

Oral Defense Announcement

University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology with an emphasis in Clinical-Community Psychology

Kathryn E. Cherry

M.A. in Psychology, August 2018, University of Missouri-St. Louis

M.A. in Social Sciences, June 2014, University of Chicago

B.A. in Psychology, May 2013, Northeastern Illinois University

What Does Masculinity Have to Do with It? The Roles of Fathers in the Socialization of Children's Emotions and Emotion Regulation

Date: December 10th, 2021

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Place: Remote

Abstract

Emotion regulation skills are important in a variety of domains throughout the lifespan, including psychological, social, academic, and occupational functioning. Research on children's emotion regulation skill development often examines the family, exploring caregiver approaches to emotion socialization. However, this research has predominantly been conducted with mothers. Fathering is of particular interest to children's emotional development for a variety of reasons, including the role of traditional Western masculine norms in gendered differences in emotion expression and regulation techniques. Fathers' conformity with masculine norms and difficulty with emotion regulation have potential to impact their emotion socialization practices, and therefore relate to their children's development of emotion regulation skills. This study modeled the relations among fathers' conformity to masculine norms, emotion regulation difficulties, emotion socialization behaviors with their children, and their children's difficulty with emotion regulation. Fathers of children ages 6-10 (n=337) were surveyed using self-report measures through Amazon's Mechanical Turk and Reddit. Results found fathers' conformity to masculine norms was associated with poorer emotion regulation and socialization of children's emotions. Fathers' difficulty with emotion regulation was also related to more unsupportive emotion socialization responses, with differences by child gender in supportive responses. Both father emotion regulation and socialization related to children's emotion regulation, such that fathers with less emotion regulation difficulty had children with more adaptive emotion regulation. Overall, conformity to masculine norms appears relevant to fathers' emotional functioning and parenting, and fathers' emotion regulation skills may be a worthwhile target for prevention and intervention in the transmission of psychopathology across generations.

Defense of Dissertation Committee

Emily Gerstein, Ph.D.

Matthew Taylor, Ph.D.

Rachel Wamser-Nanney, Ph.D.

Susan Kashubeck-West, Ph.D.