

## Adolescents' Implicit Theories of Peer Relationships and Their School Adjustment

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*This research examined the interplay between adolescents' implicit theories about peer relationships and their academic adjustment; the mediating role of adolescents' disclosure to parents and the moderating role of their victimization experience were evaluated. Five hundred and forty adolescents (253 girls; mean age = 13.5 years, SD = 0.67) reported on their incremental (vs. entity) views about peer relationships, disclosure to parents about their everyday activities, and their victimization experience in school. Grades were obtained from official school records. Adolescents who held heightened incremental views about peer relationships disclosed more to their parents—especially when they experienced victimization in school. Incremental views were associated with grades, regardless of victimization experience. The association between incremental views and grades was in part explained by adolescents' disclosure to parents.*

**Keywords:** *disclosure to parents, implicit theories, peer relationships, victimization, achievement*

RESEARCH indicates that adolescents' implicit theories about peer relationships are associated with their psychological adjustment (Rudolph, 2010; Schleider, Abel, & Weisz, 2015). When adolescents hold incremental (vs. fixed) beliefs about peer relationships, they tend to see relationships with their peers as malleable—something that can be improved over time. In turn, adolescents become more engaged in fostering positive social relationships, ultimately benefiting their competencies in the social realm. Although the role of implicit theories for adolescents' social, emotional, and academic adjustment has been documented (e.g., Yeager et al., 2014; Yeager, Lee, & Jamieson, 2016), it is unclear when and how implicit theories of peer relationships make a difference in children's school functioning. Given that adolescents' achievement is in part attributable to their social experiences (e.g., Crosnoe, 2011), it is important to understand adolescents' implicit beliefs within the context of their relationships with others. To this end, adolescents' experiences in the school (i.e., victimization experience) and home (i.e., disclosure to parents about their everyday activities) environments were investigated.

### Implicit Theories of Peer Relationships

According to Dweck and colleagues (Dweck, 1999; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Molden & Dweck, 2006), individuals hold distinct implicit (or lay) theories about intelligence—some see intelligence as something that is fixed and inborn, whereas others see it as something changeable through effort. Although some may have general views about the fixedness (vs. malleability) of intelligence, it is possible that they hold distinct theories across domains (Chiu, Hong, & Dweck, 1997). In the social domain, people may hold disparate views about the nature of their relationships with peers (Rudolph, 2010; Yeager et al., 2016). When individuals believe that social relationships are relatively static and fixed, they view the fundamental nature of social relationships as unchangeable no matter how hard one tries. To those with a static view about peer relationships, rejected individuals will remain unpopular in the peer group because there is very little that one can do to change the nature of such relationships (see Dweck, 1991). In contrast, when someone believes that social relationships are dynamic and changeable, he or she perceives that one's popularity among



peers can be improved through the use of proper strategies (see Rudolph, 2010).

Adolescents who hold incremental views about peer relationships tend to possess mastery-oriented social goals such that they are focused on developing their social competence in the peer group. Conversely, adolescents with heightened entity views about peer relationships tend to possess performance-oriented goals such that they are often concerned about demonstrating their competence in the social realm and are apprehensive of looking socially incompetent in the peer group. Adolescents who hold heightened incremental views tend to experience fewer psychological problems (e.g., depression), even in the face of victimization (Rudolph, 2010). Hence, adolescents' implicit theories of peer relationships appear to have significant implications for children's development of social competence, which in turn can influence their psychological adjustment.

Although research has documented the link between implicit theories and adolescents' school functioning (e.g., Yeager et al., 2014; Yeager et al., 2016), the social pathways through which implicit theories benefit adjustment are unclear. As children progress into adolescence, the school context becomes a vital environment where they develop social and academic competence (Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2000). Given that adolescents with heightened incremental views about peer relationships are more likely to perceive social challenges as an opportunity to develop their competence, they may be more inclined to form and maintain positive social relationships with other. Such relationships in turn may benefit their academic adjustment (Wentzel, 1999). Indeed, adolescents who get along well with others may rely on their peers as a source of instrumental support (e.g., homework help) and emotional support (e.g., relieving frustration), which are crucial to learning. In contrast, adolescents who hold heightened entity views about peer relationships may be too concerned about demonstrating their social competence, which may interfere with their willingness to seek help from their support networks. For example, adolescents who hold heightened entity views may be concerned that sharing a weakness or challenge in the social arena may lead others to see that they are socially incompetent.

#### *Role of Disclosure to Parents*

Given that adolescents who hold incremental theories about peer relationships tend to see developing their social competence as important, they may be more likely to actively seek resources to improve their social relationships—for example, through their disclosure of everyday activities to parents. Although adolescents often spend more time with their peers as they enter adolescence, parents are still a vital source of information and support (e.g., Cheung, Pomerantz, & Dong, 2013). For adolescents who desire to develop their social competence, parents may be a rich

resource of knowledge and guidance (e.g., Abaied & Rudolph, 2011; Smetana, Villalobos, Tasopoulos-Chan, Gettman, & Campione-Barr, 2009). As such, adolescents who hold incremental views may find it useful to share with parents their social experiences and challenges, to improve their social skills.

As parents become more knowledgeable about the daily experiences of adolescents, they may be able to provide effective guidance to them, which in turn may facilitate their learning. Indeed, research indicates that adolescents' disclosure of everyday activities to parents can confer benefits to their engagement and achievement in school (e.g., Cheung et al., 2013; Vieno, Nation, Pastore, & Santinello, 2009). Although there is scant empirical support examining why disclosure can enhance adolescents' academic adjustment, a possible reason pertains to the idea that disclosure enhances adolescents' sense of responsibility to parents, which in turn facilitates their academic adjustment (Qin & Pomerantz, 2013). Hence, not only are incremental views of peer relationships likely to induce disclosure, but disclosure may also represent a mechanism through which incremental beliefs benefit adolescents' school functioning. In addition, social support from parents may reduce the stress that adolescents experience in the social arena.

However, adolescents who hold an entity view of peer relationships may be more reluctant to disclose to their parents the challenges they face, as failure to overcome challenges may signal their incompetence. Research has shown that adolescents with entity views about personality traits (e.g., bullies cannot change their behaviors) are more likely to feel ashamed when experiencing social exclusion (Yeager et al., 2014). These adolescents may believe that a social failure (e.g., rejection by peers) could signal to others that one is and will always be a social "loser." As such, they may not be willing to disclose to their parents when social challenges arise. This may in turn prevent them from receiving the support they need to cope with such difficulties and may further lead to detriments in their academic adjustment. Indeed, research indicates that difficulties with peers often can detract from the cognitive resources necessary to maintain high-quality learning (Crosnoe, 2011).

#### *Role of Victimization Experience*

Peer victimization has become a major concern within the United States, with an increasing number of children experiencing victimization in school (Robers, Kemp, & Truman, 2013). Children's experience with peer victimization is associated with difficulties both academic (e.g., Feldman et al., 2014; Juvonen, Wang, & Espinoza, 2011) and psychosocial (e.g., depression, anxiety; Swearer, Collin, Radliff, & Wang, 2011). Despite the negative consequences of victimization, research indicates that incremental views about peer relationships can serve as a protective factor. For

example, children who hold incremental views about peer relationships are less likely than their counterparts holding entity views to experience depression when victimized (Rudolph, 2010). Furthermore, entity views of personality among ninth graders predicted more negative immediate reactions to peer exclusion and lower grades 9 months later (Yeager et al., 2014). Hence, the role of incremental views of peer relationships may be particularly salient under challenging social situations such as peer victimization. Indeed, for children who are motivated to develop and improve their social competence (i.e., children who hold incremental views), they may be more likely to share experiences about the school and peer contexts with their parents, especially when those experiences include challenges in the social arena (e.g., victimization). Although the victimization experience is undesirable, individuals with incremental views about peer relationships may actively seek support from their parents to alleviate the negative experience, which may ultimately enhance their academic performance.

#### *Overview of the Current Research*

Extending research on the role of implicit theories in adolescents' psychological adjustment, the current research was designed to examine whether adolescents' implicit theories of peer relationships are associated with their academic achievement (i.e., grades). In this context, we evaluate a possible mechanism—disclosure to parents—through which implicit theories benefit adolescents' academic achievement. Given a focus in prior research on the importance of children's social experience on their learning and performance in school (Crosnoe, 2011), the current research evaluated whether adolescents' victimization experience moderated the association between implicit theories and their disclosure to parents. To this end, adolescents were asked to complete surveys about their experiences at home and school, as well as their views about the malleability (vs. fixedness) of peer relationships. Adolescents' grades were obtained from official school records. We anticipated that incremental views were associated with adolescents' grades, with such a link in part explained by adolescents' disclosure of everyday activities to their parents. Incremental views of peer relationships were expected to be associated with disclosure, especially when adolescents experienced victimization. Given that girls tend to disclose more to their parents than boys (e.g., Papini, Farmer, Clark, Micka, & Barnett, 1990), we also examined if gender moderates the link between incremental views of peer relationships and disclosure to parents.

### **Method**

#### *Participants*

Seventh- and eighth-grade students ( $N = 540$ ) from a middle school in Southern California participated in this

study on adolescents' victimization experience in school. Ages of the participants ranged from 12 to 15 years (mean = 13.56,  $SD = 0.67$ ), with an approximately equal number of students enrolled in seventh (46.1%) and eighth (46.5%) grades. Of all the participants, 257 (47.6%) were girls, 247 (45.7%) were boys, and 36 (6.7%) students did not indicate their gender. Information on ethnicity was not directly solicited; however, based on publicly available information about the school demographics (Startclass, 2015), 73.9% of the students enrolled in the middle school were Hispanic, with 10.5% White, 11% Black, 1.5% Asian, 1% Pacific Islanders, 0.4% Native Americans, and 1.8% biracial.

#### *Procedures*

Several middle schools in a mid-sized school district in Southern California were contacted for the study; one school agreed to participate. A passive consent procedure was employed. Parents received detailed information about the study and were given 1 week to decide whether to opt out from the study. Thirty-one parents opted their adolescents out of the study. Adolescents who provided assent to participate completed a survey, using a laptop, during regular class time on a normal school day. The survey was hosted on an online survey platform. In addition to the instructions in the survey prompt, trained research assistants provided clear instructions verbally to the students; they also responded to the participants' questions about the survey whenever necessary. Although participants were encouraged to respond to all questions, they were allowed to skip any item they did not wish to answer. They were also permitted to exit the survey at any time. Adolescents responded to questions about their school and home experiences anonymously and independently. Information on participants' grades (average grade point average [GPA]) was obtained from official school records. The Institution Review Board of the University of California, Riverside, approved the research protocol.

#### *Measures*

*Implicit theories about peer relationships.* A 10-item measure adapted from Rudolph (2010) was used to assess adolescents' implicit views about their relationships with their peers at school. The measure was modeled after measures of personality and intelligence developed by Dweck and colleagues (e.g., Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Henderson & Dweck, 1990). Adolescents indicated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all true*, 5 = *very true*) the extent to which they agreed with the 10 statements about the changeability of peer relationships (e.g., "By working hard, kids can change how likeable they are in school" and "Kids have a certain amount of likeability, and no matter how hard they try, they can't change it" [reverse scored]). The 10 items were averaged, with higher numbers reflecting stronger beliefs in the

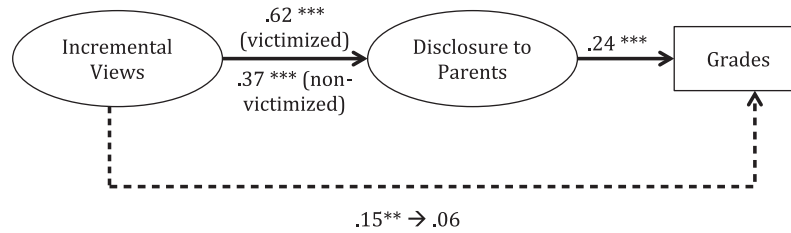


FIGURE 1. Disclosure to parents underlies the association between incremental views of peer relationships and school grades. \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .  $\chi^2 = 3.98$ ; comparative fit index = .98; Tucker-Lewis index = .96; root mean square error of approximation = .06.

changeability of peer likeability. Consistent with prior research (e.g., Rudolph, 2010), the measure attained good internal reliability ( $\alpha = .81$ ).

*Disclosure of everyday activities to parents.* A 10-item measure adapted from prior research was used to assess adolescents' disclosure of their daily whereabouts and activities to their parents. Five items (e.g., "I often start conversations with my parents about what happens in school") were drawn from the measures used by Kerr and Stattin (2000; see also Stattin & Kerr, 2000) and five other items (e.g., "I keep a lot of secrets from my parents about what I do during my free time" [reverse scored]) were drawn from Cheung et al. (2013). The measure assessed both the sharing and withholding of information on a range of personal issues, including academics. On a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all true*, 5 = *very true*), adolescents indicated the extent to which each item was true for them. Items were averaged, with higher numbers reflecting greater disclosure. Consistent with prior research (e.g., Cheung et al., 2013), the measure exhibited adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .75$ ).

*Peer victimization.* The Verbal and Physical Bullying Scale–Victimization (Swearer, 2001; Swearer, Turner, Givens, & Pollack, 2008) is an 11-item scale that assesses both verbal/relational victimization (7 items; e.g., "won't let me be a part of their group") and physical victimization (4 items; e.g., "pushed me"). Adolescents responded to each victimization experience using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *never happened*, 5 = *always happened*). The frequencies for the reported victimization experience were averaged, with higher numbers reflecting more frequent victimization experience. Consistent with prior research (e.g., Radliff, Wang, & Swearer, 2015), the measure had a high internal reliability ( $\alpha = .86$ ). Based on the frequency measure, a dichotomous victimization status variable was computed—adolescents with an average score  $>1$  were considered *victimized* (70.4% of the sample), with their counterparts who never experienced victimization considered *nonvictimized*.

*School grades.* Adolescents' cumulative GPA at the end of the school year was obtained from official school record.

GPA information was numeric, ranging from 0 to 4, with higher numbers reflecting better academic adjustment. The GPA was an indicator of adolescents' overall academic performance, which was based on their performance in both the core classes (e.g., math and language arts) and the elective classes (e.g., music).

*Gender.* Adolescents indicated their gender (1 = male, 2 = female) in the demographic section of the survey.

#### Overview of Analysis

Latent path analysis in the context of structural equation modeling was conducted to evaluate the conceptual model presented in Figure 1. With the exception of grades, latent constructs were created with the use of conceptual parcels. Confirmatory factor analysis indicated that the two purported latent constructs (i.e., incremental views of peer relationships and disclosure to parents) fit the data well (comparative fit indexes [CFIs]  $> .95$ , Tucker-Lewis indexes [TLIs]  $> .96$ , root mean square errors of approximation [RMSEAs]  $< .06$ ). To evaluate whether victimization experience and gender moderated the link between incremental views and disclosure, we utilized a set of two-group model comparisons to examine whether each path included in the conceptual model differed across groups. Analyses were conducted in Mplus 7.0 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2012). To maximize the retention of data and enhance the estimation process, we used a full information maximum likelihood method to handle missing data.

#### Results

Table 1 presents the zero-order correlations among the key constructs. Consistent with our prediction, the more adolescents held incremental views about peer relationships, the more they disclosed their everyday activities to their parents ( $r = .35, p < .001$ ). Adolescents' GPA was positively associated with incremental views ( $r = .13, p < .05$ ) as well as disclosure to parents ( $r = .19, p < .01$ ). Boys and girls were equally likely to disclose to their parents ( $t < 1, ns$ ); there was also no difference between seventh and eighth

TABLE 1  
*Associations Among Adolescents' Gender, Victimization Status, Incremental Views About Peer Relationships, and Disclosure to Parents*

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Gender	—				
2. Victimization status	.01	—			
3. Incremental views	.10	.09	—		
4. Disclosure	.02	-.02	.35***	—	
5. Grade point average	-.01	.01	.13*	.19**	—
Mean	—	1.72	3.07	2.81	2.35
SD	—	0.45	1.02	1.08	1.01

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

graders in their tendency to disclose ( $t < 1.5$ , *ns*). There was no difference between boys and girls in the association between GPA and incremental views about peer relationships ( $t < 1.5$ , *ns*). In a similar vein, victimization status (i.e., victimized once or more vs. not victimized) was not associated with adolescents' endorsement of incremental views of peer relationships ( $r = .09$ , *ns*). Older and younger adolescents did not differ on their endorsement of incremental views of peer relationships ( $t < 1$ , *ns*).

Given the association between incremental views and grades (i.e., total effect), we then evaluated the hypothesized path model depicted in Figure 1. The goal of our first model was to investigate the mediating role of disclosure. Hence, the purported moderators (i.e., victimization status and gender) were not included. The model fit the data well ( $\chi^2 = 2.18$ , CFI = .98, TLI = .96, RMSEA = .05). Adolescents' incremental views about peer relationships were positively associated with their voluntary disclosure to their parents ( $\beta = .35$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $f^2 = .14$ ). In turn, adolescents' disclosure was positively related to their GPA ( $\beta = .24$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $f^2 = .06$ ). To examine whether the association between incremental views and adolescents' GPA was in part explained by adolescents' disclosure to parents, a delta test of indirect effect was conducted. Results indicated that the direct effect of incremental views was substantially reduced when disclosure was included in the model, with a significant delta test value ( $z = 3.23$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

Next, a two-group model comparison within the context of structural equation modeling was conducted to evaluate if the association between incremental views and disclosure was moderated by victimization status. The model was identical to the mediation model evaluated in step 1 (above), with the exception that victimization status was included as a between-group factor. The model fit the data well ( $\chi^2 = 3.98$ , CFI = .98, TLI = .96, RMSEA = .06). As shown in Figure 1, the association was stronger among children who experienced one or more instances of victimization ( $\beta = .62$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $f^2 = .61$ ) versus their counterparts who never

experienced victimization ( $\beta = .37$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $f^2 = .16$ ). Such a difference was qualified by a significant  $\chi^2$  change in the nested model comparison—when the path was constrained to be the same across the two groups, there was a significant decrease in the model fit ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 4.48$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The mediating role of disclosure remained significant ( $z = 3.12$ ,  $p < .001$ ) for both groups, even when the moderating role of victimization was taken into consideration.

The possibility that gender moderates the paths in the model was also evaluated. The model examined was identical to the one evaluated in the prior step (i.e., with one mediator and one moderator), with the exception that gender but not victimization status was included as a moderating variable. Unlike the victimization status, gender did not moderate the link between incremental views and disclosure, as revealed in the nonsignificant change in model fit with the nested two-group comparison ( $\Delta\chi^2 < 1.5$ , *ns*). Hence, regardless of gender, incremental views were associated with adolescents' heightened disclosure to parents, which in turn was associated with enhanced grades. In general, none of the paths (including the direct and indirect effects) in the model were moderated by gender (each  $\Delta\chi^2 < 2$ , *ns*).

## Discussion

To our knowledge, the current research represents the first effort in examining the interplay between adolescents' views about the nature of peer relationships and their academic adjustment, in the context of their relationships with parents and peers. Consistent with Dweck and colleagues' theory (Dweck, 1999; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Molden & Dweck, 2006), the more adolescents see their social interaction with peers as changeable (i.e., incremental), the more likely they do well in school. We also tested the plausibility that adolescents' disclosure to their parents underlies the link between their implicit beliefs about peer relationships and their academic achievement. Indeed, incremental views were associated with heightened disclosure, which in turn was associated with higher GPA. There is also evidence in support of the idea that incremental views can be particularly conducive to disclosure when adolescents experience victimization in school.

Extending beyond research focusing on the role of peers in children's learning (e.g., Wentzel, 1991), the current research revealed that adolescents who see peer relationships as something that can be improved tend to do well in school. Consistent with theoretical perspectives (e.g., Dweck, 1999; Yeager, Trzesniewski, & Dweck, 2013), having the mind-set that one can build quality relationships with his or her peers may be a precursor of social competencies. Findings are largely consistent with much prior work on the role of implicit theories in academic achievement (for a meta-analysis, see Burnette, O'Boyle, VanEpps, Pollack, & Finkel, 2013). Indeed, a belief

that relationships can be improved through effort may serve as an impetus for adolescents to maintain and develop their social relationships, which may be particularly beneficial in challenging situations (e.g., victimization). Adolescents' social competencies may in turn facilitate school adjustment given that peers can often serve as a source of instrumental and emotional support (Wentzel, 2005).

In addition to documenting that incremental views about peer relationships can confer benefits to adolescents' academic functioning, the current research provided evidence in support of the idea that adolescents' disclosure to parents can in part underlie the benefits of incremental views. In line with the idea that incremental (vs. entity) theorists are more mastery oriented, adolescents with heightened incremental views may be more inclined to share with their parents their daily whereabouts, thereby allowing parents to offer suggestions and emotional support when necessary. Although stereotypes about adolescents may lead one to think that adolescents do not share anything with their parents, our research indicates that this is not entirely the case. In line with prior research, adolescents do engage in spontaneous disclosure about their everyday activities with their parents (e.g., Kearney & Bussey, 2014; Rote & Smetana, 2015). This is especially true for adolescents who hold incremental views about peer relationships, as they may not see disclosing social challenges to their parents as an indicator of their inaptness, allowing parents to step in and provide support when necessary.

The support and guidance that parents provide may not only help to resolve the problems that children might be facing but may also allow adolescents to develop skills that could benefit their academic adjustment (Cheung et al., 2013). For example, parents may provide suggestions to adolescents to help them regulate their emotions (e.g., anger) in the peer context; the skill thereby developed can in turn be transferred to the learning arena such that adolescents can use similar regulatory skills when they feel frustrated with their schoolwork. Hence, adolescents' disclosure to parents, albeit motivated by an initial goal to improve social relationships, can confer benefits in both the social and academic arenas.

At first blush, it may seem surprising that the association between incremental views of peer relationships and disclosure is stronger among adolescents who experienced victimization. However, because victimization is often a salient experience for many adolescents, having an incremental view about peer relationships may be particularly protective such that victimized adolescents with incremental views disclose more to their parents to obtain the support that they need to overcome challenges in the social realm. Indeed, these adolescents may see the victimization experience as an opportunity to further their social skills. Consequently, as compared with their nonvictimized counterparts, victimized adolescents who hold incremental views may be more likely to seek support from their parents. For these adolescents, setbacks and challenges (e.g., victimization) in the peer context

are seen not as determinants of their lack of ability to succeed but rather as an opportunity to further hone their social skills. This is consistent with previous research suggesting that incremental views are beneficial for adolescents' adjustment when they experience social challenges (Yeager et al., 2014). Moreover, the lack of a gender moderation effect was consistent with prior research on implicit theories in the peer domain (e.g., Rudolph, 2010; Yeager, Trzesniewski, Tirri, Nokelainen, & Dweck, 2011).

### *Limitations and Future Directions*

Several caveats are warranted in interpreting the findings from the current research. First, the current research focused on the interplay among the constructs under study at a single time point; thus, causal inferences should not be made on the basis of the findings. Indeed, it is quite possible that adolescents who perform well academically tend to see their relationships with peers as positive and malleable, which in turn may lead them to endorse incremental views to a greater extent. Future research incorporating multiple time points of assessments can provide additional insights into the direction of effects. In addition, incremental views may be experimentally manipulated in the laboratory setting to determine the causality. For example, adolescents may be induced to believe that peer relationships are something fixed and cannot be changed through effort (and vice versa). Second, students from a single middle school were included in the sample. Although the sample was largely representative of the geographical locale in which the selected middle school was situated, whether the findings generalize to other samples with distinct ethnic and sociodemographic compositions remains an open question. The use of a more ethnically diverse sample would shed light on how adolescents' implicit theories about peer relationships and their tendency to disclose may vary across ethnic and cultural groups. Third, we chose to focus on adolescents' academic achievement (i.e., GPA) as an indicator of their school adjustment because it is largely objective and less prone to reporters' bias. However, to gain further understanding of the role of implicit theories in children's school adjustment, other aspects of adolescents' school adjustment (e.g., engagement, time on schoolwork) should be considered. Finally, the current research did not examine the quality of the feedback that adolescents may receive from their parents and peers. It is possible that parents and peers may provide distinct forms of support (e.g., emotional vs. instrumental), especially when adolescents experience difficulties in the social setting. Research incorporating views from parents and peers can shed light on this important question.

### *Implications for Practice*

Our findings have the potential to enhance students' academic achievement in school through practice. For

example, trained teachers and school support staff can deliver brief interventions to promote students' incremental views of peer relationships. The belief that personal traits and social relationships are not fixed but can be improved through efforts may be particularly impactful for students who experience rejection and victimization. Instead of attributing their negative peer experience (e.g., victimization) to stable traits (e.g., I am a loser), an incremental mind-set may allow students to see the value in changing their social experience. For example, by thinking that the challenging social situation may not be a persistent situation, students may be more motivated to explore alternative ways to make new friends. Findings from our research suggest that students may be more likely to seek social support from trusting adults such as parents when they hold incremental views about social relationships. Last but not least, the use of a computer-based mind-set intervention (e.g., using animation to illustrate that social relationships can be enhanced through effort and the use of proper strategies) may enhance the ease of administering mind-set interventions (see Paunesku et al., 2015), given the widespread use of computer-mediated learning among adolescents.

### Conclusions

The current research provides support for the beneficial role of implicit theories of peer relationships in children's academic adjustment. Adolescents who have heightened incremental views about peer relationships tend to attain better school grades, with such a link in part explained by adolescents' disclosure to their parents about their daily whereabouts. Incremental views also tend to be particularly protective for adolescents who experience victimization in school.

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