**Запись: 1**

**Название:**

Representations of Mother-Child Attachment Relationships and Social-Information Processing of Peer Relationships in Early Adolescence

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**Ре**

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We examined the concurrent associations between early adolescents' representations of mother-child attachment relationships and how they process social information in their peer relationships. Attachment representations were examined in a normative sample of 97 males and 88 females (mean age = 10.35 years), using an adaptation of the Attachment Doll Story Completion Task. Structural Equation Modeling was used to assess general latent structures of social-information processing (SIP) orientations across the different SIP steps. As expected, secure mother-child attachment representations were positively associated with prosocial SIP orientation and negatively with antisocial SIP orientation. Avoidant attachment was associated negatively with prosocial and distress expression SIP orientations. Ambivalent attachment was positively associated with distress expression SIP orientation. Disorganized attachment was positively associated with SIP distress expression orientation and with antisocial SIP orientation. Results are discussed as reflecting a generalization of social knowledge and regulation strategies from the attachment system to the affiliative system. (Contains 4 figures and 1 table.)

Keywords Attachment, adolescence, peer relationship, social-information processing, Doll Story Completion Task A key proposition of attachment theory is that the quality of early attachment relationships affects and guides the child’s quality of relations with peers later in life (Cassidy, 2008). Specifically, attachment representations formed following repeated interactions with attachment figures are assumed to subsequently guide the child’s perceptions and cognitions (social-information processing) with peers (Kerns, 1996; Parke & O’Neil, 1999). In the present study, we investigated this assumption by examining the associations between early adolescents’ representations of mother-child attachment relationships and how they process social information in their peer relationships. According to attachment theory, all infants have an innate, biologically based tendency to form an attachment bond to stronger and wiser individuals, who become their attachment figures (Bowlby, 1969/1982). Through repeated daily experiences with these attachment figures, children develop cognitiveaffective attachment representations of themselves as being (un)worthy of care and protection and of the tendencies of these figures to be (un)available, (un)responsive, and (in)sensitive to their need for protection (Cassidy, 2008). These representations are revealed in cognitive processes such as selective perception, memory retrieval and assimilation of divergent pieces of information into a coherent whole, as well as in emotion-regulation strategies (Bretherton & Munholland, 2008). These representations guide the processing of information on attachment relationships with these figures, but are also expected to guide social relationships in general, including relationships with other social partners such as peers (Kerns, 1996; Parke & O’Neil, 1999). For example, a child who has a sensitive attachment figure develops positive expectations and attitudes about relationships, as well as a flexible, open, and resilient emotion-regulation strategy. These expectations and attitudes, as well as the relevant emotion-regulation strategies, are expected to generalize to other contexts and to be carried forward into other relationships. Specifically, attachment researchers have suggested such a transfer from past experiences in attachment relationships—a close and hierarchical relationship with an Downloaded from jea.sagepub.com at Moscow City University of on May 15, 2016 Granot and Mayseless 539 adult caregiver—to peer relationships—a symmetrical affiliation with same-age partners (Bretherton & Munholland, 2008). Such a postulated transfer between two different social systems—attachment and affiliation, each reflecting distinct evolutionary predispositions (Furman & Simon, 1999)—is not necessarily self-evident and needs empirical confirmation. Social-Information Processing in Relations With Peers A central model for social-information processing, which can help elucidate individual differences in information processing in relations with peers, is the multistep model for Social-information processing (SIP) suggested by Dodge and colleagues (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Dodge & Price, 1994). These researchers assumed that variations in children’s social-information processing are implicated in children’s social problems (aggressiveness, passivity, withdrawal) and prosocial behavior. They proposed several steps that individuals undergo when they encounter a social situation: (a) encoding is perceiving and encoding situational and social cues; (b) interpretation is forming a mental representation and interpretation of the situation; (c) clarification of goals is selecting a goal or desired outcome for interaction; (d) response generation is recalling or constructing possible reactions to the situation; (e) response evaluation is evaluating these reactions; and (f) Enactment is initiating what is expected to be an adequate action while monitoring its effects and regulating behavior accordingly. According to the model, variations in children’s socioemotional functioning derive from differences in such social-information processes, leading to a diverse selection of behavioral reactions. The reason for the variation lies in the personal social “data base,” a collection of memories and insights that is based on experience and crystallizes into internalized representations and social schemes. These different internalized representations and social schemes guide children to different interpretations, hence to different social reactions. Crick and Dodge (1994) assumed that a child’s attachment representations are one of the central components of the social data base, which guide these processes of interpretations of social information in the peer arena. A large number of studies present strong empirical support for the association between specific SIP steps and children’s social adjustment (for review see Crick & Dodge, 1994). Dodge (1993) further postulated the existence of overall latent structures of social-information processing, reflecting major SIP orientations that are observed across the different steps. These SIP orientations reflect an overall tendency in social-information processing that can be identified across the different SIP steps, including the final enactment step (Dodge, 1993). Downloaded from jea.sagepub.com at Moscow City University of on May 15, 2016 540 Journal of Early Adolescence 32(4) Crick and Dodge (1994) postulated the existence of three main alternative response orientations in problematic social situations to “move toward” the other (prosocial orientation), to “move against” the other (antisocial-aggressive orientation), and to “move away” from the other (withdrawal/avoiding orientation). Von Salisch’s (2001) findings suggested an additional alternative orientation as a common response of children in problematic social situations to express their distress as a way to achieve their goals (distress expression orientation). In the present study, we assessed all four orientations as overall latent SIP orientations, and expected the different patterns of attachment representations to be distinctly associated with the different SIP orientations.

Individual Differences in Attachment Representations and Social-Information Processing Research in the attachment paradigm has identified four major patterns of attachment behavior and representations, one secure and three insecure: avoidant, ambivalent and disorganized (Cassidy, 2008). Secure children are characterized by a balance between self-reliance and reliance on the attachment figure in times of distress, and a flexible and prosocial emotion regulation strategy. Consequently, with regard to the processing of social information, secure children are likely to develop open, flexible, and nondefensive information-processing orientations, with a high tendency to be prosocial and to cooperate with others, and low tendency to be antisocial and aggressive toward others. The three insecure patterns are conspicuous in their imbalance, showing an emphasis on self-reliance at the expense of close relationships (avoidant), an emphasis on dependency at the expense of self-reliance and exploration (ambivalent), or no consistent pattern (disorganized). Avoidant children, who are assumed to be raised by a rejecting parent, are expected to develop a deactivating emotion-regulation strategy that minimizes the expression of negative affect (sadness, distress) as a defensive exclusion of threatening information (Cassidy, 2008; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2008). Based on these internalizations, avoidant children are likely to develop a distancing orientation to information processing in social situations, with low tendencies to openly express their need for help by the expression of distress or to promote prosocial interactions with others, especially when feeling rejected. Ambivalent children, raised by a parent who is usually inconsistent and unreliably Downloaded from jea.sagepub.com at Moscow City University of on May 15, 2016 Granot and Mayseless 541 responsive, are assumed to develop a “heightening emotion-regulation strategy” in which they heighten expressions of anger, distress, or dependency to coerce the caregiver to respond to their needs (Cassidy, 2008; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2008). Based on these representations, ambivalent children are likely to develop a hypervigilant and anxious orientation, with a tendency to use expressions of distress in response to challenging peer interactions. Lyons-Ruth, Bronfman, and Atwood (1999) suggested that the disorganized pattern is rooted in an improper parent-child hierarchy in which the parent’s behaviors (frightening or frightened) prevent reciprocity in the relationships, leaving the child with two conceivable alternatives: to counteract (be hostile) or to give up (be helpless). Based on this experience, disorganized children are likely to develop two parallel social-information processing orientations: antisocial, which involves hostility and aggressiveness, and helplessness, which may be enacted by expressing distress. Several previous studies have examined the associations between parentchild attachment and social-information processing of relationships with the peer group. Suess, Grossmann, and Sroufe (1992) showed that German children who had been secure as infants (observed by the Strange Situation at 12 months) showed a lower tendency to hostile attribution of peer behavior in problematic social situations than children who had been avoidant as infants. Similarly, assessing 6- to 7-year-olds, Cassidy, Kirsh, Scolton, and Parke (1996) found that secure children assessed by a reunion procedure had a higher tendency to attribute positive intentions to peers. A similar finding was shown by Belsky, Spritz, and Crnic (1996) in a sample of American boys whereby boys with secure attachment histories (assessed by the Strange Situation at 12 months), when assessed again at 3 years of age, remembered positive events more accurately than negative events. The reverse was true of children with insecure attachment histories. This prosocial and positive propensity of secure children was also observed in the generation and evaluation of reactions to peers. Cassidy et al. (1996) found that American preschool children with secure and ambivalent patterns (assessed by the Strange Situation at 12 months) generated more positive reactions for problematic social situations than did avoidant children. Additionally, avoidant preschool children generated fewer (half as many) solutions for problematic social situations than children with secure and ambivalent patterns. Similarly, in an American sample of 6- to 7-year-olds, secure children assessed by a reunion procedure concurrently generated more positive reactions than others in processing social events. Secure attachment in Israeli 7- to 8-year-old children (assessed by the Strange Situation at 12 months) was also associated with higher tendency to evaluate Downloaded from jea.sagepub.com at Moscow City University of on May 15, 2016 542 Journal of Early Adolescence 32(4) competent-dialog responses as having a positive social outcome (Ziv, Oppenheim, & Sagi-Schwartz, 2004). Finally, Bauminger and Kimhi-Kind (2008), in a sample of 10- to 12-year-old Israeli boys (50% of them with learning disabilities), found that perceived security in attachment relationships with mother, as assessed through a self-report scale, added significant explained variance to these children’s social-information processing. The highest contribution was obtained for children’s ability to generate a competent solution. In sum, previous studies, mostly with early childhood samples, focused on the secure/insecure division and mainly showed associations between secure attachment pattern and social-information processing, characterized by a low tendency to hostile attribution and a high tendency to generate prosocial responses. In line with previous studies, in the present study we too focused on attachment to mother, who is considered the most significant attachment figure in nonclinical samples (Schneider, Atkinson, & Tardif, 2001). We further extended these studies in various ways. First, we focused on early adolescence (10- to 12-year olds), an age when the arena of peer relationships is highly central and important. Compared with early childhood, children in early adolescence have higher flexibility in thinking, greater social knowledge, and higher ability to understand peer social responses; their relationships with peers are more intense, complex, and important to them (for a review see Bukowski, Newcomb, & Hartup, 1996; Kerns, 2008). Hence, examination of social-information processing in the peer arena at this age may allow the identification of a multifaceted and complex picture of individual differences, and help us find the expected orientations of socialinformation processing for all four patterns of attachment representations. Second, to have sufficient statistical power to go beyond the secure/insecure division and examine all four patterns of attachment and their associations with the four SIP orientations, we assembled a sample larger than prior studies (Belsky et al., 1996; Cassidy et al., 1996; Suess et al., 1992; Ziv et al., 2004), which included children of both sexes. The number of participants allowed us to elucidate and identify the four latent SIP orientations using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Third, most SIP studies focused on hostile and nonadaptive SIP characteristics (hostile attribution bias, aggressive SIP reactions, or depressive-withdrawn SIP reactions), within at-risk populations (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Nelson & Crick, 1999). To broaden our understanding of the significance of SIP in the general population, as well as to allow us to elucidate individual differences in prosocial SIP orientation, which is rare among at-risk populations, we relied on a normative rather than at-risk sample. Downloaded

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