

Well-being of Adolescents in Military Families: Examining the Intersections of Resilience and Vulnerability

Chairs: Jay A. Mancini, Mallory Lucier-Greer,
& Amy Laura Arnold

Discussant: Angela Huebner

National Council on Family Relations
Annual Conference

San Antonio, TX
November 6, 2013

Data were drawn from a project funded by NIFA Award No. 2009-48680-06069, Jay A. Mancini, Principal Investigator.



The University of Georgia

Department of Human Development and Family Science



Adolescent Well-Being: Identifying Social Relationship Protective Factors

Mallory Lucier-Greer, Florida State University
Amy Laura Arnold, The University of Georgia
Jay A. Mancini, The University of Georgia
James L. Ford, The University of Georgia
Chalandra Bryant, The University of Georgia



The University of Georgia

Department of Human Development and Family Science



Identifying Protective Factors

Combine principles of...

- Contextual Model of Family Stress
- Theory of Community Action and Change

...to identify social relationship protective factors.



Protective Factors that Can be Developed or Facilitated

- Contextual Model of Family Stress
 - Internal Context: Family Support
 - External Context
- Theory of Community Action and Change
 - External Context via the Community
 - Informal Networks: Ties to Community
 - Formal Systems: Involvement in Community



Hypotheses

- **Hypothesis 1.** Higher levels of cumulative risk will be related to more depressive symptoms, lower academic performance, and lower self-efficacy in terms of persistence.
(*Previous study*)
- **Hypothesis 2.** The presence of social protective factors will diminish or eliminate the link between cumulative risk and relevant adolescent outcomes.



Measures

- Predictor: Cumulative Risk
- Outcomes
 - Depressive symptoms (CES-DC)
 - “During the past week, I felt like crying:
 - Grades: Self-reported grades on record card
 - Self-efficacy (General Self-Efficacy Scale; Sherer et al., 1982)
 - “When unexpected problems occur, I don’t handle them very well.” (reverse score)



Measures: Mediators

– Internal

- Measure of Family Support
- “(Someone in my family) listens to me when I have something to say.”

– Community Context: Informal networks

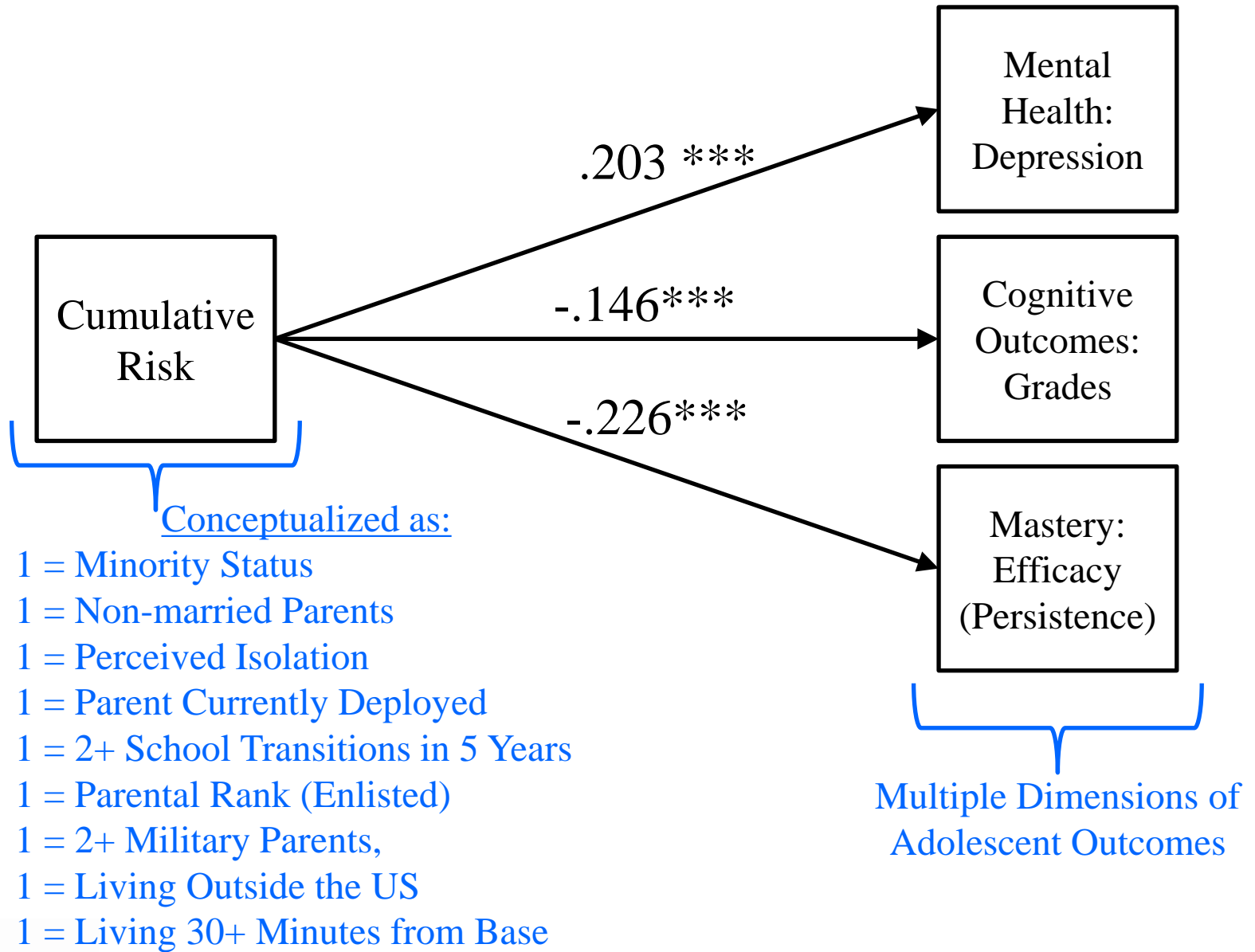
- Affectional Ties (Social Provisions; Cutrona & Russell, 1987)
- “I feel part of a group who share my attitudes and beliefs.”
- “I have a strong bond with at least one other person.”

– Community Context: Formal systems

- Involvement in community programs
- Index of involvement in youth programs, military sponsored events, & religious activities

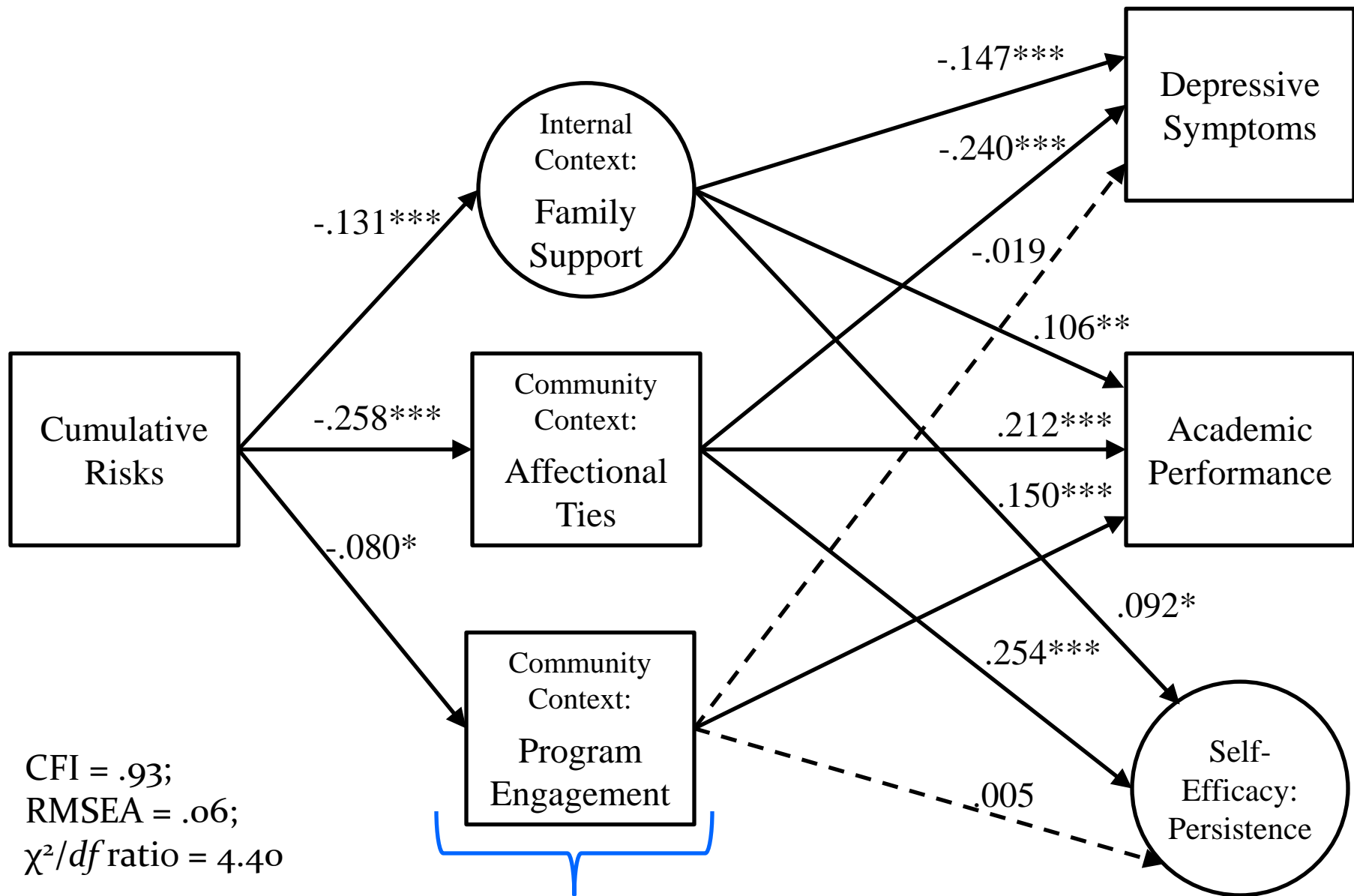


Influence of Cumulative Risk on Adolescent Outcomes



Note. Standardized coefficients





CFI = .93;
 RMSEA = .06;
 χ^2/df ratio = 4.40

Mediators at the Family- and Community-level



So what?

- Cumulative risk is related to poorer outcomes.

BUT

- Having healthy or meaningful social ties to others is related to lower levels of depression, better grades, and higher levels of self-efficacy (persistence).

