

NAME OF PRESENTING AUTHOR: Minhnguyen Cao

EMAIL ADDRESS OF PRESENTING AUTHOR: minhcao@gwu.edu

LOCATION OF PRESENTING AUTHOR:
North America

TIME ZONE OF PRESENTING AUTHOR: USA Eastern

TYPE OF SUBMISSION: Poster

MEMBER STATUS:
Non-member

ELIGIBLE FOR THOMPSON AWARD: No
ELIGIBLE FOR ROWEWARD: No

TITLE: Genetic and Environmental Predictors of Self-Worth in Young Children

FULL AUTHOR LIST: Minhnguyen Cao, MA¹; Jody M. Ganiban, PhD¹; Chang Liu, PhD¹; Daniel Shaw, PhD²; David Reiss, MD³; Misaki Natsuaki, PhD⁴; Leslie Leve, PhD⁵; Jenae Neiderhiser, PhD⁶

AFFILIATIONS:

¹ Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences, The George Washington University, Washington, DC, USA

² Department of Psychology, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA, USA

³ Child Study Center, School of Medicine, Yale University, New Haven, CT, USA

⁴ Department of Psychology, University of California – Riverside, Riverside, CA, USA

⁵ Prevention Science Institute, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, USA

⁶ Department of Psychology, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, USA

KEYWORDS: Temperament, Self-Worth, Parenting, Surgency, Involvement

ABSTRACT:

Previous research indicates that parental involvement predicts higher self-worth in children, and that self-worth is genetically influenced during childhood. However, few studies consider transactional influences of genetic and environmental (parenting) influences on self-worth. The current study used an adoption design to assess independent and interactive contributions of parental warmth involvement, child surgency, and heritable factors to two domains of early childhood social self-worth: perceived peer acceptance and maternal acceptance. We hypothesized that: (1) child surgency, which captures sociability and positive affectivity, is positively related to children's social self-worth; (2) child surgency mediates associations between heritable

tendencies to seek and form positive social relationships (i.e. birth mother agreeableness, behavioral activation) and social self-worth; and (3) adoptive mother involvement and child surgency interact to predict children's social self-worth. Participants included 561 adopted children and their birth and adoptive families from the Early Growth and Development study. When children were 54-months-old, their adoptive mothers reported on their own parenting (maternal involvement); adoptive fathers reported on children's surgency. Children rated their perceived peer and maternal acceptance at age 72 months. Birth mothers reported on their own agreeableness and behavioral activation. Birth mother characteristics predicted children's perceived maternal acceptance, however these effects were not mediated by child surgency. Surgency was positively related to perceived maternal acceptance and peer acceptance, but only when children experienced average to high levels of maternal involvement. This study reaffirmed heritable influences on self-worth, and highlights that child temperament and parenting jointly affect emergent self-worth.

GRANT SUPPORT: National Institutes of Health, Project ID: 5UH3OD023389-04
