Available online at www.sciencedirect.com
ScienceDirect
Children and Youth Services Review
28 (2006) 1229–1250

Children and Youth Services Review

www.elsevier.com/locate/childyouth

Does it pay to participate? Neighborhood-based organizations and the social development of urban adolescents

James M. Quane [a,*], Bruce H. Rankin [b]

[a] *Joblessness and Urban Poverty Research Program, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 79 JFK St., Cambridge, MA 02138, USA*
[b] *Koç University, Sariyer-Istanbul 80910, Turkey*

Received 12 November 2005; received in revised form 8 January 2006; accepted 9 January 2006
Available online 15 March 2006

Abstract

Research on the developmental gains associated with participation in youth-service organizations has not kept pace with the proliferation in funding for these kinds of programs. Advocates describe them as important venues for youth to connect to mainstream institutions and to promote social and cognitive development, especially among underserved minority youth. Using data collected from 546 urban African-American mothers and their children in Chicago, we compare the availability of youth-serving organizations in poor and non-poor neighborhoods and consider whether participation has some positive implications for youth on a number of developmental assets. A theoretical model is proposed to consider the mechanisms by which youth may be affected. The findings suggest that when available, youth participation in locally based organizations is greater in more disadvantaged neighborhoods and that participation has important and positive implications for youth's self-concept as well as their academic commitment and educational expectations. While participation may also help to connect youth to prosocial neighborhood peers, school-based peers appear to be the most important friendship networks for encouraging a normative orientation toward academic attainment. The policy implications of these findings are discussed in terms of ways to help youth develop prosocial competencies in organized social settings during after-school hours.
© 2006 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Keywords: Neighborhood-based organization; Youth social development; Urban adolescents; Afterschool programs

* Corresponding author.
E-mail address: jim_quane@harvard.edu (J.M. Quane).

0190-7409/$ - see front matter © 2006 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.
doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2006.01.004

1. Introduction

As youth progress through adolescence they must acquire the developmental assets necessary to cope emotionally, socially and physically as independent adults (Allen, Moore, Kuperminc, & Bell, 1998; Scales, Leffert, & Lerner, 1999). It is during this critical period in the life course development that children gain the experiences necessary to bolster self-concept and promote favorable expectations in their own abilities, qualities that are invaluable for successful navigation toward adulthood (Furstenberg, Cook, Eccles, Elder, & Sameroff, 1999; Gutman, Sameroff, & Eccles, 2002). As such, the acquisition of these assets is seen as an important predictor of future achievement and, particularly for poor African-American youth who grow up in disadvantaged circumstances, plays a pivotal role in their development (McLoyd, 1990; Ogbu, 1981).

Extant literature has focused on various important social supports that aid in the acquisition of these developmental attributes, namely the role played by family (Conger, Conger, & Elder, 1997; Hanson, McLanahan, & Thomson, 1997), peers (Crane, 1991; Rankin & Quane, 2002), and teachers (Dryfoos, 1994; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). More recently, attention has centered on the effectiveness of organized extracurricular or after-school leisure activities in promoting successful youth development during out-of-school time (Broh, 2002; Brown & Theobald, 1998; Gerber, 1996; Halpern, Barker, & Molland, 2000). In particular, studies emphasize the positive effects of participation on various educational outcomes, such as educational aspirations, grades, and school completion (Broh, 2002; Davalos, Chavez, & Guardiola, 1999; McNeal, 1995). Proponents of such activities argue that they help cultivate skills and values that are conducive to academic achievement, such as heightened self-esteem and self-confidence as well as a positive work ethic. These activities also expose participants to more conventional peer social networks (Bartko & Eccles, 2003; Marsh, 1992; McNeal, 1995; Rehberg, 1969). Whether these benefits hold for low-income minority youth in disadvantaged neighborhoods has not been directly addressed in the research literature but it is reasonable to speculate that disadvantaged youth stand to benefit most from their involvement because they have fewer institutional alternatives available to them that can serve this purpose (Broh, 2002).

We know from past research that African-American families from neighborhoods of concentrated poverty are less likely to participate in various community-based activities such as summer recreational programs, organized sporting activities, or youth-serving organizations, due in part to a dearth of such resources in many of these neighborhoods (Connell & Halpern-Felsher, 1997; Furstenberg et al., 1999; Rankin & Quane, 2002). However, what we do not know is whether African-American youth who do participate realize any positive gains in comparison to their non-participating counterparts. It is this question we focus on here. In particular, our analysis explores whether neighborhood disadvantage affects participation rates among urban African-American adolescents and if youth from these neighborhoods realize any important advantages from being involved with such programs. Since peer influences are especially important in this developmental period, we are also interested in the kinds of associations youth are likely to form and the social competencies they are likely to develop due to their participation. To answer these questions we use data gathered from a random sample of African-American mothers and their children in majority minority middle-class and poor neighborhoods of Chicago.

2. Disadvantaged neighborhoods and youth development

Research on the role of neighborhoods has proliferated in the past two decades, largely due to the influential work of Wilson (1987, 1991, 1996), which calls attention to the social isolation of

poor families in high poverty neighborhoods. Wilson (1987, 1996) argues that the out-migration of the middle class and the ensuing concentration of inner-city families along socioeconomic and racial and ethnic lines during the 1970s and 1980s resulted in the erosion of many of the social and institutional supports that parents count on to help raise children. In chronicling their decline, Wilson (1996) noted the demise or deterioration of neighborhood organizations such as youth recreation facilities, block clubs, or drop-in centers, which are important sources of what Putnam (1999) refers to as "bridging" and "bonding" social capital. Bonding social capital encapsulates the social processes necessary to build a relationship between individuals who have things in common such as socioeconomic status, residential location or shared interests. Bridging social capital on the other hand involves linking dissimilar groups, thereby allowing for the exchange of limited resources and information from one to the other (Coleman, 1988; Granovetter, 1973). By providing opportunities for youth to engage with positive peers and adult role models, youth organizations help engender the transfer of external assets or linkage to resources that may be beyond the means of family members but which are crucial to "getting ahead" (Briggs, 1998). Therefore, a serious consequence for families that reside in resource-depleted neighborhoods is the lack of opportunities to expose children to the normative influences of organizations that host structured activities and the positive role models who are affiliated with them (Connell, Aber, & Walker, 1995a; Wilson, 1996).

Apart from the theorized effects of locally based resources on normative youth development, the burgeoning literature on neighborhood effects has lead to a clearer understanding of other ways by which youth development is affected. Particularly, with regard to educational attainment, studies show that youth in poorer neighborhoods drop out at higher rates (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, & Sealand, 1993; Connell & Halpern-Felsher, 1997) and perform below their counterparts in better-off neighborhoods (Dornbusch, Ritter, & Steinberg, 1991). One prominent explanation for these dissimilarities is that concentrated poverty exposes some youth to the pervasive unemployment common to many disadvantaged neighborhoods, which diminishes their expectations for the future, undermines their motivation to excel in school, and even contributes to their chances of dropping out altogether (Connell and Halpern-Felsher, 1997; Connell, Halpern-Felsher, Clifford, Crichlow, & Usinger, 1995b; Quane and Rankin, 1998). Using data obtained from a convenience sample of 262 African-American mothers residing in poor and near-poor neighborhoods in a midsized Midwestern city, Ceballo, McLoyd, and Toyokawa (2004) found that, in neighborhoods with a higher percentage of affluent residents, youth tend to hold more positive views regarding education. While they were unable to explicate the mechanisms through which neighborhood socioeconomics affect such orientations, they highlight some of the leading theoretical explanations, including a contagion effect first proposed by Crane (1991), which posits that youth are "contaminated" by a pervasive disregard for doing well in school among their peers in the more disadvantaged neighborhoods.

A variant on the socialization process, also thought to influence youth outcomes, suggests that in areas of concentrated disadvantage with low levels of collective efficacy, whereby mutual trust and solidarity is lacking among neighbors, adults are unwilling to intervene on behalf of the collective good (Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997). Less efficacious neighborhoods are likely to lack the socializing agents and social controls necessary to contribute to the normative development of youth (Sampson et al., 1997; Wilson, 1991). Neighborhoods that are able to overcome such constraints and work together to realize important goals, such as increased civility and the socialization of youth, often do so through informal social controls and formal institutional means such as neighborhood organizations, which represent the "structural embodiment of community solidarity" (Sampson, 1999, p. 257).

3. Participation in neighborhood-based organizations and youth development

How youth spend their free time can have a positive impact on their social development, especially if it involves more organized and challenging leisure activities that require perseverance and dedicated effort on the part of the adolescent (Kleiber, 1999; Larson & Kleiber, 1993). Venues where these activities take place can also provide safe urban sanctuaries for youth to co-mingle and learn important lessons regarding friendship formation and personal autonomy outside of the confines of the family (McLaughlin, Irby, & Langman, 1994; Moore, 1987; Waters & Sroufe, 1983). This is realized in part by helping to put youth in contact with peers from other diligent families (Darling & Steinberg, 1997). As a result, participation in locally based activities can help to protect youth from risk and integrate them into more conventional friendship groups, thereby helping to promote the acquisition of important social competencies (Hirsch & DuBois, 1989).

Previous research highlights a compendium of psychological and behavioral competencies that are considered paramount to successful negotiation through adolescence. We focus on the procurement of three important social psychological attributes that are strongly correlated with academic functioning and are thought to enhance youths' chances of leading competent and successful lives: high educational expectations, strong academic commitment, and positive self-concept (Bloom, 1990; Lerner, Fisher, & Weinberg, 2000; Lerner, 1995; Peterson & Leigh, 1990; U.S. DHHS, 1997). Participation in organized leisure activities can provide a convenient social context for the acquisition of these important characteristics, providing an opportunity for experimentation with social roles that include other adults and peers and helping youth to develop positive perceptions of themselves and their social world (Holloway, 1982; Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1997).

3.1. Educational expectations

Personal expectations, particularly educational expectations, are strongly related to motivation and a willingness to apply oneself academically. Steele and Aronson (1995) argue that the underperformance of African-American youth is related to a failure on the part of mainstream institutions to counteract societal stereotyping, which communicates a sense of inferiority, and local cultural norms that arise to counteract these pervasive impressions. In other words, personal expectations of African-American youth may be diminished due to subjective interpretations of how society views them and a lack of exposure to supportive institutions that provide disadvantaged youth with opportunities to experiences success and achievement firsthand. Participation in organized activities helps to infuse a sense of belonging and mutual obligation, thereby positioning adolescents to better engage with others and to appreciate their own abilities and the rewards of self-motivation. The lessons gained from these encounters may have fortuitous implications for other aspects of youths' lives such as civic responsibility and self-esteem (Berman, 1997; Hamilton & Fenzel, 1988; Werner, 1994).

Very few studies have considered whether organized after-school activities have a bearing on the educational expectations of youth, but those that have suggest that programs with a strong mentoring component may have positive implications for academic success (e.g., Mahoney & Cairns, 1997). Given the prolific increase in funding for after-school programs across the nation in the past decade or more, it is reasonable to assume that participation is considered by many practitioners as having a direct influence on school performance and psychological orientation toward school.

3.2. Academic commitment

Fueled in part by a sense of alienation and distrust, low-income families and their children in disadvantaged communities often lack positive attachments with schools and other mainstream institutions, subsequently denying them the developmental benefits that these types of affiliations can provide (Benson, Leffert, Scales, & Blyth, 1998; Halpern, 1995; Stone, Doherty, Jones, & Ross, 1999). Youth who describe themselves as disconnected from these institutions are also more likely to engage in a variety of health-compromising activities (Resnick et al., 1997). Organizational affiliations help to create positive linkages between youth and their communities, thereby better integrating them into the supportive social fabric that the community can provide (Larson, 1994). These kinds of attachments instill youth with a sense of belonging and the ability to develop mature relationships with group members and caring adults (Dubais & Snider, 1993). Halpern (1992) found that the gains associated with some forms of organizational involvement transfer to other facets of youths' lives, including academic performance. One plausible explanation for this positive outcome is that these youth may have a safe, quiet space to complete their homework or have access to mentors who can provide guidance and instruction (Halpern, 1992). Similarly, such programs may provide opportunities for the acquisition of soft skills (e.g., self-discipline, teamwork, and social interaction) and hard skills (e.g., reading and writing) that help to integrate them into the social world of school.

3.3. Self-concept

How youth evaluate or describe their own abilities is also related to their chances of leading successful and productive lives. These assessments are bolstered by performing successfully in an expanding circle of new challenges and extracurricular activities, such as sporting events, religious groups, and clubs or community organizations, which provide important venues for them to win recognition for their accomplishments (Earls, Cairns, & Mercy, 1993). Positive reinforcements obtained through their association with caring adults in supportive programs help youth to link their actions with favorable outcomes and to empower them with a strong belief in their own capacities. Time spent in structured activities away from parents helps to foster independence among youth and allows them to gain a more informed opinion about their own abilities based on the feedback they receive from nonfamily members (Baker & Witt, 1996; Collins, 1990).

4. Contextualizing youth participation and development

Apart from the potential impact of neighborhood organizations, the successful acquisition of these cognitive and behavioral orientations is also related to other social contexts that youth inhabit (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, & Aber, 1997a,b; Crane, 1991; Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 1997; Vacha & McLaughlin, 1992). Drawing on the work of Bronfenbrenner (1989), researchers have begun to look closely at this microsystem and its nascent elements, chief among them being the neighborhood, family, and peer associations (Barbarin, 1993; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Brooks-Gunn, 1996; Rankin & Quane, 2002). Given our interest in the impact of organized activities on urban African-American youth, we focus mainly on the literature related to the circumstances of disadvantaged urban populations.

5. Peer association

A large literature links the socializing influences of peers to developmental outcomes in youth (Gonzales, Cauce, Friedman, & Mason, 1996; Harris, 1995; Kim, Hetherington, & Reiss, 1999; Steinberg, 1987; Stormshak, Bierman, Bruschi, Dodge, & Coie, 1999). Peer friendships can provide important sources of emotional and psychological support, but can also supply the motivation and rationalization to behave in ways that undermine their chances of getting ahead (Furstenberg et al., 1999; Patterson, DeBaryshe, & Ramsey, 1989). While in-school peer networks can have a negative effect on youth's school success, especially if these friendship groups devalue education or undermine parental encouragement for academic attainment (Steinberg, 1996; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992), they can also provide an assortment of important social supports, which help to instill youth with a sense of industry and teach them to value the benefits of academic attainment. Particularly for adolescents who are making the transition from elementary to junior high school, or junior high to senior high school, a dependable peer group can lessen the potential trauma that such a move can have. However, youth may also be negatively affected by interacting with peers whom they consider to be good students. Marsh (1991) reports that youth tend to devalue their own competence and engage in some negative self-assessments in schools where many of the students perform above the mean on tests of ability.

Neighborhood-based peers can serve a different function. The adaptive features associated with neighborhood peer contacts include time spent "hanging out" when youth learn independence and form a new social identity outside of the family (Brown, 1990). Prosocial neighborhood-based peers can also help to instill a sense of community and social integration among youth. But it is also amongst this group that a youth is libel to learn the "code of the streets," or a reaction to, and way of operating within, neighborhoods with chronic unemployment and few positive outlets (Anderson, 1990). Lacking organizations that provide safe and orderly environments outside of the close monitoring and supervision of family and other diligent adults, youth may be more susceptible to a nonnormative peer network on the streets (Halpern et al., 2000).

6. Parenting in disadvantaged neighborhoods

The other major socializing agent that influences youth development and contributes to the likelihood that they will engage in structured leisure activities is the family. For low-income parents residing in high poverty neighborhoods, the threat of crime requires them to be extra vigilant about their children's activities outside of the home (McLoyd, 1990; Steinberg, 1987). This reality has led some observers to criticize recent research on effective parenting strategies for not taking into consideration adaptive practices employed by low-income parents in high poverty neighborhoods (Burton, 1990; Furstenberg, 1993; Jarrett, 1997). Some researchers assert that the parental management styles employed by adults from high poverty neighborhoods are based on the need to protect their children against a greater risk of danger (Brooks-Gunn et al., 1993; Burton, 1990; Furstenberg, 1993; Jarrett, 1997). These concerns may be manifested in a more restrictive parenting style, one that requires persistent and vigilant supervision of children. Distal monitoring, in the form of youth involvement in formal, voluntary organizations, provides a useful alternative for mothers who are looking for a safe haven for their children while they are not in school. These kinds of activities put youth in contact with potential co-socializing agents, which parents can count on to monitor

their children while they are not with them (Amato & Booth, 1997; McLaughlin et al., 1994).

Single parenthood has also been linked to higher incidences of deviant or nonnormative activities among youth, in part because of constraints on solo parents' time with their children (McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994). Research has shown that children in single-parent households receive less supervision and perform worse on academic tests than the children of single mothers who reside in extended household arrangements (Entwisle, Alexander, & Olsen, 1997). Access to organizational resources, which can serve as safe environments for youth to congregate, may be especially important for these mothers who lack other sources of parenting support.

7. Conceptual model linking participation and youth development

The literature helps to conceptualize a theoretical model to formulate several study hypotheses, which pertain to how various socializing agents affect the development of youth. A main hypothesis relates to whether neighborhood characteristics linked to a number of adult and youth outcomes (see Sampson et al., 1997)–specifically concentrated disadvantage, residential stability, and the collective efficacy of neighbors–affect program participation among youth and the peer social networks they are embedded in. We expect that program participation will be positively and directly related to the psychosocial development of youth as well as indirectly related through exposure to friendship networks that hold positive values about schooling. A secondary hypothesis suggests that organization participation will serve as an important source of distal monitoring for single mothers as well as for mothers who are more restrictive of their children's activities outside the home due to safety concerns.

In the analyses we control for gender differences because previous research has found that African-American male and female adolescents' academic outcomes may be differentially affected by neighborhood disadvantage (Crane, 1991; Duncan, 1994). We also control for mother's conventional values concerning youths' educational orientations and economic well-being, since how mother's internalize success is strongly correlated with their children's own values and self-perceptions (Ceballo et al., 2004). Other controls include mothers' marital status, age, education, and tenure in the neighborhood.

8. Data and methods

The primary source of the data is the *Youth Achievement and the Structure of Inner City Communities* study, a project funded by the MacArthur Foundation Research Program on Successful Adolescent Development in High Risk Areas. Face-to-face interviews using a structured questionnaire were completed in June 1991. The sample is made up of African-American mothers and up to two of their adolescent children (aged 11 to 16) living in poor and non-poor inner-city tracts with high concentrations of African-American residents. Poverty census tracts are 20 percent or more in poverty and at least 50 percent African-American; non-poor tracts are census tracts with median income of $30,000 or more and at least 30 percent African-American. Household selection in the poverty stratum involved random sampling using a listing of Chicago poverty tract households provided by the National Opinion Research Center. Since no listing of households in middle-class tracts was available, a block quota selection method was used on randomly selected census blocks in all Chicago census tracts fitting the middle-class stratum criteria. The sampling design resulted in 383 mothers from poverty tracts and 163 mothers from middle-class tracts.

Additional data were obtained from the 1990 Census of Population and Housing (STF3A file). Using census tracts as a proxy for neighborhoods, tract-level information is used to construct two measures of neighborhood ecology—disadvantage and residential stability.

The sample neighborhoods are highly representative of those neighborhoods where African-American families with children between the ages of 5 to 17 were likely to reside in Chicago in the early 1990s. With regard to the sample, the mean age of mothers was 38 years. The average number of completed years of education among mothers was equivalent to a high school diploma. Approximately, 62 percent of the mothers were single at the time of the interview and had a mean monthly total household income of $1856. The average length of residence in their respective neighborhoods was approximately 11 years. The average age of the adolescents in 1991 was 13 years and youth reported an average of 2.5 siblings in their household.

8.1. Dependent variables

The *educational expectations* of youth is measured by a single question that asks youth how much education they expect to complete high school, a GED, a trade school certificate, a 2-year college, 4-year college degree, or more advanced education.

The *self-concept* items are similar to commonly cited measures of the construct, which tap into personal and social appraisals of the self (Demo, 1992; Fitts, 1964). Our 7-item scale is based on youth responses to the such statements as: “I sometimes feel unsure about who I really am,” “It’s hard to know how to act most of the time since you can’t tell what other people expect,” “There is really no way I can solve some of the problems I have,” and “I can do just about anything I set my mind to.” A scale was constructed using the combined responses to these questions and items were coded such that higher scores on the scale represent more positive self-appraisal. All three indicators of youth development are similar to subscales of global prosocial competence used by Elliot et al. (1996).

We assess *academic commitment* using a scale comprised of three items, which include the amount of time spent on homework (hours per week) and the importance the respondent places on grades and education (ranging from 1 = not important to 4 = very important). Items were standardized and summed, so a low score on the constructed scale indicates low academic commitment. The scale is similar, though in a reduced form, to scales used in previous survey instruments measuring the same construct (e.g., Thornberry, Lizotte, Krohn, Farnworth, & Jang, 1991; Vazsonyi & Pickering, 2003).

8.2. Mediating variables

The variable *organization participation* measures the number of structured out-of-school activities youth are involved in. We ask respondents to indicate which activities they had participated in during the previous academic year. The programs included Boy or Girl Scouts, organized sports, religious youth group, YMCA or similar youth group, or any other neighborhood club or program. Similar to Cooper, Valentine, Nye, and Lindsay (1999) responses were summed across all five items resulting in a composite score ranging from 0 (no organizational participation) to 5 (participated in all of the activities listed).

We distinguish between peer social support networks by including a variable labeled *neighborhood-based friends*, which assesses the orientations of neighborhood friends through a series of questions about whether most of them got good grades in school, were interested in school, attended class regularly, planned to go to college, were popular with others, made fun of

kids who studied hard, or looked up to other kids who studied hard to get good grades. The variable *school-based friends*, is a scale that combines answers from the same questions about peer networks at school. We focus on school-related peer attributes because of the important implications academic success has for youth development and because of extant literature, which suggests that attending quality after-school programs can have significant positive effects for youth on a number of school-related outcomes (Kahne et al., 1999; Posner & Vandell, 1999).

8.3. Background variables

The variable *maternal monitoring* is a youth-reported 5-item scale that measures the extent to which parents attempt to monitor their whereabouts and associations when not under parental supervision. We employ several types of family background measures to help explain youth outcomes. The parent's socioeconomic status is measured using *education* (in years of school completed), and *household income* (in dollars per month). Five measures were selected to control for youth demographic and family structure factors: *youth age* (in years) and *gender* (1 = male), *mother single parent* (1 = not married or cohabiting), and the number of coresiding *siblings in the household*. The variable *maternal conventional values* is a mother-reported scale of how "important" a range of conventional goals are for a youth in the same age range as the focal child (e.g. college education, good reputation, happy family life, saving money, working hard, and studying hard to get good grades).

We include four variables to measure salient neighborhood ecology and social organizational characteristics. *Concentrated disadvantage* is a composite score similar to that used in other studies (Sampson et al., 1997). The scale includes neighborhood measures of the unemployment rate, receipt of welfare, and proportion of residents who are college graduates or single mothers. *Residential stability* is the proportion of people residing in the same house for five years and the proportion of owner-occupied housing units, again standardized and summed. These two items are constructed using tract-level census data (U.S. Census, 1990).

Our measure of *collective efficacy* also follows Sampson et al.'s (1997) operationalization. It is a neighborhood-average composite scale that combines two subscales, neighborhood cohesion and social control. Neighborhood cohesion is a summed scale of five items: how close-knit the adult respondent perceives the neighborhood to be, the helpfulness of neighbors, the degree of agreement on basic norms, whether groups in the neighborhood get along, and whether most people "follow the rules." Social control is a 4-item scale summarizing how likely it is that neighbors would intervene to help the adult respondent under four different scenarios: her house being broken into, someone selling drugs to her child, fighting in front of her house, and her child getting into trouble.

Availability of organizations is a 5-item scale representing the neighborhood (i.e. tract) average of mothers' responses to a series of questions about the presence of formal youth programs or activities. They include organized team sports, religious youth groups, 4-H and YMCA programs, and other clubs and programs. Since the literature suggests that the effects of the availability of youth programs may vary by the level of disadvantage in the community (Halpern, 1992; Halpern et al., 2000), we also include an interaction term to assess the extent to which this influences youth outcomes.

We include the variable *years in the neighborhood*, which measures the number of years the mother has resided in the neighborhood, an important control variable for exposure to the neighborhood influences (Tienda, 1991).

8.4. Statistical analyses

Hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) is a statistical method designed for analyzing data having a hierarchical or nested structure (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992). The procedure used in conventional linear models typically involves disaggregating higher order variables to the individual level. This violates the assumption of independence of observations underlying classical statistical techniques by producing correlated error terms. HLM corrects for this and allows for the formulation and testing of each level of the structure and for specifying how variables at one level affect those at another (for a detailed discussion of the problems associated with conventional analyses of nested data and the benefits of HLM see Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992). To assess the relative importance of neighborhood, family, peer, and individual characteristics on adolescent development, we estimate a series of two-level hierarchical linear models. The level-1 predictors are the family background, parenting, peer association and respondent control variables and the level-2 predictors are measures of organization availability, concentrated disadvantage, residential stability, and collective efficacy.

9. Results

We begin our multivariate analysis of the process depicted in Fig. 1 by considering the factors that predict participation in structured out-of-school activities. The results in Table 1 indicate that at the neighborhood level the availability of youth programs is inversely related to concentrated disadvantage ($b = -.27$, $p < .10$). Moreover, we see from the interaction term that the effect of availability may be more pronounced in disadvantaged neighborhoods ($b = .12$, $p < .05$). In this case, holding the level of availability constant, participation is higher in more disadvantaged neighborhoods.

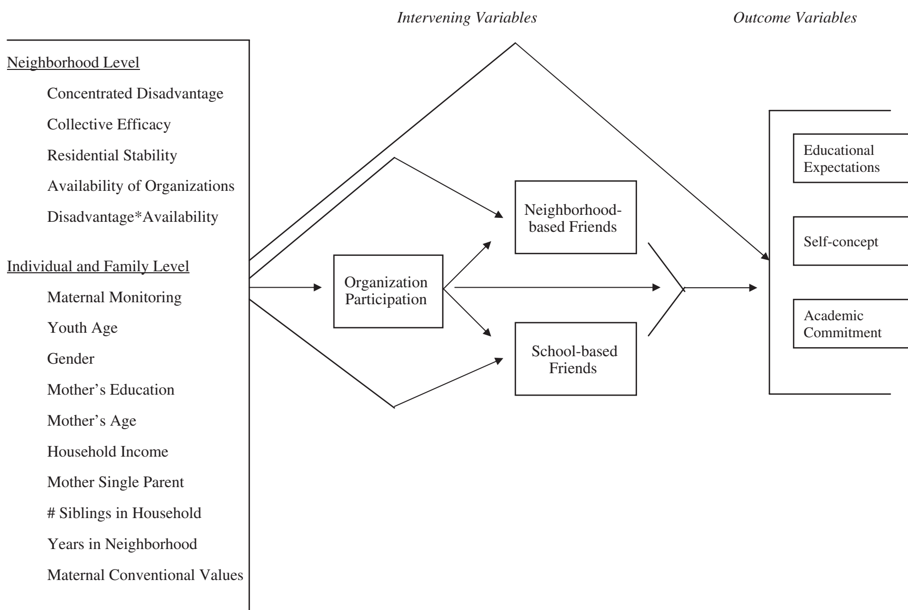

Fig. 1. Conceptual model.

Table 1
Cross-level hierarchical linear models of organization participation and peer associations

Independent variables	Organization participation		Neighborhood-based friends		School-based friends	
	b	S.E.	*b*	S.E.	*b*	S.E.
Neighborhood level						
Concentrated disadvantage	−.27^{+}	.15	−.14*	.07	−.07	.06
Collective efficacy	−.10	.10	.31**	.09	.04	.09
Residential stability	.07	.08	−.05	.07	.06	.07
Availability of organizations	.13^{+}	.07	.03	.06	.01	.06
Disadvantaged × Availability	.12*	.06	–	–	–	–
Individual level						
Organizational participation	–	–	.06*	.03	−.04	.03
Maternal monitoring	.15**	.05	.13**	.04	.12**	.04
Youth age	−.04	.03	−.11***	.02	−.05*	.02
Male youth	.20*	.09	−.07	.07	−.18*	.07
Mother's age	−.00	.01	.01*	.00	.00	.01
Mother's education	.08**	.02	−.04*	.02	.05*	.02
Monthly HH income (×1000)	.00*	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Mother single parent	.02	.10	−.07	.08	.02	.09
No. of siblings in household	.09***	.02	.01	.02	−.00	.02
Years in neighborhood	.09	.01	.00	.00	.00	.00
Maternal conventional values	.14**	.05	−.05	.04	.07	.04
Intercept	.80***	.19	−.12	.17	−.10	.17
Total Nhd explained[a]	.69		.69		.64	
Net Nhd explained[b]	.00		.00		.60	
Total explained	.15		.15		.20	

Unstandardized *b*-coefficients and (standard errors).

[a] The between-neighborhood variance explained by both individual-level and neighborhood-level variables.

[b] The residual between-neighborhood variance explained by the neighborhood-level variables, after the variance explained by the individual-level variables is taken out.

$^{+}$ $p<.10$ (neighborhood-level only).

* $p<.05$.

** $p<.01$.

*** $p<.001$.

The results also demonstrate the importance of families with regard to adolescent activity levels. As the positive coefficients for mother's education and household income indicate, children from families of higher socioeconomic status participate more, as do youth who are more closely monitored by parents ($b=.15$, $p<.01$) and whose mothers hold more conventional values ($b=.14$, $p<.01$). Other background effects include higher rates of involvement among boys ($b=.20$, $p<.05$) and among adolescents with more siblings ($b=.09$, $p<.001$).

Turning to the peer outcome models, neighborhood friends are more likely to be academically inclined when youth reside in areas where collective efficacy among the residents is higher ($b=.31$, $p<.01$) and where concentrated disadvantage is lower ($b=-.14$, $p<.05$). Furthermore, organizational participation may shape the quality of friendship networks, as greater participation is associated with contact with neighborhood-based friends who are academically inclined ($b=.06$, $p<.05$). Parental monitoring of youth activities is also a good calibrator of neighborhood friendship networks, as more vigilant parents tend to have children who are embedded in prosocial neighborhood peer networks ($b=.13$, $p<.01$). Older youth have less academically inclined neighborhood friends ($b=-.11$, $p<.01$). Interestingly, we find that

mothers with more education have children whose neighborhood friends are less academically inclined ($b = -.04$, $p < .05$).

We find no effects of neighborhood quality on the youth school-based peer networks. At the individual level, maternal monitoring is also strongly associated with school friendship choices ($b = .12$ $p < .01$) and, contrary to findings with neighborhood friends, youth whose mothers have more education are also shown to have friends who are committed to school ($b = .05$, $p < .05$). Boys are less likely to have academically inclined friends at school in comparison to girls ($b = -.18$, $p < .05$), as are older youth in comparison to their younger counterparts ($b = -.05$, $p < .05$).

In the final step in the model, we tested the effects of all the contextual variables on the various dimensions of youth development (see Table 2). At the neighborhood level, there is moderate support for the relationship between efficacious neighborhoods and stronger self-concept among youth ($b = .17$, $p < .10$), as well as the association between residential stability and lower reports of self-concept ($b = -.13$, $p < .10$) and lower academic commitment ($b = -.15$, $p < .10$).

Table 2
Cross-level hierarchical linear models of youth outcomes

Independent variables	Educational expectations		Self-concept		Academic commitment	
	b	S.E.	*b*	S.E.	*b*	S.E.
Neighborhood level						
Concentrated disadvantage	−.04	.06	−.02	.07	−.03	.08
Collective efficacy	.08	.09	.17+	.09	.16	.10
Residential stability	.06	.07	−.13+	.07	−.15+	.08
Availability of organizations	−.04	.06	.01	.07	−.05	.07
Individual level						
Organization participation	.10**	.03	.06*	.03	.12***	.03
Maternal monitoring	.11**	.04	−.01	.04	.24***	.04
Neighborhood-based friends	−.13**	.04	−.06	.05	−.05	.04
School-based friends	.19***	.04	.12**	.04	.15***	.04
Youth age	.01	.02	.07**	.02	.07***	.02
Male youth	−.32***	.07	−.06	.07	−.18**	.06
Mother's age	.01*	.00	.00	.00	−.00	.00
Mother's education	.32	.02	−.01	.02	−.02	.02
Monthly HH income	.00	.00	.00**	.00	.00	.00
Mother single parent	−.24**	.08	−.02	.09	−.24**	.08
No. of siblings in household	−.01	.02	−.05*	.02	−.02	.02
Years in neighborhood	−.01	.00	.00	.00	−.01**	.00
Maternal conventional values	.13**	.04	.16**	.04	.17***	.04
Intercept	3.75***	.16	−.03	.17	.19	.19
Total Nhd explained[a]	.77		.39		.44	
Net Nhd explained[b]	.05		.08		.00	
Total explained	.31		.13		.23	

Figures are unstandardized *b*-coefficients and standard errors.

[a] The between-neighborhood variance explained by both individual-level and neighborhood-level variables.

[b] The residual between-neighborhood variance explained by the neighborhood-level variables, after the variance explained by the individual-level variables is taken out.

+ $p < .10$ (neighborhood-level only).

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

At the individual level, we find that the hypothesis that greater participation in youth organizations is related to more positive developmental outcomes is supported. Participation is significantly associated with higher educational expectations ($b=.10$, $p<.01$), a positive self-concept ($b=.06$, $p<.05$), and greater academic commitment ($b=.12$, $p<.001$).

Peer groups clearly matter, as having academically inclined school friends is associated with better outcomes across the board ($b=.19$, $p<.001$; $b=.12$, $p<.01$; and $b=.15$, $p<.001$; for educational expectations, self-concept, and academic commitment, respectively). Interestingly, educational expectations appear to be lower among youth who have academically inclined neighborhood friends ($b=-.13$, $p<.01$), an unexpected finding discussed in the next section.

Family contexts are also important, particularly maternal monitoring (for educational expectation ($b=.11$, $p<.01$) and academic commitment ($b=.24$, $p<.001$)) and a conventional value orientation among mothers (for all three outcomes). Family structure effects are also evident, as youth of single parents have both lower educational expectations ($b=-.24$, $p<.01$) and academic commitment ($b=-.24$, $p<.01$) compared to youth in two-parent households.

With regard to some of the other control measures, we find that the educational expectations of boys are lower than girls ($b=-.32$, $p<.001$) as is their academic commitment ($b=-.18$, $p<.01$). Older youth have higher self-concept ($b=.07$, $p<.01$) and higher academic commitment ($b=.07$, $p<.0001$) in comparison to younger adolescents. In addition, higher income households are associated with youth with a positive self-concept ($b=.00$, $p<.01$).

10. Discussion and conclusions

The recent proliferation in funding for after-school programs is attributed to a shift in societal values away from preventive programs aimed at curbing risky behaviors to a more deliberate attempt to promote normative development. By encouraging the growth of positive youth programming, advocates seek to expose youth to an increased number of protective factors associated with more favorable youth outcomes (Hollister, 2003). Studies indicate that participation in activities during nonschool hours can have important implications for the well-being of urban minority youth since they are at a greater risk of developmental delays due to residing in high-risk neighborhoods where pervasive poverty and its associated social problems can interfere with the acquisition of conventional competences (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; McLoyd, 1998; National Commission on Children, 1991; Posner & Vandell, 1999). Drawing on the work of Wilson (1996), Bronfenbrenner (1989) and others (Jessor, 1993) we looked at how multiple contexts affect the social development of African-American urban youth. In particular we considered the role that neighborhood-based organizations have on important predictors of school achievement and the successful transition to adulthood, namely academic commitment, educational expectations, and self-concept (Bloom, 1990; Oppenheimer, 1988).

Although a large proportion of the explained variance in our model originated from individual-level differences, we find that neighborhood-level factors are moderately, though significantly, related to youth participation in neighborhood-based organizations and to the development of important prosocial competencies. One of the most important neighborhood-level findings relates to the indirect effect that the availability of local organizations has on youth outcomes. Not surprisingly, participation rates of youth are higher in neighborhoods with more youth organizational resources, but even more important, participation is directly associated with heightened academic expectations, positive self-concept, and stronger commitment to school among youth. Additionally, as evidenced by the significant interaction term, the effects of

availability are higher in more disadvantaged neighborhoods. This suggests that access to such resources by African-American youth may be especially important in these neighborhoods, where the need for safe and constructive free time activities are the greatest. These results reinforce findings from other studies, which indicate that youth-oriented programs have positive implications for the formation of healthy orientations and positive self-perceptions and favorably influence academic outcomes and positive social behaviors (Baker & Witt, 1996; Halpern, 1992; Holland & Andre, 1987; Oden, 1995).

From a developmental perspective, program participation aids in the successful acquisition of core competencies that help urban youth appreciate the value of education and their own self-worth. Schools alone are probably not able to provide all students with the level of individual support required for each child to feel connected and to understand they are ultimately responsible for their own futures. Other supportive milieu, such as youth organizations that provide opportunities for youth to enhance aspirations and skill development and to experience success in venues outside of the school environment, can help to minimize feelings of disenfranchisement and may even help to overcome a sense of inferiority that comes from under-performing at school. This is especially important for poor minority students who are more likely to attend substandard schools where it is generally believed that a sizeable portion of the student population will perform much worse academically in relation to their suburban or private school counterparts (Balfanz & Legters, 2001; Entwisle et al., 1997).

There is some debate in the literature as to whether a majority of poor residents or a minority of white-collar neighbors contributes to the poor school performance of youth. Recent research has shown that school attachments are more related to the percentage of higher SES neighbors (Brooks-Gunn et al., 1993; Duncan, 1994) although this association may not hold for African-American females whose school retention rates were not connected to the presence of white collar workers in the neighborhood (Ensminger, Lamkin, & Jacobson, 1996). We find a modest relationship between indicators of neighborhood quality, notably collective efficacy and residential stability, and youth prosocial development. This finding seems to reinforce the perspective that factors related to the social and physical deterioration of neighborhoods, such as concentrated poverty and chronic joblessness, contribute to the maladaption of youth (Wilson, 1996, 1991). A plausible interpretation of these results would suggest that high poverty neighborhoods provide a social milieu for youth to experience the deprivations associated with widespread joblessness and underperforming and ill-equipped institutional resources, which are supposed to provide them with the tools to achieve economic self-sufficiency as adults. Such experiences may have a fundamental impact on adolescents' self-concept. Similarly, high poverty neighborhoods increase the chances that youth will come in contact with, and be influenced by, peers who do not place a premium on a quality education (Crane, 1991; South, Baumer, & Lutz, 2003).

Curiously, and contrary to findings from other studies (South et al., 2003), we find that residential stability at the neighborhood level was marginally related to a decrease in self-concept and academic commitment. Sampson and Morenoff (2004) and others (Coleman, 1990) credit the high rates of residential churning as one of the main reason for the deterioration in social trust among residents in less efficacious neighborhoods. No doubt, schools in such neighborhoods are faced with the difficult task of trying to build unity among a student body that is regularly seeing children enter and leave the system. Residential instability at the individual level is also related to poor school outcomes as children who frequently change schools must struggle to adjust to new teachers and make new friends (South et al., 2003). However, it is also possible that families who lack the means to relocate from an undesirable neighborhood run the

risk of continuing to expose their children to the same inadequate schools and deviant peers. In such incidences, residential stability may work against the best wishes of concerned parents by maintaining the status quo.

The other main finding relates to the important relationship between participating in neighborhood-based organizations and friendship networks. Conventional wisdom holds that adolescents place primary importance on their relationship with their friends and are more likely to conform to the orientations of their peers than their immediate family members (Eccles & Barber, 1999). Maybe not surprisingly, we find that participation in locally based organizations is associated with having more prosocial neighborhood friends (but not school-based friends). This finding may reflect the fact that neighborhood peer groups can be composed of youth from a variety of schools from across the community or indeed may include youth who have already dropped out. As such, it may be unreasonable to assume that participation in neighborhood-based programs would help to better integrate youth with prosocial friendship networks at their school. What participation does provide is a closer affiliation with neighborhood-based peers who emphasize academic success and commitment, and reinforcement of the claim that participation in these organizations can decrease the likelihood that youth will become immersed in an oppositional culture (Brown, 1990; Elliot, 1989).

However, we find that having more academically oriented neighborhood-based friendship groups decreased educational expectations among African-American youth. While our conceptual model does not allow for a complete distillation of how this might occur, we point to several established bodies of knowledge, which may help to guide future research in this area. One possibility relates to the "big-fish-little-pond" (BFLP) effect, which stems from social comparison theory and postulates that youths' self-perceptions are formed by adjudicating their own academic performance with those of their peers (Marsh, 1984; Marsh & Parker, 1984). Youth may devalue their own competence in comparison to more able peers. If indeed youth place much more importance on these out-of-school relationship then policy makers need to carefully consider ways to promote healthier comparison among peers in such settings so as to ensure that youth, especially minority youth, are able to solidify important and potentially beneficial friendships with prosocial peers in supportive and structured recreational settings.

While participation in neighborhood-based organizations does not help to put youth in contact with academically inclined school-based peers, the data indicate that such friendships matter most for African-American adolescents' orientations and expectations around education. This finding echoes decades of similar results that trumpet the positive effects of embedding youth in friendship networks with academically inclined peers at school (Broh, 2002; Furstenberg et al., 1999). And, while program providers have explored the possibility of extending these benefits into the after-school hours by creating opportunities that allow youth to engage with school friends in less formal settings outside the confines of the classroom, we should carefully consider all of the implications before advocating for their widespread implementation (Halpern, 1999). While our research suggests that such efforts might have positive results, Loder and Hirsch (2003) found that Black female adolescents expressed a preference to recreate with their neighborhood friends in local organizations away from the conformity of the more regimented school system. Even school-related sporting events were criticized by respondents in this study for being less egalitarian favoring only the most able students. Programs that seek to encourage closer friendships among school-based peers may need to find ways to overcome some of the hostilities that certain youth feel from their counterparts at school and allow for a more casual and hospitable approach to youth interaction in recreational settings.

The results also demonstrate the importance of caregivers' involvement in the form of parental monitoring and their conventional values concerning such things as a quality education and hard work. Similar to other studies, which have considered these connections in more depth, the results suggest that vigilant parents are instrumental in helping to steer their children toward constructive social activities where they can encounter prosocial peers and gain invaluable interpersonal experiences (Furstenberg et al., 1999). While we found no relationship between mothers' values and the friendship networks of youth, we found evidence that such values are strongly associated with their children's prosocial orientations and the likelihood that they will participate in locally based organizations. Ethnographic accounts of youth in poor urban neighborhoods show that diligent African-American parents are quite resourceful in protecting their children from dangers outside of the home (Jarrett, 1997). Given how prominent the relationships between mothers' parenting styles, use of protective formal neighborhood resources, and developmental outcomes among youth appear to be from our analyses, we urge researchers to carefully consider how recent policy changes may have affected these dynamics. Since the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) in 1996, many low-income working mothers now face the added burden of finding safe and available options for their adolescent children during the time when they are still at work and their children are home from school. A worrisome reality for many working parents is that without the availability of structured, safe environments where children can go to after school, they can become susceptible to the attractiveness of a deviant peer group.

Finally, we would be remiss for not pointing out some of the limitations of the study. It is quite possible that the associations explored in the conceptual model are not unidirectional as tested and that the causal sequence could work the other way on some of the specified paths. For instance, peer influences may help to account for organizational affiliations and not the other way around as we proposed. Youth may encourage their prosocial friends to participate in neighborhood activities and so these formative relationships may have already been solidified before joining a club. Future research using longitudinal data should consider more reciprocal relationships when exploring the mechanisms by which families and peers moderate the organizational affiliation and social development of youth. We are also keenly aware that despite the causal assumptions depicted in the conceptual model, the cross-sectional nature of the data used for the analysis means that any inferences about causality are purely suggestive and attempts to confirm causality would require longitudinal data to test for these relationships. Some of the measures used in the analyses are also less than ideal. Youth-reported measures of peer academic performance may misrepresent the actual attainment of these friends. *Maternal monitoring* is also a youth-reported measure of parental supervision and as such represents "perceived" monitoring and may not fully capture some of the covert methods mothers employ to check on their children. Given these limitations, the findings should be considered suggestive of the link between participation and youth outcomes and more definitive validation awaits the availability of in-depth longitudinal studies of the association between organizational involvement and youth outcomes.

Nevertheless, our findings provide support for the contention that youth organizations provide an enriching environment that contributes to the well being of children. The importance of such programs is even more compelling in high poverty neighborhoods where they appear to provide a critical resource for low-income families and their children. While low-income African-American families are at a serious disadvantage in terms of the limitations associated with neighborhood disadvantage including the dearth of institutional

supports they can rely on to help raise their children (Ardelt & Eccles, 2001; Wilson, 1996), they must also face some of the same boundary-testing behaviors most adolescents engage in as they begin to assert themselves and challenge established assumptions regarding acceptable norms. It is during this confrontational stage that youth begin to question the benefits of a good education and doing well academically and whether it is in their best interests to stay in school until graduation (Cook, Herman, Phillips, & Settersten, 2002; Jessor, Donovan & Costa, 1991; Roeser & Eccles, 1998). Since the results reported here show a strong relationship between organization participation and a healthy self-regard as well as a strong commitment to schooling future, research should pay particular attention to the social environment that these kinds of organizations provide, which appear to reinforce values that adolescents might otherwise devalue or eschew altogether. Furthermore, in attempting to understand how such programs influence youth, researchers should carefully consider the peer dynamics that operate across the range of microsystems where youth encounter each other throughout the day.

Acknowledgements

This research was supported by funds made available to the Joblessness and Urban Poverty Research Program, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University by the Ford Foundation. We would like to thank Chris Wimer for his insightful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

References

Allen, J. P., Moore, C. M., Kuperminc, G. P, & Bell, K. (1998). Attachment and adolescent psychosocial functioning. *Child Development*, *69*, 1406–1419.

Amato, P. R., & Booth, A. (1997). *A generation at risk: Growing up in an era of family upheaval*. London: Harvard University Press.

Anderson, E. (1990). *Streetwise: Race, class, and change in an urban community*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ardelt, M., & Eccles, J. S. (2001). Effects of mothers' parental efficacy strategies on inner-city youth. *Journal of Family Issues*, *22*, 944–972.

Baker, W. D., & Witt, P. A. (1996). Evaluation of the impact of two after-school recreation programs. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, *14*, 23–44.

Balfanz, R., & Legters, N. (2001). *How many central city high schools have a severe dropout problem, where are they located, and who attends them?* Presented at the dropouts in America: How severe is the problem? What do we know about intervention and prevention? Conference, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

Barbarin, O. A. (1993). Emotional and social development of African American children. *Journal of Black Psychology*, *19*, 381–390.

Bartko, W. T., & Eccles, J. S. (2003). Adolescent participation in structured and unstructured activities: A person-oriented analysis. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *32*, 233–241.

Benson, P. L., Leffert, N., Scales, P. S., & Blyth, D. A. (1998). Beyond the "village" rhetoric: Creating healthy communities for children and adolescents. *Applied Developmental Science*, *2*, 138–159.

Berman, S. (1997). *Social consciousness and the development of social responsibility*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Bloom, M. (1990). The psychosocial constructs of social competency. In T. P. Gullotta, G. R. Adams, & R. Montemayor (Eds.), *Developing social competency in adolescence* (pp. 11–27). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Briggs, X. (1998). Doing democracy up close: Culture, power, and communication in community building. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *18*, 1–13.

Broh, B. A. (2002). Linking extracurricular programming to academic achievement: Who benefits and why? *Sociology of Education*, *75*, 69–91.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1989). Ecological systems theory. In R. Vasta (Ed.), *Annals of child development – six theories of child development: Revised formulations and current issues* (pp. 187–250). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (1998). The ecology of developmental process. In R. M. Lerner, & W. Damon (Eds.), *Theoretical models of human development* (Fifth edition, pp. 467–519). New York: Wiley.

Brooks-Gunn, J. (1996). Children in families in communities: Risk and intervention in the Bronfenbrenner Tradition. In G. Elder, & K. Luscher (Eds.), *Examining lives in context* (pp. 467–519). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Brooks-Gunn, J., Duncan, G. J., Klebanov, P., & Sealand, S. (1993). Do neighborhoods influence child and adolescent development? *American Journal of Sociology*, *99*, 335–395.

Brooks-Gunn, J., Duncan, G. J., & Aber, J. L. (1997a). *Neighborhood poverty: Context and consequences for children*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Brooks-Gunn, J., Duncan, G. J., & Aber, J. L. (1997b). *Neighborhood poverty: Policy implications in studying neighborhoods*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Brown, B. B. (1990). Peer groups and peer cultures. In S. S. Feldman, & G. R. Elliot (Eds.), *At the threshold: The developing adolescent* (pp. 171–196). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brown, B. B., & Theobald, W. (1998). Learning contexts beyond the classroom: Extracurricular activities, community organizations, and peer groups. In K. Borman, & B. Schneider (Eds.), *The adolescent years: Social influences and educational challenges. The ninety-seventh yearbook of the national society for the study of education: Part 1. The developing adolescent* (pp. 171–196). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Burton, L. M. (1990). Teenage childbearing as an alternative life-course strategy in multigenerational black families. *Human Nature*, *1*, 123–143.

Bryk, A. S., & Raudenbush, S. W. (1992). *Hierarchical linear modeling: Applications and data analysis methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Ceballo, R., McLoyd, V. C., & Toyokawa, T. (2004). The influence of neighborhood quality on adolescents' educational values and school effort. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *19*, 716–739.

Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, *94*, 95–120.

Coleman, J. S. (1990). *Foundations of social theory.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Collins, W. A. (1990). Parent–child relationships in the transition to adolescence: Continuity and change in interaction, affect and cognition. In R. Montemayor, G. R. Adams, & T. P. Gullotta (Eds.), *From childhood to adolescence: A transitional period?* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Conger, R. D., Conger, K. J., & Elder, G. H. (1997). Family economic hardship and adolescent academic performance: Mediating and moderating processes. In G. J. Duncan, & J. Brooks-Gunn (Eds.), *Consequences of growing up poor* (pp. 228–310). New York: Russell-Sage Foundation.

Connell, J. P., & Halpern-Felsher, B. L. (1997). How neighborhoods affect educational outcomes in middle childhood and adolescence: Conceptual issues and an empirical example. In J. Brooks-Gunn, G. J. Duncan, & J. L. Aber (Eds.), *Neighborhood poverty: Context and consequences for children*, *vol. 1* (pp. 174–199). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Connell, J. P., Aber, J. L., & Walker, G. (1995). How do urban communities affect youth? Using social science research to inform the design and evaluation of comprehensive community initiatives. In J. P. Connell, A. C. Kubish, L. B. Schorr, & C. H. Weiss (Eds.), *New approaches to evaluating community initiatives: Concepts, methods, and context* (pp. 93–125). Washington, DC: Aspen Institute.

Connell, J. P., Halpern-Felsher, B. L., Clifford, E., Crichlow, W., & Usinger, P. (1995). Hanging in there: Contextual and psychological factors contributing to urban African-American students' engagement, performance and decision to stay in school. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, *10*, 41–63.

Cook, T. D., Herman, M. R., Phillips, M., & Settersten Jr., R. A. (2002). Some ways in which neighborhoods, nuclear families, friendship groups, and schools jointly affect changes in early adolescent development. *Child Development*, *73*, 1283–1309.

Cooper, H., Valentine, J. C., Nye, B., & Lindsay, J. J. (1999). Relationships between five after-school activities and academic achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *91*, 369–378.

Crane, J. (1991). The epidemic theory of ghettos and neighborhood effects on dropping out and teenage childbearing. *American Journal of Sociology*, *96*, 1226–1259.

Darling, N., & Steinberg, L. (1997). Community influences on adolescent achievement and deviance. In J. Brooks-Gunn, G. J. Duncan, & J. L. Aber (Eds.), *Neighborhood poverty: Policy implications in studying neighborhoods*, *vol. II* (pp. 120–131). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Davalos, D. B., Chavez, E. L., & Guardiola, R. J. (1999). The effects of extracurricular activity, ethnic identification, and perception of school on student dropout rates. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, *21*, 61–77.

Demo, D. H. (1992). The self-concept over time: Research issues and directions. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *18*, 303–326.

Dornbusch, S., Ritter, P., & Steinberg, L. (1991). Community influences on the relationship of family status to adolescent school performance: Differences between African-Americans and Non-Hispanic whites. *American Journal of Education*, *99*, 543–567.

Dryfoos, J. G. (1994). *Full service schools: A revolution in health and social services for children, youth, and families*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Dubais, J. S., & Snider, B. A. (1993). The role of community-based youth groups in enhancing learning and achievement through nonformal education. In R. M. Lerner (Ed.), *Early adolescence: Perspectives on research, policy, and intervention* (pp. 159–174). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Duncan, G. J. (1994). Families and neighbors as sources of disadvantage in the schooling decisions of white and black adolescents. *American Journal of Education*, *18*, 543–567.

Duncan, G. J., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (1997). *Consequences of growing up poor*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Earls, F., Cairns, R., & Mercy, J. (1993). The control of violence and promotion of non-violence. In S. Millstein, A. Peterson, & E. Nightingale (Eds.), *Promoting the health of adolescents* (pp. 285–304). New York: Oxford University Press.

Eccles, J. S., & Barber, B. L. (1999). Student council, volunteering, basketball, or marching band: What kind of extracurricular involvement matters? *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *14*, 10–43.

Eccles, J. S., & Gootman, J. A. (2002). *Community programs to promote youth development*. Washington DC: National Academy Press.

Elliot, D. S. (1989). *Multiple problem youth*. New York: Springer-Verlag.

Elliot, D. S., Wilson, W. J., Huizinga, D., Sampson, R. J, Elliott, A., & Rankin, B. (1996). The effects of neighborhood disadvantage on adolescent development. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, *33*, 389–426.

Ensminger, M., Lamkin, R. P., & Jacobson, N. (1996). School leaving: A longitudinal perspective including neighborhood effects. *Child Development*, *67*, 2400–2416.

Entwisle, D. R., Alexander, K. L., & Olsen, L. S. (1997). *Children, schools and inequality*. Bolder, CO: Westview Press.

Fitts, W. H. (1964). *Tennessee self concept scale. Test booklet*. Nashville, TN: Counselor Recording.

Furstenberg Jr., F. F. (1993). How families manage risk and opportunity in dangerous neighborhoods. In W. J. Wilson (Ed.), *Sociology and the public agenda* (pp. 231–258). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Furstenberg Jr., F. F., Cook, T. D., Eccles, J. S., Elder Jr., G. H., & Sameroff, A. J. (1999). *Managing to make it: Urban families and adolescent success*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Gerber, S. B. (1996). Extracurricular activities and academic achievement. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, *30*, 42–50.

Gonzales, N. A., Cauce, A. M., Friedman, R. J., & Mason, C. A. (1996). Family, peer and neighborhood influences on academic achievement among African-American adolescents: One-year prospective effects. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *24*, 365–387.

Granovetter, M. S. (1973). The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology*, *78*, 1360–1380.

Gutman, L. M., Sameroff, A. J., & Eccles, J. S. (2002). The academic achievement of African American students during early adolescence: An examination of multiple risk, promotive, and protective factors. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *30*, 367–399.

Halpern, R. (1992). The role of after-school programs in the lives of inner-city children: A study of the lives of the 'Urban Youth Network'. *Child Welfare*, *71*, 215–230.

Halpern, R. (1995). *Rebuilding the inner city: A history of neighborhood initiatives to address poverty in the U.S.*. Columbia University Press.

Halpern, R. (1999). After-school Programs for low-income children: Promise and challenges. *The Future of Children*, *9*, 81–93.

Halpern, R., Barker, G., & Molland, W. (2000). Youth programs as alternative spaces to be: A study of neighborhood youth programs in Chicago's west town. *Youth and Society*, *31*, 469–506.

Hamilton, S. F., & Fenzel, L. M. (1988). The impact of volunteer experience on adolescent social development: Evidence of program effects. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *3*, 65–80.

Hanson, T. L., McLanahan, S., & Thomson, E. (1997). Economic resources, parental practices, and children's well-being. In G. J. Duncan, & J. Brooks-Gunn (Eds.), *Consequences of growing up poor* (pp. 190–238). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Harris, J. R. (1995). Where is the child's environment? A group socialization theory of development. *Psychological Review*, *102*, 458–489.

Hirsch, B. J., & DuBois, D. L. (1989). The school–nonschool ecology of early adolescent friendships. In D. Belle (Ed.), *Children's social networks and social supports* (pp. 260–276). New York: John Wiley & Sons.
Holland, A., & Andre, T. (1987). Participation in extracurricular activities in secondary school: What is known and what needs to be known? *Review of Educational Research*, *57*, 437–466.
Hollister, R. (2003). *The growth of after-school programs and their impact*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.
Holloway, W. B. (1982). Developing competence. *Society*, *19*, 40–47.
Jarrett, R. L. (1997). African-American family and parenting strategies in impoverished neighborhoods. *Qualitative Sociology*, *20*, 275–288.
Jessor, R. M. (1993). Successful adolescent development among youth in high-risk settings. *American Psychologist*, *48*, 117–126.
Jessor, R. M., Donovan, J. E., & Costa, F. M. (1991). *Beyond adolescence: Problem behavior and young adult development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Kahne, J., Nagaoka, J., Brown, A., O'Brien, J., Quinn, T., & Thandiede, K. (1999). *School and after-school programs as a context for youth development*. Oakland, CA: Mills College, Department of Education.
Kim, J. E., Hetherington, E. M., & Reiss, D. (1999). Associations among family relationships, antisocial peers, and adolescents' externalizing behaviors: Gender and family type differences. *Child Development*, *70*, 1209–1230.
Kleiber, D. A. (1999). *Leisure experience and human development: A dialectical interpretation*. New York: Basic Books.
Larson, R. W. (1994). Youth organizations, hobbies, and sports as developmental contexts. In R. K. Silbereisen, & E. Todt (Eds.), *Adolescents in context: The interplay of family, school, peers, and work in adjustment* (pp. 46–65). New York: Springer Verlag.
Larson, R. W., & Kleiber, D. (1993). Free time activities as factors in adolescent adjustment. In P. Tolan, & B. Cohler (Eds.), *Handbook of clinical research and practice with adolescents* (pp. 125–145). New York: Wiley.
Lerner, R. M., Fisher, C. B., & Weinberg, R. A. (2000). Toward a science for and of the people: Promoting civil society through the application of developmental science. *Child Development*, *71*, 11–20.
Lerner, R. M. (1995). *America's youth in crisis: Challenges and options for programs and policies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
Loder, T. L., & Hirsch, B. J. (2003). Inner-city youth development organizations: The salience of peer ties among early adolescent girls. *Applied Developmental Science*, *7*, 2–12.
Mahoney, J. L., & Cairns, R. B. (1997). Do extracurricular activities protect against early school dropout? *Developmental Psychology*, *33*, 241–253.
Marsh, H. W. (1991). Failure of high ability schools to deliver academic benefits commensurate with their students' ability levels. *American Educational Research Journal*, *28*, 445–480.
Marsh, H. W. (1992). Extracurricular activities: Beneficial extension of the traditional curriculum or subversion of academic goals? *Journal of Education Psychology*, *84*, 553–562.
Marsh, Herbert W. (1984). Self-concept: The application of a frame of reference model to explain paradoxical results. *Australian Journal of Education*, *28*, 165–181.
Marsh, H. W., & Parker, J. (1984). Determinants of student self-concept: Is it better to be a relatively large fish in a small pond even if you don't learn to swim as well? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *47*, 213–231.
McLanahan, S., & Sandefur, G. D. (1994). *Growing up with a single parent: What hurts, what helps?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
McLaughlin, M. W., Irby, M. A., & Langman, J. (1994). *Urban sanctuaries: Neighborhood organizations in the lives and futures of inner-city youth*. San Francisco: Josey-Bass Publishers.
McLoyd, V. (1990). The impact of economic hardship on black families and children: Psychological distress, parenting, and socioemotional development. *Child Development*, *61*, 311–346.
McLoyd, V. (1998). Socioeconomic disadvantage and child development. *American Psychologist*, *53*, 185–204.
McNeal Jr., R. (1995). Extracurricular activities and high school dropouts. *Sociology of Education*, *68*, 62–81.
Moore, D. (1987). Parent adolescent separation: The construction of adulthood by late adolescents. *Development Psychology*, *23*, 298–407.
National Commission on Children. (1991). *Speaking of kids: A national survey of children and parents*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.
Oden, S. (1995). Studying youth programs to assess influences on youth development: New roles for researchers. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *10*, 173–186.
Ogbu, J. U. (1981). Origins of human competence: A cultural–ecological perspective. *Child Development*, *52*, 413–429.
Oppenheimer, L. (1988). The nature of social action: Social competence versus social comformism. In B. Schneider, G. Attili, J. Nadel, & R. P. Weissberg (Eds.), *Social competence in developmental perspective* (pp. 41–70). Boston, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Patterson, G. R., DeBaryshe, B. D., & Ramsey, E. (1989). A developmental perspective on antisocial behavior. *American Prospect*, *44*, 329–335.

Peterson, G. W., & Leigh, G. K. (1990). The family and social competence in adolescence. In T. P. Gullotta, G. R. Adams, & R. Montemayor (Eds.), *Developing social competency in adolescence* (pp. 11–27). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Posner, J. K., & Vandell, D. L. (1999). After-school activities and the development of low-income urban children: A longitudinal study. *Developmental Psychology*, *35*, 868–879.

Putnam, R. D. (1999). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Quane, J. M., & Rankin, B. H. (1998). Does dependency cause despondency?: Welfare receipt and normative expectations among inner-city African-American youth. *Journal of Health and Social Services Administration*, *19*, 769–794.

Rankin, B. H., & Quane, J. M. (2002). Social contexts and urban adolescent outcomes: The interrelated effects of neighborhoods, families, and peers on African-American youth. *Social Problems*, *49*, 79–100.

Rehberg, R. (1969). Participation in interscholastic athletics and college expectations. *American Journal of Sociology*, *73*, 732–740.

Resnick, M. D., Bearman, P. S., Blum, R. W., Bauman, K. E., Harris, K. M., Jones, J., et al. (1997). Protecting adolescents from harm: Findings from the national longitudinal study on adolescent health. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, *278*, 823–832.

Roeser, R. W., & Eccles, J. S. (1998). Adolescent's perceptions of middle school: Relation to longitudinal changes in academic and psychological adjustment. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, *8*, 123–158.

Sampson, R. J. (1999). What community supplies. In R. F. Ferguson, & W. T. Dickens (Eds.), *Urban problems and community development* (pp. 241–292). Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Sampson, R. J., & Morenoff, J. D. (2004). Spatial (dis)advantage and homicide in Chicago neighborhoods. In M. F. Goodchild, & D. G. Danelle (Eds.), *Spatially integrated social science* (pp. 145–170). Oxford University Press.

Sampson, R. J., Raudenbush, S. W., & Earls, F. (1997). Neighborhoods and violent crime: A multilevel study of collective efficacy. *Science*, *277*, 918–924.

Scales, P. S., Leffert, N., & Lerner, R. M. (1999). *Developmental assets: A synthesis of the scientific literature on adolescent development*. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.

South, S. J., Baumer, E. P., & Lutz, A. (2003). Interpreting community effects on youth educational attainment. *Youth and Society*, *35*, 3–36.

Steele, C. M., & Aronson, J. (1995). Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African-Americans. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *69*, 797–811.

Steinberg, L. (1987). Single parents, stepparents, and the susceptibility of adolescents to antisocial peer pressures. *Child Development*, *58*, 269–275.

Steinberg, L. (1996). *Beyond the classroom: Why school reform has failed and what parents need to do*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S. D., Dornbusch, S. M., & Darling, N. (1992). Impact of parenting practices on adolescent achievement: Authoritative parenting, school involvement, and encouragement to succeed. *Child Development*, *63*, 1266–1281.

Stone, C., Doherty, K., Jones, C., & Ross, T. (1999). Schools and disadvantaged neighborhoods: The community development challenge. In R. F. Ferguson, & W. T. Dickens (Eds.), *Urban problems and community development* (pp. 339–280). Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Stormshak, E. A., Bierman, K. L., Bruschi, C. J., Dodge, K. A., & Coie, J. D. (1999). The relation between behavior problems and peer preference in different classroom contexts. *Child Development*, *70*, 169–182.

Tienda, M. (1991). Poor people, poor places: Deciphering neighborhood effects on poverty outcomes. In J. Huber (Ed.), *Macro–micro linkages in sociology* (pp. 244–262). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Tharp, R. G., & Gallimore, R. G. (1988). *Rousing minds to life: Teaching, learning, and schooling in social context*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Thornberry, T. P., Lizotte, A. J., Krohn, M. D., Farnworth, M., & Jang, S. J. (1991). Testing interactional theory: An examination of reciprocal causal relationships among family, school, and delinquency. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, *82*, 3–35.

U.S. Census. (1990). *Census of population and housing, Summary Tape File 3*. Washington: Bureau.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (1997). *Understanding youth development: Promoting positive pathways of growth*. Prepared for the Family and Youth Services Bureau by CSR, Incorporated.

Vacha, E. F., & McLaughlin, T. F. (1992). The social, structural, family, school, and personal characteristics of at-risk students: Policy recommendations for school personnel. *Journal of Education*, *174*, 9–25.

Vazsonyi, A. T., & Pickering, L. E. (2003). The importance of family and school domains in adolescent deviance: African American and Caucasian youth. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *32*, 115–128.

Waters, E. B., & Sroufe, L. A. (1983). Social competence as a developmental construct. *Developmental Review*, *3*, 79–97.

Werner, E. E. (1994). Overcoming the odds. *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics*, *15*, 131–136.

Wilson, W. J. (1987). *The truly disadvantaged: The inner city, the underclass, and public policy*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Wilson, W. J. (1991). Studying inner city social dislocations: The challenge of public agenda research. *American Sociological Review*, *56*, 1–14.

Wilson, W. J. (1996). *When work disappears: The world of the new urban poor*. New York: Knopf.

Youniss, J., McLellan, J. A., & Yates, M. (1997). What we know about engendering civic identity. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *40*, 620–631.