



New Parents Project (NPP)

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The New Parents Project was funded by the National Science Foundation (CAREER 0746548, Schoppe-Sullivan), with additional support from the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD; 1K01HD056238, Kamp Dush), and The Ohio State University's Institute for Population Research (NICHD R24HD058484) and program in Human Development and Family Science.

What is NPP

- A study of 182 dual-earner couples that became parents together for the first time in 2008-2009
- Recruited primarily from childbirth education classes, newspaper ads, and flyers at doctors' offices
- Followed from the third trimester of pregnancy through their infant's first 9 months of life

Original Research Questions

- (1) Does maternal gatekeeping behavior predict subsequent fathering behavior, and change in fathering behavior over time?
- (2) What are the antecedents of maternal gatekeeping in terms of mothers' characteristics (personality, beliefs, and preparation to accommodate the father's role)?
- (3) Does maternal gatekeeping behavior mediate relations between mother characteristics and fathering behavior?
- (4) Does maternal gatekeeping behavior moderate relations between father characteristics and fathering behavior?

But NPP contains so much more!

- Data on couple (romantic) relationship functioning across the transition to parenthood
- Measures of parent mental health and life satisfaction at all phases of the study
- Detailed measures on parents' expectations for parenthood and adjustment to parenthood

Unique strengths of NPP data

- Data from fathers as well as mothers at all time points
- Prenatal measurements – better for claiming causality
- Observational as well as survey data on couple, coparenting, and parent-child relationships
- Flexible time diaries that can be used to create measures of activities from parenting to sleep to leisure time – more accurate, less biased than survey measures

Limitations of NPP data

- Targeted population was dual-earner couples expecting first child: thus, sample is not representative of all new parents (sample is low-risk: highly educated, relatively wealthy)
- Significantly more missing data at 6-month time point because of subject fatigue and data collected via phone (vs. in person)
- Some of the brief survey measures used (e.g., depression measure, measure of couple relationship satisfaction) have poor reliability
- 24-month follow up was incomplete because some children were too old for the Strange Situation attachment assessment before we received funding for the follow-up

Original NPP

Initial Follow-up

3rd Trimester

3 Months

6 Months

9 Months

12-36 Months

N = 182

*n = 179

n = 133

n = 161

n = 114

- Observations
 - Coparenting
 - Couple
- Time Diaries
- Surveys
 - Demographics
 - Couple
 - Intergenerational relationships
 - Psychological characteristics
 - Beliefs & Expectations

- Observations
 - Coparenting
 - Couple
 - Mom Parenting
 - Dad parenting
- Time Diaries
- Surveys
 - Demographics
 - Coparenting
 - Couple
 - Parenting
 - Intergenerational relationships
 - Infant characteristics
 - Media use

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 - Mom Parenting
 - Dad Parenting
- Time Diaries
- Surveys
 - Demographics
 - Coparenting
 - Couple
 - Parenting
 - Intergenerational relationships
 - Infant characteristics
 - Media use
 - Breastfeeding
 - Fertility Intentions

- Observations
 - Attachment to Mom
 - Attachment to Dad
 - Mom Parenting
 - Dad Parenting
- Surveys
 - Demographics
 - Child socioemotional development
 - Breastfeeding

*ns indicate the number of families who provided at least some data at that phase; amounts of missing data vary across measures