

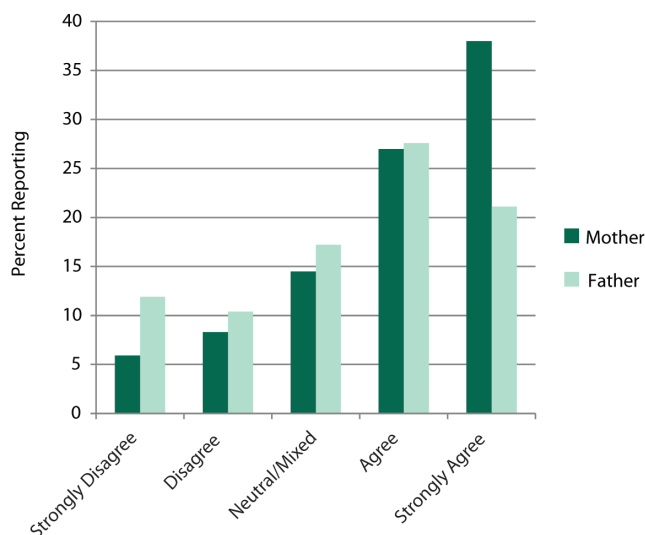
Coös County Teens' Family Relationships

CORINNA JENKINS TUCKER AND DESIREE WIESEN-MARTIN

A large body of research shows the importance of family relationship experiences for adolescent development. Although adolescents increasingly spend less time with family as they develop, parents and siblings remain important in youths' lives. Typically, adolescents' family relationships are thought to be conflicted, but recent studies highlight that teenagers' relationships with their parents are more positive than once believed.

This fact sheet examines Coös County, New Hampshire teens' perceptions of their family relationship experiences. To do so, we draw on data from the Coös Youth Study collected in 2011 from 418 eleventh graders in all Coös County public schools.

FIGURE 1: FEEL CLOSE TO MOTHER AND FATHER



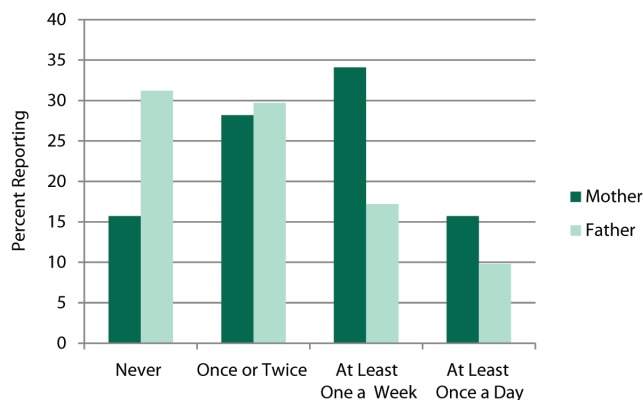
Key Findings

- Coös older adolescents feel close to their parents and siblings but also argue with them.
- A small group of youths report perpetrating violence on a family member.

Parent-Child Relationships

We asked Coös teens about their relationships with their mothers and fathers separately. While Coös teens reported arguing with their parents, most teens felt close to them. Consistent with the research literature, Coös teens felt closer to their mothers and argued more with their mothers than their fathers. See Figures 1 and 2.

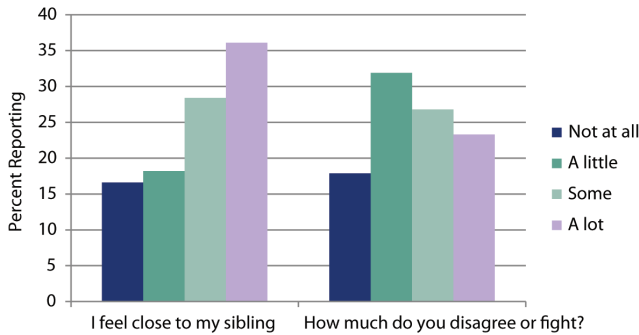
FIGURE 2: PARENT-CHILD ARGUMENTS IN THE LAST MONTH



Sibling Relationships

Coös teens' reports on their relationship with their sibling who is closest in age to them reflect the typical emotional ambiguity of sibling interactions that are filled with both love and conflict. See Figure 3.

FIGURE 3: RELATIONSHIP WITH SIBLING



Family Violence

For some teens, conflict with family members includes violence. Our work shows that approximately 11 percent of Coös teens reported that they had seriously hit a family member one or more times in the past year. Also, approximately 12 percent indicated that in the past year they had seriously threatened a family member one or more times. We do not have information on which family member these behaviors were aimed at and whether Coös teens had been the victim of family violence, but we hope to examine this issue more closely in future waves of data collection.

In summary, Coös older adolescents feel close to their parents and siblings but also argue with them. A small group of youths report perpetrating violence on a family member.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Corinna Jenkins Tucker, Ph.D., C.F.L.E., is a Carsey Institute faculty fellow and an associate professor in family studies at the University of New Hampshire (cjtucker@unh.edu).

Desiree Wiesen-Martin, M.A., is a Ph.D. candidate in sociology at the University of New Hampshire (drd33@unh.edu).