Psychoactive substance use in adolescence: The role of coparenting and identity status

Saskia Degli-Antoni, Gillian Albert Sznitman, Mathilde Dols, Stijn Van Petegem, Sophie Baudat, & Grégoire Zimmermann
Contact: saskia.degli-antoni@unil.ch
Family and Development research center (FADO), Institute of Psychology, University of Lausanne, Switzerland

BACKGROUND
- Psychoactive substance use during adolescence is an important concern given its potential negative consequences for the health and future well-being of adolescents (Zimmermann et al., 2017).
- A number of studies have examined separately the associations of individual and contextual characteristics with risk-taking behaviors. Some studies indicated associations with coparenting (parents/collaboration in childrearing) dimensions (e.g., Baril et al., 2007; Teubert & Pinquart, 2010) or identity statuses (actual state derived from the combination of identity processes) (e.g., Jones & Hartmann, 1988; Schwartz et al., 2011).

OBJECTIVE
Examine simultaneously the associations between psychoactive substance use in adolescence (alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and other drugs), the coparental context, and personal identity formation, using a variable-centred and a person-centred approach.

METHOD
Participants
A total of 1105 adolescents (wave 1 of a longitudinal study; 51.2% women; M_age = 15.08 years; SD = .63; 89.5% consider that their biological parents are responsible for their upbringing) from ten public secondary schools in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, completed self-report questionnaire.

RESULTS
Figure 1. Correlations between coparenting dimensions and psychoactive substance use.

- Perception of mother’s, father’s, and parental dyad’s contributions to coparenting: Coparenting Inventory for Parents and Adolescents (CI-PA; 38 items; α = .69-.86; Teubert & Pinquart, 2011) (i.e., cooperation “If I have a problem, my parents solve it together”, conflict “My parents disagree on whether I did something wrong or not”).
- Identity processes: Dimension of Identity Development Scale (DIDS; 25 items; α = .60-.88; Luyckx et al., 2006; Zimmermann et al., 2015) (i.e., commitment making, identification with commitment, exploration in breadth, exploration in depth, ruminative exploration).
- Frequency of psychoactive substance use: A revised version of the Risk Involvement and Perception Scale (RIPS-R; 5 items; α = .79, Zimmermann, 2010) (i.e., alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and other drugs).

In our sample, identity didn’t have a statistically significant role in the probability of psychoactive substance use ($\chi^2(5) = 7.60, p > .05$). No associations with identity statuses were highlighted and no interaction effects were observed between coparental contexts and identity statuses.

DISCUSSION
- Family context seems to be important in regard to psychoactive substance use of middle adolescents, whereas identity status seems unrelated.
- Absence of coparental cooperation seems to play an important role in adolescents’ substance use.
- The warmth, support and loyalty perceived between coparents may be a protective factor in adolescents’ substance use, despite the presence of triangulation and conflict.
- Results underline the importance of considering the family context in clinical practice with adolescent substance users.

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

• ANOVA’s conditions not satisfied ➔ two categories: a substance non-use group and a substance use group.
• Likelihood ratio test: significant relation between coparental context and psychoactive substance use ($\chi^2(4) = 18.91, p < .001$).
• Logistic regression with Cooperative coparental context as referent: adolescents in Undifferentiated ($z = 2.32, p < .05, OR = 2.24$) and Paternal Confictual ($z = 2.83, p < .05, OR = 2.92$) and Maternal Confictual ($z = 4.07, p < .05, OR = 4.37$) coparental contexts had more probability to belong to the substance use group.

Poster presented at the 16th European Association for Research on Adolescence | Ghent, Belgium | 12-13th September 2018