) teacher j) other _____

7b. How satisfied are you with their overall support? (Circle only one)

- a) very satisfied b) fairly satisfied c) a little satisfied
d) a little dissatisfied e) fairly dissatisfied f) very dissatisfied

8a. Whom do you feel would help you if you needed a ride to the airport very early in the morning? (Circle all that apply)

- a) mother b) father c) sibling d) maternal relative
e) paternal relative f) friend g) step-mom h) step-dad
i) teacher j) other _____

8b. How satisfied are you with their overall support? (Circle only one)

- a) very satisfied b) fairly satisfied c) a little satisfied
d) a little dissatisfied e) fairly dissatisfied f) very dissatisfied

9a. Whom could you count on to offer you money to help you buy something such as movie or concert tickets? (Circle all that apply)

- a) mother b) father c) sibling d) maternal relative
e) paternal relative f) friend g) step-mom h) step-dad
i) teacher j) other _____

9b. How satisfied are you with their overall support? (Circle only one)

- a) very satisfied b) fairly satisfied c) a little satisfied
d) a little dissatisfied e) fairly dissatisfied f) very dissatisfied

10a. With whom do you feel you could stay if you needed to get away from home for a little while? (Circle all that apply)

- a) mother b) father c) sibling d) maternal relative
e) paternal relative f) friend g) step-mom h) step-dad
i) teacher j) other _____

10b. How satisfied are you with their overall support? (Circle only one)

- a) very satisfied b) fairly satisfied c) a little satisfied
d) a little dissatisfied e) fairly dissatisfied f) very dissatisfied

11a. Whom can you really count on to tell you, in a thoughtful manner, when you need to improve in some way? (Circle all that apply)

- a) mother b) father c) sibling d) maternal relative
e) paternal relative f) friend g) step-mom h) step-dad
i) teacher j) other _____

11b. How satisfied are you with their overall support? (Circle only one)

- a) very satisfied b) fairly satisfied c) a little satisfied
d) a little dissatisfied e) fairly dissatisfied f) very dissatisfied

12a. Who helps you feel that you truly have something positive to contribute to others? (Circle all that apply)

- a) mother b) father c) sibling d) maternal relative
e) paternal relative f) friend g) step-mom h) step-dad
i) teacher j) other _____

12b. How satisfied are you with their overall support? (Circle only one)

- a) very satisfied b) fairly satisfied c) a little satisfied
d) a little dissatisfied e) fairly dissatisfied f) very dissatisfied

13a. Whom can you count on to help you purchase supplies that you need for school? (Circle all that apply)

- a) mother b) father c) sibling d) maternal relative
e) paternal relative f) friend g) step-mom h) step-dad
i) teacher j) other _____

13b. How satisfied are you with their overall support? (Circle only one)

- a) very satisfied b) fairly satisfied c) a little satisfied
d) a little dissatisfied e) fairly dissatisfied f) very dissatisfied

Appendix E

The Modified Children's Divorce Adjustment Inventory

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the statements below and circle the letter that best describes how you feel with each statement. **If your parents are divorced**, please answer questions about parents as they pertain to your birth parents, not to any step-parents.

1. **Sometimes I think it's my fault when my parents have problems.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
2. **I have problems in school.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
3. **I wish I were able to spend more time with my father.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
4. **I spend a lot of time with my friends.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
5. **I participate in after-school activities.**
a) all the time b) pretty often c) not very often d) once in a while
e) not at all
6. **I worry about what will happen to my family.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
7. **I wish I were able to spend more time with my mother.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
8. **I have times when I feel sad.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree

9. **I get along better with any and all of my brothers and sisters (including step-siblings or half-siblings) than I used to. (Leave blank if you are an only child)**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
10. **I often get angry with my friends.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
11. **I often feel that my mother doesn't understand me.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
12. **I often feel that my father doesn't understand me.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
13. **My parents often fight about me.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
14. **My grandparents and other family members spend time to do things with me.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
15. **My parents don't get along much.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
16. **I stay busy doing lots of activities at school and church.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
17. **I don't get along well with my mother's friend(s).**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
18. **I feel like I have to pick sides between my parents when they argue.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree

- 19. My parents agree on how I should behave.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
- 20. I get punished (sent to my room) more than I used to.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
- 21. My mother criticizes me more than she used to.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
- 22. If I do something with my Dad, my Mom gets upset.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
- 23. If I do something with my Mom, my Dad gets upset.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
- 24. I don't get along well with my father's friend(s).**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
- 25. My father criticizes me more than he used to.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree

Appendix F

Modified Parent-Child Emotional Closeness

1. **I get along well with my mom.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
2. **I get along well with my dad.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
3. **I can talk openly with my mother.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
4. **I can talk openly with my father.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
5. **I have to be careful with what I say to my mother.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
6. **I have to be careful with what I say to my father.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
7. **I am comfortable admitting doubts and fears to my mother.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
8. **I am comfortable admitting doubts and fears to my father.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
9. **My mother shows affection or liking for me.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree
10. **My father shows affection or liking for me.**
a) strongly agree b) agree c) not sure d) disagree
e) strongly disagree

Appendix G

The Modified Depression/Anxiety Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the statements below and circle the letter that best describes how you feel with each statement.

1. In the past month, how often have you **felt overtired**?
a) never b) once c) twice d) three or more times
2. In the past month, how often have you **had a headache**?
a) never b) once c) twice d) three or more times
3. In the past month, how often have you **had a stomach ache**?
a) never b) once c) twice d) three or more times
4. In the past month, how often have you **had a cold or other illness**?
a) never b) once c) twice d) three or more times
5. In the past month, how often have you **had a physical injury, for example a broken bone**?
a) never b) once c) twice d) three or more times
6. In the past month, how often have you **felt nervous or worried**?
a) never b) once c) twice d) three or more times
7. In the past month, how often have you **felt "low" or depressed**?
a) never b) once c) twice d) three or more times
8. In the past month, how often have you **felt tense or irritable**?
a) never b) once c) twice d) three or more times
9. In the past month, how often have you **had skin problems**?
a) never b) once c) twice d) three or more times
10. In the past month, how often have you **had trouble sleeping**?
a) never b) once c) twice d) three or more times
11. In the past month, how often have you **lost your appetite**?
a) never b) once c) twice d) three or more times
12. In the past month, how often have you **felt apart or alone**?
a) never b) once c) twice d) three or more times

13. In the past month, how often have you **felt as if you were eating too much?**
a) never b) once c) twice d) three or more times
14. In the past month, how often have you **felt bored?**
a) never b) once c) twice d) three or more times
15. In the past month, how often have you **thought about running away from home?**
a) never b) once c) twice d) three or more times

Appendix H

Parental Agreement

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the statements below and circle the letter that best describes how you feel with each statement. **If your parents are divorced**, please answer questions about parents as they pertain to your birth parents, not to any step-parents.

- 1. How likely is it that your parents would agree about how much time they each can spend with you?**
a) very likely b) quite likely c) somewhat likely d) a little bit likely
e) not at all likely
- 2. How likely is it that your parents would agree about rules for you?**
a) very likely b) quite likely c) somewhat likely d) a little bit likely
e) not at all likely
- 3. How likely is it that your parents would agree about how to discipline you?**
a) very likely b) quite likely c) somewhat likely d) a little bit likely
e) not at all likely
- 4. How likely is it that your parents would agree about what privileges you can have?**
a) very likely b) quite likely c) somewhat likely d) a little bit likely
e) not at all likely
- 5. How likely is it that your parents would agree about how much money you should have?**
a) very likely b) quite likely c) somewhat likely d) a little bit likely
e) not at all likely