This week, you will select an article to review for your final assignment in the course, the Aritcle Review, which is due in Week Six. Each article represents a topic and area of psychology. See the attached PSY600 Article Review List to read the articles and make your choice.

In your paper, clearly identify your article selection. Analyze psychology as a science as it is presented in your chosen article and explain why you have decided to focus on this particular topic. Assess the professional roles presented in the chosen article and describe the interactions between psychology professionals and professionals in other fields, if any. Explain any psychological theoretical perspectives presented in the article and why they are of particular interest to you.

The paper:

- Must be one to two double-spaced pages in length (excluding title and reference pages) and formatted according to APA style as outlined in the Ashford Writing Center.
- Must include a title page with the following:
  - Title of paper
  - Student's name
  - Course name and number
  - Instructor's name
  - Date submitted
- Must address the topic with critical thought.
- Must use at least one peer-reviewed source chosen from the PSY600 Article Review List
- Must document all sources in APA style as outlined in the Ashford Writing Center.
- Must include a separate reference page that is formatted according to APA style as outlined in the Ashford Writing Center.

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BRIEF REPORT

Developmental Changes in Parent–Child Communication Throughout Adolescence

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This study examined how parent–child communication regarding adolescent unsupervised activities develops over the course of adolescence. We used questionnaire data from 390 adolescents (58% girls; 90% European Canadian) who were followed from age 12 to 19. Latent growth curve modeling revealed curvilinear developmental changes that differed for boys and girls. From age 14 to 19 (but not from age 12 to 14) a linear decrease in parental control was found for both genders. For girls, parent–child communication decreased in early adolescence, as indicated by decreasing parental solicitation, decreasing adolescent disclosure, and increasing secrecy. Girls' communication with parents intensified in middle adolescence, as indicated by increasing parental solicitation, increasing adolescent disclosure, and decreasing adolescent secrecy. For boys, disclosure declined in early adolescence, but secrecy and solicitation were stable throughout adolescence. Parental knowledge decreased from age 12 to 19 for both genders but was temporarily stable for middle adolescent girls. The meaning of these developmental changes, their timing, and gender differences are discussed.

Keywords: parent–child communication, parental monitoring, adolescent disclosure, adolescent secrecy, development

It is an important developmental task for adolescents to become autonomous and to individuate from parents (Blos, 1967). The autonomy relatedness perspective (Cooper, Grotevant, & Condon, 1983) states that healthy autonomy development can only be achieved by realigning the existing parent–child relationship while ultimately staying connected to parents (see also Ryan & Lynch, 1989). Parents and children can disengage from communication as a strategic tool to renegotiate and realign their relationship toward a structure that is less authoritarian and more egalitarian. At the same time, communication is an important means of attaining and strengthening connectedness and intimacy between parents and their children (Finkenauer, Engels, & Meeus, 2002; Kerr, Stattin, & Trost, 1999). Throughout the realignment of parent–child relationships in adolescence, parents and children are therefore continuously required to find a way of communicating with one another that facilitates and acknowledges adolescent needs for autonomy and independence while enhancing connectedness and relatedness. This study aims at understanding how parents and children communicate with each other during the realignment of their relationship from early to late adolescence.

Operationalization of Parent–Child Communication

As teenagers enter high school, an increasing number of hours per day are spent engaging in activities that go unsupervised by parents (Larson, Richards, Moneta, Holmbeck, & Duckett, 1996), and of which parents are not necessarily automatically aware of. This is especially so as most adolescents do not voluntarily share all of this information with parents (Stattin & Kerr, 2000). Parents are therefore required to communicate with their adolescent children in order to remain informed and to try to evoke disclosures. For instance, parents may ask children for information (i.e., parental solicitation) or impose rules and restrictions on the amount of freedom children have to partake in activities without informing their parents (i.e., parental control; Stattin & Kerr, 2000). In this study, in order to assess different aspects of parent–child communication about adolescent leisure time activities, we measured whether adolescents voluntarily share information or keep it secret, whether parents undertake active monitoring behaviors, such as soliciting and controlling access to information, and the degree to which parents know about their adolescent children's leisure time activities.

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Developmental Changes in Parent–Child Communication

From the separation-individuation (Blos, 1967; Erikson, 1950) and the autonomy-relatedness (Cooper et al., 1983) perspectives, it is plausible that parental knowledge, as well as underlying parent–child communicative behaviors, are adapted throughout adolescence. That is, the differing developmental needs of adolescents may gradually push the balance of parent–child communication to new equilibriums in early and middle-to-late adolescence.

Early adolescence is predominantly characterized by a strife for greater autonomy and independence. With increasing adolescent individuation, children may no longer allow their parents to know everything about their lives (Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986). The loosening of ties between adolescents and their parents is marked by a reduction in the intensity and frequency of communication in early adolescence. Adolescents themselves may assert their autonomy by establishing boundaries around information they consider personal (Petronio, 2002; Youniss & Smollar, 1985), for instance by keeping secrets from their parents (Finkenauer et al., 2002). Parents can support the development of adolescents' autonomy by allowing privacy and by increasingly granting adolescents a right to make decisions without informing them first (Smetana & Asquith, 1994). Hence, both parents and adolescents can reduce the intensity of communication to meet early adolescents' increasing needs for autonomy.

In support of this idea, findings from adolescent research suggest a pattern of separation and detachment in early adolescence. Distinct developmental changes are found in parent–child communication toward less parental control and reduced knowledge and less willingness of adolescents to share information with their parents (Keijsers, Branje, Frijns, Finkenauer, & Meeus, 2010; Keijsers, Frijns, Branje, & Meeus, 2009; Laird, Marrero, Melching, & Kuhn, 2012; Masche, 2010).

When parents and adolescents no longer have to fight over issues of autonomy and independence and adolescents have formed a stable sense of self, most late adolescents start appreciating the relationship with their parents again (De Goede, Branje, & Meeus, 2009; Furman & Buhrmester, 1992; Keijsers, Loeber, Branje, & Meeus, 2011; Moore, 1987). Ultimately, in adulthood, parents and children strive for a qualitatively different relationship that involves interdependence and mutual respect, yet at the same time allows young adults to function autonomously (for a review, see Koepke & Denissen, 2012).

To understand how adolescents attain a satisfying realigned and mature relationship with their parents, it is crucial to study changes in parent–child communication from middle-to-late adolescence. Given that adolescent openness to parents may contribute to affective qualities of parent–child relationships (Finkenauer et al., 2002; Kerr et al., 1999), we propose that an increase in adolescent disclosure may contribute to increased connectedness. However, unlike the open pattern of communication prior to adolescence, in which parents control access to information and in which children (have to) disclose most of their daily activities, adolescent communication patterns are most likely qualitatively different and adjusted to more democratic and mature interactions.

To date, empirical studies on such adjustments of parent–child communication are scarce. One study shows declining parental knowledge (see also, Masche, 2010), hinting that further individuation takes place during late adolescence. This study is the first of its kind to examine the hypothesis that developmental declines in adolescents' willingness to disclose and increasing tendencies to keep secrets may recover after mid adolescence.

Gender Differences

Furthermore, gender differences in these developmental changes, while not yet well understood, are plausible. Different parent–child communication patterns among boys and girls are typically found. In empirical studies, girls experience higher levels of parental knowledge, parental control, and solicitation compared to boys and report more disclosure (for a review, see Racz & McMahon, 2011) and fewer secrets about leisure time activities in early adolescence (Almas, Grusec, & Tackett, 2011; Keijsers et al., 2010). Additionally, age-related declines in knowledge and disclosure and increases in secrecy in early-to-middle adolescence may be less pronounced for girls than for boys (Keijsers et al., 2010; Masche, 2010). Moreover, late adolescent girls are more interdependent of their parents than late adolescent boys: Girls tend to experience a better quality relationship with their parents than boys and rely more strongly on their parents as source of support, guidance, and help in late adolescence (De Goede et al., 2009; Furman & Buhrmester, 1992), suggesting a more frequent pattern of communication amongst girls and their parents. This study will therefore also examine whether developmental changes in parent–child communication differ between boys and girls.

The Present Study

This study aims to map out the theoretically plausible developmental changes in parent–child communication and parental knowledge from age 12 to 19 years old. With gradually increasing adolescent individuation from parents (Blos, 1967), we hypothesized that parental knowledge and attempts at monitoring (most notably their control efforts) would decrease throughout adolescence. We further hypothesized that adolescent openness would decrease in early adolescence. As most adolescents ultimately stay connected to their parents in late adolescence (Koepke & Denissen, 2012; Ryan & Lynch, 1989), we also hypothesized that, from middle adolescence onward, disclosure would once again increase, and secrecy would decrease. We further expected that girls would report higher overall levels of disclosure, parental knowledge, and parental solicitation and control and lower overall levels of secrecy than boys and that girls would report a less pronounced dip in their openness to their parents in middle adolescence.

Method

Participants

This longitudinal study began with 390 Grade 6 students (58% girls; mean age = 12.38 years; SD = 0.42) enrolled in eight elementary schools in a large French-speaking school district in Canada. Parents provided written consent for their child's participation. Approximately 75% of the available student population participated in this study. The sample was 90% European Canadian. Seventy-two percent of the participants lived with both biological parents. The sample was largely

middle class, with a mean family income of between $45,000 and $55,000 (CAN). Of the original sample, 320 participants (81%) were still involved in the study 8 years later. At ages 17, 18, and 19, some adolescents lived by themselves (1.7%, 5.2%, and 9.9%, respectively), but the majority lived with one or two parents during the study.

Procedures

Nine waves of data collection were carried out: age 12 (Spring of Grade 6; G6), age 12.5 (Fall of G7), age 13 (Spring of G7), age 14 (Spring of G8), age 15 (Spring of G9), age 16 (Spring of G10), age 17 (Spring of G11), age 18 (first Spring after high school), and age 19 (second Spring after HS). Both in elementary school (G6) and in high school (G7 to G11) questionnaires were completed in the classroom, supervised by graduate research assistants. However, during the high school years, some assessments had to be conducted individually in the participant's home setting (approximately 10 cases per year) or by mail (approximately five cases per year). After high school (ages 18 and 19), assessments were conducted individually, predominantly in the participant's home. From age 15 onward, participants received a $20 gift certificate for their participation at each time point. The study was approved by the Internal Review Board for Ethics in Research with Humans at the university of the second author.

Measures

To tap parent–child communication we used the series of scales developed by Stattin and Kerr (2000). All questions were scored by adolescents, using a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*often*).

Parental knowledge. Youths answered nine questions about their parents' knowledge of their whereabouts, activities, and peer relationships, such as "Do your parents know what you do during your free time?" (Cronbach's αs between .75 and .82).

Parental solicitation. With four items (revised by Hawk, Hale, Raaijmakers, & Meeus, 2008), we assessed how often the parents ask the adolescent about unsupervised time, for instance "During the past month, how often have your parents initiated a conversation with you about your free time?" (αs between .75 and .88).

Parental control. With six items, the parental control scale measured the way in which parents control the adolescent activities and friendships. An example of an item is "Must you have your parents' permission before you go out during the weeknights?" (αs between .77 and .87).

Adolescent disclosure. To evaluate adolescents' voluntary and spontaneous revelations to their parents about friends, activities, and whereabouts, three items were used (Frijns, Keijsers, Branje, & Meeus, 2010) from the five-item child disclosure scale, such as "Do you spontaneously tell your parents about your friends (which friends you hang out with and how they think and feel about various things)?" (αs between .74 and .80).

Adolescent secrecy. To assess adolescent secrets regarding friends, activities, and whereabouts, two items were extracted from the same disclosure scale, such as "Do you keep a lot of secrets from your parents about what you do during your free time?" A recent Canadian study (Almas et al., 2011) confirmed the superior fit of extracting two secrecy items from this scale (Frijns et al., 2010; αs between .69 and .82).

Strategy of Analyses

To map developmental changes in various aspects of parent–child communication, univariate latent growth curves were applied in *Mplus* 6.0. We tested and compared models with linear, quadratic, and unspecified shape of growth (i.e., except for first and last slope factor loading, all loadings were freely estimated). Syntax files can be provided upon request.

Gender differences in the levels and developmental changes were tested by a multigroup approach (boys vs. girls), in which an unconstrained model was compared to a model with the intercept or slope constrained to be equal for boys and girls. A worse fit of the constrained model, according to chi-square difference tests, would provide statistical evidence of gender differences.

We used full-information maximum-likelihood estimation, because the variables were normally distributed (maximum skewness values −1.10) and the missing values were randomly scattered (max 27.7% missing cases per variable, Little's MCAR test: $\chi^2 = 2376.93$, $df = 2134$).

Results

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics of the variables under study and the results of t tests for gender differences. A general pattern of gender differences was found, that was somewhat more pronounced in middle-to-late adolescence. Boys reported lower levels of parental control and solicitation than girls. Girls, in turn, reported more adolescent disclosure than boys and held fewer secrets from their parents. Parental knowledge was higher for girls than boys. Hence, hypothesized gender differences were present in parent–child communication, albeit not consistent across measurement waves.

We aimed to study developmental changes in parent–child communication. As an initial test, we compared different shapes of developmental change (Table 2). Univariate growth models with quadratic growth consistently provided a better fit to the data than models with linear or freely estimated growth (according to Bayesian information criterion statistics). Also, all quadratic models had acceptable to good absolute fits (comparative fit index > .92, Tucker–Lewis index > .92, root-mean-square error of approximation < .09) and a significantly better fit than linear models according to chi-square difference tests. To test whether changes would be significant within different age periods, and to explore gender differences in these nonlinear changes with sufficient statistical power, we ran multigroup linear models from age 12 to 14, 14 to 17, and 17 to 19 separately (Figure 1 and Table 3).

Parental monitoring efforts changed over adolescence. As expected, parental control declined. From age 14 to 19 (although not from age 12 to 14) a linear decrease in parental control was found, that was equally strong for boys and for girls. Parental solicitation decreased in early adolescence and increased in middle adolescence, although only among girls.

Adolescent information management also changed during adolescence, with gender differences apparent in these developmental patterns. Boys' disclosure decreased in early adolescence (age 12 to 14) and was stable thereafter. For girls, however, while disclosure also decreased between ages 12 and 14, there was an increase in disclosure in middle adolescence.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

Variable	*M*	*SD*	Boys *M*	Boys *SD*	Girls *M*	Girls *SD*	Gender difference
Parental solicitation							
Age 12	2.67	1.00	2.60	0.94	2.72	1.05	
Age 14	2.51	1.01	2.44	0.94	2.56	1.05	
Age 17	2.69	1.03	2.38	0.84	2.88	1.09	***
Age 19	2.66	1.03	2.30	0.93	2.89	1.03	***
Parental control							
Age 12	3.83	0.96	3.60	1.02	4.00	0.88	***
Age 14	3.91	0.91	3.66	0.93	4.07	0.87	***
Age 17	3.10	1.15	2.81	1.09	3.28	1.16	***
Age 19	2.04	1.04	1.89	0.93	2.14	1.10	*
Adolescent disclosure							
Age 12	3.12	1.12	3.03	1.11	3.19	1.13	
Age 14	2.87	1.08	2.73	1.02	2.96	1.11	
Age 17	3.09	1.08	2.66	0.94	3.35	1.08	***
Age 19	3.13	1.07	2.72	0.91	3.39	1.08	***
Adolescent secrecy							
Age 12	2.02	1.11	1.90	1.08	2.11	1.12	
Age 14	2.33	1.20	2.12	1.07	2.47	1.26	*
Age 17	2.09	1.04	2.11	0.98	2.07	1.07	
Age 19	1.94	1.00	2.14	1.10	1.81	0.91	**
Parental knowledge							
Age 12	3.98	0.85	3.91	0.88	4.03	0.83	
Age 14	3.83	0.75	3.84	0.75	3.81	0.75	
Age 17	3.74	0.73	3.55	0.71	3.85	0.71	***
Age 19	3.34	0.94	3.18	0.85	3.44	0.99	**

Note. Gender differences were tested with two-sided *t*-tests. Due to space limitations, only descriptive statistics of some measurements are provided. The full table and correlation tables are available upon request.
$^{*}p < .05$. $^{**}p < .01$. $^{***}p < .001$.

Regarding secrecy, boys' secrecy was found to remain stable throughout adolescence, while girls' secrecy increased in early adolescence, before subsequently decreasing between ages 14 and 19. Finally, parental knowledge decreased throughout adolescence except for a temporary stabilization with middle adolescent girls.

All analyses were replicated to examine the role of living arrangements. Living at home at age 19 did not, however, predict any of the intercepts and slope factors in middle-to-late adolescence.

Discussion

The overall aim of this study was to examine how parents and children adjust their parent–child communication during the process of realigning their relationship between ages 12 to 19. Curvilinear changes were found. In line with expectations, early adolescents reported a decrease in their willingness to disclose and early adolescent girls also reported a decrease in parental solicitation and an increase in secrecy. As was anticipated, from middle adolescence onwards, adolescents reported strongly declining parental control. Furthermore, girls reported the hypothesized more open pattern of communication from middle adolescence onward, as indicated by increasing disclosure and solicitation, and decreasing secrecy. In support of our hypotheses, parental knowledge gradually decreased throughout adolescence (at a somewhat faster rate among boys in middle adolescence). Gender differences were found: Girls reported more intense parent–child communication and a less strong dip in middle adolescence, as was expected.

By studying an extended time period, findings add to the existing literature on realignments of parent–child relationships in three ways. First, this study clearly shows that changes in parent–child communication not only take place in early adolescence, but continue during the middle-to-late adolescent years. Second, there was a differential timing of changes in parental and children's behavior. Third, there seem to be important gender differences in parent–child communication in late adolescence. The theoretical implications of these findings are discussed below.

Developmental Changes in Parent–Child Communication

It has been suggested that parent–child communication patterns may play a functional role in autonomy-related processes in parent–child relationships (e.g., Finkenauer et al., 2002; for a review, see Koepke & Denissen, 2012). That is, through adjusting the pattern of communication, parents and adolescents can shift the balance between autonomy/individuation and relatedness/connectedness to an equilibrium that matches the specific developmental needs of adolescents and their parents during different stages of adolescence.

This idea has received empirical support in this study. As an indication of increasing adolescent individuation and a decreasing relational hierarchy, adolescents reported declining levels of parental control as well as declining levels of parental knowledge

Table 2
Testing the Shape of Univariate Growth Curve Models

Variable and model	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	χ^2	*df*	Model a versus Model b $\Delta\chi^2(df = 4)$	BIC
Parental control							
a. Linear	0.63	0.67	0.19	589.41	40		7,344.67
b. Quadratic	**0.92**	**0.92**	**0.09**	**159.73**	**36**	**429.68*****	**6,938.85**
c. Unspecified shape	0.88	0.86	0.12	217.41	33		7,014.42
Parental solicitation							
a. Linear	0.93	0.94	0.08	133.62	40		6,961.14
b. Quadratic	**0.98**	**0.98**	**0.04**	**63.38**	**36**	**70.24*****	**6,914.76**
c. Unspecified shape	0.94	0.93	0.08	121.34	33		6,990.61
Adolescent disclosure							
a. Linear	0.90	0.91	0.09	175.19	40		7,472.93
b. Quadratic	**0.96**	**0.96**	**0.06**	**90.66**	**36**	**84.53*****	**7,412.26**
c. Unspecified shape	0.93	0.921	0.09	126.46	33		7,465.95
Adolescent secrecy							
a. Linear	0.71	0.74	0.12	271.54	40		8,145.65
b. Quadratic	**0.95**	**0.95**	**0.06**	**78.07**	**36**	**193.47*****	**7,976.03**
c. Unspecified shape	0.76	0.74	0.12	224.15	33		8,140.00
Parental knowledge							
a. Linear	0.90	0.91	0.09	175.71	40		5,711.70
b. Quadratic	**0.95**	**0.95**	**0.07**	**108.06**	**36**	**67.65*****	**5,667.91**
c. Unspecified shape	0.91	0.91	0.097	152.97	33		5,730.72

Note. CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker–Lewis index; RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation; BIC = Bayesian information criterion. In the "unspecified shape" models growth was captured by an intercept and a slope factor of which only the factor loading of the first and last measurement wave were fixed. Other factor loadings were not specified in this model. The best fitting model is indicated in bold.
*** $p < .001$.

(see also Keijsers et al., 2009; Masche, 2010). Moreover, in early adolescence, declining willingness to share information with their parents was found (see also Keijsers et al., 2010; Keijsers et al., 2009; Laird et al., 2012), suggesting that separation can be achieved through adjusting the amount of information that is shared with parents.

To the best of our knowledge, this study was the first empirical demonstration of the idea that changes in parent–child communication continue after early adolescence. The fact that communication between parents and their daughters increased in middle-to-late adolescence suggests that a state of independence and connectedness can ultimately be facilitated by once again opening the flow of information exchange.

Timing of Developmental Changes

The timing of developmental changes in communication was different for parents and adolescents, suggesting that adolescents are the driving force behind important changes in the parent–child relationship by pushing the balance toward less frequent communication. Whereas parental knowledge and solicitation and adolescent secrecy and disclosure already declined in early adolescence, the most pronounced changes in parental control were found to emerge from middle adolescence onwards. This suggests that children undertake active efforts to meet their increasing privacy and autonomy needs by strategically regulating the amount of information parents receive in early adolescence (Finkenauer et al., 2002; Petronio, 2002).

The overlapping decrease in parental solicitation suggests that parents generally acknowledge early adolescent privacy. However, the later timing of declines in control suggests that parents may adopt a slower timetable when it comes to adolescent autonomy development (Dekovíc, Noom, & Meeus, 1997): They still regard many issues as falling under their jurisdiction (Smetana & Asquith, 1994) and are hesitant to relax control, perhaps to protect the safety and well-being of their child.

Gender Differences in Developmental Changes

Findings indicate that girls and boys and their parents ultimately achieve a somewhat different balance between relatedness/connectedness and autonomy/independence in late adolescence. After a decline in open communication in early adolescence, boys reported stable low levels of both their willingness to disclose and of parental solicitation from middle adolescence onwards, and relatively high levels of secrecy. Girls, in contrast, reported an increasingly open flow of information after an initial decrease in early adolescence: Both parents and girls adjusted their communication behavior (increasing disclosure and decreasing secrecy of adolescents and increasing solicitation of parents).

Together these findings suggest that girls and their parents work toward a mature relationship that involves being both independent and connected at the same time. In order to receive the required support and guidance of parents (De Goede et al., 2009) an open flow of information, while crucial for girls, is less pertinent for boys (Keijsers et al., 2010). For boys and their parents, their relationship in late adolescence seems more strongly centered around independence. The patterns of communication (i.e., high levels of secrecy and few disclosures) suggest that this is partially achieved through psychological separation. Future studies are needed to examine whether this phase of separation in boys extends to early adulthood, or whether boys' connectedness to their parents increases in emerging adulthood.

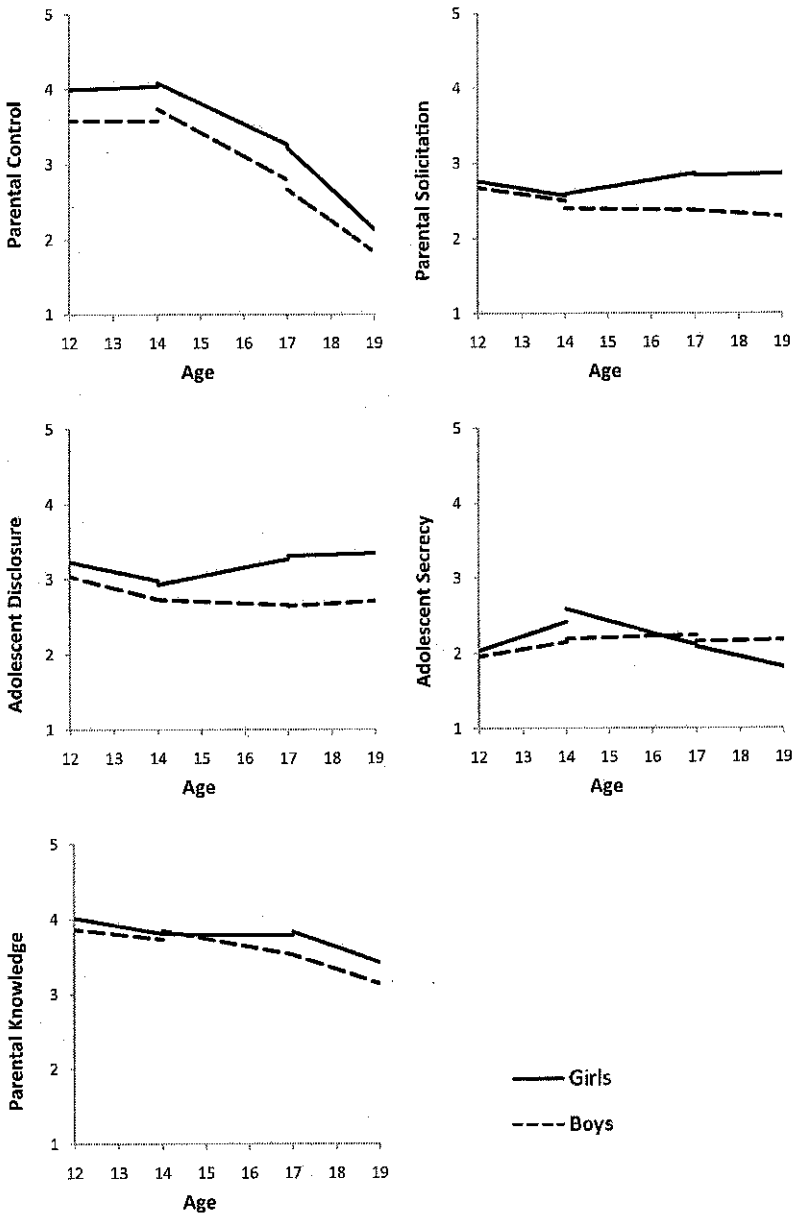

Figure 1. Developmental changes in parent–child communication for boys and for girls.

Importantly, although girls report high levels of disclosure in late adolescence, findings also indicate that they are no longer forced by their parents to do so, nor do parents know everything about their leisure time activities. In order to achieve independence and connectedness simultaneously, it may be that girls talk frequently to parents but only share the information to which parents still have legitimate access (Smetana & Asquith, 1994).That is, the amount of communication may increase, but content may become restricted at the same time.

Limitations of Present Study and Suggestions for Future Research

Despite the fact that this study used a large sample and covered a broad age range from 12 to 19, it is not without limitations. First, reports of adolescents on both parents were used. This excluded the possibility to test for father-mother differences in communication patterns, and leaves unanswered the question of whether gender differences are perhaps influenced by father-mother differences. Using parental accounts of the same behaviors may provide a different view on these processes. Second, this study used a fairly homogeneous sample of adolescents mostly from European-Canadian descent and from a single geographical area. The current findings should be replicated with more ethnically and economically diverse samples. Finally, it was beyond the scope of the study to test whether these developmental changes in parent–child communication overlap with each other or with changes in problem behavior and relationship qualities, and to test whether chang-

Table 3
Development of Parent–Child Communication Throughout Adolescence

Gender	Model 12–14		Model 14–17		Model 17–19	
	Level Age 12	Change Age 12–14	Level Age 14	Change Age 14–17	Level Age 17	Change Age 17–19
			Parental control			
Boys	3.57***	0.00	3.74***	−0.31***	2.67***	−0.42***
Girls	3.99***	0.02	4.08***	−0.27***	3.22***	−0.54***
Gender difference ($\Delta\chi^2$)	20.13***	0.14	11.80***	0.96	17.69***	3.38
			Parental solicitation			
Boys	2.68***	−0.09	2.40***	−0.01	2.37***	−0.04
Girls	2.76***	−0.10**	2.59***	0.09***	2.84***	0.01
Gender difference ($\Delta\chi^2$)	0.82	0.04	3.09	8.37**	17.69***	1.12
			Adolescent disclosure			
Boys	3.03	−0.15**	2.73***	−0.02	2.64***	0.03
Girls	3.23***	−0.13***	2.93***	0.11***	3.31***	0.02
Gender difference ($\Delta\chi^2$)	3.33	0.15	3.24	11.41**	35.11***	0.09
			Adolescent secrecy			
Boys	1.96***	0.09	2.19***	0.02	2.15***	0.01
Girls	2.03***	0.19***	2.59***	−0.16***	2.09***	−0.14***
Gender difference ($\Delta\chi^2$)	0.52	1.51	8.56***	12.84***	0.34	4.01*
			Parental knowledge			
Boys	3.86***	−0.07*	3.85***	−0.11***	3.52***	−0.19***
Girls	4.02***	−0.11***	3.80***	−0.01	3.83***	−0.21***
Gender difference ($\Delta\chi^2$)	3.69	0.80	0.25	11.23***	13.67***	0.06

Note. Gender differences are tested by comparing models using χ^2 difference test statistics ($df = 1$).
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

ing communication is the driving force behind any such changes in problem behaviors and relationship qualities or vice versa.

Conclusion

Despite these limitations, the current study offers unique empirical support for the study's hypotheses that communication of parents and their children is adjusted throughout adolescence. In early adolescence changes in parent–child communication seem to follow the pattern of more adolescent autonomy and independence. However, adolescents and their parents ultimately strive for a satisfying relationship and connectedness in late adolescence and adulthood. The study's findings suggest that adjusting the patterns of parent–child communication is essential to this "recovery process" after mid adolescence.

Although there had been some studies hinting at an important role of communication in facilitation autonomy in early adolescence, the functional role of communication in middle to late adolescence was largely unknown. This study's findings extend existing theoretical ideas in three important ways. (a) It indicates that developmental changes in parent–child communication continue in middle to late adolescents and perhaps are a means of strengthening the affective qualities of the relationship again. (b) Adolescents seem to be the active agents that push the communication pattern toward a new equilibrium, and they seem to be the driving force behind the realignment of their relationship: While adolescent willingness to share information with parents decreased in early adolescence, it was not until middle adolescence that parents also relaxed control. (c) Findings on parent–child communication patterns in late adolescence suggest that girls ultimately achieve a state of autonomy and connectedness with their parents, and boys strive for individuation through separation.

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