

41. Adolescent Peer Relations: Comparisons between Children of Female Same-Sex Parents and Opposite-Sex Parents

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This study was a comparison of 44 adolescents with female same-sex parents to 44 adolescents with opposite-sex parents. All adolescents were functioning well, as demonstrated by both self-reported and peer-reported measures of peer relations. Quality of adolescents' peer relationships did not differ by family type. Regardless of family type, adolescents who reported more friends in schools, higher quality peer relations, and were rated as more central in their friendship networks had parents who described that they had closer relationships with their adolescent children. There was a gender effect—girls reported more activities with their mothers and higher levels of care from peers and adults than did boys. Taken together, results indicate that parental sexual orientation is not a significant factor impacting adolescent children's peer relationships. Rather, the quality of parent-child relationships and family processes are much more influential in predicting adolescent peer relations.

Participants were drawn from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, which comprises a nationally representative sample of 90,000 that is geographically, economically and racially diverse. This study, known as Add Health, is a school-based survey of factors that influence health-related behaviors of adolescents in grades 7-12. Participants were matched on demographic characteristics such as sex (52% female), race (31.8% Non-White), age (mean of 15.1 years), average household income (mean of \$44,000), adoption status (4.5% adopted), learning disability status, and parents' age (mean of 41.5 years) and educational attainment (47.7% college-educated). Children with same-sex parents were not significantly different from children with opposite-sex parents based on any of these characteristics.