

A developmental perspective on parenting; Longitudinal effects of automatic and explicit parenting on adolescents' alcohol use

Ina Koning, S. Doornwaard, V. van der Rijst, J. De Houwer, W. Vollebergh

Child and Adolescent Studies, University of Utrecht, Heidelberglaan 1, 3508 TC Utrecht, The Netherlands. Email: i.koning@uu.nl

Introduction



Aim

To investigate the relative influence of automatic and reflective parenting on adolescents' alcohol use

To test the influence of parents from a dynamic developmental perspective (age-graded theory of Sampson and Laub, 2005)

Definitions

Automatic parenting: Parenting under suboptimal conditions (stress, time constraints, fatigue). Based on implicit beliefs about the outcomes and effects of their parenting behaviors and/or the way they have been parented themselves.

Reflective parenting: Parenting under optimal conditions, where parents have enough time and energy to reflect upon their behavior. This is usually assessed by self-reports, which is subject to social desirability.

PARENTS

Automatic parenting

Reflective parenting

Other parental behavior

→

CHILDREN

Mental (Perceived parenting)

Alcohol use

Method

Sample

N=111 parent-child dyads

71% female
Mean age=47.4 (SD=5.3)



45% female
12-18 years (M=14.8, SD=1.6)

Three Dutch high schools
Two waves (6-months interval)

Measures

Automatic parenting
Relational Responding Task (RRT; De Houwer et al., 2016) Implicit associations regarding alcohol-specific socialization. Rule for responding 'as if you are strict and tolerant'
Respond using 5 synonyms for 'true' and 5 for 'false' → 10 statements: 5 strict and 5 tolerant. e.g. When my child drinks alcohol, I get angry / I leave it up to my child if and how much alcohol he/she drinks
Lower reaction time score → right answer is congruent with own behavior

Reflective parenting
Parents' reports on explicit attitudes and rules about alcohol (Koning et al., 2011; Van der Vorst et al., 2005)
The degree of **acceptability** and **allowance** of underage adolescents consuming alcohol in various situations e.g. My child is allowed to drink one glass of alcohol when I or my partner is at home. 20 items, alpha = .95

Results

Automatic parenting and reflective parenting on alcohol use

PARENTS

Automatic parenting

Reflective parenting

CHILDREN

Life-time prevalence

PARENTS

Automatic parenting

Reflective parenting

CHILDREN

Weekly drinking

PARENTS

Automatic parenting

Reflective parenting

CHILDREN

Weekly drinking

Note: Adjusted for gender, age and adolescents' alcohol use at T1

Conclusions

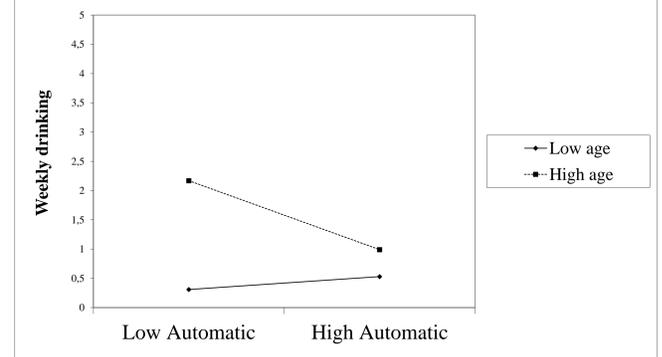
Automatic parenting DOES play a role in the **level of alcohol use** among 16+ adolescents

the influence of parents is not diminishing but is in fact **subject to change**;

reflective parenting behaviors become less and automatic parenting cognitions become more relevant during the **course of adolescence** and **drinking patterns**

(cf age-graded theory, Sampson & Laub, 2005)

Extrapolate findings to other (risk)behaviors?



Automatic Parenting	Low age	High age
Low Automatic	~0.3	~2.2
High Automatic	~0.6	~1.0