

Mothers' mental games increase depressive symptoms in daughters

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A new study in the journal *Family Relations* examined the effects of a mother's psychological control on the risk for depression of African American adolescents. Researchers found that girls whose mothers played mental games with them like making them feel guilty or withdrawing expressions of love reported much higher levels of depressive symptoms and lower levels of personal agency.

Psychological control did not affect the psychological well-being of boys.

Jelani Mandara and Crysta L. Pikes examined a sample of 152 African American students in the ninth through twelfth grade at a high school in a large Midwestern city. The sample consisted of 102 females and 50 males. Researchers assessed the degree to which maternal psychological control had an effect on depressive symptoms.

Mandara and Pikes suggested that, "The key for practitioners will be to impress upon parents the need to find a balance between psychological autonomy and behavioral regulation at each stage of their children's development."

Source: Wiley

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