

Listening to Children of Divorce: New Findings That Diverge From Wallerstein, Lewis, and Blakeslee*

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I review new findings on (a) college students' perspectives on their living arrangements after their parents' divorces, (b) their relations with their parents as a function of their living arrangements, (c) their adjustment as a function of their parents' relocation, and (d) the amount of college support they received. Students endorsed living arrangements that gave them equal time with their fathers, they had better outcomes when they had such arrangements and when their parents supported their time with the other parent, they experienced disagreement between mothers and fathers over living arrangements, and they gave evidence of their fathers' continuing commitment to them into their young adult years. These findings consistently contradict the recent, influential public policy recommendations of Judith Wallerstein.

Despite much research on the consequences of divorce for children, many aspects of divorce from the child's point of view remain relatively unstudied. These include their preferences for their postdivorce living arrangements, their perceptions of behaviors on the part of either parent that threaten to alienate them from the other parent, their perspectives on what makes a good divorce versus a bad divorce, and their resolutions about how they would handle divorce with children. It is unlikely that many parents have heard their own children's perspectives on these issues. It is also unlikely that policy makers are aware of children's perspectives. In the research discussed here, my colleagues and I studied children's perspectives by questioning young adults who had grown up in divorced homes. The advantage of studying young adults is twofold: their perspectives are informed by all of their childhood experiences of their parents' divorces, and, because they are poised to begin their own families, their perspectives are likely to predict not only their own future parenting decisions should they become divorced parents, but also their stands on the important public debates about divorce policy in this country.

Sample and Theoretical Foundation

Our informants have been college students. College students are a convenience sample, and the possibility exists that college students from divorced families represent a select sample of divorced families. Although extending this research to include noncollege samples is important, three points are worthy to note in support of using college students. First, we have not encountered evidence that college students from divorced families represent a "select few" who escaped the ill effects of their parents' divorces. The percentage of students from divorced families in our samples over the last few years (ranging from 28% to 31%) matches estimates of the percentage of children in the national population from divorced families (approximately 30%; e.g., Bumpass & Sweet, 1989; Furstenberg & Cherlin, 1991). We also are encouraged by the findings from two recent studies: (a) a

meta-analysis of the effects of sole versus joint custody on children's adjustment (Bauserman, 2002) found no differences associated with convenience (including college) samples; and (b) a study of the distress felt by young adults over their parents' divorces (Laumann-Billings & Emery, 2000) found few differences between students from an elite university and low-income-community adults.

Second, some college students report very negative experiences with their parents' divorces, and others report much more positive experiences. This allows us to investigate the processes that may lead to positive versus negative experiences. These processes should not differ even if the sample is somewhat select and higher functioning than normal.

Third, college students constitute a substantial proportion of the population of young adults. For example, the university at which our research was done accepts roughly the top 25% of the state's high school graduates (*Arizona State University Viewbook*, 2003–2004). Thus, an immediate practical application of our findings is that they can be shared with divorcing parents who are likely to send their children to college, because these findings show what their children may think and feel years later about how their parents handled their divorce.

Attachment theory provides the theoretical basis for this research. A central construct in attachment theory as originally formulated (Bowlby, 1969) and later interpreted (e.g., Sroufe & Waters, 1977) is that a history of parent availability and responsiveness to the child contributes to the security of the child's emotional connection to the parent and the child's development of healthy independence. A history of unavailability and unresponsiveness contributes to the child's feelings of insecurity in the relationship, perceptions of rejection by the parent, and anger toward the parent. Thus, attachment theory provides an explanation for why both quantity and quality of time spent together are important for parent-child relationships. After divorce, parents' availability is constrained by the child's living arrangements. Attachment theory allows us to make certain predictions concerning living arrangements, including (a) children should have attachment-related concerns about their postdivorce living arrangements, and (b) the amount of time their living arrangements provide for them to be with their parents should affect the emotional security of their relationships with their parents. Thus, attachment theory provides a framework for understanding the interpersonal meanings and feelings that are likely to be part of children's perspectives on their postdivorce living arrangements.

As we pursued this work, our findings have run counter to much of the prevailing wisdom. They are most consistently at odds with Judith Wallerstein's recent findings and policy rec-

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ommendations. While we were collecting data, Wallerstein published findings from her 25-year follow-up study of children of divorce in an initial report (Wallerstein & Lewis, 1998), which was followed by a book (Wallerstein, Lewis, & Blakeslee, 2000). The Wallerstein and Lewis paper was reviewed favorably by a Canadian Supreme Court Justice (L'Heureux-Dube, 1998) for its policy implications regarding, especially, visitation and college support. Earlier, Wallerstein filed an *amica curiae* brief (1995; later published as Wallerstein & Tanke, 1996) in a California case (*In re Marriage of Burgess*, 1996) concerning a custodial parent's right to relocate with the child. Her brief was influential in the California court's decision to allow the move, and her arguments have continued to influence similar decisions (e.g., *Baures v. Lewis*, 2001). Richards (1999) reviewed court decisions nationally and concluded that Wallerstein's "powerful and persuasive voice" has been credited "with reversing the national trend in relocation cases" (pp. 259–260).

Until recently, Wallerstein's small-scale (60 families, 131 children), longitudinal study has constituted the single largest collection of information about children's perspectives on divorce. Her recent findings rely heavily on interviews with the children who are now young adults, 57% of whom achieved bachelor's or postbachelor's degrees (Wallerstein et al., 2000), so they afford an important comparison to our findings. I have organized this paper around four issues on which our findings diverge from Wallerstein and her colleagues. These are (a) children's living arrangements, (b) postdivorce parent-child relationships, (c) the relative amounts of college financial support divorced mothers and fathers provide, and (d) parental relocation after divorce.

Living Arrangements

Wallerstein and Lewis' (1998) findings regarding the perspectives of adult children of divorce regarding visitation are summarized as

Why have we penalized these young people by insisting they spend vacation time with a parent so that the parents' calendars would balance? Surely it is a powerful message that the young people in this study who had been court-ordered to visit a parent on a rigidly fixed schedule rejected further contact when they reached adulthood. (p. 382)

Wallerstein and Lewis document the anger and resentment that accompanied rigidly enforced visitation schedules. Although Wallerstein and Lewis do not explicitly say so, readers might easily get the impression that, especially as they get older, children will want less visitation because they need to be able to skip it when it conflicts with other important activities. Wallerstein and Lewis do not try to counteract this impression, and they certainly do not report that children wanted any *more* time with their fathers. However, the findings from Fabricius and Hall (2000) show it would be inaccurate to conclude that children generally do not want more time with their fathers than they typically have after divorce.

Fabricius and Hall (2000) used students from introductory psychology classes at Arizona State University between the Fall 1996 and Spring 1999 semesters. All students present 1 day each semester were administered surveys sponsored by the psychology department, portions of which were devoted to this research. We queried 344 men and 485 women (reflecting the proportions who take psychology) who reported that their parents were divorced. Students responded to questions about (a) the actual liv-

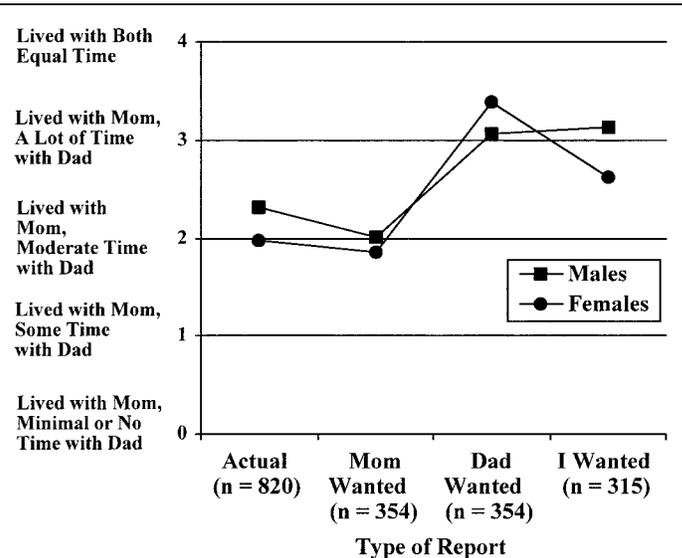


Figure 1. Mean levels of actual and desired living arrangements as reported by students.

ing arrangement they had "between the time your parents got divorced and now," (b) the living arrangement they wanted, and (c) what they believed each of their parents wanted (see Appendix for the questions and the response scales).

The means for students' reports of actual and desired living arrangements appear in Figure 1. In a subsequent study we determined that, for actual living arrangements, *minimal or no time with dad* represents about 1 day per month; *some time* = 4 days; *moderate time* = 7 days; *a lot of time* = 10 days; and *equal time* = 13 days. Figure 1 shows that men reported significantly, but only slightly, more time with dad than women. Although the overall average amount of time with dad was closest to the category *I saw dad a moderate amount* (7 days), in fact 48% of students reported that they saw their fathers either *minimal or no time* (1 day) or only *some time* (4 days).

This reported rate of father contact is comparable to that found in previous research, although comparisons are complicated because of differences across studies in ages of children, years since the divorce, year in which the divorce occurred, and time frame assessed. For example, our participants, who averaged 19 years old, reported that their parents' divorces occurred, on average, 11 years prior, or between 1985 and 1987. Seltzer (1991) used the 1987–1988 National Survey of Families and Households, in which divorces that occurred between 1985 and 1987 would have occurred only 2 or 3 years prior to the survey, and could have involved children between 1 and 17 years of age. Seltzer found that 43% of those children saw their fathers *at least once a week* during the past year, whereas 73% of our students reported they saw their fathers at least *some time* (4 days/month) during the whole time since the divorce. An additional problem is that Seltzer, like most previous researchers, used mother reports. When both mothers and fathers are asked (e.g., Ahrons, 1983; Braver & O'Connell, 1998), mothers report lower levels of father contact than fathers. The best comparison to our findings are those of Braver and O'Connell, who studied a representative sample of families who filed for divorce in 1986 in Phoenix. They found (Chart 3.1, p. 45) that 3 years later, when children averaged 9 years old, 47% of mothers and 60% of fa-

thers reported that children saw their noncustodial fathers at least once a week during the last month. Among our students whose fathers were noncustodial (i.e., students who did not live with their dads *equal time* or more), 66% reported that they saw their fathers at least *some time* (4 days/month) during the whole time since the divorce.

Figure 1 shows that students reported that their mothers did not want them to spend more time with their fathers. There was no significant difference by sex of student between what students had and what they perceived their mothers wanted for them. However, both men and women perceived that their fathers wanted significantly and substantially more time with them than they had and more time than their mothers wanted them to have. On the average, they thought their fathers wanted to see them *a lot of time*, and 44% reported that their fathers wanted *equal time* or more. Thus, they believed that close to half of their fathers wanted to have had either an equal or a majority of their daily care responsibilities. Even among those who actually saw their fathers *minimal or no time*, *some time*, and *moderate time* (63%, 78%, and 78%, respectively), reported that their fathers had wanted to see them more. It is worth remembering that these were not childhood reports obtained during early stages of fantasy-laden attempts to cope with father absence, but reports of adult college students who had, in Wallerstein and Lewis' (1998) words, "formulated and reformulated their judgments on each parent on the basis of their own observations throughout their growing-up years" (p. 377). This finding reinforces those of Kruk (1994), who found that 79% of noncustodial fathers wanted their children to live with them at least part time, which was considerably more than they did live with them.

Finally, as Figure 1 illustrates, both male and female students also wanted significantly more time with their fathers than they had and more than they thought their mothers wanted them to have. Whereas 48% reported they actually saw their fathers either *minimal or no time* or *some time*, in a dramatic reversal 48% (44% of women and 50% of men) reported that they had wanted to see their fathers *a lot or equal time*. Among those who saw their fathers *minimal or no time*, *some time*, or *moderate time*, 51%, 53%, and 56% of women and 61%, 70%, and 57% of men, respectively, wanted to see their fathers more. Less than 10% in any category wanted to see them less. Men wanted significantly more time with their fathers than did women. Interestingly, women perceived that their fathers wanted them for significantly more time than they themselves wanted.

These findings underscore two points. First, these adult children of divorce did not feel that visitation was unworkable; on the contrary, what they reported wanting was shared residential custody. Second, students perceived substantial disagreement between their parents over living arrangements. In fact, only 32% of subjects reported that their parents had wanted the same living arrangements.

Another way to explore students' living arrangement preferences is to ask them what they believe is best for children. We can explore the disagreement they perceived between their own parents by asking them what they think divorced mothers and fathers in general believe is best (see Appendix for these questions).

When we asked what they thought divorced mothers and fathers believe is best, we specified a scenario with optimal circumstances for shared residential custody (i.e., when the parents are "both good parents and they live relatively close to each other"). Figure 2 shows that even in this optimal scenario, stu-

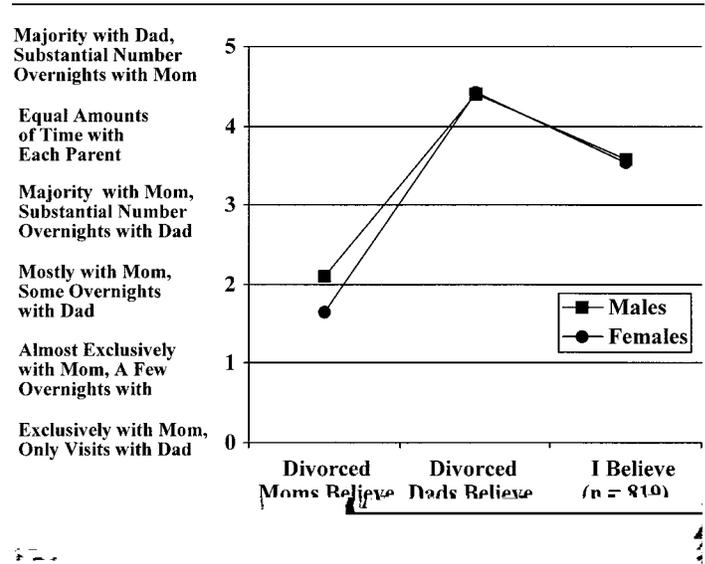


Figure 2. Mean levels of beliefs about the best living arrangements as reported by students.

dents think the norm for divorced mothers is to believe that the best arrangement is *some overnights with dad*, but the norm for divorced fathers is to believe that *equal amounts of time with each parent* is best.

Students themselves believed that the best living arrangement for children is *equal amounts of time with each parent*, the belief they attributed to fathers. There was impressive consensus on this question. Fully 70% of both men and women chose *equal amounts of time*. Most of the remaining 30% chose *substantial number of overnights with dad*. We asked students from nondivorced families (not shown in Figure 2) the same question, and they also believed, with similar consistency, that *equal amounts of time with each parent* is best for children. It is striking that although students perceived a large gender gap in their parents' generation on the issue of the best living arrangement, there was no evidence of such a gap in their own generation.

Students' belief that equal living arrangements are best was not an unrealistic, "grass-is-greener" wish of naive young adults who lacked the experience of splitting their time between two homes. We looked at the responses of the 80 students (out of 819) who had lived equal time with both parents, and 93% believed that the arrangement was best. Wallerstein and Lewis (1998) described only one young adult whose living arrangement approached equal time with her father. She was

... required ... to spend 5 days in her mother's home each week and 2 days at her dad's ... She later reported, "I hated it. I don't think that it's good for children to spend a week at one place and then go to another place for the weekend with another parent." (p. 377)

This view was clearly not reflected to any appreciable degree among our students.

During 5 semesters of administering this survey, we tried several ways to see if students would change their minds that equal time is best. We sometimes gave them the standard wording of the question and other times the alternate wording specifying optimal circumstances for shared residential custody. We changed the position of the question in the survey. Despite these

variations, we never saw any deviation in what students from divorced or married families said they believed was best.

We also constructed new questions (specifying optimal circumstances for sharing residential custody) that asked students from divorced families how many days and overnights at dad's house per 2-week period would be best for children in five age groups from 0 to 18 (see Appendix). On average, students believed that the best arrangement for children aged 3 and above was 6 days and overnights out of 14, and the majority of students chose either *6 days and nights* or *7 days and nights* as best. Even for infants and toddlers (ages 0–2 years), students believed that on average *5 days and nights* was best. Thus, we can say with some certainty that the belief of the current generation of college students is that the best living arrangement for children after divorce is to live equal or substantially equal time with each parent.

A recent meta-analysis (Bauserman, 2002) of the published and unpublished research on custody arrangements concluded that children in joint custody arrangements are better adjusted than those in sole maternal custody. This held for a variety of measures, including general adjustment, family relationships, self-esteem, emotional and behavioral adjustment, and divorce-specific adjustment. Better adjustment was equally evident in studies classified in the meta-analysis as based on joint physical custody and joint legal custody. However, the latter classification also included studies that combined both types or that left custody undefined. In addition, Bauserman cautioned, "it is important to note that joint legal custody children typically spend a substantial amount of time with the father as well" (p. 98), so studies classified as joint legal custody also may be registering associations with joint physical custody. Thus on the basis of our best knowledge of outcomes to date, students' belief that equal living arrangements are best for children appears justified.

In summary, two main findings are emphasized. First, students generally wanted more time living with their fathers, and most believed that living *equal amounts of time with each parent* was best for children. This implies that young adults value preserving the availability of both parents after divorce, which is consistent with the importance of parent availability for the child's emotional security in attachment theory.

Second, students perceived substantial disagreement between their parents over living arrangements. Moreover, they believed it was the norm for divorced fathers to endorse *equal amounts of time with each parent* and for divorced mothers to believe that it is best for children to spend only *some overnights* with their fathers, even in cases where there are two good parents who live in close proximity. This suggests that young adults may not anticipate that they can count on mothers to support their wishes regarding living arrangement, and that they perceive mothers' beliefs as a threat to their fathers' availability. I return to this issue below.

Parent-Child Relations

Wallerstein and Lewis' (1998) findings regarding father-child relations are summarized as the following:

It has been assumed by the legal system that if the mother does not interfere and the father is not dangerous, the father and the child will establish a regular contact schedule and will enjoy and benefit from each other's frequent company. Findings in this study show a much more complex picture. They raise doubts about the policy expectations of recent

years that the child of divorce can be expected to maintain a close relationship with both parents during the postdivorce years. . . . We found that [father]-child relationships that have been cut loose from their moorings to the marital bond within which they developed are inherently less stable than those in intact families. . . . Men who had been good parents within the supportive structure of the marriage gradually stopped visiting as new jobs, new locales, or new relationships took hold as their main interests." (pp. 374–375)

Previously Published Findings

How could our young adults perceive that their fathers wanted high levels of involvement, when Wallerstein and Lewis (1998) reported that fathers gradually dropped out of their children's lives after divorce? Wallerstein and Lewis are not alone here. There are several reports of "weakening" of father-child relations over time, most consistently from Furstenberg and colleagues (Furstenberg & Cherlin, 1991; Furstenberg & Harris, 1992; Furstenberg, Hoffman, & Shrestha, 1995; Furstenberg & Nord, 1985; Furstenberg, Nord, Peterson, & Zill, 1983;). However, in these cross-sectional studies, time since divorce is confounded with cohort effect. Children who spent longer in divorced families had parents who divorced in earlier years. Seltzer (1991) presents a good discussion of the interpretation issues, and Furstenberg et al. (1995) warn

. . . it is not clear whether these patterns in earlier cohorts . . . will apply in today's families. It may well be that the consequences of divorce will be different for nonresidential fathers today because they sustain more continuous contact than did their counterparts a generation ago. (p. 331)

To investigate this issue, Fabricius and Hall (2000) asked students to report their actual living arrangements in each of four 2-year intervals totaling 8 years following their parents' divorces. Students did not report a decrease in the time spent with their fathers. I have since performed a new analysis to see whether the overall steady rate of father contact might have resulted from one group of students who saw their fathers less over time and another who saw their fathers more. I examined the difference between the initial arrangement the student reported and each of the three subsequent periods. The results did not support two such groups. In each case the largest group was those who reported no change: 61% reported no change during the third and fourth years (13% reported a one-unit decrease, and 13% reported a one-unit increase); 51% reported no change during the fifth and sixth years (11% reported a one-unit decrease, and 15% reported a one-unit increase); and 44% reported no change during the seventh and eighth years (9% reported a one-unit decrease, and 17% reported a one-unit increase).

Wallerstein and Lewis' (1998) finding that fathers dropped out of their children's lives over time comes from Wallerstein's longitudinal study, so it is not subject to the confounding of time since the divorce and cohort. All families in this study were from one cohort, the early 1970s; however, the age of that cohort is problematic when trying to generalize to contemporary divorces (Furstenberg et al., 1995). For example, characteristic of that time, the mother was awarded sole legal custody in all but one of the original 60 families (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). In our studies, about half of students reported their parents had joint legal custody. Braver and O'Connell (1998) presented evidence that joint legal custody "enfranchises" fathers and promotes their continued involvement. Another problem is that the major-

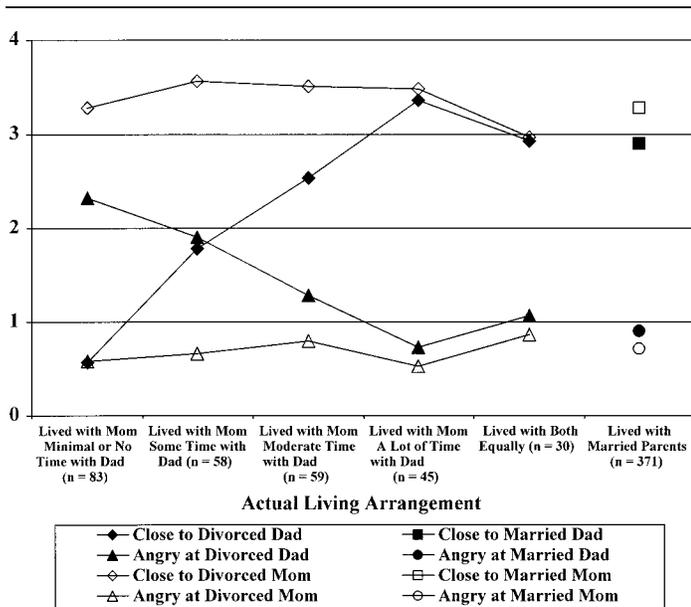


Figure 3. Mean ratings of how close and angry students felt toward each parent as a function of their actual living arrangements.

ity of the parents in Wallerstein's sample were clinically rated as having significant psychological problems during the marriage (see Kelly & Emery, 2003, this issue, for a critique of Wallerstein's sample and methods). Although larger, more current, and less maladjusted, our sample is composed of college students. Yet, the majority of Wallerstein and Lewis' subjects also were college students, and nowhere do they state that their findings do not apply equally to college and noncollege adults.

New Findings

Parent availability. According to attachment theory, parent availability contributes to children's emotional security in the relationship. Thus, I expected to find that children felt closer to their divorced fathers and harbored less anger toward them when they lived together more of the time. (See Appendix for the closeness and anger questions.)

Figure 3 presents striking confirmation of this prediction. (Figure 3 shows data for divorced families and also, on the far right, for married families. I discuss divorced families first.) Across the categories of living arrangements from *minimal or no time with dad* to *lived with both equal time*, there is a dramatic increase in how close students felt to their fathers years after the divorce, $F(4, 270) = 58.17, p < .001$, and a corresponding decrease in how much anger they felt toward them, $F(4, 271) = 13.28, p < .001$. Importantly, the increasing closeness to fathers did not correspond to decreasing closeness to mothers, $F(4, 271) = 2.24, p = .065$, nor did the decreasing anger toward fathers correspond to increasing anger toward mothers, $F(4, 271) = .76$. (Not shown are data from 31 students in the four father-residential categories involving seeing mother *a lot*, *a moderate amount*, *some*, and *minimal or no time*. In each of the first three categories, the means for anger toward mothers and fathers remain virtually identical [$M = 1.0$], as do the means for closeness [$M = 2.8$]. It was only the seven students in the category of *minimal or no time with mom* who felt more angry [$M = 2.6$] and less close [$M = 0.3$] toward their mothers than

their fathers, whereas their feelings toward their fathers were the same as in the other three father-residential categories.)

Figure 3 shows that students who lived either *equal time* or *a lot of time* with dad had relationships with both parents that were comparable to the relationships other students enjoyed with their married parents, with one exception. In married families, students were significantly less close, $t(370) = 6.29, p < .001$, and more angry, $t(370) = 3.22, p < .001$, toward their fathers than their mothers, although the differences were not great. However, in divorced families with either *equal time* or *a lot of time* with dad, they were neither less close nor more angry, $t(44) < 1.21$, toward their fathers than their mothers. Wallerstein and Lewis' (1998) conclusions that "the child of divorce can[not] be expected to maintain a close relationship with both parents during the postdivorce years," and that father-child relationships in divorced families are "inherently less stable than those in intact families" (p. 374) are clearly belied by these findings. Their report that their fathers "gradually stopped visiting" would place their families among those in which children had little time with their fathers, and Figure 3 shows that those families are not representative of families in which children had *a lot of time* or *equal time* with their father.

The father-child relationships depicted in the categories of less time with dad in Figure 3 are disturbing for their poor quality, especially considering that these are 19- and 20-year-olds who might have had opportunities for reconciliation with their fathers before college (related findings are reviewed in Kelly and Emery, 2003, this issue). The psychological distance and anger resulting from prolonged parent unavailability are predicted by attachment theory, which also predicts that loss of security in parental relationships contributes to future adjustment difficulties. Consistent with this, findings from Amato and Gilbreth's (1999) meta-analysis of studies of nonresident fathers revealed that children who were less close to their fathers had worse behavioral adjustment, worse emotional adjustment, and lower school achievement. The damage to these relationships can be expected to persist. Findings from recent studies (Furstenberg et al., 1995; Lye, Klepinger, Hyle, & Nelson, 1995) suggest that many grown children have substantially weakened relationships with their divorced fathers, as measured by time spent together as adults, quality of the relationship, and support given and received in the form of intergenerational transfers of time and money.

Parent undermining. The above findings suggest that when children live a substantial amount of time with their fathers, it communicates to them that they are important to their fathers and helps them feel emotionally secure in the relationship as indicated by feelings of closeness and lack of anger. Conversely, perceived withdrawal from the child on the part of the father or the mother would constitute a threat to the child's emotional security in those relationships. Likewise, perceived attempts by one parent to undermine the child's relationship with the other parent also would be experienced as a threat. This could be expected to "backfire" and damage the child's relationship with the parent perceived to be doing the undermining. I tested this prediction by asking students how much each of their parents (a) interfered with the time they spent with the other parent, (b) criticized the other parent to them, and (c) did not want the other parent to be involved in their life (see questions used in the Appendix). The purpose was to see whether these undermining behaviors and attitudes were associated with feelings of distance and anger toward the offending parent.

Table 1
Intercorrelations (n) and Means (SD) for Perceived Undermining Behaviors and Attitudes in Mothers and Fathers

	Interfered	Criticized	M	n
Mother				
Wanted father involved	-.50* (164)	-.35* (164)	2.63 (1.42) ^a	310
Interfered with seeing father		.49* (271)	.70 (1.16) ^b	359
Criticized father			1.66 (1.29) ^c	270
Father				
Wanted mother involved	-.48* (162)	-.39* (162)	3.35 (1.11) ^a	310
Interfered with seeing mother		.51* (271)	.46 (.94) ^b	359
Criticized mother			1.44 (1.34) ^c	270

^a $r(309) = 8.55, p < .001$. ^b $r(358) = 3.35, p < .001$. ^c $r(269) = 2.73, p < .001$. * $p < .001$.

Table 2
Correlations (n) Between Each Parent's Perceived Undermining Behaviors and Attitudes and That Parent's Relationship With the Student

Undermining Behaviors	For Mother		For Father	
	Closeness	Anger	Closeness	Anger
Wanted other involved	.27* (312)	-.24* (312)	.01 (309)	-.07 (310)
Interfered with seeing other	-.27* (164)	.51* (164)	-.03 (164)	.28* (164)
Criticized other	-.25* (164)	.51* (164)	-.14 (164)	.42* (164)

* $p < .001$.

Table 1 shows that for each parent the undermining behaviors and attitudes were significantly intercorrelated and that students perceived that their mothers engaged in all three more than their fathers. Table 2 shows the correlations that support the prediction that undermining will damage the child's relationship with the offending parent. The more mothers were perceived to interfere or criticize, and the more they let their children know that they did not want their fathers to be involved, the less close and more angry children felt toward their mothers years later. Fathers suffered somewhat fewer of the backfires of being perceived as unsupportive. Fathers' undermining behaviors were not related to how close their children felt to them, but their interference and criticism were related to students' anger at them. Students may have reacted less negatively to their fathers' undermining behaviors, because most had lived primarily with their mothers and may have perceived their fathers' undermining behaviors as less of a threat.

Because the anger question did not specifically refer to anger toward the parent for interfering, I explored the relation between interference and anger more precisely, with a new question (see Appendix) that specified anger about parental interference. For those students who reported that the target parent had done any interfering (35% of mothers and 27% of fathers), the correlation between the amount of perceived interference and anger at that parent "for interfering or making it difficult for you to spend time with" the other parent was significant: for mothers, $r(121) = .60, p < .001$; for fathers, $r(93) = .64, p < .001$. These are strong relationships. For example, when mothers were perceived to have done a lot of interfering, over 60% of students were either *moderately angry* or *very angry* with her for interfering.

When fathers were perceived to have done a moderate amount of interfering, 60% of students were either *moderately angry* or *very angry* with him. These relationships suggest that students may not have seen the interference as justified. If parents interfered to protect children from bad parenting, students would not be expected to harbor anger at that interference. It is noteworthy that typically 20–40% of divorced mothers report having interfered with visitation (e.g., Braver & O'Connell, 1998), and this matches the rate our students reported (35%). These findings suggest that mothers who interfere may risk damaging their future relationships with their children, a risk that also holds true for fathers who interfere.

Finally, if children perceive a parent's undermining behaviors and attitudes as a threat to their relationship with the other parent, children might think that parents who undermine also want living arrangements that would limit children's time with the other parent. This was true for both mothers and fathers. For all three types of undermining, students who reported higher levels were more likely to report that the undermining parent (both mothers and fathers) also wanted them to have one of the three lowest categories of time with the other parent (*minimal or no time, some time, or moderate time*), $\chi^2(4, Ns = 161-354) > 16.45, p's < .001$.

To summarize, children can become angry at a parent for interfering with their time with the other parent. When they perceive that a parent interferes, they also tend to perceive that parent as criticizing the other parent and as not wanting the other parent involved in their lives. The more they experience these undermining behaviors and attitudes, the worse they report their relations with that parent to be years later, especially for mothers.

Parent responsiveness. Attachment theory holds that a child's emotional security is a result not just of parental availability, but also of parental responsiveness to the child (Bowlby, 1969). An important aspect of parental responsiveness in divorced families would involve flexibility in adjusting visitation to the child's needs and wants. There are times when children may want unscheduled visits and other times when they may want to rearrange the schedule around other events. Wallerstein and Lewis (1998) argued that fathers' inflexibility in adjusting visitation (a) made visitation difficult and (b) led to children's later feelings of bitterness and resentment. This was one of their most powerful arguments that the legacy of divorce was enduring pain and damaged relationships:

Ellen, who had been required by court order at age 6 to spend every other weekend with her father . . . begged for flexibility in her schedule of visits but her father, insisting on his rights as upheld by the courts, refused. At age 14, Ellen told me, "My dad never loved me. People who love people respect them. He has never asked me whether I want to come see him. Or what I want to do when I get there." When Ellen reached her majority, she refused to see him anymore. (p. 377)

Deneau (1999) used a sample of 133 high school and college students to explore the issues of visitation difficulty and children's feelings of bitterness and resentment that Wallerstein and Lewis (1998) say result from father's inflexibility. First, she confirmed that fathers' (but not mothers') "flexibility in adjusting visitation schedules according to your wishes" was associated with "how much hassle or trouble it was to visit" their fathers. However, students' reports of the distance between mothers' and fathers' homes moderated this relationship, such that when dis-

tance was close and fathers were flexible, youth reported that visitation was *not difficult*. When distance was close and fathers were not flexible, they reported it as *very difficult*. When distance was far, flexibility did not matter: youth reported that visiting was difficult regardless of whether fathers were flexible. Wallerstein and Lewis did not discuss the role of distance, but Deneau's findings suggest that distance as well as fathers' flexibility may be important in determining visitation difficulty for the child.

Second, Deneau (1999) confirmed that parental responsiveness in the form of flexibility in adjusting visitation was related to children's feelings of bitterness and resentment. The more fathers were flexible, the closer students felt to them ($r = .53$) and the less anger they felt toward them ($r = -.34$), and the identical relationships held for mothers ($r_s = .52$ and $-.41$, respectively).

Attachment issues for parents. To understand why some mothers and fathers are inflexible about living arrangements and why some actively try to interfere with the child's time with the other parent and undermine that relationship, it is important to consider the complexity of attachment issues for parents. Decisions about the child's living arrangements can evoke the question, "How much does my child want to be with me?" Parents may feel abandoned and, as with children, perceived abandonment can lead to feelings of hurt and anger. Both the father who sees his child on the weekend and the mother who sees her child half time can feel abandoned. As such, parents might have no other rationale for wanting to be primary physical custodian. I explored this issue with mothers, because about 80% of students lived primarily with their mothers, and 90% reported that their mothers wanted them to live primarily with them. I asked students who lived with their mothers more than half time to rate the importance of 22 potential reasons that they thought they did not see their fathers more (see Appendix). My thinking was that students might be a source of information about their parents' reasons that would avoid a parental bias aimed at painting themselves in a good light. The list included several reasons that the mother, father, and student might not have wanted the student to have more time with dad, including "Mom didn't want me to live with dad more because she just wanted to have me with her," designed to tap attachment issues on the part of the mother.

As predicted, the attachment reason was important in the students' eyes. In fact, the top two reasons they cited (rated 3.3 on a scale of 0–8) were "Mom didn't want me to live with dad more because she just wanted to have me with her," and "Mom didn't want me to live with dad more because she had some other reason." Further, the attachment reason was the most important reason by far (rated 3.9) for those living with their mothers who wanted more time with fathers. If we believe that students have some insight into their parents' motives, these responses show that it often is important to mothers to have their children live primarily with them for its own sake.

Conversely, if the child wants more time with his or her father, the mother may perceive it as a threat. If mothers feel threatened by their children wanting more time with their father, they may interfere more with their time together. In fact, for students who lived less than half time with their fathers, the more time they wanted with their fathers the more they perceived their mothers as interfering, $r(79) = .43$, $p < .001$, but not their fathers, $r(79) = .12$, $p = .29$.

Summary. The concept of emotional security in attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) is useful in understanding our findings on the relationships young adult children of divorce reported

with their parents. This application of the concept is consistent with recent views (e.g., Marvin & Stewart, 1990) that security can be influenced by family factors. Security stems from availability and responsiveness. Parent availability, and especially father availability, was an important issue for these young adults. They generally wanted more time with their fathers, and they uniformly believed that equal living arrangements are best for children of divorce. Those who did have equal or substantially equal living arrangements reported equally good relations with both their parents. Those who reported their parents were flexible in adjusting visitation also reported better relations. When a parent was perceived as inflexible or living arrangements made a parent (especially a father) appear less available, students felt less close to and angrier toward that parent, as predicted by attachment theory.

Students showed the same reactions of emotional distance and anger toward parents whom they perceived to threaten their relationships with their other parent. When they perceived that one parent (especially the mother) interfered with seeing the other parent, criticized him or her, and did not want him or her involved, they felt less close and angrier toward the parent engaging in those undermining behaviors. When a parent was reported as doing these things, students also reported that parent wanted living arrangements that would give him or her a large majority of time with the child. The fact that students were angry about perceived parental interference suggests that the students often did not see the interference as motivated by realistic concerns about protecting them from bad parenting. Instead, the more time that all students who lived less than half time with their fathers wanted with their fathers, the more they perceived their mothers interfering.

Finally, students reported disagreement between mothers and fathers over living arrangements. They thought that only 32% of their parents wanted the same living arrangements, and they believed that disagreement was the norm in their parents' generation. In both their own families and in their parents' generation generally, students perceived that fathers wanted more time with children than mothers wanted them to have. They also perceived that the primary reason for their not having more time with their own fathers when they wanted it was not because their fathers did not want it, but because their mothers "just wanted me with her." These disagreements may reflect attachment issues for parents; namely, parents may perceive that the amount of time the child spends with them reflects, or ultimately determines, their importance to the child. There was evidence that time together was important to fathers, because students reported that their fathers maintained what little time they had with their children up to 8 years following the divorce.

College Financial Support

Divorced parents' financial support for children's college expenses is voluntary in Arizona, because child support ends at age 18 and the court is not authorized to order further support. This reality allowed us to test divorced fathers' enduring attachment to their children beyond their childhood years by examining the amount of college support they provided.

At least 21 states have laws that authorize the court to order college financial support from divorced parents (Morgan, 1998), reasoning that by sanctioning the divorce, the state has allowed the children to be deprived of economic resources and that the state therefore has a legitimate interest in compelling the parents

to provide for their children's higher education (Ellman, Kurtz, & Scott, 1998; Horan, 1987). However, the majority of states do not allow the court to require college support on the ground that college students are no longer minors (since the Vietnam-era reduction of the age of majority from 21 to 18 years) and, hence, are not protected by the court. Almost all the states that authorize the court to order college expense support will not require it from both parents, but only from the one ordered to pay child support (i.e., the noncustodial parent, in 85% of cases the father; Meyer & Garasky, 1995). Part of the rationale for this is the assumption that the custodial parent will be moved to voluntarily provide support, but that the noncustodial parent will be less likely to do so voluntarily and needs to be coerced by court order.

The assumption that divorced fathers are unlikely to contribute to their children's college expenses received support from Wallerstein and Lewis (1998); indeed, this was a major theme of their report:

Adulthood began painfully and precipitously for these young people, with a task for which they were poorly prepared and for which they had little help. At age 18, child support stops in California. None of the divorced couples had a legal agreement that covered the financing of the children's education beyond high school. These young people were expected to send themselves to college, pay tuition and supplies, and support themselves, all in the absence of marketable skills. It is not surprising that although the majority finished high school, one third ended their education there. (p. 372)

Wallerstein and Lewis (1998) focused on a small ($n = 26$) subset of Wallerstein's original children. They reported that "not one" of the 26 fathers provided "full support" (p. 373), but most mothers provided "consistent although partial support . . . [sometimes] by mortgaging their homes . . . [generally with] great sacrifice" (p. 374). Although it is difficult to make meaningful comparisons between rates of "full support" from fathers and "partial support" from mothers, Wallerstein and Lewis concluded that legislation mandating college support from fathers is "urgently needed" (p. 381). Their paper was so influential that a Canadian Supreme Court justice wrote a complimentary response (L'Heureux-Dube, 1998) urging that public policy makers pay close attention to the findings.

Fabricius, Braver, and Deneau (2003) asked students how much each of their divorced parents contributed to their college expenses. Importantly, we also obtained students' reports of each parent's standard of living, or ability to pay, and statistically controlled for this in the analysis. For example, fathers who earned twice as much as mothers needed to contribute twice as much in order to be considered in the analysis as contributing equally to mothers. The analysis showed that overall mothers and fathers contributed equally. Thus, if courts deem it necessary to order college financial support from divorced parents, then such orders should apply equally to mothers and fathers.

However, we also found that although mothers and fathers contributed equally overall, they did give different amounts depending on the custodial arrangements students reported. First, students reported that their fathers paid more when they had joint legal custody (about 50% of fathers) than when their mothers had sole legal custody. This is in line with previous findings (e.g., Braver & O'Connell, 1998) that joint legal custody is associated with greater father involvement and appears to "enfranchise" fathers. However, the converse was true of mothers. Stu-

dents reported that their mothers paid more when they had sole legal custody than when they shared joint legal custody with their fathers. The result was that in joint legal custody families, fathers paid more than their share, and in sole maternal legal custody families, mothers paid more than their share. Second, we found the same thing for the residential custody arrangements students reported. When students lived with their fathers half time or more than half time (about 24% of students), fathers paid more than their share; when students lived with their mothers more than half time, mothers paid more than their share. Finally, when students lived with their mothers more than half time, the amount fathers contributed was not uniform but was related to the amount of time students lived with their fathers. Specifically, there was an average increase of almost \$1,000 per year from fathers for each step increase in the time their children lived with them across the first four categories of living arrangements from *minimal or no time to a lot of time* (paralleling the improvement in students' perceived relationships with their fathers shown in Figure 3). These increases were independent of the legal custody status that these fathers had.

Thus, fathers contributed less when children did not live with them at least a substantial amount of time. Mothers contributed less when children did not live with them a majority of the time. These "threshold" living arrangements for mothers and fathers match the different living arrangements that mothers and fathers wanted to have and believed are best, as reported by students, which suggests that when parents are limited to less they may feel "parentally disenfranchised" (Braver & O'Connell, 1998), or that they have lost their child. The effects associated with legal custody status probably reflect greater proportions of disenfranchised mothers in joint legal and disenfranchised fathers in sole maternal custody families. It may be that time apart damages both the child's and the parents' feelings about the relationship, leading not only to children's feelings of distance and anger as we saw above, but also to parents' disengagement in the form of reduced financial support for college. It is important, we believe, that another aspect of parents' lives that might be expected to have interfered with college support was not in fact associated with reduced support. That was parents' remarriage. Wallerstein and Lewis (1998) concluded that fathers disengaged at least partly because "new relationships took hold as their main interests" (p. 375). However, we found that voluntary college support was related to living arrangements and not to remarriage, which suggests that this type of support is an index of the quality of the parent-child relationship that developed over the time spent together after the divorce.

Relocation

Courts have been struggling with the issue of the advisability of parents moving away after divorce, thereby separating children from one parent. The view developed here is that unavailability of a parent due to lack of time together can damage the child's security in that relationship. At one time, California placed the burden on the custodial parent to prove that the move was in the child's best interest, and the noncustodial parent's ability to continue to exercise visitation was a significant consideration in assessing that interest (e.g., *In re Carlson*, 1991). In contrast, in her *amica curiae* brief (1995) filed in the California Supreme Court case *In re the Marriage of Burgess* (1996), Wallerstein argued for a presumption in favor of allowing relocation. Influenced by finding deterioration of father-child rela-

tionships in her small, nonrepresentative sample, focusing on findings from a few studies that did not show a relation between child adjustment and amount of father-child contact (e.g., Guidubaldi & Perry, 1985; Hetherington, 1993), and deprived of more recent research (e.g., Bauserman, 2002; see Warshak, 2000, for a critique of her argument), she concluded that the “guiding principle” in relocation cases should be to protect “the stability and integrity of the postdivorce family unit, in which the key relationship is the one between child and primary custodial parent” (p. 26). The court agreed, helping to begin a national trend in court decisions to permit custodial parents to move with the child. For example, in a recent New Jersey Supreme Court decision (*Baures v. Lewis*, 2001) heavily influenced by Wallerstein’s brief, the court affirmed “the simple principle that, in general, what is good for the custodial parent is good for the child” (p. 28).

Surprisingly, this trend occurred in the absence of direct evidence about the effect of relocation on children of divorce. A review of the social science literature undertaken for the legal community (Gindes, 1998) found no empirical studies designed to answer the question. A few studies existed reporting on the (generally deleterious) effects of parental relocation on nondivorced children (Jordan, Lara, & McPartland, 1996; Tucker, Marx, & Long, 1998; Levine, 1966; Humke & Schaeffer, 1995; Stokols & Schumaker, 1982). The most direct evidence to be found specifically with divorced children (Stolberg & Anker, 1983) showed that a large number of “environmental changes,” one of which was parental relocation, predicted poor outcomes in children, but the effect of parental relocation was not specifically examined.

We conducted a study to tackle this issue directly (Braver, Elman, & Fabricius, 2003). We sought evidence about long-term child outcomes in college students whose parents had divorced at some time during their childhood. Long-term effects are important, because although children might initially be disrupted by a move, the possibility exists that they may eventually adjust. Also, policy makers would likely want to give greater weight to long-term outcomes.

We divided college students whose parents were divorced into five groups: neither parent ever moved “more than an hour’s drive” away from the family’s home ($n = 232$), mother moved with the child ($n = 148$), father moved with the child ($n = 22$), mother moved without the child ($n = 46$), or father moved without the child ($n = 154$). Then we compared families in which neither parent moved away to those with any moves. Students from families in which one parent moved reported that they received less financial support from their parents, worried more about that support, felt more hostility in their interpersonal relations, experienced more distress related to their parents’ divorce, were less likely to perceive each of their parents as sources of emotional support and role models, were more likely to perceive that their parents did not get along with each other, were in worse general physical health, and had lower general life satisfaction. The most common moves separated the child and father, either because the mother moved with the child or the father moved without the child. The effects were remarkably similar in these two cases.

Relocation is supposed to be undertaken for reasons that are expected to improve the parent’s and/or the child’s life. Had we found that when the mother moved with the child the student showed advantages, it might imply that moves resulted in improved conditions for the child. Had we found no differences, it

might imply that moves were undertaken to rectify bad situations and that they had the desired effects. If the moves had any beneficial effects, it is hard to understand why we found deficits associated with mother moving with the child. We would have to assume a rather complicated series of events; namely, that families in which mothers moved with the child were predisposed to be distressed, and that the move made things better than they would have been had she stayed but still left the child distressed. Because parental conflict could predispose the child to distress and also motivate the mother to move, we currently are investigating whether families with moves had more conflict beforehand, and whether child outcomes remain after controlling for conflict. A simpler explanation is that lack of time together after relocation can damage the child’s security in the father-child relationship. This would account for the similar findings for moves by the mother with the child and moves by the father without the child. At the very least, it is clear from our findings to date that there is no evidence for the increasingly common-held presumption in the courts that moves instituted by the custodial parent are in the best interests of the child. Instead, parents and courts should carefully consider any possible effects on the child of moves by the mother or the father.

Conclusion

Warshak (2000) argued that Wallerstein has “shifted from her earlier position” (p. 89) in which she found more value and importance in the father’s contributions (e.g., Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). The recent Wallerstein (e.g., Wallerstein et al., 2000; Wallerstein & Lewis, 1998) paints a bleak picture of children’s lives with their fathers after divorce. She argues that divorced fathers cannot be expected to remain involved with their children, that it is harmful to children to require them to go through the motions of remaining involved with their fathers by forcing them to visit, that fathers must be required to help with college expenses, and that the only real consideration in deciding whether a custodial mother should move away from the father with the child is how much the move will benefit the mother’s life.

Our findings present a different picture. We found that far from paternal involvement being perceived as necessarily disruptive and unworkable, it is not uncommon for young adults to have wanted more of it. Far from fathers necessarily dropping out, these same young adults perceived their fathers wanted more time with them. They reported that their fathers maintained the time they had with their children for many years after the divorce and that they contributed equally to college expenses. In fact, our data show that it is realistic to expect that children of divorce will maintain close relationships with their fathers, especially for those children who live significant amounts of time with their fathers and whose fathers refrain from criticizing and interfering with the child’s relationship with the mother. We conclude that Wallerstein’s subjects are not representative, and that the findings of her 25-year longitudinal study are outdated and do not reflect today’s youth. Thus policy recommendations based on the father-child relationships in her families are misguided.

In addition, we found indications of what can make children’s experience of their parents’ divorce better or worse. When they do not live substantial amounts of time with their fathers, their relationships with them suffered. In fact, when living arrangements gave them *equal time with both parents* or *a lot of time with dad*, students enjoyed the same high-quality relationships with each of their parents, and they actually fared some-

what better than students from married families in which relationships with fathers were not as good as they were with mothers. Living equal or substantially equal time with each parent requires living in close proximity. We found that children whose parents did not relocate were better off on a range of measures, and that children felt that distance made visitation difficult. However, when parents lived close, visitation was difficult only when the father was inflexible in adjusting schedules, given that the child's primary residence had been with mother. In fact, when either parent was perceived to be inflexible about visitation, that parent's relationship with the child was worse, and when either parent (but especially the mother) was perceived to undermine the child's relationship with the other parent, the child's relationship with the offending parent suffered.

What may prohibit many divorces from being better for the child is parental disagreement over living arrangements, of which there were several examples. The more students perceived a parent engaging in undermining behaviors and attitudes, the less time they perceived that parent wanted them to have with the other parent. The more time they wanted with their fathers, the more they perceived their mothers interfering with that time. They saw mothers' desire to have the children with her as a primary reason they did not have more time with their fathers, and they expect that it is the norm for mothers and fathers to disagree about living arrangements. I argued that time with the child has meaning to the parent about how important he or she is to the child. Feeling unimportant can generate feelings of abandonment and anger in parents, and such feelings are not easily addressed by laws. They are influenced by societal norms about how important mothers and fathers should be to their children. If the living arrangements for children after divorce are to reflect the desires of young adults who have lived through their parents' divorces, there is need for a change of norms as well as laws. Young college adults, men and women alike, believe that equal time spent living with each parent after divorce is best for children, and they believe this with remarkable uniformity. We need to begin listening to them.

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Appendix

Living Arrangement Questions

Between the time your parents got divorced and now, which of the following best characterizes [your living arrangements with each of them/the living arrangements you wanted to have/the living arrangements your mother wanted you to have/the living arrangements your father wanted you to have]?

- 0 = [Lived/Live] with mother, [saw/see] father minimally or not at all
 1 = [Lived/Live] with mother, [saw/see] father some
 2 = [Lived/Live] with mother, [saw/see] father a moderate amount
 3 = [Lived/Live] with mother, [saw/see] father a lot
 4 = [Lived/Live] equal amounts of time with each parent
 5 = [Lived/Live] with father, [saw/see] mother a lot
 6 = [Lived/Live] with father, [saw/see] mother a moderate amount
 7 = [Lived/Live] with father, [saw/see] mother some
 8 = [Lived/Live] with father, [saw/see] mother minimally or not at all

Questions About the Best Living Arrangement

[Standard Wording] If two parents get divorced, what do you feel is the best living arrangement for the children?

[Alternate wording specifying optimal circumstances for shared residential custody] If two parents get divorced, and they are both good parents and they live relatively close to each other, what do [you feel/you think divorced mothers would feel/you think divorced fathers would feel] is the best living arrangement for the children?

- 0 = Exclusively with the mother, and only regular visits with the father
 1 = Almost exclusively with the mother, and only a few regular overnights with the father
 2 = Mostly with the mother, and some regular overnights with the father
 3 = The majority of time with the mother, and a substantial number of regular overnights with the father
 4 = Equal amounts of time with each parent
 5 = The majority of time with the father, and a substantial number of regular overnights with the mother
 6 = Mostly with the father, and some regular overnights with the mother
 7 = Almost exclusively with the father, and only a few regular overnights with the mother
 8 = Exclusively with the father, and only regular visits with the mother

Questions About the Best Living Arrangement at Different Ages

Imagine that two parents get divorced and they are both good parents and they live close to one another, and they have a child aged [birth–2 years/3–5 years/6–10 years/11–14 years/15–18 years].

How many days should the child spend at the dad’s house during an average 2-week (14-day) period, where “day” means daytime plus overnight.

- 0 = 1–2 days (this is equivalent to one weekend at most with dad)

- 1 = 3–4 days
 2 = 5 days
 3 = 6 days
 4 = 7 days (equal time with each)
 5 = 8 days
 6 = 9 days
 7 = 10–11 days
 8 = 12–13 days (this is equivalent to one weekend at most with mom)

Questions About Closeness and Anger

At this point in your life, how close do you feel toward your [mother/father]?

- 0 = Not at all close
 1 = Only minimally close
 2 = Somewhat close
 3 = Moderately close
 4 = Very close

At this point in your life, how much anger do you feel toward your [mother/father] that seems to stem from how [she/he] behaved as a parent after the divorce?

- 0 = None at all
 1 = A minimal amount
 2 = Some amount
 3 = A moderate amount
 4 = A lot

How angry are you at your [mother/father] for interfering or making it difficult for you to spend time with your [father/mother] (assuming she/he did)?

- 0 = None at all
 1 = A minimal amount
 2 = Some amount
 3 = A moderate amount
 4 = Very angry

Questions About Undermining the Relationship to the Other Parent

After the divorce, how much do you feel that your [mother/father] wanted you [father/mother] to be involved as a parent in your life?

After the divorce, how much did your [mother/father] interfere or make it difficult for you to spend time with your [father/mother]?

After the divorce, how much did your [mother/father] complain about, criticize, or speak badly about your [father/mother] in your presence?

- 0 = Not at all
 1 = Only minimally
 2 = Somewhat
 3 = Moderately
 4 = A lot

Reasons I Didn’t Live With Dad More

Please read each of the following possible reasons and rate HOW IMPORTANT YOU FEEL EACH REASON WAS on a scale of 0–8, where “0” means “this was not at all the reason why I didn’t live with dad more” and “8” means “this was probably the most important reason why I didn’t live with dad more.”

1. I didn’t live with dad more because mom moved away.
2. I didn’t live with dad more because dad moved away.

Mom didn’t want me to live with dad more because

3. she believed in general that children are best raised by their mother.
4. she just wanted to have me with her.
5. she felt that dad was not capable, or was not a good parent.
6. she got remarried.
7. dad got remarried.
8. she had some other reason.

Dad didn’t want me to live with him more because

9. he felt he was not as capable or as good a parent as mom was.
10. he worked too much and didn’t have any more time.
11. he got remarried.
12. he believed in general that children are best raised by their mother.

13. he couldn't afford it.
14. he was just satisfied with the amount of time I lived with him.
15. he had some other reason.

I myself did not want to live with dad more because

16. dad was not as capable or as good a parent as mom was.

17. none of my friends lived with their dads more than I did.
18. I believed in general that children are best raised by their mother.
19. he got remarried.
20. I was just satisfied with the amount of time I lived with my dad.
21. I had some other reason.
22. I didn't live with dad more because that's all the law would allow.