

## Introduction

- ✦ Parental knowledge contributes to adolescents' well-being and school success (Hill & Wang, 2015; Okagaki & Frensch, 1998)
- ✦ Individual behaviors and family-level processes are sources of parental knowledge (Bumpas & Rodgers, 2009)
- ✦ Parents and adolescents often report different levels of knowledge and such discrepancies have been associated with adolescent behavior (Abar et al., 2015; Padilla-Walker et al., 2007)
- ✦ Little is known about how knowledge discrepancies are related to school outcomes such as school engagement and commitment to learning
- ✦ School engagement and commitment to learning are key components of adolescent school success (Fredericks et al., 2004)
- ✦ Grounded in a family systems perspective, our goals were the following:
  - Explore between- and within-family correlates of parental knowledge using multi-level modeling
  - Investigate the implications of knowledge discrepancies for school engagement and commitment to learning

## Method

- ✦ Participants
  - 180 parent-adolescent dyads 53% female, grades 6-8
  - 58% African American, 17% Multiracial, 16% European American, 7% Latino, 2% Asian American
- ✦ Measures
  - Adolescents and parents:
    - Warmth (8 items,  $\alpha = .91$ ) and conflict (11 items,  $\alpha = .87$ )
    - Parental knowledge (9 items,  $\alpha = .70$ )
    - Knowledge discrepancy: parent report – adolescent report, then categorized into four groups 1) parents reported a lot more 2) parents reported some more 3) adolescents reported some more 4) adolescents reported much more
  - Adolescents
    - Self-disclosure (6 items,  $\alpha = .75$ )
    - School engagement: school self-esteem (10 items,  $\alpha = .80$ ), school trouble (4 items,  $\alpha = .76$ ), school bonding (5 items,  $\alpha = .83$ )
    - Commitment to learning (7 items,  $\alpha = .75$ )
  - Parents
    - Parent solicitation (5 items,  $\alpha = .81$ )
  - Control variables: adolescent gender, ethnicity, grade, and parents' education level and marital status

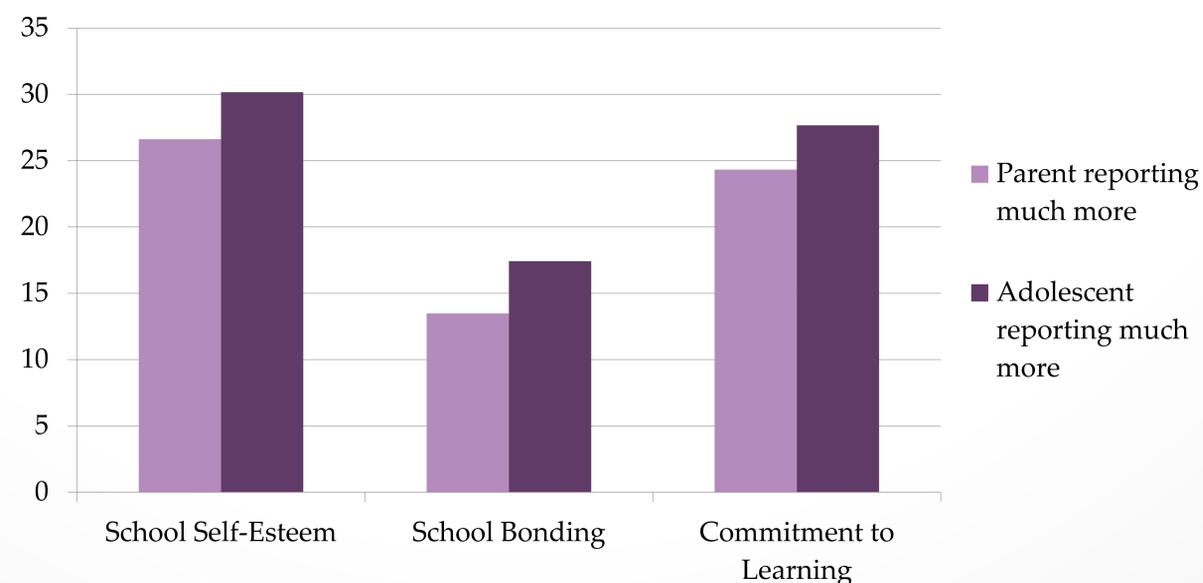
## Results

- ✦ Analytic strategy:
  - Multi-level modeling to assess between- and within-family correlates of knowledge
  - ANOVA to assess knowledge discrepancy group differences in school engagement and commitment to learning
- ✦ Findings:
  - Parents, on average, reported greater parental knowledge than adolescents
  - Relationship quality was significantly related to parental knowledge
  - When parents and adolescents reported more warmth and less conflict in their relationships, parental knowledge was greater
  - Adolescent self-disclosure and parent solicitation significantly contributed to greater parental knowledge
  - There were significant differences for school self-esteem, school bonding, and commitment to learning based on knowledge discrepancies
  - There were no differences for school trouble

Analysis of Variance Between Knowledge Discrepancy Scores and Adolescent Outcomes

	ANOVA			Parent reporting much more	Adolescent reporting much more	Tukey-Kramer
	df	F	R <sup>2</sup>	M	M	
School self-esteem	3	4.21**	.09	26.62	30.17	4.11*
School bonding	3	4.30**	.09	13.48	17.42	4.77*
Commitment to learning	3	5.83***	.12	24.33	27.67	6.61*

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$



Coefficients, Standard Errors, and T-Ratios for Sources of Parental Knowledge

	Parental Knowledge		
	B	SE	t-ratio
<i>Fixed Effects</i>			
Intercept	28.26***	4.35	6.49
Parent report of knowledge	3.40***	.70	-4.85
Race/ethnicity	-0.11	.17	-0.67
Adolescent gender	0.03	.55	0.06
Adolescent grade	-0.36	.36	-.99
Parent education level	0.15	.26	-.58
Marital status	1.24*	.56	2.19
Adolescent disclosure	0.47***	.10	4.60
Parent solicitation	0.25**	.10	2.48
Parent-adolescent warmth	1.49**	.56	2.65
Parent-adolescent conflict	-0.08**	.03	-2.46
<i>Variance Components</i>			
Residual	19.45***	1.50	
Intercept	0.64	2.15	

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$

## Discussion

- ✦ Parent-adolescent knowledge discrepancies may have consequences beyond the risk-taking environment and into the school context
- ✦ Knowledge discrepancies may represent a mismatch in parent-adolescent communication such that parents who report much more knowledge than adolescents may be less responsive to their adolescents' needs
- ✦ Interestingly, knowledge discrepancies were unrelated to school trouble, which is the behavioral facet of engagement
- ✦ Unlike risk-taking behaviors such as alcohol use, school trouble may be more closely related to school factors (such as teachers' knowledge of student behavior) than parental factors