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Rejection Sensitivity and Early Relationships: Explaining Differential Outcomes in Early Dating

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Rejection Sensitivity and Early Relationships:

Explaining Differential Outcomes in Early Dating

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Rejection Sensitivity and Early Relationships:

Explaining Differential Outcomes in Early Dating

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Introduction

Dating initiation is arguably one of the most important developmental tasks of adolescence and early adulthood (Furman, Brown, & Feiring, 1999; Erikson, 1968). Through dating, adolescents establish themselves as individuals separate from their parents, explore their own identity, and negotiate social status. Dating can bring many positive outcomes; however, much of the literature explores risks such as increased substance use and decreased academic engagement associated with dating in early adolescence or late childhood (e.g., Neeman, Hubbard, & Masten, 1995). Yet, these findings have been equivocal, with variations in related outcomes according to age and gender, and with some individuals actually seeming to benefit from early dating initiation. Various interpersonal factors such as parental conflict levels have been explored as potential moderators (e.g., Doyle et al., 2003); yet very limited research has explored intrapersonal personality factors as a moderating factor. Rejection sensitivity, or the degree to which an individual perceives and expects rejection in interpersonal situations (Downey, Feldman, & Ayduk, 2000) provides one particularly important personality characteristic. High expectations of rejection as well as heightened sensitivity to potential rejections tend to increase the likelihood of rejection as well as increasing the emotional impact of the rejection. For early adolescents, this may become a compounding factor, adding increased

weight and volatility to the transitory yet developmentally important early romantic relationships.

Developmental Timing of Dating

Sometime during adolescence, most individuals begin to transition from primarily same-sex peer relationships, to mixed-gender group interaction, and then to romantic relationships (Montgomery & Sorell, 1998; Connolly et al., 2004). These early romantic relationships are often short in duration (Furman & Shaffer, 2003) and relatively superficial and shallow (Merten, 1996), and yet they carry great weight in adolescent development. The transition from same-sex peer friendships to romantic relationships is developmentally pivotal. Interacting with opposite-sex peers creates a social challenge, with new rules and the added challenge of trying to connect across different gender roles, which provide an opportunity for cognitive, emotional and social development (Giordano, Manning, & Longmore, 2006). Adolescents are relatively preoccupied with the development of their individual identity, which limits their capacity for intimacy; however, adolescents view their relationships in much the same way adults do, emphasizing intimacy, passion, and commitment (Connolly et al., 1999). During in-lab interactions, adolescents show more conflict and less affective responsiveness with their romantic partner than with their friend but rated their romantic partners as their greatest source of support (Furman & Shomake, 2008). While these relationships may appear brief and unimportant, young adolescents view them with a great deal of importance and they prove relatively influential across adolescent development.

Despite the fact that learning how to negotiate romantic relationships is a key developmental task, it has been proposed that initiating romantic relationships before mastering other developmental tasks, such as same-sex friendship, disrupts the developmental course (Sullivan, 1953). Having a romantic relationship is considered atypical before the age of thirteen (Carver et al., 2003; Feiring, 1996). Fewer than 20% of this demographic reports a romantic relationship, and only 33% of adolescents ages fifteen to sixteen say the same (Connolly & Johnson, 1996; Feiring, 1996). Thus, dating after the age of thirteen is considered normative, and anything earlier than that is considered early (Santrock, 2003).

Developmental Impacts of Early Dating

Furthermore, the entrance into dating relationships before the more normative time point of thirteen is associated with poor school performance (Neeman et al., 1995) and lower academic motivation (Quatman, Sampson, Robinson, & Watson, 2001). As a new developmental task, dating occupies time and resources, distracting from academic pursuits. Additionally, American adolescents transition from smaller schools with only one teacher, to larger schools with different teachers for each subject. This transition is associated with a higher emphasis on teacher control, less positive student-teacher interpersonal interactions and less student choice opportunities when compared to the last year of elementary school (Eccles &Midgley, 1989; Midgley & Feldlaufer, 1987). Across both junior high and the transition to high school, academic expectations increase and grades become more public, leading to more peer comparisons (Eccles et al., 1993). Also, as adolescents are focusing on their peer relationships, parents begin to allow more autonomy and self-regulation, leading to increased

opportunity to experiment with potentially dangerous behaviors (Brown, 1998).
These environmental and psychosocial changes are arguably mismatched, with
adolescents needing opportunities to safely explore their autonomy, with less
rather than more peer comparison (Eccles et al., 1993). This mismatch is thought
to contribute to increased delinquency, decreased school performance, and
increased academic anxiety due to the conflict between academic and social
pressures. Dating can also serve as an assertion of adulthood and autonomy
(Connolly et al., 1999), autonomy that an adolescent is not receiving in their
restrictive academic setting.

Early sexual involvement is another risk associated with early dating
initiation, and along with it comes risk of pregnancy and disease (Crockett et al.
1996; Leitenberg & Saltzman, 2000). Beyond that, sexual involvement interacts
with many of the other risks and factors that may impact adolescents who engage
in early dating. Large-scale research has indicated that engaging in romantic
relationships at an earlier age is associated with more partners across the lifetime,
earlier initiation of sexual behavior, greater likelihood of cohabitation and
marriage in early adulthood (Meier & Allen, 2009). Sexual activity in early
adolescence is independently associated with depression, violence, substance use,
poor academic participation, and poor relationship quality (Welsh et al., 2005;
Williams et al., 2008).

As adolescents assert their autonomy through dating, they also appear to
assert their autonomy through substance use. Early dating is specifically
associated with an increased risk of smoking (Fidler et al., 2006), especially if
there is sexual activity within that relationship (Welsh et al., 2005; Williams et al.,

2008). Seventh-grade students who have a romantic partner show increased alcohol consumption and aggression (Miller et al., 2009). Again, sexual activity appears to exacerbate this, with higher levels of violence in sexually active adolescents (Welsh et al., 2005; Williams et al., 2008). The direction of these associations are not well established; however it appears that romantic partners in early adolescence influence more adult behaviors such as substance use, externalizing behaviors, and sexual activity.

Early dating is further associated with increased internalizing symptoms (e.g., Quatman, Sampson, Robinson, & Watson, 2001). Longitudinally looking at thirteen-year-old girls, engaging in romantic activities was associated with increases in depressive symptoms at age fourteen; inversely, depressive symptoms also predicted increases in romantic involvement and sexual activities (Davila et al., 2009a), indicating a bidirectional relationship. The negative impact of early dating initiation may partially be explained by findings that across adolescence having a series of short-term relationships is associated with increased depressive symptoms (Joyner & Udry, 2000). Because relationships in early adolescence are more likely to be brief and transitory, this may partially explain findings of increased depression symptoms in adolescents who initiate dating behavior at a relatively early time point.

While these relationships may be tumultuous and hold negative repercussions, there appear to be associated social benefits. Adolescent dating acts as a status symbol, with whom an adolescent is dating, if anyone, being associated with peer social status (Kupersmidt & Dodge, 2004). Across the

adolescent period, those adolescents who had a boyfriend or girlfriend indicated having a larger social network with more opposite-sex and non-school friends (Connolly & Johnson, 1996). These findings may suggest that larger social networks facilitate dating initiation or that dating initiation helps facilitate social networking. While most research to date has focused on negative outcomes, there appears to be a positive social impact associated with adolescent dating.

Moderating Factors

Parental and family factors seem to further impact the link between early dating and various outcomes. Dating initiation allows adolescents to begin to seek autonomy, redirecting their emotional energy from family to opposite-sex peers. Parental factors such as marital discord, quality of parent-child relationship, and parental warmth all contribute to the tenor of these early adolescent relationships (Gray & Steinberg, 1999). During in lab interactions, less functional parental conflict behaviors are associated with similar interaction patterns between adolescents and their romantic partner (Darling et al., 2008). Adolescents appear to be modeling parental conflict resolution patterns, which will impact the quality of their relationships across development. For boys who experience a high level of parental marital discord, early dating initiation is associated with positive outcomes, particularly higher self-esteem compared to their non-dating counterparts (Doyle et al., 2003). In contrast, for girls whose parents score low in parental warmth and support, there is an increased risk for depression in response to romantic problems, which are almost inevitable in early adolescence (Ge, Best, Conger, & Simons, 1996). Also, higher parent-adolescent

stress is associated with earlier subsequent sexual intercourse (Davila et al., 2009). Adolescent girls' perception of parental acceptance as well as appropriate boundary setting is further associated with the degree of mutuality and satisfaction they report in their romantic relationships (Auslander et al., 2008). Adolescents with non-intact families initiate dating at an earlier age on average compared to those from intact households (Coleman, Ganong, & Ellis, 1985).

Rejection Sensitivity and Early Dating

While parent-child relationships appear to be a factor that moderates the association between early dating and adolescent well-being, personal schemas and interpersonal expectations are likely another moderating factor. It is considered normative to seek belonging and some level of approval, and therefore to have some level of sensitivity to rejection. Yet, some individuals seem particularly attuned to potential rejections in their interpersonal world. When presented with ambiguous social cues, these individuals are more likely to assume a negative attribution, and read rejection into the behavior of others (Downey, Feldman, & Ayduk, 2000). This is conceptualized as a fairly stable trait, likely based on the unique history of social and familial experiences. Rejection sensitivity is seen as a continuous trait, with each individual having a different level of rejection sensitivity based on his or her unique experiences (Downey & Feldman, 1996). This internal schema of expecting rejection in interpersonal relationship is associated with hyper-vigilance for rejection cues, which then leads individuals to be quicker to respond in a defensive way—either anxiously withdrawing or aggressively lashing out (Downey et al., 2004). Thus within rejection sensitivity

research, individuals are seen as possessing distinct characteristics of anxious or angry rejection sensitivity. Individuals high in anxious rejection sensitivity are likely to respond to ambiguous social cues by not only assuming rejection, but also to respond with withdrawal, social anxiety, and smoothing-over behavior. For individuals high in angry rejection sensitivity, responses are more likely to include taking an angry or offensive stance. These behaviors, as well as the perceptual biases of rejection sensitivity, are associated with lower abilities to develop and benefit from positive interpersonal relationships and can lead to feelings of loneliness (Levy, Ayduk, & Downey, 2002).

Research specifically exploring rejection sensitivity's role in dating behavior has generally focused on adult relationships. Adult men who are invested in their relationships and are high in rejection sensitivity demonstrate higher rates of romantic partner violence when compared to individuals low in rejection sensitivity (Downey, Feldman, & Ayduk, 2000). Adult women high in rejection sensitivity, when given an in-lab conflict task that stirs up cues of potential relational dissolution, have more anger and negativity towards their partner during and following the conflict compared to low rejection sensitive individuals. College women who are high in rejection sensitivity also experience more depression in response to partner initiated break ups (Ayduk, Downey, & Kim, 2001). More globally, individuals high in rejection sensitivity are more preoccupied with interpersonal relationships, especially their romantic relationships. These individuals may be more susceptible to being influenced and have been shown to more frequently act counter to their own values and to change

or suppress their own opinions (Ayduk, May, Downey, & Higgins, 2003) . For instance, decreased levels of condom use have been observed despite internal beliefs about their importance (Edwards & Barber, 2010). Furthermore, researchers have shown that rejection sensitivity accounts for about half of the variance in the association between adult romantic attachment behavior and a history of family violence (Feldman & Downey, 1994), indicating that this intrapersonal schema is influential in translating early experiences into romantic experiences.

In adolescence, identity formation is a key task, and a task that is generally dependent on formative peer relationships. Same-sex peer friendships are often considered the building blocks for later romantic relationships, and thus the way rejection sensitivity impacts these interactions provides a window into potential impacts on early romantic relationships. Middle school children high in rejection sensitivity have been shown to become comparatively more distressed when told that a friend had refused to participate in an activity with them. Over time, these same high rejection sensitivity children show more reactivity and aggression in response to interpersonal slights, which leads to strain in relationships with teachers as well as peers (Downey, Lebolt, Rincon, &Freitas, 1998). In nine to eleven-year-old children, high levels of generalized rejection sensitivity (a combined measure of anxious and angry rejection sensitivity) are associated with internalizing and externalizing behavior (Sandstrom, Cillessen, & Eisenhower, 2003).

As romantic relationships come on-line, they quickly become an important and highly influential relationship and experience. Research suggests that in many ways these early relationships have many of the same psychological qualities as adult relationships, but with more weight given the developmental significance and the sheer number of hours an adolescent can dedicate to thinking about their partner. This suggests that adolescents high in rejection sensitivity might experience similar relational patterns to those seen in adults, which will likely be particularly salient in terms of increased partner influence. Indeed, looking at a later adolescent time point (age 14-21) individuals high in rejection sensitivity show the adult patterns of self-silencing and depression within their romantic relationships. Furthermore, self-silencing partially mediates the relationship between rejection sensitivity and depression (Harper, Dickson, & West, 2006). Specifically for low socioeconomic status early adolescent girls, there is evidence for rejection sensitivity predicting increased willingness to bend personal beliefs and do things they consider wrong to maintain a relationship as well as to demonstrate insecurity about their partner's commitment. In response to conflict, these same high rejection sensitive girls show comparatively higher physical and non-physical hostility (Purdie & Downey, 2000). It is proposed that these effects are particularly salient in disadvantaged youths because family failures and absences make these early romantic relationships more salient. However, these effects likely persist even in more advantaged populations because of the developmental importance of these early relationships. For highly rejection sensitive young adolescent, the salience of these relationships may lead to

increased partner influence, increased disruption of other areas of their life due to preoccupation, as well as increased conflict following their entrance into the dating world.

Previous research shows evidence for early dating as a potential (if equivocal) risk factor for negative developmental outcomes. Above and beyond this, rejection sensitivity is associated with more negative peer and romantic relationships, characterized by increased conflict, instability, and partner influence. For an adolescent delving into the dating world before developmentally ready, high rejection sensitivity and the associated increased conflict, instability and partner influence likely exacerbates the impact of these relationships, creating greater risk for these individuals. This study seeks to replicate previous research exploring the association between early dating and developmental outcomes, and explore the further role of rejection sensitivity in moderating these associations.

Hypotheses:

1. Early dating will be negatively associated with academic outcomes.

2. Early dating will be associated with more positive social outcomes.

3. Rejection sensitivity will moderate the association between early dating and various outcomes, such that individuals higher in rejection sensitivity will have more negative outcomes.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited from five regional public schools as part of a school-based longitudinal study. The sample consisted of 319 ninth grade adolescents (125 girls, 194 boys) who ranged in age from 13 to 15 years (M=13.95; SD=.36). The ethnic composition of the sample was 63% European American, 1% African American, 1% Asian American, 12% Latino American, and 24% mixed ethnic background. According to 2000 census data, the towns the schools reside in ranged in per capita income from $35,087 to $77,794 (M=$58,465, SD=$16,036). According to school records, the number of children eligible for free/reduced lunch ranged from 2% to 57%.

Procedures

All students attending each school were recruited for participation in the spring of 8th grade via letters sent home with students and mailed directly home. Three hundred and eighty-eight families (62%) completed consent forms and of these, 281 parents consented to their child's participation (53% of the total population.) Students who refused to participate (n=1) or were absent on one of the days of testing (n=1) were excluded from analyses, leaving a final sample of 279 participants at Time 1. At Time 2, Fall of 9th grade, 248 (89%) of the original participants were available for participation. Attrition was due to participants attending high schools not included in the study (n=19), moving away from the area (n=5), retention in 8th grade (n=1), incomplete data (n=2), and participation refusal (n=3). By the spring of 9th grade (Time 3), a total of 241 (86%) participants were available for participation. Attrition between Time 2 and Time 3 was due to placement out of district (n=3), participants moving away (n=3), and

school absence on the testing date (n=1). There were no significant differences

found between adolescents who participated at only one time point, adolescents

who participated at two time points, adolescents who had missing data, or

adolescents who participated at all three time points. Participants completed

measures in the classroom in 45-minute sessions.

Measures

All measures used in this study were administered at time point 3 (Spring

of 9th grade). Participants completed the 12-item Dating Questionnaire. Dating

initiation was assessed using the question, "What grade were you in the first time

you had a serious relationship?" All other questions were excluded for these

analyses. The specifier "serious relationship" was used based on previous

literature, which indicates that group dating or more casual dating is not a risk

factor in this group (Darling et al., 1999; Doyle et al., 2003). Based on previous

literature, adolescents who reported their first serious relationship to have

occurred before 7th grade were classified as early daters. Likewise, those who

reported their first relationship in 7th, 8th, or 9th grade were classified as average

daters. Individuals who reported that they had never had a serious relationship

were classified as non-daters. Notably, exploratory analyses revealed

discrepancies between adolescent reports of their "first serious relationship"

between time point 1 (Spring of 8th grade) and time point 3 (Spring of 9th grade)

with 29 adolescents identifying themselves as early daters at time point 1 but not

at time point 3, and eight adolescents identifying themselves as early daters at

time point 3 but not time point 1. Because having identified one's first serious

relationship prior to 7th grade at either time point has a likely developmental

impact, any individual who identified themselves as an early dater at time point 1

was also recoded as an early dater, regardless of their response in 9th grade. For

the purpose of analyses, the variable was recoded so that responses indicating

kindergarten through 6th grade as the first serious relationship were recoded as

zero; 7th, 8th and 9th grade as one; and those who did not answer the question as

well as those who indicated no relationship were coded as two. According to the

questionnaire instructions, individuals who had indicated no dating experience

were asked to skip this question, hence it is assumed that those who did not

respond had not had a serious romantic relationship yet. This recoding

transformed the variable into a categorical variable. This was considered

appropriate given previous literature establishing a relative cut-point for early

dating (Santrock, 2003).

   Rejection sensitivity was measured using 6 sets of items from the

Children's Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire (CRSQ; Downey, Lebolt, et al.,

1998). The CRSQ presents a range of interpersonal scenarios and assesses

children's anxious and angry expectations of rejection prior to receiving

ambiguous, accepting, or rejecting feedback. For each of the six situations,

students rated how anxious and how angry they would feel (1=not at all nervous,

6=very, very nervous; anxious; 1=not at all angry, 6=very, very angry; angry) as

well as how likely it is that the other person in the scenario would respond with

acceptance (1=yes, 6=no; rejection expectation). Each participant received a

score for anxious rejection sensitivity and angry rejection sensitivity. Anxious

rejection sensitivity was calculated for each situation by multiplying the rejection

expectation score by their rating of anxiety about the situation. The overall rating

of anxious rejection sensitivity was created by averaging these calculated scores

for each situation. Angry rejection sensitivity scores were calculated using the

same method. For both classifications, higher scores reflect greater anxious or

angry expectations of rejection. In the spring of 9th grade, Cronbach's alpha for

anxious rejection sensitivity was .81 and for angry rejection sensitivity was .72.

School related stress and performance was assessed using several

measures exploring the unique stressors associated with the transition to high

school and junior high. Global and chronic school-related stress was assessed

using 11 items from the Chronic Strain Questionnaire for Children (CSS;

Rudolph, Kurlakowsky, & Conley, 2001). Students rated their experiences of

academic strain since the beginning of the year (1=not at all, 5=very much; e.g.,

"Do you fail or do very badly on tests?"). Responses were averaged so that each

student received a composite score, with higher scores indicating higher academic

strain. The Chronbach's alpha for the Chronic Strain Questionnaire for Children

was .80.

School related hassles were measured using a 51-item measure of various

school stressors the adolescent might experience in school (SH) (Robinson et al.,

1995). Students were instructed to rate how true each statement was for them that

year in school (1=not at all, 5=very much; e.g., "You have had problems

remembering your locker combination", "You have received poor grades", "This

school is large and crowded"). These scores were averaged so that each student

had a composite score, with higher scores indicating higher levels of stress. The

Chronbach's alpha for School Hassles was .93.

Teacher ratings of effort and performance were calculated using two items

from the Teacher Academic Helplessness Scale (Nolen-Hoeksema, Girgus, &

Seligman, 1992) where teachers were asked to respond to each item with a score

from 1 to 5 for that individual student (1=Not true, 5=Very true). Each student

received two independent ratings from two of their main teachers, which were

then averaged. Academic effort was assessed using the item "Works hard

academically," and academic performance was assessed using the item "Performs

well academically."

Students completed sociometric measures in their classrooms under the

supervision of trained research assistants. Each participant received a set of

rosters with the names, alphabetized by first name, of all students in the grade.

Each sociometric question was printed at the top of a separate roster, and students

answered by circling the names and code numbers of their peers. Students were

assured of confidentiality and instructed to read each question and select peers

that fit each description. Self-nominations were discouraged and all such

nominations were discarded during data entry.

These sociometric peer nominations were used to measure peer

preference. Students were asked to select an unlimited number of peers they "like

the most" and peers they "like the least." Standardized scores for "like the most"

nominations and "like the least" nominations were computed based on the number

of nominations each participant received relative to their peers. A continuous

score was computed by subtracting the number of standardized "like the least" nominations from standardized "like the most" nominations. This continuous score was standardized within each participant's grade to reflect sociometric preference. This sociometric preference score has a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1, with greater scores indicating higher levels of sociometric popularity.

Perceptions of popularity were also measured using sociometric peer nominations. Again, participants were provided with an alphabetized list of grademates and were asked to select an unlimited number of peers who are "most popular" and "least popular." Standardized scores were again computed based on number of nominations adolescents received relative to grademates. A continuous score of perceived popularity was calculated by subtracting the number of standardized "least popular" nominations from the number of "most popular" nominations. This score was again standardized within each adolescent's grade to reflect sociometric perceived popularity, giving a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1, with greater scores indicating higher levels of perceived popularity.

Sociometric ratings of friendship were also collected. Participants were asked to circle all of their friends. A count of nominations was calculated for each participant and then standardized against their grademates. Higher numbers indicated being named as a friend by more peers.

Sociometric ratings of attractiveness were also collected. Participants were again given an alphabetized list of their grademates and instructed to "Circle

the names of the people who are attractive," and were encouraged to select as many peers as fit that description. Again each participant received a sum count of nominations, which was then standardized against their grademates. Higher scores indicated higher peer ratings of attractiveness.

Adolescent depressive symptoms were measured using the Child Depression Inventory (CDI; Kovacs, 1981), a 27-item questionnaire measuring cognitive, affective, and behavioral symptoms of depression. However an item assessing suicidal thoughts was excluded from the questionnaire for the purposes of this study. Items on the CDI include prompts such as "No one really loves me," "I have trouble sleeping every night," and "I am bad all the time." Adolescents are asked to select responses that represent how they have been feeling in the past two weeks. Each item includes three statements, scored 0 to 2, each of increasing symptom severity. Higher scores on this measure indicate higher levels of depressive symptoms. The Chronbach's alpha was .86.

Rosenberg's 10-item questionnaire was used to assess self-esteem (RSE; 1989). Adolescents rated items on a six-point scale (1 = does not describe me at all, 6 = describes me very well; e.g., "At times I think I am no good at all," "I take a positive attitude for myself"). Items were reverse-scored when appropriate and mean scores for the 10 items were computed for each participant. Higher scores reflected higher levels of self-esteem. The Cronbach's alpha for this measure was .91.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

As seen in Table 1, descriptive statistics were calculated for all variables. Using a multiple choice question regarding length of the adolescents' first serious relationship, a chi-squared analysis was run to explore any variation in relationship length between early and average dating adolescents. Results indicated no significant differences. The association between rejection sensitivity and the timing of dating initiation was also assessed using a one-way ANOVA. There was no significant variation in rejection sensitivity among the three groups for either angry rejection sensitivity ($F(2,321)=1.33$, $p>.05$) or anxious rejection sensitivity ($F(2,321)=1.33$, $p>.05$).

In addition, bivariate correlations were run to explore relationships among all study variables (Table 2). As would be expected, school-related variables were inter-correlated, such that the School Hassles (SH) measure and the Chronic School Stress (CSS) measure were positively correlated and teacher ratings of effort and performance were positively correlated. Moreover, both SH and CSS scores were negatively correlated with teacher ratings of effort and performance.

Interpersonal outcomes were also associated with moderate correlations among sociometric ratings of friendship, popularity and preference, as well as between peer ratings of attraction and these social outcomes (Table 2). However these findings were not confined to sociometric ratings, as ratings of friendship and preference were also positively associated with teacher perceptions of academic effort and performance.

Intrapersonal ratings of self-esteem and depression were highly correlated, such that higher rates of depressive symptoms were associated with lower self-

esteem. Both these factors were also associated with academic and social

outcomes, with higher depressive symptoms and lower self esteem associated

with lower peer ratings, increased academic stress, and decreased teacher ratings.

Angry and anxious rejection sensitivity were also correlated and negatively

associated with school outcomes and self-esteem.

Direct Effects of Dating Status

> **Social outcomes**.

A series of one-way ANOVAs was also used to assess the direct

relationship between dating initiation and social outcomes. In terms of peer

ratings of who in their grade is the most attractive, there was a direct effect of

dating status (F (2, 239)=4.31, p=.01). Bonferroni post-hoc analyses indicated

that average daters (M=.56, 95% CI [.30, .83]) were rated as more attractive than

non-daters (M=.08, 95% CI [-.12, .29], p=.01), with a trend towards early daters

(M=.33, 95% CI [-.10, .76], p = 1.00) as less attractive than average daters, but

more attractive than non-daters.

Using a sociometric rating of popularity, there was a similar effect of

dating status (F (2, 239)=8.09, p=.000). Bonferroni post-hoc analyses reveal that

average daters (M=.52, 95% CI [.30, .74]) are significantly more popular

compared to non-daters (M=-.09, 95% CI [-.29, .11], p=.000). However, the

general trend of the means suggest that average daters are the most popular,

followed by early daters (M=.27, 95% CI [-.15, .69], p=.89), and with non-daters

rated as the least popular.

In terms of peer preference, there was not an effect of dating status (F (2, 182)=2.18, p=.12). Similarly, there was not an effect of dating status on whether peers rated the adolescent as one of their friends (F (2, 716)=2.35, p=.10).

Intra-psychic outcomes.

A series of one-way ANOVAs was also used to assess the relationship between dating initiation and intra-psychic outcomes such as depressive symptoms and self-esteem. There was an association between dating initiation (F (2, 316)=7.20, p=.001) and depressive symptoms. Bonferroni post-hoc analyses indicate that average daters (M=.44, 95% CI [.38, .49]) have higher rates of depressive symptoms than non-daters (M=.33, 95% CI [.29, .36], p=.001).

Self reports of self-esteem show a similar trend with a direct effect of dating initiation (F (2, 314)=4.40, p=.013) and Bonferroni post-hoc analyses indicating that average daters (M=3.86, 95% CI [3.70, 4.00]) have lower self-esteem compared to non-daters (M=4.12, 95% CI [4.01, 4.23], p=.001).

School-related outcomes. A series of one-way ANOVAs was used to assess the direct relationship between dating initiation and school-related outcomes. Early dating was directly associated with more stress and feelings of hassle along with lower teacher ratings of effort and performance. Specifically, results indicated that self-reports of school hassles (SH) differed across dating status groups (F (2,319)=11.13, p<.01). Bonferroni post-hoc analyses indicated that non-daters (M=1.65, 95% CI [1.59, 1.71]) reported fewer hassles compared to both average daters (M=1.89, 95% CI [1.80, 1.98], p<.01) and early daters (M=1.89, 95% CI [1.72, 2.06], p<.01) Self reports of school stress (CSS) resulted

in similar findings, reflecting a main effect of dating initiation (F(2, 315)=7.72, p=.001). Bonferroni post-hoc analyses indicate that non-daters (M=1.99, 95% CI [1.88, 2.10]) reported lower levels of stress compared to both average daters (M=2.34, 95% CI [2.20, 2.49], p=.001) and early daters (M=2.35, 95% CI [2.04, 2.67], p=.004).

Similarly, teachers indicated that non-daters exerted more effort (F(2, 337)=7.12, p=.001) and performed better (F (2, 337)=10.27, p=.000) in academic tasks. Bonferroni post-hoc analyses indicated that teachers rated non-daters (M=3.84, 95% CI [2.78, 3.66]) as higher in effort compared to average daters (M=3.40, 95% CI [3.20, 3.61], p=.006) as well as compared to early daters (M=3.22, 95% CI [2.78, 3.66], p=.012). They also rated non-daters (M=3.84, 95% CI [3.68, 4.00]) higher in performance compared to both average daters (M=3.43, 95% CI [3.23, 3.62], p<.01) and non-daters (M=3.04, 95% CI [2.57, 3.51], p<.001).

Moderating Effect of Rejection Sensitivity

Rejection sensitivity was tested as a moderator of the relationship between dating initiation and outcome measures using multiple regression analyses. Anxious and Angry rejection sensitivity were analyzed as separate variables in all analyses. The dating initiation variable was transformed before analyses. First it was transformed into a categorical variable, dividing the participants into the groups of early daters, average daters, and non-daters. Then, in order to meaningfully run regression analyses between a categorical and continuous variable, the variable was dummy coded.   Six new variables were created,

creating three pairs of variables, with each category (early daters (0), average

daters (1), and non-daters (2)) coded as zero and hence acting as the comparison

group once. For example, when early daters is the comparison group, one

variable would have early daters coded as zero, average daters coded as zero, and

non-daters coded as one, while the other variable would have early daters coded

as zero, average daters coded as one, and non-daters coded as zero.

Within the regression analyses, these pairs must always be entered into the

regression together. In the first step of the regression, this pair of dummy coded

variables as well as the rejection sensitivity variable was entered. In the second

step of the regression, the interaction term between rejection sensitivity and each

of these dummy coded variables was entered. The various outcome measures

were entered as the dependent variable. For any significant interactions, post hoc

probing was done to explore the nature of this interaction using procedures

recommended by Aiken and West (1991). Each regression was run three times, so

that each group was the comparison group in one analysis. By doing this, the

regression term for rejection sensitivity in the second step of the equation

corresponds to the slope of the line for the comparison group.

Social outcomes. Looking at ratings of social preference, anxious

rejection sensitivity moderated the relationship between dating initiation and

social preference, but only for non-daters (See Table 4). For non-daters,

adolescents high in anxious rejection sensitivity were preferred less than their low

rejection sensitive non-dating peers (b=-.07, p=.004) (Figure 1). For average and

early daters, the slopes of the lines were not significant, indicating no interaction

effect (Average daters: b=.01, p=0.76; Early Daters: b=.04, p=0.33). There was no moderating effect of angry rejection sensitivity on the relationship between dating initiation and social preference (Table 4).

There were no moderating effects of anxious or angry rejection sensitivity on the association between dating initiation and popularity (Table 5 and 6), peer ratings of attractiveness (Table 7 and 8), or peer ratings of friendship (Table 9 and 10).

Intra-psychic outcomes. In contrast to expectations, there were no moderating effects of anxious or angry rejection sensitivity on the relationship between dating initiation and depressive symptoms (Table 11 and 12) or self-esteem (Table 13 and 14).

School-related outcomes. Angry rejection sensitivity moderated the association between dating initiation and ratings of chronic school stress (CSS), but only for early and average daters. As seen in Table 16 and Figure 2, Post hoc analyses indicated that for early daters, adolescents who were high in angry rejection sensitivity reported significantly higher rates of stress compared to their low rejection sensitive early dating peers (b=.11, p=.03). Average daters showed the same trend, with adolescents high in angry rejection sensitivity reporting higher stress compared to low rejection sensitive average dating peers (b=.06, p=.001). The line for non-daters was non-significant, indicating no interaction effect of angry rejection sensitivity on school stress (b=.02, p=.27). There was no effect of anxious rejection sensitivity on the association between dating initiation and school stress (Table 15).

There was also no moderating effect of angry or anxious rejection sensitivity on the relationship between early dating and school hassles (SH) (Table 17 and 18) or teacher reports of effort (Table 19 and 20) and performance (Table 21 and 22).

Discussion

This study was designed to further examine the influence of early dating initiation on both social and school-related outcomes and to investigate the potential role of rejection sensitivity in moderating these associations. Using school-based samples and classroom administration of questionnaires, we were able to assess adolescents on a wide array of developmental factors, and use a variety of reporters, including teachers and peers. Using a 9th grade time point, we were able to assess these factors following an important developmental transition, which marks a time of great change. These findings replicate previous research indicating the relative social benefit associated with dating (Connolly & Johnson, 1996), as well as an association between early dating and negative school related outcomes (Neeman et al., 1995; Quatman, Sampson, Robinson, & Watson, 2001). Additionally, rejection sensitivity appears to moderate the negative social impacts of failing to date by 9th grade as well as the negative school related impacts associated with early dating.

Social Factors

Given that dating at this time-point is thought to largely be a status symbol and likely plays a role in peer perceptions (Kupersmidt & Dodge, 2004), it is not surprising that daters in our sample had more favorable peer ratings.

Using sociometric measures, adolescents who begin dating at a normative time point were rated as more attractive and popular when compared to their non-dating peers. These results suggest that peers are attuned to dating status and those individuals who begin dating at a developmentally normative time point are conferred the most peer status benefits. This further suggests that adolescents are aware of the non-normative nature of early dating initiation and therefore perceive these peers less positively. There was no significant association between dating initiation and peer ratings of friendship and preference. Not dating may make adolescents seem less attractive and popular, but does not seem directly related to likeability and friendship. Alternatively, it is possible that rather than dating predicting positive social outcomes, adolescents who are already perceived as attractive and popular may be more likely to follow social norms and engage in dating in a more normative way.

In contrast, rejection sensitivity is generally associated with less positive peer relationships, both due to these negative expectations of rejection leading to avoidance and the demonstration of less prosocial behaviors (Levy, Ayduk, & Downey, 2002). In this same way, rejection sensitivity likely negatively impacts both the ability to initiate romantic relationships as well as the quality and number of peer relationships. As such, in our sample, anxious rejection sensitivity appeared to amplify the association between dating status and peer ratings, but only for adolescents who have not yet begun dating. Adolescents who began dating on time or early, were more frequently rated as liked by peers compared to non-daters, regardless of levels of anxious rejection sensitivity. Non-daters are

generally less well liked, but rejection sensitivity moderates this, such that

individuals who are high in anxious rejection sensitivity and are not dating were

even more rejected by peers than their low rejection sensitive non-dating peers.

Having never dated is becoming less normative by 9th grade, leading to more

negative peer perceptions for this group as a whole. Given that anxious rejection

sensitivity is associated with internalizing symptoms and avoidance in response to

potential rejection (Downey et al., 2004), adolescents high in anxious rejection

sensitivity likely respond in less positive ways to peers, and exacerbate their

peers' already negative perceptions of them. The social avoidance associated with

anxious rejection sensitivity likely further impedes dating initiation, which in turn

further reduces peer liking. For some individuals, this may prevent them from

being liked as well as prevent them from taking the risk of initiating dating

behavior.

Surprisingly, rejection sensitivity did not appear to impact social ratings

for adolescents in our sample who have already begun dating. Perhaps the more

salient factor of having been in a relationship overshadows any rejection sensitive

behaviors in the minds of their peers, and thus rejection sensitivity has no impact

on peer ratings.

Intra-personal Factors

While there is a clear social benefit to dating initiation, this same benefit

does not appear to extend to self-reports of self-esteem and depression.

Comparing on-time dating adolescents to adolescents who have yet to date,

adolescents dating at a normative time point had higher rates of depressive

symptoms, as well as lower rates of self-esteem. It appears that while their peers

see these adolescents in a positive light, adolescents who are average daters, and

thus have recently begun dating have a less positive internalized sense of well-

being. The literature suggests that while dating initiation is exciting for young

adolescents, it can also confer a sense of anxiety and uncertainty, as it provides a

new and foreign social interaction (Connolly et al., 1999). The social rules of

dating are different from those experienced in same-sex peer friendship and in

opposite-sex relationships with family. This sense of uncertainty likely has a

negative impact on adolescent's self-esteem and internalizing symptoms such as

depression. These relationships also tend to be short in duration and relatively

volatile (Furman & Shaffer, 2003) leading to frequent break ups, which are

generally associated with increased depressive symptoms (Joyner & Udry, 2000).

Contrary to previous research indicating an association between early

dating and internalizing symptoms (e.g., Quatman, Sampson, Robinson, &

Watson, 2001) within our study, adolescents who identified as early daters did not

show this same negative impact. By 9th grade, individuals who identify as early

daters have had several years to learn to navigate the dating world and may have

in effect recovered from any drops in internal well-being experienced during the

awkward early transition to the dating world. Over time, these adolescents may

be able to become more familiar with social scripts associated with dating and

therefore develop an increased sense of competence. This increased sense of

competence in their interpersonal world may in fact decrease experiences of low

self-esteem and depressive symptoms.

School-related Outcomes

Ninth grade marks an important transitional time point, as adolescents move from smaller middle schools to larger and more challenging high schools. Academics become more challenging and compartmentalized as increased pubertal and social development comes on board (Eccles et al., 1993; Eccles & Midgley, 1989). This provides both a social and an academic stress, as both arenas of their life are in flux. The choice to date may reflect a relative focus on the peer environment, perhaps at the cost of academics.

Within our sample, early dating was directly associated with self-reported feelings of school-related stress and hassles as well as lower teacher perceptions of academic effort and performance, replicating previous research associating early dating with poor academic performance and investment (Neeman et al., 1995; Quatman, Sampson, Robinson, & Watson, 2001. Notably, previous research suggests that academic disengagement is predictive of an associated increase in perceptions of stress (Rudolph et al., 2001), so perhaps for these early daters we are seeing an accumulation of negative school outcomes over time.

While dating after the age of thirteen is considered more normative, within our sample it appears that that any dating is associated with negative school-related outcomes. These average dating teens do not have significantly lower teacher ratings or significantly higher self-ratings of stress, yet the trend is for them to have more negative school outcomes when compared to non-daters. Given the literature on competing developmental goals at this time point (Eccles

et al., 1993), average dating adolescents are likely experiencing some level of stress as they juggle competing developmental demands.

Rejection sensitivity appears to magnify the negative association between dating and specific school outcomes. Looking at adolescent self-reports of school stress, early daters who are high in angry rejection sensitivity report higher school stress than their low rejection sensitive early dating peers. Similarly, on-time or average daters who are high in angry rejection sensitivity report more school stress than their low angry rejection sensitive on-time dater peers. This suggests that angry rejection sensitivity compounds the negative impact of dating on school-related stress. Angry rejection sensitivity is characterized by hostile and angry responses to potential rejection. Within an academic setting, adolescents may be experiencing rejection cues from teachers and other peers, which increase perceptions of school-related stress. Previous research has identified within adolescents, a developmental sequence of having poor self-regulation, leading to decreased academic engagement, and then increased perceptions of school-related stress, and finally an increase in depressive symptoms (Rudolph et al., 2001). Angry rejection sensitivity can be conceptualized as an aspect of self-regulation (Morf, 2006), which may lead to academic disengagement and increased stress in much this same way. Moreover, individuals high in angry rejection sensitivity experience more stress in interpersonal relationships (Levy, Ayduk, & Downey, 2002), which likely limits resources available for other challenges. Alternatively, dating may initially negatively impact these adolescents' school performance, and their angry rejection sensitive approach to the interpersonal world may compound

this. For an angry rejection sensitive adolescent, mild negative teacher feedback may lead to increased hostile and avoidant responses, which further negatively impact academic experiences.

Limitations

Our sample was drawn from a collection of high schools in the New England area, with relatively low rates of diversity, limiting how representative these results may be for other populations. Furthermore, our measure of dating initiation was limited by self-report and did not allow for further measurement of reciprocity and degree of physical involvement. Reciprocal ratings from dating partners would help to confirm that these relationships are or were indeed "serious," a factor that may influence the degree of impact dating may have. Previous research also indicates that sexual activity is associated with depression, violence, substance abuse, and decreased relationship quality and academic performance (Welsh et al., 2005; Williams et al., 2008) as well as risks of pregnancy and disease (Crockett et al. 1996; Leitenberg & Saltzman, 2000). Examining this as a factor may help to clarify the impact early dating and rejection sensitivity have on various outcomes. This could be expounded upon in further research, exploring more diverse populations as well as gathering a more complete picture of how participants are defining their "serious relationships." Further research should also explore how these impacts continue to play out into late adolescence and early adulthood. Perhaps adolescents who are not dating at ninth grade experience similar outcomes and negative impacts when dating initiation happens later, particularly if it occurs during another transitional period,

such as the transition to college. With age, there are likely benefits of increased

maturation, particular cognitive maturation, which may prove protective.

However, dating initiation is likely relatively stressful at any time, especially if

this coincides with another challenging transition or stressor.

Implications

The findings of this study are consistent with previous studies in

suggesting that the timing of dating initiation has important implications for

adolescents' socio-emotional well-being. Dating prior to or during the transition

to high school appears to promote social success while contributing to school

stress and undermining school performance. Together, these factors appear to

contribute to lower levels of personal well-being. Moreover, angry rejection

sensitivity appears to exacerbate the negative influence of dating on adolescents'

sense of school stress and anxious rejection sensitivity appears to further

undermine non-daters social status. Across the adolescent time period,

individuals are working to transition to new academic, social, and familial

challenges. These findings suggest that dating initiation has differential impacts

on each of these domains. Adolescents are arguably struggling to balance the

very differing demands of these domains, such that success in one domain

frequently leads to reduced success in another. Interventions directed at

promoting adolescent adjustment may need to be similarly sensitive to the

interdependence of these various domains, with particular sensitivity to aiding

dating youth to remain engaged in school. Moreover, adolescents who are

rejection sensitive may benefit the most from intervention efforts so as to

minimize academic or social deficits experienced in this transitional period.

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Table 1. Descriptive statistics for all measures

Measure		Early Daters	Average Daters	Non-daters	Total
SH	Mean	1.89	1.89	1.65	1.77
	SD	.51	.52	.339	.47
	N	37	125	159	321
CSS	Mean	2.35	2.34	1.99	2.17
	SD	.92	.84	.72	.81
	N	35	123	158	316
Teacher Effort	Mean	3.22	3.4	3.84	3.61
	SD	1.36	1.21	1.19	1.24
	N	39	120	181	340
Teacher Performance	Mean	3.04	3.43	3.84	3.6
	SD	1.45	1.09	1.09	1.17
	N	39	120	181	340
PR Attractiveness	Mean	.33	.56	.08	0
	SD	1.14	1.29	1.11	1
	N	29	96	117	242
PR Friendship	Mean	.17	.7	.55	.58
	SD	.78	1.05	1.04	1.03
	N	21	83	95	199
PR Popularity	Mean	.27	.52	-.09	.19
	SD	1.10	1.09	1.11	1.13
	N	29	96	117	242
PR Preference	Mean	.05	.43	-.09	.33
	SD	1.03	1.06	1.11	1.07
	N	29	96	117	242
CDI	Mean	.41	.44	.33	.38
	SD	.23	.29	.21	.25
	N	37	124	158	319
Self-Esteem	Mean	4.03	3.85	4.12	4.00
	SD	0.71	0.83	0.68	0.75
	N	36	123	158	317

Note: SH: School-related Hassles
CSS: Chronic School Stress
PR: Peer Sociometric rating
CDI: Child Depression Inventory

Table 2. Pearson Correlations

	1.	*2.*	*3.*	*4.*	*5.*	*6.*	*7.*	*8.*	*9.*	*10.*	*11.*	*12.*
1. SH	1.00											
2. CSS	.67**	1.00										
3. Teacher Effort	-.25**	-.40**	1.00									
4. Teacher Performance	-.23**	-.40**	.87**	1.00								
5. PR Attractiveness	.004	.03	.11	.12	1.00							
6. PR Friendship	-.10	-.07	.14	.21**	.57**	1.00						
7. PR Popularity	.03	.08	-.03	.05	.65**	.59**	1.00					
8. PR Preference	-.07	-.02	.19**	.26**	.48**	.63**	.56**	1.00				
9. CDI	.56**	.50**	-.19**	-.21*	-.11	-.15*	-.10	-.14*	1.00			
10. Self-Esteem	-.47**	-.44**	.23**	.27**	.16*	.16*	.11	.14*	-.76**	1.00		
11. Angry Rejection Sensitivity	.19**	.22**	-.02	-.07	-.08	-.08	-.06	-.12	.25**	-.26**	1.00	
12. Anxious Rejection Sensitivity	.18**	.19**	.03	-.02	-.06	-.03	-.16*	-.07	.33**	-.33**	.70**	1.00

Note: ** p<.01, *p<.05.
SH: School-related Hassles
CSS: Chronic School Stress
PR: Peer Sociometric rating
CDI: Child Depression Inventory

Table 3. Multiple Linear Regression testing the moderating impact of anxious

rejection sensitivity on the relationship between dating status and peer preference

ratings.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE B	B	SE B
Constant	.30*	.10	.27	.10
Dummy Coded Early Date	-.30*	.22	-.19	.22
Dummy Coded Average Date	.12	.15	.15	.15
Centered Anxious Rejection Sensitivity	-.02	.02	-.07**	.03
Anxious RS*Dummy 1			.12*	.05
Anxious RS*Dummy 2			.08*	.03
Change R^2		.02		.03
R^2		.02		.05
Change F		1.56		3.88*

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05
Dependent Variable: Peer Preference Scores
Non-Daters are used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 4. Multiple Linear Regression testing the moderating impact of angry

rejection sensitivity on the relationship between dating status and peer preference

ratings.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE B	B	SE B
Constant	.29**	.10	.26	.10
Dummy Coded Early Date	-.30	.22	-.23	.23
Dummy Coded Average Date	.14	.15	.16	.15
Centered Angry Rejection Sensitivity	-.04*	.02	-.08**	.03
Angry RS*Dummy 1			.08	.05
Angry RS*Dummy 2			.06	.04
Change R^2		.03		.01
R^2		.03		.04
Change F		2.47		1.53

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05

Dependent Variable: Peer Preference Scores
Non-Daters are used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression testing the moderating impact of anxious

rejection sensitivity on the relationship between dating status and peer popularity

ratings.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE B	B	SE B
Constant	-.14	.10	-.15	.10
Dummy Coded Early Date	.37	.22	.42	.23
Dummy Coded Average Date	.65**	.15	.66**	.15
Centered Anxious Rejection Sensitivity	-.05**	.02	-.06*	.03
Anxious RS*Dummy 1			.04	.05
Anxious RS*Dummy 2			.02	.03
Change R^2	.10		.00	
R^2	.10		.10	
Change F	8.70**		.42	

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05
Dependent Variable: Peer Ratings of Popularity
Non-Daters are used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression testing the moderating impact of angry

rejection sensitivity on the relationship between dating status and peer popularity

ratings.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE B	B	SE B
Constant	-.13	.10	-.14	.10
Dummy Coded Early Date	.39	.22	.37	.24
Dummy Coded Average Date	.63**	.15	.64**	.15
Centered Angry Rejection Sensitivity	-.03	.02	-.04	.03
Angry RS*Dummy 1			-.02	.07
Angry RS*Dummy 2			.03	.04

Change R^2		.07	.00
R^2		.07	.08
Change F		6.23**	.52

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05
Dependent variable: Peer Ratings of Popularity
Non-dating adolescents were used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 7. Multiple Linear Regression testing the moderating impact of anxious

rejection sensitivity on the relationship between dating status and peer

attractiveness ratings.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE *B*	*B*	SE *B*
Constant	.04	.11	.04	.11
Dummy Coded Early Date	.24	.24	.22	.24
Dummy Coded Average Date	.52**	.16	.52**	.16
Centered Anxious Rejection Sensitivity	-.02	.02	-.02	.03
Anxious RS*Dummy 1			-.02	.06
Anxious RS*Dummy 2			-.01	.04
Change R^2		.04		.00
R^2		.04		.04
Change F		3.73*		.05

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05
Dependent Variable: Peer Rating of Attractiveness
Non-Daters are used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 8. Multiple Linear Regression testing the moderating impact of angry

rejection sensitivity on the relationship between dating status and peer

attractiveness ratings.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE B	B	SE B
Constant	.03	.11	.03	.11
Dummy Coded Early Date	.25	.24	.18	.25

Dummy Coded Average Date	.53**	.16	.53**	.16
Centered Angry Rejection Sensitivity	-.03	.02	-.03	.03
Angry RS*Dummy 1			-.06	.07
Angry RS*Dummy 2			.01	.04
Change R^2		.05		.00
R^2		.05		.05
Change F		4.10**		.53

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05
Dependent variable: Peer Rating of
Attractiveness
Non-dating adolescents were used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 9. Multiple Linear Regression testing the moderating impact of anxious

rejection sensitivity on the relationship between dating status and peer ratings of

friendship.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE *B*	*B*	SE *B*
Constant	.51**	.11	.46**	.11
Dummy Coded Early Date	-.35	.25	-.32	.25
Dummy Coded Average Date	.20	.16	.24	.16
Centered Anxious Rejection Sensitivity	-.01	.02	-.06	.03
Anxious RS*Dummy 1			.03	.06
Anxious RS*Dummy 2			.08	.04
Change R^2	.03		.03	
R^2	.03		.05	
Change F	1.78		2.70	

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05
Dependent Variable: Peer Ratings of Friendship
Non-Daters are used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 10. Multiple Linear Regression testing the moderating impact of angry

rejection sensitivity on the relationship between dating status and peer ratings of

friendship.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE B	B	SE B
Constant	.49**	.11	.44**	.11
Dummy Coded Early Date	-.35	.25	-.34	.26
Dummy Coded Average Date	.22	.16	.26	.16
Centered Angry Rejection Sensitivity	-.03	.02	-.07*	.03
Angry RS*Dummy 1			.01	.08
Angry RS*Dummy 2			.08	.04
Change R^2		.03		.02
R^2		.03		.05
Change F		2.29		1.87

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05
Dependent variable: Peer Ratings of Friendship
Non-dating adolescents were used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 11. Multiple Linear Regression testing the moderating impact of anxious

rejection sensitivity on the relationship between dating status and Child

Depressive Inventory scores.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE *B*	*B*	SE *B*
Constant	.33**	.02	.33**	.02
Dummy Coded Early Date	.09*	.04	.09	.04
Dummy Coded Average Date	.10**	.03	.10**	.03
Centered Anxious Rejection Sensitivity	.02**	.00	.01**	.01
Anxious RS*Dummy 1			-.00	.01
Anxious RS*Dummy 2			.01	.01
Change R^2		.14		.01
R^2		.14		.15
Change F		17.43**		2.00

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05
Dependent Variable: Child Depression Inventory
Non-Daters are used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 12. Multiple Linear Regression testing the moderating impact of angry

rejection sensitivity on the relationship between dating status and Child

Depressive Inventory scores.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE B	B	SE B
Constant	.33**	.02	.33**	.02
Dummy Coded Early Date	.09*	.04	.09*	.04
Dummy Coded Average Date	.10**	.03	.10**	.03
Centered Angry Rejection Sensitivity	.02**	.00	.01*	.00
Angry RS*Dummy 1			.01	.01
Angry RS*Dummy 2			.01	.01
Change R^2	.10		.10	
R^2	.10		.00	
Change F	11.78**		.69	

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05

Dependent variable: Child Depression Inventory
Non-dating adolescents were used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 13. Multiple Linear Regression testing the moderating impact of anxious

rejection sensitivity on the relationship between dating status and Self-Esteem

scores.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE *B*	*B*	SE *B*
Constant	4.11**	.06	4.11**	.06
Dummy Coded Early Date	-.11	.13	-.11	.13
Dummy Coded Average Date	-.23**	.09	-.23**	.09
Centered Anxious Rejection Sensitivity	-.05**	.01	-.04**	.01
Anxious RS*Dummy 1			.01	.03
Anxious RS*Dummy 2			-.03	.02
Change R^2	.13		.01	
R^2	.13		.14	
Change F	15.40**		1.46	

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05

Dependent Variable: Self-Esteem
Non-Daters are used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 14. Multiple Linear Regression testing the moderating impact of angry

rejection sensitivity on the relationship between dating status and Self-Esteem

scores.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE B	B	SE B
Constant	4.12**	.06	4.12**	.06
Dummy Coded Early Date	-.13	.13	-.13	.14
Dummy Coded Average Date	-.25**	.09	-.25**	.09
Centered Angry Rejection Sensitivity	-.05**	.01	-.05**	.02
Angry RS*Dummy 1			-.00	.04
Angry RS*Dummy 2			-.01	.02
Change R^2	.09		.00	
R^2	.09		.09	
Change F	10.44**		.02	

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05
Dependent variable: Self-Esteem
Non-dating adolescents were used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 15. Multiple linear regression testing the moderating impact of anxious

rejection sensitivity on Chronic School Stress.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE *B*	*B*	SE *B*
Constant	2.00**	.06	2.00**	.06
Dummy Coded Early Date	.37*	.15	.38**	.15
Dummy Coded Average Date	.32**	.10	.33**	.09
Centered Anxious Rejection Sensitivity	.03**	.01	.02	.02
Anxious RS*Dummy 1			.04	.03
Anxious RS*Dummy 2			.01	.02
Change R^2	.08		.00	
R^2	.08		.08	

Change F	9.05**		.73	

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05

Dependent Variable: Chronic School Stress

Non-Daters are used as the comparison group in dummy coding

Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1

Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 16. Multiple linear regression testing the moderating impact of angry

rejection sensitivity on Chronic School Stress.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE B	B	SE B
Constant	2.00**	.06	2.00**	.061
Dummy Coded Early Date	.38**	.14	.43**	.145
Dummy Coded Average Date	.33**	.09	.33*	.092
Centered Angry Rejection Sensitivity	.04**	.01	.02	.016
Angry RS*Dummy 1			.09*	.039
Angry RS*Dummy 2			.04	.023
Change R^2		.09		.02
R^2		.09		.11
Change F		10.55**		3.31*

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05

Dependent variable: Chronic School Stress

Non-dating adolescents were used as the comparison group in dummy coding

Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1

Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 17. Multiple linear regression testing the moderating impact of anxious

rejection sensitivity on School-related Hassles.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE *B*	*B*	SE *B*
Constant	1.65**	.04	1.65**	.04
Dummy Coded Early Date	.25**	.08	.26**	.08
Dummy Coded Average Date	.23**	.05	.23**	.05
Centered Anxious Rejection Sensitivity	.02**	.01	.01**	.01
Anxious RS*Dummy 1			.02	.02
Anxious RS*Dummy 2			.00	.01
Change R^2		.09		.00
R^2		.09		.10

Change F	10.89**		1.65	

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05

Dependent Variable: School-related Hassles

Non-Daters are used as the comparison group in dummy coding

Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1

Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 18. Multiple linear regression testing the moderating impact of angry

rejection sensitivity on School-related Hassles.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE B	B	SE B
Constant	1.65**	.04	1.65**	.04
Dummy Coded Early Date	.25**	.08	.27**	.08
Dummy Coded Average Date	.23**	.06	.23*	.05
Centered Angry Rejection Sensitivity	.02**	.01	.02	.016
Angry RS*Dummy 1			.03	.02
Angry RS*Dummy 2			.02	.01
Change R^2		.1		.01
R^2		.1		.11
Change F		11.79**		1.22

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05

Dependent variable: School-related Hassles

Non-dating adolescents were used as the comparison group in dummy coding

Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1

Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 19. Multiple linear regression testing the moderating impact of anxious

rejection sensitivity on Teacher Effort ratings.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE *B*	*B*	SE *B*
Constant	3.89**	.10	3.89**	.10
Dummy Coded Early Date	-.47*	.23	-.47*	.23
Dummy Coded Average Date	-.50**	.15	-.49**	.15
Centered Anxious Rejection Sensitivity	.01	.02	.04	.02
Anxious RS*Dummy 1			-.02	.05
Anxious RS*Dummy 2			-.06	.03
Change R^2		.04		.01
R^2		.04		.05

Change F		4.39**		1.65

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05
Dependent Variable: Teacher Effort Ratings
Non-Daters are used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 20. Multiple linear regression testing the moderating impact of angry

rejection sensitivity on Teacher Effort ratings.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE B	B	SE B
Constant	3.89**	.10	3.89**	.10
Dummy Coded Early Date	-.48*	.23	-.49*	.23
Dummy Coded Average Date	-.49**	.15	-.48**	.15
Centered Angry Rejection Sensitivity	-.01	.02	.02	.03
Angry RS*Dummy 1			-.03	.06
Angry RS*Dummy2			-.05	.04
Change R^2		.04		.01
R^2		.04		.05
Change F		4.23**		.95

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05

Dependent variable: Teacher Effort
Non-dating adolescents were used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 21. Multiple linear regression testing the moderating impact of anxious

rejection sensitivity on Teacher Performance ratings.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE *B*	*B*	SE *B*
Constant	3.91**	.09	3.91**	.09
Dummy Coded Early Date	-.66**	.21	-.64**	.21
Dummy Coded Average Date	-.48**	.14	-.47**	.14
Centered Anxious Rejection Sensitivity	-.00	.01	-.01	.02
Anxious RS*Dummy 1			.03	.05
Anxious RS*Dummy 2			-.09	.03
Change R^2		.05		.01
R^2		.05		.06

Change F	5.68**	1.19

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05
Dependent Variable: Teacher Performance Ratings
Non-Daters are used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Table 22. Multiple linear regression testing the moderating impact of angry

rejection sensitivity on Teacher Performance ratings.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	SE B	B	SE B
Constant	3.90**	.09	3.91**	.09
Dummy Coded Early Date	-.67**	.21	-.66**	.22
Dummy Coded Average Date	-.47**	.14	-.46**	.14
Centered Angry Rejection Sensitivity	-.02	.02	.00	.02
Angry RS*Dummy 1			.00	.06
Angry RS*Dummy 2			-.04	.03
Change R^2		.06		.01
R^2		.06		.06
Change F		6.11**		.80

Note. ** p<.01; *p<.05

Dependent variable: Teacher Performance
Non-dating adolescents were used as the comparison group in dummy coding
Dummy Coded Early Date has early daters coded as 1
Dummy Coded Average Date has average daters coded as 1

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Moderating effect of anxious rejection sensitivity on peer preference

ratings.

Figure 2. Moderating effect of angry rejection sensitivity on school stress.

Moderating Effect of Anxious Rejection Sensitivity on Peer Preference Ratings