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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Melody Gaye Stone entitled "Spillover Effects of Interparental Conflict Styles: Parenting Behaviors as Linking Mechanisms."

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**SPILOVER EFFECTS OF INTERPARENTAL CONFLICT STYLES:
PARENTING BEHAVIORS AS LINKING MECHANISMS**

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Melody Gaye Stone

August 2000

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Cheryl Buehler, my committee chair, for her direction and expertise as she presented me with opportunities and challenges that have fostered my growth as a scholar. Thank you to my faculty committee, Dr. Priscilla Blanton, Dr. William Poppen, and Dr. Delores Smith for their insightful comments and suggestions, and for their ability to help me appreciate the practical relevance and application of this work.

I appreciate my UT friends who have been ever-present in times of need and a source of fun and laughter as we learned together and from each other. I would like to thank my non-UT friends who wondered why I returned to school, but rallied around me in support, nonetheless. In particular, I thank Jeannie Gerard, Ambika Krishnakumar, Sherrie McGuire, and Tami Spidell.

I am grateful to my mother and father who, in their own unique ways, lead me to this academic pursuit. My siblings, Kendall, Kevin, and Cindra are my biggest fans. Thank you to my family for how they have influenced me.

Lastly, to Rex, my dearest friend, confidante, and love, I thank you for your tender-hearted and sturdy support. I would not have done this without you. And to Emma, our young daughter, who tried your best to keep me from working on this dissertation, I thank you for enriching my life beyond all expectations. To Rex and Emma, I dedicate this work.

ABSTRACT

Marital conflict is associated with youth problem behavior both directly and indirectly through disruptions in parenting. This study used self-report questionnaires to examine the linkages among youth perceptions of covert and overt interparental conflict styles, disrupted parenting behaviors, and youth problem behavior. It was hypothesized that disrupted parenting composed of five parenting behaviors---psychological intrusion, intraparental inconsistency, low warmth/support, inadequate behavioral monitoring, and harsh punishment---would intervene in the association between hostile interparental conflict and youth problem behavior.

Participants were 337 youth aged 10 to 15. Self-report measures included the Achenbach CBCL (youth problem behavior) as well as covert and overt conflict style and parenting behavior items that were either written for this study or adapted from other sources. Multiple hierarchical regression was used to examine the associations among youth perceptions of hostile interparental conflict, disrupted parenting, and youth problem behavior.

The results indicated that covert and overt interparental conflict styles were associated with youth problem behavior not only directly but also indirectly through youth perceptions of disrupted parenting. The strongest and most consistent linkages involved intraparental inconsistency. Intraparental inconsistency transmitted part of the effect of both covert and overt interparental

conflict styles to youth, who exhibited problems such as anxiety, depression, aggression, and disruptive behaviors in the context of marital conflict. For the most part, this pattern held for youth with varying background characteristics.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Children exposed to conflictual interactions between parents are at risk for problems such as depression, anxiety, somatic complaints, delinquency, and aggression (Buehler et al., 1997; 1998; Davies & Cummings, 1998; Katz & Gottman, 1997; Kerig, 1995; 1998). The direct impact of interparental conflict has been established in survey, longitudinal, and experimental research (Cummings & Davies, 1994; Fincham, Grych, & Osborne, 1994; Buehler et al., 1998). Although well documented, understanding the positive linear relationship between interparental conflict and youth adjustment is not as simple as once believed.

Researchers are trying to understand how and why interparental conflict is associated with youth adjustment problems, and the search is still in its infancy (Fincham, 1998). Explanations postulated to account for this association involve direct and indirect effects of interparental conflict on youth adjustment problems. The direct effects argument suggests that conflictual interactions between parents affect youth directly without being filtered through another factor. Children become distressed and aroused by conflict that is intense, frequent, and unresolved (Cummings & Davies, 1994; Grych & Fincham, 1993). The indirect effects argument suggests that conflictual interactions between

parents influence youth through linking mechanisms including disrupted parenting behaviors, parental depression, and disruption in children's emotional security (Buehler, Krishnakumar, Anthony, Tittsworth, & Stone, 1994; Conger et al., 1992, 1993; Conger, Ge, Elder, Lorenz, & Simons, 1994; Cummings, Davies, & Simpson, 1994; Downey & Coyne, 1990; Fincham, 1998; Grych & Fincham, 1990; Grych, Seid, & Fincham, 1992). The mechanism under consideration in this study is disrupted parenting. Thus, in an effort to understand the association between interparental conflict and youth adjustment problems, the goal of this study is to examine simultaneously the direct effects of youth perceptions of hostile interparental conflict and the indirect effects of youth perceptions of disrupted parenting. Tested in this study is the proposition that youth perceptions of five parenting behaviors—psychological intrusion, intraparental inconsistency, low warmth/support, inadequate behavior monitoring, and harsh punishment—function as connecting mechanisms between youth perceptions of hostile interparental conflict styles and youth problem behavior.

Before discussing some of the potential connections between youth perceptions of interparental conflict, disrupted parenting behaviors, and youth problem behavior, conceptual definitions of terms used in the study are introduced next and elaborated upon in the literature review.

Conceptual Definitions

Interparental Conflict Concepts

Interparental conflict is defined as inevitable and inherently neutral disagreements between parents about various issues in family life (Buehler et al., 1994).

Interparental conflict style is defined as the manner in which parents express feelings and thoughts of disagreement (Buehler et al., 1994).

Marital conflict is a general term used to express hostile conflictual interactions between spouses.

Covert interparental conflict style is a pattern of hostile behaviors and affect that reflect indirect ways of managing conflict between parents (Buehler & Trotter, 1990).

Overt interparental conflict style is a pattern of hostile behaviors and affect which indicate direct manifestations of negative connections between parents (Buehler et al., 1998).

Youth Problem Behavior Concepts

Internalizing youth problem behavior is defined as inner-directed maladaptive actions and reactions, such as depressive affect, anxious thoughts, withdrawal, and suicidal ideation (Achenbach, 1991).

Externalizing youth problem behavior is defined as outer-directed maladaptive actions of children and adolescents, such as aggression, stealing, lying, and alcohol and other substance use (Achenbach, 1991).

Total youth problem behavior is the combination of both internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior (Achenbach, 1991).

Disrupted Parenting Concepts

Psychological intrusion is defined as patterns of parental behaviors which intrude upon the child's emotional and psychological autonomy (Barber, 1996).

Intraparental inconsistency is defined as alterations in parental disciplinary strategy in the form of erratic and arbitrary behavior used to enforce rules and distribute rewards and consequences for a child's unacceptable behavior (Hetherington, 1979). This concept describes behavior within a parent rather than behavior between parents.

Low warmth/support is defined as parenting behaviors which convey disinterest, emotional unavailability, and lack of acceptance of the child (Rollins & Thomas, 1979).

Inadequate behavior monitoring is defined as parenting behaviors which convey lack of child-centeredness or concern, including inadequate supervision or limit-setting (Steinberg, Mounts, Lamborn, & Dornbusch, 1991).

Harsh punishment is defined as forceful and threatening compliance-gaining strategies used by parents with their children, which might be accompanied with a critical or angry emotional tone (Baumrind, 1968).

Review of Literature

This study addresses the role of disrupted parenting in the socializing of children and adolescents, by examining the interplay between marital strife and parenting behaviors. Youth might perceive that their parents treat them differently after their parents fight with each other. Therefore, from the youth's point of view, disruption in parenting behaviors might result from hostile marital conflict spilling over into the parent-child relationship. Spillover refers to the transfer of behavior, moods and emotions from one setting to another (Erel & Burman, 1995). According to this hypothesis, negative emotions in one family relationship are likely to transfer to other family relationships. Therefore, marital conflict might compromise youth well-being by spilling over into the parent-child relationship the rancor and hostility from tense marital interactions. For example, in a recent study examining the transmission of tension from the marital dyad to the parent-child dyad, parents were more likely to have tense interactions with their children when there had been marital tension the day previously (Almeida, Wethington, & Chandler, 1999). In the face of marital conflict, disrupted parenting might be one of the driving forces behind adjustment problems in youth (Buehler et al., 1994; Crockenberg & Covey, 1991; Davies & Cummings, 1994; Fincham, 1998; Jouriles, Farris, & McDonald, 1991).

Promising strides have been made in exploring the spillover hypothesis. Most commonly, researchers have supported their argument by relying on empirical literature that documents each part of the two-part pathway: 1) the

relationship between interparental conflict and specific parenting behaviors; and 2) the relationship between specific parenting behaviors and youth problem behavior. In addition to the bivariate associations between hostile interparental conflict and parenting behaviors, and between parenting behaviors and youth problem behavior, there is more rigorous empirical support for the intervening role of parenting. A few researchers have provided direct tests of this linking relationship by determining whether the association between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior disappears or is reduced significantly after important parenting variables are considered.

Theoretically, there are two ways through which disrupted parenting might function as a linking mechanism in the relationship between hostile interparental conflict and youth problem behavior. These include mediating effects and indirect (or intervening) effects. Either effect is an example of spillover wherein hostile interparental conflict spills over into the parenting domain, resulting in disrupted parenting.

Disrupted parenting might function as a mediating variable. Mediating effects would be present to the extent that disrupted parenting completely explained the association between hostile interparental conflict and youth problem behavior. This would indicate that disrupted parenting was a complete mediator (Baron & Kenny, 1986). As a partial mediator, disrupted parenting would diminish statistically but not eliminate the association between hostile interparental conflict and youth problem behavior. Many researchers test for

mediating effects using cross-sectional data. Ideally, mediation should be tested with longitudinal data so the antecedent, mediating, and outcome variables are time-ordered.

Alternatively, disrupted parenting might function as an intervening variable (an indirect effect). Disrupted parenting might be associated with hostile interparental conflict and with youth problem behavior, forming a causal pathway from hostile interparental conflict to disrupted parenting to youth problem behavior. An indirect effect would indicate that the pathway is statistically significant, but that a significant direct effect between hostile interparental conflict and youth problem behavior also exists and is not diminished by the existence of the statistically significant indirect pathway through disrupted parenting.

Promising strides have been made in exploring the spillover hypothesis and contributions from this literature are reviewed in a following section on parenting behaviors. There are three major limitations with this literature that are remedied in the present study. First, in models that explore the role of parenting behaviors as a link between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior, the concept of interparental conflict has been defined so broadly that researchers use the term to measure diverse phenomenon; thus, distinct and well-conceptualized interparental conflict styles have not been considered together in the same model. In the proposed study, two conceptually and empirically distinct conflict styles are addressed, covert and overt interparental

conflict. Second, the few researchers who have investigated the linking role of parenting behaviors have aggregated parenting behaviors into a composite, thus losing important information about the contributions of each unique parenting behavior. In the proposed study, five distinct parenting behaviors are examined as linking mechanisms in the relationship between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior. The parenting variables which are the interest of this study include psychological intrusion, intraparental inconsistency, low warmth/support, inadequate behavioral monitoring, and harsh punishment. Third, the role each parenting behavior might play in linking the relationship between interparental conflict styles and youth problem behavior has not been examined to determine under what contextual influences it occurs. In the proposed study, each pathway is examined in terms of background conditions of youth age, youth gender, marital status of parents, and family poverty status.

Theoretical Foundation

Family Systems Theory

Family systems theory is the source of one explanation for the spillover hypothesis, which involves the expression of behavior, emotions, and moods in the parent-child subsystem which are generated in the marital dyad. Basic to understanding this expressive process is the family systems concept of triangles. Triangulation is basic to understanding the function of any family system (Bowen, 1971; Minuchin, 1974) and "describes the way any three people, related to each other, involve others in emotional issues between them" (Bowen, 1989,

p. 306). In the anxiety-filled environment of conflict, a third person is triangulated to ease or spread around the anxious and hurt feelings of the conflicting partners. In terms of marriage and parenting, this process might involve either: 1) distancing the child from the marital relationship, which creates a rigid boundary between the marital subsystem and the parent-child subsystem or 2) closing the distance between parent and child by drawing the child into a closer, enmeshed parent-child subsystem.

The process of distancing the child from the marital subsystem involves the disputing parents displacing their negative emotions of anxiety, unhappiness, and dissatisfaction onto their child (Haley, 1976). The triangulated youth becomes the focus of attention through a family projection process (Bowen, 1978) termed by family systems theorists as scapegoating (Haley, 1976) or detouring (Minuchin, 1974). When parents focus on the child as the problem, they transfer or displace the tension from the marital dyad to the child. Thus, parents might exaggerate or exacerbate the child's problems (Pillari, 1991).

The process of closing the distance between a parent and child involves drawing the child into an enmeshed relationship with the parent. Thus, unresolved tension in the marital relationship spills over to the parent-child relationship by way of the parent securing and maintaining a strong emotional alliance and level of support from the child. For example, the triangulated youth might feel pressured or obliged to listen to or agree with one parent's complaints

against the other. The resulting enmeshment and cross-generational coalition might facilitate a parent-child emotional alliance against the other parent (Haley, 1976; Minuchin, 1974). In efforts to maintain the child's support, the parent might relax expectations and demands for appropriate behavior from the child, preferring to see the child as a confidante and friend. Alternatively, when the child fails to fulfill the role of confidante or emotional support, the parent might respond harshly. Family therapists maintain such parenting behavior might result in depressed, anxious, or noncompliant children (Haley, 1976; Minuchin, 1974).

Although the models in this study assume that hostile marital conflict affects parenting, which in turn affects youth problem behavior, one cannot overlook reciprocity and circularity in the family system; children's behavior also influences parent-child interactions (Bell, 1968). This is relevant to the study of marital conflict for two reasons. First, the structures of family alliances seen in maritally distressed families might originate in child problems rather than in conflict. Second, the expression of marital conflict might be influenced by child reactions and behaviors. For example, children who are exposed to ongoing conflict show increased sensitivity to tension and are preoccupied with the parents and the parents' well-being (Cummings, Iannotti & Zahn-Waxler, 1985) which some researchers have described as a pattern of insecure attachment (Cummings & Davies, 1994; Owen & Cox, 1997). Other researchers have described such child response as a condition of hypervigilance and overwhelming arousal which distracts the child from autonomous activity and

play (Gottman & Katz, 1989). Children's specific reactions can be expected to influence the dynamics of marital conflict in ways that could facilitate or prevent resolution.

Social Learning Theory

Patterson provides another perspective for the indirect effects argument, explaining how interparental conflict, disrupted parenting, and youth adjustment are linked. Patterson (1982) reasons that parents become emotionally upset and distracted when embroiled in their disputes. The distractions result in less focused attention on their child's behavior and the parent-child relationship. Consequently, parents provide less warmth, support, encouragement, monitoring, and fewer instructions, demands and expectations. Parents ignore their youth and their youth's misbehavior until that misbehavior escalates to a point that demands control. Patterson suggests that at this point parents are likely to behave in controlling, threatening, and severely punitive ways.

Social learning theory is a source also for explaining the direct effects of marital conflict on problems experienced by youth. Youth might learn through their parent's example that conflict is handled by insulting, yelling, name calling, and threatening, and/or recruiting a third party to ease conflictual tensions. Youth repeatedly exposed to anxious tensions and lessons in hostile patterns of conflict management might not develop important relational and emotional regulation skills (Cummings & Davies, 1994). Such parent modeling might result

in noncompliant, misbehaving children or anxious and depressed children (Cummings & Davies, 1994; Patterson, 1982).

Interparental Conflict Styles

One major limitation in understanding how hostile interparental conflict is associated with youth problem behavior has been the inadequate conceptualization of interparental conflict. Historically, researchers used the concept of interparental conflict or marital conflict broadly and in diverse ways, failing---until recently---to recognize the multidimensional nature of the construct. This approach is rooted in conceptualizing marital quality in terms of relationship satisfaction and conflict frequency. However, this global perspective was criticized as researchers found interparental conflict had a stronger effect on youth problem behavior than did global marital satisfaction (Crockenberg & Covey, 1991; Cummings et al., 1994; Katz & Gottman, 1993). Even so, more recent research has had a limited focus on frequency of conflict, a construct which tends to composite how often parents disagree, with the manner in which they express their disagreement. Such aggregation has confounded results of studies examining parenting in the context of marital conflict. Most recently, researchers have suggested that interparental conflict is a multidimensional construct (Buehler et al., 1994; Cummings & Davies, 1994; Grych & Fincham, 1990). Two important dimensions are the frequency of disagreements (interparental conflict) and the mode of expression used to deal with the conflict (conflict styles) (Buehler et al., 1997).

In this study, a distinction is drawn between interparental conflict and conflict styles because such a distinction is important empirically and practically. Interparental conflict is defined as disagreements between parents about various issues in family life (Buehler et al., 1994). Interparental conflict or disagreements are inevitable and inherently neutral (Sprey, 1979). Studies suggest that interparental conflict is unrelated to youth problem behavior when hostile modes of expression are controlled (Buehler & Trotter, 1990; Jenkins & Smith, 1991) and do not affect youth as strongly as when parents express disagreements with each other in a negative or disrespectful manner (Buehler et al., 1997). Furthermore, frequency of interparental conflict or disagreements is only weakly related to parenting behaviors (Buehler et al., 1994; Camara & Resnick, 1989).

Interparental conflict style is defined as the manner in which feelings and thoughts of disagreement are expressed. Several variants of interparental conflict styles have been identified in the literature. These include a covert conflict style, an overt conflict style, an avoidant conflict style, a withdrawal conflict style, and a cooperative conflict style. Although each of these interparental conflict styles deserves attention with regard to their association with parenting and youth problem behavior, the focus of this study is on the two interparental conflict styles, covert and overt, that are characterized by negative affect and disrespectful behavior. Covert and overt interparental conflict styles are important to study because increasing evidence suggests parents who use covert and overt conflict styles to express their disagreements place their child at

risk for problem behavior (Buehler et al., 1997; 1998) and also might engage in negative parenting behaviors (Ahrons, 1981; Camara & Resnick, 1989; Fauber, Forehand, Thomas, & Wierson, 1990).

This study improves on previous research by making a distinction between interparental conflict and interparental conflict styles and by examining how covert and overt interparental conflict styles are associated with parenting and youth problem behavior. Although theory and preliminary empirical findings suggest the importance of studying the spillover effects of hostile interparental conflict styles into parenting, few studies have been conducted that examine parenting behaviors in the context of specific interparental conflict styles. Even fewer have addressed the more subtle pathways of spillover that might be associated with covert interparental conflict.

More specifically, only ten studies have explored directly the linking role of parenting behaviors in the association between interparental conflict styles and youth problem behavior. Of those studies, almost all researchers measured interparental conflict using a composite of frequency of disagreement, an overt conflict style, and elements of a covert conflict style (using the O'Leary-Porter Scale), which reduces the impact of each conflict style. A strength of this study is the inclusion of a covert interparental conflict style, which has not been examined previously in a model with disrupted parenting (for an exception, see Stone, Buehler, & Barber, 1999).

Covert Interparental Conflict Style

Youth perceptions of a covert interparental conflict style is one predictor included in this study because most research examining interparental conflict has explored the association between parents' use of an overt conflict style and youth problem behavior to the neglect of parents' use of a covert conflict style (Buehler et al., 1997). Yet, scholars have suggested a covert interparental conflict style is associated with youth problems, particularly internalizing problem behavior (Buehler et al., 1997; 1998; Cummings & Davies, 1994; Forehand & McCombs, 1989). A covert interparental conflict style is defined as behaviors and affect that reflect indirect ways of managing conflict between parents (Buehler & Trotter, 1990). The indirect behaviors of a covert interparental conflict style, exemplified by indirectly expressed anger or resentment, have two components. Conceptually, one component involves the child and the other does not.

Child-focused covert interparental conflict style is defined as behaviors and affect that actively or even subtly recruit the child or allow child-initiated involvement in parental disputes. Such behavior has qualities of disconfirming or ignoring the other parent, subtly disrespecting and disregarding the other parent, and indirectly communicating through the child. Parents demonstrate a covert interparental conflict style when one parent engages the child in a coalition against the other parent, often referred to as triangulation in the clinical literature (Minuchin, 1974). Identifying behavioral characteristics include: trying to get the

child to side with oneself, using the child to get information about the other parent when one does not want to ask the other parent directly, having the child carry messages to the other parent because one does not want to relay the information, denigrating the other parent when present but behaving as though that parent is not present, and denigrating the other parent when that person is absent (Buchanan, Maccoby, & Dornbusch, 1991; Buehler et al., 1997; Johnston, Gonzalez & Campbell, 1987; Kerig, 1995; McHale, 1997; Stone & Buehler, 1997; Tschann, Johnston, Kline, & Wallerstein, 1989).

The second component of a covert interparental conflict style does not involve the cross-generational coalition, but is characterized by more global covert behaviors. Global covert interparental conflict is exemplified when unspoken resentments and tensions between parents are manifested in subtle, indirect behaviors and affect such as the "silent punishment," sarcasm, or veiled teasing (Jenkins & Smith, 1991; Stone & Buehler, 1997; Whittaker & Bry, 1991).

Conceptually, therefore, parents who engage in a covert interparental conflict style suppress their hostile feelings toward each other and do not directly express the conflictual tension. This subtle aggression might either triangulate the child or be expressed toward one's partner in indirect ways that do not involve the child. The triangulating component of covert interparental conflict style, which involves the child, is the interest of this study rather than global covert interparental conflict because Buehler et al. (1998) found an association between child-focused covert interparental conflict style and youth problem

behavior, whereas Jenkins and Smith (1991) found no association between global covert interparental conflict and youth problem behavior.

Some scholars suggest that parents' use of a covert interparental conflict style may not be a salient predictor of youth maladjustment (Hetherington, Cox, & Cox, 1982—"encapsulated conflict"). However, in a recent meta-analytic review, Buehler et al. (1997) found 7 studies that had assessed some aspect of parents' use of a covert interparental conflict style. These 7 studies yielded 24 effects and the average effect size was .28 ($SD = .38$). Cohen (1977) defines this as a small but significant association. Additionally, Buehler et al. (1998) examined empirically the association between parents' use of a covert interparental conflict style and youth problem behavior. They found a positive association, particularly with internalizing youth problem behavior. This association was robust for sons and daughters, pre and early adolescent youth, youth with married and divorced parents, and youth from families with varying levels of economic well-being.

Overt Interparental Conflict Style

Youth perceptions of an overt interparental conflict style is the other conflict style included in the study because research suggests it has the greatest impact on the socialization of children (Grych & Fincham, 1990), and it has generated the most research interest. An overt interparental conflict style is defined as hostile behaviors and affect that reflect direct expressions of negative connections between parents. Defining characteristics include yelling, insulting,

hitting, shoving, threatening, and using abusive language (Buehler et al., 1998; Fincham et al., 1994). Buehler et al. examined empirically the association between parents' use of an overt interparental conflict style and youth problem behavior. They found a positive association with externalizing youth problem behavior. This association was robust for sons and daughters, pre and early adolescent youth, youth with married and divorced parents, and youth from families with varying levels of economic well-being.

Youth Problem Behavior

Youth problem behavior is a multidimensional construct which includes internalizing youth problem behavior and externalizing youth problem behavior. Internalizing problems are characterized by subtle, inward, and covert types of behavior and reactions which include depression, anxiety, withdrawal, somatic complaints, and suicidal ideation (Achenbach, 1991). Externalizing problems are characterized by outward, overt, and confrontational types of behaviors which include aggression, delinquency, and alcohol and other substance use (Achenbach, 1991). Internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior comprise partially the broader construct of youth maladjustment. Internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior are chosen as the dependent variables because they are important youth outcomes and generally seem to be influenced by interparental conflict styles (Buehler et al., 1998; Fauber et al, 1990).

Disrupted Parenting Behaviors

Several different approaches have been used to assess parenting behaviors in relationship to child socialization. One of the most common strategies includes classifying parenting in terms of specific parenting styles. Another approach involves taking individual parenting factors and measuring their relative influence on youth outcomes.

Historically, parenting behaviors have been classified along the dimensions of support and control (Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Peterson & Rollins, 1987). Researchers have conceptualized and defined these dimensions differently (Becker, 1964; Schaefer, 1959), but agree that they are critical for optimal child development. Parental support is characterized by behaviors that convey love and value to the child. Parental control refers to measures parents take to channel their child's behavior in an appropriate and desirable direction (Rollins & Thomas, 1979). Optimal parenting, it is widely assumed, requires parents to provide an atmosphere characterized by affection and responsiveness to the child, consistent use of firm control, and clear expectations for responsible behavior (Baumrind, 1968). Within the dimensions of control and support, researchers assess parenting by aggregating parenting behaviors to form a "parenting style." From this perspective, critical etiological factors of youth problem behavior include: intraparental inconsistent discipline, lack of parental acceptance, low parental behavioral monitoring, and harsh punishment (Fauber et al., 1990; Loeber & Dishion, 1984).

A more recent classification scheme suggests optimal socialization requires parents to provide an atmosphere characterized by emotional connection, behavioral regulation, and the development of psychological autonomy (Barber, 1996). Support and control are considered orthogonal. The underlying assumption of this classification is that levels of control behavior operate independently of levels of support behavior. For example, Barber, Olsen, and Shagle (1994) found that parental control variables (psychological and behavioral control) operated independent of support variables (parental acceptance) to predict internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior. Critical etiological factors of this approach include the same parenting behaviors used in the support and control tradition with the important addition of psychological control or intrusion (Barber, 1996). Such an approach involves examining the influence of individual parenting behaviors, rather than aggregated parenting behaviors, in relationship to youth outcomes.

Because the aim of this study is to identify the relative importance of youth perceptions of parenting behaviors that function as linking mechanisms in the association between youth perceptions of interparental conflict styles and youth problem behavior, several parenting behaviors are included together. Including parenting behaviors together facilitates assessment of the unique contribution of each parenting component. Analyzing several distinct parenting behaviors simultaneously with interparental conflict has been done previously only once (see Fauber et al., 1990).

Thus, a second limitation in the literature which is remedied by the proposed study is that parenting behaviors considered detrimental to youth adjustment have not been examined independently and simultaneously in the same model with distinct measures of covert and overt interparental conflict styles. The aggregation of parenting behaviors has masked the independent contributions made by each. The present study examines components of youth perceptions of parenting that are possible linking mechanisms between youth perceptions of hostile interparental conflict styles and youth problem behavior.

Although theory and some preliminary empirical findings suggest the importance of studying parenting behaviors in the context of marital conflict, few studies have been conducted that examine parenting as a linking mechanism. There are ten studies, which are discussed in the following sections, which have explored directly the role of parenting behaviors in the association between interparental conflict and youth problems. Of the ten studies, however, almost all researchers measured interparental conflict using a composite of frequency of disagreement, an overt conflict style, and, occasionally, elements of a covert interparental conflict style. The researchers concluded from these studies that disrupted parenting behaviors, for the most part, function as linking mechanisms in the association between interparental conflict and youth problems.

However, this study improves on existing research by examining the following parenting behaviors in the context of covert and overt interparental conflict styles: psychological intrusion, intraparental inconsistency, lack of

warmth/support, inadequate behavioral monitoring, and harsh punishment. The role of each parenting behavior is examined with a direct test for mediating and indirect effects in the association between interparental conflict styles and youth problem behavior. Testing directly for mediating and indirect effects is superior to examining bivariate associations of each link of the association because each link is considered in the context of the variance contributed by the direct relationship between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior.

Importantly, the current study uses youth reports of interparental conflict styles and parenting behaviors. Osborne and Fincham (1996) suggest that youth perceptions of interparental conflict might serve as a context in which parenting behavior is interpreted by youth. For example, youth who witness hostile interparental interactions might feel less certain of their own relationship with their parents. Therefore, youth who witness their parents' fights might consider conflict in the parent-child relationship to be more hostile than those youth who have not witnessed interparental conflict (Cummings & Davies, 1994). Children interpret and respond to interparental conflict in unique ways and their perceptions are linked to their emotional responses that arise out of the conflict they witness (Cummings et al., 1994; Grych & Fincham, 1990).

Because children's perception of interparental conflict and their subsequent interpretation of the parent-child relationship might predict youth adjustment, it is imperative to distinguish between youth perceptions of interparental conflict and parenting behaviors from observer and parent reports

of interparental conflict and parenting behaviors (Harold, Fincham, Osborne, & Conger, 1997). Nonchild reports of children's exposure to interparental conflict might be inadequate for understanding how such conflict impacts children, because children actively interact with their environment (Grych & Fincham, 1990). Therefore, to understand the impact of hostile interparental conflict and how youth interpret parenting behaviors, youth reports of interparental conflict and parenting were used.

The next section defines each parenting behavior, gives examples of each behavior, and presents research to date that explores the interrelations between interparental conflict, parenting behaviors, and youth problem behavior. First, empirical support for direct tests of the linking role of each parenting behavior is presented. Second, a review of those studies which provide tangential evidence that supports the bivariate associations of each leg of the pathway is provided.

Psychological Intrusion

Psychological intrusion, also referred to as psychological control in the literature, is defined as patterns of family interaction that intrude upon youth's emotional and psychological autonomy (Barber, 1996; Barber et al., 1994). Identifying characteristics include constraining verbal expressions, invalidating feelings, personal attacks, guilt induction, love withdrawal, and inconsistent emotional expression (Barber, 1996). Psychological control is distinguished from behavioral control in that the parent attempts to control, through the use of

anxiety or guilt induction, youth's thoughts and feelings rather than youth's behavior (Barber, 1996). Parents who use psychological intrusion discourage children's expression of personal autonomy (Baumrind, 1971; 1978). Examples of psychological intrusion include finishing the child's sentences, telling a child that the child's feelings are ridiculous, and withdrawing love when a child expresses an opinion contrary to the parent's.

Direct evidence. Two studies have examined directly the mediating role of psychological intrusion in the association between interparental conflict and youth problems. Each documents psychological intrusion as a linking mechanism. First, Fauber et al. (1990) studied the mediating effects of psychological control (also including measures of rejection/withdrawal and lax control). They found that psychological control partially mediated the relationship between interparental conflict and youth internalizing but not externalizing youth problem behavior. Interparental conflict was measured with mother reports on the O'Leary-Porter Scale (OPS; Porter & O'Leary, 1980), which composites frequency of disagreement, overt conflict (verbal aggression) and elements of covert interparental conflict style. Psychological control was measured with youth and mother reports using the Child's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; Schaefer, 1965) of parents' use of anxiety, guilt induction, and shame. Observational ratings also were used. Second, the clearest evidence for the spillover effect of interparental conflict into parents' use of psychological intrusion is offered by Stone, Buehler, and Barber (1999) in their direct test of a

model linking interparental conflict styles to youth problem behavior. Conflict was measured with youth reports using measures which distinguish covert interparental conflict style from overt interparental conflict style and frequency of disagreement. Psychological intrusion was measured using child reports of five items from the Psychological Control Scale (Barber, 1996) and the Revised Children's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; Schaefer, 1965). The researchers reported psychological intrusion was linked to conflict styles, especially a covert interparental conflict style. They found that the relationship between covert and overt interparental conflict and youth problem behavior was not only direct, but also indirect through psychological intrusion.

Thus, two studies provide a direct test of the linking role of psychological intrusion in the relationship between interparental conflict styles and youth problem behavior. One tested with a measure of interparental conflict which aggregates overt conflict, elements of a covert interparental conflict style, and frequency of disagreement. Covert and overt interparental conflict as distinct conflict styles were examined in the other study. These studies support the hypothesis that interparental conflict as well as covert and overt interparental conflict styles exert their influence on internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior through the linking variable of psychological intrusion.

Tangential evidence. In terms of tangential evidence which supports each link of the mediational pathway, there are no other studies which have examined the link between interparental conflict and psychological intrusion. However,

empirical support exists which suggests an association between psychological intrusion and youth problem behavior. For example, Barber et al. (1994) demonstrated that psychological control uniquely predicted internalizing youth problem behavior. More recently, Barber's (1996) cross-sectional and longitudinal data analyses revealed that youth perceptions of parents' use of psychological control were associated with youth depression and, to a lesser extent, delinquency. Along these lines, other studies suggest psychological intrusion is associated with higher levels of both internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior (Conger, Conger, & Scaramella, 1997; Herman, Dornbusch, Herron, & Herting, 1997; Linver & Silverberg, 1995).

Intraparental Inconsistency

Intraparental inconsistency, also called inconsistent discipline in the literature, is conceptualized as alterations in parental disciplinary strategies in the form of erratic and arbitrary behaviors to enforce rules and distribute rewards and consequences for their child's unacceptable behavior (Hetherington, 1979; Patterson, 1982). Examples of inconsistency include enforcing a curfew one night, but not the next; requiring homework to be done before watching television sometimes but not at other times; punishing disrespectful comments at one time, but ignoring rude remarks at other times; and changing standards for acceptable behavior depending on the parent's mood. The resulting disciplinary atmosphere created by parents who use inconsistency is instability and unpredictability.

Direct evidence. Two studies have examined inconsistency as a link between interparental conflict and youth problems and both document some linkages. First, Fauber et al. (1990) examined intraparental inconsistency, as a component of lax control, in a mediational role. Interparental conflict was assessed using mother reports on the O'Leary-Porter Scale (OPS; Porter & O'Leary, 1980) which, as mentioned previously, combines frequency of disagreement, overt conflict and elements of a covert interparental conflict style. Inconsistency was measured with youth reports on the Child's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; Schluderman & Schluderman, 1970) and deals with the degree to which youth perceive their parents consistently regulate and monitor their youth's activities and conduct. The researchers found that lax control and inconsistency partially mediated the association between interparental conflict and externalizing youth problem behavior. However, their results must be interpreted with caution, because parental inconsistency was measured in combination with lax control, a conceptually different construct.

Second, also using the OPS, Mann and MacKenzie (1996) examined the role of inconsistency combined with lax control, calling it "inept discipline." They found inept discipline by mother but not father mediated the association between interparental conflict and son's oppositional behavior. Other researchers examined inconsistent discipline as a linking mechanism, although the tested models aggregated various combinations of inadequate behavior monitoring, inconsistent discipline, low warmth/support, and harsh punishment; therefore,

the differential effect of each parenting behavior was obscured. For example, in two longitudinal studies, researchers found that the relationship between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior disappears when the variance from the composite parenting variable is controlled (Caspi & Elder, 1988; Conger et al., 1993).

Thus, two studies tested directly the linking role of inconsistency in the relationship between interparental conflict and youth problems. Both used a composite of interparental conflict. No studies have examined inconsistency in the context of distinct interparental conflict styles. However, these studies provide preliminary evidence suggesting interparental conflict styles might exert their influence on youth problem behavior through the intervening variable of at least some aspects of inconsistency.

Tangential evidence. Tangential evidence supports each leg of the pathway. Studies document an association between interparental conflict and parental inconsistency (Hetherington, Cox & Cox, 1976; Holden & Ritchie, 1991; Stoneman, Brody, & Burke, 1989.) For example, Emery, Hetherington, and Dilalla (1984) suggested that when marital conflict is high, consistent parenting often is compromised. More specifically, Goldberg and Easterbrook (1984) found that when fathers feel maritally distressed, disruption occurs in the father-daughter relationship. Also, researchers have suggested that marital tension might lead to not only inconsistency within each parent but also inconsistency between parents (Becker, 1964). For example, Stoneman et al. (1989) found

overt conflict was related to inconsistency between parents and intraparental inconsistency for daughters but not for sons. In addition, Krishnakumar and Buehler (2000) reported in their meta-analysis that the average effect size between interparental conflict and intraparental inconsistency was $-.64$ (95% CI = $-.45 + -.83$; # of effects = 5). Overall, tangential evidence supports the spillover of interparental conflict into parenting in the form of inconsistency.

Research also documents the link between parental inconsistency and externalizing youth problem behavior. More specifically, inconsistent discipline has been linked to aggression and antisocial behavior in children (Block, Block, & Morrison, 1981). Likewise, inconsistent discipline is associated positively with police involvement and a self-reported delinquent lifestyle (Patterson & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1984). Furthermore, Wahler, Williams, and Cezero (1990) found maternal inconsistency increased the probability that their child would react adversely, with oppositional behavior, complaints, and demandingness. Moreover, Loeber and Dishion (1984), using group comparisons, suggested that children who fight more aggressively are likely to experience higher levels of inconsistent discipline at home. Also, DeBaryshe, Patterson, and Capaldi (1993) found ineffective discipline, characterized mainly by inconsistency, was associated with externalizing youth problem behavior. Not only externalizing youth problem behavior, but internalizing youth problem behavior such as depression and loneliness are associated with inconsistent discipline (Lempers, Clark-Lempers, & Simons, 1989).

Low Warmth/Support

Parental warmth/support, also called warmth/acceptance and warmth/empathy in the literature, is defined as parenting behaviors which convey love, warmth, support, affirmation, and value to the child (Rollins & Thomas, 1979). Qualities of warmth/support include responsiveness, emotional availability, and conveyance that the child is loved and respected. A parent demonstrates warmth/support when smiling at or hugging the child, listening, and showing interest in the child's feelings and thoughts. Low warmth/support creates an emotional climate characterized by disinterest and emotional unavailability.

Rutter (1971) was one of the first researchers who suggested that conflicting parents might be less supportive of their children, concluding that children with highly conflictual parents exhibit antisocial behavior, especially when the conflict is paired with little warmth in the parent-child relationship. Four studies have tested directly the role of low warmth/support in the association between interparental conflict and youth problems. Each documents some aspects of low warmth/support as a linking mechanism.

Direct evidence. First, Burman, John, and Margolin (1987) found that low parental warmth in the father-child relationship completely mediated the association between overt conflict and father and child reports of youth problem behavior. Lack of warmth in the mother-son relationship partially mediated the relationship between overt conflict and mother reports of son's externalizing

youth problem behavior. They assessed interparental conflict using parent reports of the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS; Straus, 1979) which measures overt marital aggression. Mother-child and father-child warmth was based on mother, father, and child reports of the Inventory of Family Feelings (IFF; Lowman, 1980; Fineberg & Lowman, 1975) which assesses the degree of warmth felt by the respondent toward each family member. Mother-child and father-child dyadic scores were based on averaging parent-child individual scores.

Second, Tschann et al. (1989) also assessed overt conflict using parent reports on the Parent History Questionnaire (PHQ; Tschann et al.) and on an expanded version of the Hostility Conflict Checklist (HCC; Jacobson, 1978) which measures hostility and verbal/physical aggression. The researchers also used clinician reports of parents' use of overt conflict. The parenting measure was assessed through clinician reports of the mother-child and father-child relationship in terms of warmth/empathy. The researchers found, through structural equation modeling, that overt conflict was linked to clinician report of youth depression and anger completely through an accepting/rejecting relationship with mother.

Third, Fauber et al. (1990) found through structural equation modeling that the relationship of marital conflict to youth problem behavior is mediated through its impact on "rejection-withdrawal." The researchers used mother reports on the O'Leary Porter Scale (OPS; Porter & O'Leary, 1980) to assess an aggregation of frequency of disagreement, verbal aggression and components of

a covert interparental conflict style. Acceptance/rejection was measured by youth and mother reports on the Child's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; Schaefer, 1965) and observational ratings.

Fourth, Osborne and Fincham (1996) found that parental acceptance/child-centeredness versus parental rejection in the mother-child and father-child relationship partially mediated the association between interparental conflict and internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior for both boys and girls. Interparental conflict was assessed using the Children's Perceptions of Interparental Conflict Scale (CPIC; Grych et al., 1992), which measures children's perceptions of conflict properties (i.e., frequency, intensity, degree of resolution). The parenting variable was measured by youth report on the Child Report of Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; Margolies & Weintraub, 1977) and is a composite measure of parental acceptance vs. rejection and harsh treatment (e.g., "swears at me," "puts me down").

Thus, four studies provide a direct test of the linking role of some aspects of low parental warmth/support in the relationship between interparental conflict and internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior. Two tested overt conflict; one tested interparental conflict as a composite measure; and one tested interparental conflict that was frequent, intense, and poorly resolved. However, a covert interparental conflict style as a distinct conflict style has not been examined with low warmth/support. These studies generally support the hypothesis that interparental conflict, and overt conflict specifically, exerts its

influence on internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior through low parental warmth/support.

Tangential evidence. There is evidence for each leg of the pathway.

Tangential theoretical and empirical support exists for the link between interparental conflict and low warmth/support. One of the clearest explanations for how interparental conflict impacts specific parenting behaviors is offered by Patterson (1982). When parents become emotionally aroused and distracted in the face of marital conflict, they give their children less attention and support. Fewer praises and less encouragement, as well as ignoring their child's misbehavior might follow. Jacobson (1978) explain that "selective attention" operates in the midst of marital conflict. That is, when parents are involved in conflict, they might focus more on their child's negative behavior and less of the positive behavior, resulting in antisocial or noncompliant behavior or internalizing problems. In terms of empirical support, Burman et al. (1987) found mothers' reports of low overt interparental conflict predicted warmth in the mother-son relationship.

The negative linear association between warmth/support and youth problem behavior has received some theoretical and empirical support. Fauber et al. (1990) suggest that low acceptance can encourage children to either misbehave in efforts to gain parental attention or to internalize their feelings of being unaccepted. Low levels of parental acceptance are associated with internalizing youth problem behavior, specifically depression (Baron &

MacGillivray, 1989; Clark-Lempers, Lempers, & Netusil, 1990; Fauber et al., 1990). Likewise, low warmth/support has been linked with externalizing youth problem behavior, such as delinquency (Loeber & Dishion, 1984; Simons, Robertson, & Down, 1989), aggression and hostility (Fauber et al., 1990; Olweus, 1980), and alcohol use (Whitbeck, Hoyt, Miller, & Kao, 1992). Conversely, Burman et al. (1987) found warm and supportive parent-child relationships predicted good adjustment in their children. More specifically, mothers rated their daughters low on internalizing youth problem behavior when the father-daughter relationship was warm, as reported by fathers and daughters. Fathers reported low externalizing youth problem behavior when the mother-son relationship was warm, as reported by mothers and sons.

Inadequate Behavior Monitoring

Behavior monitoring, also called behavior regulation or lax control in the literature, is defined as the extent to which parents know their child's activities and whereabouts, as well as the company their child keeps. Such parental knowledge demonstrates child-centeredness or concern (Steinberg et al., 1991). Examples of high parental monitoring include knowing names of their child's friends, and who are their best friends; knowing the particular topics the child is studying currently in school, as well as the learning activities and tests associated with those topics; awareness of the child's favorite activities; and, how the child is feeling about friendships and socializing. Examples of inadequate monitoring include parents not knowing the names of their child's

best friends or how the child spends time after school or on weekends. The climate created by inadequate monitoring is characterized by inadequate supervision or limit-setting.

Direct evidence. Two studies have examined directly the role of inadequate monitoring in the association between interparental conflict and youth problems. Each documents some aspects of monitoring as a linking mechanism. First, Fauber et al. (1990), assessing interparental conflict using mother reports on the O'Leary-Porter Scale (OPS; Porter & O'Leary, 1980) found parents' lax control partially mediated the relationship between interparental conflict and externalizing youth problem behavior. Lax control (vs. firm control) was assessed by youth report on the Child's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; Schluderman & Schluderman, 1970) and deals with the degree to which youth perceive their parents consistently regulate and monitor their youth's activities and conduct. Thus, the parenting measure combined inconsistent discipline and lax control. Second, Tschann et al. (1989) studied the effects of behavioral regulation using clinician report of parent "expects ego control," a construct somewhat similar to behavioral monitoring. Overt interparental conflict was assessed using parent reports on the Parent History Questionnaire (PHQ; Tschann et al., 1989), parent reports on the Hostility Conflict Checklist (HCC; Jacobson, 1978), and clinician reports. Using structural equation modeling they found overt interparental conflict indirectly affects youth problems through inadequate behavioral regulation.

Thus, two studies tested directly the mediating role of monitoring in the association between interparental conflict and youth problems. One used a composite of interparental conflict and one tested overt conflict. No studies have examined inadequate monitoring in the context of a covert interparental conflict style. These studies provide preliminary support for the hypothesis that interparental conflict, particularly overt conflict, exerts its influence on externalizing youth problem behavior through the intervening variable of at least some aspects of inadequate monitoring.

Tangential evidence. There are studies which support each leg of the pathway. Tangential evidence suggests interparental conflict spills over into parenting in the form of low monitoring, which demonstrates that parents in the midst of marital strife might be too preoccupied with their own troubles to effectively monitor and structure their youth's environment. For example, some studies suggested an association exists between overt conflict and parental monitoring behaviors (Burman et al., 1987; Conger et al., 1993). Also, Patterson (1982) has suggested that marital aggression affects the mother's self-esteem which, in turn, impacts her ability to parent.

Ample empirical support suggests lower levels of monitoring predict youth problem behavior, especially externalizing youth problem behavior (Crouter, MacDermid, McHale, & Perry-Jenkins, 1990; Patterson & Strouthamer-Loeber, 1984). More specifically, Patterson and Stouthamer-Loeber found a negative correlation between parental monitoring and delinquency. Likewise, Sampson

and Laub (1994) found maternal monitoring correlated negatively with delinquency. Furthermore, Barber et al. (1994) found that low monitoring was related more strongly to externalizing youth problem behavior than to internalizing youth problem behavior. Apparently, parents involved in overt interparental conflict might be less vigilant, exert less supervision, and make fewer demands on their child because they are preoccupied or overwhelmed with their conflictual relationship.

Harsh Punishment

Harsh punishment, often referred to as harsh discipline or strict discipline in the literature, is conceptualized as forceful and threatening compliance-gaining strategies used by parents with their children (Baumrind, 1968). Harsh punishment is characterized by a critical and angry emotional tone and is devoid of inductive reasoning or firm instructions. Examples of harsh punishment include hitting, spanking, yelling, name-calling or threatening, which creates an emotional climate of coldness and hostility.

Direct evidence. There are six studies that have examined directly the linking role of harsh punishment in the association between interparental conflict and youth problems. Four document some aspects of harsh punishment as a linking mechanism. Conversely, two found evidence suggesting harsh punishment does not mediate the relationship between interparental conflict and youth problems.

First, Harold and Conger (1997) found that parents' harsh behavior

mediated the relationship between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior. The interparental conflict measure was based on combining spouse reports of overt hostility and observer ratings of husband-to-wife and wife-to-husband hostility. Parents' harsh behavior was assessed by mother and father combined report of hostility toward the adolescent (e.g., "got angry," "criticized," "shouted or yelled," items written for the study) and observer ratings of mothers' and fathers' behavior toward the adolescent (e.g., angry-coercive, antisocial).

Second, Harold et al. (1997) found that adolescent perceptions of parental hostility toward the adolescent partially mediated the relationship between interparental conflict and internalizing youth problem behavior, and fully mediated the relationship between interparental conflict and externalizing youth problem behavior. Interparental conflict was assessed using the Children's Perceptions of Interparental Conflict Scale (CPIC; Grych et al., 1992), which measures children's perceptions of conflict properties (frequency, intensity, degree of resolution), degree of threat felt by the adolescent, and content (whether or not the disagreement is related to the child). The parent-child relationship was based on an index formed for mother-adolescent and father-adolescent hostility comprising the average of three scales: 1) the acceptance/rejection subscale of the Child Report of Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; Margolies & Weintraub, 1977), 2) the verbal aggression scale of the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS; Schumm & Bagarozzi, 1989; Straus, 1979) and, 3) the Conflict Behavior Questionnaire (CBQ; Prinz, Foster, Kent & O'Leary, 1979;

Robin & Foster, 1984), which measures conflict and negative communication in the parent- child relationship.

Third, Osborne and Fincham (1996), also using the CPIC, found that negativity in the mother-child and father-child relationship partially mediated the association between interparental conflict and internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior for both boys and girls. Parent-child negativity was measured the same as in the above study, a composite of youth reports of parental rejection and harsh punishment ("swears at me," "puts me down").

Fourth, O'Keefe's (1994) research on maritally violent families found that the quality (amount of discord) of the mother-child relationship and mother to child aggression partially mediated the relationship between overt interparental conflict (physical aggression) and externalizing and internalizing youth problem behavior. Conflict between parents was measured using mother reports of the physical aggression subscale of the Conflict Tactics Scale - Form N (CTS; Straus, 1979). Amount of discord in the mother-child relationship was measured with mother and child reports of a single item detailing the frequency of discord in the relationship. The physical aggression subscale of the CTS-Parent-Child Version was used to measure mother reports of the amount of parent aggression against the child.

Fifth, to the contrary, Forehand, Wierson, McCombs, Brody, and Fauber (1989) found that "poor parenting" did not mediate or intervene in the relationship between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior.

Interparental conflict was assessed using mother reports on the O'Leary-Porter Scale (OPS; Porter & O' Leary, 1980). Ratings of parenting skills were based on three minute observations of mother-adolescent pairs discussing a "hot topic" from the Issues Checklist (Robin & Weiss, 1990), a tool which identifies conflictual issues unique to a particular family. The parenting behavior measure was a composite of mothers' expression of anger and tension toward the adolescent, her problem-solving attempts, and her attempts at positive communication. Although interparental conflict was directly related to internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior, the indirect path through parenting was not significant. It is important to note, however, that "poor parenting" measured only some aspects of harsh punishment and those aspects are diluted compared to the behavior measured in O'Keefe's study.

Sixth, Jenkins and Smith (1991) found that parent reports of overt interparental conflict was a stronger predictor of youth problem behavior than harsh punishment toward the child. The parenting measure combined mother report of mother and father physical aggression toward the child and observers' reports of maternal verbal aggression toward the child. Parents reported via interviews their use of shouting, swearing, and throwing things during disagreements. The hypothesis that physical and verbal aggression in the parent-child relationship mediates or intervenes in the relationship was unsupported.

Thus, of the six studies which examined directly aspects of harsh

punishment as a linking mechanism in the association between interparental conflict and youth problems, three used overt conflict, one used a composite of interparental conflict (overt conflict, elements of covert conflict, and frequency of disagreement), and two examined conflict that was frequent, intense and poorly resolved. However, covert conflict as a distinct interparental conflict style has not been examined in the context of harsh punishment. The conclusions reached by the researchers of these studies are in opposition, which might be because the measures range from parent behavior that is as mild as disapproval to parent behavior that is severe, hostile, and includes harsh physical punishment.

Tangential evidence. Tangential evidence suggests that harsh punishment functions as a linking mechanism in the relationship between hostile interparental conflict and youth problems. For example, overt interparental conflict has been linked with parent's use of "harsh discipline" or parental "aggression against the child" (Floyd & Azmich, 1991; Holden & Ritchie 1991; Jenkins & Smith, 1991; Jouriles & LeCopte, 1991; Trickett & Kuczynski, 1986). More specifically, overt interparental conflict was positively associated with parents' use of coercive behavioral control (Dadds, Sheffield & Holbeck, 1990). Jouriles, Barling, and O'Leary (1987) found marital aggression was positively correlated with aggression in the parent-child relationship. Furthermore, the relationship between marital aggression and youth problem behavior disappeared after the researchers controlled for aggression in the parent-child relationship.

Researchers report evidence supporting the link between harsh punishment and youth problems. For example, strict discipline was associated positively with youth problems (Barnes & Farrell, 1992; Jouriles et al., 1987; Olweus, 1980; Weiss, Dodge, Bates, & Pettit, 1992). More specifically, in terms of externalizing youth problem behavior, research suggests children exposed to strict discipline tend to be aggressive with their peers (Dodge, Pettit, & Bates, 1994; Eron, 1982; Howes, 1988) and to be more aggressive than children whose parents use other disciplinary methods (Hershorn & Rosenbaum, 1985; Kandel, 1990; McLeod, Kruttschnitt, & Dornfeld, 1994; Trickett & Kuczynski, 1989). Strict discipline also has been linked with internalizing youth problem behavior (Bryan & Freed, 1982; Jouriles et al., 1987; Kandel, 1990; Weiss et al., 1992).

Conclusion

In conclusion, although more comprehensive research is needed to address gaps in this literature, the spillover hypothesis is supported partially in the theoretical and empirical literature. Regardless of who reports the conflict and parenting behaviors, studies tend to uniformly show that when parents are embroiled in marital strife, they seem unavailable to provide their children with parenting behaviors necessary for their child's optimal socialization.

The clearest evidence concerns overt interparental conflict. It appears that overt interparental conflict might be related to inconsistency, low warmth/support, inadequate behavior monitoring, and harsh punishment, and that such parenting behaviors function as linking mechanisms in the association

between overt interparental conflict and externalizing youth problem behavior. In addition, inconsistency also functions as a linking mechanism in the association between overt interparental conflict and internalizing youth problem behavior.

The most significant gap in the literature involves the absence of research on a covert interparental conflict style, especially in terms of parenting. Supporting evidence concerning a covert interparental conflict style is nonexistent except for one study where the researchers suggested that psychological intrusion intervenes in the relationship between a covert interparental conflict style and internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior. The greatest contribution of the present study is the inclusion of a covert interparental conflict style with the simultaneous assessment of parenting behaviors.

Except for the few studies which have examined covert and overt interparental conflict as distinct conflict styles, most researchers have conducted their exploration using an interparental conflict measure which aggregated frequency of disagreement (interparental conflict), verbal aggression (overt conflict), with some elements of covert conflict. Unfortunately, aggregating frequency of disagreement with covert and overt interparental conflict styles tends to weaken the effects of conflict styles. Likewise, using aggregated measures of parenting behaviors creates difficulty in culling out the individual effects of each individual parenting behavior.

This study examines specific interparental conflict styles rather than the

global concept of interparental conflict. Greater specificity and detail regarding conflict styles and parenting behaviors should facilitate a clearer understanding of how and whether to develop interventions for parents who have difficulty separating behavior in their marital role from behavior in their parenting role.

Contextual Factors

A third limitation of this literature is that the influences of background variables have been given only limited consideration in the exploration of interparental conflict styles and parenting behaviors. It is important to note that contextual variables such as youth age, gender, parent's marital status, and family poverty status might moderate the linkages between interparental conflict styles, parenting behaviors, and youth problem behavior.

Youth Age

The effects of age need to be considered because there are substantial developmental changes that occur between pre-adolescence and early adolescence. For instance, the individuation process is more prominent during early adolescence, therefore the linking model might fit better with early adolescents than with pre-adolescents (Barber et al., 1994). Likewise, pre-adolescent youth seem particularly vulnerable to conflicting loyalties to parents (Hodges, 1991) and children show increased sensitivity to and involvement with others' conflicts as they grow older (Fauber et al., 1990). However, Hetherington (1979, 1984) suggested that children of different ages differ in their awareness of and ability to handle interparental conflict, but that no one particular age

group is likely to be more affected than another. Existing data has shown that no one age group of children is particularly vulnerable to the effects of hostile interparental conflict (Emery, 1982; Grych & Fincham, 1990), a contention supported by Buehler et al.'s (1997) meta-analysis.

There has been limited research on age differences in this literature. Of the 10 studies that formally test for linking effects of the disrupted parenting, none of the researchers tested for age differences in the pathways from interparental conflict styles to youth problem behavior.

Gender

The effects of youth gender are important to consider because some researchers have suggested that boys and girls have different responses to interparental conflict (Cummings & Davies, 1994). For example, reviewers reported that studies have shown that the association between marital conflict and youth problem behavior is stronger for boys than for girls (Grych & Fincham, 1990; Reid & Crisafulli, 1990) and that boys evidence externalizing problem behavior and girls show internalizing problem behavior (Emery, 1982). However, according to Buehler et al.'s (1997) meta-analytic review, although the effect size of the association between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior was higher for boys (.32) than for girls (.23), the difference was not statistically significant.

In addition, some studies suggest that opposite-gender parent-child dyads may be more adversely affected than same-gender parent-child dyads.

Katz and Gottman (1993) reported that belligerence by a parent predicts internalizing problems in the opposite-gender child, suggesting that children identify with the same-gender parent and so are negatively affected by the opposite-gender parent's belligerence. Evidence of a somewhat different nature comes from Kerig, Cowan, and Cowan (1993) who found that maritally dissatisfied fathers show more negativity to girls than to boys, and their daughters in turn are less compliant with them than with their mothers. The researchers also reported that maritally dissatisfied mothers are more likely to reciprocate sons' negative affect.

Of the 10 studies that examined the linking roles of disrupted parenting, three tested for gender differences in the link between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior and each found some evidence of gender differences in the linkages. In Burman et al. (1987) examination of parental warmth, significant correlations were found between parental warmth and child adjustment in regard to youth gender. Fathers rated sons low on externalizing youth problem behavior when the mother-son relationship was warm and mothers rated daughters low on internalizing youth problem behavior when the father-daughter relationship was warm. Harold and Conger (1997) found significant gender differences in their examination of the mediational role of harsh punishment. Harsh punishment was associated with internalizing youth problem behavior for boys and girls, but only associated with externalizing youth problem behavior for boys in their sample. Osborne and Fincham (1996) found interparental conflict was more strongly

associated with a negative mother-son relationship as compared to the father-son relationship, although there was no significant difference found between the effect of interparental conflict in the mother-daughter versus father-daughter relationship.

Parent's Marital Status

Parent's marital status is a salient variable to consider in the context of interparental conflict styles and youth problem behavior (Amato, 1993) and some researchers have found differences in the association between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior for married and divorced families (Fauber et al., 1990; Forehand et al., 1989). Of the 10 studies that have examined the role of parenting behaviors in the association between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior, one has looked at differences in the pathways between married and divorced families. Fauber et al. (1990) in their examination of rejection/withdrawal and inconsistent discipline (as a part of lax control) found the mediational patterns were different for the two samples. The only direct effect was the association between interparental conflict and externalizing youth problem behavior in married families. The model accounted for a greater proportion of the variance in youth problem behavior of adolescents from married families. The lax control variable was insignificant in both samples. Rejection/withdrawal was considerably stronger in the divorced sample than in the married sample, mediating the relationship between interparental conflict and both internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior. The

mediational path of psychological control in the relationship between interparental conflict and internalizing youth problem behavior was strongest in the married sample.

Family Poverty Status

Socioeconomic status is associated with both interparental conflict and youth problem behavior (Hoteling & Sugarman, 1990) and deserves consideration when examining youth outcomes in the context of interparental conflict styles. For example, according to Buehler et al.'s (1997) meta-analytic review, the effect size of the association between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior evidenced a statistically significant difference according to the socioeconomic status composition of the sample. In predominantly middle class samples, the effect size was greater than in samples composed of lower, middle, and upper-middle class subjects. Likewise, the effect size was greater in samples that were predominantly lower income than in samples that included lower, middle, and upper-middle class respondents. However, of the ten studies that examined the mediating role of parenting behavior in the association between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior, none have looked at differences in terms of economic conditions. Thus, each pathway should be examined to determine how poverty status conditionalizes the associations.

Objectives

Despite the practical significance of understanding the impact of parenting behaviors in the context of interparental conflict, research often has been limited to a global evaluation of interparental conflict (aggregation of frequency of disagreements, overt conflict, and elements of covert conflict) and relatively limited or composited measures of parenting behaviors. The critical next step is to test empirically the spillover hypothesis with a comprehensive model that addresses the limitations of other studies. The present study advances previous research by using clearly-distinct and well-conceptualized measures of interparental conflict, consisting of a covert conflict style and an overt conflict style. A strength of this study is the inclusion of a covert interparental conflict style in the model. In contrast to many previous studies that focused on composites of parenting behaviors, a comprehensive assessment of five components of parenting behavior including psychological intrusion, intraparental inconsistency, low parental warmth/support, inadequate behavioral monitoring, and harsh punishment is employed. As part of this more comprehensive approach, the present study is designed to assess both internalizing and externalizing symptoms. In addition, each pathway is examined to determine the impact of contextual influences of youth age, gender, parent's marital status, and family poverty status.

The proposed models are grounded on evidence showing covert and overt interparental conflict styles are related directly to internalizing and

externalizing youth problem behavior (Buehler et al., 1998). The following models have been formulated based on the theoretical and empirical evidence currently available that suggests the linking role of parenting behaviors.

Figure 1 summarizes the theoretical model for the relationships between youth perceptions of hostile interparental conflict, parents' disrupted parenting, and youth problem behavior. Figure 2 summarizes the theoretical model for the relationships between youth perceptions of covert and overt interparental conflict styles, parents' specific disrupted parenting behaviors, and youth problem behavior. Indirect paths between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior reflect the hypothesized intervening role of disrupted parenting behaviors. Direct paths between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior indicate that disrupted parenting behaviors are hypothesized to transmit only part of the effect of interparental conflict style, in light of evidence of direct effects of interparental conflict and other significant linking processes (Davies & Cummings, 1998; Emery, 1982; Grych & Fincham, 1990).

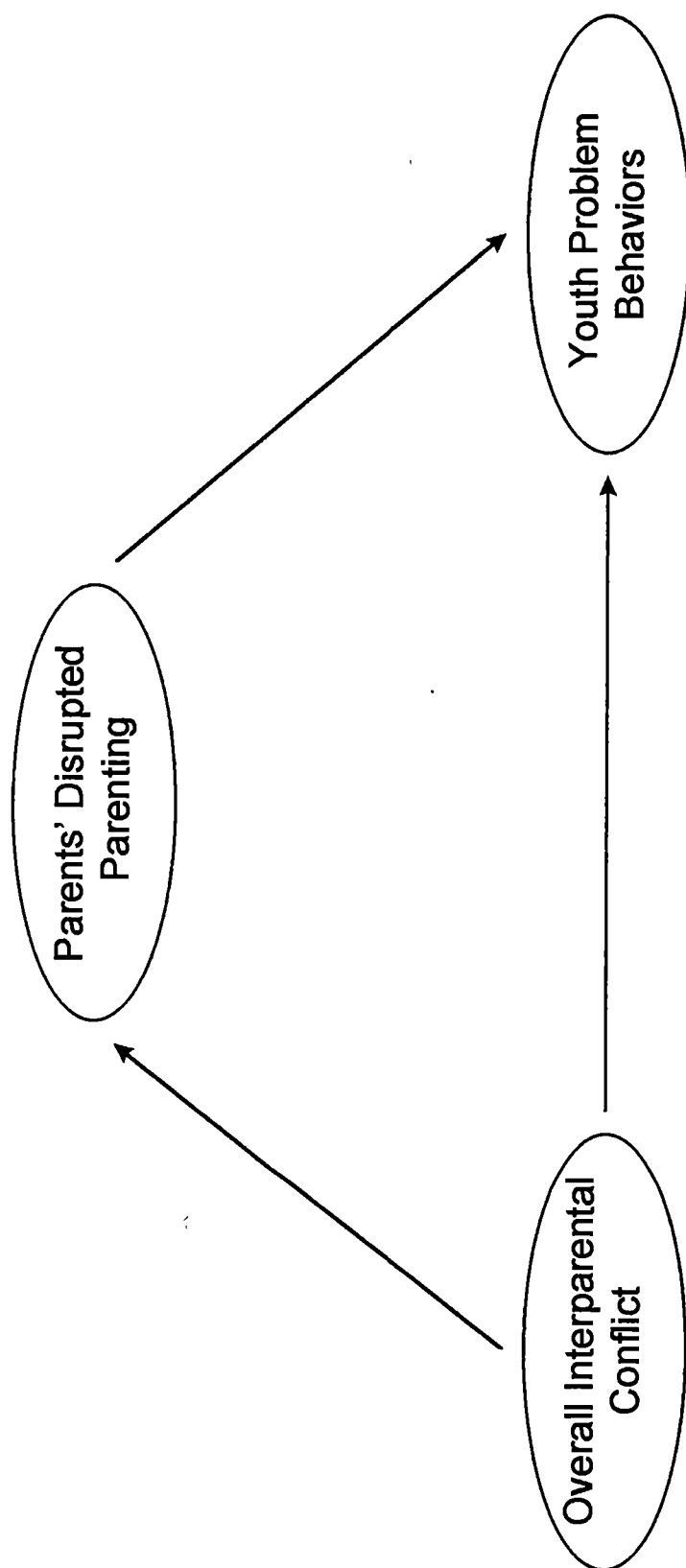


Figure 1. Theoretical Model for the Relationships Between Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict, Parents' Disrupted Parenting, and Youth Problem Behavior

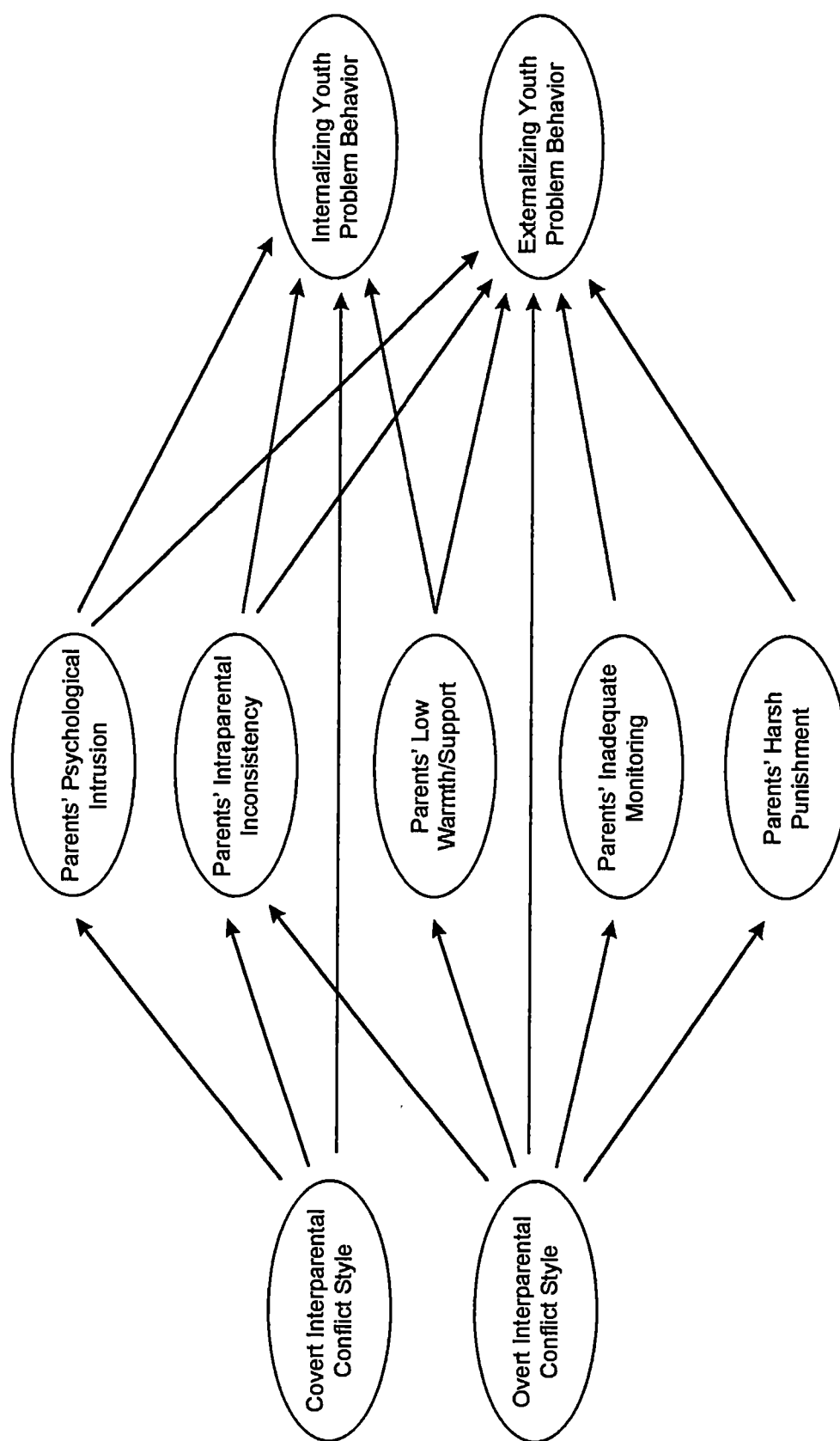


Figure 2. Theoretical Model for the Relationships Between Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles, Parents' Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Youth Problem Behavior

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Criteria

The youth who participated in the study were sixth through eighth grade students from selected middle schools in Knox County, Tennessee. The data used for this study are part of a larger, more comprehensive project developed to evaluate certain aspects of family life, with a focus on interparental conflict within families (Buehler et al., 1994). Specific schools were targeted for participation to ensure socioeconomic diversity. Included in the study were youth with married parents and those with divorced parents if the child lived with the mother. The target child was the offspring of the current marriage. Youth reported on their perceptions of interparental conflict, parenting behaviors, and their own problem behavior.

Sample Characteristics

The sample consisted of 337 youth aged 10 to 15 ($M = 12.40$, $SD = .99$). There were 190 females (56%) and 147 males (44%). Based on reports from 255 (76%) of the youth, the average level of formal education attained by mothers and fathers was between "completed high school" and "completed some college." Youth who did not complete this question reported it was because they did not know their parents' education level. Eighty-seven percent reported

married parents. Eighty-seven percent of the youth paid full price for school lunch (3% received a partial subsidy and 10% received free lunch).

The representativeness of this sample was examined by comparing these average characteristics with 1989 and 1990 census data on families and individuals living in Knox County (Slater & Hall, 1996; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996). In 1990, 75% of individuals aged 25 and over had graduated from high school and 24% had a bachelor's degree. Female-headed families were 12.5% of the Knox county population, and although the county records did not detail marital status, it is reasonable to assume that the percentage of divorced and separated female household heads was smaller than 13%. Therefore, the sample for this part of the study slightly over represented divorced, mother-custody families. In 1989, 10% of all families had incomes below the poverty line, a percentage which closely replicated the proportion of families in this sample whose children received free school lunch (also a needs-based measure of economic well-being)(Buehler et al., 1998).

Data Collection Procedures

Approval for this study was obtained from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, the Internal Review Board, and the Knox County school system. Data were collected in 1995. Sixth through eighth grade home room teachers from selected schools were invited to participate and a little more than half of the teachers participated. Students in each school were assigned randomly to

homerooms, which reduced many sources of possible teacher selection bias. Child permission forms were sent home with each youth. Two follow-up letters were mailed to their home, if necessary. Youth received a finger puppet for returning the form, whether or not parental permission was given to participate in the study. Parental consent was received for 75% of the invited youth.

Youth completed their questionnaire in the school cafeteria in three separate groups on different days. Make-up dates were provided for absent youth. Students were given as much time as needed to complete the survey, and several trained assistants were available to answer questions. Upon completion of the questionnaire, students were treated to a pizza party as a reward for participation.

Measurement

A complete list of all the items for each construct is in the Appendix. The items retained after factor analysis are marked with an asterisk.

Hostile Interparental Conflict

Covert Interparental Conflict Style

Youth reported their perceptions of frequency of use of a covert interparental conflict style using eight items, four written for this study and four adapted from Grych et al. (1992). Sample items were "How often do you feel caught in the middle when your parents fight?" and "How often do you feel you have to take sides when your parents argue?". The response format ranged from

"never" (1) to "very often" (4). Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .84.

Overt Interparental Conflict Style

Youth perceptions of the frequency of their parents' use of an overt interparental conflict style was measured using five items written for this study. Youth reported how often their parents did any of these things in front of them (so they could see or hear): "call each other names," "tell each other to shut up," and "threaten each other." The response format ranged from "never" (1) to "very often" (4). Cronbach's alpha was .87.

Overall Interparental Conflict

Overall interparental conflict was the sum of the covert and overt interparental conflict style scales.

Disrupted Parenting

Psychological Intrusion

Youth reported their perceptions of their mother's and father's use of psychological intrusion using eight items for each parent. Items were selected from the Psychological Control Scale - Youth Self Report (PCS-YSR, Barber, 1996) and three were adapted from the Child Report of Parental Behaviors Inventory (CRPBI, Schludermann & Schludermann, 1970). Sample items were "My mother/father is a person who tries to change how I feel or think about things," or "My mother/father is a person who finishes my sentences when I talk." The response format ranged from "not like her/him" (1) to "a lot like her/him" (3). Cronbach's alpha was .63 for mother psychological intrusion and

.60 for youth perceptions of father psychological intrusion.

The parents' psychological intrusion scale was the mean of the mother psychological intrusion and father psychological intrusion scales.

Intraparental Inconsistency

Youth reported their perceptions of their mother's and father's inconsistency using six items from the Children's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; Schaefer, 1965; Schuldermann & Schuldermann, 1970) and the Weinberger Parenting Inventory (WPI; Weinberger, Feldman, & Ford, 1989). Sample items were "My mother/father is a person who only keeps rules when it suits her/him" and "My mother/father is a person who lets me do something one day and the next day I get into trouble for doing the same thing." The response format ranged from "not like her/him" (1) to "a lot like her/him" (3). Cronbach's alpha was .75 for youth perceptions of mothers and .77 for youth perceptions of fathers.

The parents' intraparental inconsistency scale was the mean of mother's and father's intraparental inconsistency scales.

Low Warmth/Support

Youth reported their perceptions of their mother's and father's warmth/support using five items from the Children's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; Schaefer, 1965; Schuldermann & Schuldermann, 1970). Sample items included, "My mother/father is a person who enjoys doing things with me" and "My mother/father is a person who gives me a lot of care and

attention." The response format ranged from "not like her/him" (1) to "a lot like her/him" (3). Youth responses to the items were reversed to reflect low warmth/support, so a high score indicates low warmth/support. Cronbach's alpha was .83 for youth perceptions of mother's low warmth/support and .86 for youth perceptions of father's low warmth/support.

The parents' low warmth/support scale was the mean of the mother and father low warmth/support scales.

Inadequate Behavior Monitoring

Youth reported their perceptions of their mother's and father's monitoring using the scale developed by Brown, Mounts, Lamborn, and Steinberg (1993). Sample items were "How much do your parents really know about who your friends are?" and "How much do your parents really know what you do with your free time?" The response format ranged from "doesn't know a lot" (1) to "knows a lot" (3). Youth responses to the items were reversed to reflect inadequate behavior monitoring so a high score indicates less monitoring. Cronbach's alpha was .75 for youth perceptions of mother's inadequate monitoring and .75 for youth perceptions of father's inadequate monitoring.

The parents' inadequate behavior monitoring scale was the mean of mother's and father's inadequate behavior monitoring scales.

Harsh Punishment

Youth reported their perceptions of their mother's and father's physical punishment using six items from the Children's Report of Parental Behavior

Inventory (CRPBI; Schaefer, 1965; Schuldermann & Schuldermann, 1970) and the Weinberger Parenting Inventory (WPI; Weinberger et al., 1989). Sample items were "My mother/father is a person who will lose her/his patience and punish me more severely than she really means to when I really upset her/him" and "My mother/father is a person who gives hard punishment." The response format ranged from "not like her/him" (1) to "a lot like her/him" (3). Cronbach's alpha was .70 for youth perceptions of mother's harsh punishment and .80 for youth perceptions of father's harsh punishment.

The parents' harsh punishment scale was the mean of the mother and father harsh punishment scale.

Parents' Disrupted Parenting

The parents' disrupted parenting scale was the sum of the parents' scales for psychological intrusion, intraparental inconsistency, low warmth/support, inadequate behavioral monitoring, and harsh punishment.

Youth Problem Behavior

Internalizing and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior

Youth reported their own problem behavior using the Child Behavior Checklist-Youth Self-Report (CBC-YSR, Achenbach, 1991). This questionnaire consisted of 112 statements that described the youth within the past 6 months. The response format was "not true" (0), "somewhat or sometimes true" (1), and "very true or often true" (2). Based on Achenbach's (1991) recommendation, 30 items were used to measure internalizing youth problem behavior (Cronbach's

alpha = .92) and 31 were used to measure externalizing youth problem behavior (Cronbach's alpha = .90). Examples of internalizing items were "I feel worthless or inferior" and "I am unhappy, sad, or depressed." Examples of externalizing items were "I lie or cheat" and "I disobey at school."

These scales have extensive evidence of both reliability and validity and are the most commonly used assessment of children's behavior problems (Achenbach, 1991). However, it is important to note that the internalizing and externalizing scores often are highly correlated, as they were in this sample.

Total Youth Problem Behavior

The total youth problem behavior scale was the sum of the internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior subscales.

Background Variables

Four background variables were used as controls in the analyses and to contextualize the results. The background variables were youth age, youth gender, parental marital status, and family poverty status. Dummy coding was used. Youth age was coded '0' for youth aged 10 through 12.9 and '1' for youth aged 13 to 15. Youth gender was coded '0' for sons and '1' for daughters. Parental marital status was coded '0' for two-parent households (parents of the target child are not divorced or separated) and '1' for divorced or separated mother-custody households. Family poverty status was coded '0' for youth who paid full price for their school lunch and '1' for youth who received free or reduced school lunch.

Analytic Strategy

Data were analyzed using hierarchical multiple regression, which is suitable for examining direct, mediating, and intervening associations among youth perceptions of parents' use of interparental conflict styles, parenting behaviors, and youth problem behavior. The criteria used to test for direct, mediating, and intervening effects are explained in the next paragraphs.

To test for direct and mediating associations, the following criteria, outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986) were used (see Figure 3): (1) an initial statistically significant relationship must exist between the independent and dependent variables (path a); (2) a statistically significant relationship must exist between the independent variable and the mediating variable (path b); (3) a statistically significant relationship must exist between the mediating variable and the dependent variable (path c); and (4) the previous statistically significant relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable should be no longer significant after the mediating variable is introduced. If the association between the independent and dependent variable is not significant ($p > .05$) after the mediating variable is introduced into the model (path a), but the paths b and c are significant, then the association between the independent and dependent variables is completely explained by the mediating variable, and this is an instance of complete mediation.

However, if the association between the independent and dependent variable is still significant after the intervening variable is introduced into the

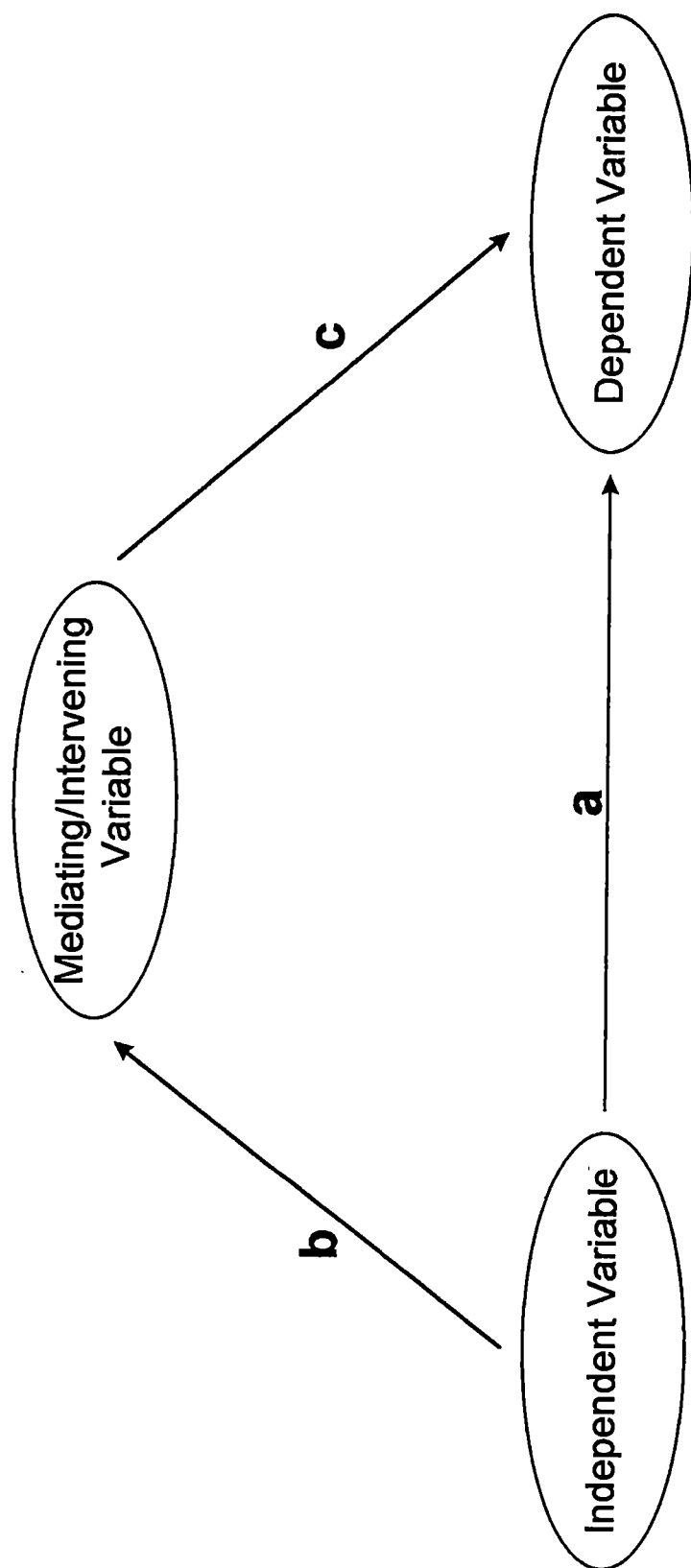


Figure 3. Direct and Indirect Pathways of the Association Between the Independent and Dependent Variables

model (path a), and paths b and c are significant, then the association between the independent and dependent variable is both direct and indirect through the intervening variable. Such a situation is not considered a complete mediating effect but rather an indirect effect. The significance of indirect effects is tested using a procedure developed by Sobel (1982) and discussed by Baron and Kenny (1986). The formula provided by Sobel (1982) calculates a t value using the unstandardized beta coefficients and the standard error from paths b and c. This t value is calculated using the following formula:

$$t = \frac{bc}{\sqrt{c^2S_b^2 + b^2S_c^2 + S_b^2S_c^2}}$$

where b = the unstandardized beta coefficient for path b in Figure 3; S_b = the standardized error for b; c = the unstandardized beta coefficient for path c in Figure 3; and S_c = standard error for c. A t -value of 1.96 or larger indicates that a statistically significant indirect effect exists ($p < .05$). Unless otherwise stated in the Results chapter, the calculated t value is 1.96 or higher, indicating that when the two legs of the pathway are integrated, the total path is strong enough to be statistically significant, thus an empirically significant indirect effect exists.

The first step in the analysis was to examine the association between conflict and parenting behaviors, because to satisfy the second condition outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986) a statistically significant relationship must

exist between the independent variable (conflict) and the potential mediating or intervening variable (parenting). To do so involved conducting a separate hierarchical multiple regression analysis wherein parenting behavior was the dependent variable. The background variables were entered in Block 1 and conflict was entered in Block 2. Follow-up moderating analyses were conducted by entering an interaction between the conflict variable and a background variable in Block 3. These interaction terms were created by multiplying the centered value of the relevant conflict scale by the centered value of the background dummy variable. Centering a variable involves subtracting the mean of a variable from the individual scores of that variable, as prescribed by Aiken and West (1991), which is intended to minimize problems with multicollinearity. This pattern of analysis was repeated for each parenting variable.

The second step in the analysis was to test: (a) the second half of the indirect pathway, from parenting behaviors to youth problem behavior; and (b) the direct pathway from conflict to youth problem behavior. In doing so, the first, third, and fourth conditions outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986) were met. Using another hierarchical multiple regression equation, youth problem behavior served as the dependent variable. The background variables were entered in Block 1, conflict was entered in Block 2, and parenting was entered in Block 3. A statistically significant change in F after the entry of the hypothesized mediating variable (parenting) signified a mediating relationship might exist. Again, moderating analyses were conducted by examining the interaction between each

background variable and the relevant parenting variable, and this interaction term was entered in Block 4.

If there was no evidence of a mediating effect but the possibility of an indirect effect, the final step involved integrating results from the first half of the pathway (parenting variables regressed on the conflict variables) with the second half of the pathway (youth problem behavior regressed on conflict and parenting variables). As stated previously, this was done by mathematically testing the significance of the indirect pathway using Sobel's (1982) equation which provides a t value that represents the entire pathway. The t value can then be evaluated for its statistical significance.

The probability level used to determine statistical significance was $p < .05$ for all regression analyses, including direct, mediating, indirect, or interaction effects. Also, residual analyses were conducted for all regression analyses. Unless otherwise noted in the Results chapter, it can be assumed that regression assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity were met.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Factor Analysis

Evidence for construct validity of the predictor variables was obtained by factor analysis using maximum-likelihood extraction with oblimin (oblique) rotation. Questionnaire items used to measure a covert interparental conflict style, an overt interparental conflict style, and the parenting variables were factor-analyzed together in two sets (one for mother's parenting with the conflict items and one for father's parenting with the conflict items), which is a stringent standard for evidence of discriminant and convergent validity. All retained items had a primary loading of at least .48. The difference between the primary and secondary factor loadings was at least .20. The factor pattern was consistent with the measurement theory and evidenced good discriminant validity. Each scale had sufficient range and variance to include in the analyses (see Table 1).

Descriptive Statistics

As a reminder, all of the constructs were assessed using youth perceptions. "Youth perceptions of" will not be used repeatedly so that the text reads more easily. At the zero-order level, overall interparental conflict was associated with youth problems, with correlations ranging from .39 to .44. Overall interparental conflict was associated with parents' disrupted parenting ($r = .52$, $p < .001$).

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Interparental Conflict, Disrupted Parenting, Youth Problem Behavior, and Control Variables

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
(1) Overall interparental conflict	1.00												
(2) Covert conflict style	.86***	1.00											
(3) Overt conflict style	.89***	.55***	1.00										
(4) Parents' disrupted parenting	.52***	.50***	.43***	1.00									
(5) Mother's disrupted parenting	.49***	.46***	.40***	.92***	1.00								
(6) Father's disrupted parenting	.47***	.45***	.38***	.93***	.70***	1.00							
(7) Total YPB	.44***	.44***	.34***	.50***	.47***	.46***	1.00						
(8) Internalizing YPB	.42***	.45***	.30***	.41***	.37***	.39***	.93***	1.00					
(9) Externalizing YPB	.39***	.36***	.32***	.51***	.49***	.45***	.91***	.70***	1.00				
(10) Youth age	-.05	-.06	-.03	.09	.09	.07	.04	.03	.04	1.00			
(11) Youth gender	-.01	-.02	-.002	.17***	.11*	.20***	.07	-.03	.16**	-.02	1.00		
(12) Parent's marital status	.14**	.09	.1588	.09	.11*	.05	.18***	.17**	.16**	-.02	-.10	1.00	
(13) Poverty status	.25**	.20***	.25***	.09	.04	.12*	.12*	.12*	.12*	-.24***	-.003	.22***	1.00
Mean	2.85	1.38	1.47	7.25	7.25	7.34	21.47	10.39	11.12	NA	NA	NA	NA
Standard Deviation	1.02	.55	.62	1.40	1.47	1.56	17.17	9.82	8.76	NA	NA	NA	NA
Cronbach's Alpha	NA	.84	.87	NA	.57	.56	.94	.92	.90	NA	NA	NA	NA

Note. YPB is Youth Problem Behavior. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Likewise, overall interparental conflict was associated with separate mother's and father's disrupted parenting with correlations of .49 for the relationship between overall interparental conflict and mother's disrupted parenting and .47 for the association between overall interparental conflict and father's disrupted parenting.

Parents' disrupted parenting was associated with internalizing youth problem behavior, externalizing youth problem behavior, and total youth problem behavior with correlations ranging from .44 to .39. Mother's disrupted parenting was associated with total youth problem behavior, internalizing youth problem behavior, and externalizing youth problem behavior, with correlations ranging from .37 to .49. Likewise father's disrupted parenting was associated with measures of youth problem behavior with correlations ranging from .39 to .46.

Means, standard deviations, zero-order correlations, and reliability coefficients for the specific covert interparental conflict, overt interparental conflict, and parenting variables, as well as for all youth problem behavior scales are displayed in Table 2. Covert interparental conflict and overt interparental conflict were associated with the youth problem behavior variables under consideration, with correlations ranging from .36 to .45 for covert interparental conflict style and the youth problem scales and .30 to .34 for overt interparental conflict and the youth problem behavior scales.

The interparental conflict styles also were associated with the parenting variables, with correlations ranging from .17 to .23 for the relationship between a

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics for Specific Interparental Conflict, Disrupted Parenting, and Youth Problem Behavior Variables

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
(1) Covert conflict style	1.00														
(2) Overt conflict style	.54***	1.00													
(3) M psychological intrusion	.28***	.18***	1.00												
(4) F psychological intrusion	.23***	.08	.54***	1.00											
(5) M inconsistency	.37***	.32***	.35***	.24***	1.00										
(6) F inconsistency	.43***	.33***	.29***	.35***	.53***	1.00									
(7) M low warmth/support	.31***	.29***	.09	.003	.31***	.14***	1.00								
(8) F low warmth/support	.18***	.25***	.02	-.04	.14**	.19***	.53***	1.00							
(9) M inadequate monitoring	.28***	.24***	.17***	.09	.30***	.27***	.40***	.33***	1.00						
(10) F inadequate monitoring	.32***	.28***	.16**	.08	.29***	.24***	.45***	.35***	.96***	1.00					
(11) M harsh punishment	.17**	.20***	.22***	.17*	.24***	.26***	-.01	-.03	.03	.02	1.00				
(12) F harsh punishment	.25***	.25***	.19***	.26***	.18***	.34***	.03	.06	.19***	.20***	.54***	1.00			
(13) Total YPB	.44***	.34***	.26***	.27***	.38***	.37***	.22***	.23***	.33***	.34***	.23***	.20***	1.00		
(14) Internalizing YPB	.45***	.30***	.19***	.26***	.33***	.30***	.19***	.21***	.23***	.25***	.19***	.17**	.93***	1.00	
(15) Externalizing YPB	.36***	.32***	.29***	.24***	.37***	.38***	.22***	.22***	.38***	.38***	.24***	.19***	.91***	.70***	1.00
Mean	1.38	1.47	1.63	1.51	1.38	1.30	1.34	1.48	1.44	1.45	1.46	1.60	21.47	10.39	11.12
Standard Deviation	.55	.62	NA	NA	.44	.45	.46	.54	.47	.45	.47	.59	17.17	9.82	8.76
Cronbach's Alpha	.84	.87	NA	NA	.70	.70	.69	.78	.75	.75	.62	.77	.94	.92	.90

Note. M is Mother, F is Father, YPB is Youth Problem Behavior. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

covert interparental conflict style and parents' disrupted parenting. The correlation for the relationship between covert interparental conflict and mother's disrupted parenting behaviors was .17 to .37 and .18 to .43 for covert interparental conflict and father's disrupted parenting behaviors.

The correlation for the relationship between overt interparental conflict and parents' specific disrupted parenting behaviors was .43. Overt interparental conflict was associated with mother's specific disrupted parenting behaviors with correlations ranging from .18 to .32. Overt interparental conflict style was associated with father's specific disrupted parenting behaviors with correlations ranging from .25 to .33.

Likewise, the specific disrupted parenting behaviors were associated with the three youth problem behavior scales. Correlations ranged from .19 to .38 for mother's disrupted parenting behaviors and .17 to .38 for father's disrupted parenting behaviors.

Hierarchical Regression Analyses

The analyses were conducted from a molar level to a micro level, examining the most general scales first and moving toward increasing specificity. The first set of analyses was conducted using the composite scale of covert and overt interparental conflict styles, overall interparental conflict, according to the following order:

(a) overall interparental conflict, parents' disrupted parenting (composite of all parenting behaviors for both mothers and fathers), and youth problem behavior;

(b) overall interparental conflict, mother's disrupted parenting (composite of all parenting behaviors for mother, only), and youth problem behavior; and overall interparental conflict, father's disrupted parenting (composite of all parenting behaviors for father, only), and youth problem behavior;

(c) overall interparental conflict, parents' (mother's and father's together) specific disrupted parenting behaviors (i.e. psychological intrusion, intraparental inconsistency, low warmth/support, inadequate behavior monitoring, and harsh punishment), and youth problem behavior;

(d) overall interparental conflict, mother's specific disrupted parenting behaviors (i.e. psychological intrusion, intraparental inconsistency, low warmth/support, inadequate behavior monitoring, and harsh punishment), and youth problem behavior; and overall interparental conflict, father's specific disrupted parenting behaviors (i.e. psychological intrusion, intraparental inconsistency, low warmth/support, inadequate behavior monitoring, and harsh punishment), and youth problem behavior.

The second set of analyses followed the above pattern with the exception that separate scales for covert and overt interparental conflict styles were used instead of the composite scale of overall interparental conflict.

Intervening Role of Disrupted Parenting in the Association
Between Hostile Interparental Conflict and Youth Problem Behavior

To provide a general context for subsequent analyses, a regression analysis was conducted to determine the amount of variance in total youth problem behavior explained by overall interparental conflict (see Table 3). The control variables (youth age, youth gender, parental marital status, and poverty status) were entered in Block 1. These variables accounted for 5% of the variance in total youth problem behavior, as shown by R^2 change in Table 3, Block 1, column 1. Overall interparental conflict explained an additional 17% of the variance in total youth problem behavior (F change = 71.66, $p < .001$), as shown by R^2 change in Table 3, Block 2, column 1. Additionally, using the unstandardized regression estimates, each point increase in overall interparental conflict resulted in an increase of 7.15 total problem behaviors, as shown in Table 3, Block 2, column 2. This pattern replicated when internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior were analyzed as separate measures. These results indicated that hostile conflictual interactions between parents were associated with youth problem behavior, laying the foundation for detailed examination of the role of disrupted parenting behavior within the context of marital conflict.

Table 3
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict, Parents' Disrupted Parenting, and Total Youth Problem Behavior

	Total Youth Problem Behavior								
	Background Variables Block 1			Overall Interparental Conflict Block 2			Parents' Disrupted Parenting Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.07	2.32	1.89	.06	2.22	1.72	.02	.80	1.64
Youth gender	.09	3.04	1.86	.09	3.07	1.69	.02	.76	1.63
Parent's marital status	.17	8.54	2.83	.13**	6.60	2.58	.11*	5.87	2.44
Poverty status	.10	5.13	2.87	.00	-.01	2.68	.01	.52	2.53
Interparental conflict				.43***	7.15	.84	.24***	3.94	.94
Disrupted parenting							.36***	4.42	.68
Total R ²	.05**			.22***			.31***		
Adjusted R ²	.04			.21			.30		
F change	4.42**			71.66***			42.05***		
R ² change	.05**			.17***			.09***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1-divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Overall Interparental Conflict, Parents' Disrupted Parenting,
and Youth Problem Behavior

This first set of regression equations was calculated to examine the role of parents' disrupted parenting in the established relationship between overall interparental conflict and youth problem behavior. To determine the first pathway of the model from overall interparental conflict to parents' disrupted parenting, a regression equation was conducted with parents' disrupted parenting as the dependent variable. The background variables were entered in Block 1 and overall interparental conflict was entered in Block 2. Follow-up moderating analyses were conducted by entering an interaction between the conflict variable and a background variable in Block 3. Another regression analysis was conducted to determine the second half of the indirect pathway, from parents' disrupted parenting to total youth problem behavior, and the direct pathway from overall interparental conflict to total youth problem behavior. Total youth problem behavior served as the dependent variable. The background variables were entered in Block 1, overall interparental conflict was entered in Block 2, and parents' disrupted parenting was entered in Block 3. Moderating analyses were conducted by examining the interaction between each background variable and parents' disrupted parenting and this interaction term was entered in Block 4. Unless the results indicated a mediating effect, the final step involved integrating results from the first half of the pathway with the second half of the pathway using Sobel's equation.

To help the reader understand the process of data interpretation, the first analyses are explained in detail as the reader refers to Figure 4 and Tables 3 and 4. As mentioned previously, four conditions must be met if mediation exists. The four conditions, with application to this first and most general hypothesized model are as follows. First, a direct relationship must exist between the predictor variable—overall interparental conflict, and the dependent variable—total youth problem behavior (Path A). This first condition of the mediating test was met because overall interparental conflict predicted total youth problem behavior (F change = 71.66, $p < .001$; Beta = .43, $p < .001$), as shown in Table 3, Block 2, column 1. Second, the predictor variable—overall interparental conflict, should be associated with the hypothesized mediating variable—parents' disrupted parenting, to provide evidence of the significance of the first half of the pathway (Path B). The second condition of the mediating test was met. Overall interparental conflict predicted parents' disrupted parenting (F change = 127.57, $p < .001$; Beta = .53, $p < .001$), as shown in Table 4, Block 2, column 1. Third, the hypothesized mediating variable—parents' disrupted parenting—should be associated with total youth problem behavior, even after controlling for the variance accounted for by the predictor, overall interparental conflict (Path C). The third condition of the mediational test was met as parents' disrupted parenting was associated with total youth problem behavior (F change = 42.05, $p < .001$; Beta = .36, $p < .001$), as shown in Table 3, Block 3, column 1. Fourth, the previously significant direct association between the predictor variable—

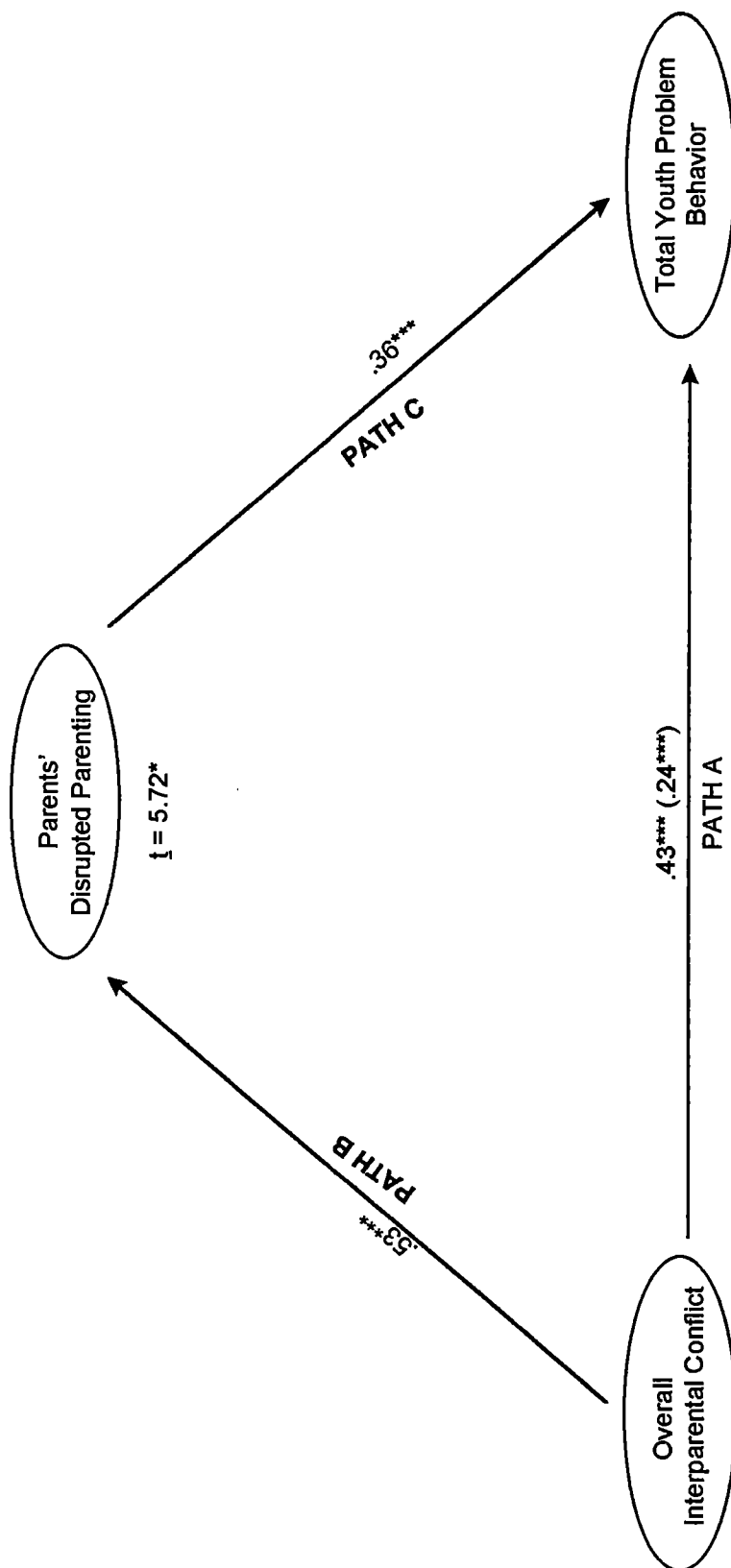


Figure 4. Model of Parents' Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Total Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 4
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Parents' Disrupted Parenting

	<u>Parents' Disrupted Parenting</u>					
	Background Variables Block 1			Overall Interparental Conflict Block 2		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.12*	.33	.15	.11*	.32	.13
Youth gender	.18***	.52	.15	.19***	.52	.13
Parent's marital status	.09	.36	.23	.04	.16	.20
Poverty status	.10	.40	.23	-.03	-.12	.20
Interparental conflict				.53***	.73	.06
Total R ²	.06***					
Adjusted R ²	.05					
F change	5.14***					
R ² change	.06***					
				127.57***		
				.32***		
				.31		
				.26***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

overall interparental conflict, and the dependent variable---total youth problem behavior, should disappear (full mediation) or diminish statistically (partial mediation) when the hypothesized mediator, parents' disrupted parenting, is entered into the analysis. The fourth condition of the mediational test was met. The direct association between the predictor variable---overall interparental conflict, and the dependent variable---total youth problem behavior diminished (Beta = .43, $p < .001$ to Beta = .24, $p < .001$) after the hypothesized mediator, parents' disrupted parenting, was entered into the analysis. Therefore, parents' disrupted parenting partially mediated the relationship between overall interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior, transmitting part of the effect of conflict on total youth problem behavior. Follow-up analysis using Sobel's equation indicated that the pathway from conflict to parenting to youth problem behavior was significant ($t = 5.72$, $df =$, $p < .05$), verifying that the association between overall interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior is both direct and partially mediated through parents' disrupted parenting. Based on the results of the moderating analyses, this model fit equally well for daughters and sons, pre- and early adolescents, youth who lived with mother only and those who lived with both parents, and poor and less poor families.

A similar pattern of intervening effects of disrupted parenting replicated when internalizing (see Figure 5 and Table 5) and externalizing (see Figure 6 and Table 6) youth problem behavior were analyzed. (Text continued on p. 83.)

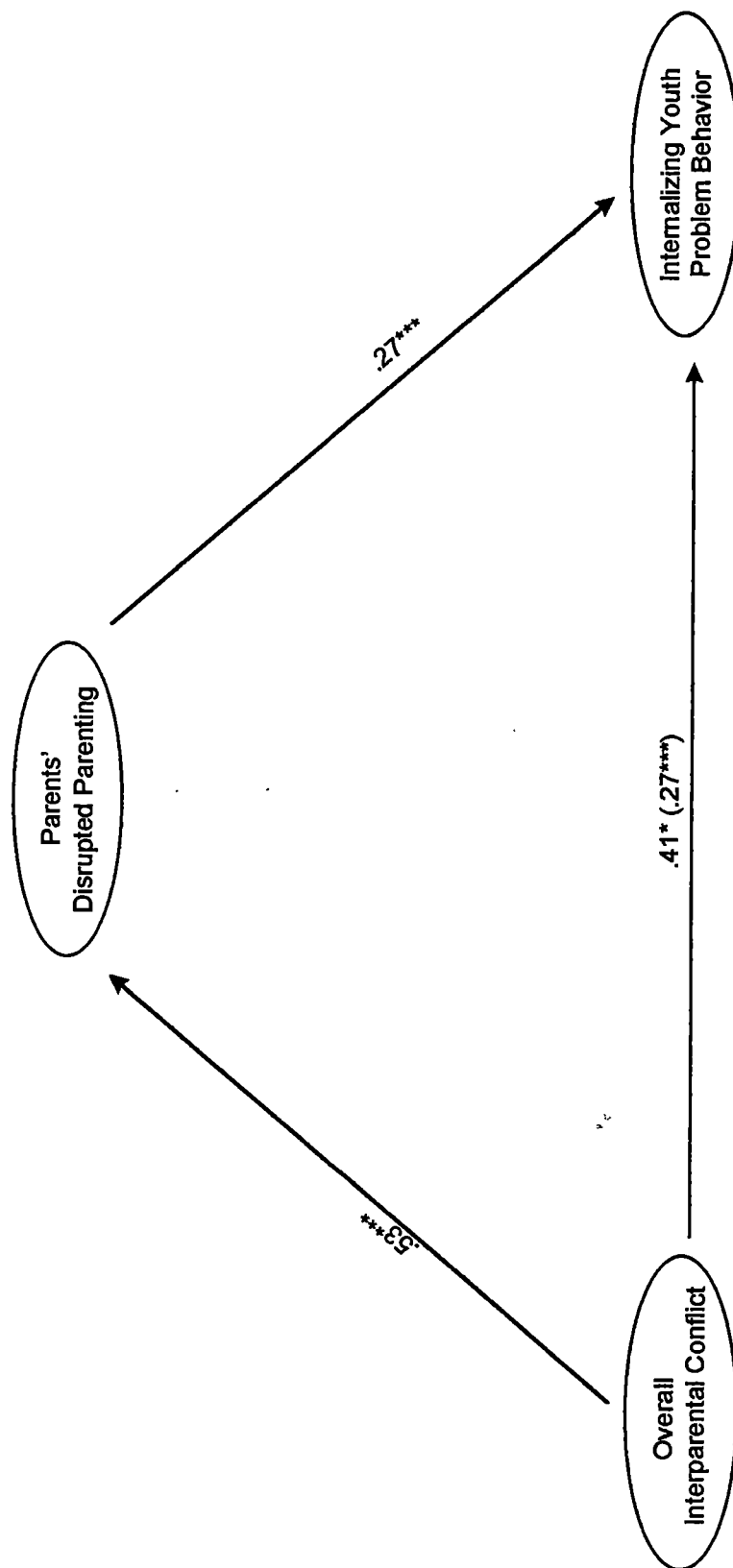


Figure 5. Model of Parents' Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 5

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict, Parents' Disrupted Parenting, and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior									
	Background Variables Block 1			Overall Interparental Conflict Block 2			Parents' Disrupted Parenting Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.05	1.00	1.09	.05	.94	1.00	.02	.32	1.00	
Youth gender	-.01	-.21	1.07	-.01	-.20	.98	-.06	-1.20	.98	
Parent's marital status	.14**	4.23	1.63	.11*	3.16	1.50	.10*	2.84	1.46	
Poverty status	.10	2.79	1.66	-.001	-.04	1.56	.01	.19	1.51	
Interparental conflict				.41*	3.94	.49	.27***	2.55	.56	
Disrupted parenting							.27***	1.92	.41	
Total R ²	.04*			.19***			.24***			
Adjusted R ²	.02			.18			.23			
F change	3.15*			64.41***			22.26***			
R ² change	.04*			.16***			.05***			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

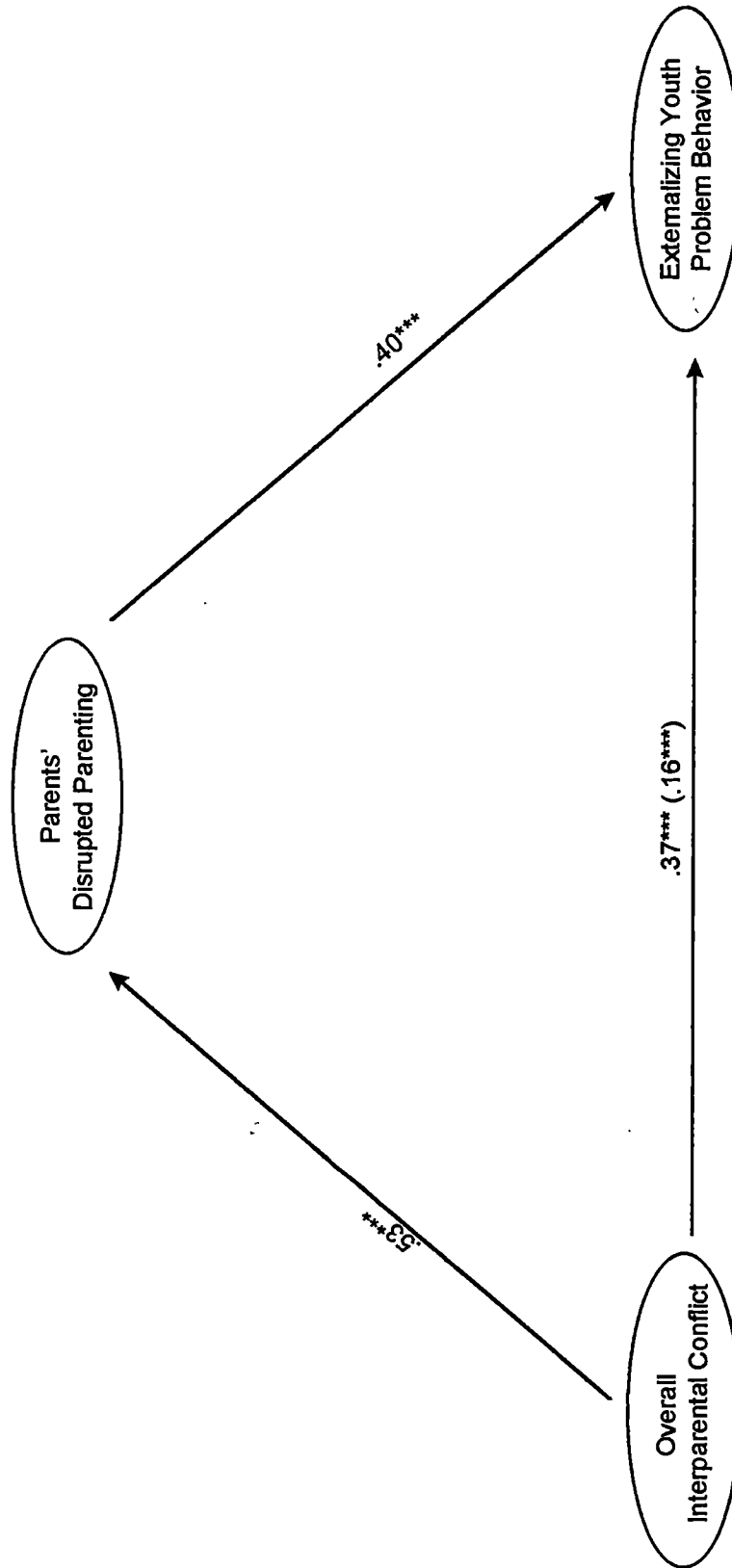


Figure 6. Model of Parents' Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 6

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict, Parents' Disrupted Parenting, and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior								
	Background Variables Block 1			Overall Interparental Conflict Block 2			Parents' Disrupted Parenting Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.07	1.30	.96	.07	1.26	.89	.03	.46	.84
Youth gender	.18	3.19	.94	.18***	3.20	.87	.11*	1.90	.83
Parent's marital status	.16	4.20	1.43	.13*	3.34	1.34	.11*	2.94	1.25
Poverty status	.10	2.61	1.45	.01	.34	1.39	.02	.63	1.29
Interparental conflict				.37***	3.16	.44	.16**	1.35	.48
Disrupted parenting							.40***	2.49	.35
Total R ²	.07***			.20***			.30***		
Adjusted R ²	.06			.19			.29		
F change	6.29***			52.29***			51.13***		
R ² change	.07***			.13***			.11***		

Note. $N = 337$. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Overall Interparental Conflict, Mother's/Father's Disrupted Parenting,
and Youth Problem Behavior

The next set of regression equations was calculated to test if there were any parenting differences between mothers (see Figure 7) and fathers (see Figure 8) in the context of overall interparental conflict. (Refer to Table 7 for the first half of the pathway and Table 8 for the second half of the pathway). The indirect pathway replicated when mother's disrupted parenting and father's disrupted parenting were analyzed as separate measures. Based on the results of the moderating analyses, the model for mother's disrupted parenting was consistent for youth with varying background characteristics except parent's marital status. The indirect pathway was stronger for youth living with mothers only than for youth living with married parents because the leg between mother's disrupted parenting and total youth problem behavior was stronger. The indirect pathway for father's disrupted parenting describes equally well youth from varying background characteristics except poverty status. The pathway was stronger for less poor than poor families because the leg between father's disrupted parenting and total youth problem behavior was stronger. The pattern of intervening effects also replicated when separately analyzing internalizing (see Figures 9 and 10 and Table 9) and externalizing youth problem behavior (See Figures 11 and 12 and Table 10), with some variations created by the significant moderators. Thus, at this level of analysis, (Text continued on p. 94.)

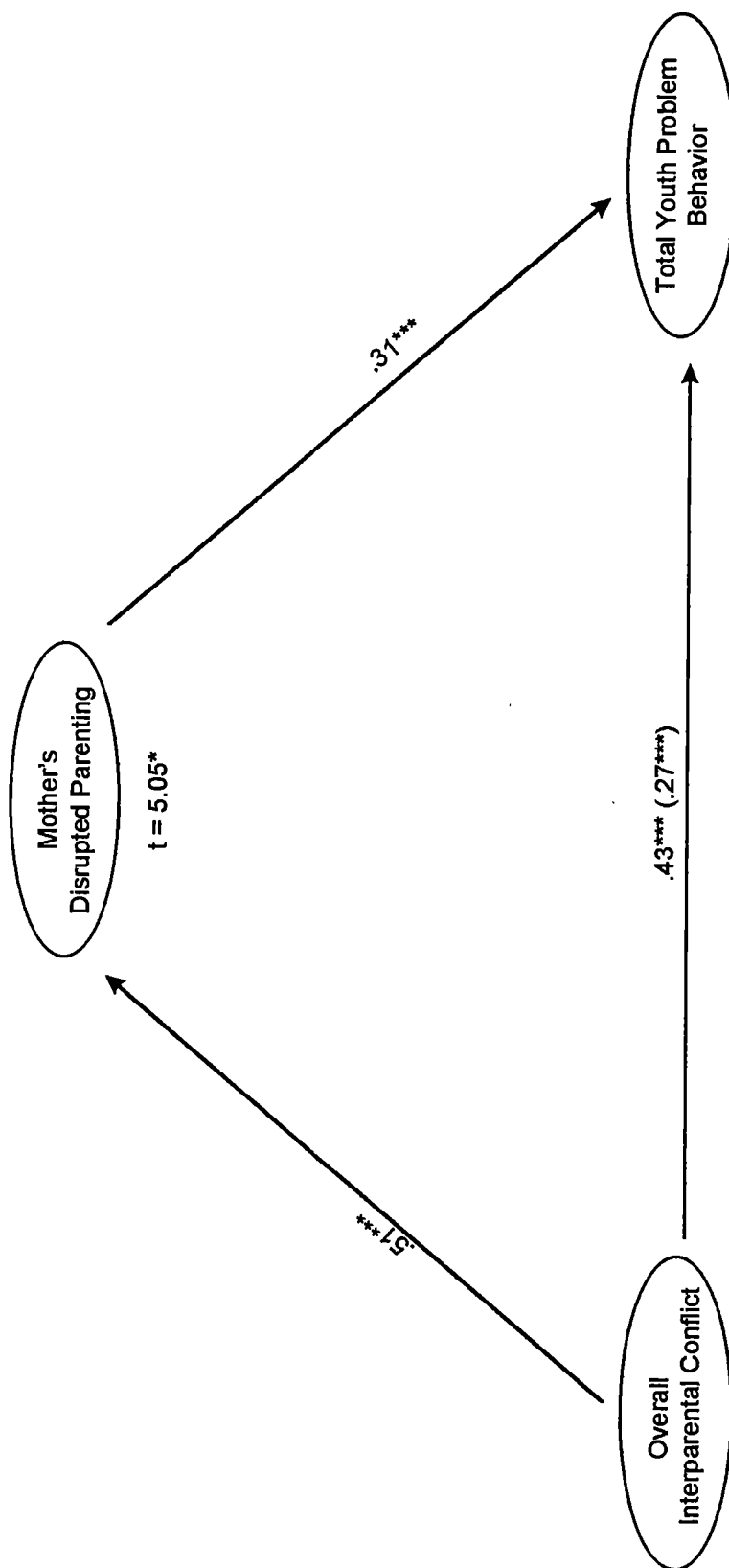


Figure 7. Model of Mother's Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Total Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

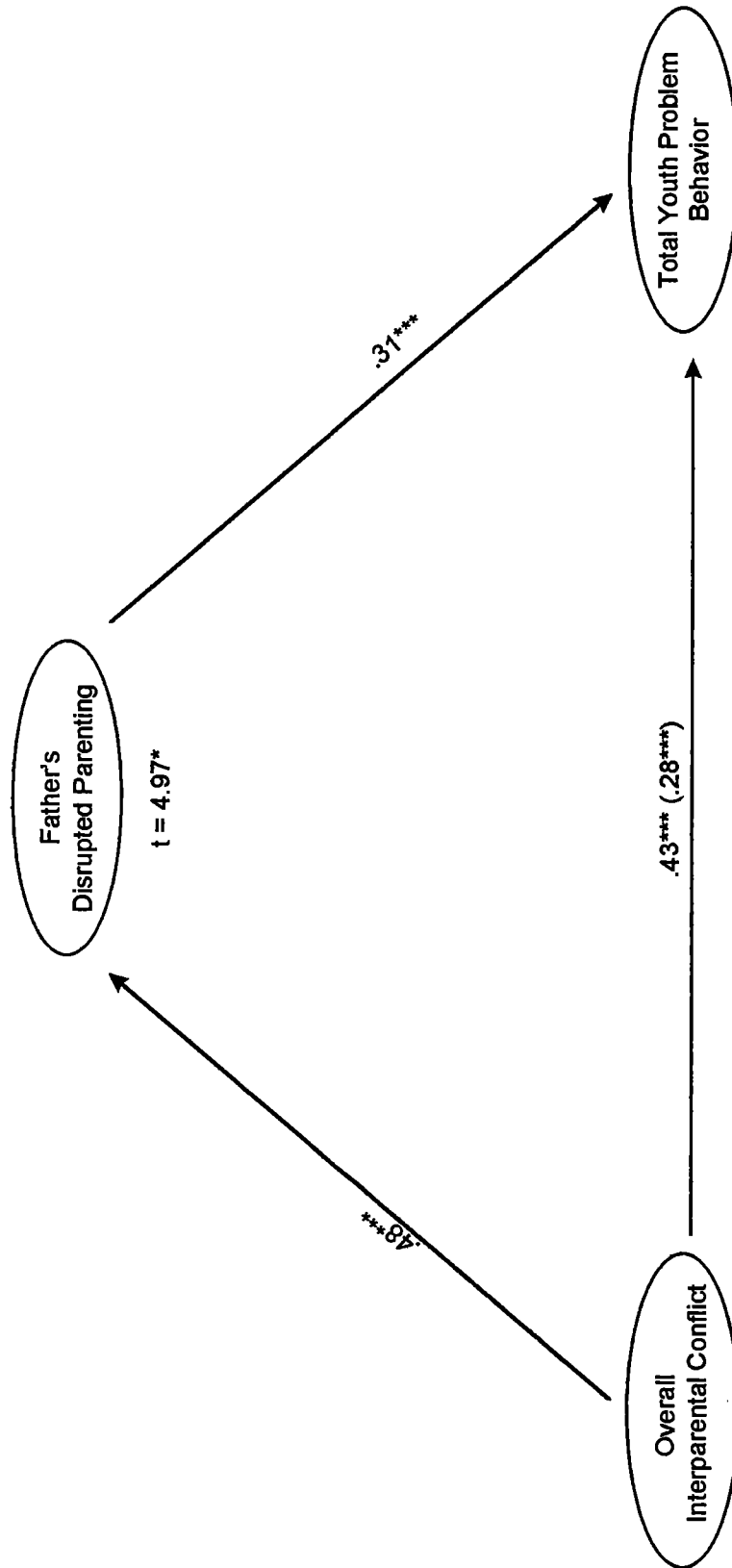


Figure 8. Model of Father's Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Total Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. $^*p < .05$ $^{**}p < .01$ $^{***}p < .001$

Table 7

Hierarchical Regression Analyses of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Mother's/Father's Disrupted Parenting

	Mother's Disrupted Parenting					Father's Disrupted Parenting				
	Background Variables Block 1			Interparental Conflict Block 2		Background Variables Block 1			Interparental Conflict Block 2	
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Std error
Youth age	.11	.32	.16	.10*	.31	.14	.11*	.34	.17	.15
Youth gender	.13*	.37	.16	.13**	.38	.14	.21***	.67	.17	.15
Parent's marital status	.11*	.49	.25	.07	.30	.21	.05	.23	.25	.23
Poverty status	.04	.19	.25	-.07	-.33	.22	.13**	.16	.26	.23
Interparental conflict										
					.73	.07			.48***	.72
										.07
Total R ²	.04*			.28***			.07***		.28***	
Adjusted R ²	.03			.26			.06		.27	
F change	3.26*			108.40***			6.21***		96.00***	
R ² change	.04*			.24***			.07***		.21***	

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 8
Hierarchical Regression Analyses of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict, Mother's/Father's Disrupted Parenting, and Total Youth Problem Behavior

	Total Youth Problem Behavior											
	Background Variables Block 1			Interparental Conflict Block 2			Mother's Parenting Block 3			Father's Parenting Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.07	2.32	1.89	.06	2.22	1.72	.03	1.09	1.65	.03	1.08	1.66
Youth gender	.09	3.03	1.86	.09	3.07	1.69	.05	1.70	1.63	.02	.77	1.66
Parent's marital status	.17**	8.54	2.84	.13**	6.60	2.58	.11	5.51	2.47	.13**	6.49	2.47
Poverty status	.10	5.13	2.87	.00	-.01	2.69	.02	1.21	2.57	-.01	-.33	2.56
Interparental conflict				.43	7.15	.84	.27***	4.49	.93	.28***	4.68	.92
Disrupted parenting							.31***	3.65	.63	.31***	3.42	.60
Total R ²	.05**			.22***			.29***			.29***		
Adjusted R ²	.04			.21			.28			.28		
F change	4.42**			71.66***			33.16***			32.39***		
R ² change	.05**			.17***			.07***			.07***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1-divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

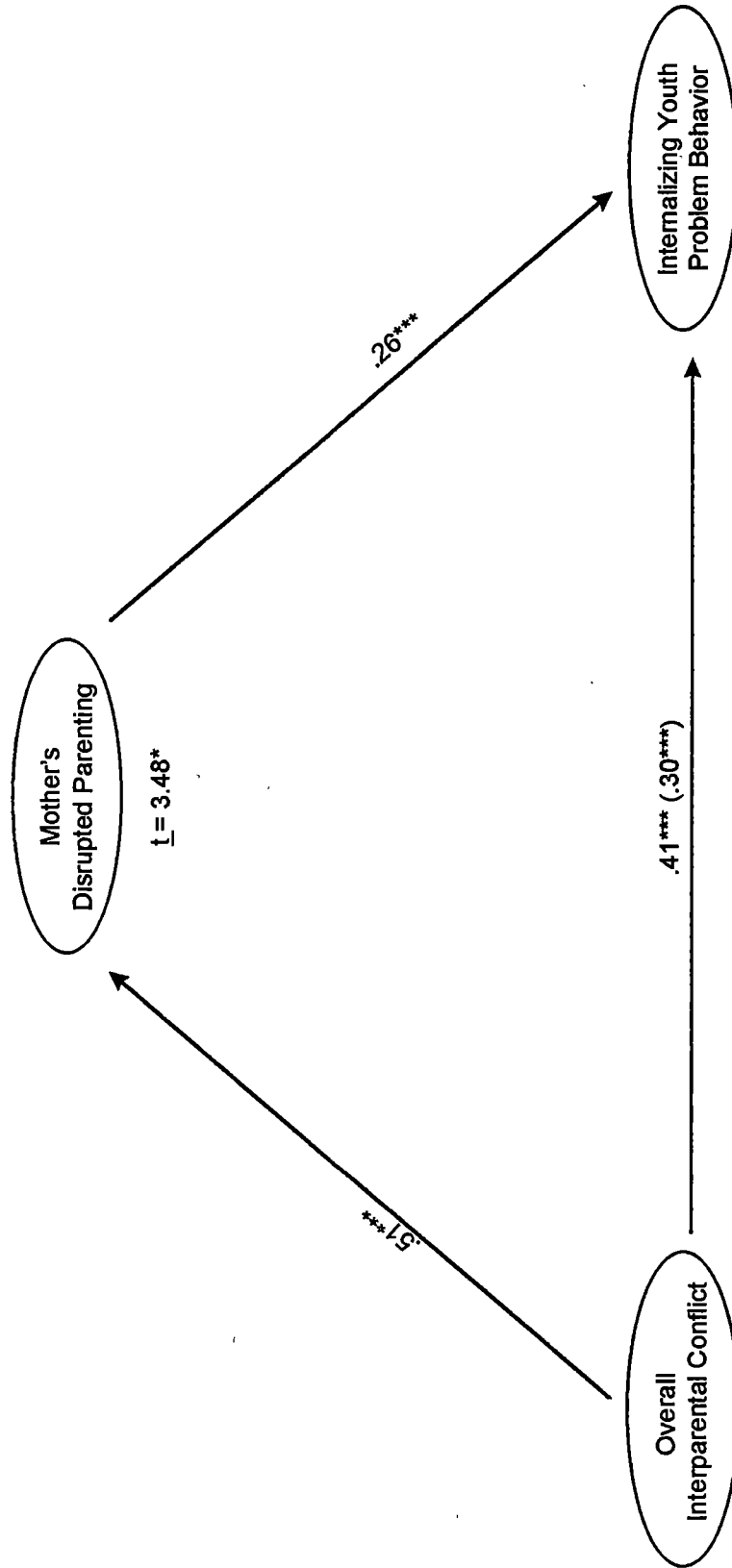


Figure 9. Model of Mother's Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

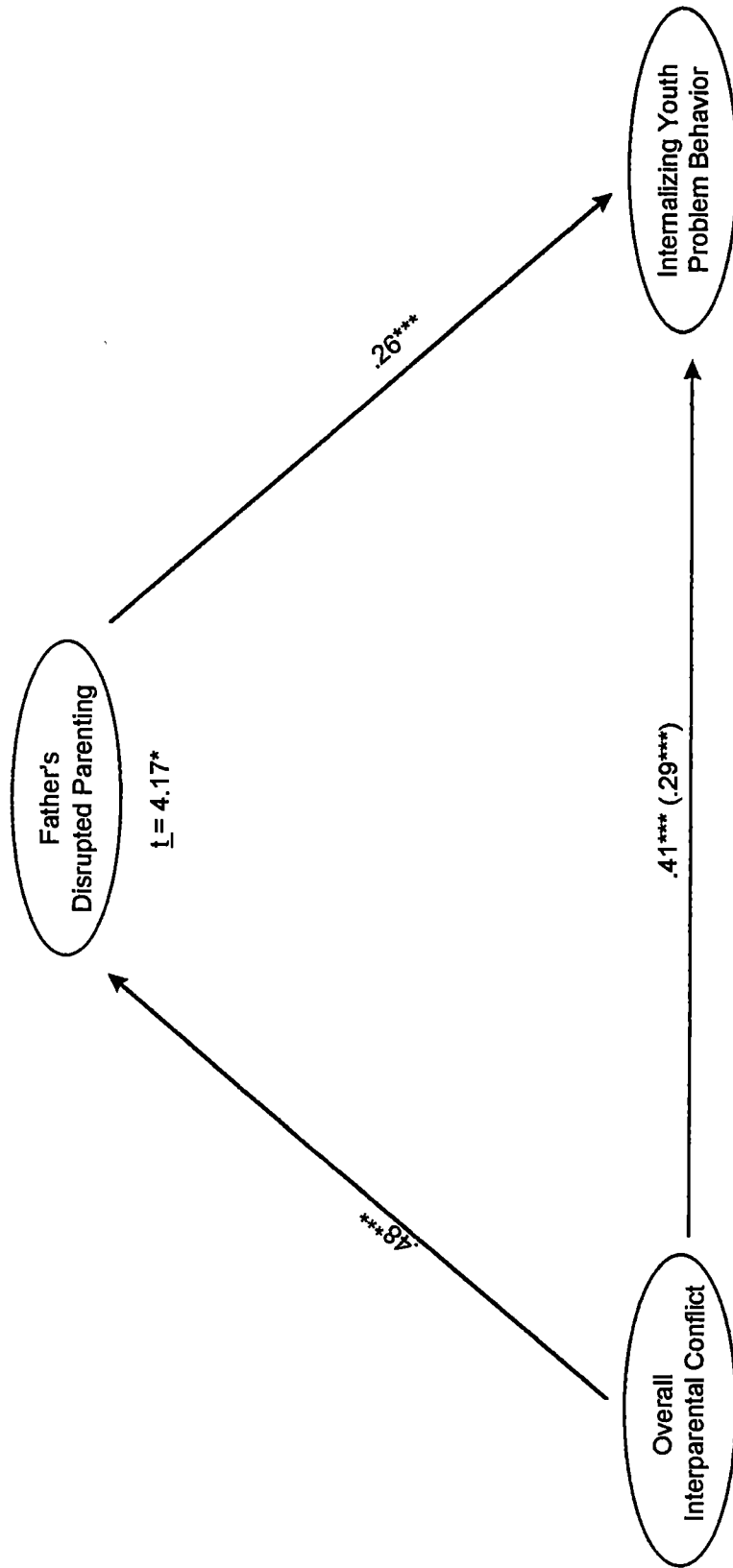


Figure 10. Model of Father's Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 9
Hierarchical Regression Analyses of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict, Mother's/Father's Disrupted Parenting, and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior											
	Background Variables Block 1			Interparental Conflict Block 2			Mother's Parenting Block 3			Father's Parenting Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.05	1.00	1.09	.05	.94	1.00	.03	.50	.99	.02	.39	.98
Youth gender	-.01	-.22	1.07	-.01	-.20	.98	-.04	-.72	.97	-.07	-1.30	.98
Parent's marital status	.14**	4.23	1.63	.11*	3.16	1.50	.09	2.74	1.48	.11*	3.11	1.46
Poverty status	.10	2.79	1.66	-.001	-.04	1.56	.01	.43	1.53	-.01	-.20	1.51
Interparental conflict				.41***	3.94	.49	.30***	2.92	.56	.29***	2.75	.54
Disrupted parenting							.21***	1.41	.38	.26***	1.65	.36
Total R ²	.04*			.19***			.23***			.24***		
Adjusted R ²	.02			.18			.21			.23		
F change	3.15*			64.41***			13.79***			21.60***		
R ² change	.04*			.16***			.03***			.05***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

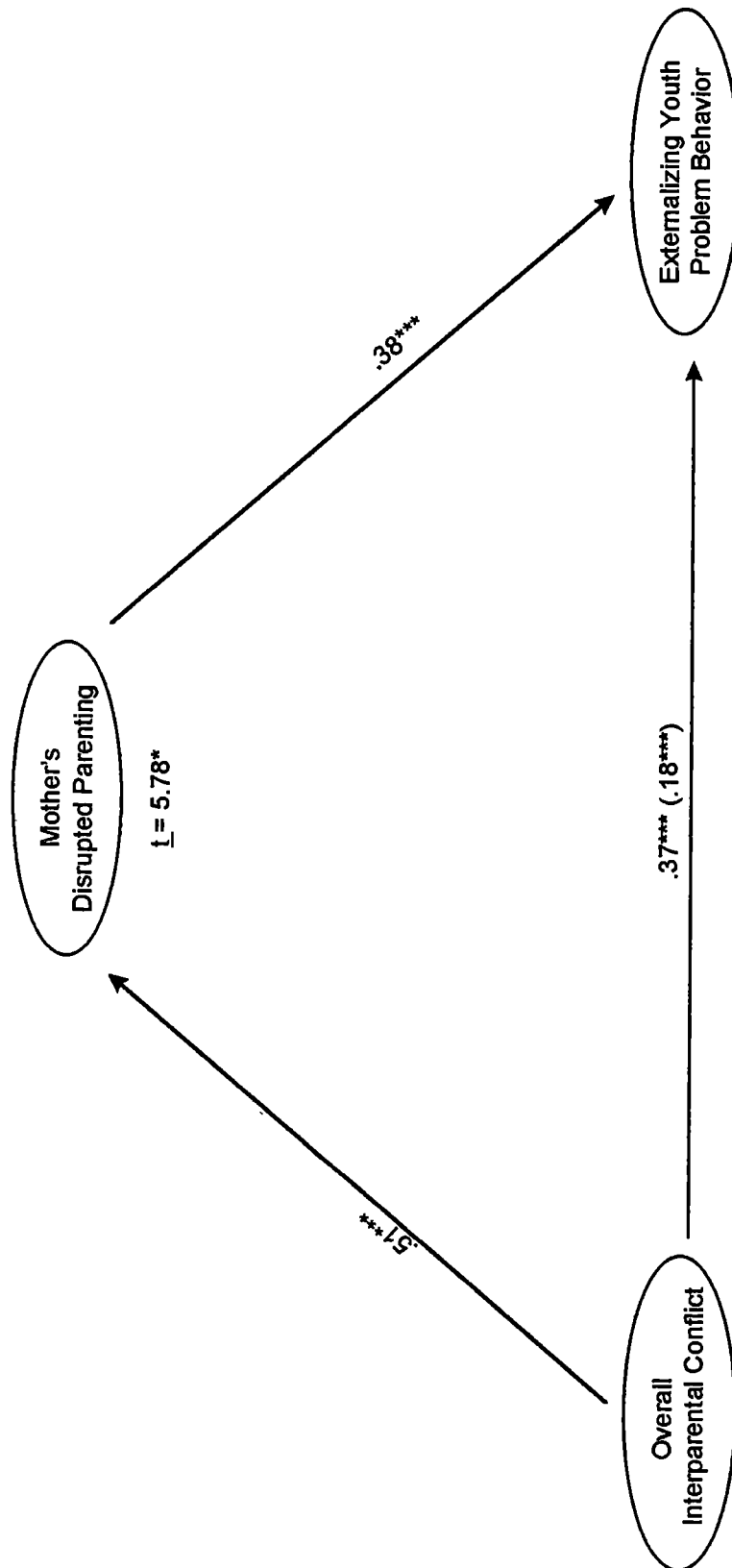


Figure 11. Model of Mother's Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

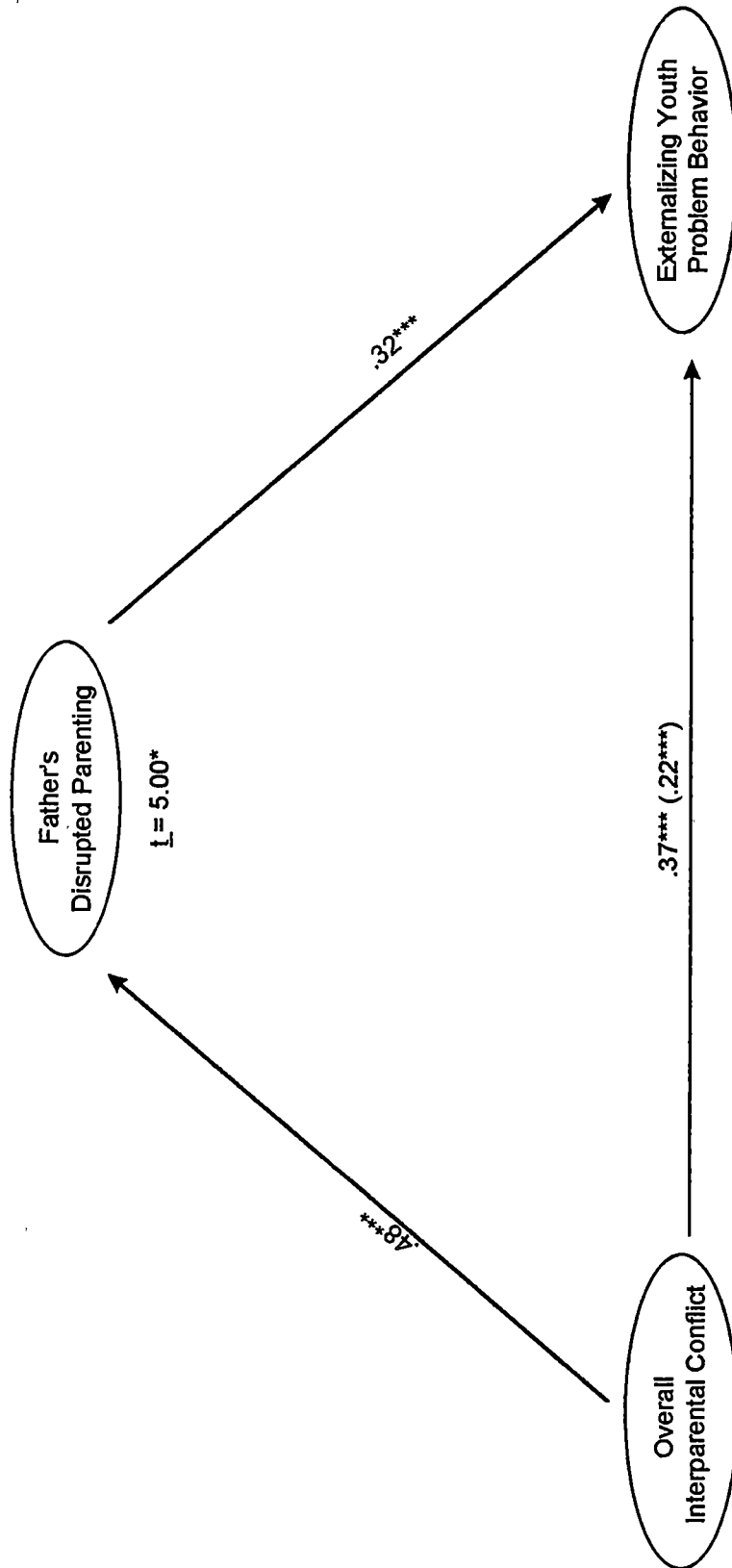


Figure 12. Model of Father's Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior ($N = 337$).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. $^*p < .05$ $^{**}p < .01$ $^{***}p < .001$

Table 10
Hierarchical Regression Analyses of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict, Mother's/Father's Disrupted Parenting, and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior															
	Background Variables Block 1				Interparental Conflict Block 2				Mother's Parenting Block 3				Father's Parenting Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error		Beta	b	Std error		Beta	b	Std error		Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.07	1.30	.96		.07	1.26	.89		.03	.57	.84		.04	.67	.86	
Youth gender	.18***	3.19	.94		.18***	1.26	.87		.13**	2.37	.82		.11*	2.01	.86	
Parent's marital status	.16**	4.20	1.43		.13*	3.20	1.33		.10*	2.68	1.25		.13**	3.29	1.28	
Poverty status	.10	2.61	1.45		.01	3.34	1.38		.04	1.08	1.30		.001	.17	1.32	
Interparental conflict					.37***	3.16	.44		.18**	1.54	.47		.22***	1.88	.47	
Disrupted parenting									.38***	2.23	.32		.32***	1.78	.31	
Total R ²	.07**				.20***				.30***				.27***			
Adjusted R ²	.06				.19				.29				.26			
F change	6.30***				52.29***				48.05***				32.60***			
R ² change	.07**				.13***				.10***				.07***			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

no differences emerged between the model for youth report of mother's and father's disrupted parenting.

In summary, the data provide evidence that the association between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior is not only direct, but also indirect through disrupted parenting. This finding is consistent for both mother's and father's disrupted parenting using the total youth problem behavior scale as well as the internalizing and externalizing subscales.

Overall Interparental Conflict, Parents' Specific
Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Youth Problem Behavior

The next set of regression equations was calculated to explore the role of parents' specific parenting behaviors in the established relationships between overall interparental conflict and the three measures of youth problem behavior (see Figures 13, 14, and 15). To determine the first pathway of the model from overall interparental conflict to each of the specific parenting behaviors---psychological intrusion, intraparental inconsistency, low warmth/support, inadequate behavior monitoring, and harsh punishment---five regression equations were analyzed to estimate the association between overall interparental conflict and each parenting behavior. (See Tables 11 through 15).

For each equation, the variables were entered in the following order. The relevant parenting behavior was the dependent variable. In the first block, youth age, youth gender, parent's marital status, and family poverty status were entered. The second block contained the other four (Text continued on p. 103.)

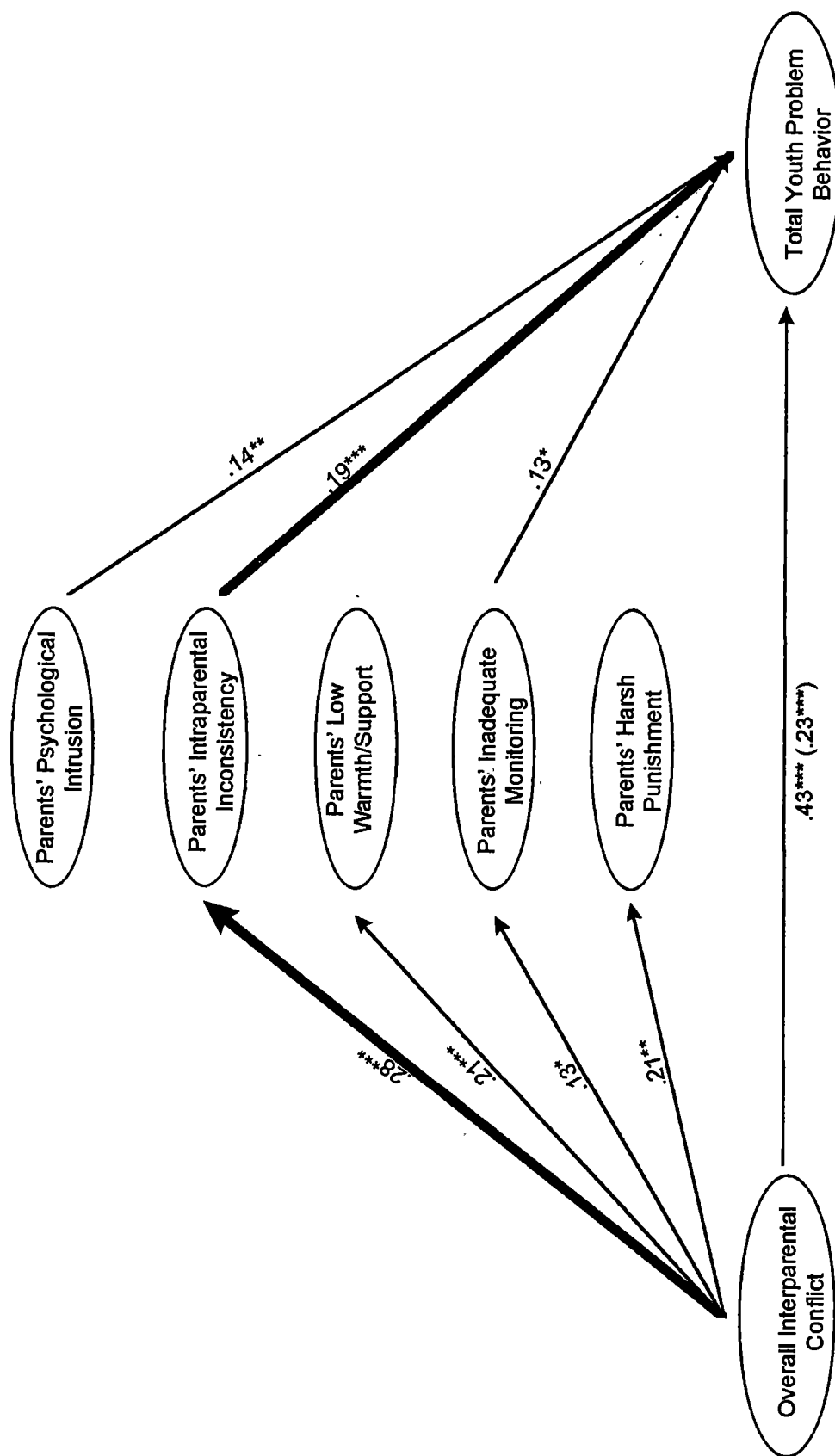


Figure 13. Model of Parents' Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Total Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

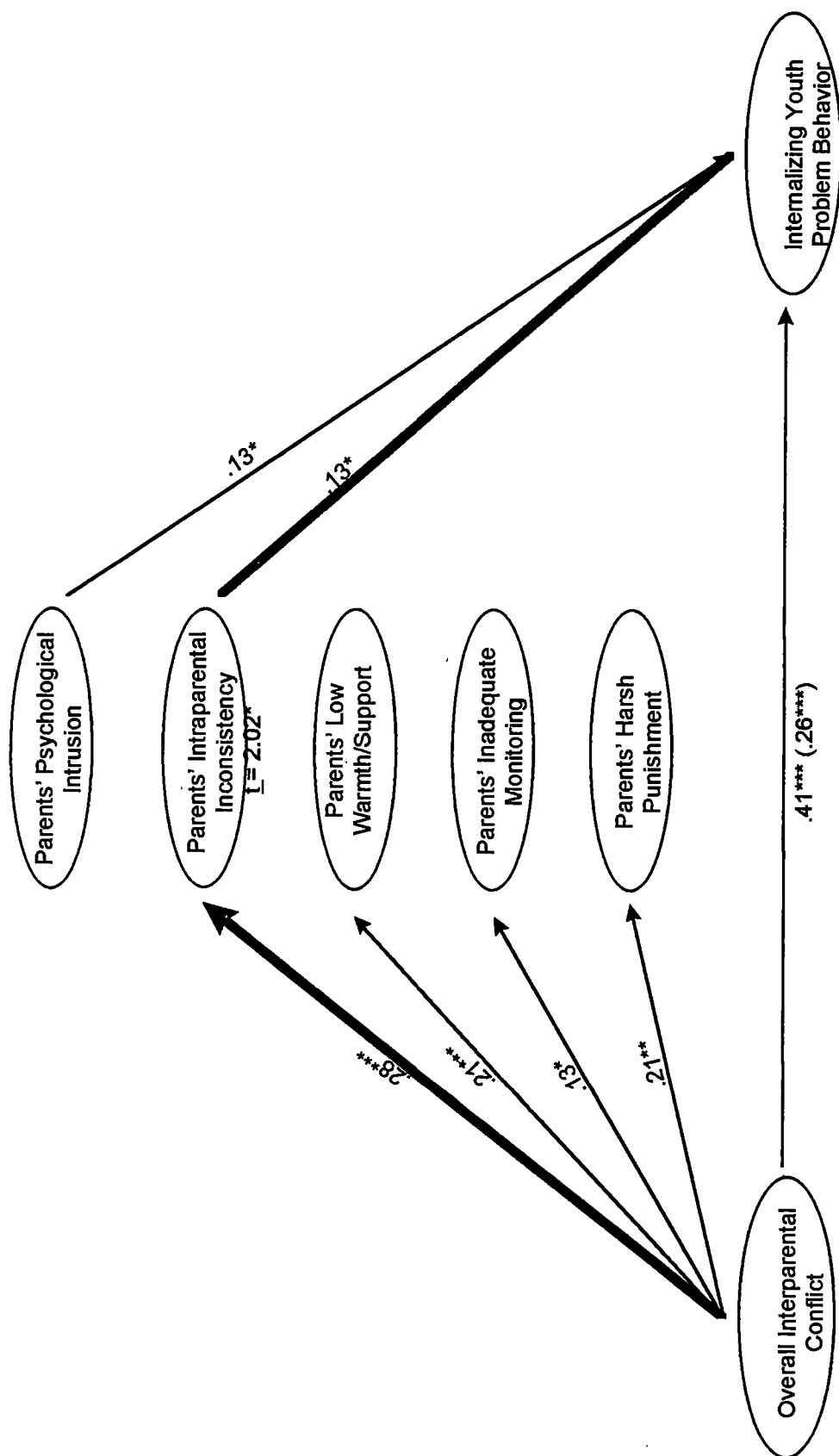


Figure 14. Model of Parents' Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

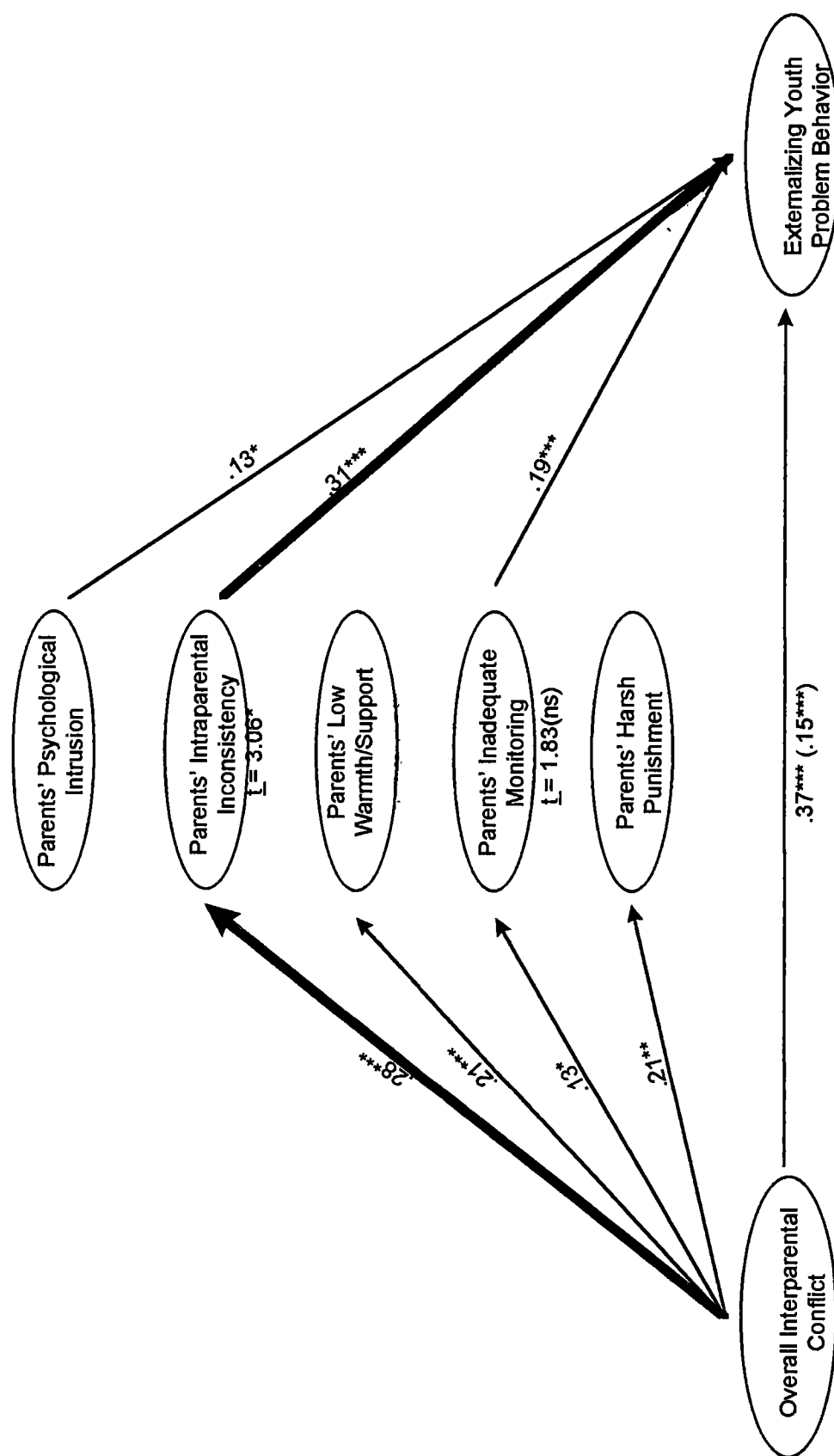


Figure 15. Model of Parents' Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 11
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Parents' Psychological Intrusion

	Parents' Psychological Intrusion							
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Overall Interparental Conflict Block 3	
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	Std error
Youth age	-.03	-.03	.06	-.08	-.08	.05	-.07	.05
Youth gender	.13	.14	.06	.11	.11	.05	.12*	.05
Parent's marital status	-.01	-.02	.09	-.003	-.005	.08	-.01	.08
Poverty status	.02	.03	.09	-.02	-.04	.08	-.04	.08
Inconsistency				.37***	.49	.07	.35***	.08
Low warmth/support				-.09	-.10	.07	-.10	.07
Inadequate monitoring				.03	.04	.07	.02	.07
Harsh punishment				.14**	.15**	.06	.13*	.06
Interparental conflict							.08	.03
Total R ²	.02			.21***			.21***	
Adjusted R ²	.01			.19			.19	
F change	1.74			19.34***			1.89***	
R ² change	.02			.19***			.004***	

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 12
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Parents' Intraparental Inconsistency

	Parents' Intraparental Inconsistency									
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Overall Interparental Conflict Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.12*	.09	.04	.07	.06	.04	.09	.07	.04	
Youth gender	.000	.000	.04	-.13**	-.10	.04	-.10*	-.07	.04	
Parent's marital status	.003	.003	.07	-.04	.05	.06	-.05	-.06	.05	
Poverty status	.13*	.15	.07	.09	.11	.06	.04	.04	.06	
Psychological intrusion				.32***	.24	.04	.28***	.21	.04	
Low warmth/support				.15**	.13	.05	.09	.08	.05	
Inadequate monitoring				.19***	.16	.05	.14**	.12	.04	
Harsh punishment				.22***	.18	.04	.16**	.13	.04	
Interparental conflict							.28***	.11	.02	
Total R ²	.02			.31***			.37***			
Adjusted R ²	.01			.30			.35			
F change	2.03			34.77***			28.50***			
R ² change	.02			.29***			.05***			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 13
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Parents' Low Warmth/Support

	Parents' Low Warmth/Support							
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Overall Interparental Conflict Block 3	
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	Std error
Youth age	.11	.10	.05	.06	.05	.04	.07	.04
Youth gender	.05	.05	.05	-.01	-.01	.04	.01	.04
Parent's marital status	.06**	.21	.07	.10	.13	.07	.08	.07
Poverty status	.09	.11	.07	.06	.08	.07	.02	.07
Psychological intrusion				-.08	-.07	.05	-.09	.04
Intraparental inconsistency				.17**	.19	.07	.10	.07
Inadequate monitoring				.39***	.38	.05	.35	.05
Harsh punishment				-.07	-.06	.05	-.10***	.05
Interparental conflict							.21***	.02
Total R ²	.05**			.24***			.27***	
Adjusted R ²	.03			.22			.25	
F change	4.01**			20.50***			13.62***	
R ² change	.05**			.19***			.03***	

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 14
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Parents' Inadequate Behavior Monitoring

	Parents' Inadequate Behavior Monitoring									
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Overall Interparental Conflict Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.09	.08	.05	.02	.02	.04	.03	.03	.04	
Youth gender	.21***	.20	.05	.19***	.17	.04	.19***	.18	.04	
Parent's marital status	.15**	.20	.07	.09	.12	.07	.08	.11	.07	
Poverty status	.03	.04	.08	-.03	-.04	.07	-.06	-.07	.07	
Psychological intrusion				.03	.03	.05	.02	.02	.05	
Intraparental inconsistency				.20***	.24	.06	.16**	.19	.07	
Low warmth/support				.37***	.38	.05	.34***	.35	.05	
Harsh punishment				.03	.03	.05	.01	.01	.05	
Interparental conflict							.13*	.06	.03	
Total R ²	.07***			.28***			.29*			
Adjusted R ²	.06			.26			.27			
F change	6.17***			24.29***			5.02*			
R ² change	.07***			.21***			.01*			

Note. $N = 337$. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 15
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Parents' Harsh Punishment

	Parents' Harsh Punishment								
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Overall Interparental Conflict Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.10	.10	.05	.08	.07	.05	.09	.09	.05
Youth gender	.15*	.14	.05	.12*	.12	.05	.13**	.13	.05
Parent's marital status	-.02	-.03	.08	-.02	-.02	.07	-.03	-.04	.07
Poverty status	.05	.07	.08	.02	.02	.07	-.02	-.03	.07
Psychological intrusion				.13**	.05	.15	.13*	.12	.05
Intraparental inconsistency				.27***	.32	.07	.20***	.24	.07
Low warmth/support				-.07	-.08	.06	-.11	-.12	.06
Inadequate monitoring				.03	.04	.06	.01	.01	.06
Interparental conflict							.21***	.09	.03
Total R ²	.03*			.16***			.19***		
Adjusted R ²	.02			.14			.17		
F change	2.80*			12.37***			11.56***		
R ² change	.03*			.13***			.03***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

parenting behaviors as controls. Overall interparental conflict was entered in the third block. Interaction terms were entered in the fourth block.

A second set of hierarchical multiple regression equations was analyzed to determine the second pathway from parenting to youth problem behavior. (See Tables 16, 17, and 18). The variables were entered in the following order. The relevant problem behavior scale was the dependent variable. Youth age, youth gender, parent's marital status, and family poverty status were entered in the first block. The second block contained overall interparental conflict. To examine the role of parenting behaviors, youth perceptions of the five parenting variables were entered in the third block. Interaction terms were entered in the fourth block.

Parents' Psychological Intrusion

Parents' psychological intrusion was not associated with overall interparental conflict but was associated with total youth problem behavior. These results replicated for internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior. Therefore, there was no evidence that parents' psychological intrusion functioned as a linking mechanism in the association between overall interparental conflict and youth problem behavior.

Parents' Intraparental Inconsistency

In addition to the direct association between overall interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior, parents' inconsistency was associated positively with overall interparental conflict and (Text continued on p. 107.)

Table 16

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict, Parents' Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Total Youth Problem Behavior

	Total Youth Problem Behavior											
	Background Variables Block 1				Overall Interparental Conflict Block 2				Parents' Disrupted Parenting Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error			
Youth age	.07	2.32	1.89	.06	2.22	1.72	.03	.88	1.66			
Youth gender	.09	3.04	1.86	.09	3.07	1.69	.03	1.09	1.67			
Parent's marital status	.17**	8.54	2.83	.13**	6.60	2.58	.12**	6.27	2.48			
Poverty status	.10	5.13	2.87	-.001	-.01	2.68	.01	.47	2.53			
Interparental conflict				.43***	7.15	.84	.23***	3.86	.95			
Psychological intrusion							.14**	4.57	1.73			
Intraparental inconsistency							.19***	8.18	2.54			
Low warmth/support							.05	1.85	2.08			
Inadequate monitoring							.13*	4.84	2.05			
Harsh punishment							.06	2.04	1.88			
Total R ²	.05**			.22***			.32***					
Adjusted R ²	.04			.21			.30					
F change	4.42**			71.66***			9.20***					
R ² change	.05**			.17***			.10***					

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 17

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict, Parents' Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior									
	Background Variables Block 1		Overall Interparental Conflict Block 2		Parents' Disrupted Parenting Block 3					
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Std error
Youth age	.05	1.00	1.09	.05	.94	1.00	.02	.40	.99	
Youth gender	-.01	-.21	1.07	-.01	-.09	.98	-.05	-.98	1.00	
Parent's marital status	.14**	4.23	1.63	.11*	3.16	1.50	.11*	3.10	1.48	
Poverty status	.10	2.79	1.66	-.001	-.04	1.56	.004	.13	1.52	
Interparental conflict				.41***	3.94	.49	.26***	2.53	.57	
Psychological intrusion							.13*	2.42	1.04	
Intraparental inconsistency							.13*	3.36	1.52	
Low warmth/support							.06	1.36	1.25	
Inadequate monitoring							.05	1.15	1.23	
Harsh punishment							.05	1.05	1.13	
Total R ²	.04*			.19***			.25***			
Adjusted R ²	.02			.18			.23			
F change	3.15*			64.41***			4.82***			
R ² change	.04*			.16***			.06***			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 18

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict, Parents' Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior									
	Background Variables Block 1			Overall Interparental Conflict Block 2			Parents' Disrupted Parenting Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.07	1.30	.96	.07	1.26	.89	.03*	.47	.84	
Youth gender	.18***	3.19	.94	.18***	3.20	.87	.11*	2.02	.85	
Parent's marital status	.16**	4.20	1.43	.13**	3.34	1.34	.12	3.06	1.26	
Poverty status	.10	2.61	1.45	.01	.34	1.39	.02	.63	1.29	
Interparental conflict				.37***	3.16	.44	.15**	1.29	.48	
Psychological intrusion							.13**	2.14	.88	
Intraparental inconsistency							.21***	4.82	1.29	
Low warmth/support							.03	.56	1.06	
Inadequate monitoring							.19***	3.63	1.04	
Harsh punishment							.05	.94	.96	
Total R ²	.07***			.20***			.32***			
Adjusted R ²	.06			.19***			.30			
F change	6.29***			52.29***			11.85***			
R ² change	.07***			.13***			.12***			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

total youth problem behavior forming a pathway from overall interparental conflict to parents' inconsistency to total youth problem behavior. The direct association between overall interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior remained significant after the hypothesized mediator, parents' inconsistency was entered into the analysis. Thus, evidence indicated that parents' inconsistency does not produce a complete mediating effect, but an indirect effect. The relationship between overall interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior is not only direct, but also indirect through parents' inconsistency. Parents' inconsistency transmitted part of the effect of overall interparental conflict on total youth problem behavior. Based on the results of the moderating analyses the indirect pathway fit equally well for youth from two-parent as well as one-parent families and poor and less poor youth. The pathway was stronger for adolescents than pre-adolescents and for daughters than sons because the leg between overall interparental conflict and parents' inconsistency was stronger. This pattern of intervening effects, including the significant moderators, replicated when internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior were analyzed as separate measures.

Parents' Low Warmth/Support

Parents' low warmth/support was associated with overall interparental conflict but was not associated with total youth problem behavior, precluding the possibility of intervening effects of parents' low warmth/support. These results replicated for internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior.

Parents' Inadequate Behavior Monitoring

Parents' inadequate monitoring was associated with overall interparental conflict and with total youth problem behavior. The direct association between overall interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior remained significant after parents' inadequate monitoring was entered into the analysis. Evidence indicated that parents' low warmth/support did not produce a complete mediating effect, but suggested an indirect effect. However, follow-up analyses with Sobel's equation showed that when integrating results from the first half of the pathway (parents' inadequate monitoring regressed on overall interparental conflict) with the second half of the pathway (youth problem behavior regressed on overall interparental conflict and parents' inadequate monitoring), the path was not strong enough to hold up ($t = 1.45$, $p > .05$). Thus, parents' inadequate monitoring did not function as a linking mechanism in the association between overall interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior. These results replicated when internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior were analyzed as separate measures.

Parents' Harsh Punishment

Parents' harsh punishment was associated with overall interparental conflict but was not associated with total youth problem behavior, which precluded parents' harsh punishment from functioning as an intervening variable in the association between overall interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior. These results replicated when internalizing and externalizing youth

problem behavior were analyzed as separate measures.

In summary, the data provide evidence that the association between overall interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior is not only direct, but also indirect through parents' intraparental inconsistency. Parents' intraparental inconsistency was the only parenting behavior which functioned as an intervening variable. These findings replicated when internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior were analyzed as separate measures.

Overall Interparental Conflict, Mother's/Father's Specific
Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Youth Problem Behavior

This set of regression equations was calculated to test for parenting differences between mothers and fathers in the context of overall interparental conflict and youth problem behavior (see Figures 16 through 21). (Refer to Tables 19 through 28 for the first half of the pathways and Tables 29, 30, and 31 for the second half of the pathways). When mother's and father's parenting behaviors were examined separately, differences arose between inconsistency and inadequate monitoring.

Mother's intraparental inconsistency functioned as an intervening variable in the relationships between overall interparental conflict and each of the three measures of youth problem behavior. The indirect pathways were similar for daughters and sons, pre- and early adolescents, youth who lived with mothers only and those who lived with both parents, and youth from poor and less poor families. Father's intraparental inconsistency also (Text continued on p. 129.)

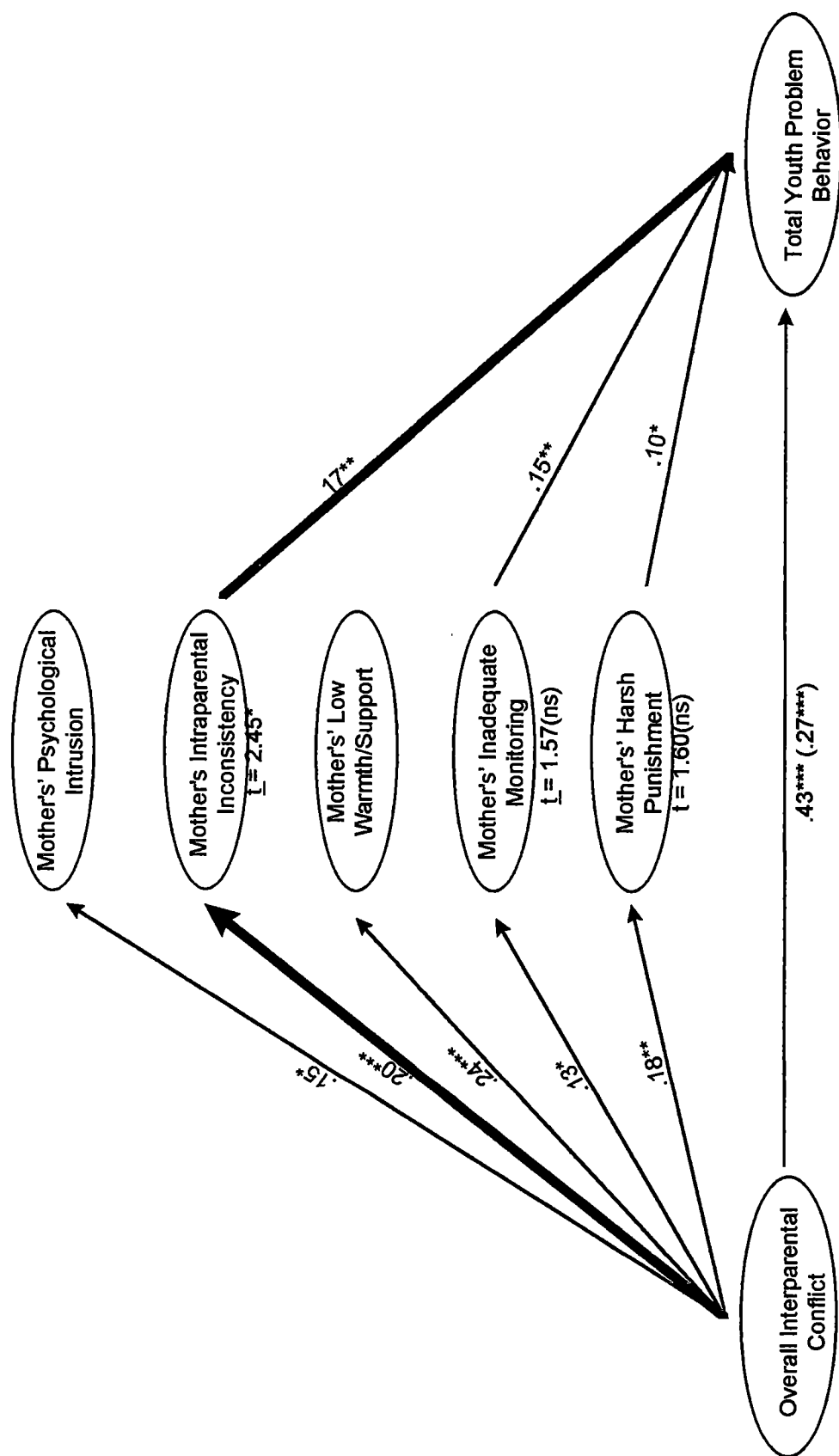


Figure 16. Model of Mother's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Total Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

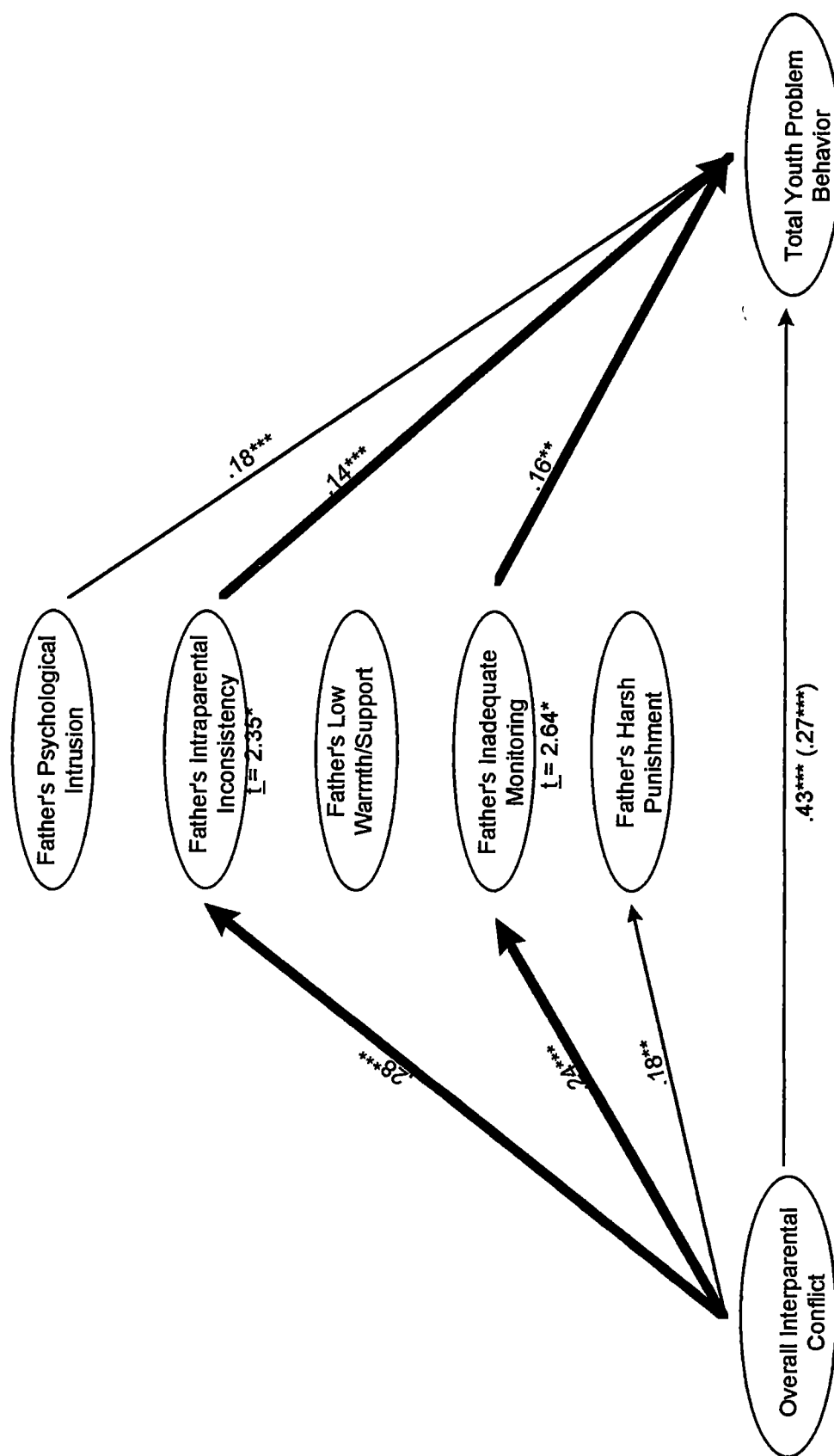


Figure 17. Model of Father's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Total Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

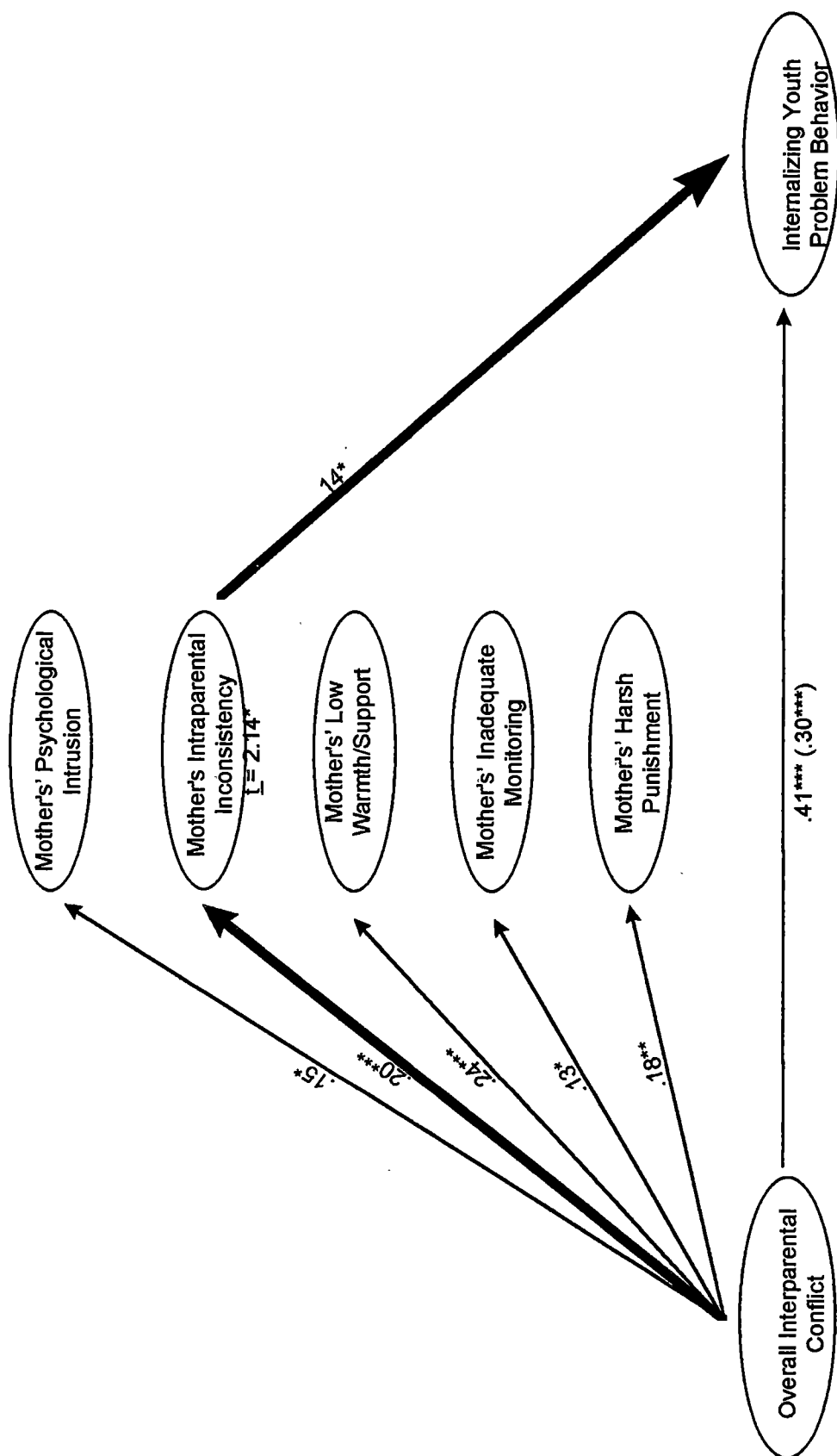


Figure 18. Model of Mother's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

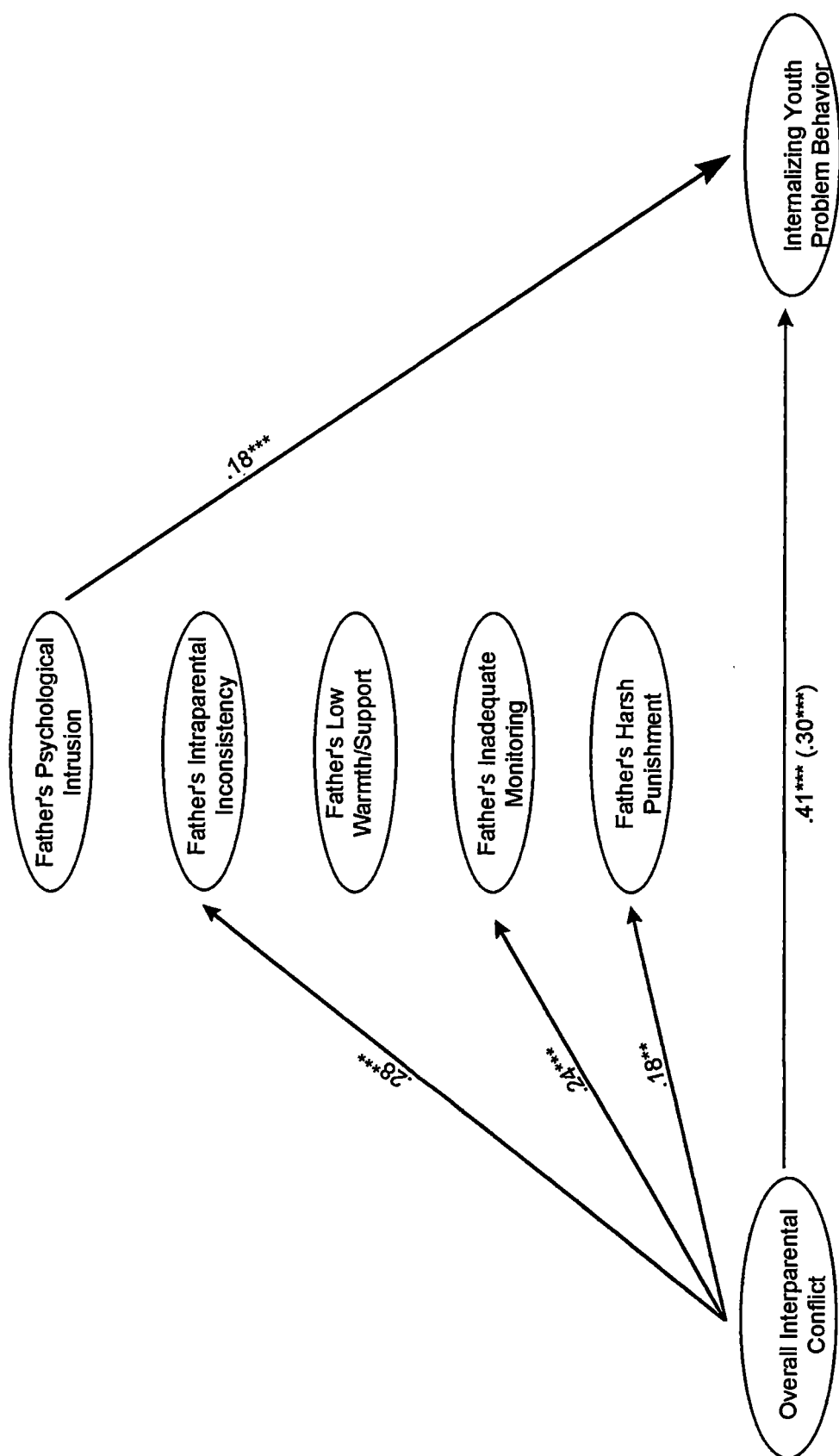


Figure 19. Model of Father's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

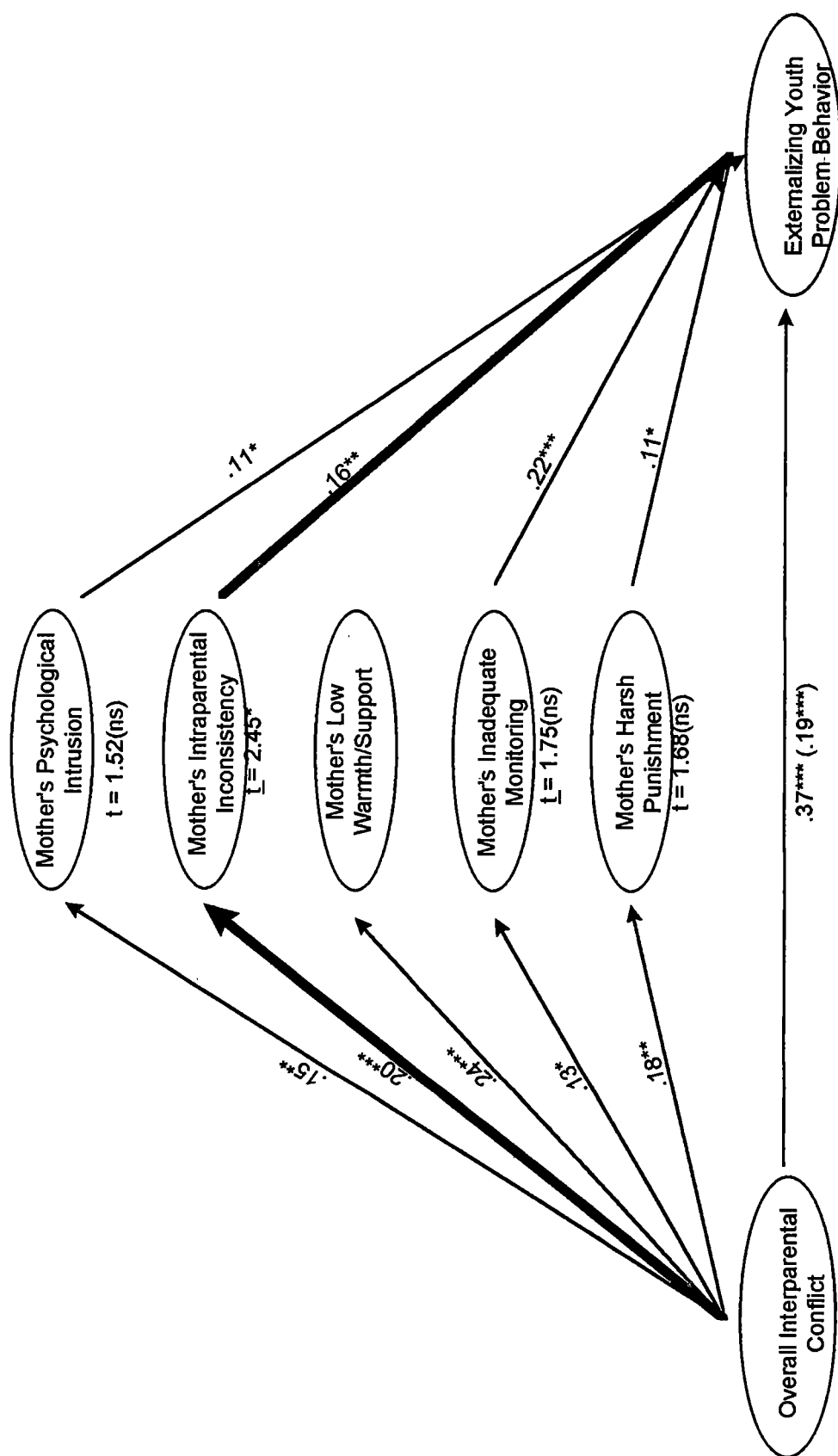


Figure 20. Model of Mother's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

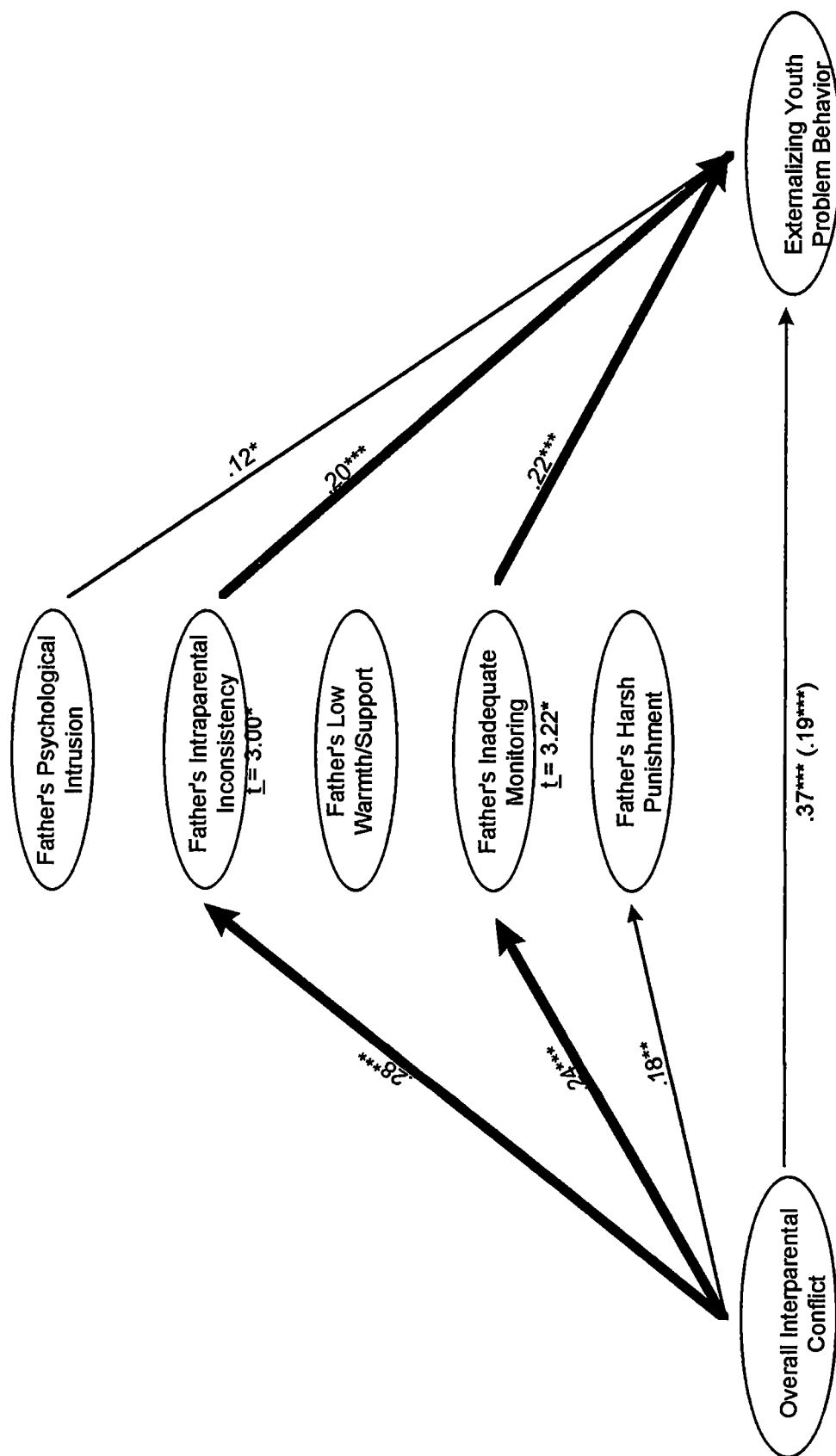


Figure 21. Model of Father's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Overall Interparental Conflict and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior ($N = 337$).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of interparental conflict after disrupted parenting is considered. $^*p < .05$ $^{**}p < .01$ $^{***}p < .001$

Table 19
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Mother's Psychological Intrusion

	Mother's Psychological Intrusion								
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Interparental Conflict Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	-.04	-.04	.06	-.07	-.08	.06	-.06	-.07	.06
Youth gender	.16**	.18	.06	.13*	.15	.06	.14**	.16	.06
Parent's marital status	-.07	-.12	.10	-.02	-.03	.09	-.02	-.03	.09
Poverty status	.02	.02	.10	-.04	-.07	.09	-.04	-.07	.09
Inconsistency				.33***	.43	.07	.30***	.39	.08
Low warmth/support				-.10	-.10	.06	-.09	-.09	.06
Inadequate monitoring				-.01	-.01	.07	-.03	-.03	.08
Harsh punishment				.14*	.14	.05	.14*	.13	.05
Interparental conflict							.15*	.16	.07
Total R ²	.03*			.18***			.20*		
Adjusted R ²	.02			.16			.17		
F change	2.89*			14.78***			3.05*		
R ² change	.03*			.15***			.02*		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 20
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Father's Psychological Intrusion

	Father's Psychological Intrusion								
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Interparental Conflict Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	-.04	-.04	.06	-.07	-.08	.06	-.07	-.07	.06
Youth gender	.16**	.18	.06	.13*	.15	.06	.13*	.15	.06
Parent's marital status	-.07	-.12	.10	-.02	-.03	.09	-.02	-.04	.09
Poverty status	.02	.02	.10	-.04	-.07	.09	-.05	-.08	.09
Inconsistency				.33***	.43	.07	.32***	.41	.08
Low warmth/support				-.10	-.10	.06	-.10	-.11	.06
Inadequate monitoring				-.01	-.01	.07	-.01	-.02	.07
Physical punishment				.14*	.14	.05	.13*	.13	.05
Interparental conflict							.04	.02	.03
Total R ²	.03*			.18***			.18		
Adjusted R ²	.02			.16			.16		
F change	2.89*			14.78***			.38		
R ² change	.03*			.15***			.001		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 21
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Mother's Intraparental Inconsistency

	Mother's Intraparental Inconsistency								
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Interparental Conflict Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.13*	.11	.05	.09	.08	.04	.09*	.08	.04
Youth gender	-.04	-.04	.05	-.13*	-.11	.04	-.11*	-.10	.04
Parent's marital status	.06	.07	.07	.001	.002	.07	-.01	-.01	.06
Poverty status	.06	.07	.08	.04	.05	.07	-.01	-.01	.07
Psychological intrusion				.27***	.20	.04	.24***	.18	.04
Low warmth/support				.22***	.21	.05	.16*	.16	.05
Inadequate monitoring				.17**	.16	.05	.14**	.13	.05
Harsh punishment				.18***	.17	.05	.14**	.14	.05
Interparental conflict							.20***	.09	.02
Total R ²	.02			.27***			.30***		
Adjusted R ²	.01			.26			.28		
F change	1.95			28.29***			14.05***		
R ² change	.02			.25***			.03***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 22
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Father's Intraparental Inconsistency

	Father's Intraparental Inconsistency								
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Interparental Conflict Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.08	.07	.05	.04	.04	.04	.05	.05	.04
Youth gender	.04	.04	.05	-.08	-.07	.04	-.04	-.04	.04
Parent's marital status	-.04	-.06	.07	-.06	-.07	.07	-.07	-.09	.07
Poverty status	.18**	.23	.08	.13**	.18	.07	.08	.10	.07
Psychological intrusion				.30***	.23	.04	.27***	.21	.04
Low warmth/support				.14**	.11	.04	.11*	.09	.04
Inadequate monitoring				.13***	.13	.05	.06	.06	.05
Harsh punishment				.23***	.17	.04	.17***	.13	.04
Interparental conflict							.28***	.12	.02
Total R ²	.03*			.26***			.32***		
Adjusted R ²	.02			.24			.30		
F change	2.67*			25.04***			28.57***		
R ² change	.03*			.23***			.06***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 23
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Mother's Low Warmth/Support

	Mother's Low Warmth/Support								
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Interparental Conflict Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.08	.07	.05	.02	.02	.05	.03	.03	.05
Youth gender	.04	.04	.05	-.01	-.01	.05	.001	.001	.05
Parent's marital status	.08	.03	.08	-.04	-.06	.07	-.05	-.07	.07
Poverty status	.08	.05	.08	.02	.02	.07	-.03	-.05	.07
Psychological intrusion				-.04	-.03	.04	-.03	-.05	.07
Intraparental inconsistency				.24***	.25	.06	.17**	.18	.06
Inadequate monitoring				.35***	.34	.05	.30***	.29	.05
Harsh punishment				-.06	-.06	.05	-.09	-.09	.05
Interparental conflict							.24***	.11	.03
Total R²	.01			.21***			.25***		
Adjusted R²	-.003			.19			.23		
F change	.71			20.70***			18.59***		
R² change	.01			.20***			.04***		

Note: N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 24
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Father's Low Warmth/Support

	Father's Low Warmth/Support									
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Interparental Conflict Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.11*	.12	.06	.07	.08	.06	.08	.08	.06	
Youth gender	.05	.05	.06	-.004	-.005	.06	.003	.003	.06	
Parent's marital status	.24***	.40	.09	.20***	.33	.08***	.20***	.32	.08	
Poverty status	.12*	.19	.09	.08	.13	.08	.07	.11	.09	
Psychological intrusion				-.09	-.09	.05	-.10	-.09	.05	
Intraparental inconsistency				.15**	.18	.07	.12*	.15	.07	
Inadequate monitoring				.30***	.37	.06	.28***	.34	.07	
Harsh punishment				-.01	-.01	.05	-.02	-.02	.05	
Interparental conflict							.08	.04	.03	
Total R ²	.09***			.21***			.21			
Adjusted R ²	.08			.19			.19			
F change	8.21***			12.21***			1.92			
R ² change	.09***			.12***			.004			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 25
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Mother's Inadequate Behavior Monitoring

	Mother's Inadequate Behavior Monitoring									
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Interparental Conflict Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.10	.10	.05	.06	.05	.05	.06	.06	.05	
Youth gender	.21***	.20	.05	.20***	.19	.05	.20***	.19	.05	
Parent's marital status	.16***	.23	.08	.15**	.21	.07	.14**	.20	.07	
Poverty status	.02	.03	.08	-.001	-.001	.07	-.03	-.04	.07	
Psychological intrusion				.08	.06	.04	.06	.05	.04	
Intraparental inconsistency				.18**	.19	.06	.15**	.16	.06	
Low warmth/support				.32***	.33	.05	.29***	.30	.05	
Harsh punishment				-.05	-.05	.05	-.07	-.07	.05	
Interparental conflict							.13*	.06	.03	
Total R ²	.07***			.26***			.27*			
Adjusted R ²	.06			.24			.25			
F change	6.43***			20.42***			5.18*			
R ² change	.07***			.19***			.01*			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 26
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Father's Inadequate Behavior Monitoring

	Father's Inadequate Behavior Monitoring								
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Interparental Conflict Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.07	.06	.05	.01	.01	.05	.02	.02	.04
Youth gender	.22	.20	.05	.18***	.16	.05	.19***	.17	.04
Parent's marital status	.13	.17	.07	.07	.10	.07	.05	.07	.07
Poverty status	.03	.04	.07	-.03	-.05	.07	-.07	-.10	.07
Psychological intrusion				-.004	-.004	.04	-.01	-.01	.04
Intraparental inconsistency				.14*	.14	.06	.06	.06	.06
Low warmth/support				.30***	.25	.04	.27***	.22	.04
Harsh punishment				.11*	.09	.04	.07	.05	.04
Interparental conflict							.24***	.11	.02
Total R ²	.06***			.21***			.25***		
Adjusted R ²	.05			.19			.23		
F change	5.64***			14.59***			18.25***		
R ² change	.06***			.14***			.04***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 27
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Mother's Harsh Punishment

	Mother's Harsh Punishment								
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Interparental Conflict Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.06	.06	.05	.05	.04	.05	.05	.05	.05
Youth gender	.09	.08	.05	.10	.10	.05	.11*	.10	.05
Parent's marital status	.06	.09	.08	.05	.08	.08	.05	.06	.08
Poverty status	.01	.01	.08	-.003	-.004	.08	-.04	-.06	.08
Psychological intrusion				.15**	.12	.05	.12*	.10	.05
Intraparental inconsistency				.22***	.24	.06	.18**	.19	.06
Low warmth/support				-.07	-.07	.06	-.11	-.11	.06
Inadequate monitoring				-.06	-.06	.06	-.08	-.08	.06
Interparental conflict							.18**	.08	.03
Total R ²	.01			.10***			.12**		
Adjusted R ²	.001			.08			.10		
F change	1.12			7.64***			8.52**		
R ² change	.01			.08***			.02**		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 28
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict and Father's Harsh Punishment

	Father's Harsh Punishment							
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Interparental Conflict Block 3	
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	Std error
Youth age	.12*	.14	.06	.09	.11	.06	.10	.06
Youth gender	.17*	.20	.06	.11*	.13	.06	.12*	.06
Parent's marital status	-.09	-.10	.10	-.08	-.14	.09	-.09	.09
Poverty status	.07	.13	.10	.02	.04	.09	-.004	.09
Psychological intrusion				.14**	.14	.06	.13*	.05
Intraparental inconsistency				.33***	.07	.25	.19***	.08
Low warmth/support				-.01	-.01	.06	-.02	.06
Inadequate monitoring				.12*	.15	.07	.07	.07
Interparental conflict							.18**	.03
Total R ²	.05**			.18***			.20**	
Adjusted R ²	.04			.16			.18	
F change	4.32**			12.90***			9.02**	
R ² change	.05**			.13***			.02**	

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 29
Hierarchical Regression Analyses of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict, Mother's/Father's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Total Youth Problem Behavior

	Total Youth Problem Behavior											
	Background Variables Block 1			Interparental Conflict Block 2			Mother's Parenting Block 3			Father's Parenting Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.07	2.32	1.89	.06	2.21	1.72	.02	.81	1.66	.05	1.55	1.66
Youth gender	.09	3.04	1.86	.08	3.07	1.69	.05	1.69	1.67	.02	.62	1.68
Parent's marital status	.17**	8.54	2.83	.13	6.60**	2.58	.10*	5.04	2.50	.13**	6.64	2.55
Poverty status	.10	5.13	2.87	.000	-.001	2.68	.02	1.14	2.56	-.001	-.04	2.56
Interparental conflict				.43***	7.15	.84	.27***	4.52	.94	.27***	4.51	.93
Psychological intrusion							.08	2.24	1.49	.18***	1.51	5.2
Inconsistency							.17**	6.42	2.15	.14***	5.55	2.14
Low warmth/support							.004	.19	1.99	.04	1.42	1.64
Inadequate monitoring							.15**	5.57	1.96	.16**	6.24	2.04
Harsh punishment							.10*	3.85	1.81	-.004	-.13	1.50
Total R ²	.05**			.22***			.30***			.31***		
Adjusted R ²	.04			.21			.28			.29		
F change	4.42**			71.66***			7.64***			8.50***		
R ² change	.05**			.17***			.08***			.10***		

Note: N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 30

Hierarchical Regression Analyses of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict, Mother's/Father's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior											
	Background Variables Block 1			Interparental Conflict Block 2			Mother's Parenting Block 3			Father's Parenting Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.05	1.00	1.09	.05	.94	1.00	.02	.35	1.00	.04	.72	.98
Youth gender	-.01	-.21	1.07	-.01	-.20	.98	-.03	-.57	1.00	-.07	1.35	1.00
Parent's marital status	.14	4.23	1.63	.11*	3.16	1.50	.09	2.66	1.50	.11*	3.19	1.51
Poverty status	1.00	2.79	1.66	-.001	-.04	1.56	.01	.39	1.54	-.001	-.03	1.52
Interparental conflict				.41***	3.94	.49	.30***	2.89	.56	.30***	2.85	.55
Psychological intrusion							.03	.53	.89	.20***	3.43	.89
Inconsistency							.14*	3.21	1.29	.07	1.62	1.27
Low warmth/support							.01	.20	1.19	.07	1.18	.97
Inadequate monitoring							.07	1.54	1.18	.09	1.94	1.21
Harsh punishment							.08	1.69	1.09	.01	.08	.89
Total R ²	.04*			.19***			.23**			.26***		
Adjusted R ²	.02			.18			.21			.24		
F change	3.15*			64.41***			3.39**			5.69***		
R ² change	.04*			.16***			.04**			.06***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 31
Hierarchical Regression Analyses of Youth Perceptions of Overall Interparental Conflict, Mother's/Father's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior									
	Background Variables Block 1		Interparental Conflict Block 2		Mother's Parenting Block 3		Father's Parenting Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Std error
Youth age	.07	1.30	.96	.07	1.26	.89	.03	.44	.84	.85
Youth gender	.18***	3.19	.94	.18***	3.20	.87	.13**	2.21	.85	.86
Parent's marital status	.16**	4.20	1.43	.13**	3.34	1.34	.09	2.29	1.26	1.31
Poverty status	.10	2.61	1.45	.01	.34	1.39	.04	1.05	1.29	1.31
Interparental conflict				.37***	3.16	.44	.19***	1.59	.47	.48
Psychological intrusion							.11*	1.66	.75	.77
Inconsistency							.16**	3.26	1.09	1.10
Low warmth/support							-.002	-.04	1.00	.84
Inadequate monitoring							.22***	4.01	.99	1.05
Harsh punishment							.11*	2.12	.92	.77
Total R ²	.07***			.20***			.31***			.30***
Adjusted R ²	.06			.19			.29			.28
F change	6.29***			52.29***			11.17***			9.76***
R ² change	.07***			.13***			.12***			.10***

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

functioned as an intervening variable in the relationship between overall interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior. However, the indirect pathway for father's inconsistency was stronger for adolescents than pre-adolescents, daughters than sons, and youth from poor than less poor families because the leg between overall interparental conflict and father's inconsistency was stronger. The indirect pathway replicated, including a similar pattern for the moderators, for externalizing youth problem behavior. However, unlike mother's inconsistency, father's inconsistency did not intervene in the relationship between overall interparental conflict and internalizing youth problem behavior.

Father's inadequate monitoring functioned as an intervening variable in the relationship between overall interparental conflict and total as well as externalizing youth problem behavior, but mother's inadequate monitoring did not. The indirect pathway for the fathers' model was similar for daughters and sons, pre- and early adolescents, youth who lived with mothers only and those who lived with both parents, and youth from poor and less poor families.

Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles.

Parents' Disrupted Parenting, and Youth Problem Behavior

The next set of regression equations was calculated to estimate the role of parents' disrupted parenting in the relationships between each interparental conflict style---covert and overt, and youth problem behavior (see Figures 22, 23, and 24). To determine the first pathway of the model from covert and overt interparental conflict styles to disrupted parenting, (Text continued on p. 133.)

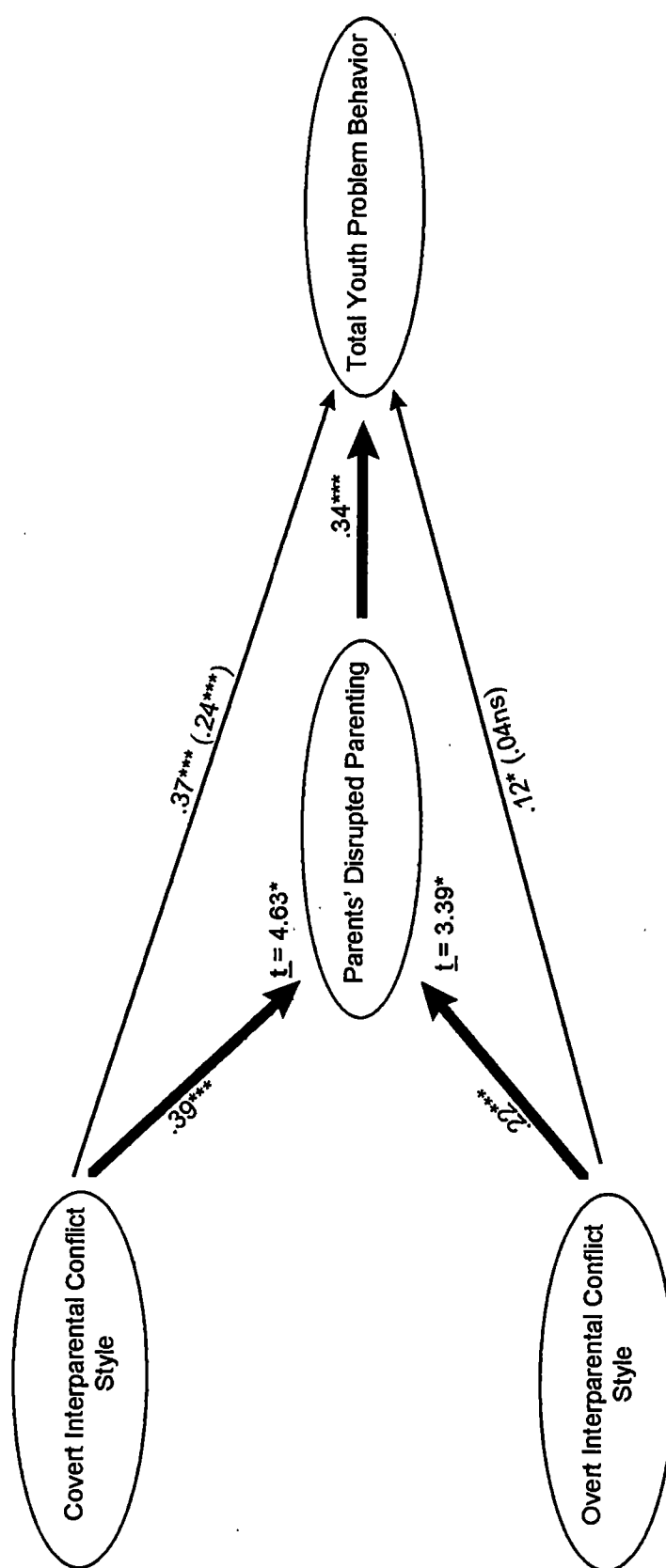


Figure 22. Model of Parents' Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Total Youth Problem Behavior ($N = 337$).
 Note. Values in parentheses are the standardized regression coefficients for the direct effect of covert and overt interparental conflict styles after disrupted parenting is considered. $^*p < .05$ $^{**}p < .01$ $^{***}p < .001$

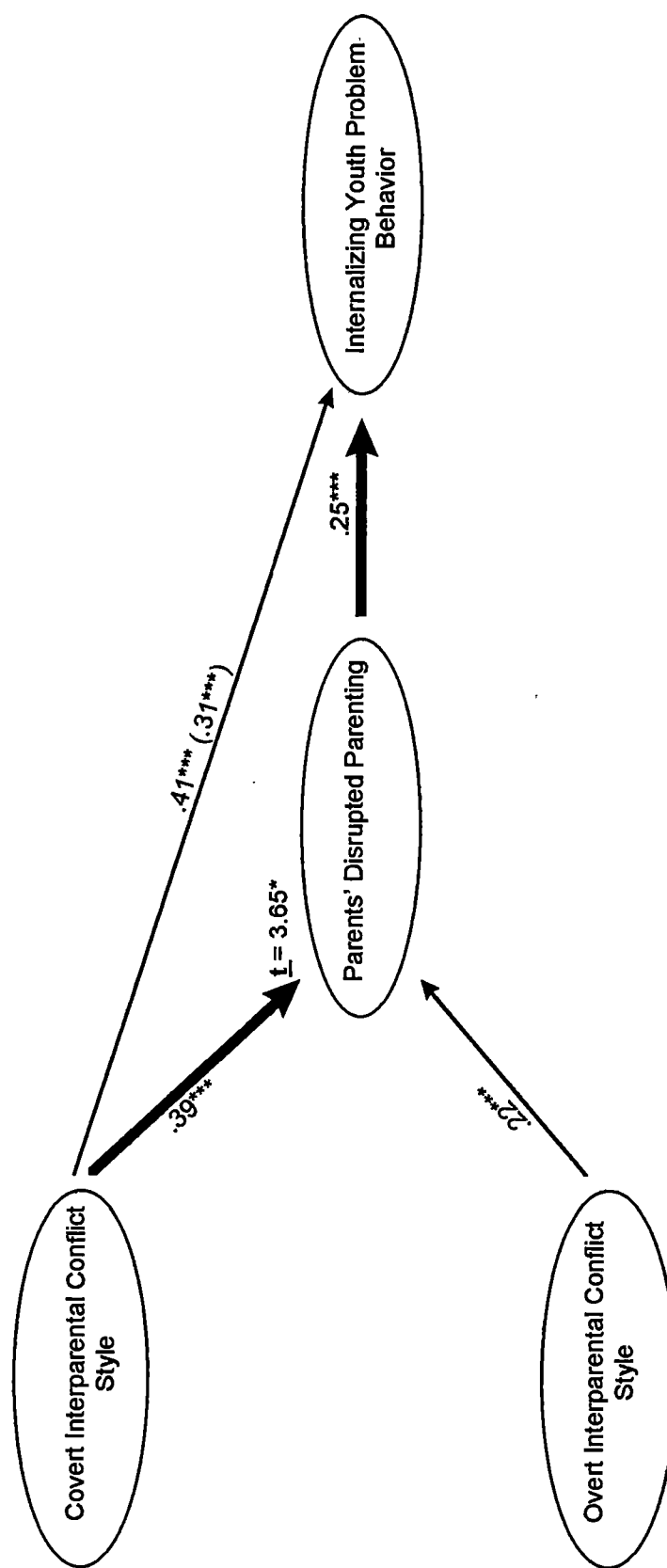


Figure 23. Model of Parents' Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of covert interparental conflict style after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

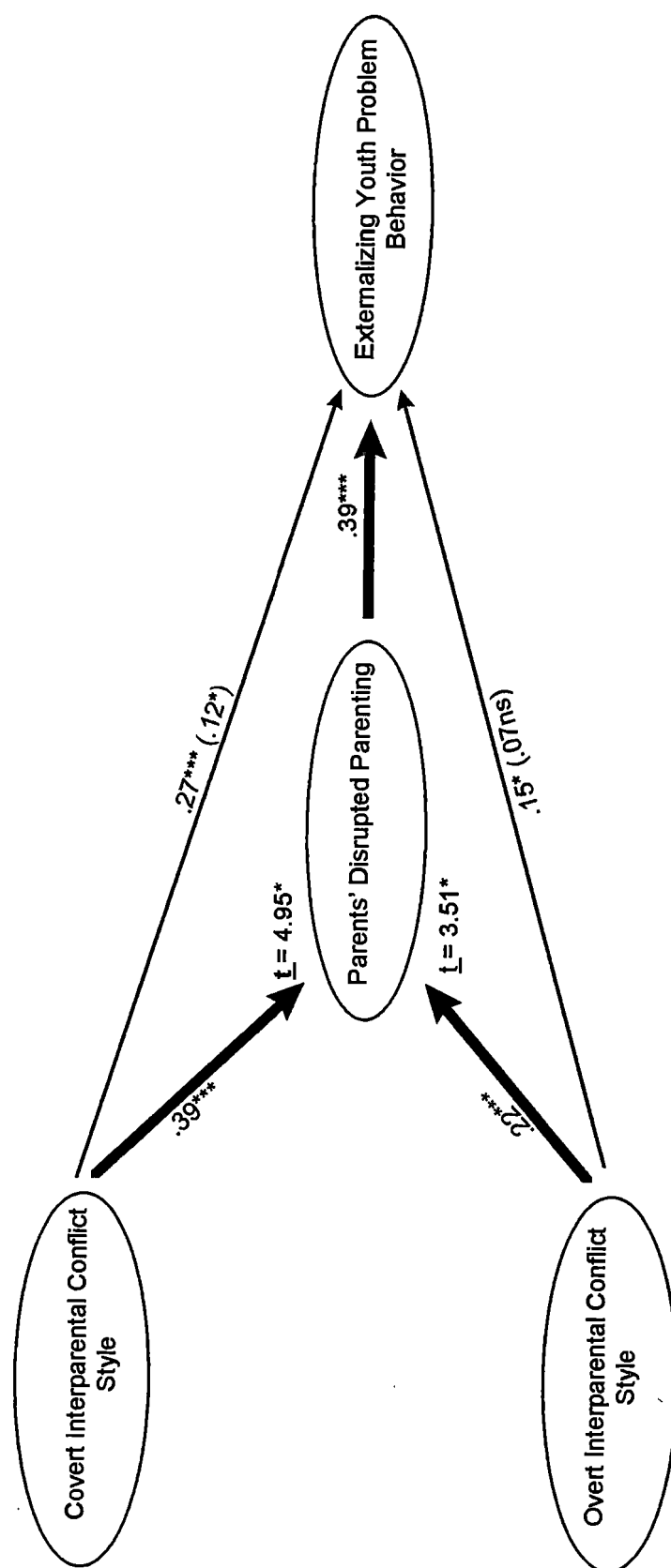


Figure 24. Model of Parents' Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).
Note. Values in parentheses are the standardized regression coefficients for the direct effect of covert and overt interparental conflict styles after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

the variables were entered in the following order (see Table 32). Disrupted parenting was the dependent variable. In the first block, youth age, youth gender, parent's marital status, and family poverty status were entered. A covert interparental conflict style and an overt interparental conflict style were entered in the second block. Interaction terms were entered in the third block. A second regression equation was calculated to determine the second pathway from disrupted parenting to youth problem behavior. (See Tables 33, 34, and 35). The variables were entered in the following order. Youth problem behavior was the dependent variable. Youth age, youth gender, parent's marital status, and family poverty status were entered in the first block. The second block included covert and overt interparental conflict style. Disrupted parenting was entered in the third block. Interaction terms were entered in the fourth block.

A covert interparental conflict style and overt interparental conflict style were associated with total youth problem behavior ($Beta = .37, p < .001$, $Beta = .12, p < .05$, respectively; $\Delta change = 40.45, p < .001$). In addition to the direct associations between a covert interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior and an overt interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior, parents' disrupted parenting was associated positively with each conflict style and total youth problem behavior, forming pathways from covert and overt interparental conflict to disrupted parenting to total youth problem behavior. The direct association between a covert interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior remained significant (Text continued on p. 138).

Table 32
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Parents' Disrupted Parenting

	Parents' Disrupted Parenting					
	Background Variables Block 1			Conflict Styles Block 2		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.11*	.31	.15	.11*	.31	.13
Youth gender	.18***	.50	.15	.18***	.51	.13
Parent's marital status	.09	.37	.23	.05	.19	.20
Poverty status	.10	.40	.23	-.02	-.09	.20
Covert conflict style				.39***	.98	.14
Overt conflict style				.22***	.49	.12
Total R ²	.06***			.32***		
Adjusted R ²	.04			.31		
F change	4.89***			65.35***		
R ² change	.06			.27***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 33

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles, Parents' Disrupted Parenting, and Total Youth Problem Behavior

	Total Youth Problem Behavior								
	Background Variables Block 1			Conflict Styles Block 2			Disrupted Parenting Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.07	2.32	1.89	.07	2.43	1.70	.03	1.10	1.63
Youth gender	.09	3.04	1.86	.09	3.20	1.67	.03	1.03	1.62
Parent's marital status	.17**	8.54	2.83	.14**	6.97	2.56	.12*	6.15	2.43
Poverty status	.10	5.13	2.87	.01	.30	2.65	.01	.70	2.51
Covert conflict style				.37***	11.63	1.81	.24***	7.46	1.84
Overt conflict style				.12*	3.28	1.62	.04	1.21	1.57
Disrupted parenting							.34***	4.24	.68
Total R ²	.05**			.24***			.32***		
Adjusted R ²	.04			.22			.30		
F change	4.42**			40.45***			38.58***		
R ² change	.05**			.19***			.08***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 34
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles, Parents' Disrupted Parenting, and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	<u>Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior</u>								
	<u>Background Variables</u> Block 1			<u>Conflict Styles</u> Block 2			<u>Disrupted Parenting</u> Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age				.06	1.10	.98	.03	.55	.97
Youth gender				-.001	-.10	.96	-.05	-1.00	.96
Parent's marital status				.12*	3.44	1.48	.11*	3.09	1.44
Poverty status				.01	.19	1.53	.01	.36	1.49
Covert conflict style				.41***	7.30	1.04	.31***	5.56	1.09
Overt conflict style				.07	1.04	.94	.01	.18	.93
Disrupted parenting							.25***	1.77	.41
Total R ²				.22***			.27***		
Adjusted R ²				.21			.25		
F change				39.97***			19.04***		
R ² change				.19***			.04***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 35

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles, Parents' Disrupted Parenting, and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior									
	Background Variables Block 1			Conflict Styles Block 2			Disrupted Parenting Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.07	1.30	.96	.07	1.31	.89	.03	.54	.84	
Youth gender	.18***	3.19	.94	.18***	3.24	.87	.11	1.97	.83	
Parent's marital status	.16**	4.20	1.43	.13**	3.44	1.34	.11*	2.96	1.25	
Poverty status	.10	2.60	1.45	.02	.41	1.39	.02*	.65	1.29	
Covert conflict style				.27***	4.29	.94	.12*	1.87	.95	
Overt conflict style				.15*	2.18	.85	.07	.98	.81	
Disrupted parenting							.39***	2.47	.35	
Total R ²	.07***			.20***			.31***			
Adjusted R ²	.06			.19			.29			
F change	6.29***			27.12***			49.27***			
R ² change	.07***			.13***			.10***			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

after the hypothesized mediator, parents' disrupted parenting, was entered into the analysis. Thus, evidence indicated that disrupted parenting did not produce a complete mediating effect, but an indirect effect. The relationship between a covert interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior was not only direct, but also indirect through disrupted parenting. Parents' disrupted parenting transmitted part of the effect of a covert interparental conflict style on total youth problem behavior. Based on the results of the moderating analyses, this path was similar for pre- and early adolescent youth as well as for daughters and sons. The indirect pathway was stronger for youth living with mother only than for youth living with two parents and for youth from less poor than for poor families because the leg between parents' disrupted parenting and total youth problem behavior was stronger. The association between overt interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior became nonsignificant ($\text{Beta} = .12$, $p < .001$ to $.05$, $p = \text{ns}$) when parents' disrupted parenting was entered into the equation. Thus, disrupted parenting completely mediated the association between overt interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior. Because the significant moderators describe the second leg of the pathway (from disrupted parenting to total youth problem behavior), the same conditions described above held for the mediating pathway.

A similar pattern of linking effects of disrupted parenting replicated when externalizing youth problem behavior was analyzed as a separate measure. The model fit equally well for pre- and early adolescent youth, daughters and sons,

and youth from less poor and poor families. The indirect pathway was stronger for youth living with mother only than for youth living with both parents because the leg between parents' disrupted parenting and externalizing youth problem behavior was stronger.

When internalizing youth problem behavior was analyzed as a separate measure, disrupted parenting functioned as an intervening variable in the relationship between a covert interparental conflict style and internalizing youth problem behavior. The indirect path fit equally well for pre- and adolescent youth, daughters and sons, youth from mother-only and two parent families, and youth from poor and less poor families. Overt interparental conflict was not related to internalizing youth problem behavior, therefore disrupted parenting could not function as a linking mechanism.

Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles.

Mother's/Father's Disrupted Parenting, and Youth Problem Behavior

These regression equations were calculated to test for parenting behavior differences between mothers and fathers in the context of covert and overt interparental conflict styles and youth problem behavior (see Figures 25 through 30). (See Table 36 for results of the first half of the pathways and Tables 37, 38 and 39 for results of the second half of the pathways). When mother's and father's disrupted parenting behaviors were examined separately, the above results replicated, with no differences between the models for mother's disrupted parenting and the models for father's disrupted (Text continued on p. 150.)

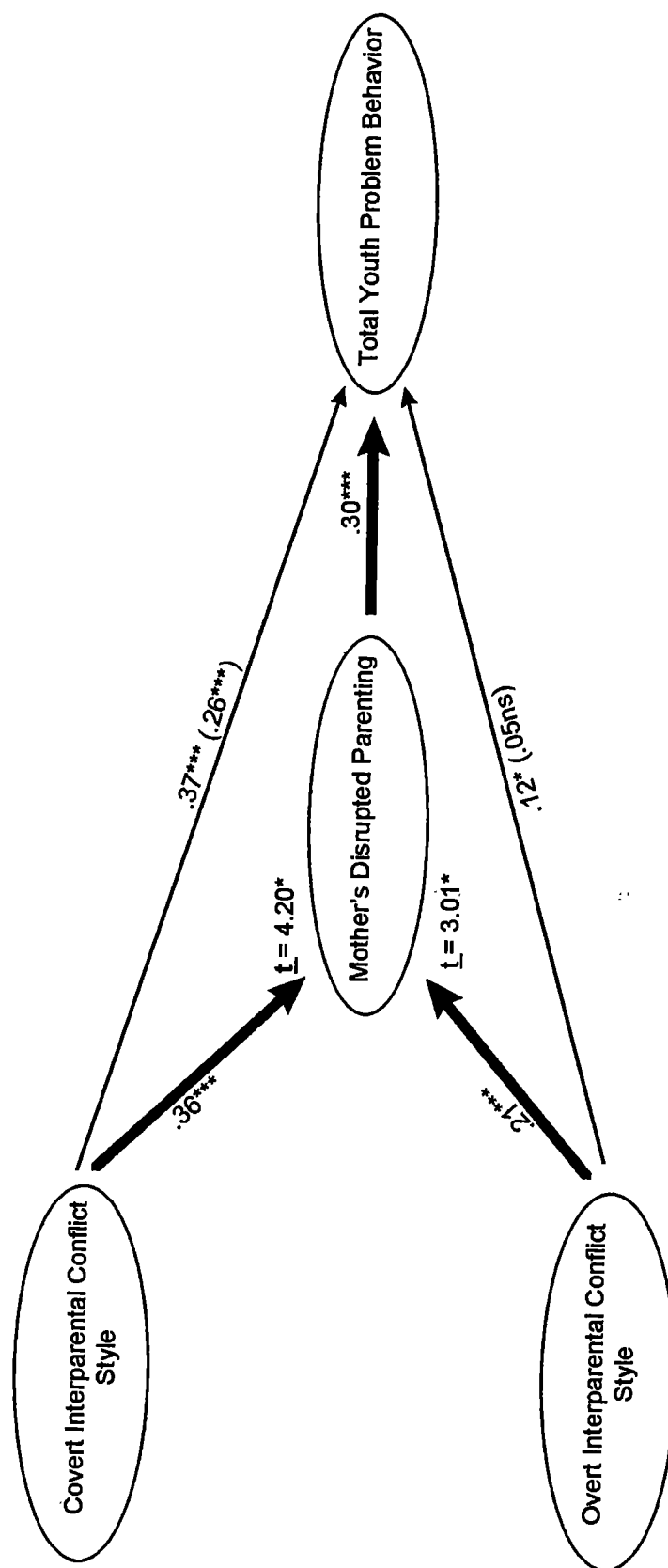


Figure 25. Model of Mother's Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Total Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Values in parentheses are the standardized regression coefficients for the direct effect of covert and overt interparental conflict styles after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

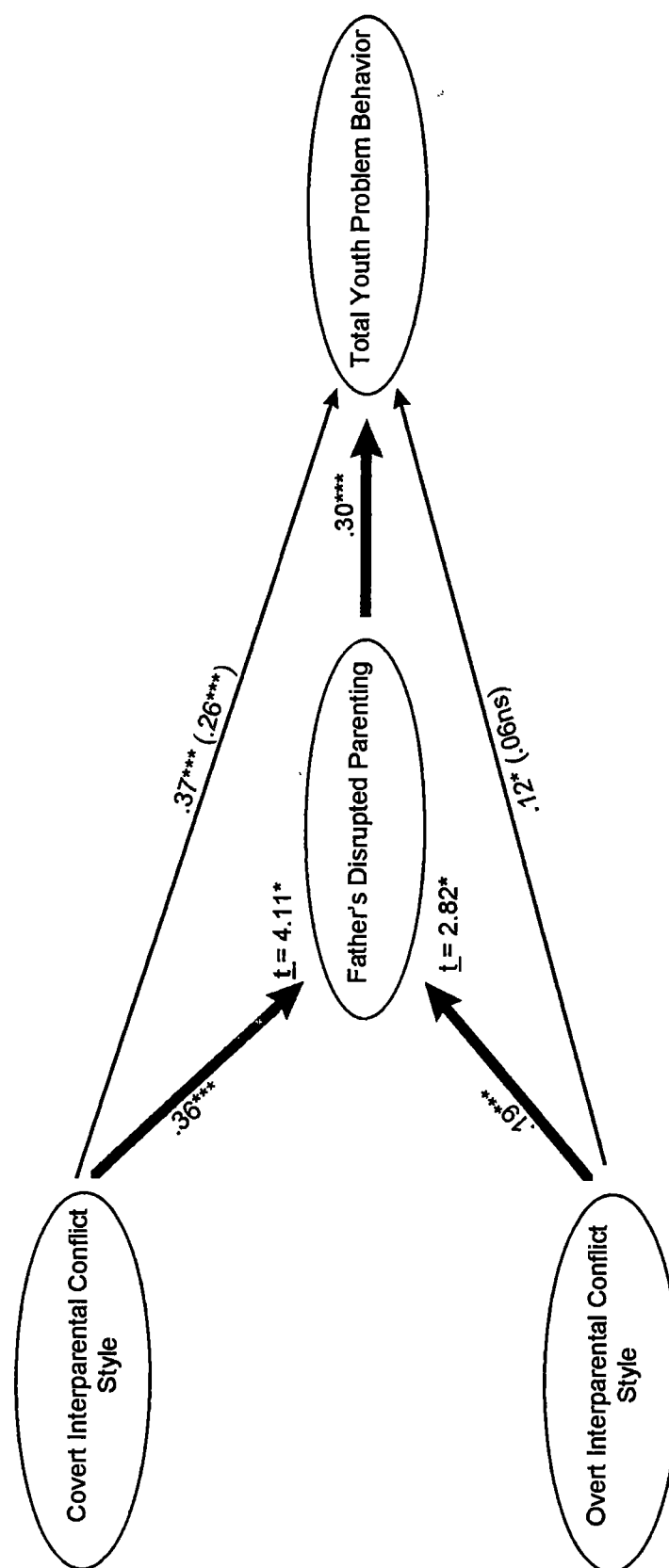


Figure 26. Model of Father's Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Total Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).
Note. Values in parentheses are the standardized regression coefficients for the direct effect of covert and overt interparental conflict styles after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

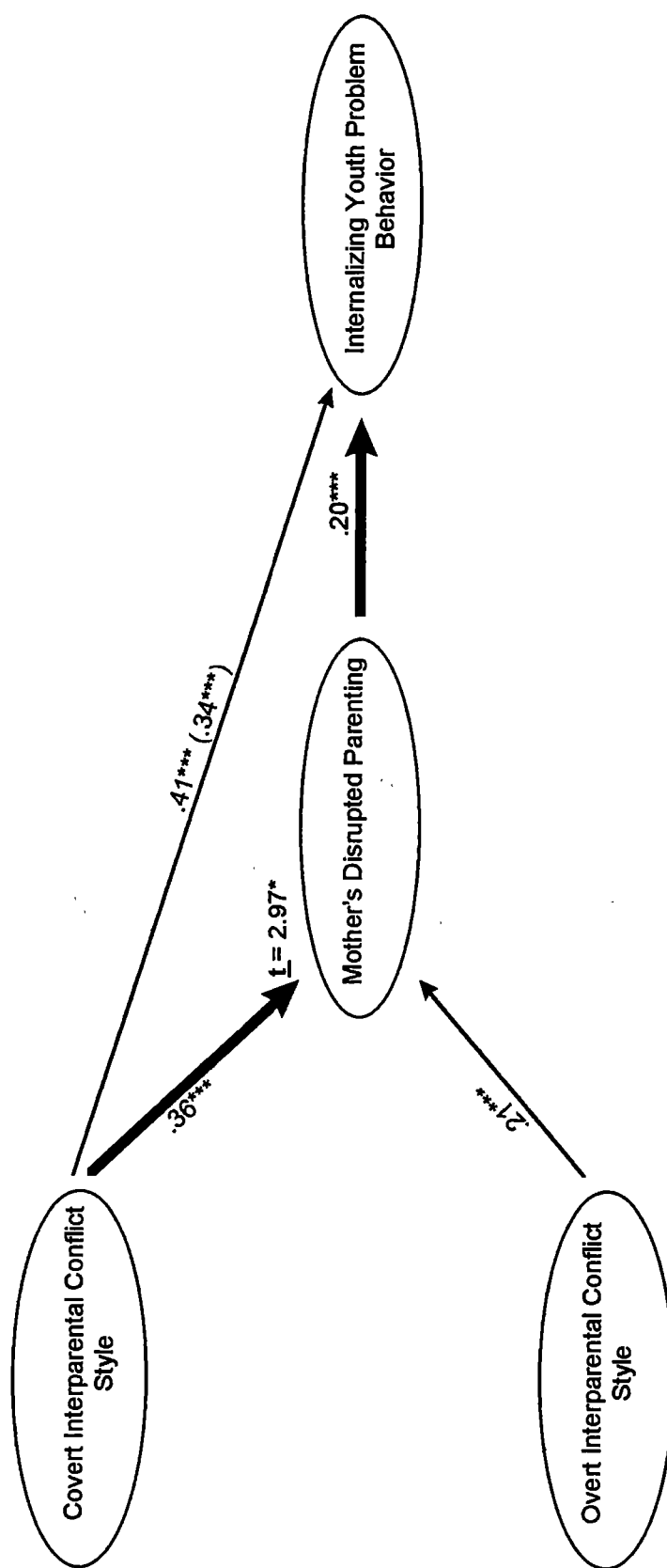


Figure 27. Model of Mother's Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of covert interparental conflict style after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

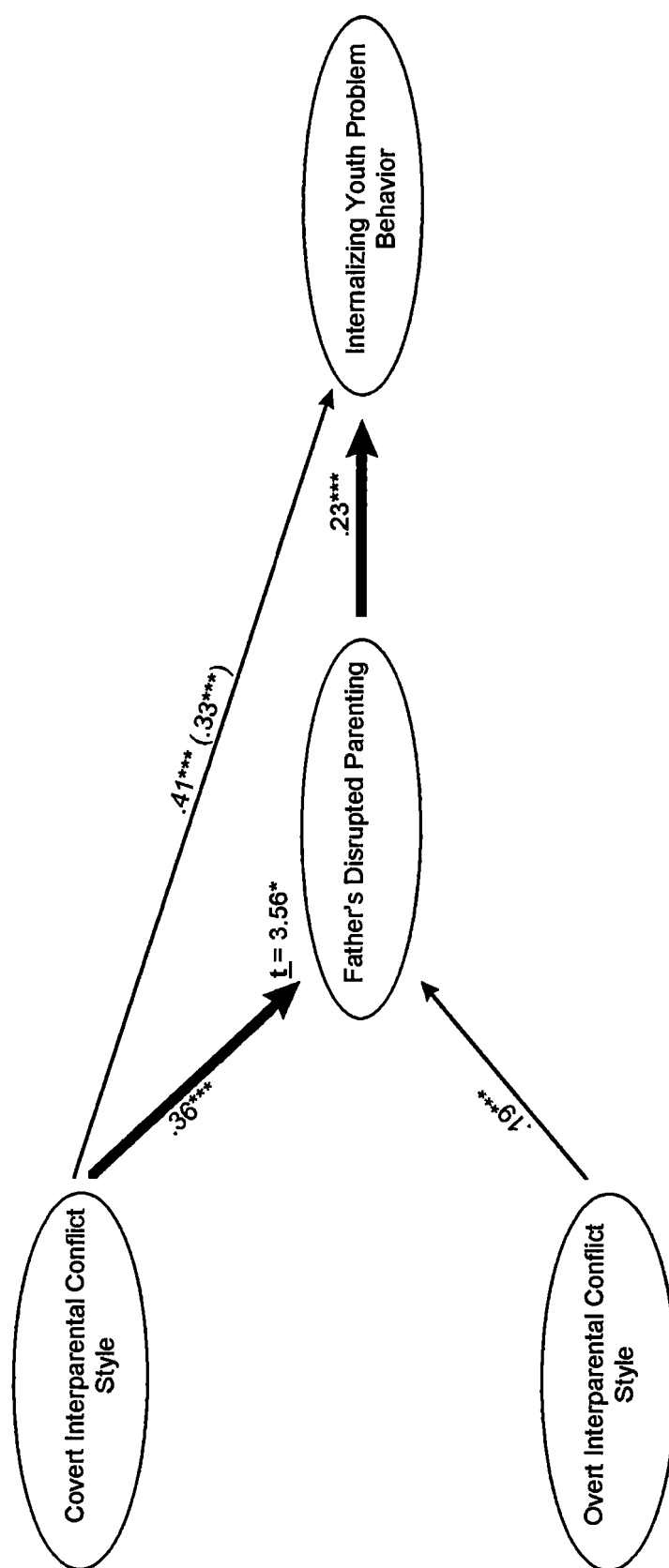


Figure 28. Model of Father's Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).

Note. Value in parenthesis the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of covert interparental conflict style after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

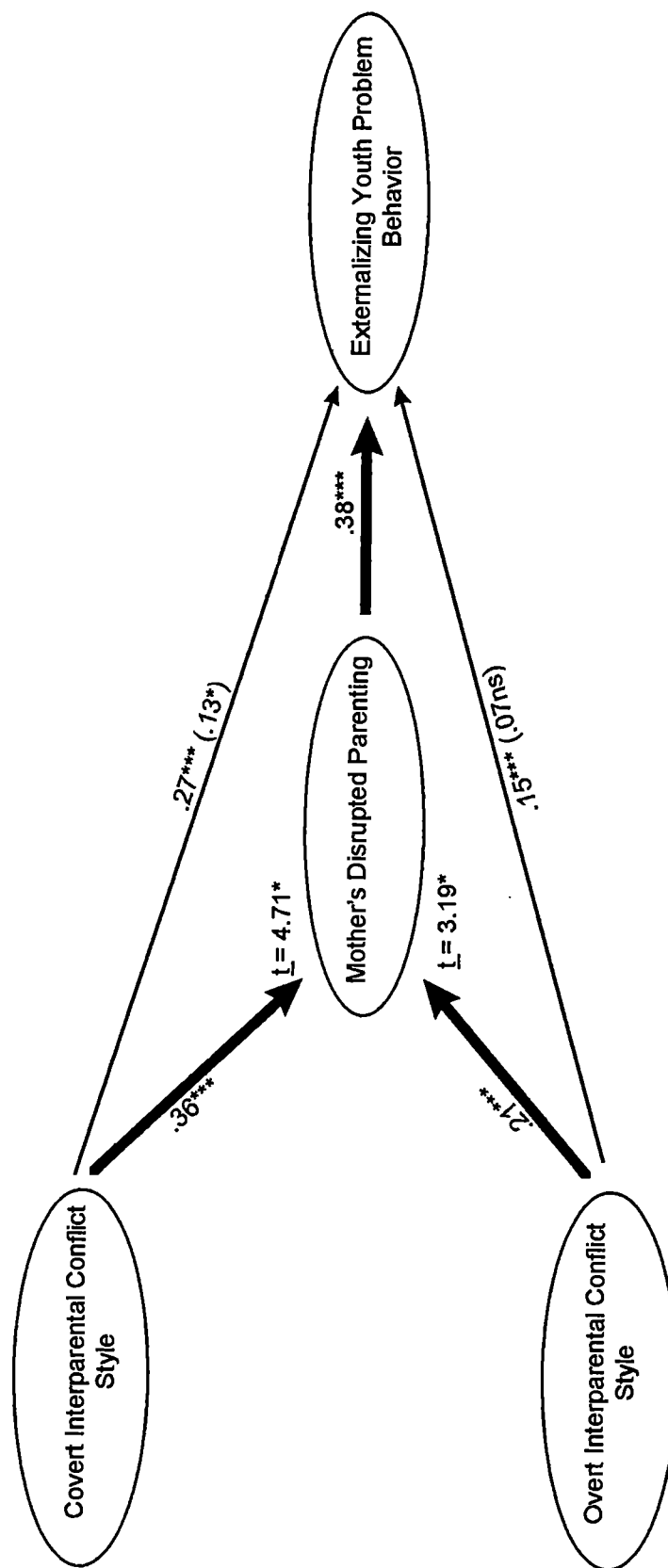


Figure 29. Model of Mother's Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).
Note. Values in parentheses are the standardized regression coefficients for the direct effect of covert and overt interparental conflict styles after disrupted parenting is considered. $^*p < .05$ $^{**}p < .01$ $^{***}p < .001$

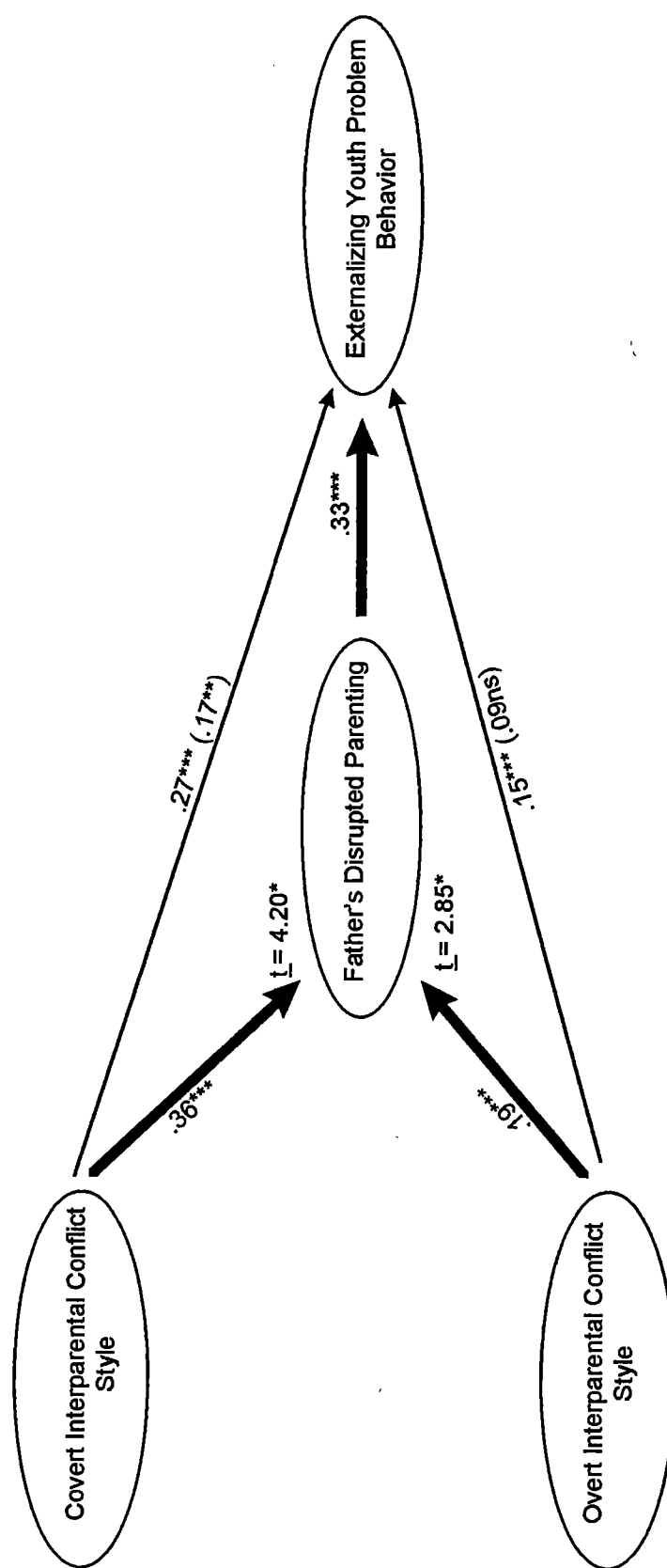


Figure 30. Model of Father's Disrupted Parenting Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).
 Note. Values in parentheses are the standardized regression coefficients for the direct effect of covert and overt interparental conflict styles after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 36

Hierarchical Regression Analyses of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Mother's/Father's Disrupted Parenting

	Mother's Disrupted Parenting					Father's Disrupted Parenting				
	Background Variables Block 1			Conflict Styles Block 2		Background Variables Block 1			Conflict Styles Block 2	
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Std error
Youth age	.11*	.32	.16	.11*	.32	.14	.11*	.34	.17	.15
Youth gender	.13*	.37	.16	.13**	.38	.14	.21***	.67	.17	.15
Parent's marital status	.11*	.49	.25	.07	.32	.21	.05	.23	.25	.22
Poverty status	.04	.19	.25	.07	.32	.22	.13*	.61	.26	.23
Covert conflict style										
Overt conflict style										
Total R ²	.04*			.28***						
Adjusted R ²	.03			.27						
F change	3.26*			56.44***						
R ² change	.04*			.25***						
							.07***			
							.06			
							6.21***			
							.07***			
							.29***			
							.27			
							50.70***			
							.22***			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 37

Hierarchical Regression Analyses of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles, Mother's/Father's Disrupted Parenting, and Total Youth Problem Behavior

	Total Youth Problem Behavior											
	Background Variables Block 1			Conflict Styles Block 2			Mother's Parenting Block 3			Father's Parenting Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.07	2.32	1.89	.07	2.43	1.70	.04	1.31	1.65	.04	1.31	1.65
Youth gender	.09	3.04	1.86	.09	3.20	1.67	.05	1.86	1.62	.03	.98	1.66
Parent's marital status	.16**	8.54	2.83	.14**	6.97	2.56	.11	5.86	2.46	.13**	6.78	2.46
Poverty status	.10	5.13	2.87	.01	.30	2.65	.03	1.40	2.55	-.001	-.07	2.55
Covert conflict style				.37***	11.63	1.81	.26***	8.19	1.84	.26***	8.30	1.84
Overt conflict style				.12*	3.27	1.62	.05	1.50	1.59	.06	1.75	1.58
Disrupted parenting							.30***	3.50	.63	.30***	3.27	.60
Total R ²	.05**			.24***			.30***			.30***		
Adjusted R ²	.04			.22			.29			.29		
F change	4.42**			40.45***			30.51***			29.47***		
R ² change	.05**			.19***			.06***			.06***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 38

Hierarchical Regression Analyses of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles, Mother's/Father's Disrupted Parenting, and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior											
	Background Variables Block 1			Conflict Styles Block 2			Mother's Parenting Block 3			Father's Parenting Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.05	1.00	1.09	.06	1.10	.98	.03	.69	.98	.03	.58	.97
Youth gender	-.01	-.21	1.07	-.01	-.10	.96	-.03	-.59	.96	-.06	-1.14	.97
Parent's marital status	.14	4.23	1.63	.12	3.44	1.48	.10*	3.03	1.46	.11*	3.35	1.44
Poverty status	.10	2.79	1.66	.01	.19	1.53	.02	.59	1.51	.001	.02	1.49
Covert conflict style				.41***	7.30	1.04	.34***	6.04	1.09	.32***	5.75	1.08
Overt conflict style				.07	1.04	.94	.02	.39	.94	.02	.33	.93
Disrupted parenting							.19***	1.28	.38	.24***	4.52	.35
Total R ²	.04*			.22***			.25***			.27***		
Adjusted R ²	.02			.21			.23			.25		
F change	3.15*			39.94***			11.59***			18.60***		
R ² change	.04*			.19***			.03***			.04***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 39

Hierarchical Regression Analyses of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles, Mother's/Father's Disrupted Parenting, and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior											
	Background Variables Block 1			Conflict Styles Block 2			Mother's Parenting Block 3			Father's Parenting Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.07	1.30	.96	.07	1.31	.89	.03	.60	.84	.04	.71	.86
Youth gender	.18	3.19	.94	.18	1.31	.87	.14**	2.39	.83	.12*	2.05	.86
Parent's marital status	.16	4.20	1.43	.13	3.26	1.34	.10*	2.73	1.26	.13**	3.34	1.28
Poverty status	.10	2.61	1.45	.02	3.44	1.38	.04	1.11	1.30	.01	.21	1.32
Covert conflict style				.27***	4.29	.94	.13*	2.12	.94	.16**	2.51	.96
Overt conflict style				.15*	2.18	.85	.08	1.06	.81	.10	1.37	.82
Disrupted parenting							.37***	2.20	.32	.31***	1.75	.31
Total R ²	.07***			.20***			.90***			.27***		
Adjusted R ²	.06			.19			.29			.26		
F change	6.29***			27.12***			46.43***			31.14***		
R ² change	.07***			.13***			.10***			.07***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

parenting, except with respect to the background characteristics. In the model for mothers, the indirect pathway from a covert interparental conflict style and the mediating pathway from overt interparental conflict through mother's disrupted parenting to total youth problem behavior was stronger for youth from mother-only families than from two-parent families because the leg between mother's disrupted parenting and total youth problem behavior was stronger. In the model for fathers, the linking pathways were stronger for youth from less poor than poor families because the leg from father's disrupted parenting to total youth problem behavior was stronger.

Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles, Parents' Specific
Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Youth Problem Behavior

The next set of regression equations were calculated to explore the role of specific parenting behaviors in the established relationships between covert and overt interparental conflict and the three measures of youth problem behavior (see Figures 31, 32, and 33). To determine the first pathway of the model from covert and overt interparental conflict styles to each specific parenting behavior---psychological intrusion, inconsistency, low warmth/support, inadequate monitoring, and harsh punishment---five regression equations were analyzed to estimate the association between covert and overt interparental conflict styles and each parenting behavior (see Tables 40 through 44). For each equation, the variables were entered in the following order. The relevant parenting behavior was the dependent variable. (Text continued on p. 159.)

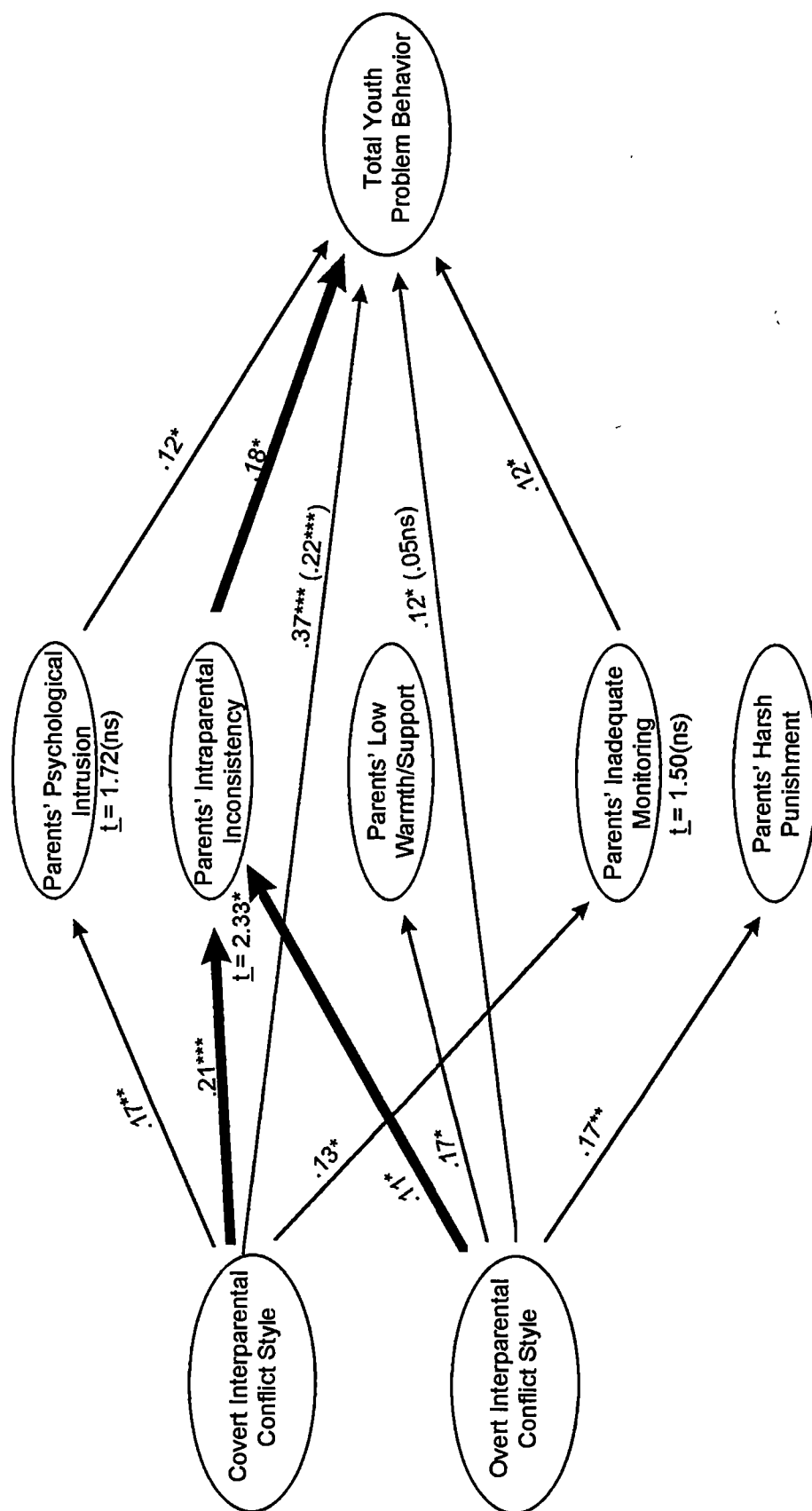


Figure 31. Model of Parents' Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Total Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).
Note. Values in parentheses are the standardized regression coefficients for the direct effect of covert and overt interparental conflict styles after disrupted parenting is considered. $^*p < .05$ $^{**}p < .01$ $^{***}p < .001$

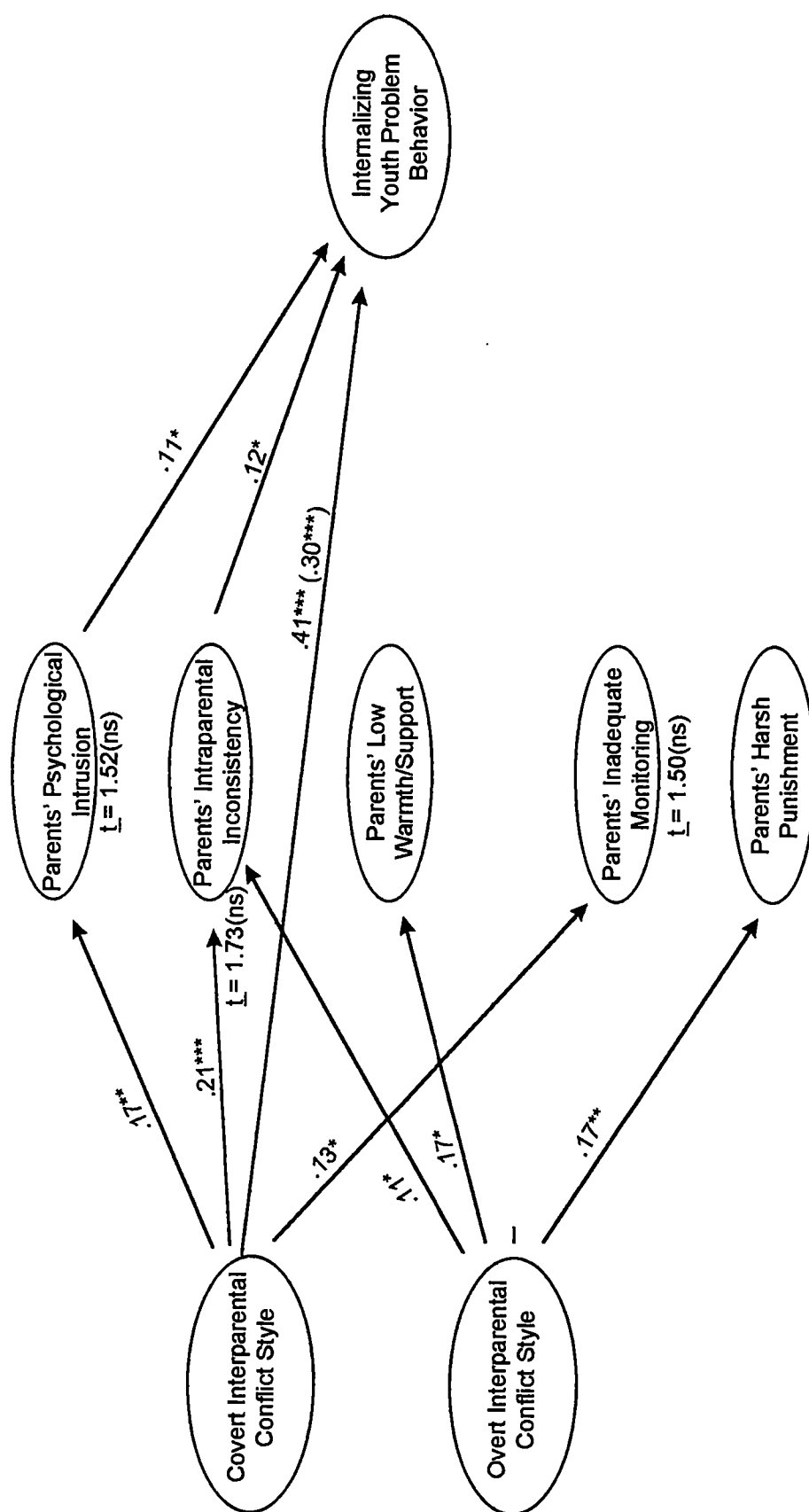


Figure 32. Model of Parents' Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).
 Note. Values in parentheses are the standardized regression coefficients for the direct effect of covert and overt interparental conflict styles after disrupted parenting is considered. $^*p < .05$ $^{**}p < .01$ $^{***}p < .001$

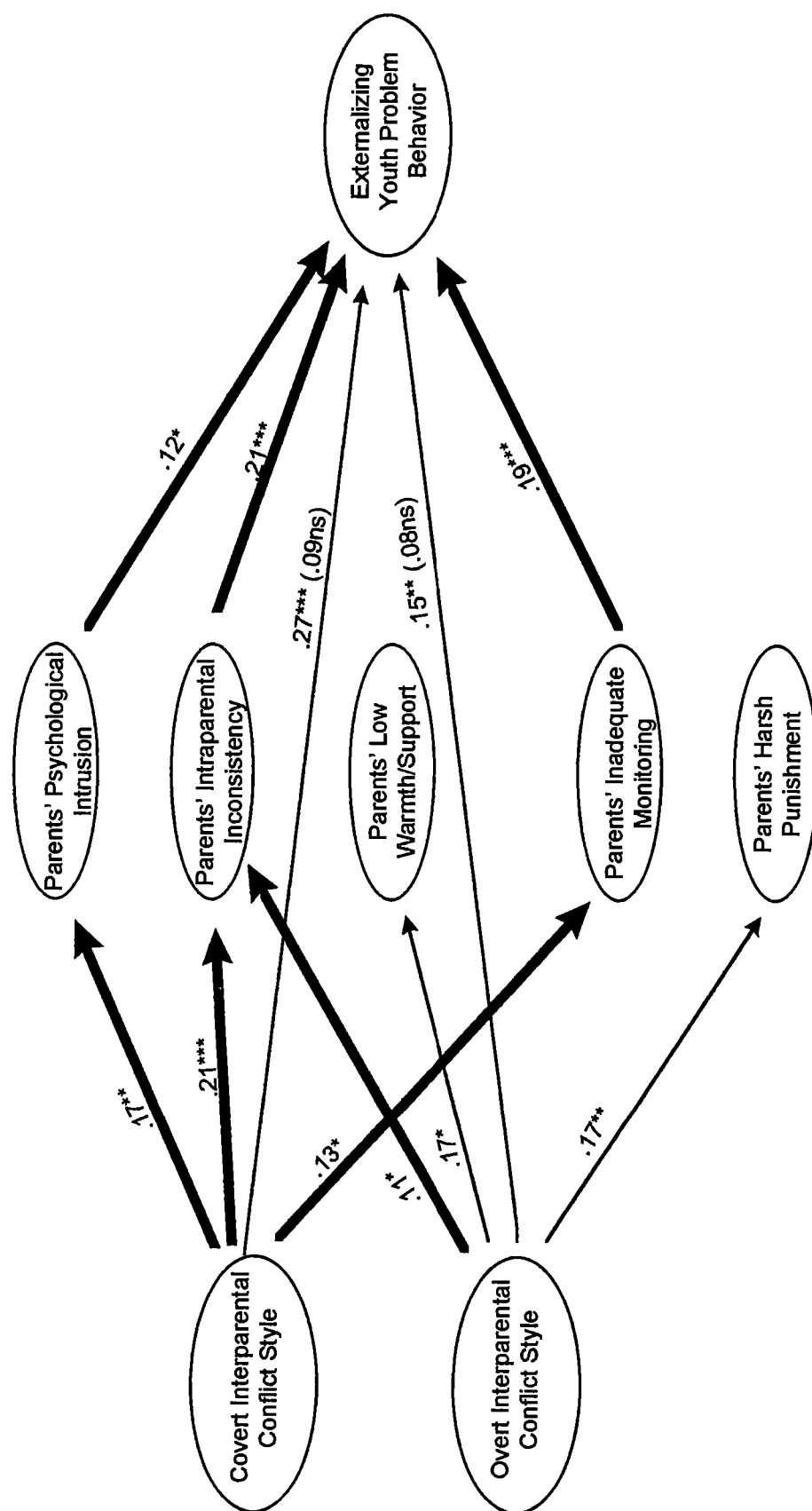


Figure 33. Model of Parents' Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).
Note. Values in parentheses are the standardized regression coefficients for the direct effect of covert and overt interparental conflict styles after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 40
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Parents' Psychological Intrusion

	Parents' Psychological Intrusion									
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Conflict Styles Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	-.03	-.03	.06	-.08	-.08	.05	-.07	-.07	.05	
Youth gender	.14	.14	.06	.11*	.12	.05	.12*	.13	.05	
Parent's marital status	-.01	-.02	.09	-.003	-.005	.08	-.001	-.001	.08	
Poverty status	.02	.03	.09	-.03	-.04	.08	-.04	-.06	.08	
Intraparental inconsistency				.37***	.49	.07	.33***	.43	.08	
Low warmth/support				-.09	-.10	.07	-.09	-.11	.07	
Inadequate monitoring				.03	.04	.07	.02	.02	.07	
Harsh punishment				.14**	.15	.06	.13*	.14	.06	
Covert conflict style							.17**	.16	.06	
Overt conflict style										
Total R ²	.02			.21***			.23*			
Adjusted R ²	.01			.19			.20			
F change	1.74			19.34***			3.69*			
R ² change	.02			.19***			.02*			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 41
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Parents' Intraparental Inconsistency

	Parents' Intraparental Inconsistency									
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Conflict Styles Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.12	.09	.04	.07	.06	.04	.09	.07	.04	
Youth gender	.000	.000	.04	-.13**	-.10	.04	-.09*	-.07	.04	
Parent's marital status	.003	.003	.07	-.04	-.05	.06	-.04	-.05	.05	
Poverty status	.13*	.15	.07	.09*	.11	.06	.04	.05	.06	
Psychological intrusion				.32***	.24	.04	.27***	.20	.04	
Low warmth/support				.15**	.13	.04	.09	.08	.05	
Inadequate monitoring				.19***	.16	.04	.14**	.12	.04	
Harsh punishment				.22***	.18	.04	.16***	.13	.04	
Covert conflict style							.21***	.15	.04	
Overt conflict style							.11*	.07	.03	
Total R ²	.02			.31***			.37***			
Adjusted R ²	.01			.30			.35			
F change	2.03			34.77***			15.16***			
R ² change	.02			.29***			.06***			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 42

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Parents' Low Warmth/Support

	Parents' Low Warmth/Support									
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Conflict Styles Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.11	.10	.05	.06	.05	.04	.07	.06	.04	
Youth gender	.05	.05	.05	-.01	-.01	.04	.004	.003	.04	
Parent's marital status	.16**	.21	.07	.10	.13	.07	.08	.11	.07	
Poverty status	.09	.11	.07	.06	.08	.07	.02	.03	.07	
Psychological intrusion				-.08	-.07	.05	-.09	-.08	.05	
Intraparental inconsistency				.17**	-.19	.07	.11	.12	.07	
Inadequate monitoring				.39***	.38	.05	.04***	.34	.05	
Harsh punishment				-.07	-.06	.05	-.10*	-.10	.05	
Covert conflict style							.07	.05	.05	
Overt conflict style							.17**	.12	.04	
Total R ²	.05**			.24			.27***			
Adjusted R ²	.03			.22			.25			
F change	4.01**			20.50***			7.20***			
R ² change	.05**			.19***			.03***			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 43
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Parents' Inadequate Behavior Monitoring

	Parents' Inadequate Behavior Monitoring									
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Conflict Styles Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.09	.08	.05	.02	.02	.04	.03	.03	.04	
Youth gender	.22**	.20	.05	.19*	.17	.04	.20***	.18	.04	
Parent's marital status	.15**	.20	.07	.09	.12	.07	.09	.12	.07	
Poverty status	.03	.04	.08	-.03	-.04	.07	-.05	-.07	.07	
Psychological intrusion				.03	.03	.05	.01	.01	.05	
Intraparental inconsistency				.20***	.24	.06	.16**	.18	.07	
Low warmth/support				.37***	.38	.05	.34***	.35	.05	
Harsh punishment				.03	.03	.05	.01	.01	.05	
Covert conflict style							.13*	.11	.05	
Overt conflict style							.02	.01	.04	
Total R ²	.07***			.28***			.30*			
Adjusted R ²	.06			.26			.27			
F change	6.17***			24.29***			3.27*			
R ² change	.07***			.21***			.01			

Note: N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 44

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Parents' Harsh Punishment

	Parents' Harsh Punishment								
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Conflict Styles Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.10	.10	.05	.08	.07	.05	.09	.08	.05
Youth gender	.15	.14	.05	.12*	.12	.05	.13*	.12	.05
Parent's marital status	-.02	-.03	.08	-.02	-.02	.07	-.03	-.04	.07
Poverty status	.05	.07	.08	.02	.02	.07	-.02	-.03	.07
Psychological intrusion				.15**	.13	.05	.14*	.12	.05
Intraparental inconsistency				.27***	.32	.07	.21***	.25	.07
Low warmth/support				-.07	-.08	.06	-.11*	-.12	.06
Inadequate monitoring				.03	.04	.06	.01	.01	.06
Covert conflict style							.06	.05	.06
Overt conflict style							.17**	.13	.05
Total R ²	.03*			.16***			.19**		
Adjusted R ²	.02			.14			.17		
F change	2.80*			12.37***			6.26**		
R ² change	.03*			.13***			.03**		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

In the first block, youth age, youth gender, parent's marital status, and family poverty status were entered. The second block contained the other four parenting behaviors as controls. Covert and overt interparental conflict were entered in the third block. Interaction terms were entered in the fourth block.

A second set of hierarchical multiple regression equations was analyzed to determine the second pathway from parenting to youth problem behavior (see Tables 45, 46, and 47). The variables were entered in the following order. The relevant youth problem behavior scale was the dependent variable. Youth age, youth gender, parent's marital status, and family poverty status were entered in the first block. The second block held covert and overt interparental conflict. To examine the intervening role of parenting behaviors, youth perceptions of the five parenting variables were entered in the third block. Interaction terms were entered in the fourth block.

Parents' Psychological Intrusion

Parents' psychological intrusion was associated with a covert interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior. The direct association between a covert interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior remained significant after parents' psychological intrusion was entered into the analysis. Evidence indicated that parents' psychological intrusion did not produce a complete mediating effect, but suggested an indirect effect. However, follow-up analyses with Sobel's equation showed that when integrating results from the first half of the pathway (Text continued on p. 163.)

Table 45

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles, Parents' Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Total Youth Problem Behavior

	Total Youth Problem Behavior									
	Background Variables Block 1				Conflict Styles Block 2			Parents' Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Std error
Youth age	.07	2.32	1.89	.07	2.44	1.70	.03	1.03	1.65	1.65
Youth gender	.09	3.04	1.86	.09	3.20	1.67	.04	1.25	1.67	1.67
Parent's marital status	.17	8.54	2.83	.14**	6.97	2.56	.13**	6.49	2.47	2.47
Poverty status	.10	5.13	2.87	.005	.30	2.65	.01	.64	2.53	2.53
Covert conflict style				.37***	11.63	1.81	.22***	6.94	1.87	1.87
Overt conflict style				.12*	3.28	1.62	.05	1.40	1.60	1.60
Psychological intrusion							.12*	4.14	1.73	1.73
Intraparental inconsistency							.18**	7.83	2.54	2.54
Low warmth/support							.05	2.04	2.08	2.08
Inadequate monitoring							.12*	4.57	2.04	2.04
Harsh punishment							.06	2.23	1.87	1.87
Total R ²	.05**			.24***			.32***			
Adjusted R ²	.04			.22			.30			
F change	4.42**			40.45***			8.28***			
R ² change	.05***			.19***			.09			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor. *p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 46

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles, Parents' Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior									
	Background Variables Block 1			Conflict Styles Block 2			Parents' Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Block 3			Std error
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.05	1.00	1.09	.06	1.10	.98	.03	.53	.98	
Youth gender	-.01	-.21	1.07	-.005	-.10	.96	-.04	.83	.99	
Parent's marital status	.14*	4.23	1.63	.12*	3.43	1.48	.11*	3.31	1.47	
Poverty status	.10	2.79	1.66	.01	.19	1.53	.01	.29	1.50	
Covert conflict style				.41***	7.30	1.04	.30***	5.40	1.11	
Overt conflict style				.06	1.04	.94	.01	.22	.95	
Psychological intrusion							.11*	2.03	1.03	
Intraparental inconsistency							.12*	3.03	1.51	
Low warmth/support							.07	1.54	1.23	
Inadequate monitoring							.04	.91	1.21	
Harsh punishment							.06	1.23	1.11	
Total R ²	.04*			.22***			.27**			
Adjusted R ²	.02			.21			.24			
F change	3.15*			39.94***			4.002**			
R ² change	.04*			.19***			.05**			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor. *p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 47

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles, Parents' Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior							
	Background Variables Block 1			Conflict Styles Block 2			Parents' Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Block 3	
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	Std error
Youth age	.07	1.30	.96	.07	1.31	.89	.03	.84
Youth gender	.18***	3.19	.94	.18***	3.24	.87	.12*	.85
Parent's marital status	.16**	4.20	1.43	.13**	3.44	1.34	.12*	1.26
Poverty status	.10	2.61	1.45	.02	.41	1.38	.02	1.29
Covert conflict style				.27***	4.29	.94	.09	.95
Overt conflict style				.15**	2.18	.85	.08	.82
Psychological intrusion							.12*	.89
Intraparental inconsistency							.21***	1.30
Low warmth/support							.03	1.06
Inadequate monitoring							.09***	1.05
Harsh punishment							.05	.96
Total R ²	.07***			.20***			.32***	
Adjusted R ²	.06			.19			.30	
F change	6.29***			27.12***			11.41***	
R ² change	.07			.13***			.12***	

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor. *p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

(parents' psychological intrusion regressed on a covert interparental conflict style) with the second half of the pathway (youth problem behavior regressed on a covert interparental conflict style and parents' psychological intrusion), the path was not strong enough to hold up ($t = 1.72$, $p > .05$). Although the t -value approaches significance, the value falls short of the critical value at the .05 significance level. Overt interparental conflict was unrelated to parents' psychological intrusion, therefore psychological intrusion could not function as an intervening variable. These results replicated when internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior were analyzed as separate measures.

Parents' Intraparental Inconsistency

Parents' inconsistency was associated positively with a covert interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior forming a pathway from a covert interparental conflict style to parents' inconsistency to total youth problem behavior. The direct association between a covert interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior remained significant after the hypothesized mediator, parents' inconsistency, was entered into the analysis. Thus, evidence indicated that parents' inconsistency produced an indirect effect. Parents' inconsistency transmitted part of the effect of overall interparental conflict on total youth problem behavior. Based on the results of the moderating analyses, the indirect pathway from covert interparental conflict style to parents' inconsistency to total youth problem behavior was stronger for daughters than sons and for early adolescents than pre-adolescents because the leg between

covert interparental conflict and parents' inconsistency was stronger.

Parents' inconsistency was associated positively with overt interparental conflict style (Beta = .11, $p < .05$) and total youth problem behavior (Beta = .18, $p < .01$). The direct association between overt interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior become nonsignificant when parents' inconsistency was entered into the analysis, evidenced by the drop in Beta for overt interparental conflict style (from .12, $p < .001$ to .05, $p > .05$). Thus, parents' inconsistency fully mediated the relationship between overt interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior. This mediating pathway was similar for daughters and sons, pre- and early adolescents, youth who lived with mother only and those who lived with both parents, and poor and less poor families.

The indirect pathway for parents' inconsistency in the relationship between a covert interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior and the mediating pathway for the association between overt interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior through parents' inconsistency replicated for externalizing youth problem behavior. For internalizing youth problem behavior, parents' intraparental inconsistency functioned as an intervening variable in the relationship between a covert interparental conflict style and internalizing youth problem behavior, but not for overt interparental conflict and internalizing youth problem behavior because overt interparental conflict was unrelated to internalizing youth problem behavior.

Parents' Low Warmth/Support

Parents' low warmth/support was not associated with a covert interparental conflict style nor total youth problem behavior, although it was associated with overt interparental conflict style. Thus, parents' low warmth/support did not explain the relationship between interparental conflict styles and total youth problem behavior.

These results replicated for internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior.

Parents' Inadequate Behavior Monitoring

Parents' inadequate monitoring was associated with a covert interparental conflict style and with total youth problem behavior. The direct association between a covert interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior remained significant after parents' inadequate behavior monitoring was entered into the analysis. Evidence indicated that parents' monitoring did not produce a complete mediating effect, but suggested an indirect effect. However, follow-up analyses with Sobel's equation showed that when integrating results from the first half of the pathway (parents' inadequate monitoring regressed on a covert interparental conflict style) with the second half of the pathway (youth problem behavior regressed on a covert interparental conflict style and parents' inadequate monitoring), the path was not strong enough to hold up ($t = 1.50$, $p > .05$). Overt interparental conflict was unrelated to parents' inadequate monitoring and therefore could not function as an intervening variable. These results

replicated when internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior were analyzed as separate measures.

Parents' Harsh Punishment

Although parents' harsh punishment was associated with overt interparental conflict style, it was not associated with a covert interparental conflict style nor with total youth problem behavior, precluding the possibility of parents' harsh punishment functioning as an intervening variable. These results replicated when internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior were analyzed as separate measures.

In summary, the path between a covert interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior is not only direct, but also indirect through parents' intraparental inconsistency. This indirect pathway also was found in the analyses with externalizing youth problem behavior. In addition, parents' intraparental inconsistency is a complete mediator in the relationship between overt interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior and overt interparental conflict and externalizing youth problem behavior. Parents' intraparental inconsistency is the only parenting behavior which functioned strongly both as a mediator and an intervening variable in the relationships between a covert interparental conflict style and overt interparental conflict and youth problem behavior.

Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Style, Mother's/Father's Specific
Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Youth Problem Behavior

These regression equations were calculated to test for parenting behavior differences between mothers and fathers in the context of covert and overt interparental conflict styles and youth problem behavior (see Figures 34 through 39). (Refer to Tables 48 through 57 for the first half of the pathways and Tables 58, 59, and 60 for the second half of the pathways.) When mother's and father's parenting behaviors were examined separately, differences arose for inconsistency, inadequate monitoring, and harsh punishment.

Mother's/Father's Psychological Intrusion

Mother's psychological intrusion was associated positively with a covert interparental conflict style but was not associated with total youth problem behavior, precluding mother's psychological intrusion from functioning as an intervening variable.

Father's psychological intrusion was associated positively with a covert interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior. The direct association between a covert interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior remained significant after father's psychological intrusion was entered into the analysis. Evidence indicated that father's psychological intrusion did not produce a complete mediating effect, but suggested an indirect effect. However, follow-up analyses with Sobel's equation showed that when integrating results from the first half of the pathway (Text continued on p. 187.)

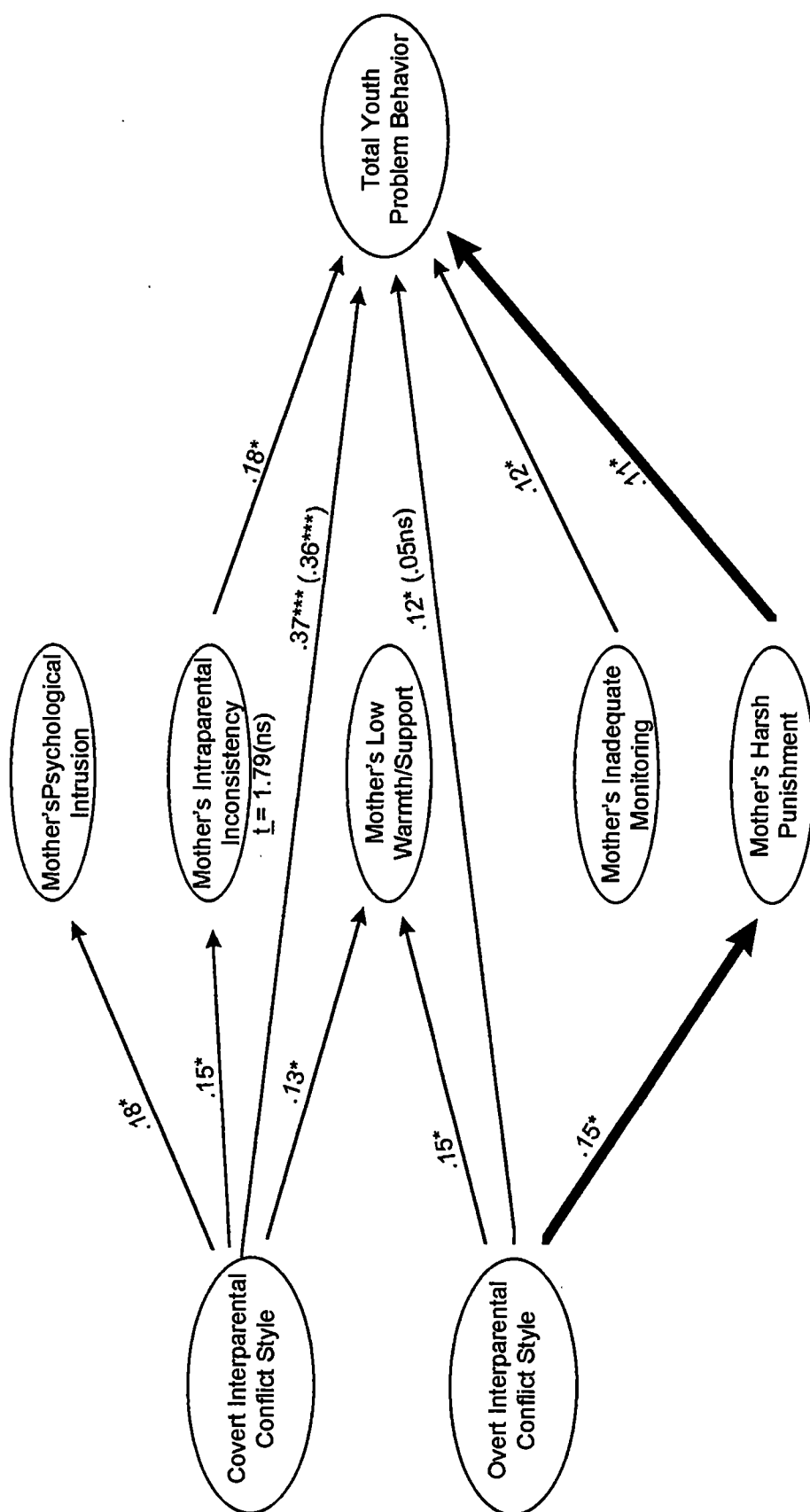


Figure 34. Model of Mother's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Total Youth Problem Behavior ($N = 337$).
 Note. Values in parentheses are the standardized regression coefficients for the direct effect of covert and overt interparental conflict styles after disrupted parenting is considered. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

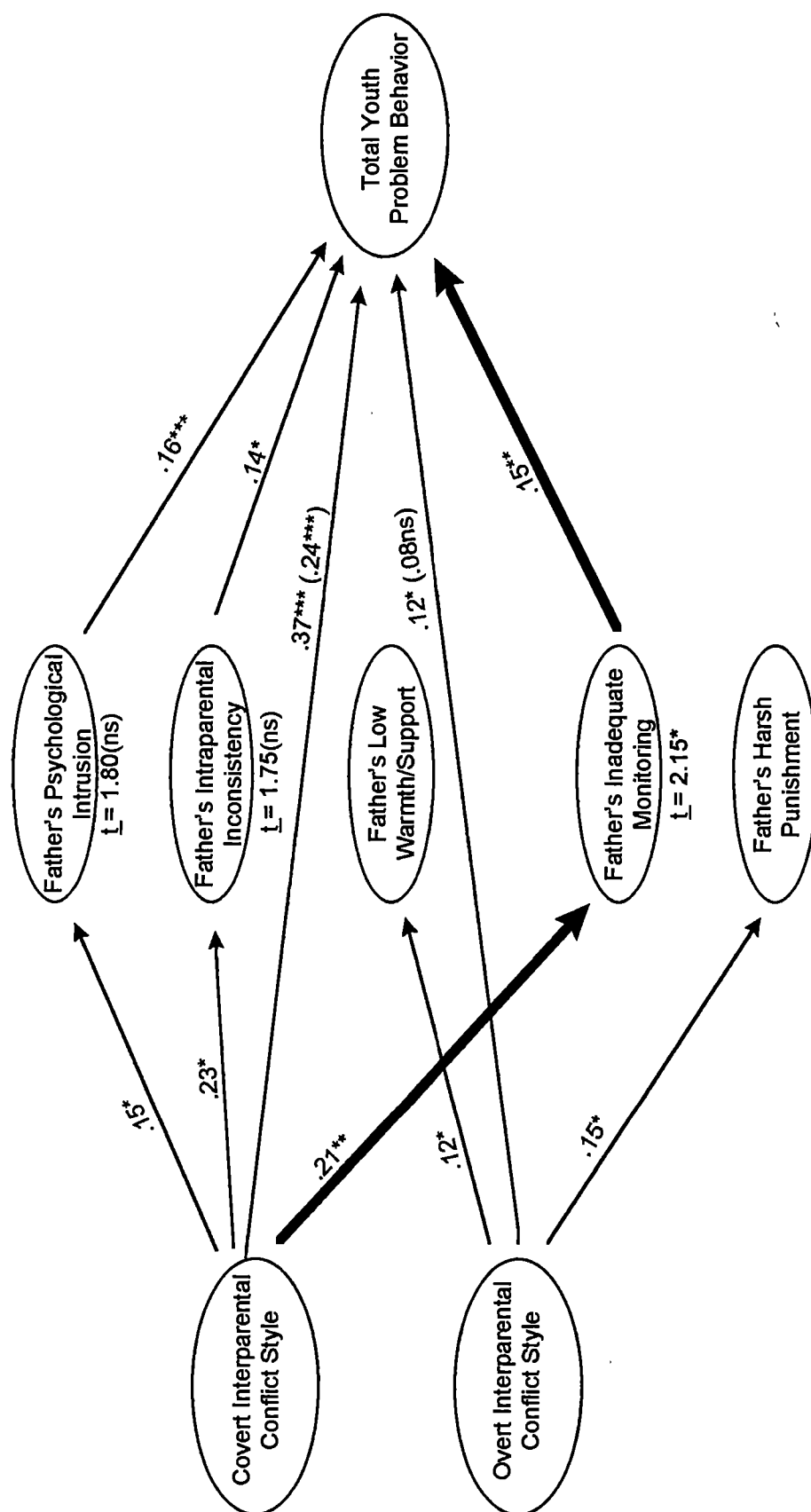


Figure 35. Model of Father's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Total Youth Problem Behavior ($N = 337$).
 Note. Values in parentheses are the standardized regression coefficients for the direct effect of covert and overt interparental conflict styles after disrupted parenting is considered. $*p < .05$ $**p < .01$ $***p < .001$

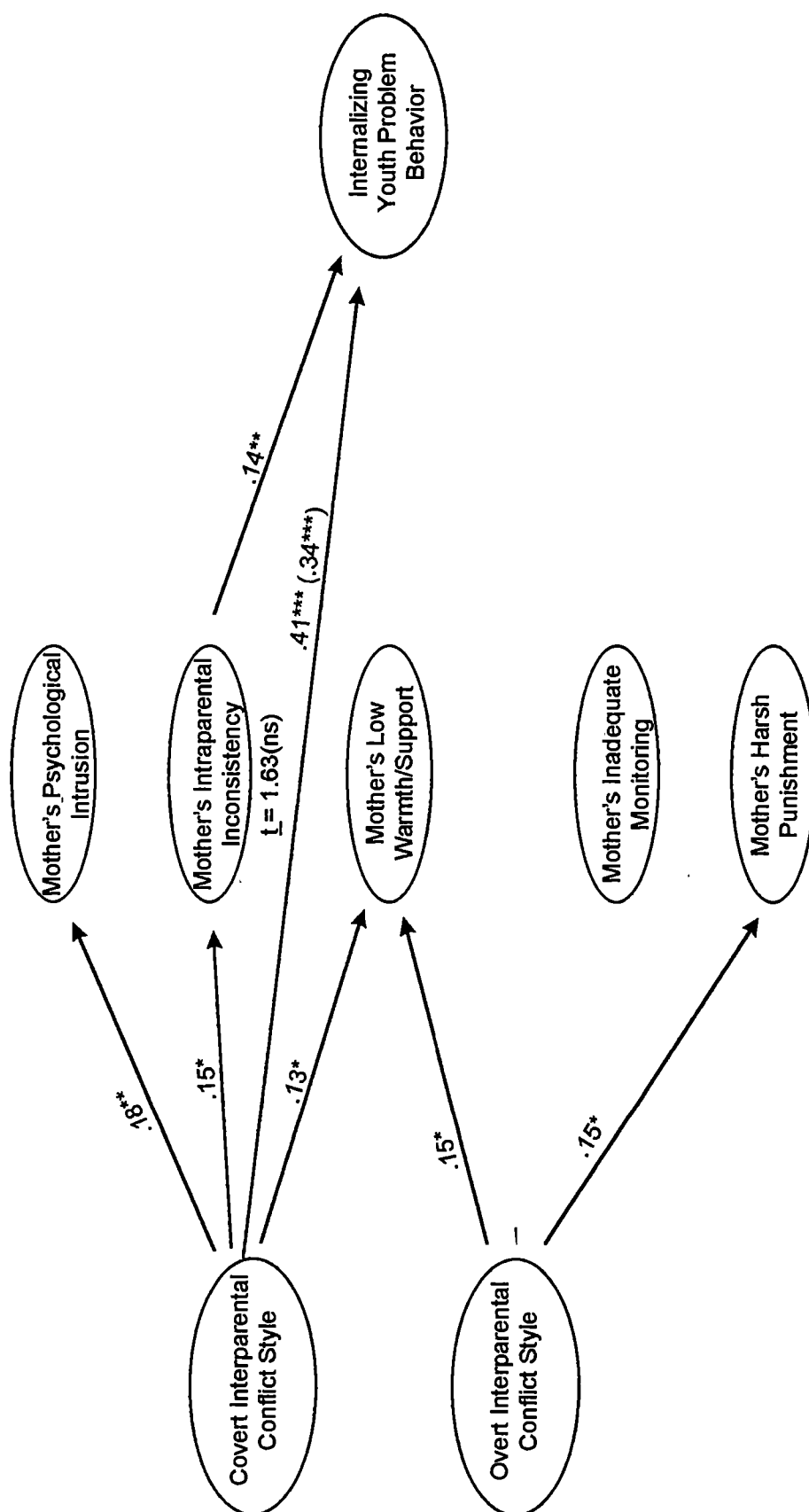


Figure 36. Model of Mother's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior ($N = 337$).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of covert interparental conflict style after inconsistency is considered. $^*p < .05$ $^{**}p < .01$ $^{***}p < .001$

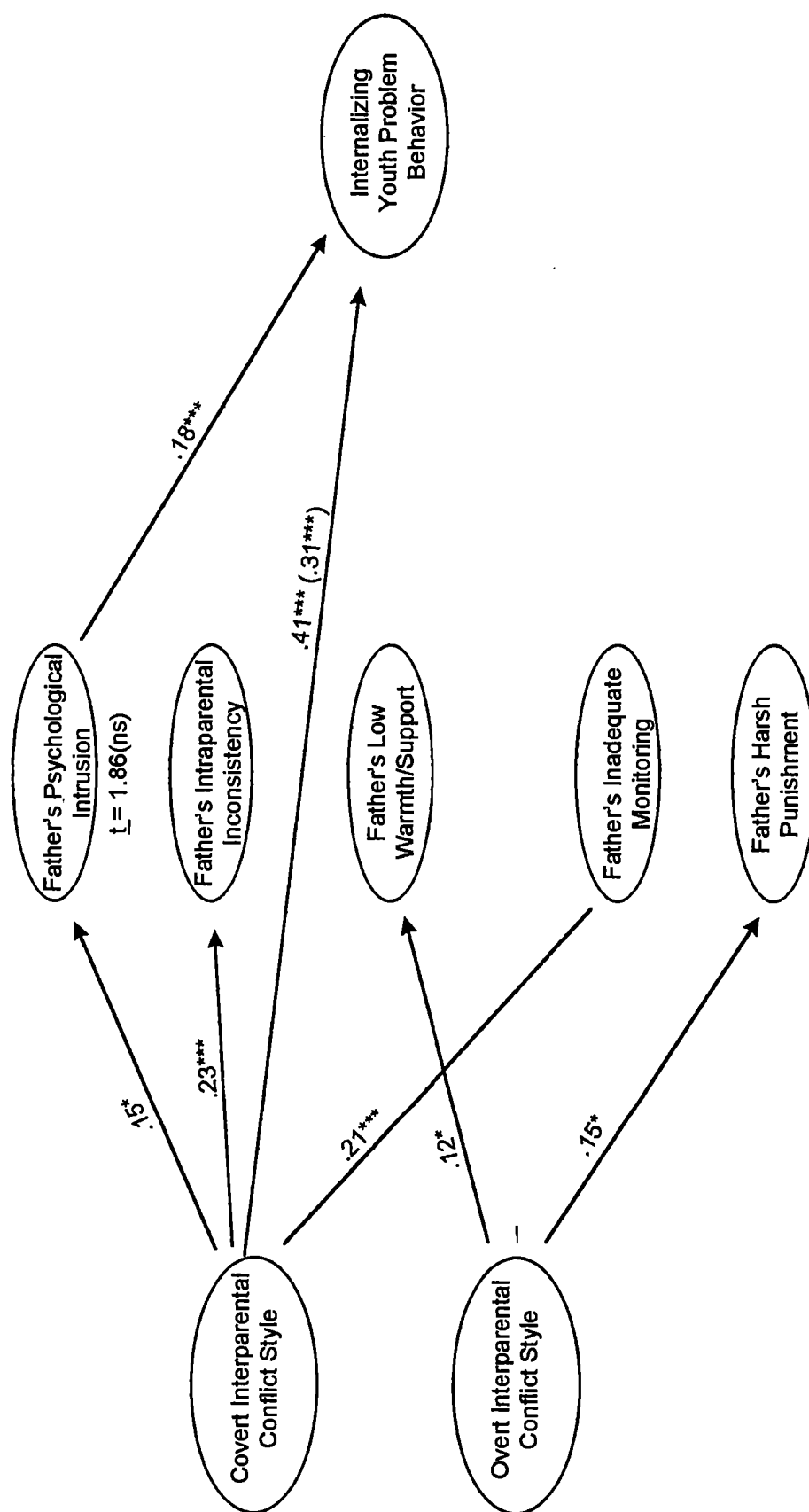


Figure 37. Model of Father's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior ($N = 337$).

Note. Value in parenthesis is the standardized regression coefficient for the direct effect of covert interparental conflict style after psychological intrusion is considered. $*p < .05$ $**p < .01$ $***p < .001$

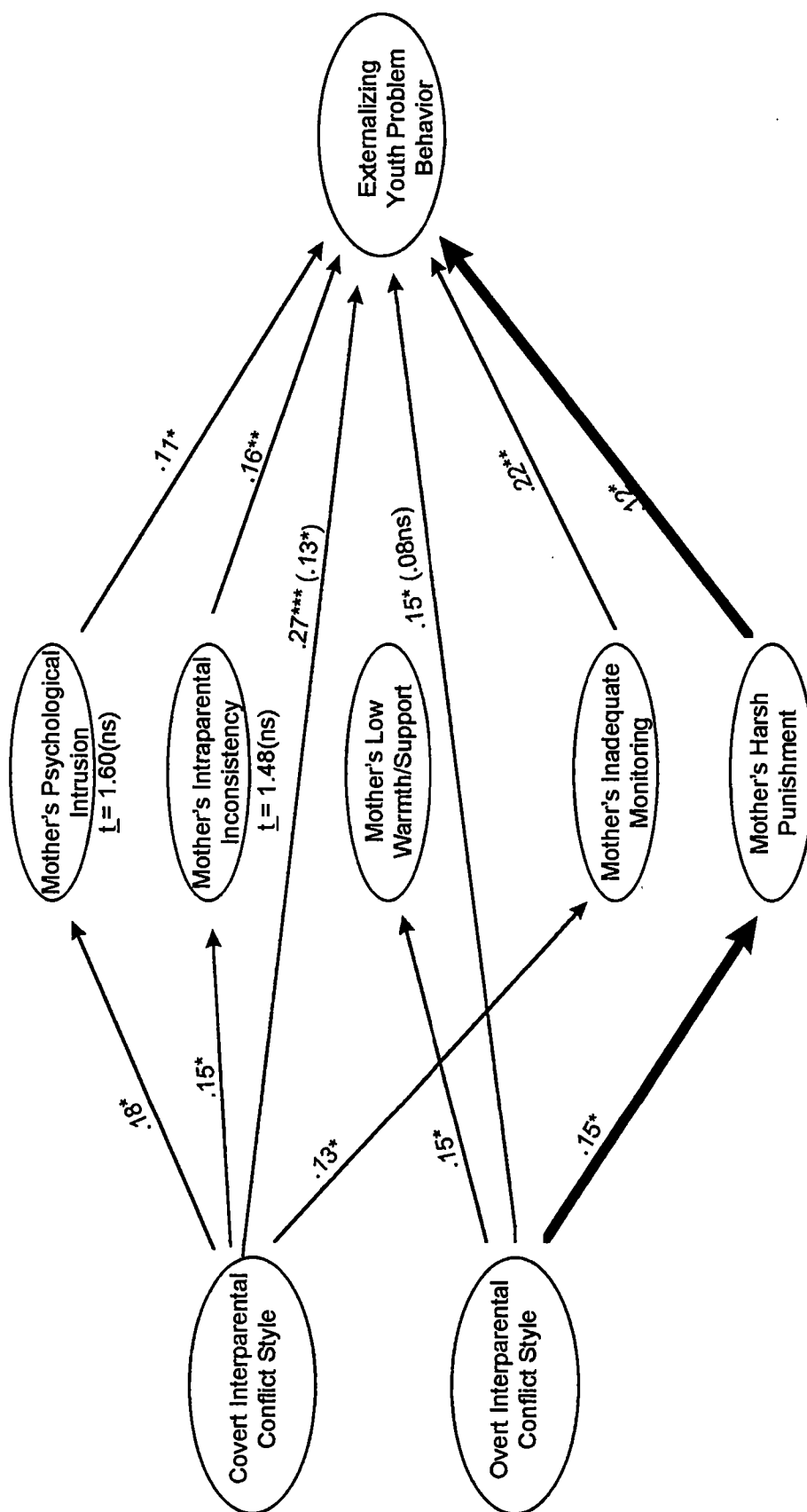


Figure 38. Model of Mother's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior ($N = 337$).
 Note. Values in parentheses are the standardized regression coefficients for the direct effect of covert and overt interparental conflict styles after disrupted parenting is considered. $^*p < .05$ $^{**}p < .01$ $^{***}p < .001$

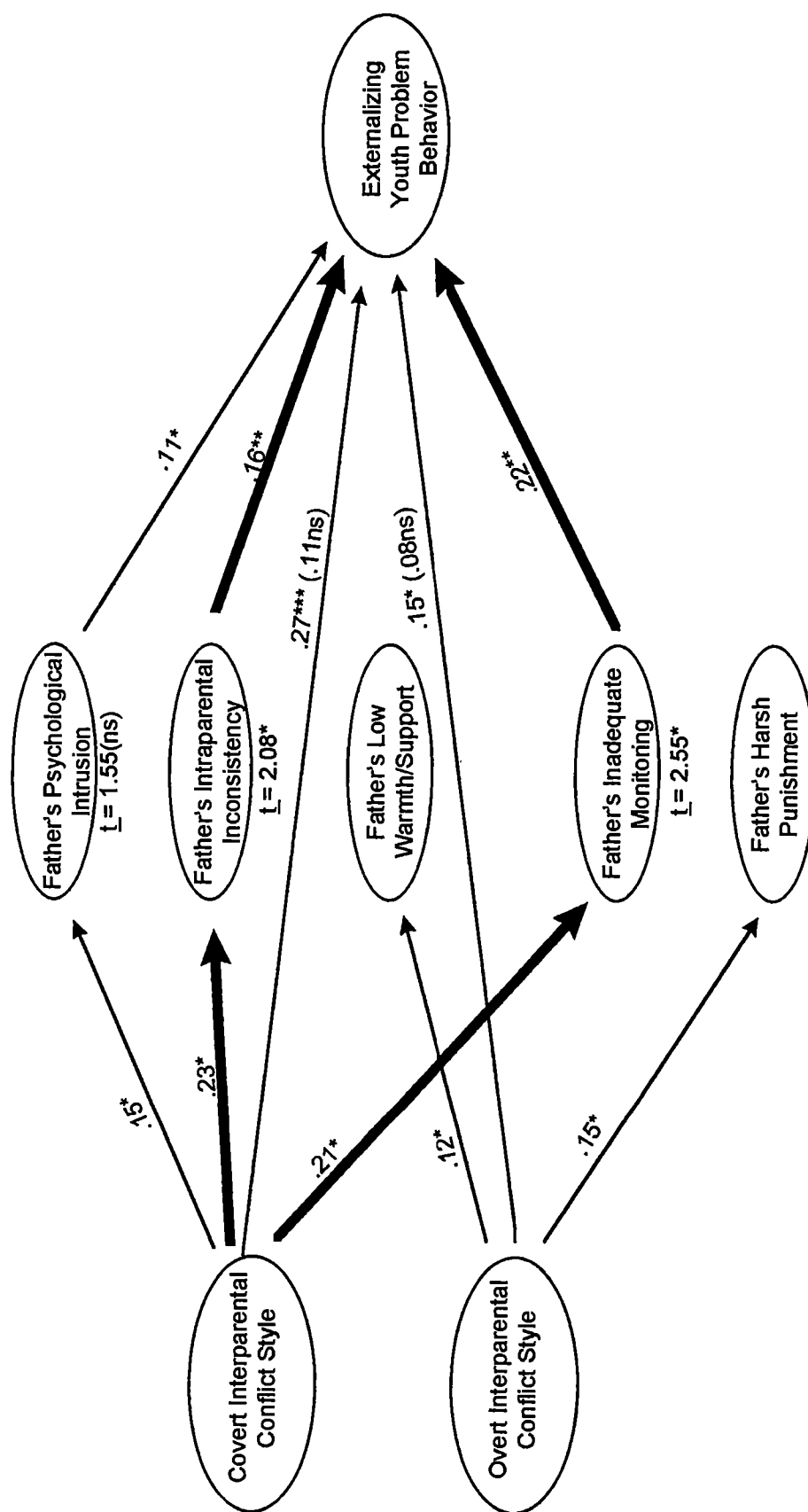


Figure 39. Model of Father's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors Explaining the Association Between Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior (N = 337).
 Note. Values in parentheses are the standardized regression coefficients for the direct effect of covert and overt interparental conflict styles after disrupted parenting is considered. $^*p < .05$ $^{**}p < .01$ $^{***}p < .001$

Table 48
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Mother's Psychological Intrusion

	Mother's Psychological Intrusion									
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Conflict Styles Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	-.02	-.02	.07	-.07	-.08	.06	-.06	-.06	.06	
Youth gender	.08	.10	.07	.07	-.08	.06	.07	.094	.06	
Parent's marital status	.04	.07	.10	.002	.004	.09	.002	.004	.09	
Poverty status	.02	.03	.10	-.004	-.007	.09	-.03	-.05	.10	
Inconsistency				.31***	.42	.07	.27***	.36	.08	
Low warmth/support				-.04	-.06	.07	-.07	-.09	.07	
Inadequate monitoring				.09	.11	.07	.06	.08	.07	
Harsh punishment				.14**	.17	.07	.12*	.15	.07	
Covert conflict style							.18*	.19	.07	
Overt conflict style							.02*	-.01	.06	
Total R ²	.01			.16***			.18*			
Adjusted R ²	-.003			.14			.16			
F change	.71			14.53***			4.39*			
R ² change	.01			.15***			.02*			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 49
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Father's Psychological Intrusion

	Father's Psychological Intrusion								
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Conflict Styles Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	-.04	-.04	.06	-.07	-.08	.06	-.06	-.07	.06
Youth gender	.16**	.18	.06	.13*	.15	.06	.14**	.16	.06
Parent's marital status	-.07	-.12	.10	-.02	-.03	.09	-.02	-.03	.09
Poverty status	.02	.02	.10	-.04	-.07	.09	-.04	-.07	.09
Inconsistency				.33***	.43	.07	.30***	.39	.08
Low warmth/support				-.10	-.10	.06	-.09	-.09	.06
Inadequate monitoring				-.01	-.01	.07	-.03	-.03	.08
Harsh punishment				.14*	.14	.05	.14*	.13	.05
Covert conflict style							.15*	.16	.07
Overt conflict style							-.10	-.09	.06
Total R ²	.03*			.18***			.20*		
Adjusted R ²	.02			.16			.17		
F change	2.89*			14.78***			3.05*		
R ² change	.03*			.15***			.02*		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 50
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Mother's Intraparental Inconsistency

	Mother's Intraparental Inconsistency									
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Conflict Styles Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.13*	.11	.05	.09	.08	.04	.10*	.08	.04	
Youth gender	-.04	-.04	.05	-.13**	-.11	.04	-.11*	-.10	.04	
Parent's marital status	.06	.07	.07	.002	.002	.07	-.004	-.05	.06	
Poverty status	.06	.07	.08	.04	.05	.07	-.005	-.07	.07	
Psychological intrusion				.27***	.20	.04	.23***	.18	.04	
Low warmth/support				.22***	.21	.05	.16**	.16	.05	
Inadequate monitoring				.17**	.16	.05	.14*	.13	.05	
Harsh punishment				.18**	.17	.05	.15*	.12	.05	
Covert conflict style							.15*	.12	.05	
Overt conflict style							.08*	.06	.04	
Total R ²	.02			.27***			.31***			
Adjusted R ²	.01			.26			.28			
F change	.02			28.29***			7.31***			
R ² change	1.95			.25***			.03***			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 51
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Father's Intraparental Inconsistency

	Father's Intraparental Inconsistency								
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Conflict Styles Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.08	.07	.05	.04	.04	.04	.06	.05	.04
Youth gender	.04	.04	.05	-.08	-.07	.05	-.04	-.03	.04
Parent's marital status	-.05	-.06	.07	-.06	-.07	.07	-.07	-.09	.07
Poverty status	.18**	.23	.08	.13**	.18	.07	.08	.11	.07
Psychological intrusion				.30***	.23	.04	.235**	.20	.04
Low warmth/support				.14**	.11	.04	.11*	.09	.04
Inadequate monitoring				.13*	.13	.05	.05	.05	.05
Harsh punishment				.23***	.17	.04	.17***	.13	.04
Covert conflict style							.23***	.19	.05
Overt conflict style							.09	.07	.04
Total R ²	.03*			.26***			.32***		
Adjusted R ²	.02			.24			.30		
F change	2.67*			25.04***			15.71***		
R ² change	.03*			.23***			.07***		

Note: N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 52
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Mother's Low Warmth/Support

	Mother's Low Warmth/Support									
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Conflict Styles Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.08	.07	.05	.02	.02	.05	.03	.03	.05	
Youth gender	.04	.04	.05	-.01	-.01	.05	.001	.01	.05	
Parent's marital status	.03	.07	.08	-.04	-.06	.07	-.05	-.07	.07	
Poverty status	.04	.05	.08	.02	.02	.07	-.04	-.05	.07	
Psychological intrusion				-.04	-.03	.04	-.07**	-.05	.04	
Intraparental inconsistency				.24***	.25	.06	.18**	.18	.06	
Inadequate monitoring				.35***	.34	.05	.30***	.29	.05	
Harsh punishment				-.06	-.06	.05	-.09	-.09	.05	
Covert conflict style							.13*	.11	.05	
Overt conflict style							.15*	.11	.04	
Total R ²	.01			.21***			.25***			
Adjusted R ²	-.003			.19			.23			
F change	.71			20.70***			9.27***			
R ² change	.01			.20***			.04***			

Note: N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 53
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Father's Low Warmth/Support

	Father's Low Warmth/Support									
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Conflict Styles Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.11*	.12	.06	.07	.08	.06	.07	.08	.06	
Youth gender	.05	.05	.06	-.01	-.05	.06	-.002	-.02	.06	
Parent's marital status	.25***	.40	.09	-.21***	.33	.08	.19***	.32	.08	
Poverty status	.12*	.19	.09	.08	.13	.09	.07	.11	.09	
Psychological intrusion				-.09	-.09	.05	-.09	-.08	.05	
Intraparental inconsistency				.15**	.18	.07	.13*	.16	.07	
Inadequate monitoring				.30***	.36	.06	.29***	.35	.07	
Harsh punishment				-.01	-.01	.05	-.03	-.02	.05	
Covert conflict style							-.04	-.04	.06	
Overt conflict style							.12*	.11	.05	
Total R ²	.09***			.21***			.22			
Adjusted R ²	.08			.19			.19			
F change	8.21***			12.21***			2.08			
R ² change	.09***			.12***			.01			

Note: N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 54
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Mother's Inadequate Behavior Monitoring

	Mother's Inadequate Behavior Monitoring									
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Conflict Styles Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.10	.10	.05	.08	.05	.05	.07	.06	.05	
Youth gender	.21***	.20	.05	.20***	.19	.05	.20***	.19	.05	
Parent's marital status	.16**	.23	.08	.15**	.21	.07	.14**	.20	.07	
Poverty status	.02	.03	.08	-.001	.001	.07	-.03	-.04	.07	
Psychological intrusion				.08	.06	.04	.06	.05	.04	
Intraparental inconsistency				.18***	.19	.06	.14*	.15	.06	
Low warmth/support				.32***	.33	.05	.29***	.30	.05	
Harsh punishment				-.05	-.05	.05	-.07	-.07	.05	
Covert conflict style							.12	.10	.05	
Overt conflict style							.03	.03	.05	
Total R ²	.07***			.26***			.27*			
Adjusted R ²	.06			.24			.25			
F change	6.43***			20.42***			3.00*			
R ² change	.07***			.19***			.01*			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 55

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Father's Inadequate Behavior Monitoring

	Father's Inadequate Behavior Monitoring									
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Conflict Styles Block 3			
	B	b	Std error	B	b	Std error	B	b	Std error	
Youth age	.07	.06	.05	.01	.01	.05	.03	.02	.05	
Youth gender	.22***	.20	.05	.19***	.16	.05	.20***	.18	.04	
Parent's marital status	.13*	.17	.07	.07	.10	.07	.05	.07	.07	
Poverty status	.03	.04	.07	-.04	-.05	.07	-.07	-.09	.07	
Psychological intrusion				-.01	-.004	.04	.02	-.02	.04	
Intraparental inconsistency				.14*	.14	.06	.06	.06	.06	
Low warmth/support				.30***	.25	.04	.27***	.22	.04	
Harsh punishment				.11*	.06	.04	.07	.06	.04	
Covert conflict style							.21***	.17	.05	
Overt conflict style							.07	.05	.04	
Total R ²	.06***			.21***			.25***			
Adjusted R ²	.05			.19			.23			
F change	5.65***			14.59***			10.42***			
R ² change	.06***			.14***			.05*			

Note: N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 56
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Mother's Harsh Punishment

	Mother's Harsh Punishment									
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Conflict Styles Block 3			
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	
Youth age	.06	.06	.05	.05	.04	.05	.05	.05	.05	
Youth gender	.09	.08	.05	.10	.09	.05	.10	.10	.05	
Parent's marital status	.06	.09	.08	.06	.08	.08	.04	.06	.08	
Poverty status	.01	.01	.08	-.004	-.01	.08	-.04	.06	.08	
Psychological intrusion				.15**	.12	.05	.13*	.10	.05	
Intraparental inconsistency				.22***	.24	.06	.18**	.20	.07	
Low warmth/support				-.07	-.07	.06	-.11*	-.11	.06	
Inadequate monitoring				-.06	-.06	.06	-.08	-.08	.06	
Covert conflict style							.05	.04	.06	
Overt conflict style							.15*	.12	.05	
Total R ²	.01			.10***			.12*			
Adjusted R ²	.001			.08			.10			
F change	1.12			7.64***			4.60*			
R ² change	.01			.08***			.03*			

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 57
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles and Father's Harsh Punishment

	Father's Harsh Punishment							
	Background Variables Block 1			Other Parenting Behaviors Block 2			Conflict Styles Block 3	
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b
Youth age	.12*	.14	.07	.09*	.11	.06	.10	.12
Youth gender	.17**	.20	.06	.11*	.13	.06	.12*	.14
Parent's marital status	-.09	-.16	.10	-.08	-.14	.09	-.09	-.16
Poverty status	.07	.13	.10	.02	.04	.09	-.01	-.01
Psychological intrusion				.14*	.14	.06	.14*	.14
Intraparental inconsistency				.25***	.33	.07	.20***	.26
Low warmth/support				-.01	-.01	.06	-.03*	-.03
Inadequate monitoring				.12*	.15	.07	.08	.10
Covert conflict style							.05	.06
Overt conflict style							.15*	.14
Total R ²	.05**			.18***			.20**	
Adjusted R ²	.04			.16			.18	
F change	4.33**			12.90***			4.79**	
R ² change	.05**			.13***			.02*	

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor.

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 58

Hierarchical Regression Analyses of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles, Mother's/Father's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Total Youth Problem Behavior

	Total Youth Problem Behavior											
	Background Variables Block 1			Conflict Styles Block 2			Mother's Parenting Block 3			Father's Parenting Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.07	2.32	1.89	.07	2.44	1.70	.03	1.12	1.66	.03	1.12	1.65
Youth gender	.09	3.04	1.86	.09	3.20	1.62	.05	1.84	1.66	.02	.81	1.68
Parent's marital status	.17**	8.54	2.84	.14**	6.97	2.56	.11*	5.38	2.49	.13**	6.76	2.54
Poverty status	.10	5.13	2.87	.01	.30	2.65	.03	1.35	2.55	.002	.12	2.55
Covert conflict style				.37***	11.63	1.81	.26***	8.22	1.85	.24***	7.45	1.87
Overt conflict style				.12*	3.28	1.62	.05	1.51	1.60	.08	2.17	1.60
Psychological intrusion							.07	1.89	1.49	.16***	4.85	1.52
Inconsistency							.16**	6.21	2.14	.14*	5.20	2.14
Low warmth/support							.01	.19	1.97	.05	1.67	1.64
Inadequate monitoring							.15***	5.35	1.95	.15**	5.92	2.04
Harsh punishment							.11*	4.04	1.80	-.001	-.19	1.50
Total R ²	.05**			.24***			.31***			.32***		
Adjusted R ²	.04			.22			.29			.29		
F change	4.44**			40.45***			7.11***			7.51***		
R ² change	.05**			.19***			.08***			.08***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor. *p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 59

Hierarchical Regression Analyses of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles, Mother's/Father's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	Internalizing Youth Problem Behavior											
	Background Variables Block 1			Conflict Styles Block 2			Mother's Parenting Block 3			Father's Parenting Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.05	1.00	1.09	.06	1.10	.98	.03	.52	.98	.04	.83	.87
Youth gender	-.01	-.22	1.07	-.01	-.10	.96	-.02	-.44	1.00	-.06	-1.18	.99
Parent's marital status	.14**	4.23	1.63	.12*	3.44	1.48	.10*	2.95	1.48	.11**	3.30	1.49
Poverty status	.10	2.79	1.66	.01	.19	1.53	.02	.57	1.51	.004	.12	1.50
Covert conflict style				.41***	7.30	1.04	.34***	6.07	1.10	.31***	5.59	1.10
Overt conflict style				.07	1.04	.94	.02	.31	.95	.04	.65	.94
Psychological intrusion							.01	.24	.88	.18***	3.10	.89
Inconsistency							.14**	3.04	1.27	.06	1.30	1.26
Low warmth/support							.01	.20	1.17	.08	1.41	.97
Inadequate monitoring							.07	1.35	1.16	.07	1.64	1.20
Harsh punishment							.09	1.85	1.07	.01	.19	.88
Total R ²	.04*			.22***			.26*			.28***		
Adjusted R ²	.03			.21			.23			.25		
F change	3.15*			39.95***			3.03*			4.69***		
R ² change	.04**			.19***			.04*			.05***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1-divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor. *p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Table 60

Hierarchical Regression Analyses of Youth Perceptions of Covert and Overt Interparental Conflict Styles, Mother's/Father's Specific Disrupted Parenting Behaviors, and Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior

	Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior											
	Background Variables Block 1			Conflict Styles Block 2			Mother's Parenting Block 3			Father's Parenting Block 3		
	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error	Beta	b	Std error
Youth age	.07	1.30	.96	.08	1.31	.89	.03	.47	.84	.05	.82	.85
Youth gender	.18***	3.19	.94	.18***	3.24	.87	.13***	2.23	.85	.11*	1.93	.87
Parent's marital status	.16**	4.20	1.43	.13*	3.44	1.34	.09	2.34	1.27	.13*	3.32	1.31
Poverty status	.10	2.61	1.45	.02	.41	1.39	.04	1.08	1.30	.01	.30	1.32
Covert conflict style				.27***	4.29	.95	.13*	2.12	.94	.11	1.83	1.00
Overt conflict style				.15**	2.18	.85	.08	1.15	.81	.10	1.46	.82
Psychological intrusion							.11*	1.61	.76	.12*	1.80	.78
Inconsistency							.16**	2.23	1.10	.20***	3.84	1.11
Low warmth/support							-.002	-.04	1.00	.02	.37	.85
Inadequate monitoring							.22***	3.98	.00	.22***	4.22	1.05
Harsh punishment							.12*	2.14	.92	-.02	-.24	.77
Total R ²	.07***			.20***			.32*			.30***		
Adjusted R ²	.06			.19			.29			.28		
F change	6.30***			27.12***			10.82***			9.33***		
R ² change	.06***			.13***			.11***			.10***		

Note. N = 337. Youth age: 0=preadolescent, 1=early adolescent. Youth gender: 0=male, 1=female. Parent's marital status: 0=married, 1=divorced/separated. Poverty status: 0=less poor, 1=more poor. *p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

(father's psychological intrusion regressed on a covert interparental conflict style) with the second half of the pathway (youth problem behavior regressed on a covert interparental conflict style and father's psychological intrusion), the path was not strong enough to hold up ($t = 1.80$, $p > .05$). Overt interparental conflict was unrelated to mother's or father's psychological intrusion, precluding psychological intrusion from functioning as an intervening variable in the model for mothers or fathers.

The results replicated when internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior were analyzed as separate measures.

Mother's/Father's Intraparental Inconsistency

Mother's inconsistency and father's inconsistency were associated with a covert interparental conflict style and positively associated with total youth problem behavior. The direct associations between a covert interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior remained significant after mother's inconsistency and father's inconsistency were entered into their respective equations. Evidence indicated that neither mother's inconsistency nor father's inconsistency produced a complete mediating effect, but suggested an indirect effect. However, follow-up analyses with Sobel's equation showed that when integrating results from the first half of the pathway (inconsistency regressed on a covert interparental conflict style) with the second half of the pathway (youth problem behavior regressed on a covert interparental conflict style and inconsistency), that neither path for mothers' or fathers' model was strong

enough to hold up ($t = 1.79$, $p > .05$ and $t = 1.75$, $p > .05$, respectively). Although the t-values approach significance, the value falls short of the critical value at the .05 significance level.

Overt interparental conflict was unrelated to mother's or father's intraparental inconsistency, therefore mediating analyses were not conducted.

The results replicated when internalizing youth problem behavior was analyzed separately. Although the data suggested an indirect effect for both mother's and father's models, follow-up analyses with Sobel's equation indicated the paths were not strong enough to hold up ($t = 1.63$, $p < .05$; $t = 1.86$, $p > .05$, respectively). Thus, in regard to inconsistency, no differences arose between mothers and fathers with respect to total and internalizing youth problem behaviors. However, when analyzing externalizing youth problem behavior, father's inconsistency in conjunction with father's inadequate behavior monitoring completely mediated the relationship between a covert interparental conflict style and externalizing youth problem behavior. The mediating pathway from a covert interparental conflict style to father's inconsistency to externalizing youth problem behavior was stronger for adolescents than pre-adolescents and for youth from less poor than more poor families. In the model for mothers, inconsistency did not play an intervening role.

Mother's/Father's Low Warmth/Support

Mother's low warmth/support was associated positively with a covert interparental conflict style and overt interparental conflict but was not

associated with total youth problem behavior, so mother's low warmth/support could not function as an intervening variable. These findings replicated in the model for fathers. Also, the results replicated when analyzing internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior as separate measures.

Mother's/Father's Inadequate Behavior Monitoring

Mother's inadequate monitoring was not associated with a covert interparental conflict style nor with overt interparental conflict, although it was associated positively with total youth problem behavior. In the absence of associations between interparental conflict styles and inadequate monitoring, inadequate monitoring cannot function in the role of an intervening variable. The results replicated when analyzing internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior as separate measures.

Father's inadequate monitoring was associated positively with a covert interparental conflict style ($\text{Beta} = .21$, $p < .001$) and with total youth problem behavior ($\text{Beta} = .15$, $p < .01$). Each point increase in the measure of father's inadequate monitoring resulted in an increase of 5.92 total youth problem behavior. The direct association between a covert interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior remained significant after the hypothesized mediator, father's inadequate monitoring, was entered into the analysis. Thus, evidence indicated that father's inadequate monitoring does not produce a complete mediating effect, but an indirect effect. Father's inadequate monitoring transmitted part of the effect of a covert interparental conflict style on total youth

problem behavior. Based on the results of the moderating analyses, this indirect pathway was stronger for daughters than for sons and for youth from mother-only families than for youth from two-parent families because the leg between covert interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior was stronger. These results replicated when analyzing internalizing youth problem behavior as a separate measure. However, father's inadequate monitoring—in conjunction with father's inconsistency---completely mediated the association between covert interparental conflict style and externalizing youth problem behavior. The mediating pathway was stronger for daughters than for sons and for youth from mother-only families than for youth from two-parent families because the leg between covert interparental conflict and externalizing youth problem behavior was stronger.

Neither mother's nor father's inadequate monitoring was associated with overt interparental conflict , which precluded inadequate monitoring from functioning in the role of an intervening variable.

Mother's/Father's Harsh Punishment

Mother's harsh punishment was unrelated to covert interparental conflict style although it was associated positively with total youth problem behavior. Father's harsh punishment was unrelated to covert interparental conflict style or total youth problem behavior. In the absence of associations between covert interparental conflict style and harsh punishment, harsh punishment could not function in the role of an intervening variable. These results replicated when

analyzing internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior as separate measures.

Mother's harsh punishment was associated positively with overt interparental conflict ($\text{Beta} = .15, p < .05$) and total youth problem behavior ($\text{Beta} = .11, p < .05$). Mother's harsh punishment completely mediated the association between overt interparental conflict and total youth problem behavior, shown by the overt interparental conflict Beta coefficient drop from .12 ($p < .05$) to .08 ($p > .05$). This path was similar for pre- and early adolescents, daughters and sons, youth from mother-only families and two-parent families, and youth from less poor and more poor families. These results replicated when analyzing externalizing youth problem behavior as a separate measure, but the indirect pathway was stronger for youth from mother-only than two-parent families because the leg between mother's harsh punishment and externalizing youth problem behaviors was stronger.

Because overt interparental conflict is unrelated to internalizing youth problem behavior, harsh punishment could not function as an intervening variable.

Father's harsh punishment was associated positively with overt interparental conflict but was unrelated to total youth problem behavior, therefore could not function as an intervening variable. These results replicated when analyzing internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior as separate measures.

Summary

In summary, youth perceptions of parents' disrupted parenting intervened in the relationship between youth perceptions of overall interparental conflict and youth problem behavior. Youth perceptions of mother's disrupted parenting and father's disrupted parenting functioned similarly with few exceptions. When youth perceptions of overall interparental conflict was broken apart into covert interparental conflict style and overt interparental conflict style, and when separately analyzing youth perceptions of specific maternal and paternal disrupted parenting behaviors, the model for mothers and the model for fathers shared mostly similarities and a few differences.

For the relationship between total youth problem behavior and covert interparental conflict, the model for mothers and the model for fathers were similar in that four of the disrupted parenting behaviors did not function as intervening variables. One difference arose regarding youth perceptions of inadequate behavior monitoring. Mother's inadequate monitoring did not intervene in the relationship between covert interparental conflict style and total youth problem behavior, but father's inadequate monitoring did.

For the relationship between total youth problem behavior and overt interparental conflict style, both models were similar also in that four of the parenting behaviors did not function as intervening variables. One difference arose regarding youth perceptions of harsh punishment. Father's harsh punishment did not mediate the relationship between overt interparental conflict

and total youth problem behavior, but mother's harsh punishment did.

These similarities and differences replicated when analyzing the relationships between covert and overt interparental conflict and externalizing youth problem behavior. For the relationship between internalizing youth problem behavior and covert and overt interparental conflict, both models were the same. No parenting behaviors functioned as intervening variables. (See Table 61 for a summary of all hierarchical regression analyses in the study.)

Table 61. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analyses for All Models of Youth Perceptions of Interparental Conflict, Disrupted Parenting, and Youth Problem Behaviors

Interparental Conflict	Disrupted Parenting	Youth Problem Behavior	Effect of Parenting	Moderating Effects
Overall conflict	Parents'	Total	Indirect	None
Overall conflict	Parents'	Internalizing	Indirect	Less poor > poor
Overall conflict	Parents'	Externalizing	Indirect	Divorced > married
Overall conflict	Mother's	Total	Indirect	Divorced > married
Overall conflict	Father's	Total	Indirect	Poor > less poor
Overall conflict	Mother's	Internalizing	Indirect	None
Overall conflict	Father's	Internalizing	Indirect	Boy > girl Poor > less poor
Overall conflict	Mother's	Externalizing	Indirect	Girl > boy Married > divorced
Overall conflict	Father's	Externalizing	Indirect	Less poor > poor
Overall conflict	Parents' psychological intrusion	Total	None	NA
Overall conflict	Parents' psychological intrusion	Internalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Parents' psychological intrusion	Externalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Parents' inconsistency	Total	Indirect	Adolescent > preadolescent Girl > boy
Overall conflict	Parents' inconsistency	Internalizing	Indirect	Adolescent > preadolescent Girl > boy
Overall conflict	Parents' inconsistency	Externalizing	Indirect	Adolescent > preadolescent Girl > boy
Overall conflict	Parents' low warmth/support	Total	None	NA
Overall conflict	Parents' low warmth/support	Internalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Parents' low warmth/support	Externalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Parents' inadequate monitoring	Total	None	NA
Overall conflict	Parents' inadequate monitoring	Internalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Parents' inadequate monitoring	Externalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Parents' harsh discipline	Total	None	NA
Overall conflict	Parents' harsh discipline	Internalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Parents' harsh discipline	Externalizing	None	NA

Table 61 continued.

Interparental Conflict	Disrupted Parenting	Youth Problem Behavior	Effect of Parenting	Moderating Effects
Overall conflict	Mother's psychological intrusion	Total	None	NA
Overall conflict	Father's psychological intrusion	Total	None	NA
Overall conflict	Mother's psychological intrusion	Internalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Father's psychological intrusion	Internalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Mother's psychological intrusion	Externalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Father's psychological intrusion	Externalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Mother's inconsistency	Total	Indirect	None
Overall conflict	Father's: inconsistency	Total	Indirect	Adolescent > preadolescent Girl > boy Poor > less poor
Overall conflict	Mother's inconsistency	Internalizing	Indirect	None
Overall conflict	Father's inconsistency	Internalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Mother's inconsistency	Externalizing	Indirect	None
Overall conflict	Father's: inconsistency	Externalizing	Indirect	Adolescent > preadolescent Girl > boy Poor > less poor
Overall conflict	Mother's low warmth/support	Total	None	NA
Overall conflict	Father's low warmth/support	Total	None	NA
Overall conflict	Mother's low warmth/support	Internalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Father's low warmth/support	Internalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Mother's low warmth/support	Externalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Father's low warmth/support	Externalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Mother's inadequate monitoring	Total	None	NA
Overall conflict	Father's inadequate monitoring	Total	Indirect	None
Overall conflict	Mother's inadequate monitoring	Internalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Father's inadequate monitoring	Internalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Mother's inadequate monitoring	Externalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Father's inadequate monitoring	Externalizing	Indirect	None
Overall conflict	Mother's harsh discipline	Total	None	NA
Overall conflict	Father's harsh discipline	Total	None	NA

Table 61 continued.

Interparental Conflict	Disrupted Parenting	Youth Problem Behavior	Effect of Parenting	Moderating Effects
Overall conflict	Mother's harsh discipline	Internalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Father's harsh discipline	Internalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Mother's harsh discipline	Externalizing	None	NA
Overall conflict	Father's harsh discipline	Externalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Parents'	Total	Indirect	Divorced > married Poor > less poor
Covert conflict	Parents'	Internalizing	Indirect	None
Covert conflict	Parents'	Externalizing	Indirect	Divorced > married
Overt conflict	Parents'	Total	Mediating	Divorced > married Poor > less poor
Overt conflict	Parents'	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Parents'	Externalizing	Mediating	Divorced > married
Covert conflict	Mother's	Total	Indirect	Divorced > married
Covert conflict	Father's	Total	Indirect	Less poor > poor
Covert conflict	Mother's	Internalizing	Indirect	None
Covert conflict	Father's	Internalizing	Indirect	Boy > girl Less poor > poor
Covert conflict	Mother's	Externalizing	Indirect	Girl > boy Divorced > married
Covert conflict	Father's	Externalizing	Indirect	None
Overt conflict	Mother's	Total	Mediating	Divorced > married
Overt conflict	Father's	Total	Mediating	Less poor > poor
Overt conflict	Mother's	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Father's	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Mother's	Externalizing	Mediating	Girl > boy Divorced > married
Overt conflict	Father's	Externalizing	Mediating	None
Covert conflict	Parents' psychological intrusion	Total	None	NA
Covert conflict	Parents' psychological intrusion	Internalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Parents' psychological intrusion	Externalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Parents' inconsistency	Total	Indirect	Girl > boy Adolescent > preadolescent

Table 61 continued.

Interparental Conflict	Disrupted Parenting	Youth Problem Behavior	Effect of Parenting	Moderating Effects
Covert conflict	Parents' inconsistency	Internalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Parents' inconsistency	Externalizing	Mediating	None
Covert conflict	Parents' low warmth/support	Total	None	NA
Covert conflict	Parents' low warmth/support	Internalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Parents' low warmth/support	Externalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Parents' inadequate monitoring	Total	None	NA
Covert conflict	Parents' inadequate monitoring	Internalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Parents' inadequate monitoring	Externalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Parents' harsh discipline	Total	None	NA
Covert conflict	Parents' harsh discipline	Internalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Parents' harsh discipline	Externalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Parents' psychological intrusion	Total	None	NA
Overt conflict	Parents' psychological intrusion	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Parents' psychological intrusion	Externalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Parents' inconsistency	Total	Mediating	None
Overt conflict	Parents' inconsistency	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Parents' inconsistency	Externalizing	Mediating	None
Overt conflict	Parents' low warmth/support	Total	None	NA
Overt conflict	Parents' low warmth/support	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Parents' low warmth/support	Externalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Parents' inadequate monitoring	Total	None	NA
Overt conflict	Parents' inadequate monitoring	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Parents' inadequate monitoring	Externalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Parents' harsh discipline	Total	None	NA
Overt conflict	Parents' harsh discipline	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Parents' harsh discipline	Externalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Mother's psychological intrusion	Total	None	NA
Covert conflict	Father's psychological intrusion	Total	None	NA
Covert conflict	Mother's psychological intrusion	Internalizing	None	NA

Table 61 continued.

Interparental Conflict	Disrupted Parenting	Youth Problem Behavior	Effect of Parenting	Moderating Effects
Covert conflict	Father's psychological intrusion	Internalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Mother's psychological intrusion	Externalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Father's psychological intrusion	Externalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Mother's inconsistency	Total	None	NA
Covert conflict	Father's inconsistency	Total	None	NA
Covert conflict	Mother's inconsistency	Internalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Father's inconsistency	Internalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Mother's inconsistency	Externalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Father's inconsistency	Externalizing	Mediates	Adolescent > preadolescent Girl > boy
Covert conflict	Mother's low warmth/support	Total	None	NA
Covert conflict	Father's low warmth/support	Total	None	NA
Covert conflict	Mother's low warmth/support	Internalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Father's low warmth/support	Internalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Mother's low warmth/support	Externalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Father's low warmth/support	Externalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Mother's inadequate monitoring	Total	None	NA
Covert conflict	Father's inadequate monitoring	Total	Indirect	Girl > boy Divorced > married
Covert conflict	Mother's inadequate monitoring	Internalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Father's inadequate monitoring	Internalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Mother's inadequate monitoring	Externalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Father's inadequate monitoring	Externalizing	Mediates	Girl > boy Divorced > married
Covert conflict	Mother's harsh discipline	Total	None	NA
Covert conflict	Father's harsh discipline	Total	None	NA
Covert conflict	Mother's harsh discipline	Internalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Father's harsh discipline	Internalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Mother's harsh discipline	Externalizing	None	NA
Covert conflict	Father's harsh discipline	Externalizing	None	NA

Table 61 continued.

Interparental Conflict	Disrupted Parenting	Youth Problem Behavior	Effect of Parenting	Moderating Effects
Overt conflict	Mother's psychological intrusion	Total	None	NA
Overt conflict	Father's psychological intrusion	Total	None	NA
Overt conflict	Mother's psychological intrusion	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Father's psychological intrusion	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Mother's psychological intrusion	Externalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Father's psychological intrusion	Externalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Mother's inconsistency	Total	None	NA
Overt conflict	Father's inconsistency	Total	None	NA
Overt conflict	Mother's inconsistency	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Father's inconsistency	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Mother's inconsistency	Externalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Father's inconsistency	Externalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Mother's low warmth/support	Total	None	NA
Overt conflict	Father's low warmth/support	Total	None	NA
Overt conflict	Mother's low warmth/support	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Father's low warmth/support	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Mother's low warmth/support	Externalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Father's low warmth/support	Externalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Mother's inadequate monitoring	Total	None	NA
Overt conflict	Father's inadequate monitoring	Total	None	NA
Overt conflict	Mother's inadequate monitoring	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Father's inadequate monitoring	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Mother's inadequate monitoring	Externalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Father's inadequate monitoring	Externalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Mother's harsh discipline	Total	Mediating	None
Overt conflict	Father's harsh discipline	Total	None	NA
Overt conflict	Mother's harsh discipline	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Father's harsh discipline	Internalizing	None	NA
Overt conflict	Mother's harsh discipline	Externalizing	Mediating	Divorced > married
Overt conflict	Father's harsh discipline	Externalizing	None	NA

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

This study addresses the role of disrupted parenting in the socializing of children and adolescents, by examining the interplay between marital strife and parenting behaviors. The following proposition was tested. Youth perceptions of selected parenting behaviors---psychological intrusion, intraparental inconsistency, low warmth/support, inadequate behavioral monitoring, and harsh punishment function as connecting mechanisms between youth perceptions of hostile interparental conflict styles and youth problem behavior. As expected, this study indicates that---according to youth perceptions of family interactions---youth feel the impact of their parents' marital strife not only by direct exposure to the conflict, but also through disruptions in their parents' behavior toward them.

Research Questions

The overarching questions this study seeks to answer are: Is there spillover from marital strife into the quality of parenting exhibited by mothers and fathers? If so, which parenting behaviors are most important? Do one or two parenting behaviors constitute the spillover effect? Are there different effects for mothers and fathers, and if so, what are the differences? How do background characteristics of youth age, youth gender, parent's marital status, and family poverty status contextualize spillover?

Is There Spillover From Marital Strife Into the Quality of Parenting

Exhibited by Mothers and Fathers?

The results of this study indicate that, especially from the youth's point of view, disruptions in parenting are important to consider in the context of marital conflict, particularly when assessing how marital conflict impacts youth. As expected, this study clearly supports the notion that marital strife impacts youth, in part, through disrupted parenting behaviors. When examining youth perceptions of disrupted parenting as a total parenting environment (versus dismantling parenting into specific behaviors) disrupted parenting intervenes between youth perceptions of overall interparental conflict and total, internalizing, and externalizing youth problem behavior. When parents fight, their children not only feel upset by observing hostile interactions between their parents. Children also feel that their parents' behavior towards them becomes more negative when their parents are embroiled in conflict. In such situations, children are at risk for loneliness, feeling unloved, anxiety, destroying property, lying, stealing, and being argumentative, to name just a few examples of the problems that youth report experiencing when their parents fight. The results of this study concur with the findings of the ten studies reported previously in the Literature Review section of this paper. Those studies indicate that, regardless of who reports on interparental conflict and parenting behaviors, when parents are engaged in marital strife, parents are less likely to provide their child with the parenting behaviors necessary for their child's optimal socialization.

Some enlightening patterns emerge when dismantling overall interparental conflict into separate components of covert conflict and overt conflict. When parents use a covert interparental conflict style with each other, disrupted parenting intervenes in the relationship between covert interparental conflict and total, internalizing, and externalizing youth problem behavior. From the child's point of view, when parents fight covertly, children are affected not only by being inducted into triangulation that occurs with a covert interparental conflict style, but are also troubled by their parents' behavior toward them.

Interestingly, however, when parents use overt interparental conflict with each other, disrupted parenting completely mediates the relationship between overt interparental conflict and total and externalizing youth problem behavior, according to youth reports. Apparently when parents yell or insult one another, for instance, youth are troubled primarily by the disruption that occurs in their parents' behavior toward them rather than their parents' fighting, *per se*.

Indeed, according to how youth experience family interactions when their parents fight, marital conflict spills over into the quality of parenting youth receive. Assuming youth are accurate reporters of what occurs in their family, such dynamics might exemplify how difficult it is for conflicting couples to keep healthy boundaries between their marital relationship and their parent-child relationships. Proponents of family systems theory suggest two processes to explain the link between marital conflict, disrupted parenting behaviors, and

youth problem behavior. Each process is an example of boundary violations in the family system.

First, parents might try to distract themselves from their conflict by focusing instead on their child's real or imagined problems, a family systemic concept termed "scapegoating" (Haley, 1976), "detouring" (Minuchin, 1974), and "family projection process" (Bowen, 1978). Parents might create, maintain, or even exacerbate their child's problem to divert themselves from the issue of their tense marital relations (Pillari, 1991). Second, the child of conflicting parents might catalyze the process by taking on the role of a symptom bearer. The child might do so to capture parental attention, albeit negative attention, in hopes that by focusing parents' attention away from their conflict, this might be a way to keep the family united. Such behavior could become patterned to the point where the child does not learn to tolerate or manage conflict in appropriate ways (Cummings, 1994).

Boundary violations or disruptions in family alliances might be a key factor in how youth experience their disputing parents, and this seems to be true whether youth perceive their parents use covert interparental conflict, overt interparental conflict, or both conflict styles. For instance, boundary violations such as scapegoating, role reversals, and triangulation erode generational hierarchies and boundaries between the marital dyad and the parent-child dyad (Minuchin, 1974). This is particularly true for a covert interparental conflict style which, by definition, involves triangulation of the child. Therefore, if parents use

a covert interparental conflict style, their children are affected by boundary violations in both the marital dyad and the parent-child relationship. Likewise, the name-calling, yelling, threatening, and insulting that is characteristic of overt interparental conflict could be so absorbing for parents that negativity and tension from the marital dyad might spread to the child through mother's and father's diminished parenting. Thus, according to youth reports of how youth experience family interactions, whether the influence of marital conflict is direct, indirect through parenting, or completely mediated by disrupted parenting, it appears that marital conflict causes problems for youth because of the boundary violations that accompany parents' conflictual behavior.

Which Parenting Behaviors Are Most Important?

Do One Or Two Parenting Behaviors Constitute the Spillover Effect?

The strongest and most consistent linkages involve the indirect pathways between hostile interparental conflict and youth problem behavior through parents' intraparental inconsistency. According to youth reports, parents' inconsistency intervenes in the relationship between overall interparental conflict and total, internalizing, and externalizing youth problem behavior. When parents fight, children experience internalizing and externalizing problems from direct exposure to marital conflict and also from their parents' use of inconsistency.

If, indeed, youth perceptions of family interactions are an accurate representation of what actually occurs in the family, the link between marital conflict and parents' inconsistency can be explained using family systems

theory. Parents embroiled in conflict with one another might become distracted from parental responsibilities and, consequently, inconsistent in their interactions with their children. Parents who use inconsistency might disrupt or weaken appropriate family alliances and/or create boundary ambiguity regarding role expectations and appropriate behaviors of their child. For example, the child might be inducted to perform the role of ally. As an ally, parents might use the child to meet their intimacy needs denied in the conflictual marriage relationship (Cohen, Coker, & Weissman, 1984). To promote the parent-child bond, the parent might become overly solicitous regarding the child's wants and needs, even to the point of avoiding discipline and rule enforcement. In efforts to develop an affectionate and supportive ally in the child, and even to create a coalition against the other spouse, the parent forfeits parental control (Boszormenyi-Nagy & Ulrich, 1981; Bowen, 1978; Minuchin, 1974). However, when the parent discovers that the child cannot fulfill the parent's emotional needs, the parent might withdraw the special status extended to the child. The end result is an atmosphere characterized by ambivalent commands, changing role expectations, and boundary violations.

Ambiguity regarding role expectations and behavior standards might create uncertainty for children in the form of changing cues. Inconsistent discipline might result in confusing signals for children, perhaps even to the point of creating binds for the child because of the discrepancies between what parents say and what they do (Patterson, 1982). These discrepancies create an

ambiguous socialization environment that might result in children experiencing internal disequilibrium and insecurity. Such inconsistency from parents, a potentially frustrating scenario, might create emotional regulation difficulties for children that become internalized as depressed mood or anxiety (Davies & Cummings, 1994).

Inconsistent discipline also might result in difficulties with behavioral regulation. Children might act out aggressively as a means to prompt parents to establish clearer, more consistent behavioral expectations and demands. Children also might behave aggressively to release tension created by the ambiguity inherent in an unpredictable discipline environment. Finally, such parenting practices might be associated with both internalizing and externalizing symptoms in children because aggressive and delinquent behavior often serves as a mask for children's and adolescents' depressed mood and feelings of anxiety (Kaplan & Sadock, 1998).

The finding that inconsistency functions as an intervening variable in the relationship between marital conflict and youth problem behavior is even more compelling when youth perceptions of overall interparental conflict is dismantled and analyzed as separate components of a covert interparental conflict style and an overt interparental conflict style. Youth perceptions of parents' inconsistency functions a little differently with a covert interparental conflict style than with an overt interparental conflict style in relationship to total youth problem behavior. Parents' inconsistency transmits only part of the effect of a covert interparental

conflict style to total youth problem behavior. However, the effect of overt interparental conflict is completely transmitted through parents' inconsistency. Thus, according to youth perceptions, it appears that inconsistency is the parenting behavior which drives spillover from not only overt interparental conflict, but for covert interparental conflict as well.

The finding of spillover from overt interparental conflict to inconsistency is supported by previous research on marital conflict and parenting, which has found marital conflict to be associated with inconsistent discipline. However, this study provides new information about the nature of spillover in families with regards to covert interparental conflict. Although the connections have not been studied previously in any detail, the link between covert interparental conflict and inconsistency is not surprising.

Covert interparental conflict and inconsistency share underlying characteristics that involve boundary violations and shifts in family alliances. The triangulating behavior of covert interparental conflict is characterized by relationship boundaries that are extremely permeable and ambiguous. Likewise, inconsistency is characterized by rules and expectations that are unclear and unpredictable. When children feel drawn into their parents' conflicts, they might feel they are expected to cross the generational boundary to play the role of confidante, ally, or message carrier. Such interactions, which characterize covert interparental conflict and inconsistency, might lead to enmeshed parent-child relationships and parent-child alliances. As mentioned previously, it might be

that parents' efforts to maintain a parent-child alliance include fewer or inconsistently enforced demands for appropriate child behavior. Depending on the needs of the parent, expectations for acceptable behavior might be enforced at certain times but not at other times when these parental expectations might place the parent-child alliance in jeopardy. Thus, although inconsistency and covert interparental conflict clearly are different variables, they share characteristics such as indirectness, uncertainty, and ambiguity which facilitate linkages between the marital and parent-child subsystems within the family.

Are There Different Effects For Mothers And Fathers.

And If So, What Are The Differences?

There are very few differences between the models for mother's parenting and the models for father's parenting. Differences in effects for mothers and fathers do not emerge until parents' disrupted parenting is dismantled into distinct parenting behaviors. For overall interparental conflict, although the effects are similar for inconsistency, the models differ with respect to inadequate monitoring. Youth perceptions of father's monitoring but not mother's intervenes in the association between youth perceptions of overall interparental conflict and total and externalizing youth problem behavior.

Furthermore, when overall interparental conflict is dismantled into covert and overt interparental conflict, youth perceptions of father's but not mother's inconsistency and inadequate monitoring completely mediate the relationship between covert interparental conflict and externalizing youth problem behavior.

Conversely, youth perceptions of harsh punishment completely mediates the relationship between overt interparental conflict and youth problem behavior (total and externalizing) in the model for mothers but not fathers. What might account for these differences between the model for mothers and the model for fathers?

Most research suggests that marital conflict is more disruptive for father's than for mother's parenting (Belsky, 1990; Easterbrooks & Emde, 1988), and that the way fathers attempt to resolve conflict might be more predictive of children's problems than is mothers' conflict resolution style (Camara & Resnick, 1989). Disruptions in fathers' parenting might begin with withdrawal from wives in response to conflict (Christensen & Heavey, 1990; Gottman & Levenson, 1988), and might spill over to father withdrawal from children and family activities (Amato, 1986; Brody, Pellegrini & Sigel, 1986; Peterson & Zill, 1986).

The results of this study support the notion that fathers' parenting becomes disrupted in the midst of marital conflict. Apparently, covert interparental conflict might be so absorbing for fathers that they become less consistent in their discipline, less likely to enforce guidelines for acceptable behavior, and less likely to keep track of their children's activities. There are two ways to interpret the finding that fathers' parenting becomes disrupted in the context of marital conflict, particularly covert interparental conflict.

Fathers' tendency to be less consistent and less vigilant about monitoring their children's behavior can be interpreted as an example of fathers withdrawing

from their children in the context of marital conflict. When fathers fail to keep up with the details of their children's life, children may interpret such lack of attention as disinterest on their father's part. Therefore, youth might display externalizing problem behavior as an attention-getting strategy. Or, if children feel their father is not interested in them, children might be unresponsive to their father's instructions, feeling that their father does not deserve their compliance.

Another explanation for father withdrawal might be centered around a key aspect of inconsistency, which involves parental behavior changes resulting from changes in the parent's mood. Children might, at one time, experience comfort in a close father-child relationship. Then, when fathers get embroiled in marital conflict, children might feel pushed out of the comfortable alliance. When children perceive such inconsistent behavior from their father, the behavior might be very confusing and provocative for the children. Children might be left in a watchful or vigilant state, uncertain of the security of their relationship with their father. Such emotional arousal could lead to aggressive behavior in an attempt to diffuse anxiety or worry (Katz & Gottman, 1993). Thus, children of conflicting parents might be vulnerable to externalizing problem behavior, especially if children perceive their father has become distracted and withdrawn.

Although the link between marital conflict and father's inconsistency and inadequate monitoring might result from father withdrawal, I suggest an alternative interpretation of the process. Fathers' disrupted parenting might not involve father withdrawal. Rather, fathers might simply become engaged with

their children in a different way. Parents' discordant marital relations might leave father looking for support and affection from the youth and even using the youth to create a coalition against the other spouse (Boszormenyi-Nagi & Ulrich, 1981; Bowen, 1978; Minuchin, 1974), especially in efforts to counter-balance a, possibly closer, alliance between mother and child. In an effort to maintain an alliance with their children, fathers might include fewer or inconsistently enforced demands for appropriate child behavior. Fathers might even become overly indulgent or ingratiating toward their children. Depending on the needs of the father, expectations for acceptable behavior might be enforced inconsistently---at certain times but not at other times---especially when such expectations might place the father-child alliance in jeopardy. Indeed, results of this study indicate that emotions from parents' covert interparental conflict spill over into fathers' ability to regulate and structure their children's lives. To the parent, this freedom and lack of vigilance is a way to maintain a bond of love and affection with the child. However, such parent behavior allows child misbehavior (Fauber et al., 1990) which is unfortunate because, as Barber and Olsen (1997) suggest, young adolescents require sufficient regulation of behavior to enable them to interact and function within societal rules and structure. Thus, fathers' inadequate monitoring of youth's activities and youth behavior is linked with aggressive, delinquent behavior. When fathers do not keep track of their children's activities, some youth might use this freedom to engage in antisocial behavior.

Thus, the finding of the relationship between marital conflict, father's

disrupted parenting in the form of inconsistency and inadequate monitoring, and youth problem behavior can be explained in another way besides the father withdrawal hypothesis. In the context of marital conflict, fathers' intensified engagement with their children is another interpretation that may explain the linkages between the marital and parent-child subsystems that are associated with youth problem behavior.

Mothers in high conflict marriages, on the other hand, might also tend to increase their level of investment and involvement with their children as a way to compensate for tense marital relations. Although some researchers describe this, perhaps compensatory, process as supportive and facilitative involvement with children (Belsky, Youngblade, Rovine, & Volling, 1991; Brody et al., 1986; Stoneman et al., 1989) others view such behavior as strained and poor parenting (Christensen & Margolin, 1988; Goldberg & Easterbrooks, 1984). Empirical evidence is mixed regarding whether marital conflict engenders a stronger mother-child alliance. Nevertheless, in the midst of marital conflict, it appears that family alliances are weakened and boundary violations are likely to occur. Whether the child moves toward or away from the mother, however, these changes might make parent-child coalitions, role-reversals, and scapegoating more likely which, in turn, might undermine parents' disciplinary efforts (Isaacs, Montalvo, & Abelson, 1986; Mann, Borduin, Henggeler, & Blaske, 1990).

Interestingly, the only instance of spillover to mother's parenting behavior involves youth perceptions of mother's use of harsh punishment. The

association between overt interparental conflict and externalizing youth problem behavior is completely explained through mother's harsh punishment. Mothers were harsher with their children in the context of overt interparental conflict. Mothers who are emotionally distressed and taxed by their relationships with their spouses are more likely to intensify their disciplinary attempts. It appears that these mothers might attempt to bring order and control by focusing on child misbehavior. This harshness is associated with externalizing youth problem behavior, in particular. Confused and perhaps angry by their mother's harshness, children misbehave.

From a systems perspective, the process makes sense. In response to the intensity of a loud and hostile marital conflict, a mother might become overly solicitous in attempts to gain emotional intimacy or support from her child. When the mother realizes her child is unable to meet her emotional needs, she becomes indignant and angry at her child. Out of frustration with not only her marriage but also her child for being unable to meet her needs, she treats her child harshly. Or, as a scapegoat, the child functions to diffuse the hostility between parents. Following a conflictual marital situation, a mother might project the negative emotion onto her child, a process called projection by Freud (1967), initially, and later developed into a systemic concept called family projection process (Bowen, 1989). The child becomes the recipient of the negativity in the marital relationship. For mothers, spillover into harsh punishment might provide a way for them to diffuse the anxiety, anger, and hostility of an atmosphere

permeated with yelling, insulting, and name-calling between marital partners.

It is compelling that the indirect effects of disruptions in parenting behaviors are different for mothers than for fathers, in that the indirect effect involves overt interparental conflict for mothers and covert interparental conflict for fathers. It might be that disrupted parenting is more likely to occur in conjunction with the conflict style that engenders the most anxiety or discomfort for the parent.

Perhaps fathers are more comfortable with overt interparental conflict, which might explain why father's parenting is not compromised by the occurrence of overt interparental conflict. Perhaps marital disagreements characterized by yelling, name-calling, and insulting do not tax the emotions of fathers to the degree that covert interparental conflict does. It might be that conflict that involves triangulation of children overloads fathers. Possibly, in the context of covert interparental conflict, fathers tend to feel outnumbered or defeated, particularly in the presence of a mother-child alliance. Covert interparental conflict might be so absorbing for fathers that they tend to foreclose on their parental responsibilities.

On the other hand, mothers might be more comfortable with covert interparental conflict, but experience more distress in an overtly conflictual interaction. Covert interparental conflict might be more comfortable for mothers because child care tends to be a maternal domain. Therefore, involving children in the conflict might feel empowering to mothers. One laboratory study showed

that children tended to take their mother's side in parent conflict, especially in verbal versus physical arguments (El-Sheikh & Cheskes, 1995). Conversely, overt interparental conflict might feel overpowering and absorbing. Another study reported that children have negative emotional reactions to mothers when fathers exhibit negative behavior during episodes of marital conflict (Crockenberg & Forgays, 1996). If so, then in the context of overt interparental conflict, mothers are not only at odds with their husbands, but with their children, also. Such a situation would heighten the distress mothers might feel during overt interparental conflict, which would explain the link to mother's harsh punishment.

How Do Background Characteristics Of Youth Age, Youth Gender, Parent's Marital Status, and/or Family Poverty Status Contextualize Spillover?

Some noticeable patterns emerge with regard to the background characteristics of age, gender, and parent's marital status. Where age is a significant moderator, the pathways are, without exception, stronger for adolescents than for pre-adolescents. Where gender is a significant moderator, the pathway for daughters is usually stronger than for sons, regardless of parent gender. Where family structure is a significant moderator, the pathways for mother-only families are stronger than for two-parent families. In the few instances where poverty status conditionalizes a pathway, there is no consistent pattern.

Youth Age

In every instance where age conditionalizes an indirect or mediating pathway, the pathways are stronger for early adolescent youth than for pre-adolescents. Also, conditionalized pathways always include either covert interparental conflict or inconsistency. This suggests that older youth might be more vulnerable to interactions and relationships characterized by ambiguity and indirectness than are younger youth. The 13 to 15 year-old youth might be less able and willing to tolerate spillover in the form of inconsistency because of more experienced expectations about relationships and greater awareness of and desire for autonomy. The older group has a better defined sense of self, so might be more experienced at recognizing intrusions on their autonomy. It is likely that inconsistency feels very intrusive and unnerving to the older group. Ready to have power to make some of their own decisions, adolescents can do so best within clearly defined and consistent parental expectations. When those expectations are unclear and dependent on parental mood, youth might feel stripped of their increasing freedom and, consequently, might feel helpless and angry to have aspects of their life determined by the whims of their parents. Thus, when marital conflict spills over into the parent-child relationship, it is not surprising that older youth—who undoubtedly recognize the dynamics at work—are more distressed than pre-adolescents, who might be less aware of what is happening and feel less entitled to fair play from their parents.

Although every instance of an interaction by age indicates that the older

group is more vulnerable, the majority of pathways reveal no difference by age. Out of tests for interactions on 43 indirect pathways, 8 reveal age interactions. The majority of models show no age difference in strength of pathways. It appears that age differences in child problems in the context of marital conflict are not easy to characterize. Grych and Fincham's (1990) review concluded that no one age group of children is especially vulnerable to the impact of marital conflict. However, other theoreticians and researchers contend that the nature of the impact of hostile interparental conflict, and of children's responses to conflict, might differ according to age (Cummings, 1994). Hetherington (1979) has suggested that children of different ages differ in their awareness of and ability to cope with interparental conflict. Young children are less able to cope with interadult conflict, but are also less aware of conflict and its implications; older children, although more aware of conflict and its meaning, have a greater range of resources and strategies for coping (Hetherington, 1984). Although there are theoretical reasons to predict such differences, they have not been found consistently at the level of broad-band pathology typically studied (Kitzmann, 2000).

Youth Gender

In most instances where gender conditionalizes an indirect or mediating pathway, the pathways are stronger for daughters than for sons. Although the research on gender effects are mixed, the findings of this study point to some examples of gender differences in youth's reactions to disrupted family

interactions in response to marital conflict. Twelve of the fourteen instances of interactions by gender show the effect to be stronger for daughters. This suggests that daughters might be more sensitive to the effects of disrupted parenting in the context of marital conflict.

There are two reasons why the effects might be stronger for daughters. First, when talking with children, parents tend to use emotional terms more frequently with daughters than with sons, especially when referring to negative emotions such as sadness (Adams, Kuebli, Boyle, & Fivish, 1995). Therefore, marital conflict might have a different impact on daughters, especially if maritally distressed parents use more negative affective terms when discussing conflict with daughters than with sons. Second, daughters might be more attuned to subtleties of relationship dynamics. For example, although daughters and sons report equal awareness of marital discord (Emery & O'Leary, 1982; Grych et al., 1992), daughters are more sensitive to the distinction between resolved and unresolved conflict (El-Sheikh & Cummings, 1995). If, indeed, daughters are more sensitive to interactional nuances, this increased awareness--- especially in an environment of covert and/or overt hostility---might place daughters at greater risk than sons.

Furthermore, cross-gender parent-child relations appear to be particularly affected, especially the father-daughter relationship (Gjerde, 1988; Kerig et al., 1993). One reason for this might be because, in the midst of marital conflict, men often withdraw from interaction rather than engage in the conflict, distancing

themselves from their wives (Gottman & Levenson, 1988) as well as their children—especially their daughters (Amato, 1986). Five of the ten interactions involving separate measures for mother's disrupted parenting and father's disrupted parenting are composed of cross-gender parent-child dyads. Five interactions involve the father-daughter dyad, three involve the mother-daughter dyad, and two involve the father-son dyad. There were no interactions of mother-son effects, although studies provide general evidence that not only are opposite-gender dyads more adversely affected than are same-gender dyads, but that the mother-son dyad also might be at risk (Katz and Gottman, 1993; Kerig et al., 1993; Osborne and Fincham, 1996).

There are theoretical reasons to expect that the disruptions in parenting caused by marital conflict would have important negative consequences both for daughters and for sons. Because of fathers' relative greater importance in the socialization of sons (Block, 1983), disruptions in fathers' parenting might be more detrimental for sons than for daughters. Perhaps only certain aspects of marital distress are more harmful for sons. On the other hand, the combination of a larger negative impact of marital conflict on fathers' parenting and on opposite-gender parent-child dyads might leave father-daughter relationships more at risk (Belsky, Rovine, & Fish, 1989; Goldberg & Easterbrooks, 1984). Although most instances of an interaction by gender indicate that daughters, and perhaps father-daughter dyads in particular, are most vulnerable, the majority of pathways reveal no difference by gender. Based on the results of this study, it is

equivocal whether daughters are more sensitive to the effects of disrupted parenting in the context of marital conflict. It would be premature to make solid conclusions about gender effects, including same- or opposite-gender parent-child dyads.

Parent's Marital Status

In 12 out of 13 instances where marital status conditionalizes an indirect or mediating pathway, the pathways are stronger for youth from mother-only families than for youth from two-parent families. In general, the conditionalized pathways involve mother's disrupted parenting intervening in the relationship between marital conflict (overall interparental conflict as well as separate measures of covert and overt interparental conflict) and externalizing youth problem behavior. In addition, the more specific analyses reveal two other pathways that are conditionalized by family structure. Mother's harsh punishment fully mediates the association between overt interparental conflict and externalizing youth problem behavior, and father's inadequate monitoring fully mediates the relationship between covert interparental conflict style and externalizing youth problem behavior.

It is not surprising that the mediating path through mother's harsh punishment is stronger for youth from divorced, mother-custody households, when one considers the resources required for raising a child. In addition to time and finances, emotional resources are likely to be less available to mothers in single parent families. Mothers might be emotionally aroused or angered by

rancorous relationships with their ex-spouses and might be more likely to discipline harshly. Hostile arguments with a former spouse might further deplete available emotional resources, leaving the custodial parent unavailable to provide optimal parenting. Quite possibly, the child might resemble the ex-spouse in physical appearance or mannerisms, which might catalyze mother's tendency to transfer anger at ex-spouse to the parent-child relationship. Exposure to such a situation undoubtedly angers and arouses youth, who respond with aggressive behavior.

The association between covert interparental conflict style and externalizing youth problem behavior, which is fully mediated by father's inadequate monitoring is also conditionalized by family structure. I suggest two reasons why the effect might be stronger for youth from divorced, mother-custody families. First, noncustodial fathers might find it difficult to be as involved with their children as they would be if they were living with their children. It is likely that these fathers might be unaware of the details and activities of their youth's daily life, which youth might interpret as lack of interest. Second, when these youth do spend time with their fathers, these fathers most likely want the experience to be pleasant and might not be interested in setting limits or enforcing rules with their children.

Although most interactions by family structure point to a stronger pathway for mother-only than for two-parent families, it is important to note that most of the models show no difference by family structure. It appears that such

differences in child problems in the context of marital conflict are not there to any great extent.

Summary

Slope comparisons of the relationships between hostile interparental conflict, disrupted parenting, and youth problem behavior across the background variables reveal that group differences are limited and are, therefore, not easy to characterize. It is important to note that slope comparisons across groups examine differences in relationships rather than the more commonly reported mean differences between groups. As such, the results of comparisons of strength of indirect pathways across youth age, youth gender, parental marital status, and family poverty status prevent the drawing of definite conclusions.

Unexpected Outcomes

Two unexpected outcomes of this study involve the lack of findings regarding links with psychological intrusion and low warmth/support. The results of this study indicate that psychological intrusion does not intervene in the association between marital conflict and youth problem behavior. Both mother's and father's use of psychological intrusion was expected to transmit part of the effect of marital conflict on youth problem behavior. Initially, it appeared that psychological intrusion intervened in the relationship between covert interparental conflict style and total, internalizing, and externalizing youth problem behavior. However, follow-up analyses using Sobel's equation showed

that the indirect pathway was not strong enough to hold statistically.

The reason the results for psychological intrusion were not as robust as expected is most likely a measurement issue. Psychological intrusion and inconsistency share defining characteristics and are correlated; each includes behaviors that characterize boundary violations and ambiguity that result in binding interactions. Parents who use psychological intrusion violate the personal space or autonomy of the child through indirect and veiled manipulation. For example, a parent might withhold love from a child until the child brings feelings, thoughts, and goals into conformity with those of the parent (Barber, 1996). Parents who use psychological intrusion also appeal to the child's sense of guilt or shame (Barber, 1996). Parents who use inconsistency create boundary ambiguity regarding appropriate standards for behavior. Behavioral expectations might seem confusing because of their changing nature. Both psychological intrusion and inconsistency might bind the child to the parent in a state of watchfulness. Furthermore, it has been suggested that inconsistency is the mechanism through which psychological intrusion is expressed.

Because of the above similarities between psychological intrusion and inconsistency, measurement decisions about discriminate and convergent validity of the two parenting behaviors needed to be addressed when forming the specific parenting scales. One of the goals of this study was to find which parenting behaviors, in particular, drive the effect of disrupted parenting. Thus, it

was important to discriminate well between the five parenting behaviors in order to determine which ones uniquely form an indirect linking mechanism. In favor of discriminate validity, several items that loaded on both psychological intrusion and inconsistency were dropped from the scales, resulting in the psychological intrusion measure being limited by a reliance on just two items. Consequently, important aspects of psychological intrusion are not included in the measure. Had more items been retained, the results for psychological intrusion most probably would have been more robust. It seems likely that efforts to maintain discriminate validity resulted in an underestimate of the effects of psychological intrusion.

Would different choices have been better for the goals of this study?

There were at least two other options available. One, I could have kept the five-factor parenting measure and been guided by less stringent validity standards, which would have overestimated the unique effects of each parenting behavior. Two, I could have created a four-factor measure of parenting by combining psychological intrusion and inconsistency. Although this second alternative is justified conceptually and empirically, doing so would have resulted in loss of information about the unique effects of psychological intrusion and inconsistency. The distinction between psychological intrusion and inconsistency would be lost. Although the result of joining these parenting behaviors would have produced stronger effects, most likely, doing so would have been less informative. The effects of psychological intrusion fell short of significance, but

it is apparent from this data that there is a trend for marital conflict to spread into parenting in the form of mother's and father's psychological intrusion. Thus, in future studies, it is important that this parenting behavior not be dismissed when examining the effects of parenting in the context of marital conflict.

The second unexpected result involved low warmth/support. Low warmth/support was not found to be a linking mechanism in the association between marital conflict and youth problem behavior, although, consistent with the extant literature, low warmth/support is associated with covert and overt interparental conflict. However, both mother's and father's low warmth/support are unrelated to youth problem behavior, which is contrary to what was expected. Previous research has suggested that lack of positive emotional bonds might result in the child feeling unimportant and unloved, and at risk for engagement in antisocial behavior (externalizing problems). Alternatively, feeling unsupported might leave the child feeling anxious and depressed (internalizing problems).

Low warmth/support did not function as a linking mechanism in the model for mothers or fathers. The fact that low warmth/support was not an intervening variable might be because, in the context of other parenting behaviors, the importance of low warmth/support is overshadowed. It is not that warmth/support is unimportant, but in the face of the robust link of inconsistency in the association between marital conflict and youth problem behavior, low warmth/support appears to be less important. Quite possibly the lack of

significant findings might be a measurement issue. Low warmth/support converged with psychological intrusion and in an effort to discriminate the two parenting variables, some of the overlapping items were dropped from the low warmth/support scale. Thus, some important aspects of low warmth/support were not part of the measure. This resulted in a measure that was limited to three items and had low internal consistency. Again, it might have been better to have adopted a four-factor parenting construct (joining psychological intrusion and inconsistency), which would have been less informative, or to have accepted less stringent validity standards and risked inflating the estimates of association.

Summary of Findings

According to youth perceptions of family interactions, the pattern of findings that emerge in this study provides support for the spillover hypothesis, that feelings from the marital realm are influencing mothers' and fathers' parenting behaviors. Negativity, anger, boundary ambiguity, and boundary violations from parents' fighting with each other spills over into parenting and youth problem behavior. Disruptions in both mother's and father's parenting transmit part of the detrimental effect of covert and overt interparental conflict to youth. As a result, youth tend to exhibit inwardly directed problems such anxiety, sadness, fearfulness, and low energy---and outwardly directed problems such as lying, aggression, and vandalism. The strongest and most consistent linkages involve intraparental inconsistency. Intraparental inconsistency drives the effect

of disrupted parenting, but the spillover effect also involves, to a lesser extent, father's inadequate monitoring and mother's harsh punishment.

Consistent with finding that fathers make unique contributions to child development (Parke, 1990), this study provides evidence that the association between marital conflict and father's parenting reveals information over and beyond that provided by the association between marital conflict and mother's parenting in understanding child well-being. Covert interparental conflict appears to be particularly absorbing for fathers; fathers experience a diminished capacity to provide consistent discipline and adequately monitor their children's activities and behavior when covert processes characterize their hostile marital interactions. The findings here highlight the importance of fathers' involvement in the lives of their children. The role of fathers is important in providing guidance and nurturance that is invaluable to youth's psychosocial development.

A key contribution of this study is the inclusion of the more covert and ambiguous aspects of marital conflict and parenting that seem to place children at risk by modeling specific patterns of boundary violations and by placing captivating and potentially exhaustive demands on children. Family interactions that promote unhealthy roles for the child in the family have detrimental effects on both the marital dyad as well as the mother-child and the father-child relationship (Osborne & Fincham, 1996). Repeated experiences with conflict might leave the child hypervigilant to others' negative affect, predisposing the

child to anxiety. The child might also develop coping strategies, such as disruptive or aggressive behavior, that themselves become problematic.

Practical Implications

The present study has practical value for clinicians who work with youth, couples, and/or families. Finding both direct effects of marital conflict and indirect effects of marital conflict through disruptions in parenting suggests that changes made in either the marital or parental relationship would benefit youth. Thus, if interventions could be made in only one dyad, either the marital relationship or the parent-child relationship, children would be better off than if no interventions were made. This is an important point for practitioners who are uncertain about the most effective point of entry to help conflictual families change entrenched interactional patterns. Because change in either dyad would likely benefit the child, the practitioner would be wisest to intervene in the area where the family demonstrates the least resistance and greatest chance for success. Because covert and overt marital conflict spills over into other family interactions, and because covert processes are ubiquitous, interventions made with any family member or group are likely to bring positive results.

When working with young people, a central focus should be instructing youth in covert processes, coaching them to recognize shifting family alliances and boundary intrusions, particularly when they are being inducted into hostile interparental conflict. Strategies aimed at avoiding triangulation would be

important for youth to learn (Buchanan et al., 1991). Helping youth identify processes such as scapegoating and detouring might buffer the impact of hostile interparental conflict.

This study focuses on the intervening role of youth perceptions of disrupted parenting, but the impact of hostile interparental conflict on youth problem behavior cannot be overlooked. Direct effects of youth perceptions of hostile interparental conflict remain even after considering the impact of disruptions in parenting behavior. Therefore, an obvious intervention includes working with couples to alter their hostile covert and/or overt interactions. Couples need encouragement to reduce the level of belligerence, contempt, defensiveness, and criticizing in their fighting (Cummings & Davies, 1994; Gottman, 1994). Parents need to be made aware of how their triangling behaviors affect their children. It is important for couples to learn how to keep children out of marital conflict. In summary, parents need to learn how to construct appropriate boundaries around their marital relationship as well as insulate children from hostile marital interactions.

Limitations Of Study

The findings reported here are not without limitations. Youth are the sole reporters on all items, so the findings are limited to youth perceptions of family life. However, theoretical and empirical evidence justifies the use of youth reporters. Researchers argue that youth reports of interparental conflict are

better indicators of youths' experience than parent reports (Davies & Cummings, 1994; Grych et al., 1992). Youth have access to the whole range of their own behavior and emotions in an array of settings, so youth reports represent a better estimate of what the youth actually sees, hears, and/or feels; therefore, youth might be the best interpreters and reporters of their own problem behavior. In support of the value of youth reports, Harold and Conger (1997) conclude that the negative impact of marital conflict on present and future youth problem behavior was explained completely by youth perceptions of marital conflict and the significance youth attach to the conflict. Furthermore, there is extensive literature documenting that youth can accurately and reliably report their parents' practices (Golden, 1969; Moścowitz & Schwarz, 1982) and their own adjustment (McCord, 1990).

Although children's perceptions are important to examine within the context of marital conflict and parenting, reliance on children's perceptions creates the chance that the substantive associations might be due to common-source variance (youth reports on all constructs), which would inflate estimates of association between constructs such as correlations and regression coefficients. Common-source bias probably affected the estimates of disrupted parenting affects, to some extent. Nevertheless, three observations add confidence to the belief that the findings are not due merely to common-source variance.

First, if youth were biased toward providing negative characterizations of their parents, all of the correlations between marital conflict and disrupted parenting would be high. In fact, some correlations are high ($r = .33$, $p < .001$ between overt interparental conflict and father's inconsistency) and others are low ($r = .08$, $p < .001$ between overt interparental conflict and father's psychological intrusion).

Second, Gerard and Buehler (1999) found in this sample of youth that the association between youth reports of poor parenting and their own reports of problem behavior could not be explained by a youth hostile attribution bias. A hostile attribution bias is a negative belief system about others, relationships, and the world. Addition of a hostile bias measure in their analyses did not change significantly the association between poor parenting and youth problem behavior. Thus, rater bias does not appear to account for inflated estimates of association between the study constructs to any great extent.

Third, for this sample of youth, Buehler et al. (1998) used latent construct analysis to demonstrate that youth reports of hostile interparental conflict and youth problem behavior contain little correlated error. Further, the correlated error that is present did not change the association between interparental conflict and youth problem behavior.

Thus, it is difficult to account for the particular pattern of findings in this study on the basis of common-source variance alone. I do recognize, however, that future investigations of the effects of disrupted parenting on youth in the

context of marital conflict would be strengthened by the use of data from multiple methods and sources.

The findings of this study are limited by their reliance on one indicator of youth adjustment. As noted previously, youth adjustment is a global term that encompasses aspects of adaptiveness and appropriateness of youth behavior, emotional well-being, self concept, and achievement. Internalizing and externalizing youth problem behavior comprise only part of that broader construct but is an important conceptualization of youth adjustment.

The study results are based on correlational data from one point in time. Because data on marital conflict, disrupted parenting, and youth problem behavior was obtained at the same time, it is not possible to establish the causal order between variables. Although the models assume that marital conflict affects parenting, which in turn affects youth problem behavior, it should be noted that children's behavior also influences parent-child interactions (Bell, 1968). Thus, the possibility cannot be eliminated that the associations are due to other causal ordering such that youth behavior affects parents.

Future studies can address this limitation by using structural equation methods with longitudinal data to model reciprocal influences over time between parents and youth. Another way to address this limitation is to use experimental methods. The linkages identified need to be examined in future research using a longitudinal design so that the time ordering of the variables can be examined.

An ideal future study would include a longitudinal design of multiple methods and multiple sources.

Future Research

Future research should examine a more rigorous test of the model by exploring a greater spectrum of other forms and modes of conflict expression such as avoidant, withdrawal, and cooperative interparental conflict styles. Also, researchers have suggested that parental depression and psychopathology might influence the association between interparental conflict styles and youth problem behavior (Buehler et al., 1994; Downey & Coyne, 1990); thus, parental mental health would be an important addition to a more comprehensive model. Importantly, the meaning youth attach to hostile interparental conflict has been identified by Grych and Fincham (1990) as a potential explanatory mechanism through which hostile interparental conflict affects youth adjustment. An enhanced model that includes analyses of additional interparental conflict styles, parental depression, parental psychopathology, and youth appraisals should help pinpoint strategic areas for intervention.

The results of this study might be enriched by examining more closely a global dimension of covert interparental conflict style. Global covert interparental conflict is exemplified when unspoken resentments and tensions between parents are manifested in subtle, indirect behaviors and affect such as the "silent treatment," sarcasm, or veiled teasing (Jenkins & Smith, 1991; Stone & Buehler,

1997; Whittaker & Bry, 1991). This subtle aggression is expressed toward one's partner in indirect ways that do not involve the child. Global covert interparental conflict style has been explored only superficially and deserves further attention. Although Jenkins and Smith (1991) did not find a significant relationship between parents' silent tensions and youth problem behavior, a well-developed measure which taps all aspects of the global covert interparental conflict construct (i.e., veiled teasing, sarcasm, the "silent treatment") should provide a more complete understanding of the effects of interparental conflict, and particularly a covert interparental conflict style, on youth.

In conclusion, the robust relationship between hostile interparental conflict and youth problem behavior is worthy of further examination, especially determining why and how these two factors are linked. This study illuminates the importance of considering parenting practices in this explanatory role. Overall, the findings reported here buttress a growing literature indicating that disruptions in parenting are a significant indirect source of the impact of marital conflict on youth problem behavior.

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APPENDIX

Measures

Interparental Conflict StylesCovert Conflict

How often does one of your parents send a message to the other one through you because they don't want to talk to the other parent?

How often does one of your parents insult (show disrespect for) the other one when they are not there?

*How often does one of your parents ask you what the other one is thinking, feeling, or doing because they don't want to ask the other parent?

*How often does one of your parents try to get you to side with one of them?

*How often do you feel caught in the middle when your parents fight?

*How often do you feel torn between your parents?

*How often do you feel like you have to take sides when your parents fight?

*How often do you feel if you make one parent happy you will upset the other?

Response Scale:

- (1) never
- (2) once in a while
- (3) fairly often
- (4) very often

Overt Conflict Style

When your mom and dad disagree about any of the things in Question 2, how often do they do the following in front of you (so you can see or hear?)

*Call each other names

*Threaten each other

*Yell at each other

*Insult (show disrespect for) each other

*Tell each other to shut up

Response Scale:

- (1) never
- (2) once in a while
- (3) fairly often
- (4) very often

Disrupted Parenting Behaviors

Psychological Intrusion

My mother/father is a person who . . .

- Acts like she/he knows what I am thinking or feeling
- Blames me for other family members' problems
- *Tries to change how I think or feel about things
- Finishes my sentences when I talk
- *Would like to be able to tell me how to think or feel about things
- Tells me that I am not a loyal or good member of the family

Response Scale:

- (1) not like her/him
- (2) somewhat like her/him
- (3) a lot like her/him

Intraparental Inconsistency

My mother/father is a person who . . .

- Only keeps rules when it suits her/him
- *Frequently changes the rules I am supposed to follow
- *Lets me do something one day and the next day I get into trouble for doing the same thing
- It depends on her/his mood whether a rule is enforced or not
- *Punishes me for things she/he previously told me were okay
- *Soon forgets a rule she/he has made

Response Scale:

- (1) not like her/him
- (2) somewhat like her/him
- (3) a lot like her/him

Low Warmth/Support

My mother/father is a person who . . .

- *Gives me a lot of care and attention
- *Believes in showing her/his love for me
- Is able to make me feel better when I am upset
- Cheers me up when I am sad
- *Enjoys doing things with me

Response Scale:

- (1) not like her/him
- (2) somewhat like her/him
- (3) a lot like her/him

Inadequate Behavioral Monitoring

How much do your parents REALLY know about. . .

- *Who your friends are?
- *Where you go at night?
- *How you spend your money?
- *What you do with your free time?
- *Where you are most afternoons after school?

Response Scale:

- (1) don't know
- (2) know a little
- (3) know a lot

Harsh Punishment

My mother/father is a person who . . .

- *Is very strict with me
- *Gives hard punishment
- Spanks me so I will learn to respect my elders
- *Punishes hard, so I will remember it for a long time
- When I really upset her/him, will lose her/his patience and punish me more severely than she/he really means to
- Punishes unfairly

Response Scale:

- (1) not like her/him
- (2) somewhat like her/him
- (3) a lot like her/him

Youth Problem BehaviorInternalizing Youth Problem Behavior

Stem: Below is a list of items that describe kids. For each item that describes you now or within the past 6 months, please circle the 2 if the item is very true or often true of you. Circle the 1 if the item is somewhat or sometimes true of you. If the item is not true of you, circle the 0.

I feel lonely.

I cry a lot.

I deliberately try to hurt or kill myself.

I am afraid I might think or do something bad.

I feel that I have to be perfect.

I feel that no one loves me.

I feel that others are out to get me.

I feel worthless or inferior.

I would rather be alone than with others.

I am too fearful or anxious.

I feel dizzy.

I feel too guilty.

I eat too much.

I feel overtired.

Physical problems without known medical cause:

Aches or pains (not headaches)

Headaches

Nausea, feel sick

Rashes or other skin problems

Stomachaches or cramps

Vomiting, throwing up

I refuse to talk.

I am secretive and keep things to myself.

I am self-conscious and easily embarrassed.

I am shy.

I am suspicious.

I think about killing myself.

I don't have much energy.

I am unhappy, sad, or depressed.

I keep from getting involved with others.

I worry a lot.

Externalizing Youth Problem Behavior

Stem: Below is a list of items that describe kids. For each item that describes you now or within the past 6 months, please circle the 2 if the item is very true or often true of you. Circle the 1 if the item is somewhat or sometimes true of you. If the item is not true of you, circle the 0.

- I argue a lot.
- I brag.
- I am mean to others.
- I try to get a lot of attention.
- I destroy my own things.
- I destroy things belonging to others.
- I disobey at school.
- I don't feel guilty after doing something I shouldn't.
- I am jealous of others.
- I get in many fights.
- I hang around with kids who get in trouble.
- I lie or cheat.
- I physically attack people.
- I would rather be with older kids than kids my own age.
- I run away from home.
- I scream a lot.
- I set fires.
- I show off or clown.
- I steal at home.
- I steal from places other than home/
- I am stubborn.
- My moods or feelings change suddenly.
- I swear or use dirty language.
- I talk too much.
- I tease others a lot.
- I have a hot temper.
- I threaten to hurt people.
- I cut classes or skip school.
- I am louder than other kids.
- I use alcohol or drugs for non medical purposes.

VITA

Melody Gaye Stone was born on January 24, 1953 in Lansing, Michigan. She was raised with her older brother, Kendall Wayne, younger brother, Kevin David, and younger sister, Cindra Roberta, by their parents, Robert and Gwyneth (Brefka) Stone. She attended Lake Owasso Elementary school and Capital View Junior High school in Roseville, Minnesota. She and her family moved to Maryland in 1968 where Gaye graduated from Oxon Hill Senior High school in 1971.

She attended the University of Florida in Gainesville where, in 1976, she earned a B.A. degree in Criminal Justice. Gaye subsequently moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where her parents had relocated, and worked as a Child Care Supervisor for the Dane County Youth Detention Center. In 1979 she began work for the Industry, Labor, and Human Relations Board of the State of Wisconsin investigating fraudulent unemployment compensation claims. In the fall of 1982, she began full time graduate studies at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and earned an M.S. in Marriage and Family Therapy in May 1984.

In September 1984, Gaye relocated to Knoxville, Tennessee, and began work as a Marital and Family Therapist at Overlook Mental Health Center. She became a Clinical Member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) and a Tennessee Licensed Marital and Family Therapist. Five years later she opened a Marriage and Family Therapy practice, maintaining a

sliding fee so her services would be available to a diverse client population.

In 1994, Gaye began part time doctoral study at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, in Child and Family Studies. She graduated in August 2000. During her Ph.D. program she taught family studies and child development courses. She maintains her clinical practice and is working toward her Approved Supervisor status with AAMFT.

Gaye married Rex David Rowell in September 1988. They have a 16-month-old daughter, Emma Piper. Upon Emma's entry into preschool, Gaye plans to teach and continue research in the areas of marital conflict and covert family interaction processes.