

Psychological Risk & Resiliency: Children's Adjustment Post-Katrina

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Predicting PTSD in Children Post-Katrina: A Longitudinal Analysis

Purpose:

1. To evaluate children and their mothers post-Katrina adjustment over a two year time span.
2. To examine variables impacting children from a family and community perspective.
3. To examine the effect of parent distress and lack of social support on their parenting behavior and children's PTSD symptom severity.

Method

391 Katrina affected mother- child dyads completed a number of questionnaires at 3-7 months and 12-14 months after Katrina. Children completed questionnaires at their schools; mothers mailed questionnaires.

Kelley, M. L., Self-Brown, S., Le, B., Vigna, J.F. Hernandez, B. C., & Gordon, A.T. (Provisionally accepted with Minor Revisions). Predicting Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms in Children Following Hurricane Katrina: A Longitudinal Analysis of Child and Family Variables. *Submitted to Journal of Traumatic Stress.*



Predicting PTSD in Children Post-Katrina: A Longitudinal Analysis

Child Measures

1. Hurricane Threat and Loss (HURTE)
2. Community Violence Exposure (SAVE)
3. PTSD (UCLA PTSD Reaction Index)

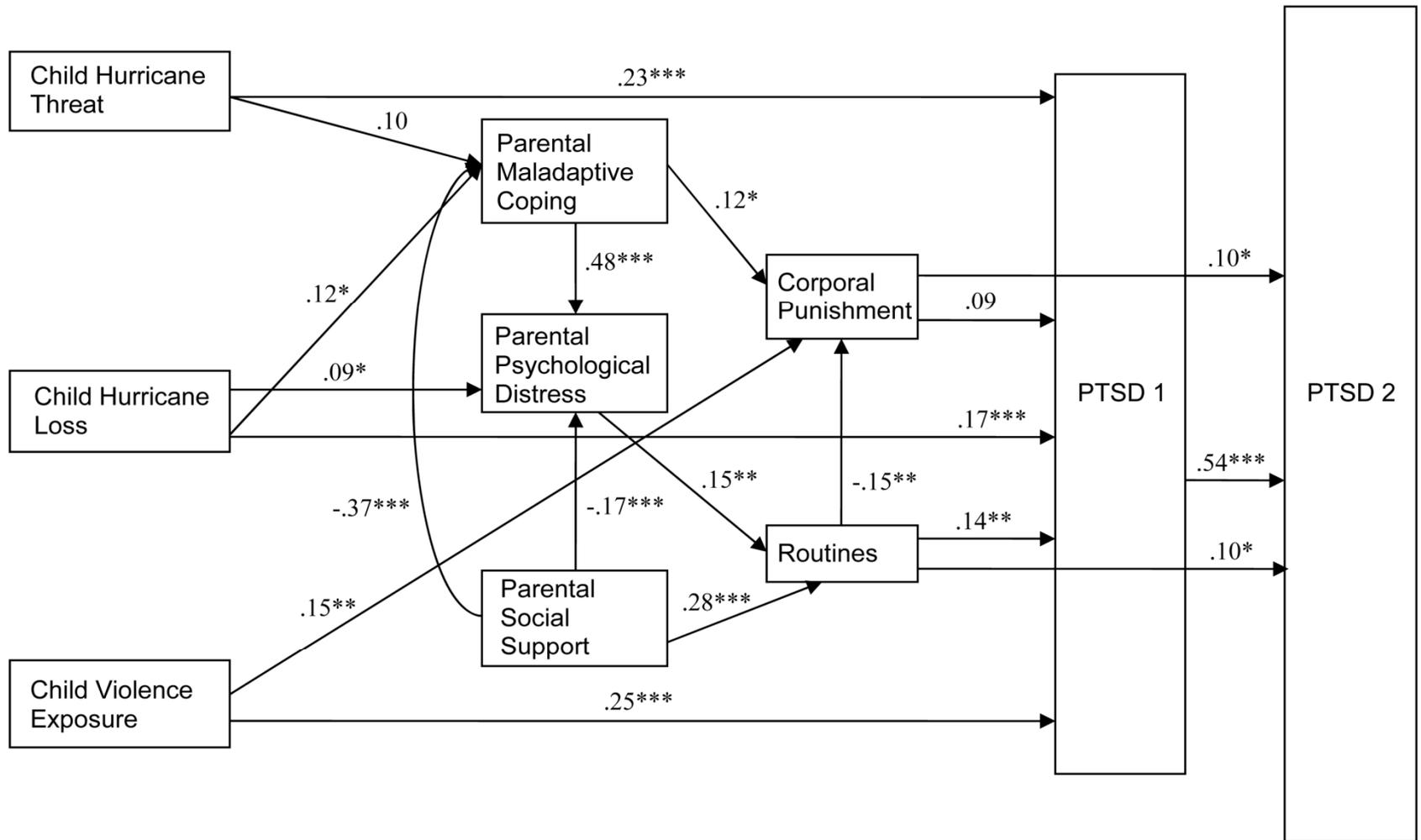
Mother Measures

1. Negative Coping (Brief Cope)
2. Social Support (ISEL)
3. Global Distress (SCL-90, Global Distress Index)

Parenting Measures

1. Corporal Punishment (Alabama Parenting Questionnaire)
2. Family Routines (Family Routine Questionnaire)





$p < .10$
 * $p < .05$
 ** $p < .01$
 *** $p < .0001$

^a All path coefficients are standardized

Predicting PTSD in Children Post-Katrina: A Longitudinal Analysis

Results

1. **Hurricane and Violence Exposure** Predicted Child PTSD.
2. **Low Social Support** and Negative Coping Predicted Parent Distress
3. **Parent Distress** Positively Related to Corporal Punishment and Routines.
4. Parents' Use of **Corporal Punishment** Predicted Child PTSD at T1 & T2
5. Children with Severe PTSD Symptoms at **T1**, 12 times more likely to have severe PTSD at **T2**.



The Youth Coping Responses Inventory: Development & Initial Validation

Purpose

To develop a comprehensive measure of coping that is psychometrically sound and appropriate for use with diverse samples of youth.

Participants

450 youth, ages 10-16 ($M = 12.58$). 53% African American, 39% Caucasian, 8% other .

Item Generation

Pool of items generated from literature review and variations of items on existing adult and child coping measures. Final pool = 83 items

Item Elimination

16 items eliminated due to low frequency, high inter-item correlations, or poor wording. 23 items eliminated after factor analysis

Hernandez, B.C., Vigna, J.F., & Kelley, M.L. (Accepted with Minor Revisions). The Youth Coping Responses Inventory: Development and initial validation. *Submitted to the Journal of Clinical Psychology.*



The Youth Coping Responses Inventory: Development & Initial Validation

Results

44 Remaining Items.

Exploratory factor analysis revealed **three coping** factors:

- Diversion (through Routines, Family, and Positivity): 20 items, $\alpha = .90$
- Destructive Coping: 13 items, $\alpha = .86$
- Ameliorative Coping: (active problem solving, discussion) 11 items, $\alpha = .85$

Initial Validation

Diversion positively related to Personal Adjustment

Destructive Coping positively related to Social Stress, Anxiety, Depression;
negatively related to Personal Adjustment

Ameliorative Coping positively related to Social Stress, Anxiety, Depression

Conclusion

YCRI appears to be a a reliable, valid measure of youth coping.



Positive Adjustment in Youth Post-Katrina: Impact of Child & Maternal Social Support and Coping

Background

Research on children's post-disaster positive adjustment understudied.

Positive adjustment: Possessing attributes such as interpersonal skills, self-reliance, and self-esteem

Maternal and child coping and social support related to adjustment in non-disaster literature and buffers against PTSD symptom severity post-disaster

Purpose

To examine possible predictors of positive adjustment post-Katrina emphasizing personal and maternal factors

Vigna, J. F., Hernandez, B. C., Paasch, V., Gordon, A.T., & Kelley, M. L. (2009). Positive Adjustment in Youth Post-Katrina: The Impact of Child and Maternal Social Support and Coping. K. E. Cherry (Ed), *Lifespan Perspectives on Natural Disasters: Coping with Katrina, Rita and other Storms*. NY: Springer.



Positive Adjustment in Youth Post-Katrina: Impact of Child & Maternal Social Support and Coping

Hypotheses

1. Heightened **hurricane** and **violence exposure** will predict fewer positive outcomes
2. **Children 's positive coping** strategies will predict greater positive adjustment; negative coping strategies will predict less positive adjustment.
3. **Mothers** reporting greater **social support** will have children with greater positive adjustment
4. **Mothers** using **positive coping** strategies will have children with greater positive adjustment



Positive Adjustment in Youth Post-Katrina: Impact of Child and Maternal Social Support and Coping

Participants

142 mother-child dyads from Orleans, Jefferson, and EBR
(Mean child age = 11.67 years; 58% female; 59% African American)

Procedure:

Youth completed measures of hurricane (HURTE) and community violence exposure (SAVE) 3 – 7 months post-Katrina.

Youth completed a measure of social support (SSSC), coping (YCRI), and positive adjustment (BASC-2) 25 – 28 months post-Katrina.

Parents completed measures of social support (ISEL), coping (COPE), and their perception of their children's positive adjustment (BASC-2) 25 -28 months post-Katrina.



Positive Adjustment in Youth Post-Katrina: Impact of Child and Maternal Social Support and Coping

Results

1. Hurricane-related life-threatening experiences *positively* related to positive adjustment.
2. **Parent-provided social support** was the strongest predictor of child-reported positive adjustment
3. Coping style using **Diversion** (Re-establishing Routines, Alternate Activities, and Spirituality) was the second strongest predictor of positive adjustment
4. **Destructive** coping negatively predicted positive adjustment
5. **Ameliorative** coping was not associated with positive outcomes.



Positive Adjustment in Youth Post-Katrina: Impact of Child and Maternal Social Support and Coping

Conclusions

1. **Parent support** is paramount in youths' positive adjustment post-disaster
2. Programming should emphasize to **parents** their **critical role** in determining their children's long-term adjustment in times of crisis.
3. **Providing children distracting activities** may be integral to post disaster adjustment. **Problem focused** coping may not be helpful to children in situations they cannot control outcome.

