

# Screening for family functioning in primary care: Preliminary Evidence

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## Background

- Initiation of alcohol, cigarette, marijuana, and condomless sex behaviors by the age of 13 range from 3-16% and prevalence of these behaviors in high school range from 9-30%.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics suggest screening adolescents for risk behaviors in primary care settings.
- Yet, time constraints in clinical settings may limit screening for multiple risk behaviors.
- Family functioning behaviors are shown to be associated negatively with substance use and sexual risk behaviors.
- **Therefore, this study aimed to identify a subset of family functioning items that can be used to screen for substance use and sexual risk behaviors.**

## Data Sample/Measures

- Harmonized adolescent data from five family-based intervention trials.
  - N = 1843
  - 12 to 18 years (M = 13, SD = 1.2)
- Family Functioning Measures
  - Parental Involvement (PI) 11 items
  - Positive Parenting (PP) 6 items
  - Family Communication (FC) 3 items
  - Parent-adolescent Communication (PAC) 20 items
  - Parental Monitoring (PM) 6 items
- Risk Outcomes Measures
  - Lifetime and past 90-day substance use behaviors
  - Lifetime and past 90-day sexual risk behaviors

## Results/Discussion

- Results indicated the 12 family functioning items (out of 46 items) were positively correlated with the five family functioning subscales indicating convergent validity.
- Further, the 12 items were negatively correlated with all substance use outcomes, but not the sexual risk behavior outcomes, indicating divergent validity.
- Primary care providers who may feel uncomfortable or perceive a low prevalence of substance use behaviors among adolescents may benefit from a family functioning assessment that is also related to risk outcomes.

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## Data Analyses

- EFA with 46 family functioning items (n = 918)
  - Reduced 46 items to 21 items based on communalities (>.60)
- CFA with 21 items of family functioning (n = 916)
  - Reduced 21 items to 12 items based on factor loadings (>.40)
- Bivariate correlations for convergent and divergent validity

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. 12 items	0.59*	0.60*	0.76*	0.40*	0.29*	-0.14*	-0.11*	-0.17*	-0.13*	-0.20*	-0.18*
2. PI	-	0.61*	0.42*	0.21*	0.27*	-0.16*	-0.13*	-0.21*	-0.17*	-0.20*	-0.17*
3. PP		-	0.40*	0.28*	0.29*	-0.11*	-0.10*	-0.13*	-0.12*	-0.14*	-0.14*
4. PAC			-	0.26*	0.18*	-0.10*	-0.09*	-0.11*	-0.08*	-0.15*	-0.12*
5. FC				-	0.32*	-0.11*	-0.07*	-0.09*	-0.09*	-0.12*	-0.12*
6. PM					-	-0.03	0.01	-0.01	0.02	-0.01	-0.02
7. Life Cig						-	0.55*	0.34*	0.36*	0.40*	0.38*
8. 90 Cig							-	0.33*	0.43*	0.43*	0.49*
9. Life Alc								-	0.63*	0.39*	0.35*
10. 90 Alc									-	0.41*	0.46*
11. Life Drug										-	0.71*
12. 90 Drug											-

\* p < .05