Developmental Trajectories of Parental Mediation Across Early and Middle Childhood

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## Sample

"A total of 467 parents provided complete data about their two children at wave 1, of which 415 parents provided complete data for all four waves (11.13% dropout rate). Because the current study aimed to investigate developmental trajectories within one and the same parent, a parent was included in the analyses when s/he completed the questionnaire at all four waves. When the parent who had completed the survey at wave 1 was replaced by the other parent at any of the following waves, s/he was excluded from the analyses. This procedure resulted in the elimination of 101 parent reports, yielding parent reports about 729 children at intake (53.2% girls; Mage = 5.41 years, SD = 1.41) that were provided by 366 parents.
On average, the participating parents were 36 years old at intake (M = 36.58 years, SD = 4.34). Most parents were women (89.9%) and were born in the
Netherlands (97.8%). Parents’ families consisted of three people (4.1%), four people (53.3%), five people (30.3%), or six or more people (12.3%). Of the parents, 0.3% had received primary education, 48.9% had received secondary education, 36.9% held bachelor’s degree, and 13.9% held master’s or doctoral degree. Approximately half of the parents had an annual household income ranging between €38,800 and €65,000 (47.5%), one third of the parents earned less than €38,800 (32.6%), and 19.9% earned more than €65,000"(Beyens et al., 2019, p. 232-233)

# Abstract

Despite a large body of literature on the opportunities of parental mediation to enhance positive and offset negative media effects, a long-term view as to the development of such mediation across childhood is lacking. The current study aimed to address this gap by presenting a developmental approach to parental mediation. Using an accelerated longitudinal design with four-wave panel data of 729 children, we investigated developmental trajectories of restrictive and active mediation across early (3–6 years) and middle childhood (7–10 years) and potential individual differences in these trajectories. Results revealed that parents’ expressions of restrictive and active mediation follow a curvilinear pattern over time, whereby parents’ mediation efforts increase across early childhood, peak at around age 8, before slowly declining throughout middle childhood. In addition, the results indicated that parenting style and children’s social-emotional difficulties are important sources of individual differences in the trajectories, above and beyond demographic

# Outcome

"Importantly, as predicted by developmental parental mediation theory, our results also showed that restrictive mediation, as well as both types of active mediation, show a curvilinear pattern across early and middle childhood, whereby parents’ mediation efforts increase across early childhood (3–6 years), peak at the onset of middle childhood (around age 7 to 9), before slowly declining again"(Beyens et al., 2019, p. 242)

"Although not as robust as we might have expected based on the literature, child’s sex did influence parental mediation, such that parents of boys were more likely to engage in restrictive and negative active mediation in early childhood. It has often been found that boys in this age group are more interested in violent, action-packed media content than girls (Valkenburg Janssen, 1999), and it is thus well possible that parents respond to this specific media preference of boys. Besides parents of boys, highly educated parents and parents with more children are also more likely to restrict content."(Beyens et al., 2019, p. 243)

"Our results showed that parents who rely on a more responsive parenting style are more likely to engage in positive and negative active mediation" (Beyens et al., 2019, p. 244)

"Moving beyond parent characteristics, we also found evidence that child characteristics influence parents’ mediation efforts. Specifically, in the context of restrictive mediation, we found that parents of children with more emotional problems (e.g., fearful, worried) are more likely to engage in restrictive mediation. "(Beyens et al., 2019, p. 244)

"Finally, we found that parents of children with higher levels of hyperactivity more strongly increase their efforts to restrict media content throughout childhood"(Beyens et al., 2019, p. 245)