In Good Company: Adolescent Well-Being and Shared Time with Family, Neighbors, Mentors, and Friends

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Abstract

Adolescents spend most of their time interacting with people, and family, social, and community interactions play a prominent role in long-run adolescent development. However, little is known about how adolescents feel as they interact with others. This study identifies the immediate emotional response of adolescents as they spend time with parents, siblings, extended family members, friends, mentors, and other adults in their community. Relying on nationally representative data from the American Time Use Survey from 2003-2016, we find that adolescents in non-nuclear families particularly benefit from spending time with older siblings and nonresident parents. In addition, spending time with mentors and adult acquaintances improves well-being for some but not all adolescents, suggesting a need for care when designing policies aimed at adolescent involvement in communities.

Keywords: adolescent development, well-being, family interactions, community exposure, time use

JEL: D64, J12, J13, Z13

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Introduction

Despite stereotypical beliefs that adolescents spend too much time alone, in reality adolescents in the United States spend about 83% of their waking hours in the company of others. These daily interactions influence adolescent development in important ways. While we know that family members, friends, and adults in a community shape adolescents' outcomes, we know little about the daily mechanics that build long-run patterns, including how adolescents feel when in the company of other people. The well-being adolescents immediately experience when spending time with other people influences their thought processes, behavior, and health. Perhaps valuable experiences with family, friends, and community members are not immediately pleasant for adolescents and yield benefits only in the long run. Or valuable experiences may in fact appeal to adolescents immediately in addition to supplying long-run benefits. This study aims to examine how adolescents feel when spending time with family members, friends, mentors, and adults in their communities to more fully understand the implications of shared time.

There is great interest among parents and policy-makers alike in understanding which factors at home and in communities help or hinder adolescents. Adolescence is a time of rapid social, emotional, and physical development, accompanied by academic pressures, social sensitivity, and a gradual detachment from parents and home life. Adolescents can be particularly vulnerable to destructive influences during this time. In view of the high stakes involved in adolescent development, it is important to understand which individuals at home and in communities provide a protective influence on adolescents. Identifying whose company improves well-being has implications for policy, community programs, and preventive interventions aimed at adolescents. We therefore study adolescent immediate well-being when sharing time with immediate family members, extended family members, friends, mentors, and adult community members.

We rely on a novel data set to explore adolescent well-being. To estimate connections between shared time of individuals and adolescent well-being, we use the American Time Use Survey (ATUS; see Hofferth, Flood, & Sobeck, 2015), a data set that offers advantageous features for this research. First, the data are nationally representative, allowing us to move beyond small, homogenous samples to explore a broad view as well as examine nuances of shared time stemming from diversity in sociodemographics and familial contexts. Second, the

data were generated in natural settings and situations of daily life, thus minimizing concerns about generalizability of the findings. Third, the data contain complete information about activities adolescents were engaged in when sharing time with others, allowing us to estimate companion effects on well-being separate from activity context (Lam, McHale, & Crouter, 2012). Finally, we utilize the panel nature of the data to account for unobserved individual heterogeneity. To date, very little work on adolescent shared time can isolate causation from confounds. By using fixed effects modeling, we move the literature beyond associations and closer to causal explanations.

Extant research on an adolescent's immediate well-being when sharing time with others has focused almost exclusively on the parent-child relationship and has neglected other relationships (Larson & Almeida, 1999), notwithstanding the important role that siblings, extended family members, mentors, and friends play in shaping long-run outcomes. We therefore carefully consider interactions between adolescents and a broader set of companions, considering that as adolescents age, they increase autonomy, transform family relationships, and develop a stronger sense of self (Guisinger & Blatt, 1994).

When examining the role shared time plays in adolescent development, researchers have primarily focused on connections with a particular individual. However, we obtain a more holistic picture of shared time responses of adolescents when we simultaneously estimate the comparative contributions of all individuals connected to an adolescent. For example, immediate well-being may differ depending on whether an adolescent is with a friend versus a family member. Understanding immediate responses to contact relative to other contact or time alone may clarify why adolescents may or may not be spending time with certain people in their lives.

Shared Time as a Context of Adolescent Development

From broad theories of human ecology (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) to specific theories of adolescent development (Hill, 1983; Steinberg, 2016), scholars believe that contact with people shapes adolescent outcomes. Adolescents learn through observing their world, spending time with role models, and imitating those around them (Bandura & Walters, 1959). Although theoretically these interactions influence adolescent outcomes, little is known about the processes of adolescent contacts that lead to these global outcomes (Bronfenbrenner, 1995). Social learning theory posits that development is a product of accumulated socialization

experiences with people in an adolescent's environment (Spielberger, 2004). Socialization agents such as parents, siblings, extended family members, mentors, neighbors, and friends alter the context in which adolescents learn. Because adolescents develop through learning by observation, spending time with role models, and imitating those around them (Bandura & Walters, 1959), they develop differently depending on whom they spend time with, what is modeled and taught during interactions, and the underlying connection with socializing agents.

The growth of an adolescent's identity and independence plays out over a multitude of scenarios and situations, ranging from home and school interactions to work relationships, religious affiliations, and interactions with neighbors and acquaintances, where the adolescent increasingly learns to navigate life without adult supervision. Individuals in close relational proximity to an adolescent, such as parents, likely play a different role in development compared to others with more removed relationships by virtue of the relational proximity to an adolescent.

Family Structure and Shared Time

There is considerable evidence that adolescent outcomes vary by household structure, suggesting that responses to shared time may differ as well. Children living within a nuclear family tend to exhibit better global outcomes than children in other household structures on educational, social, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions (for a full review of these studies, see Brown, 2010). Despite previous research suggesting differential psychological well-being for adolescents in stepfamilies (Jensen & Howard, 2015; Meggiolaro & Ongaro, 2014) and single-parent families (Turunen, 2013), most research exploring shared time with adolescents focuses on nuclear families (Lam et al., 2012). Because of this gap in the literature, we examine the potentially heterogeneous impact of shared time on adolescent well-being using different household makeups.

To date, much of the research on youth outcomes sensitive to family structure has used between-group analytics in which researchers compare children in nuclear versus non-nuclear families across well-being measures (Jensen & Harris, 2017). While our analysis can be used for between-group analysis, we offer additional insight by exploring within-group analysis in which variation within a common family type is explored. Within-group analysis is valuable and justified for three reasons. First, family structure in part determines the set of people available to share time with an adolescent, and neglecting family structure hides relevant responses by adolescents in non-nuclear homes to nonresident parents and stepparents. Second, outcomes may

vary substantially among youth of different family types, and a focus within a family type more precisely conveys a particular adolescent's experience. Finally, focusing on the adolescent experience within a specific home context improves the precision of policies, programs, and interventions aimed at adolescents.

Adolescent Relationships and Shared Time

Parents. The role of parents in adolescent development is arguably the most studied topic in the field of adolescence (Collins & Laursen, 2004). Parents' investing time in adolescents may bring about social learning (Bandura & Walters, 1959), greater ability of parents to respond to their child's needs (Maccoby & Martin, 1983), an improved context of a child's environment (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), and healthy attachment to parents (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). When children spend time with parents, parents have more opportunities to coach children in their development and model prosocial behavior. In addition, a self-conception theory suggests that time with parents can improve immediate well-being; when parents greet adolescent actions with interest, adolescents will make positive attributions about themselves, leading to improved immediate well-being for the adolescent (Lam et al., 2012). However, as adolescents increase in autonomy, the time they spend with parents may allow opportunities for conflict. Adolescent-parent conflict is likely to shape adolescent well-being, as these conflicts involve higher levels of negative affect between the parties than in other conflicts an adolescent might experience (Adams & Laursen, 2001). Thus, theory provides reasons to observe both positive and negative immediate responses from adolescents when spending time with parents.

From an empirical standpoint, little is known about how parents and children share time (Lam et al., 2012) or about how children immediately respond to interactions with parents. We do know that the quantity of time adolescents spend with parents decreases in adolescence (Larson et al., 1996) and that parents report that interactions have "less frequent expressions of positive emotions and more frequent expressions of negative emotions" when compared with interactions between parents and preadolescent children (Damon & Lerner, 2008). Despite negative forces at work, much extant research reports positive general benefits to children when parents spend time with children (Price, 2008), when mothers spend time at home (Datcher-Loury, 1988), when fathers are involved with children (Pleck, 1997), and when parents read and play with children (Zick et al., 2001). In addition, Cripps and Zyromski (2009) found that adolescents living with involved and supportive parents reported higher levels of self-esteem,

happiness, and self-satisfaction. Nonetheless, little research specifically addresses the immediate response of adolescents when sharing time with parents. In summary, theory suggests that both positive and negative forces shape adolescents' immediate well-being when sharing time with parents. Given the lack of theoretical consensus and scant research on immediate responses to shared time, we make no specific hypothesis about parents' roles in adolescent immediate well-being when sharing time.

Both parents together. Strong research evidence suggests that, in nuclear families, spending time with multiple family members at the same time increases youths' well-being (Hofferth & Sandberg, 2001), but researchers debate whether this effect is due to the types of activities engaged in or the simple fact of spending time together (Crouter, Head, McHale, & Tucker, 2004). For example, Shira Offer (2013) used an experiential sampling technique to associate joint eating activities and joint leisure time with improved adolescent well-being, and joint household time with negative changes in well-being. We contribute to the understanding of how spending time with both parents affects adolescent well-being by similarly controlling for distinct types of activities in which families can engage, while allowing relative comparisons to more adolescent companion types. We hypothesize that spending time with both parents will improve adolescent immediate well-being.

Stepparents. Shared time with stepparents may affect youth well-being through positive and negative mechanisms. A socialization hypothesis predicts improved child well-being with the presence of a stepparent who provides additional positive support and warmth (Sweeney, 2010). On the other hand, interactions with a stepparent who is a "relative stranger" to an adolescent may not naturally feel warm and comfortable (Beer, 1988). These strained interactions with stepparents might increase adolescent stress and overt conflict within the relationship (Turunen, 2013).

Empirical research presents a mixed view of adolescents' responses to shared time with a stepparent. Some prior research found that adolescents perceived a more positive relationship when stepparents talked with stepchildren daily (Schrodt, Soliz, & Braithwaite, 2008) and when they spent time together (Ganong, Coleman, & Jamison, 2011). On the other hand, Larson (2005) found that too much one-on-one time was linked to perceptions of a lower-quality stepparent-child relationship. Ironically, youths often desire the support of stepparents but react unfavorably when stepparents assert authority in the family (Pace, Shafer, Jensen, & Larson,

2015). The lack of clarity seen in empirical work may stem from the varying ways stepparents enact the stepparent role, considering the increasingly incomplete institutionalization of stepfamilies (King, Thorsen, & Amato, 2014). This indistinctness may also result from the simultaneous positive and negative forces at work in the stepparent-child relationship. Due to mixed theoretical and empirical predictions, we make no specific hypotheses about how adolescents immediately respond to shared time with a stepparent.

Nonresident parents. Many of the theoretical reasons to believe that adolescents respond to sharing time with parents apply equally to nonresident parents. Shared time with nonresident parents provides opportunities for nonresident parents to engage in active parenting but is not sufficient for a close relationship to emerge (King & Amato, 2006). Deep interest and involvement during shared time is thought to strengthen a youth's sense of emotional security and ability to cope with stress (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999) as well as strengthen the transfer of social capital (King & Amato, 2006).

Empirical finding which connect global well-being with the frequency of visitation with nonresident parents are mixed (see meta-analysis by Amato & Gilbreth, 1999). No work, however, has evaluated the immediate response of adolescents when sharing time with nonresident parents. We fill this gap in the literature. In addition, we control for the activities engaged in together, given concerns that nonresident parents may be "Disneyland parents" who share time only in leisure and fun (Stewart, 1999). In view of mixed findings in prior work, we make no specific hypotheses about how shared time with nonresident parents affects the immediate well-being of adolescents.

Siblings. Although considerably less research has focused on the adolescent-sibling relationship than on the relationship of adolescents with their parents (McHale, Updegraff, & Whiteman, 2012), an emerging body of literature on sibling influences suggests that siblings positively and negatively influence one another. Most relevant to this study are theories suggesting that siblings influence one another through warmth or conflict when spending time with each other. Social-cognitive development theory suggests that spending time together as siblings provides opportunities for development. Sibling interactions provide opportunities to learn new skills and behaviors (Jensen, Whiteman, Loeser, & Bernard, 2018) and to practice resolving conflict (Brody, 1998). These types of interactions would likely be positive for adolescents' immediate well-being. However, destructive sibling conflicts in adolescence are

connected with negative global outcomes, such as deviancy and internalizing problems (Banks et al., 2004; Buist et al., 2013); this type of contact would likely decrease immediate well-being. While adolescents generally view sibling relationships as strong (Cole & Kearns, 2001) and closer to friendship than adolescent-parent relationships (Buhrmester & Furman, 1990), empirically, we know these relationships evolve through adolescence (Kim, McHale, Osgood, & Crouter, 2006). We know little about how adolescents immediately respond to contact with siblings, and we fill this gap in the literature by exploring adolescent well-being when spending time with siblings.

Parent support and family structure influences sibling relationships (Derkman et al., 2011). Compensation theory suggests that siblings draw closer together to compensate for and overcome disharmony or tension, and past research has established that siblings from disharmonious families have stronger relationships than those from harmonious families (Jenkins, 1992). This line of reasoning leads us to suspect that adolescents in non-nuclear families respond well to sharing time with siblings. On the other hand, a congruence hypothesis suggests that the positive emotional support drawn from highly available parents spills into positive sibling relationships, and research finds support for this hypothesis as well (Rinaldi & Howe, 2003; Seginer, 1998). Considering the lack of consensus on how adolescents with different family structures will respond when sharing time with siblings, we make no hypothesis about differences across family structure, and the analysis is exploratory.

Older siblings likely impact adolescent well-being differently than do younger siblings. Social learning theory explains that youths likely model older siblings when developing attitudes, skills, and behaviors, and older siblings are thought to be especially powerful models for younger siblings (Jensen et al., 2018). In line with a sibling-trainer hypothesis, research has found that older siblings can negatively impact younger adolescent siblings through negative modeling (Solmeyer, McHale, & Crouter, 2014; Whiteman, Jensen, Mustillo, & Maggs, 2016). On the other hand, older siblings can offer positive help and guidance for younger siblings (Tucker, McHale, & Crouter, 2001). Because the literature on sibling interactions has focused on the impacts of older siblings, we know little about adolescent well-being in relation to spending time with younger siblings. Interacting with and caring for younger siblings is a practice that occurs regularly and broadly across household types (Wikle, Jensen, & Hoagland, 2017), and adolescent well-being during this type of contact deserves more attention.

Much of the past work on sibling-influence processes measures patterns of associations rather than establishing causal links of influence on adolescents (Jensen et al., 2018). Our research addresses this gap in the literature. Theory suggests that an adolescent's well-being may improve or decline when spending time with siblings. Empirical reports of positive views of sibling relationships with older siblings generally lead us to hypothesize that the presence of an older sibling will contribute to an adolescent's emotional well-being in a positive manner. We make no hypothesis about how adolescents respond to sharing time with younger siblings because research on this relationship is limited and the analysis is exploratory.

Extended family members. Family networks beyond the immediate family presumably influence adolescent well-being and development; however, we know little about adolescent well-being when spending time with extended family members. Connections between extended family members and adolescent well-being are complicated and likely depend on frequency of contact, culture, and genetic relationship, among other factors (Hamilton, 2005). There is strong evidence of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic variation in the role of adolescent–extended family relationships on long-run adolescent well-being. The social networks of African American and Latino families in the United States are "more cohesive and include a larger proportion of extended family members" than those of European Americans (Smetana, Campione-Barr, & Metzger, 2006, p. 266). These adolescents rely on these networks more commonly as sources of emotional support (Harwood, Leyendecker, Carlson, Asencio, & Miller, 2002; Taylor & Roberts, 1995), and these relationships are linked with improved academic achievement (Budescu & Silverman, 2016) and reduced incidences of depression and delinquency (Hamilton, 2005; Margolis, Fosco, & Stormshak, 2016) in some populations. There has been little research investigating whether these relationships vary across race.

Considering clear patterns found in previous associations between extended family involvement and positive global outcomes for adolescents, we suspect a link between shared time with extended family members and adolescent well-being. We hypothesize that adolescent well-being improves with contact with extended family members, but we expect that this effect will be more pronounced for Black and Hispanic adolescents than for Caucasian adolescents.

Mentors and adult neighbors. Understanding adolescent responses to spending time with mentors is warranted, considering that adults in adolescents' lives may be the most important developmental asset for positive growth (Theokas & Lerner, 2006) and that mentors

offer effective avenues of continued support not easily duplicated (DuBois & Karcher, 2013). Indeed, Jencks and Mayer (1990) suggested ways in which these supportive and encouraging relationships with nonparental adults might influence an adolescent's development. Their collective socialization theory posits that neighborhood mentors and role models serve to socialize adolescents through modeling and teaching. In these interactions, mentors can also provide benefits beyond role modeling, including giving guidance, steering youth toward rewarding careers (McDonald & Lambert, 2014), and providing an adolescent with advantageous connections (Erickson, McDonald, & Elder, 2009). Adolescents find mentors through formal programs such as after-school programs, community youth programs, and religious activities. In addition, many adolescents report having relationships with supportive, "natural mentor" adults who have emerged from other contexts (Hurd & Zimmerman, 2010). Prior research documents a correlation between having mentors and global outcomes such as improved psychosocial functioning (DuBois & Silverthorn, 2005) and improved academic performance (Rhodes, Grossman, & Resch, 2000). However, if adolescents do not find contact with mentors to be enjoyable or meaningful, they may be less likely to continue mentored relationships and may miss out on the long-term benefits these relationships provide. We know little about the immediate response of adolescents to time spent with mentors, and we fill this gap in the literature.

In view of a strong consensus on the important role of adults in adolescent development, it seems natural to study adolescent responses to shared time with more removed nonrelative adults, such as neighbors. In focusing on adult neighbors, we must include some natural mentors as well as some less involved adults. Neighbors socially removed from adolescents still have occasion to interact with adolescents, model prosocial behavior, and provide positive support and encouragement, although their contact is likely less frequent and their interest less established. The scant empirical research measuring adolescent responses to interacting with neighbors suggests that in Germany, family and peer relationships are much more important for adolescent well-being than are neighbor relationships, though neighbor effects are still substantial, particularly with regard to adolescent mental health (Bügelmayer & Schnitzlein, 2014).

Because there is a growing interest in neighborhood effects, it is important that we gain a better understanding of the effect of mentors and adult acquaintances on adolescent immediate well-being, as well as place those results in context with the effects of family members and

peers. By determining adolescents' responses to shared time with community members, the current project is relevant to both sociological and economic theory, as well as to social policy aimed at understanding and improving mentoring programs and neighborhood effects more generally. Theoretical models predict positive effects; thus, we suspect that adolescents will report improved immediate well-being when spending time with mentors and adult neighbors.

Friends and peer networks. As adolescents age, peer relationships play an increasingly prominent role in their lives. Models of epidemic spread posit that friends influence adolescence during shared time through modeling and imitation (Jencks & Mayer, 1990). Peer relationships differ from relationships with family members because they are both more voluntary and more transitory (Laursen & Hartup, 2002). Perhaps because of this, adolescents commonly report that their friend relationships are their "most important extra familial resources and influences" (Damon & Lerner, 2008, p. 557) and begin to perceive parents as less of a primary source of support than friends, placing friends and parents on equal footing (Helsen, Vollbergh, & Meeus, 2000; Scholte, Van Lieshout, & Van Aken, 2001).

Research has found positive benefits of strong peer relationships on adolescent well-being (Simmons, Burgeson, & Reef, 1988) and academic achievement (Parker et al., 2015). Low-quality friendships are associated with loneliness, depression, and decreased school achievement (Hartup, 1996), and difficulty connecting with peers has been linked to negative personal and social characteristics (e.g., Abecassis, Hartup, Haselager, Scholte, & Van Lieshout, 2002).

Some evidence shows that adolescent responses to friends differ across sexes. In general, adolescent girls tend to have "fewer but more intensive" relationships with peers, while boys "have a more extensive network, but largely consisting of more superficial relationships" (Helsen et al., 2000, p. 320). Girls also tend to view their peers as more supportive than do boys (Cheng & Chan, 2004). However, similar research has found no significant gender differences for the effects of peer relationships on emotional well-being (Helsen et al., 2000). Similarly, research has found no significant differences in these impacts across racial or cultural boundaries. Considering prior research on attachments between adolescents and friends, we hypothesize that the presence of friends will result in positive changes in an adolescent's reporting of his or her immediate well-being. Further, we hypothesize that adolescent girls and boys will respond similarly to time with friends.

This Study

In the current study, we examine how adolescents feel when sharing time with parents, stepparents, nonresident parents, siblings, extended family members, mentors, adult neighbors, and friends, and we make four distinct contributions to the literature. Our first contribution is a thorough study of shared time with an expanded set of individuals in adolescents' daily lives. Prior work on shared time has focused almost exclusively on the parent-child relationship and has neglected other relationships (Larson & Almeida, 1999). We therefore carefully consider interactions between adolescents and a broader set of companions, given the relationship transformations and increased autonomy seen during adolescence (Guisinger & Blatt, 1994). Additionally, we simultaneously estimate adolescent responses to shared time with many people. By performing simultaneous estimation rather than individual estimations, we can compare adolescent experience with companions relative to other companions or time alone to provide a more complete picture of shared time responses and tradeoffs.

Second, we provide separate estimates for adolescents hailing from nuclear families, stepparent families, and single-parent families, extending the shared time literature beyond nuclear families (Lam et al., 2012). Because family structure in part determines the set of people available to share time, sensitivity to family structure enables us to detect responses by adolescents in non-nuclear homes to nonresident parents and stepparents. Additionally, outcomes may vary substantially among youth of different family types, and a focus within a family type more precisely convey an adolescent's experience and provide more refined information relevant for policy and interventions.

Our third contribution is our use of a large, nationally representative sample from the United States. The heterogeneous data allow us to move the literature beyond small, homogenous samples to explore a broad view and to examine nuances of shared time stemming from sociodemographic diversity and difference in family structures. The data contain complete activity information, allowing us to avoid confounding activities with companions (Lam et al., 2012).

Fourth, we utilize the panel nature of the data to estimate causal effects. By using fixed effects modeling, we move the literature beyond associations and closer to causal explanations. Although associations have contributed to our knowledge about connections between

relationships and adolescent well-being, to this point very little work has been able to isolate causation from confounds for many relationships (Jensen et al., 2018).

Method

Participants

Our empirical analysis of adolescent well-being utilizes individual-level time-use diaries from the American Time Use Surveys (ATUS; see Hofferth et al., 2015). Of particular interest is the survey's Well-Being Module, implemented in 2010, 2012, and 2013. During these years, respondents rated their well-being for up to three daily activities chosen at random. These states include happiness, sadness, fatigue, and stress, as well as an indicator for how meaningful the respondent viewed the activity to be. This sample includes 1,870 adolescents between the ages of 15 and 18 who were not parents. Within the final sample, adolescents reported their well-being for up to three distinct activities, giving a total of 5,070 activities for the analysis. These participants came from every state within the United States and Washington, DC. We separated adolescents by family type, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

Division of Sample into Family Types

Household Construction	No father	Biological father	Adoptive father	Stepfather	Total
No mother	45	91	0	1	137
Biological mother	439	964	9	116	1,528
Adoptive mother	6	2	16	1	25
Stepmother	5	29	1	10	45
Total	495	1,086	26	128	1,735

Note:

Key: Nuclear household Stepparent household Single-parent household.

Homes with two biological or adoptive parents were classified as nuclear homes. Homes with only one biological or adoptive parent as well as a resident stepparent who was in a committed relationship with the youth's parent, either by marriage or cohabitation, were classified as stepparent homes. Homes with only one resident parent figure were categorized as single-parent homes. Table 2 identifies useful demographic information for the sample.

Table 2. Household and Individual Demographics—Descriptive Statistics[a]

	Full sample (N_1 = *1,735*)			Nuclear household (N_2 = *991*)		Stepparent household (N_3 = *147*)		Single-parent household (N_3 = *542*)	
Variables	M	SD	Range	**M**	**SD**	**M**	**SD**	**M**	**SD**
Household Level:									
Younger sibling[b]	0.58	0.49	0–1	0.61	0.49	0.68	0.47	0.52***	0.50
Older sibling[c]	0.49	0.50	0–1	0.48	0.50	0.30***	0.46	0.50	0.50
Low-income[d]	0.26	0.44	0–1	0.14	0.35	0.26***	0.44	0.51***	0.50
Respondent Level:									
Age	16.52	1.04	15–18	16.50	1.06	16.51	0.98	16.56	1.04
Male[e]	0.51	0.50	0–1	0.52	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.52	0.50
Female[f]	0.49	0.50	0–1	0.48	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.48	0.50
White, non-Hispanic[g]	0.59	0.49	0–1	0.63	0.48	0.62	0.48	0.49***	0.50
Black, non-Hispanic[h]	0.13	0.33	0–1	0.06	0.24	0.06	0.24	0.28***	0.45
Hispanic[i]	0.23	0.42	0–1	0.24	0.43	0.29	0.45	0.19*	0.39
Spring[j]	0.26	0.44	0–1	0.27	0.44	0.27	0.44	0.22*	0.41
Summer[k]	0.25	0.43	0–1	0.25	0.43	0.31	0.46	0.25	0.44
Fall[l]	0.24	0.43	0–1	0.23	0.42	0.20	0.40	0.25	0.43
Morning[m]	0.29	0.45	0–1	0.29	0.45	0.28	0.45	0.29	0.45
Afternoon[n]	0.44	0.50	0–1	0.43	0.50	0.45	0.50	0.43	0.50
Evening[o]	0.23	0.42	0–1	0.23	0.42	0.22	0.41	0.23	0.42
Night[p]	0.04	0.21	0–1	0.04	0.20	0.05	0.21	0.05	0.21

Note. [a] Asterisks represent significance of two-sample unpaired *t*-tests with unequal variances comparing family types 2 and 3 with family type 1. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$. [b]Younger sibling: 0 = respondent does not have a younger sibling living at home, 1 = respondent has a younger sibling living at home. [c]Older sibling: 0 = respondent does not have an older sibling living at home, 1 = respondent does have an older sibling living at home. [d]Low-income household: 0 = household income is greater than 1.5 times the poverty threshold, 1 = household income is below 1.5 times the poverty threshold. [e]Male: 0 = not male, 1 = male. [f]Female: 0 = not female, 1 = female. [g]White, non-Hispanic: 0 = not white or Hispanic, 1 = white and non-Hispanic. [h]Black, non-Hispanic: 0 = not African American or Hispanic, 1 = African American and non-Hispanic. [i]Hispanic: 0 = not Hispanic, 1 = Hispanic. [j]Spring: 0 = surveyed day not from March to May, 1 = surveyed day from March to May. [k]Summer: 0 = surveyed day not from June to August, 1 = surveyed day from June to August. [l]Fall: 0 = surveyed day not from September to November, 1 = surveyed day from September to November. [m]Morning: 0 = surveyed activity not from 6 a.m. to 12 p.m., 1 = surveyed activity from 6 a.m. to 12 p.m. [n]Afternoon: 0 = surveyed activity not from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m., 1 = surveyed day from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. [o]Evening: 0 = surveyed activity not from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., 1 = surveyed day from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. [p]Night: 0 = surveyed activity not from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., 1 = surveyed day from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.

Procedure

The Bureau of Labor Statistics administered the ATUS (Hofferth et al., 2015) in connection with the Current Population Survey (CPS). We used sampling weights provided by

the ATUS to ensure that the sample was representative of the United States' national population. A phone interview lasting about 30 minutes documented an individual's time use over a 24-hour period, from 4:00 a.m. of the previous day until 4:00 a.m. of the interview day, and respondents accounted for all time throughout the day (Hamermesh, Frazis, & Stewart, 2005). Interviewers used the Day Reconstruction Method and computer assistance to elicit high-quality recall and accuracy (Kahneman, Krueger, Schkade, Schwarz, & Stone, 2004), and for each primary activity throughout a day, respondents reported who else was present.

For three activities—selected at random from all daily activities lasting at least 5 minutes except sleeping, grooming, and personal activities—the respondent evaluated his or her levels of pain, happiness, sadness, fatigue, and stress, as well as how meaningful the respondent viewed the activity to be. The ATUS survey provided activity-level weights specifically for the respondents in the well-being module, in order to account for the fraction of time spent outside of eligible activities and adjust for the probability that an eligible activity is selected, as well as accounting for oversampling and other aspects of the survey design. We focused on five well-being indicators: happiness, sadness, fatigue, stress, and activity meaningfulness.

Since 1987, researchers have utilized the method of experiential sampling as a time-sampling method (Loewenstein, Hamilton, Alagna, Reid, & De Vries, 1987). Experiential sampling provides "a valid instrument to describe variations in self-reports of mental processes" and is best used to obtain empirical data on the frequency, intensity, and pattern of emotional and other psychological states (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1987, p. 35). In traditional experiential sampling, select individuals provide self-reports at random occasions during the day, generally through pagers or phone apps that allow respondents to provide reports in real time. One advantage of this approach is that it provides psychologically sound information "from within the ecologically valid contexts of people's daily experience," a feature critical for the examination of a context's impact on adolescent development (Larson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1983, p. 32).

Dependent Variables

We used five dependent variables to evaluate adolescent subjective well-being. Each ATUS respondent answered the following questions for three activities during the sample day: (a) How meaningful did you consider what you were doing [to be]? (b) How happy did you feel during this time? (c) How tired did you feel during this time? (d) How sad did you feel during

this time? (e) How stressed did you feel during this time? For each question, the respondents chose their answers from a scale of 0 (e.g., not happy at all) to 6 (e.g., very happy). As explained by Musick, Meier, and Flood (2016), these questions mirror subjective well-being components of the Princeton Affect and Time Study (Krueger et al., 2009) and the European Social Survey (OECD, 2013). Russell (2003) explained core affect along two independent dimensions: the positive/negative dimension and the arousal dimension. Russell characterized emotions as one of four types: positive high arousal (e.g., happiness), positive low arousal (e.g., contentment), negative high arousal (e.g., stress), or negative low arousal (e.g., sadness). The well-being indicators in the ATUS capture these types of affect. The survey also included meaningfulness, allowing us to evaluate which interactions provided meaning independent of the reported negative and positive emotions of the situation. Given these justifications, indicators on meaning, happiness, tiredness, sadness, and stress allowed for a broad investigation into the determinants of well-being in adolescents. Table 3 summarizes these measures.

Table 3. *Dependent Variable Statistics*

Variable	Mean	Variance	Range	Correlation				
				Meaningfulness	Happiness	Fatigue	Sadness	Stress
Meaningfulness	3.40	3.94	0–6	1.0000				
Happiness	4.24	2.27	0–6	0.3593	1.0000			
Fatigue	2.55	3.42	0–6	-0.0691	-0.1519	1.0000		
Sadness	0.42	1.16	0–6	-0.0209	-0.2076	0.1491	1.0000	
Stress	1.11	1.55	0–6	-0.0012	-0.2809	0.2608	0.3654	1.0000

For our sample of adolescents, these distributions are largely left-skewed and unimodal. On average, adolescents reported moderate scores of activity meaningfulness and happiness, slightly lower scores of fatigue, and extremely low scores of sadness. In fact, only 18% of activities received a sadness rating above 0. Table 4 explores the average differences in these ratings across respondent sex and race as well as household income and makeup. The most notable differences occur across respondent race, sex, and household income, with relatively few average differences across household makeup.

Table 4.*Adolescent's Emotional Self-Reporting—Descriptive Statistics*[a]

	Full sample (N_1 = *5,054*) [b]		Male respondents (N_2 = *2,621*)		Female respondents (N_3 = *2,433*)	
Variable	**M**	SD	**M**	SD	**M**	SD
Meaningfulness	3.40	1.98	3.35	1.95	3.44	2.02
Happiness	4.24	1.51	4.21	1.51	4.27	1.50
Fatigue	2.55	1.85	2.43	1.84	2.68***	1.85
Sadness	0.42	1.07	0.38	1.02	0.47**	1.13
Stress	1.11	1.55	0.97	1.43	1.25***	1.65
	Full sample (N_1 = *5,054*)		Caucasian respondents (N_2 = *3,147*)		Non-Caucasian respondents (N_2 = *1,907*)	
	M	SD	**M**	SD	**M**	SD
Meaningfulness	3.40	1.98	3.25	1.97	3.61***	1.99
Happiness	4.24	1.51	4.24	1.43	4.25	1.61
Fatigue	2.55	1.85	2.61	1.78	2.46**	1.94
Sadness	0.42	1.07	0.40	1.01	0.45	1.16
Stress	1.11	1.55	1.16	1.54	1.03**	1.56
	Full sample (N_1 = *5,054*)		Low-income household (N_2 = *1,438*)		High-income household (N_3 = *3,616*)	
	M	SD	**M**	SD	**M**	SD
Meaningfulness	3.40	1.98	3.68	2.06	3.29***	1.95
Happiness	4.24	1.51	4.37	1.56	4.20***	1.48
Fatigue	2.55	1.85	2.36	1.92	2.62***	1.82
Sadness	0.42	1.07	0.46	1.19	0.41	1.03
Stress	1.11	1.55	1.00	1.57	1.14**	1.54
	Nuclear household (N_1 = *2,879*)		Stepparent household (N_2 = *434*)		Single-parent household (N_3 = *1,579*)	
	M	SD	**M**	SD	**M**	SD
Meaningfulness	3.36	1.96	3.36	1.95	3.52*	2.03
Happiness	4.25	1.46	4.22	1.43	4.12**	1.61
Fatigue	2.54	1.82	2.83**	1.83	2.55	1.87
Sadness	0.41	1.05	0.38	0.90	0.46	1.15
Stress	1.09	1.54	1.22	1.49	1.12	1.58

Note. [a]Asteriscs represent significance of two-sample unpaired *t*-tests with unequal variances comparing columns 2 and 3 for each row except the last, which compares rows 2 and 3 against row 1 individually. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$. [b]Averages are calculated at the activity level and therefore represent approximately three activities per teen.

Explanatory Variables

Shared time with individuals. In order to determine the influence of family members, friends, mentors, and other adults on adolescent well-being, we measured whom an adolescent was with at the time of the well-being measure. We constructed a dichotomous variable to measure whether the adolescent survey respondent was interacting with one parent while engaged in the activity measured for well-being. We identified stepparents as household adults

who were not biological or adoptive parents but who were in committed relationships (marriage or cohabitation) with adolescents' parents (Jensen & Howard, 2015), and we constructed a dichotomous variable to measure shared time with stepparents. For adolescents in two-parent homes, we measured as a dichotomous variable whether both parents were present during the surveyed activity. Using the same approach, we measured separately whether a younger sibling was present or whether an older sibling was present. We included indicators for whether an activity took place with a nonhousehold relative over the age of 30 (e.g., an aunt, uncle, or grandparent) in an attempt to capture the effect of extended family adults on adolescent well-being.

We used indicator variables to capture the impact of community exposure on adolescent well-being. We measured as dichotomous variables whether the adolescent was interacting with a formal mentor. We identify mentors as non-household adults who are a teen's activity companion during school, during a school-related function, or in one-on-one interactions outside of the teen's home. We separately measured as a dichotomous variable whether the adolescent was with adult neighbors or other nonhousehold adults who were not formal mentors. We know these individuals were not reported as friends by the respondent, and we therefore assume that these relationships were different from peer friendships. We calculated as a dichotomous variable whether the adolescent reported being with a friend during the sampled activity. The data prevent us from distinguishing the number of friends present or the quality of an underlying friendship. Figure 1 and Figure 2 summarize companion through an adolescent's day, and Table 5 summarizes both the frequency and duration of the time spent with each group, as well as time alone. Table 5 also examines differences in both frequency and duration across adolescents living in various household types.

Activity type. We included control indicators denoting the type of primary activity to control for the impact of certain primary activities on adolescent well-being. For example, adolescents may report higher levels of sadness when attending a funeral, regardless of the person with whom they share the experience. Thus, we controlled for activity type to mitigate concerns about confounding factors. Table 6 summarizes the likelihood of an adolescent spending time in various activity types with different family and community members. Table 7 summarizes adolescent emotions when engaged in various activities with different family and community members.

Figure 1. Adolescent Companionship throughout a School Day

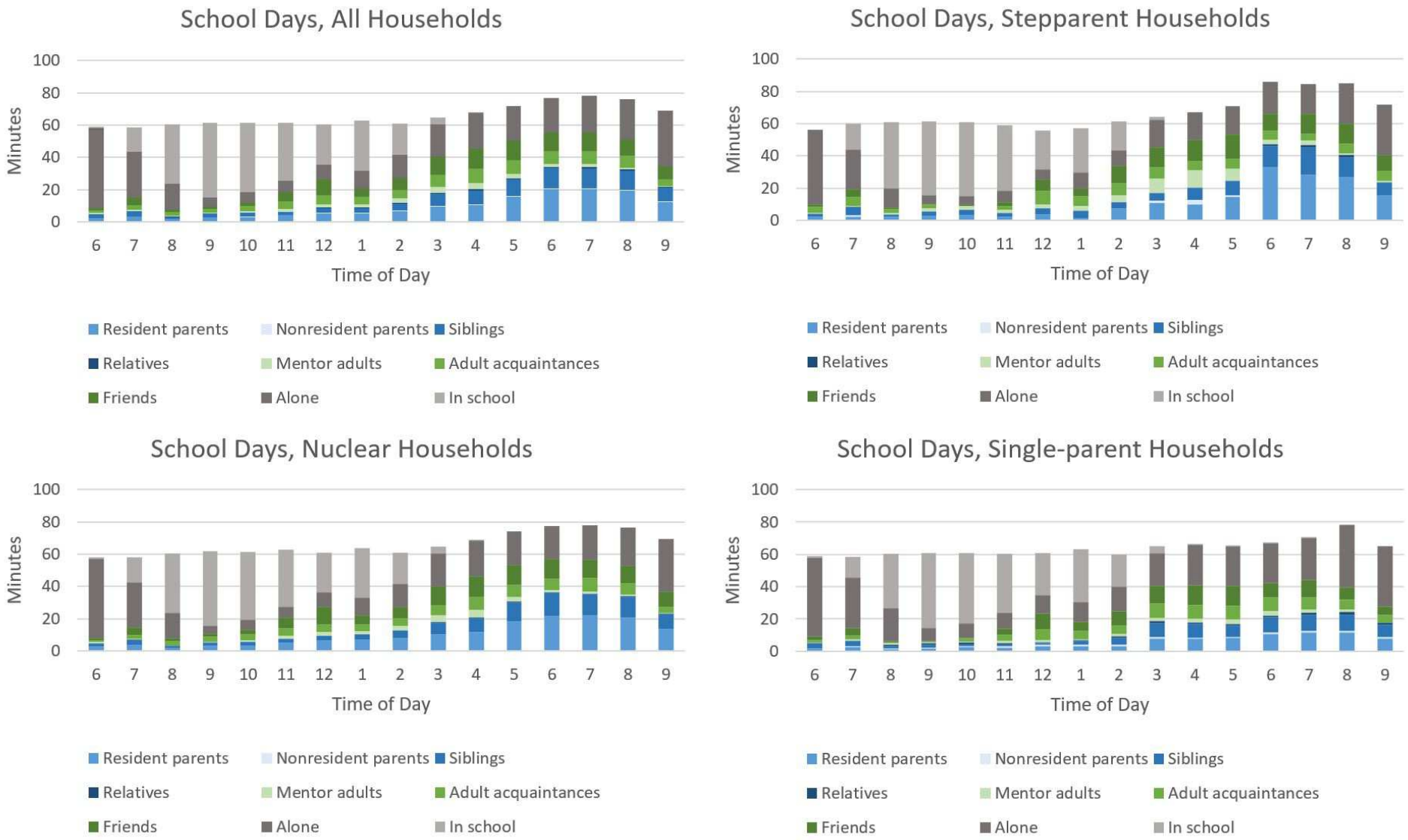

Figure 2. Adolescent Companionship throughout a Non-School Day

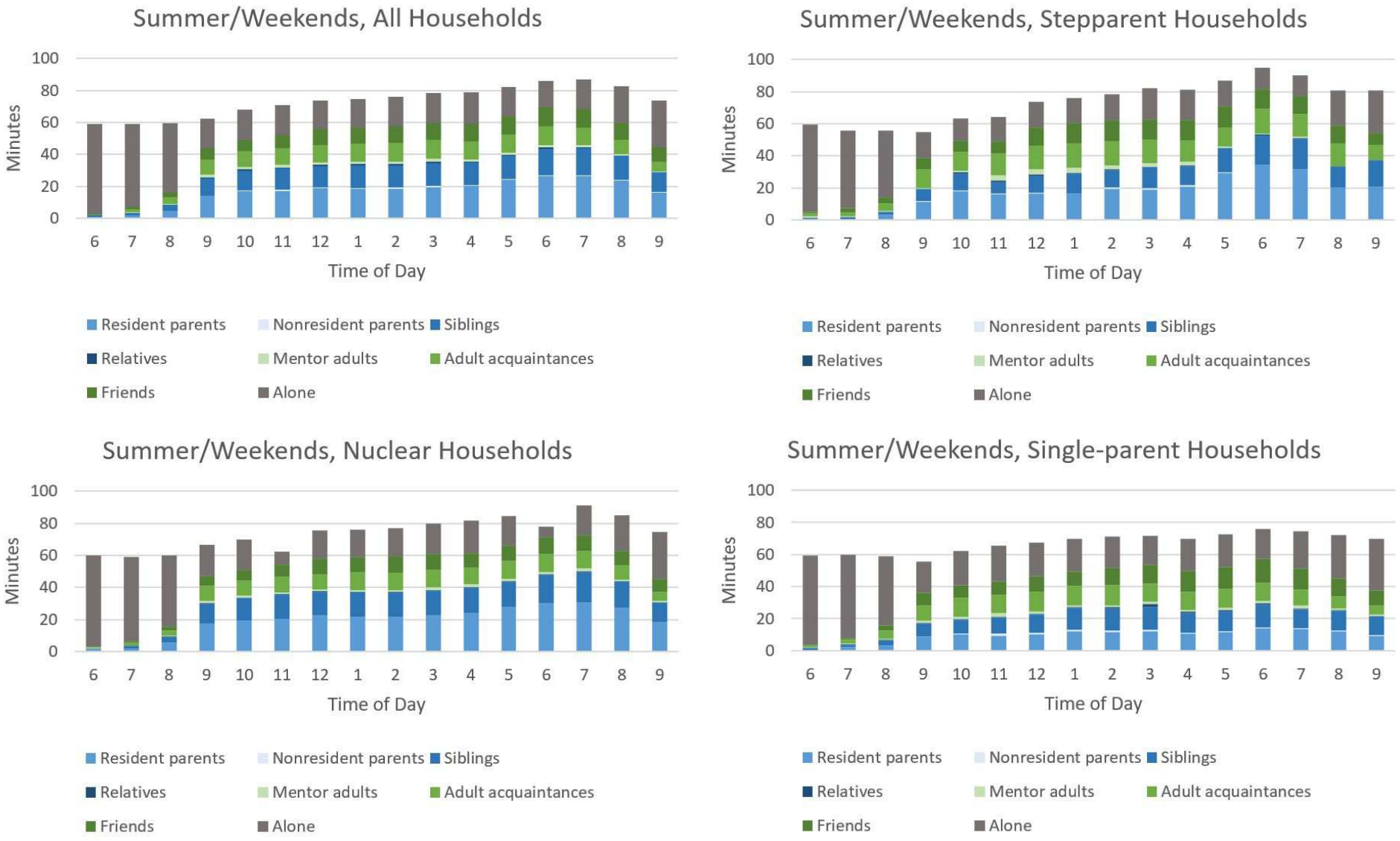

Table 5. *Incidence and Duration of Activity Companions*[a]

	Nuclear homes ($N_1 = 986$)				Stepparent homes ($N_2 = 147$)				Single-parent homes ($N_3 = 541$)			
Activity Companions	*p*	SD_p	Average duration[b]	SD of duration	*p*	SD_p	Average duration	SD of duration	*p*	SD_p	Average duration	SD of duration
1 biological parent	0.84	0.37	3.30	3.06	0.72***	0.45	2.97	2.92	0.69***	0.46	2.97	3.06
1 stepparent	—	—	—	—	0.59	0.49	2.82	3.09	—	—	—	—
2 parents (either type)	0.55	0.50	2.31	2.65	0.51	0.50	2.47	2.69	—	—	—	—
Nonresident parent	—	—	—	—	0.06	0.25	1.41	1.42	0.04	0.19	5.76	5.75
Younger sibling	0.49	0.50	3.73	3.44	0.54	0.50	3.87	3.32	0.37***	0.48	3.86	3.36
Older sibling	0.25	0.44	3.52	3.61	0.16*	0.37	2.82†	2.56	0.18**	0.39	3.32	3.14
Adult relatives	0.02	0.14	2.62	2.88	0.02	0.15	3.07	1.35	0.11***	0.32	1.78†††	1.97
Mentor adults	0.20	0.40	1.84	1.79	0.24	0.43	2.53†††	2.45	0.17	0.38	2.05†	1.98
Adult acquaintances	0.49	0.50	3.73	3.13	0.56	0.50	4.01	3.51	0.53	0.50	3.81	3.53
Friends	0.57	0.49	3.86	3.22	0.57	0.50	4.49†	3.50	0.55	0.50	4.16	3.58
Alone	0.99	0.12	6.96	4.04	0.97	0.17	6.65	4.14	0.98	0.13	7.03	3.89
Total[c]	—	—	14.68	2.40	—	—	14.81	2.37	—	—	14.37	2.68

Note. [a]Asterisks and daggers represent significance of two-sample *t*-tests with unequal variances for frequencies and intensities. Nuclear home is the base of comparison in all tests except those for "1 stepparent" and "Nonresident parent," for which Stepparent is the base. *, $^{\dagger}p < .05$. **, $^{\dagger\dagger}p < .01$. ***, $^{\dagger\dagger\dagger}p < .001$. [b]Averages are calculated conditional on interaction in the day with the companion type. Measured in hours. [c]Represents the average amount of time a teen in each category spent in nonsleep activities.

Table 6. *Incidence of Activity Types and Companions, Full Sample* (N = 1,735 *adolescents*)

Activity Types	Physical	Household	School/ study	Work	Eating	Watching TV/movies	Religious/ volunteer	Talking/ socializing	Travel	Other	Total
Activity Companions											
1 biological parent	0.13	0.24	0.06	0.01	0.57	0.26	0.03	0.17	0.41	0.20	*0.76*
1 stepparent	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.01	*0.06*
2 parents (either type)	0.03	0.06	0.01	0.00	0.31	0.11	0.02	0.08	0.09	0.05	*0.39*
Nonresident parent	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.02	*0.04*
Younger sibling	0.08	0.16	0.04	0.01	0.33	0.21	0.03	0.09	0.22	0.12	*0.45*
Older sibling	0.04	0.05	0.02	0.00	0.17	0.10	0.01	0.04	0.10	0.06	*0.23*
Adult relatives	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.04	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.01	*0.06*
Mentor adults	0.05	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.04	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.05	0.05	*0.20*
Adult acquaintances	0.10	0.06	0.04	0.11	0.20	0.08	0.04	0.14	0.22	0.14	*0.52*
Friends	0.21	0.07	0.06	0.01	0.33	0.11	0.05	0.26	0.35	0.20	*0.57*
Alone	0.23	0.37	0.52	0.03	0.42	0.40	0.03	0.13	0.46	0.92	*0.98*
Other	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.04	0.02	*0.08*
Total[a]	*0.51*	*0.56*	*0.55*	*0.15*	*0.96*	*0.76*	*0.12*	*0.51*	*0.90*	*0.95*	*1.00*

Note. [a]The total column and row represent the percentage of the sample interacting in that activity type or type of person, not the sums of individual cells

Table 7. *Differences in Emotional Responses by Companion/Activity Pairing*

	Phys	Hh	Sch	Work	Eat	TV	Rel	Talk	Phys	Hh	Sch	Work	Eat	TV	Rel	Talk
	Meaningfulness								Happiness							
1 parent	0.34	-0.05	-0.08	0.49	0.19	-0.32	0.81	0.44	0.26	-0.18	-0.95	0.15	0.12	0.08	0.40	0.07
Stepparent	0.69	0.39	0.81	0.00	0.45	-0.70	0.00	1.00	0.16	0.26	-0.82	0.00	0.34	0.17	0.00	-0.21
2 parents	0.67	0.18	0.36	0.81	0.33	-0.36	0.98	0.62	0.25	-0.01	-1.74	1.17	0.23	0.08	0.47	0.05
Nonresident parent	1.31	-0.03	-0.20	0.30	0.79	0.30	0.30	0.51	1.17	0.50	0.00	0.50	0.72	-1.91	-0.16	0.44
Younger sibling	0.09	0.06	0.02	0.02	0.11	-0.37	0.87	0.53	-0.18	-0.17	-0.69	0.26	0.10	0.04	0.12	0.42
Older sibling	0.68	0.00	0.74	0.81	0.25	-0.36	0.89	0.77	0.56	0.05	-1.42	1.17	0.17	0.27	0.56	0.30
Adult relatives	-0.11	-0.12	-0.03	0.24	0.54	-0.22	0.86	0.76	0.23	-0.34	-0.59	-0.34	0.52	0.49	0.74	0.32
Mentor adults	0.69	0.23	0.47	1.31	0.34	-0.69	1.09	-0.03	0.33	-0.45	-0.34	0.50	0.54	0.03	0.50	0.01
Adult acquaintances	0.23	0.05	0.22	0.20	0.42	-0.28	0.92	0.49	0.46	-0.22	-0.70	-0.34	0.48	0.36	0.52	0.25
Friends	0.28	-0.42	0.33	0.31	0.05	-0.24	0.75	0.40	0.42	0.08	-0.17	-0.03	0.36	0.12	0.44	0.38
Alone	0.02	-0.09	0.23	0.76	-0.22	-0.58	0.56	0.55	0.19	-0.22	-0.48	0.09	-0.16	-0.07	0.34	0.32
1 parent	0.38	-0.18	0.19	-0.55	-0.08	0.15	-0.08	-0.02	-0.10	-0.09	0.16	-0.27	-0.13	-0.11	0.07	0.59
Stepparent	-0.02	-0.35	0.24	0.00	0.08	-0.41	0.00	0.46	-0.39	-0.01	0.54	0.00	-0.17	-0.39	0.00	-0.39
2 parents	0.56	-0.37	-0.10	-0.84	-0.14	0.03	0.06	-0.02	-0.27	-0.04	0.07	-0.39	-0.25	-0.29	0.00	0.54
Nonresident parent	-0.53	-0.03	-0.84	-0.84	-0.24	0.24	-0.30	-0.10	-0.39	-0.07	-0.39	-0.39	-0.39	2.08	-0.39	-0.19
Younger sibling	-0.11	-0.06	0.59	0.16	-0.09	0.16	-0.30	-0.37	-0.21	-0.09	-0.09	-0.39	-0.06	0.12	-0.08	-0.13
Older sibling	-0.15	-0.29	0.09	-0.84	-0.08	0.34	0.04	0.09	-0.39	0.00	0.14	-0.39	0.07	-0.02	0.36	0.70
Adult relatives	0.21	-0.38	0.92	-0.16	-0.49	-0.36	-0.51	-0.23	-0.37	-0.11	0.51	-0.17	-0.03	-0.19	-0.39	0.48
Mentor adults	0.05	-0.41	-0.04	-0.84	0.03	-0.30	-0.37	-0.04	-0.04	-0.39	-0.26	1.48	-0.24	-0.39	-0.02	-0.23
Adult acquaintances	0.35	-0.38	0.53	0.14	-0.33	-0.01	-0.19	-0.08	-0.21	0.05	0.54	0.06	-0.11	-0.25	0.15	0.48
Friends	-0.10	0.04	0.41	-0.23	-0.06	0.08	-0.15	0.14	-0.13	0.21	-0.28	-0.31	-0.03	-0.19	-0.07	-0.07
Alone	0.17	0.02	0.17	-0.59	0.05	-0.02	0.12	-0.21	-0.02	0.10	0.13	-0.23	0.07	0.12	0.21	-0.01
	Fatigue								Sadness							

Demographics and contextual factors. While our estimation strategy did not require us to control for individual, family, or seasonal demographics, we did include these controls in our random effects estimation as a robustness check. We measured the age and race of the respondent, as well as the family's income level as a measure of economic stability. We also included indicators for *when* the adolescents performed each activity, controlling for time of day, seasonal, and year effects, as well as whether the activity was performed on a holiday. We also controlled for how well-rested each adolescent felt. These effects may be important, as we expect sleep patterns, seasonal effects, and fluctuations in activity timing will influence adolescent reports of emotional states.

Analytic Approach

We take advantage of the multilevel nature of our data to consistently estimate the effects of contact with different individuals. Adolescents may differ in stable ways in reporting subjective well-being. For example, what one person considers a 6 on the happiness scale may not be the same for another. Rather than focus on absolute well-being rankings, we measure well-being for each adolescent relative to reports of his or her own well-being when in different contexts. Because our data set consists of three activities and emotional evaluations per individual, we can estimate person-specific fixed effects to control for unobserved individual characteristics. By transforming variables to deviations from the individual-specific means, or equivalently by including a person-specific dichotomous variable for observations corresponding to each respondent, we control for all factors affecting well-being that do not change based on the context of interactions. Thus, we consistently estimate the contact effects of interest by using fixed effects (with robust standard errors) while controlling for unobservable confounding factors in a robust framework (Wooldridge, 2016). We conceptualized the basic model in matrix form as follows:

$$y_{ij} = \beta_0 + X'_{ij}\beta_1 + W'_i\beta_2 + \alpha_i + \varepsilon_{ij}$$

We represent well-being for a given person i in context j (including who else is present) as the dependent variable. We separated the unobservable effects into a person-specific unobservable effect on well-being α_i and an idiosyncratic exogenous factor ε_{ij}. We assumed the person-specific unobserved effect was the same regardless of the well-being observation, and we assumed the idiosyncratic exogenous factor was independent of the contextual and activity-level covariates and the context-invariant covariates. We explicitly estimated the model using fixed effects estimation to capture the cumulative person-specific effect.

We estimated the fixed effect model on the subsamples of adolescents in nuclear homes in two steps. In the first step, we estimated main effect on the companionship factors only. We

included activity type controls and timing controls. In the second step, we included eight gender and race interaction terms to explore potentially heterogeneous effects of spending time with extended family members, community members, and friends based on theoretical predictions and prior work: female interacted with other relatives over 30, Black interacted with other relatives over 30, and Hispanic interacted with other relatives over 30, as well as female interacted with friends, Black interacted with friends, Hispanic interacted with friends, mentor interacted with minorities (Black and Hispanic), and nonfamily adult interacted with minorities.

We estimated the fixed effect model on the subsample of adolescents living in stepparent homes in a similar manner, excluding the case of nonresident parent as a companion. Finally, we estimated the model on the subsample of adolescents living in single-parent homes using the same model, after omitting the category of time with both parents as companions.

For completeness, we estimated the same models using a random effects model and performed Hausman tests for each measure of well-being to compare random effects estimates against fixed effects estimates. Although we found little evidence of endogeneity, we opted to rely primarily on fixed effects estimation because of the less restrictive assumptions about linearity and exogeneity required for the validity of the fixed effects model. The results are largely consistent with the results from the fixed effects models, with only slight differences in the importance of some of the interaction terms.

Results

Adolescents in Nuclear Homes

In Table 8, we report results from fixed effects regression estimating the impact of contact with individuals on adolescent well-being for those living in nuclear homes. The magnitudes correspond to how much a covariate changed adolescent immediate well-being on a 6-point scale. The presence of family members impacted adolescent emotional reporting. While spending time with parents in a one-on-one setting did not impact immediate adolescent well-being, spending time with both parents improved the meaning of the experience by 0.48 points. The presence of a younger sibling decreased sadness by an estimated 0.13 points in the full model with interactions. Older siblings also improved well-being by decreasing fatigue by 0.55 points. There was no impact of extended family members on adolescent well-being in nuclear homes.

Table 8. *Adolescent Well-Being—Impact of Companions on Emotional Reporting, Two Biological/Adoptive Parents* (N = 2,879 *activities,* 986 *teens*)

Variables	Meaningfulness		Happiness		Fatigue		Sadness		Stress	
One parent	0.08	0.07	-0.10	-0.09	0.10	0.09	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.01
	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Two parents	0.61**	0.59**	0.23	0.24	0.28	0.28	-0.07	-0.08	0.05	0.06
	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Younger sibling	-0.21	-0.19	-0.09	-0.10	-0.04	-0.01	-0.13	-0.13*	0.04	0.05
	(0.17)	(0.16)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.07)	(0.07	(0.12)	(0.12)
Older sibling	0.17	0.20	0.032	0.05	-0.56**	-0.56**	0.08	0.07	0.09	0.080
	(0.29)	(0.28)	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.21)	(0.20)	(0.13)	(0.12)	(0.15)	(0.15)
Adult relatives	0.13	0.50	-0.08	-0.34	-0.26	-0.14	0.04	0.53	-0.22	-0.09
	(0.26)	(0.45)	(0.18)	(0.29)	(0.23)	(0.38)	(0.15)	(0.41)	(0.19)	(0.34)
Mentor adults	0.30	0.48	0.22	0.24	-0.31	-0.34	-0.18	-0.14	0.19	0.30
	(0.32)	(0.31)	(0.17)	(0.21)	(0.27)	(0.26)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.24)	(0.26)
Adult acquaintances	0.58***	0.65**	0.24	0.26	-0.32*	-0.21	0.11	0.10	0.034	0.19
	(0.17)	(0.22)	(0.14)	(0.17)	(0.16)	(0.17)	(0.10)	(0.13)	(0.12)	(0.14)
Friends	0.50**	0.12	0.50***	0.53***	-0.40**	-0.46**	-0.15	-0.23*	-0.01	0.17
	(0.16)	(0.19)	(0.10)	(0.13)	(0.12)	(0.17)	(0.08)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.13)
Interactions:										
Female * Relative		-0.10		0.49		0.20		-0.42		-0.16
		(0.47)		(0.28)		(0.42)		(0.36)		(0.31)
*Black * Relative*		*-1.46*		*0.48*		*-0.90*		*-0.49*		*0.18*
		(0.76)		*(0.43)*		*(1.18)*		*(0.38)*		*(0.41)*
Hispanic * Relative		-0.46		-0.05		-0.29		-0.75		-0.09
		(0.50)		(0.39)		(0.47)		(0.39)		(0.45)
Female * Friends		0.70*		0.22		-0.27		0.03		-0.37*
		(0.27)		(0.19)		(0.22)		(0.14)		(0.18)
Black * Friends		-0.011		-0.68**		0.83		-0.10		-0.25
		(0.48)		(0.25)		(0.46)		(0.19)		(0.29)
Hispanic * Friends		0.33		-0.48*		0.77*		0.32*		-0.01
		(0.32)		(0.24)		(0.33)		(0.16)		(0.22)
*Minority * Mentor*		*-0.63*		*-0.05*		*0.11*		*-0.15*		*-0.43*
		(0.86)		*(0.33)*		*(0.73)*		*(0.34)*		*(0.64)*
Minority * NFA		-0.30		-0.03		-0.38		0.01		-0.41
		(0.34)		(0.25)		(0.32)		(0.18)		(0.24)
Activity type controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Time of day controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Overall R^2	0.119	0.129	0.124	0.131	0.078	0.089	0.046	0.059	0.177	0.183
F for change in R^2	9.65***	7.04***	10.10***	7.68***	6.10***	5.68***	2.43***	2.13***	11.98***	8.86***

Note. Variables in italics have a less than 1% success rate, leading to potential imprecision in estimation. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Contact with formal mentors did not change adolescent well-being in nuclear homes. On the other hand, informal interactions with nonhousehold adults were 0.58 points more meaningful for adolescents in nuclear homes, and adolescents reported less fatigue during these interactions. The presence of friends positively impacted immediate well-being across many measures. When estimating direct effects only, we found that friends increased activity meaningfulness for adolescents in nuclear homes by 0.50 points, increased happiness by 0.50 points, and decreased fatigue. The effects of shared time with friends were heterogeneous and did not benefit all adolescents. Adolescent girls experienced more meaningfulness and less stress when with friends, whereas adolescent boys did not. Black adolescents in nuclear homes did not experience more happiness when with friends but did experience decreased fatigue and sadness. For Hispanics, friends did not change meaning, happiness, fatigue, sadness, or stress.

Adolescents in Stepparent Homes

In Table 9, we report estimates of the impact of contact with individuals on adolescent well-being for those living in stepparent homes. The magnitudes correspond to how much a covariate changed adolescent immediate well-being on a 6-point scale. Adolescents in stepparent homes responded to family members. Spending time with a resident parent did not affect adolescent well-being in stepparent families, regardless of whether the parent was a biological parent or stepparent. Moreover, spending time with a biological parent and a stepparent together did not improve adolescent well-being in stepparent homes. Conversely, spending time with nonresident parents improved well-being for these adolescents. Their happiness increased by 1.77 points and stress decreased by 1.75 points when spending time with nonresident parents. While well-being was unaffected when sharing time with younger siblings in stepparent homes, well-being improved when sharing time with older siblings. Happiness increased by 1.74 points, and stress decreased by 0.77 points. Adult relatives did not affect adolescent well-being in stepparent homes.

Shared time with formal mentors improved well-being for adolescents in stepparent homes. Meaningfulness when with formal mentors was estimated to be 2.13 points higher, and fatigue declined when with formal mentors. Contact in less formal settings with neighbors and other adults was more meaningful for adolescents in stepparent homes. Friends also improved well-being. When estimating direct effects, experiences with friends were estimated to be 1.55 points more meaningful, and contact with friends reduced both sadness and fatigue. The models including interactions revealed that adolescent girls in stepparent homes found more meaningfulness and happiness when spending time with friends, while adolescent boys did not.

Table 9. *Adolescent Well-Being—Impact of Companions on Emotional Reporting, One Biological/Adoptive Parent + One Step Parent* (N = 434 *activities,* 147 *teens*)

Variables	Meaningfulness		Happiness		Fatigue		Sadness		Stress	
One "biological" parent	-0.25	-0.23	-0.30	-0.29	-0.04	-0.14	0.23	0.23	-0.32	-0.34
	(0.371)	(0.38)	(0.26)	(0.27)	(0.37)	(0.38)	(0.27)	(0.28)	(0.23)	(0.25)
One stepparent	0.45	0.39	-0.64	-0.45	0.50	0.52	-0.06	-0.11	0.36	0.33
	(0.24)	(0.24)	(0.42)	(0.41)	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.19)	(0.19)	(0.28)	(0.28)
Both parents	0.44	0.25	0.24	0.02	0.00	-0.07	-0.39	-0.32	0.20	0.33
	(0.56)	(0.56)	(0.51)	(0.48)	(0.62)	(0.63)	(0.33)	(0.33)	(0.44)	(0.45)
Nonresident parent	-0.04	0.93	1.78**	2.10***	0.078	0.18	-0.39	-0.61*	-1.58	-1.75*
	(0.46)	(0.60)	(0.56)	(0.55)	(0.80)	(0.85)	(0.25)	(0.29)	(0.84)	(0.84)
Younger sibling	0.49	0.53	0.31	0.39	-0.47	-0.50	-0.23	-0.26	-0.16	-0.17
	(0.43)	(0.44)	(0.35)	(0.35)	(0.31)	(0.31)	(0.21)	(0.21)	(0.23)	(0.23)
Older sibling	0.79	0.99	1.74***	1.74***	-0.60	-0.70	-0.05	-0.06	-0.77*	-0.82*
	(0.65)	(0.67)	(0.30)	(0.35)	(0.75)	(0.75)	(0.27)	(0.26)	(0.36)	(0.37)
Adult relatives	0.40	0.60	0.86	0.66	0.13	0.53	-0.47	-0.61	-0.00	0.25
	(0.41)	(0.58)	(0.63)	(0.74)	(0.65)	(1.01)	(0.27)	(0.38)	(0.63)	(0.73)
Mentor adults	2.13***	2.51***	0.41	0.54	-0.37	-1.26*	0.08	0.04	0.24	-0.23
	(0.45)	(0.72)	(0.49)	(1.06)	(0.35)	(0.64)	(0.13)	(0.26)	(0.52)	(0.67)
Adult acquaintances	0.49	0.79*	0.21	0.22	-0.31	-0.29	0.00	0.09	-0.62	-0.71
	(0.34)	(0.39)	(0.48)	(0.55)	(0.45)	(0.52)	(0.18)	(0.21)	(0.41)	(0.56)
Friends	1.55***	0.40	0.78*	0.51	-0.87*	-1.00	-0.49***	-0.31	-0.25	0.05
	(0.36)	(0.47)	(0.31)	(0.31)	(0.36)	(0.59)	(0.14)	(0.18)	(0.29)	(0.41)
Interactions:										
Female * Relative		-1.06		0.31		-0.01		0.14		-0.66
		(0.58)		(0.90)		(0.89)		(0.42)		(0.89)
*Black * Relative*		*0.78*		*1.03*		*-2.18*		*-0.17*		*0.87*
		(0.77)		*(1.10)*		*(1.33)*		*(0.55)*		*(1.40)*
Hispanic * Relative		0.47		-0.53		0.87		0.53		0.13
		(0.82)		(1.06)		(0.86)		(0.57)		(1.22)
Female * Friends		2.14***		1.15*		-0.07		-0.41		-0.62
		(0.55)		(0.57)		(0.64)		(0.26)		(0.59)
Black * Friends		0.96		-3.38***		-1.96*		0.63		-0.02
		(0.90)		(0.56)		(0.86)		(0.35)		(0.73)
Hispanic * Friends		0.51		-0.41		0.49		-0.06		-0.08
		(0.57)		(0.52)		(0.66)		(0.27)		(0.66)
Minority * Mentor		-0.54		-0.11		1.32		-0.00		0.74
		(0.90)		(1.15)		(0.68)		(0.26)		(0.97)
Minority * NFA		-0.48		0.37		-0.49		-0.39		0.13
		(0.50)		(0.66)		(0.64)		(0.28)		(0.78)
Activity type controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Time of day controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Overall R^2	0.365	0.407	0.221	0.263	0.142	0.185	0.132	0.149	0.188	0.201
F for change in R^2	16.12***	18.70***	7.21***	67.21***	2.08**	2.83***	1.76*	1.59*	2.69***	2.81***

Note. Variables in italics have a less than 1% success rate, leading to potential imprecision in estimation. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 10. *Adolescent Well-Being—Impact of Companions on Emotional Reporting, One-Parent Households* (N = 1,579 *activities,* 541 *teens*)

Variables	Meaningfulness		Happiness		Fatigue		Sadness		Stress	
One parent	0.33*	0.33*	0.20	0.22	-0.015	0.01	0.10	0.10	-0.13	-0.15
	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.12)
Nonresident parent	0.29	0.31	-0.48	-0.45	-0.10	-0.13	0.05	-0.01	0.32	0.43
	(0.66)	(0.68)	(0.83)	(0.84)	(0.55)	(0.57)	(0.65)	(0.68)	(0.73)	(0.73)
Younger sibling	-0.16	-0.16	-0.26	-0.26	-0.21	-0.23	-0.26*	-0.22	-0.20	-0.23
	(0.25)	(0.25)	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.19)	(0.20)	(0.12)	(0.13)	(0.15)	(0.15)
Older sibling	0.53*	0.52*	0.96***	0.93***	-0.30	-0.28	0.12	0.11	-0.31	-0.30
	(0.23)	(0.24)	(0.23)	(0.24)	(0.26)	(0.26)	(0.19)	(0.19)	(0.19)	(0.20)
Adult relatives	-0.16	0.17	-0.25	-0.07	0.086	-0.25	-0.50	-0.20	-0.00	-0.42
	(0.32)	(0.32)	(0.22)	(0.28)	(0.43)	(0.41)	(0.39)	(0.22)	(0.24)	(0.23)
Mentor adults	1.17	1.57**	-0.09	-0.18	-0.07	-0.29	0.06	-0.05	0.10	0.16
	(0.63)	(0.52)	(0.22)	(0.31)	(0.31)	(0.31)	(0.11)	(0.07)	(0.28)	(0.27)
Adult acquaintances	0.04	0.24	0.28	0.37	-0.03	-0.02	0.23	0.19	-0.02	-0.19
	(0.20)	(0.23)	(0.19)	(0.24)	(0.25)	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.18)	(0.19)	(0.20)
Friends	0.22	0.12	0.58***	0.77***	-0.49**	-0.54	-0.07	-0.2	-0.18	-0.12
	(0.20)	(0.36)	(0.13)	(0.19)	(0.15)	(0.28)	(0.11)	(0.15)	(0.12)	(0.19)
Interactions:										
Female * Relative		-0.53		-0.38		0.26		-0.01		0.23
		(0.37)		(0.33)		(0.44)		(0.31)		(0.29)
Black * Relative		0.17		-0.17		0.00		-0.13		0.33
		(0.42)		(0.45)		(0.39)		(0.35)		(0.40)
Hispanic * Relative		-0.20		0.55		0.96		-1.49		0.90*
		(0.74)		(0.42)		(1.24)		(0.93)		(0.41)
Female * Friends		0.07		-0.31		0.23		0.24		-0.23
		(0.36)		(0.24)		(0.30)		(0.22)		(0.22)
Black * Friends		-0.28		-0.12		-0.32		0.15		0.05
		(0.45)		(0.27)		(0.36)		(0.21)		(0.31)
Hispanic * Friends		0.27		0.029		0.30		0.11		0.18
		(0.44)		(0.26)		(0.42)		(0.41)		(0.20)
*Minority * Mentor*		-1.07		0.23		0.45		0.41		-0.28
		(1.52)		(0.42)		(0.72)		(0.28)		(0.60)
Minority * NFA		-0.44		-0.16		0.01		0.03		0.36
		(0.30)		(0.33)		(0.35)		(0.28)		(0.34)
Activity type controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Time of day controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Overall R^2	0.142	0.150	0.120	0.125	0.085	0.094	0.041	0.069	0.137	0.150
F for change in R^2	7.79***	5.81***	5.22***	4.46***	4.07***	3.40***	1.13	1.20	5.03***	4.39***

Note. Variables in italics have a less than 1% success rate, leading to potential imprecision in estimation. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Compared to other adolescents in stepparent homes, Black adolescents in stepparent homes reported 2.87 points lower happiness when with friends while also reporting 0.95 points less fatigue when with friends. Hispanic adolescents in stepparent homes showed no heterogeneous responses to shared time with friends.

Adolescents in Single-Parent Homes

Table 10 contains estimates of the impact of contact with individuals on adolescent immediate well-being for those living in single-parent homes. The magnitudes correspond to how much a covariate changed adolescent immediate well-being on a 6-point scale. The meaningfulness of shared time improved by 0.33 points when adolescents in single-parent homes spent time with a resident parent. Nonresident parents did not impact adolescent well-being in single-parent homes. Shared time with younger siblings decreased sadness by 0.26 points. Contact with an older sibling increased happiness by 0.96 points and meaningfulness by 0.53 points. Contact with an older relative did not change well-being for adolescents in single-parent homes.

Community members had a mixed impact on adolescents in single-parent homes. Shared time with formal mentors was 1.57 points more meaningful when allowing for interaction effects. In contrast, informal time with nonhousehold adults had no significant effect on adolescent reporting. Contact with friends impacted adolescent well-being. Happiness improved by 0.60 points and sadness declined by 0.49 points when adolescents spent time with friends. These effects did not vary across genders, races, or ethnicities.

Discussion

The current study underscores the importance of shared time with various people as a critical context of adolescent development. While some theoretical and empirical evidence suggests that interactions shape long-term adolescent outcomes, we know little about how adolescents respond immediately to contact with the people around them. Thus, the broad aim of this study was to use nationally representative data to examine the impact on adolescent well-being when sharing time with different people in their lives. We found that adolescents immediately responded to the presence of distinct types of people.

Adolescents in Nuclear Homes

Family contact. We found that parents play an important role in adolescent well-being. In two-parent homes, time with one parent was less important than time with both parents, and well-being improvements when spending time with both parents come from a synergy in dual parenting rather than differences in activities performed during family time (Crouter et al., 2004). Well-being for adolescents in two-parent homes improved when sharing time with siblings. In

these homes, contact with younger siblings improved well-being, a finding previously unmeasured. Sharing time with older siblings improved immediate well-being as well, suggesting that despite some level of conflict in sibling relationships (Kim et al., 2006), sibling relationships play a positive role in daily well-being. Despite previous work studying the importance of extended family on youth long-term development, we found no response in adolescent immediate well-being when sharing time with adult relatives.

Community contact. When evaluating adolescent immediate well-being, we found that adolescents in nuclear homes did not immediately respond to contact with formal mentors but did respond to adults in the community whose contact emerged more organically. It is not clear why adolescents in nuclear homes preferred contact with adult acquaintances and neighbors to formal mentors, and more research is needed to understand the difference in the roles played by each group. What is clear is that the long-term benefits of contact with each type of acquaintance likely differ. Neighbors and adult acquaintances presumably have connections to the adolescents' families and may be more likely to provide support beyond role modeling, including giving guidance and providing advantageous social and employment connections in the future (Erickson et al., 2009). These positive responses to interactions may be the basis for adolescents forming long-term attachments that bring about beneficial long-range outcomes.

Friends played a role in immediate well-being for adolescents, a role that strengthened with the adolescent's level of privilege. In contrast to previous work that found no differences in the effects of friends on well-being across gender, racial, or cultural boundaries (Helsen et al., 2000), we found that friends improved well-being for adolescents in nuclear homes, and the effects were strongest among non-Black, non-Hispanic adolescents. In addition, adolescents in nuclear homes had the strongest responses to friends when compared to adolescents living in non-nuclear homes. Additionally, girls found time with friends to be highly meaningful, perhaps due to known differences in the ways girls experience support and depth in peer relationships (Cheng & Chan, 2004; Helsen et al., 2000).

Adolescents in Stepparent Homes

Family contact. Despite research suggesting that parents play a vital role in long-term adolescent outcomes, we found no well-being response to sharing time with a biological parent in stepparent families. We saw neither positive responses (Ganong et al., 2011) nor negative responses (Larson, 2005) to shared time with stepparents, regardless of whether a biological parent was also present during interactions. These findings, taken with previous work on adolescent perspectives of stepparent relationships, suggests that there is not a single universal path for adolescents and stepparents to build a strong relationship.

Adolescents in stepparent homes particularly benefited from spending time with nonresident parents. Adolescents were happier and less stressed when spending time with non-resident parents, a finding that is important to adolescent well-being considering the documented long-term consequences of stress on the development and health of the youth brain (Tottenham & Galvan, 2016). The positive role of nonresident parents deserves attention, given empirical work that inadequately measures children's immediate well-being when with nonresident parents and sometimes casts doubt on the benefit of nonresident parents beyond financial support (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999). Only 6% of adolescents in stepparent homes spent time with nonresident parents on a given day, suggesting that the benefits of this type of contact are limited by infrequent contact.

Older siblings played a valuable role in adolescent immediate well-being. Adolescents were happier and less stressed when spending time with older siblings. The effect sizes were similar to those of nonresident parents. However, given that adolescents had more frequent contact with older siblings than with nonresident parents, we assert that older siblings make the largest contribution to adolescent immediate well-being in stepparent homes. From the perspective of the older sibling, adolescents in stepparent homes did not find interactions with younger siblings to be negative. Older siblings therefore play a positive role in the daily well-being of their younger siblings without sacrificing their own well-being.

Community contact. When evaluating adolescent immediate well-being, we found that adolescents in stepparent homes benefited from contact with formal mentors, and the magnitudes of the effects were as large as or larger than those of responses to other relationships. Conversely, informal contact with adult acquaintances and neighbors played a minimal role in well-being for adolescents in stepparent homes. These responses to community role models oppose responses by adolescents in nuclear homes, and the reasons why these responses are different depending on family structure remain unclear. If informal relationships with neighbors provide different long-term benefits compared to formal mentors, then adolescents in stepparent homes may be missing out on long-term gains due to lukewarm responses to contact with neighbors. Perhaps adolescents' failure to respond to shared time with neighbors stems from the quality of social capital in neighborhoods. If stepparent families select into neighborhoods with lower social capital, adolescents may be unresponsive to neighbors, resulting in fewer beneficial interactions. More research is needed to better understand community impacts on adolescents in stepparent homes.

Friends played a role in immediate well-being for adolescents in stepparent homes. Again, we found that friends improved well-being for adolescents, and the effects were strongest

among non-Black adolescents. We also found that girls experienced more happiness when spending time with friends, and they considered the time to be highly meaningful.

Adolescents in Single-Parent Homes

Family contact. Single parents had a positive effect when they spent time with their resident children. Adolescents in single-parent homes did not immediately respond to shared time with nonresident parents. It is not clear why responses to nonresident parents differ by family structure, and more research is needed to explain the difference observed. Older siblings effectively improved the well-being of adolescents in single-parent homes. Adolescents had frequent contact with older siblings, thus making an important contribution to adolescent immediate well-being in single-parent homes. From the perspective of the older sibling role model, adolescents in single-parent homes found interactions with younger siblings to improve well-being. Thus, older siblings play a positive role in the daily well-being of their younger siblings that also improves their own well-being.

Community contact. For adolescents in single-parent homes, formal mentors played a role in improved well-being, whereas adult acquaintances and neighbors did not. These adolescents benefitted from formal programs that gave them access to role models through after-school and community programs. Without formal access to mentors, these adolescents perhaps would not have had strong mentor relationships in their lives, considering their lack of response to informal community role models. Adolescents in single-parent homes appear to be the least connected to friends compared to adolescents with other family structures. For adolescents in single-parent families, contact with friends—while positive—was less impactful than contact with parents, older siblings, or mentors. Perhaps these youth are less able to enjoy time away from family or may have family responsibilities that inhibit peer relationships. It is not clear why these adolescents did not find peer relationships to be as immediately enjoyable as other adolescents did. More research is needed to understand this weakened response.

Policy Implications

The results from this analysis lend themselves to important and perhaps novel policy implications. First, adolescents in stepparent homes particularly benefited from spending time with nonresident parents. They experienced less stress, an important consideration during a time of heightened vulnerability to the lifelong consequences of stress on health (Tottenham & Galvan, 2016). Parents, counselors, social workers, and policy-makers alike can renew efforts to encourage nonresident parent involvement in their children's lives.

Second, our findings suggest that older siblings play an especially valuable role in non-nuclear families. Adolescents in non-nuclear homes thrive when spending time with older

siblings and likely rely on older siblings for emotional support more than researchers previously realized. Policies and programs aimed at non-nuclear families could educate parents and children about the unique role older siblings play in reducing stress and improving immediate well-being of family members.

A third implication of this research involves formal role models in the community. We found that adolescents in non-nuclear homes particularly benefit from formal programs that provide access to social capital and neighborhood role models. This access is needed, given the indifference observed among these adolescents toward informal community role models. Neighborhood and community programs that enable adolescents to interact with formal role models—including religious and volunteer organizations, mentor organizations, and community enhancement groups—may have similarly positive immediate results.

The immediate response to spending time with neighbors and community members was not unpleasant for adolescents; in fact, it was meaningful and positive for adolescents in nuclear families. Considering the different experiences adolescents from nuclear and non-nuclear families have with neighbors and adult acquaintances in their communities, adolescents in non-nuclear families may form different levels of long-term attachment and forfeit long-term benefits associated with this type of community exposure (Erickson et al., 2006; McDonald & Lambert, 2014). Community policy-designers, neighbors, and parents should be particularly sensitive to the need to create immediately positive experiences for adolescents from non-nuclear homes as these adolescents informally engage with neighbors and adults in their communities.

Peer relationships were most valuable for non-Black and non-Hispanic adolescents in nuclear homes, while less-advantaged adolescents showed dampened responses to contact with peers. Considering the important role that strong peer relationships play in long-term outcomes, school administrators, teachers, leaders, and parents can provide support to adolescents who most need help developing healthy friendships and peer relationships.

Limitations and Conclusions

The ATUS data set allowed us to make substantial progress in understanding the immediate impact on adolescent well-being of interacting with close family, extended family, neighbors, and friends, yet limitations of this research remain. The ATUS data contains well-being responses that were collected a few hours after interactions, rather than in real time. We are not concerned that this significantly alters the importance of the result, but we suggest caution when comparing our findings to experiential sampling studies. While we estimate the initial impact of contact, longitudinal data would allow researchers to trace impacts throughout development. Future work—which could take our estimates of the starting impact of contact and

follow it to the long-term endpoints—would greatly expand our understanding of the role contact plays through the process of adolescent development.

A related issue is a need to better understand the impacts of contact in research that accounts for the quality of interactions, and future work delineating the quality of an experience would provide a richer understanding of how adolescent interactions with people impact well-being and development. Given limitations in ATUS data on parent information, we were limited in types of family compositions to study. We hope to see future research exploring contact with adolescents using more refined variability in household makeup, including adolescents living with single fathers, relatives, unmarried parents, and homosexual parents. Finally, we found divergent patterns of response to community exposure by adolescents in nuclear and non-nuclear homes. This finding may help explain the lack of consensus in empirical work on long-term community impacts, and more research is needed to understand whether differential long-term responses to community exposure exist in different populations. Despite these limitations, our study contributes to the current literature by expanding our understanding of how contact with family members, friends, mentors, and neighbors contributes to adolescent well-being.

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