

## Development of the Early Adolescence Resilience Survey

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## What is Resilience?

- A set of qualities or protective mechanisms that contributes to successful adaptation and competent functioning despite challenging circumstances (Benard, 1991; Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998).
- Those characteristics that enable children "to work well, play well, love well, and expect well" (Gates, 1996).

## Methodological Issues

- Multiple conceptions and definitions of resilience
- Resilience as a dynamic process, not a fixed attribute
- "Overall" resilience vs. domain-specific resilience
- Distinction between internal and external protective factors
- Shortcomings of current measures

## Study 1: Purpose

- Select target population
- Identify resilience constructs
- Generate survey items to develop a preliminary instrument
- Conduct a pilot test of the instrument and make appropriate revisions

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- D. Giving Back to Others
  - Balancing your own interests with the interests of others.
- E. High Expectations
  - Receiving positive support and encouragement from others to succeed.

### Study 1: Selected Items

- A. Interpersonal Connections
  - Item #04: "At my school there is a teacher or another adult who really cares about me."
- B. Skills and Competencies
  - Item #31: "I get along well with others."
- C. Hope/Optimism
  - Item #39: "I think I will have a happy life as an adult."
- D. Contributions
  - Item #42: "I enjoy helping other people."
- E. High Expectations
  - Item #49: "My family expects me to get good grades."

### Study 1: Procedure

- The EARS was administered to young adolescents ( $N = 58$ ) at four summer camps.
- Sample characteristics:
  - 53% male
  - 68% White
  - Mean age of 13 years

### Study 1: Results

- Good reliability in the form of internal consistency:
  - Interpersonal Connections = .891
  - Skills and Competencies = .770
  - Hope/Optimism = .645
  - Contributions = .772
  - High Expectations = .838
- Negatively-worded items were unclear

### Study 2: Purpose

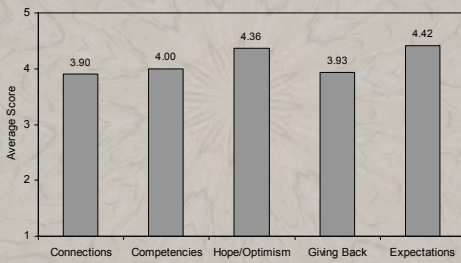
- Measure statistical differences in factor scores by demographics
- Assess the instrument's measurement model

### Study 2: Method

- Based on results from Study 1, the EARS was shortened from 72 to 55 items.
- Research staff administered the modified EARS to young adolescents ( $N = 397$ ) at 16 child-care programs.
- Sample characteristics:
  - 49% male
  - 42% White
  - Mean age of 13 years

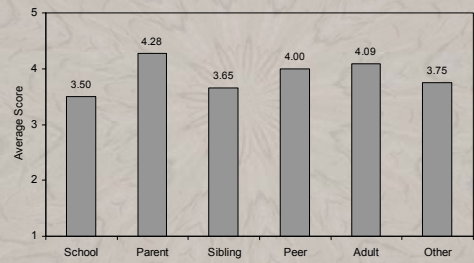
### Study 2: Results

Average Factor Scores



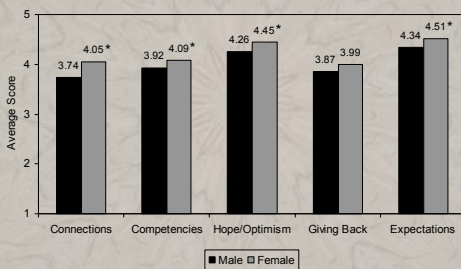
### Study 2: Results

Average Scores on "Interpersonal Connections"



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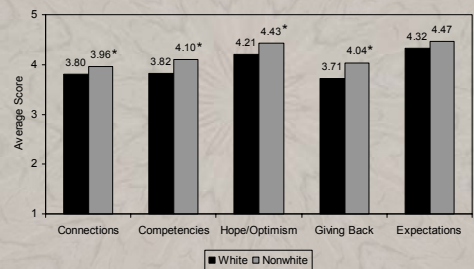
Average Factor Scores by Gender



Note. \* $p < .05$ .

### Study 2: Results

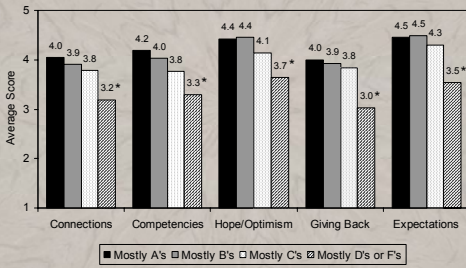
Average Factor Scores by Race



Note. \* $p < .05$ .

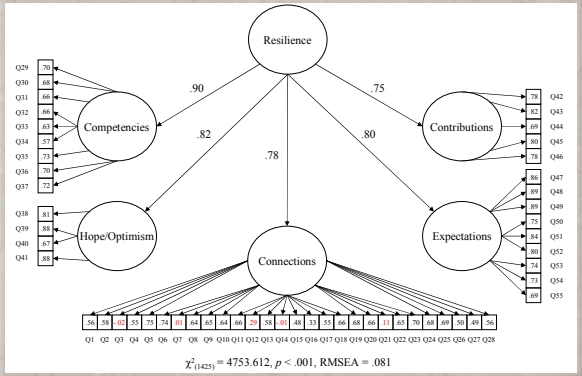
## Study 2: Results

Average Factor Scores by Academic Performance



Note. \* $p < .05$ .

## Study 2: Results



## Conclusions

- The EARS shows promise as a tool that measures the multifactorial construct of resilience.
- Results can be used to develop programs and social policies that benefit young adolescents.
- Low scores on connections to school are of concern.
- Categorical disparities in factor scores should be investigated further.

## Resources

### Article:

Luthar, S. S., Cicchetti, D., & Becker, B. (2000). The construct of resilience: A critical evaluation and guidelines for future work. *Child Development, 71*, 543-562.

### Websites:

<http://www.resilnet.uiuc.edu/>

<http://www.resiliency.com/>

<http://www2.cce.umn.edu/nrrc/research.shtml>