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Effects of Divorce on the Self-Concept of Middle School Students

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**EFFECTS OF DIVORCE ON THE SELF-CONCEPT
OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Robyn Jeanette Brady, B. S.

An Abstract Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Lindenwood University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Art
1998

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to examine if there is a difference in self-concept between 6th and 7th grade students whose parents have been divorced within the last five years and 6th and 7th grade students whose parents are not divorced. Sixty students attending a Midwestern middle school were the subjects of the study. The sample group consisted of 32 students currently taking part in a divorce group and the control group consisted of 28 students whose parents were not divorced. The students completed the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale, a self-report measure which evaluates the areas (i.e., clusters) of Behavior, Physical Appearance and Attributes, Anxiety, Popularity, and Happiness and Satisfaction. The results of the t test indicated a significant difference in the self-concept means between the two groups for the total and cluster scores. The children in the divorce group scored lower on all areas of the measure evaluated. School counselors can use the results of the study to better understand how parental divorce may effect the self-concept of children.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Parental divorce is not only the end of a marriage, but it is also the end of the family unit. When a child's parents divorce, he or she must face significant events such as changes in living arrangements and economic status. The child also faces a variety of emotional events such as separation and custody battles that can involve court proceedings. Children react in a variety of ways, but it is almost universal that children's self-concept and mental health are negatively affected (Ozimo & Ozimo, 1989).

School counselors should be aware of the negative affect that parental divorce may have on the self-concept of children and adolescents. Ozimo and Ozimo (1989) reported that children and adolescents whose parents are divorcing make up a large percentages, perhaps as much as 80% of the school age population. According to Crosbie-Burnett and Newcomer (1989), "an increasing number of children are bringing divorce-related problems to school" (p. 155). Burke and Van de Streek (1989) also emphasized the importance of seeking counseling to foster self-concept when children's parents are divorced.

Sollnit (in Hett & Rose, 1991) supported these findings by reporting that divorce and separation are among of the most serious and complex mental health crises faced by children today. When parents separate, "the children experience a double loss: the loss of the parent who leaves and the loss of the remaining parent who may be emotionally unavailable to their

children because of their own turmoil” (Hett & Rose, 1991, p. 38).

According to Hett and Rose (1991), recent studies have indicated an increased number of children from broken families being seen for psychological and behavior problems. Cherlin (in Hines, 1997) agreed that high divorce rates, reconstituted and single parent families, and shared custody have become commonplace in the lives of children and adolescents. Sprinthall, Hall, & Gerler Jr. (1992) also added that family life in the final decade of the 1900’s has become more complex through disruptions such as divorce, single-parent families, and blended families. Therefore, there is an inevitable pressure on school counseling services to respond to such difficulties.

The research reviewed above indicates that there may be an increasing need for school counselors to provide counseling services to help children cope with divorce related issues. With this high prevalence of divorce, do children whose parents are divorced feel differently about themselves than children whose parents are not divorced? Is there a difference between the self-concept of children whose parents have divorced and those whose parents are not divorced? If that is the case, are some areas of self-concept influenced more than others?

The Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale provides clusters in many areas examined in the research studies and presented in the literature, which are affected by parental divorce. The areas include behavior, school achievement, anxiety, popularity, happiness and satisfaction with life, and physical

appearance. In this study, the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale was used to measure the difference in self-concept between early adolescents whose parents have been divorced and those whose parents have not been divorced.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was any difference in self-concept between children in divorced families and children in nondivorced families, utilizing the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale. The purpose was also to identify the specific areas of self-concept that indicated the most significant differences.

Hypothesis

The first null hypothesis for this study is that there is no significant difference in the self-concept score means between 6th and 7th grade students whose parents have been divorced within the last five years and 6th and 7th grade students whose parents are not divorced.

The second null hypothesis examined the difference in the cluster mean scores between 6th and 7th grade students whose parents have divorced within the last five years and 6th and 7th grade students whose parents are not divorced. The individual hypotheses are as follows. There will be no difference in the Behavior cluster mean score between the two groups. There will be no difference in the Intellectual and School Status cluster mean score between the two groups. There will be no difference in the Physical Appearance and Attributes cluster mean score between the two groups. There will be no difference in the Anxiety cluster mean scores between the two

groups. There will be no difference in the Popularity cluster mean score between the two groups. There will be no difference in the Happiness and Satisfaction cluster mean score between the two groups.

The independent variables were parents who were divorced (divorce) and parents who were not divorced (no divorce). These variables are at a nominal level of measurement. The dependent variables of overall self-concept, behavior, intellectual and school status, physical appearance and attributes, anxiety, popularity, and happiness and satisfaction are at an interval level.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Definition of Self-Concept

The purpose of this study is to examine the self-concept of children from divorced parents. A review of the literature on self-concept indicated some interchanging terminology with regard to the meaning of self-concept. Phrases such as self-regard, self-image, self-esteem, self-perception, and self-worth are all used in the literature to refer to self-concept.

Definitions of self-concept can be described in different ways.

Coopersmith (1967) defined self-concept or self-esteem as the "evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself" (p. 5). Branden (1987) described self-concept and self-esteem as self-acceptance, the refusal to be in an adversarial relationship with our own experience by refusing to deny or own any aspect of the self such as one's thoughts, emotions, memories, physical attributes, subpersonalities or actions. Branden regarded self-esteem as the foundation for all growth and change.

In another description of self-concept, Satir (1988), stated that the child's judgement of him or herself influences the kinds of friends one chooses, how one gets along with others, the kind of person he or she marries, and the productivity level one will attain during life. Satir also believed a child comes into the world with no past, no experience, and no scale to judge one's self-worth.

Campbell (1984) believed that the "self" and the "other" constitute

the most significant source of self-concept and self-esteem. The "other" supplies the individual with acceptance, praise, friendship, respect, and love. These positive influences of others serve as gratification because of the implicit message that reassures the individual that he or she indeed has worthwhile qualities. Campbell added that the "self" usually has roots independent of what others think. Campbell concluded that the combined perceptions of the "self" and the "other" created an individual's self-concept (Campbell, 1984).

Berne and Savoy (1985) had another view of self-concept. They believed that children affect the environment in which they live. When the child displays anger and frustration, in turn, the child touches off anger and frustration in those around him. When people reinforce the child's negative image, the child's self-concept lowers and frustration grows. Berne and Savoy also believed that poor self-concept prohibits the individual from building relationships. This leaves the individual feeling threatened and unsuccessful, unable to experience kinship with the world or express assertiveness. The individual can also have difficulty with fears and other strong emotions.

Still further definitions of self-concept have been described by others in the field. Raimy (in Scher, 1990) referred to self-concept as "the descriptive aspect of how an individual perceives himself and his behavior in terms of ability, value, worth, and limitations" (p. 4). Buri and Kircher (1993) stated that "one's self-concept is primarily affected by social interactions to the extent and in the way that one perceives these interactions" (p. 2). Buri and

Kircher also stated that the child 's personal interpretation of experience, not what is recorded by camera or observer, is the true basis for the formation of and change in expectations, beliefs, and wishes.

Wistre and Crowley (1993) wrote that "numerous theorists of the self have likened self-concept to a theory that one constructs about one's self. This theory is suggested to have a functional role in one's behavior, attitudes, and experience" (p. 370). Harter (in Wistere & Crowley, 1993), on the other hand, considered self-worth as an integral component of the individual's self-concept. He described self-worth as the conscious verbalizable concept of one's worth as a person and the overall value that one places on the self as a person. Wistre and Crowley also reported that one's sense of efficacy and active control are critical dimensions of the self-concept. They suggested that the individual's self-perception has a functional role on one's behavior and experience.

Other definitions of self-concept were also reviewed. Nielsen and Mertha (1994) defined self-esteem as the multidimensional, evaluative dimension of the self-concept. McGadney (1995) defined self-concept as "psychological dimension that tells how good we feel about ourselves. Orr and Dinur (1995) stated that self-concept encompasses well-being, school achievement, and social involvement.

Satir (1988) felt that self-concept is formed almost entirely by the family. She believed that every word, facial expression, gesture, or action on the part of the parent gives the child some message about self-worth. After the child

begins school, however, other influences such as acceptance by friends come into play. These forces tend to reinforce or contradict the feelings the child learned at home. All of these experiences and interactions contribute to the child's sense of self-worth. These beliefs are related to the purpose of this which is to examine the effects of parental divorce on children and how this effects self-concept issues.

Adolescent Self-Concept

Adolescence bridges the stage of childhood and young adulthood. According to Erikson (1950), one's self-concept or self-esteem grows to be developed and defined in terms of the individual's social reality. The growing child derives a vitalizing sense of actuality from the awareness that his or her individual way of mastering experiences is successful to the group identity.

Adolescents experience numerous and rapid changes. Physically, adolescents experience changes in height, weight, and secondary sex characteristics. Body shape changes from that of a child to an adult. Their world also widens socially (Chiam, 1987). The behavioral changes of adolescence begin at age eleven and continue well into the twenties (Ames, Ilg, & Baker, 1988). Eleven is often a time of discord and discomfort. It is also a time of loosening up, breaking old bonds, and trial and error. The eleven-year-old child begins to test the limits of authority of what will and will not be permitted (Ames, Ilg, & Baker, 1988).

Because of the rapid growth of the adolescent body, all sameness and continuity that the child relied on earlier, is questioned. The growing and

developing youth, faced with physiological changes within themselves and within the mature tasks ahead of them, are now primarily concerned with what they, as individuals, appear to be in the eyes of others as compared with what they themselves believe they are (Erickson, 1950). Early adolescents must try to match their changing selves with their changing social and family situations (Lerner, 1985).

Effects of Divorce on Children

Research has documented the range of reactions, feelings, difficulties, and behaviors created by parental divorce, separation, or both. Bronstein, Clauson, Stoll, and Abrams (1993) reported that "children from divorced families are more likely to experience behavioral, social, emotional or academic problems than those growing up in households with two biological parents" (p. 268). In an examination of studies by Hines (1997), it was suggested that compared with children whose parents are not divorced, children of divorced parents are at higher risk for experiencing difficulties in school and academic adjustment, disruptions in peer relationships, precocious sexual behavior, delinquency, and substance abuse.

The research indicated that parental divorce is a traumatic event in the life of a child or adolescent. When discussing crises of children, Allan and Anderson's (1986) study indicated that a major source of crises for many students involve family issues. When children brainstormed about crisis events in their lives the pain over separation and divorce was often of major concern (Allan & Anderson, 1986).

Ozimo and Ozimo's (1988) findings suggested that children experiencing parental divorce may find the event psychologically comparable to death and experience similar feelings of shock, disbelief, and denial" (p. 54). Zill and

Peterson (1986) reported that :

more than half of all school age children interviewed in the recent National Survey of Children said they feel afraid when their parents have arguments. Similarly, the portion of children reported to have had a seriously upsetting experience is highest for those whose parents' marriages have been disrupted or whose parents' had relationships that were characterized by high conflict. (p. 295)

Hines (1997) also discussed divorce-related factors of the trauma of divorce. These factors included the conflict between parents that often precedes, accompanies, and follows divorce. Another factor might be the possible loss and diminished contact with a parent. The potential of diminished parent effectiveness can also be a factor. Finally, children may experience decreases in economic support.

Children whose parents separate face the loss of the parent who does not have primary custody of them. They also feel the loss of the intact family they had. Wallerstein and Kelly (1980) stated that in some cases, if the non-custodial parent has little or no contact with the children it may result in the child feeling rejected or abandoned. Terber (1985) suggested that one of the greatest feelings created by marital separation is the fear of losing both parents. Abandonment fears and separation anxieties can result (Terber, 1985). Most children believe they are to blame or are responsible in some way for the divorce. Terber also reported that children often express their fear of abandonment in normally nonproblematic situations such as leaving for

school or going to bed.

According to Armoto (1993), parental loss often results from divorce, and thus the children lose the knowledge, skills, and resources of that parent. Armoto also indicated that, economic loss is another result of divorce, since the child is often living in a single-parent family in cases where the custodial parent is not remarried. Hammond (1981) discussed loss of the family unit in the event of parental divorce. "Especially through the initial adjustment period, children may find themselves deeply involved in the conflict and may face separation from one parent, changes in daily living patterns, and the realization that they will not be part of the 'perfect American family'"(p. 392). He also stated that these children often feel isolation from friends who have intact families.

Kosinski (1983) also reported on the loss of the family and stated that children mourn the loss of the previous family and this can become a major interference in the formation of a new family. Kosinski also indicated that "children in reconstituted families find their affections and loyalties divided between two parental households" (Kosinski, Jr., 1983, p. 201). According to Wallerstein (1991), even when a child has a positive relationship with both parents after a divorce, he or she may still be saddened by the fact that they cannot do activities with both parents at the same time.

Many researchers have reported on the emotional distress and psychological effects parental divorce can have on children. In a study by Morgan (in Adams, Miller, & Reavis, 1989), the most commonly exhibited

concern of the middle school students who are not from intact families included anxiety and guilt. Also, a study by Gavin (in Adams et al., 1989), done in 1984, indicated nervousness, extreme moodiness, psychosomatic problems and a sudden lack of self-confidence were also seen in some children from divorced parents.

According to the research, children can have many negative reactions to the conflicts, separation, and changes brought on by parental divorce. Hett and Rose (1991) found that the "... reaction of children is almost universal: shock, followed by denial, depression, anger, fear, and sometimes the feeling that they are somehow responsible for the event" (p. 38). Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1990) supported these findings, reporting that divorce may be the leading cause of childhood depression.

Wallerstein (1989) described the divorce process as a period of madness for the adult, which then terrifies the child. Zill and Peterson's (1986) study indicated that "... children's mental health is related to marital disruption and the level of conflict in the family" (p.296). Ozimo and Ozimo (1988) stated that the effects of parental divorce includes depression, excessive anger and aggression, self-destructive behaviors, thoughts of suicide, juvenile delinquency, and sexual promiscuity.

Research indicated children may experience stress, guilt, and difficulty adjusting to changes. Armato (1993) discussed the stress that parental divorce may place on the child. Research by Armato revealed that children may feel more life stress over the many changes in children's living situations such as

changing school, child care, and home. In terms of emotional distress, Kline (1991) examined direct and indirect influences of marital discord on emotional adjustment and found that marital conflict contributed to problematic emotional and behavioral adjustment. According to Rosenthal (1993), most children do not understand their feelings enough to express them. They may feel guilty burdening their parents with their feelings.

Many research studies have focused on the effects of parental divorce on school-related issues. Guttman, Amir, and Katz (1987) reported that better controlled studies, with regard to children of divorced parent, indicated poorer cognitive functioning and school performance. The researchers added that research showed children of divorced parents scored lower on achievement tests. They found that these children had a lower withdrawal threshold (i. e. tendency to give up more quickly) on tests than children with intact families. According to Dawson (in Adams et al., 1989), a study by the Kettering Foundation also indicated that children from one-parent families show a lower achievement than children from intact families.

In terms of school related issues, Hett and Rose (1991) "... found differences between children from separated and intact families in such areas as academic achievement, emotional adjustment, and school-related problem behaviors..."(p. 39). According to Hett and Rose, a school survey sponsored by the U. S. National Association of Elementary Principals indicated that children from single-parent families were lower in achievement, presented more school discipline problems, and were absent

from school more frequently than peers with two parents. Miller (1993) suggested that living in a single-parent household is one of the five factors which can contribute to a student's academic risk level.

Further research supported these findings. A study conducted by Lindner, Hagan, and Brown (1992) examined adjustment to early adolescence in children who come from divorced families. The study indicated that "... children who had experienced their parents' marital transition demonstrated greater difficulty in adjustment than children who had been spared such experience..." (p. 71). These difficulties included higher levels of behavior problems, deficiencies in scholastic, social and general competence even 4-6 years after the divorce (Lindner et al., 1992).

Lee (1994) investigated the relationship between school-related emotional and behavioral problems and variation in family structure in a sample of eighth graders. Lee found that among those who exhibited behavior problems, such problems were two to four times as likely to occur in single-parent or step-families as in intact families. In a similar study, Anderson (1992) reported that data concerning the quality of marital relationships of parents correlated with the child's social competence and externalizing behavior.

Peeks (1992) focused on the relationship between children's negative behavior and their parents' disagreements and unhappiness. The researcher indicated that when "... parents became upset, angry or are hurt beyond the limits that are emotionally tolerable for that family unit, a child... will try to help the family member in distress" (Peeks, 1992, p. 295). If positive

behaviors are not effective, according to Peeks, a child may resort to negative behaviors such as school failure, fears, or violence.

Research also indicated there are effects on self-esteem when children experience parental divorce. Effects described by Ozimo and Ozimo (1988), included low self-esteem and guilt because children feel caught in the middle or that they were causing the divorce. Parental divorce can also decrease the child's sense of belonging and may cause a loss of security (Ozimo & Ozimo, 1988). They also reported that children may often feel a lack of control and powerlessness, as well.

Effects of Divorce on Peer Relationships

The review of the literature also indicated that peer relationships may be affected by parental divorce. The statistical analysis of Evans and Neel (in Coffman, 1988), indicated that "children from one-parent families are far more often engaged in conflict in their schools than are children from two-parent families" (p. 61). According to Coffman (1988), youths with divorced parents "lack the faith and trust in interpersonal relationships with their peers" (p. 62). Coffman also pointed out that unresolved or negatively resolved conflict situations can significantly influence the developing adult.

In further research about effects on peer relationships, Adams et al., (1989) indicated one of the most commonly exhibited behaviors of middle school students from non-intact families included problems with peer relationships. Adams et al. noted increased irritability, outbursts, and pushing and hitting in students from one-parent families. In a discussion of parental divorce,

Armato (1993), indicated that children often have to make adjustments to changes in relationships with peers and extended family members and these changes can create a stressful environment.

Effects of Divorce on Adolescents

When researching children's responses to divorce, Cantrell (1986) focused on the developmental stages of the child. Cantrell reported that children from the ages of 9 to 12 are "...actively struggling to deal with their conflicting feelings and trying to make sense of the disorder in which they find themselves" (p. 164). Their feelings include intense anger, powerlessness, loss, rejection, fear, and loneliness. They may also experience identity confusion and somatic symptoms.

Further research supported these findings. Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989) stated that young adolescents need a family structure and sense of being valued and protected by their parents. "The pressures of divorce can lead children to the point that they become psychologically depleted and their own emotional and social progress is crippled" (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989, p. 189). Wallerstein (1989) described adolescence as a period of particularly great risk for children from divorced parents. She also stated that adolescents can feel emotionally and physically abandoned due to a lack of family structure.

Further research indicated that adolescents may exhibit a variety of other feelings and reactions to parental divorce. What they experience with divorce occurring during these formative years can influence their later relationships. The adolescent age group experiences parental divorce as traumatic

(Wallerstein, 1991). Although they may not feel responsible for the divorce, they felt a great amount of sadness, sense of loss and sense of betrayal. According to Wallerstein and Kelly (1980), the teen may feel anger toward their parents. A 1987 Harvard University study discussed by Robinson (1994) indicated that 66% of the teens interviewed whose parents were divorced felt alone, angry, or sad. Sometimes the anger may be turned outward towards parents, siblings, and teachers or they may turn the anger inward toward themselves (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989).

The research also indicated that children who have experienced parental divorce may exhibit difficulties in the school setting. In a study by Long (1988), three young adolescent groups were compared on academic and emotional adjustment in the school setting. Long found that adolescents of divorced families who reported high interparental conflict prior to separation and after the divorce, functioned at a lower level than those for intact families.

In another study about the school setting, McCombs and Forehand (1989) examined relationships between adolescent and family factors that may mediate negative influences of divorce. Findings from a sample of adolescents and their divorced mothers revealed that adolescents with high grade point averages had mothers who had less intense conflict with their spouse (McCombs & Forehand, 1989). Robinson (1994) reported on a study that indicated that of the teens interviewed whose parents were divorced, 73% of the females had trouble with their studies and 33% if the males had trouble

with their studies.

Research studies also focused on the influence of parental divorce on the adolescent's ability to adjust to their parents' transition simultaneously while adjusting to their own developmental transitions. Wallerstein (1983) maintained that such children are faced with the mastery of six hierarchical coping tasks. Parental divorce may add to the challenges of growing up. According to Wallerstein (1983), the six tasks were: (a) acknowledging the reality of the marital rupture, (b) disengaging from parental conflict and distress and resuming customary pursuits, (c) resolution of loss, (d) resolving anger and self-blame (e) accepting the permanence of the divorce, and (f) achieving realistic hope regarding relationships.

Kurdeck (1994) further investigated the effects of and relationship between parental transitions and developmental adjustment issues in adolescents. The researcher found that a negative linear relationship existed between the number of parenting transitions experienced and child adjustment (Kurdeck, 1997). This meant that the less transitions that the parents were adjusting to during the divorce, the fewer adjustment problems. Hines (1997) supported these findings by stating that adolescents of parental divorce often face divorce related transitions involving geographic location and the addition of step family members. Hines added that these factors may be especially challenging to the adolescent who is simultaneously involved in critical developmental transitions.

Effects of Divorce on Self-Concept

Researchers have investigated the effects of parental divorce on the self-concept of children and adolescents. Parish (1991) discussed a study where children and youth evaluated themselves using a self-concept inventory. Results indicated that self-concept was higher for those from intact families than for those from divorced or remarried families. In a study by Smith (1990), the effects of parental separation on academic achievement and self-concept were examined with a sample of seventh and eighth graders. Smith found that the academic self-concept was lower for adolescents in mother-only families when compared to peers who were living with both biological parents.

Further research supported these findings. Ortiz and Farrel (1993) stated that family theorists propose that a stressful event in the family system is likely to cause changes in family roles which ultimately may have negative effects on the self-concept of children. Clark and Barber (1994) investigated adolescent self-esteem in post divorce, mother-headed families, and two-parent, always married families. Results suggested that adolescents with little contact with fathers had lower self-esteem than others.

When examining the literature, it appeared that there is a lack of research on the positive, healthy effects of parental divorce. Although there appeared to be little in the literature to support this view, Hines (1997) did report on certain strengths that adolescents may acquire as a result of family separations. Hines concluded that as a consequence of altered family

situations, patterns, and routines, some adolescents acquire a sense of responsibility and competence.

Overall, the research showed common areas of self-concept that are affected by parental divorce. Divorce can be a traumatic event in the life of a child (Allen & Anderson, 1986). Children may experience a significant amount of sadness, anxiety, and unhappiness (Hett & Rose, 1991). School achievement and behavior seem to be negatively effected (Lindner et al., 1992). Children may have difficulty getting along with their peers and feel isolation (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989). Adolescents may have more difficulty adjusting to developmental changes if they are experiencing simultaneous parental transitions (Wallerstein, 1983).

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Subjects

The sample group (divorce) was compared to a control group (no divorce). The divorce group involved 32 sixth and seventh grade students. In terms of gender, 43.75% were male (n=14) and 56.25% were female (n=18). The participants ages for the divorce group ranged from 12 to 14 years old, with a mean of 12. According to school records, all parents had been divorced in the last five years. School records of each student were used to determine that none of the students had handicapping conditions, nor were any of the students gifted. In the sample group, 81.25% of the children (n=28) had responded to a flyer sent out by the group leader to notify students of the group's existence. In the sample group, 18.75% of the children (n=6) in the divorce group were originally referred to the group leader for emotional and/or behavioral concerns.

The no divorce group contained 28 sixth and seventh grade students. In this group, 46.43% of the students were male (n=13) and 53.57% were female (n=15). The participants ages ranged from 12 to 13 years old, with a mean of 12. School records indicated that none of these students' parents were divorced and that none had a handicapping condition or were gifted. None of the no divorce groups' participants were referred to the group leader for any academic or behavioral evaluation or counseling. The children volunteered to participate by responding to a flyer notifying parents of the study.

All of the students in the study attended Windsor Middle School, located south of St. Louis, in a rural/suburban community, with an enrollment of 800 students. All students were Caucasian. All were between the ages of 11 and 13. See Table 1 for an analysis of the participants' family status.

Table 1

Family Status of Children Participating in the Study

Group	Family Status	n	Percent of Group
Divorce	Single-parent mother	12	37.5%
	Single-parent father	4	12.5%
	Mother remarried	12	37.5%
	Father remarried	3	9.36%
	Grandparents	1	3.13%
No Divorce	Both parents	28	100%

Note: Family Status refers to where the children primarily reside.

Measures

The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (1996) is a self-report measure which was developed to aid in the assessment of self-concept in children and adolescents (Appendix A). Piers (1996) defined self-concept as a "...relatively stable set of self-attitudes that represent both a description and an evaluation of one's own behavior and attributes" (p. 1). The instrument

focuses on the child's conscious self-perception, rather than the observations of others. Piers used the term self-concept interchangeably with self-esteem and self-regard.

The Piers-Harris is an 80 item, self-reporting questionnaire designed to assess how children feel about themselves. The scale can be administered individually or in a group setting. Children are shown statements that state how some people feel about themselves. The children circle "yes" or "no" to indicate whether the statement applies to them. A high score on the scale suggests a positive self-evaluation, whereas a low score suggests a negative self-evaluation. The scale provides raw, stanine, and T-scores.

The scale offers 6 subscales that include Behavior, Intellectual and School Status, Physical Appearances and Attributes, Anxiety, Popularity, and Happiness and Satisfaction. The cluster scales include most, but not all of the 80 items of the total score. Piers (1996) designed these six subscales to interpret and analyze different areas of self-concept. The 16-item cluster of Behavior reflects the extent to which the child admits or denies problematic behavior. The 17-item cluster of Intellectual and School Status reflects the child's self-assessment of his or her abilities with respect to academic and intellectual tasks.

According to Piers (1996), the 13-item cluster of Physical Appearance and Attributes reflects the child's attitudes concerning his or her physical characteristics, leadership and the ability to express ideas. The Anxiety cluster contains 14 items that tap a variety of emotions including

worry, nervousness, shyness, sadness, fear, and a general feeling of being left out of things. The 12-item Popularity cluster reflects the child's evaluation of his or her popularity with peers and ability to make friends. The 10-item Happiness and Satisfaction cluster evaluates the child's feelings of happiness and satisfaction with life.

The psychometric properties of the Piers-Harris have been investigated in many studies. According to the authors, Test-retest reliability coefficient for total scores ranged from .42 to .96, with the median coefficient being .73. In terms of internal consistency for total scores, using the Kuder-Richardson formula estimates ranged from .88 to .93.

Piers (1996) reported internal consistency estimates for cluster scales. These correlations, according to the authors, ranged from .21 to .59, showing a moderate degree of interrelatedness among scales. Piers also presented an item-cluster scale and item-total correlations. An examination of the item-cluster scale correlations determined that the correlation between items within a cluster scale were higher than correlations among those items and the other cluster scales. Significant correlations with other cluster scales exist and most of the time have a higher correlation with the clusters to which they belong.

In terms of the scale's content validity, although an attempt was made to measure areas in which children reported qualities liked or disliked about themselves, some items were dropped. Therefore, every area is not covered to the same degree, putting more validity on the total self-concept score than on

the individual cluster scales. In terms of correlations with other self-concept measures, studies indicated a range from .32 to .73. When examining factorial validity, it was determined that caution should be taken when examining factor significance, replication and stability and when interpreting specific cluster scales.

According to Piers (1996), the scale had significant correlations with measures intended to assess similar constructs. Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton (in Piers, 1996), concluded that self-concept interpretations of the total score on the scale warranted convergent validity. When examining validity of cluster scales, Marx and Winne (in Piers, 1996) reported strong convergent and discriminate validity for the physical appearance subscale. Academic subscales demonstrated good convergent validity and reasonable discriminate validity.

The Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale has three general uses. First, it can be used as a screening device in a classroom setting. Second, the scale can be used as an individual assessment in clinical settings. The final purpose is to use the scale as a research instrument to provide a self-report measure of children's self-concept. The Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale was chosen for this study because the 6 subscales of the measurement seem to reflect the areas of self-concept found most often to be effected by parental divorce, according to the literature review above. Those areas include behavior, school and academic status, anxiety, and happiness and satisfaction with life. For this research study, the instrument was used to measure the difference in self-

concept of the divorce group compared to the no divorce group.

Procedure

The data in this study was collected in the guidance office in the middle school, during the school day. A flyer was sent to parents in the control (no divorce) group, asking for permission for their child's participation (Appendix B). The parents of the sample (divorce) group signed permission for participation when signing permission for participating in the divorce group counseling activities. Each group of the study, in separate sessions, were brought together in the guidance office and asked to sit at the tables provided.

The sample group was administered the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale in the first session, followed by the control (no divorce) group. After the students were seated at tables, they were given the scale and told not to put their names on them. The counselor read the instructions aloud, asked if there were any questions, and then told the participants to begin. Frequently asked questions included what to do if he or she had no siblings and what the definition of "obedient" was. The scales were all completed in 10 to 25 minutes during each session. The scales were collected as each participant completed the scale. After all participants in the group were finished completing the scale, they were dismissed together.

Data Analysis

A *t* test was used to examine the mean difference in T-scores between the control (no divorce group) and sample (divorce) group. The independent variables were binominal, "parents are not divorced" or "parents are divorced". The dependent variables were overall self-concept, intellectual and

school status, behavior, physical appearances and attributes, anxiety, popularity, and happiness and satisfaction. Each of these variables is at an interval level of measurement and is reported with T-scores. The means of the two groups of the study were compared for significant differences to determine acceptance or rejection of the null hypothesis.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

In terms of whole group means and standard deviations, there were some extreme differences in scores. Based on individual test analysis, the lower minimum scores were 4 for the Intellectual and School Status and 23 for Happiness and Satisfaction. Both of these scores were obtained in the sample (divorce group). The highest maximum scores were 70 on the Total, Intellectual and School Status, and Physical Appearance and Attributes clusters. These scores were all obtained in the control (no divorce) group. See Table 2 for an overview of the descriptive statistics.

Table 2.Descriptive Statistics

Scale	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Anxiety	25.00	69.00	52.3000	13.4609
Behavior	24.00	69.00	49.4500	9.8177
Happiness	23.00	69.00	51.7333	12.8944
Intellectual	4.0	70.00	51.3333	13.6899
Physical	27.00	70.00	53.0833	12.5513
Popularity	27.00	69.00	49.0500	11.0560
Total Score	33.00	70.00	54.1000	11.3013

Further examination of the descriptive statistics indicates that the Intellectual and School Status cluster scores had the greatest range, with 66.

The least amount of difference in the cluster scores was among the Popularity scores, with a range of 42. An individual test analysis indicated a pattern of higher scores in the no divorce group for cluster and total scores. The Intellectual and School Status scores had the greatest standard deviation, with 13.6899. The Behavior score had the least standard deviation, with 9.8177. (See Table 2)

Means and Standard Deviations

The results of the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale as shown in Table 3, indicated the divorce group (n=32) had a Total mean score of 49.4688, with a standard deviation of 10.9072. The no divorce group (n=28) had a Total mean score of 59.3928 and a standard deviation of 9.3822 (See Table 3).

A further question of this study was whether some areas of self-concept described by Piers (1996) were influenced more than others when comparing the two groups. As shown in Table 3, all cluster scale means were significantly higher for the no divorce group (n=28), when compared the to the divorce (n=32) group.

As Seen in Table 3, the Anxiety cluster for the divorce group had a mean of 46.5313, with a standard deviation of 12.9590 and the no divorce group had a mean of 58.8929, with a standard deviation of 10.8912. For the Behavior cluster, the no divorce group had a mean of 54.1786, with a standard deviation of 5.9070 and the divorce group had a mean of 45.3125. with a standard deviation of 10.7326.

Table 3.Group Statistics Comparing Means and Standard Deviations

Scale	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total Score	Divorce	32	49.4688	10.9072
	No Divorce	28	59.3928	9.3822
Anxiety	Divorce	32	46.5313	12.9590
	No Divorce	28	58.8929	10.8912
Behavior	Divorce	32	45.3125	10.7326
	No Divorce	28	54.1786	5.9070
Happiness	Divorce	32	46.1563	13.1667
	No Divorce	28	58.1071	9.2350
Intellectual	Divorce	32	45.6875	14.1769
	No Divorce	28	57.7857	9.8859
Physical	Divorce	32	47.9063	11.6878
	No Divorce	28	59.000	10.9240
Popularity	Divorce	32	45.0938	10.5413
	No Divorce	28	53.789	9.8831

For the Happiness and Satisfaction cluster, the divorce group had a mean of 46.1563, with a standard deviation of 13.1667. The no divorce group had a mean of 58.1071, with a standard deviation of 9.2350. For the Intellectual and School Status cluster, the divorce group had a mean of 45.6875, with a standard deviation of 14.1796. The mean for the no divorce group was 57.7857, with a standard deviation of 9.8859. For the Physical Appearance and Attributes cluster, the divorce group mean was 47.9063, with a standard deviation of 11.6878. The no divorce group had a mean of 59.000, with a standard deviation of 10.9240. For the Popularity cluster, the divorce group had a mean of 45.0983, with a standard deviation of 10.5413. The no divorce group had a mean of 53.5714, with a standard deviation of 9.9645 (See Table 3).

Overall, Anxiety, Happiness and Satisfaction, and Intellectual and School Status appeared to have the highest deviation between the means, all in the divorce groups. All standard deviations were higher in the divorce group.

Results of the t test

As seen in Table 4, the Levene's test was first completed to compare the two groups. The purpose of the Levene's test is to test the null hypothesis that the variances are equal. To check whether the groups have the same variance in the population, the Levene's test, which uses an F statistic, for equality (homogeneity) of variances (Howell, 1992), was completed (See Table 4). The Levene's test utilizes a null hypothesis that assumes that the variances of the two groups are equal. The hypothesis is accepted or rejected when

compared to the level of significance and is a different hypothesis than that of the research study.

According to Norusis (1991), the statistical test of the null hypothesis that all groups have the same mean in the population, is based on computing a ratio, called an F statistic. This ratio is calculated by dividing the between groups mean square by the within group mean square. The within group mean square is based on how the observations within each of the groups varies. The between group mean square is based on how much the group means vary among themselves. If the null hypothesis is true, the two numbers should be close to each other. If one is divided by the other, the ratio or F statistic should be close to one. The observed significant level ($\alpha=.05$) is based on the actual value of F and on the degree of freedom for the two mean squares.

Table 4

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

Scale	F	Significance
Total Score	1.881	.175
Anxiety	1.868	.177
Behavior	8.663	.005
Happiness	5.627	.021
Intellectual	1.187	.280
Physical	.005	.947
Popularity	.551	.461

For the total score, the Levene's test of variance showed that the level of significance, .175, was more than alpha ($\alpha=.05$), therefore, we accept the null hypothesis that variance of the two groups are equal. With the exception of Behavior and the Happiness and Satisfaction clusters, the Levene's test of variances for each cluster, showed that the level of significance is more than alpha ($\alpha=.05$), therefore, we accept the null hypothesis that the variances of the two groups are equal. Therefore, equal variances were assumed for the t test (See Table 4).

For the Behavior and Happiness clusters, with significant level less than alpha ($\alpha=.05$), we reject the null hypothesis that the variances of the two groups are equal (See Table 4). Therefore, equal variances are not assumed for the t test for these two clusters.

The results of the t test, as shown in Table 5, with $df=58$, indicated a statistically significant difference between the divorce and no divorce group means. With regard to the total self-concept mean, with a t-value of $T(58)=3.750$, was higher than the p-value of .001. This created a mean difference, equal variances assumed, of -9.9241 (See Table 5). This shows that mean scores for the divorce group for the overall self-concept were significantly higher than the group of children whose parents were not divorced (See Table 5). According to Norusis (1991), the t-value is used to calculate how often a standardized score of, in this case, 3.750, or greater occurs when there is no difference between the two groups in population.

The results of the t test , as shown in table 5, indicted a significant

difference between the mean scores on all clusters. The Behavior and the Happiness and Satisfaction clusters had the highest significant differences. A result of the t test for the Happiness and Satisfaction cluster indicated a t-value of $T(58)=-4.108$, which is higher than the p-value of .001. This indicates a significant difference in the means. A result of the t test for the Behavior cluster indicated a t-value of $T(58)=-4.028$, which is higher than .001, which is the p-value. Therefore, it can be assumed that the self-concept areas indicating the most significant differences between the two groups were related to the children's perceptions of their behavior and their satisfaction with life.

Table 5.
Results of the Independent Sample t test and Mean Differences of the Total Score and Cluster Scores

Scale	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value
Total Score	-9.9241	-3.750	.001
Anxiety	-12.3616	-3.967	.001
Behavior	-8.8661	-4.028	.001
Happiness	-11.9509	-4.108	.001
Intellectual	-12.0982	-3.780	.001
Physical	-11.9038	-3.781	.001
Popularity	-8.4777	-3.188	.001

Note. df=58

The next highest significance was on the cluster of Anxiety, with a t-value

$T(58)=-3.967$, which is higher than the p-value of .001. After Anxiety, the next highest significant difference was on the Physical Appearance and Attributes, with a t-value of $T(58)=-3.781$, which is higher than the p-value of .001. The next highest significant difference, indicated by the results of the t test, was on the Intellectual and School Status cluster, with a t-value of $T(58)=-3.780$, which is higher than the p-value of .001. The results of the t test on the Popularity cluster also indicated a significant difference in the means with a t-value of $T(58)=-3.188$ (See Table 5)

The total score had a mean difference of -9.9241 . The cluster scale with the highest mean differences was Anxiety with a mean difference of -12.3616 , followed by Intellectual and School Status with a difference of -12.0982 . The next highest mean difference was -11.509 , on the Happiness and Satisfaction cluster.

The results of the study rejected the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the mean scores between 6th and 7th grade students whose parents were divorced and those whose parents are not divorced. The results also rejected the null hypotheses that there was a no significant difference in the cluster mean scores between 6th and 7th grade students whose parents were divorced and those whose parents were not divorced. The results rejected the null hypothesis that there was no significant difference in the Anxiety, Behavior, Happiness and Satisfaction, Intellectual and School Status, Physical Appearance and Attributes, and Popularity cluster mean scores between these two groups.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

A Discussion of the Study's Results

The purpose of the study was to determine whether there was a significant difference in self-concept between children whose parents were divorced in the last five years and those whose parents were not divorced. The results of the study rejected both of the null hypotheses. In terms of the first hypothesis, the results indicated a significant difference in the self-concept means between 6th and 7th grade students whose parents have divorced within the last five years and 6th and 7th grade students whose parents are not divorced. The divorce group of children had lower overall self-concept scores than the group of children whose parents were not divorced.

The second hypothesis of the research study was also rejected. The results indicated a significant difference in all cluster mean scores between the divorce group and the no divorce group. All areas that the cluster scales examined, Anxiety, Behavior, Happiness and Satisfaction, Intellectual and School Status, Physical Appearance and Attributes, and Popularity indicated significantly lower scores for the children whose parents had been divorced within the last five years.

The major conclusion drawn by the research is that there is a significant difference between the self-concept of the children from divorced families when compared to children from intact families. When using the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale, the results of the study correlated with some of the

previous research, but contradicted other findings.

The study was consistent with the following research studies. When examining specific areas of self-concept, the highest differences between the divorce group and no divorce group were in the areas of Anxiety, Happiness and Satisfaction, and Behavior. Anxiety, as described earlier in this paper, taps into feelings of nervousness, worry, sadness and isolation. Adams et al. (1991) studies indicated that children of divorce experience nervousness, moodiness and a lack of confidence.

Happiness and Satisfaction, another cluster with a significant difference in mean scores, refers to the child's satisfaction with life. In correlation with the significant difference in on this areas and the Anxiety area, (divorce group being lower), Wallerstein (1989) indicated that children are unsure of what is happening in their lives and what will happen in the future.

The Behavior cluster reflects the child's perceptions of his or her problematic behavior what will happen in the future. In support of the lower scores obtained by the divorce group in this area on the current study, Lindner et al., (1992) concluded that children from single-mother homes may have difficulties in adjustment and experience a higher level of behavior problems, specifically deficiencies in scholastic, social, and general competencies.

Overall, the results of the current study indicated lower mean scores and significant differences in the mean scores for the anxiety, behavior, intellectual and school achievement, and the happiness and satisfaction

areas. Bronstein et al. (1993), reported children of divorced parents are more likely to experience social, emotional, behavioral, and academic problems. Ozimo and Ozimo (1988) mentioned depression, self-destructive behavior, and decreased academic achievement in their description of the effects of divorce on children.

In terms of overall self-concept, Parish's study (1991) involved children and youths evaluating themselves utilizing a self-concept inventory. Those results supported the current study, by indicating that self-concept was higher for those from intact families than for those from divorce or remarried families. Earlier in this paper, observations indicated that 37.5% of the divorce group resided in single-parent households and 37.5% of the divorce group resided with remarried mothers.

The results correlated with other previous research studies. Clark and Barber (1994), also divided participants into groups based on where they resided. Their results also suggested that adolescents who had less contact with fathers had lower self-esteem than others. Ortiz and Farrell (1993) determined that a stressful event in the family unit, such as separation, divorce, and family restructuring may have negative effects on the self-concept of children.

Other research findings indicate some contradictions. In a study by Kinard and Reinherz (1986), they found that "...although marital disruption did not have effects on measures of anxiety, it did result in increased problems with attention, withdrawal, dependency, and hostility" (p. 291), for children in the

group in which parents had divorced during their school years. The above research study results indicated that 26.67% of the divorce group scored below the T-score of 40 on the Anxiety cluster of the Piers-Harris. The Anxiety cluster had the highest mean difference, as well. According to Fuller (1989), some researchers have found "...that family behavior determined a child's self-concept, not family structure. Negative self-concept was related to conflict in the home. Positive self-concept was related to how happy children perceived their parents to be" (p. 11).

Limitations of the Study

The sample group is not a random sample due to the fact that these children were already in the divorce group, not randomly selected. Also, as mentioned in Chapter III, 18.75% of the divorce group had been referred for counseling and for special services evaluation.

An examination of individual tests indicated some statistical and interpretive concerns. Some participants in the divorce group had extremely low T-scores which may lead one to question the validity of the self-report in these instances. First, 26.67% (n=8) of the subjects of the divorce group scored below the T-score of 40 on the Anxiety cluster and 15.6% (n=5) scored below 40 for the total. This indicates that these students may need referrals for individual counseling. Second, there was an extremely high T-score of 70 in the no divorce group for the Total, Intellectual and Physical clusters. All other maximum T-scores were extremely high, with 69. Only 14.2% (n=4) of the no divorce group scored at those high levels on any scale.

The researcher concluded that these findings are consistent with experiences with leading divorce groups and counseling those children individually. However, there are other factors that can significantly affect the development of self-concept and the areas examined in this study. These factors include a family's socioeconomic and social status. Also, the child's gender, body type, and birth order can significantly affect self-concept. These factors were not considered in the study.

Parenting styles and parents' mental health should also be considered when examining a child's self-concept. Armoto (1993) indicated that the degree to which children were exposed to the interparental conflict and parental competence in helping the child to cope following the divorce may have a significant influence on the child's well-being. Bronstein et al., (1993) discussed the importance of the level of conflict and interparental cooperation in the post-divorce period as important factors associated with children's psychological and social adjustment.

In support of these findings, Shaw and Emery (1987) indicated that research indicated that how well a child adjusts to a divorce seems to depend largely on the post divorce parental relationship, how the divorce is handled with the children, and on the quality of the post divorce family. According to Hertherton and Clingempeel (in Hines, 1997), when assessing the reaction of children and adolescents to divorce the complex interaction among gender, age at the time of divorce, the remarriage of the parent(s), the amount of time since the divorce, custody arrangement, and family structure are important to

consider..."(p. 379). With the exception of age and living arrangement, these variables were not examined indepth in the study, thus, limiting the conclusions. Therefore, despite the significant mean difference found in this study, results should be used with caution and these other factors should also be considered.

Implications and Further Research

On an interpretive level, the findings indicated that school counselors should focus on self-concept when working with children of divorced parent. Sadness, worry, and nervousness appear to be common feelings for these children. These children have difficulty being satisfied with their lives. These children may exhibit behavior problems at school and at home as their way of expressing frustration about the divorce. An examination of individual tests indicated that a large percentage of children in the divorce group may need further assessment and individual counseling for anxiety problems.

Further research in this area could include examining the other factors mentioned above that affect self-concept and using these as variables in a similar study. Also, the divorce group could again complete the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale after the 16 planned group sessions. The results could help indicate if the group activities were effective in fostering a positive self-concept. This study could also be extended to develop effective strategies for children of divorced parents who have obtained a low total score on the scale. This could be done by examining individual test items where children responded negatively and using these as a guide to the goals of the

counseling sessions.

Finally, Hines (1997) reported that as a consequence of altered family situations, patterns and routines, some adolescents acquire certain strengths such as a sense of responsibility and competence. More research needs to be done that focuses on the positive rather than negative aspects and effects of parental divorce. Through divorce, children may get away from domestic violence situations. Children may feel relief, after a divorce, from being exposed to constant arguing and living in a hostile environment. Parents may feel less tense and upset after the divorce is final and, therefore, may be more emotionally available for the children. Remarriage can sometimes create a more stable family structure than the past one. For some children, a single parent household can help develop a greater sense of responsibility and contribution to the family. Therefore, an examination of the positive, solution focused ways that children of divorced families cope with their situations could be researched and used in counseling strategies.

Appendix A

Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale

Here are a set of statements. Some of them are true of you and so you will circle the yes. Some are not true of you and so you will circle the no. Answer every question even if some are hard to decide, but do not circle both yes and no. Remember, circle the yes if the statement is generally like you, or circle no if the statement is generally not like you. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. My classmates make fun of me..... yes no
2. I am a happy person.....yes no
3. It is hard for me to make friends.....yes no
4. I am often sad.....yes no
5. I am smart.....yes no
6. I am shy.....yes no
7. I get nervous when the teacher calls on me.....yes no
8. My looks bother me.....yes no
9. When I grow up, I will be an important person.....yes no
10. I get worried when we have tests in school.....yes no
11. I am unpopular.....yes no
12. I am well behaved in school.....yes no
13. It is usually my fault when something goes wrong.....yes no
14. I cause trouble to my family.....yes no
15. I am strong.....yes no
16. I have good ideas.....yes no
17. I am an important member of my family.....yes no
18. I usually want my own way.....yes no

19. I am good at making things with my hands.....yes no
20. I give up easily.....yes no
21. I am good in my school work.....yes no
22. I do many bad things.....yes no
23. I can draw well.....yes no
24. I am good in music.....yes no
25. I behave badly at home.....yes no
26. I am slow in finishing my school work.....yes no
27. I am an important member of my family.....yes no
28. I am nervous.....yes no
29. I have pretty eyes.....yes no
30. I can give a good report in front of my class.....yes no
31. In school I am a dreamer.....yes no
32. I pick on my brother(s) and sister(s).....yes no
33. My friends like my ideas.....yes no
34. I often get into trouble.....yes no
35. I am obedient at home.....yes no
36. I am lucky.....yes no
37. I worry a lot.....yes no
38. My parents expect too much of me.....yes no
39. I like being the way I am.....yes no
40. I feel left out of things.....yes no
41. I have nice hair.....yes no

42. I often volunteer in school.....yes no
43. I wish I were different.....yes no
44. I sleep well at night.....yes no
45. I hate school.....yes no
46. I am among the last to be chosen for games.....yes no
47. I am sick a lot.....yes no
48. I am often mean to other people.....yes no
49. My classmates in school think I have good ideas.....yes no
50. I am unhappy.....yes no
51. I have many friends.....yes no
52. I am cheerful.....yes no
53. I am dumb about most things.....yes no
54. I am good looking.....yes no
55. I have lots of pepyes no
56. I get into a lot of fights.....yes no
57. I am popular with boys.....yes no
58. People pick on me.....yes no
59. My family is disappointed in me.....yes no
60. I have a pleasant face.....yes no
61. When I try to make something, everything seems to go wrong.....yes no
62. I am picked on at home.....yes no
63. I am a leader in games and sports.....yes no

64. I am clumsy.....yes no
65. In games and sports, I watch instead of play.....yes no
66. I forget what I learn.....yes no
67. I am easy to get along with.....yes no
68. I lose my temper.....yes no
69. I am popular with girls.....yes no
70. I am a good reader.....yes no
71. I would rather work alone than with a group.....yes no
72. I like my brother (sister).....yes no
73. I have a good figure.....yes no
74. I am often afraid.....yes no
75. I am always dropping or breaking things.....yes no
76. I can be trusted.....yes no
77. I am different from other people.....yes no
78. I think bad thoughts.....yes no
79. I cry easily.....yes no
80. I am a good person.....yes no

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER

DEAR PARENTS,

IN ORDER TO FULFILL REQUIREMENTS FOR MY MASTER'S THESIS, I AM DOING A RESEARCH PROJECT ON THE SELF-CONCEPT OF THE CHILDREN OF DIVORCED PARENTS. TO DESIGN MY RESEARCH STUDY, I NEED STUDENTS OF INTACT AND DIVORCED FAMILIES TO COMPLETE THE PIERS-HARRIS SELF-CONCEPT SCALE. THE SCALE WILL BE ADMINSTERED ON OCTOBER 7TH IN THE GUIDANCE OFFICE. THE STUDENTS WILL NOT USE THEIR NAMES AND THEIR PARTICIPATION WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL. THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY WILL BE USED FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES ONLY. IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE, PLEASE SIGN BELOW AND RETURN THIS FORM TO THE GUIDANCE OFFICE BY SEPTEMBER 10TH.

I GIVE PERMISSIN FOR MY CHILD, _____, TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ABOVE DESCRIBED RESEARCH PROJECT.
PARENT SIGNATURE _____

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