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**Friendship Quality of Aggressive and
Non-Aggressive Early Adolescents**

by

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**A thesis submitted
to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of**

Master of Arts

**Department of Psychology
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario**

August 19, 1999

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Abstract

This research was conducted to examine whether the friendship relations of overtly aggressive and relationally aggressive early adolescents would qualitatively differ from those of their average counterparts. Early adolescents ($n = 150$), ages 12 to 14 years with identified reciprocal friendships completed a measure of various friendship qualities adapted from previous research. Results revealed that the friendships of overtly aggressive early adolescents were characterized by lower levels of affiliative quality (i.e., less closeness) and greater levels of conflict (i.e., overt aggression toward friend) than those of average early adolescents. Less help and closeness also characterized the friendships of relationally aggressive early adolescents. However, these affiliations did not appear to involve high levels of aggression within the friendship. Instead, results indicated that relationally aggressive early adolescents and their friends were more likely to engage in overt aggression toward the peer group than average early adolescents.

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Friendship Quality of Aggressive and Non-Aggressive Early Adolescents

“Friendships are ‘the most desirable of all things;
more necessary than either
air, fire or water’ ”

Erasmus

Webster’s New World Dictionary (1991) defines a friend as “a person whom one knows well and is fond of” (Neufeldt, 1991; p. 540). While this may suffice as a basic explanation of the word, friends hold much more significance for our lives than this definition alone would suggest. For this reason, considerable attention and research into the study of friendship has been generated in the last half century.

Friendship constitutes an essential component of human interaction, providing the medium for the acquisition of crucial skills and competencies necessary for children’s social, emotional and cognitive development (Newcomb & Bagwell, 1996). Throughout the lifespan, friendships play an integral part in our social lives, becoming increasingly more salient as we progress through childhood social development, and plateauing in adolescence. While *having* friends may have important implications for our social status and emotional well-being, it is the very *nature*, or quality, of these relationships that determines whether they are successful, fulfilling, and satisfying to those involved.

In the present study, the quality of friendship was examined at a significant stage in development, namely, early adolescence. Initiating and maintaining satisfying, mutual friendship relations is central to early adolescent development (Berndt & Savin-Williams, 1993). These formative years are perhaps the most important in the evolution of

friendship, as the extent to which parents form the focal point of support and intimacy begin to moderate, and peers assume a pivotal role in the satisfaction of the emotional and social needs of adolescence (Berndt, 1982; Buhrmester and Furman, 1987).

The behavioural subgroup selected as the primary focus of attention for this study was aggressive early adolescents. This selection was based upon the ramifications that their negative behaviour might have for their peer relationships. In particular, the quality of these friendships was investigated, in light of the fact that negative features of friendship (such as conflict) are increasingly salient to early adolescents and may have implications for the quality of their relationships. It was anticipated that this research would provide greater insight into the expression of aggression during the early adolescent stage of development, as well as the nature of aggressive adolescents' friendship relations.

To facilitate the comprehension of early adolescent friendship relations, the literature review begins by distinguishing between two terms often referred to in the associated literature, acceptance and friendship. This clarification serves to situate, and provide some context for the present study within the extensive literature on children's peer relations. The literature review continues with a discussion of the features of early adolescents' friendships. Two lines of inquiry will achieve our understanding of these features. First, early adolescents' conceptions of their peer relationships are reviewed, allowing some insight into the features of friendship that early adolescents have themselves deemed meaningful. Secondly, a comparison between friendship features in mutual friendships and acquaintance affiliations highlights and provides greater perception of the actual friendships of early adolescents.

Friendship quality was the essence of this investigation and as such, deserves considerable attention. Quality is the most important component of friendship as it comprises the individual's impression of the relationship and delineates whether the participants view the relationship as emotionally fulfilling. Two recent studies of friendship quality are addressed in considerable detail (Parker & Asher, 1993; Bukowski, Hoza, Boivin, 1994). These studies have revealed associations between friendship quality and gender, self-perception, peer status, and friendship stability, which will be briefly touched upon.

Given that early adolescents' negative behaviours could have ramifications for the affective quality of their friendship, attention is focused on the friendship relations of aggressive early adolescents. Thus, a review of aggressive behaviour and the quality of early adolescents' friendship are addressed. Finally, drawing from the paucity of research literature in this area, hypotheses for the present research are presented.

Acceptance versus Friendship

The terms friendship, acceptance and popularity each refer to the adjustment or status of children within the larger peer group. Despite the widespread notion that they are similar and the lay tendency to use them interchangeably, these terms are conceptually distinct (Bukowski, Hoza, Boivin, 1993; Schneider, Wiener & Murphy, 1994).

Peer acceptance refers to the extent to which a child is liked or disliked by the larger peer group (Asher, Parker & Walker, 1996). A child who is accepted will be regarded positively by his or her peers and is more likely to gain entry into various interactions within the group. On the contrary, a child who is disliked will be poorly accepted by the peer group, potentially resulting in rejection. As Asher, Parker and

Walker (1996) have noted, of primary significance to the distinction between friendship and acceptance is the source of these judgements. With regards to peer acceptance, the source of these particular designations is inconsequential; of importance is the degree to which the child is liked or disliked by the peer group at large. In addition, the subject's perception of the other children in the peer group is irrelevant to his/her level of acceptance. For this reason, acceptance is referred to as a unilateral construct (Bukowski, Hoza, Boivin, 1993; Asher, Parker and Walker, 1996). Popularity is clearly a function of peer acceptance. Peer acceptance precedes popularity since to be considered popular by one's peers, a child must be well liked or accepted by the majority of the peer group (see Bukowski & Hoza, 1989 for a review).

Whereas acceptance is a global construct in peer relations, friendship operates on a dyadic level. Bukowski and Hoza (1989) defined friendship as "the experience of having a close, mutual, dyadic relation" (p. 19). As this statement implies, reciprocity is perhaps the essential element of friendship (Mannarino, 1980). Both individuals are necessary components of the relationship, and each one serves as an important source of judgement on the nature of the affiliation. In this respect, friendship can be categorized as a bilateral construct (Bukowski & Hoza, 1989; Bukowski, Hoza, Boivin, 1993). Thus, in the case of friendships, the perception of the focal child is crucial (Asher, Parker & Walker, 1996).

Both parties enter into the friendship voluntarily and both members maintain the relationship as a source of mutual support. Voluntariness is seen as a fundamental aspect of friendship as it encompasses the ability to initiate, maintain and terminate the relationship (Krappman, 1996). However, Krappman (1996) cautioned that in some circumstances, the voluntary aspect of friendship might be less than ideal. Although we

are free to choose our own affiliations, there are some instances in which our friendship choices may be limited due to the availability of individuals. Furthermore, in children's friendships in particular, secession from a friend may procure a significant penalty, such as the loss of social status. In these situations the voluntariness of friendship is debatable.

Despite moderate levels of association between popularity and friendship (see Bukowski, Boivin, Hoza, 1993 for a review), having friends does not secure popular status within the peer group. Similarly, being popular does not guarantee friendship. For example, it is not uncommon for children considered popular by their peers to lack a close, reciprocal, friendship. Parker and Asher (1993) revealed that depending upon the criteria used to identify friendship, estimates of popular children who were friendless ranged from 6.2% using a looser best friend criterion, to 30.5% using a more stringent very best friend criterion. George and Hartmann (1996) found that only 2% of popular children lacked a reciprocal friend in their study of friendship and popularity status.

Conversely, children who are poorly accepted by the peer group may still maintain a close, reciprocal friendship. Indeed, in a study of early adolescents who differed in popularity status, George and Hartmann (1996) reported that while unpopular children were less likely to have a reciprocal friend than popular children, 77% of unpopular children reported a reciprocal friendship. Not surprisingly, the friendship networks of unpopular children were smaller and more likely to be comprised of other poorly accepted children. Similar to George and Hartmann's (1996) findings, Parker and Asher (1993) found that children considered unpopular by the peer group were less likely to have a reciprocal friend. However, their estimates of unpopular children with reciprocal friends were considerably lower, ranging from 45.3% (using the looser *best* friend criterion) to

only 29.3% (based on the more stringent *very best* friend criterion). Research results suggest that the friendships of rejected children may not be as satisfying and fulfilling as those between popular children (e.g., Parker & Asher, 1993).

Measuring friendship

As acceptance and friendship represent two independent constructs, they require different forms of assessment. Acceptance is typically assessed with a sociometric nomination measure, which generally requires children and adolescents to indicate those peers that they like to play with and those they do not like to play with. The positive nominations for each individual are then totalled to yield an index of acceptance. The sum of the negative nominations for each child generates an index of rejection (e.g., Bukowski, Hoza, Boivin, 1993; e.g., Crick, Casas & Mosher, 1997).

A variation of this method is the rating procedure. In this case, children and adolescents are asked to rate on a scale (i.e., from 1 to 5) how much they like to play with their peers. An average rating is then calculated and on this basis, children are classified as highly accepted, average accepted or poorly accepted (see Parker & Asher, 1993). Consistent with the concept of acceptance as a unilateral construct, the essential component of this method is the group's appraisal of the individual (Bukowski, et al., 1993). The child's opinion of its own peer status is not considered.

As noted, friendship is a bilateral construct (Bukowski & Hoza, 1989), of which the key element is reciprocity. As such, measures of friendship should reflect the mutuality of friendship with nominations affirmed by both parties (Berndt, 1984). Nominations by a single child (i.e., unilateral) are generally considered unacceptable as children tend to "choose up", nominating their more popular peers. Not surprisingly,

these designations are unlikely to be reciprocated (see Berndt, 1984 for a review).

Furthermore, unilateral friendship nominations are less stable than reciprocated friendship selections (Bukowski & Hoza, 1989).

To be consistent with the bilateral notion of friendship when measuring this construct, each child is typically asked to indicate his or her best friends. Choices that are reciprocated are defined as a friendship. On the basis of this procedure, the criterion for friendship can be either restrictive or liberal (Bukowski, et al., 1993). A restrictive criterion necessitates that each child must choose the other as his or her “very”, or “first” best friend to satisfy a mutual nomination. A liberal indice of friendship requires only a reciprocated choice. Whether the child was nominated as the subject’s first, second or third choice is irrelevant. Often, attempts are made to include more restrictive measures of friendship (i.e., the highest rated friendship). However, given that this method limits the number of reciprocal friendships identified, a more liberal indice is often accepted (e.g., Grottpeter & Crick, 1996). In a study by Parker and Asher (1993), the strict reciprocity method of friendship (i.e., each child had designated the other as a “very” best friend) held for 55% of the sample.

The use of reciprocal nominations as a measure of friendship seems to be favoured by most researchers (e.g., Berndt, 1984; Bukowski & Hoza, 1989; Hartup, 1995; Furman, 1996). However, there is some debate on the number of friendship nominations that children should be asked to provide (Furman, 1996). Restricting the number of nominations may result in some friendships not being identified. Conversely, an unlimited choice procedure may prompt some children to include children who are not their actual friends. To avoid these potential problems, three friendship selections seem sufficient and

typical of most studies in the friendship and friendship quality literature (e.g., Parker & Asher, 1993; Grotmeter & Crick, 1996; Rys & Bear, 1997).

Estimates of unreciprocated friendship vary widely in the literature. For example, Berndt and Hoyle (1985) reported that 10% of their sample of children and early adolescents were excluded from the analyses due to a lack of reciprocal nominations. Parker and Asher (1993) noted that 22% of their sample of children in grades three through six did not have reciprocated friendship choices. Grotmeter and Crick (1996) revealed that 38% of their participants in grades three through six did not have reciprocated friendships. These results suggest that initial samples must be large to obtain an adequate number of mutual friendships for study.

Consistent with the notion that reciprocal nominations represent a dyadic, bilateral view of friendship, this method of friendship identification was employed in the current study. To further reduce the difficulties associated with restricted and unlimited friendship choice procedures, and to account for the possibility that aggressive early adolescents may be further down in early adolescent's choices, a five-friend selection procedure was adopted.

Friendship in Middle Childhood and Early Adolescence

During early adolescence there is a remarkable progression in the complexity of children's conceptualizations of their interpersonal relationships. As a result, friendship becomes increasingly more comprehensive and explicit during these stages.

Friendship stability

The degree of friendship stability in childhood and early adolescence has been a fairly contentious issue among child development researchers. Often debated is the issue

of whether friendships become increasingly stable with age. Berndt (1982) reported that friendship stability remains relatively constant from childhood to adolescence (i.e., grade four to eleven). Berndt and Hoyle (1985) also did not find that friendships were increasingly more stable between later childhood and early adolescence. In contrast, based on results from several studies, Epstein (1986) concluded that friendship stability does increase with age. However, she noted that most of the studies she reviewed involved short-term measures. Across a full year, only late adolescent friendships are significantly more stable than those of early and middle adolescents.

Also in dispute is the duration of friendship. Berndt and Hoyle (1985) revealed that friendship stability across the school year was quite high in grades one, four and eight. In contrast, Epstein (1986) has concluded that friendship stability is relatively low, even during older adolescence. According to Berndt (1982; Berndt & Perry, 1990), most early adolescent friendships continue for several months. However, estimates of adolescent's friendship stability range as high as an average of three years (Claes, 1992).

Friendship conceptions and expectations

For the most part, evaluations of childrens' and early adolescents' expectations and conceptions of friendship query the aspects of peer relations that they consider to be important attributes of the relationship, or values that a friend should possess. Associated measures usually pose questions such as "what are the things people should do to be good friends?" (Furman & Bierman, 1984), and "what do you expect your best friend to be like?" (Bigelow, 1977).

Given the ambiguity and projective nature of the items on these measures (Bigelow, 1977), it is the individual's perception of the ideal friendship that is being

obtained and not a judgement of their current peer relationship. However, there is evidence that early adolescents' friendship expectations are correlated with evaluations of existing features in their current friendships (Clark & Bittle, 1992). Thus, the implication of examining early adolescents' conceptions and expectations of friendship is two-fold. First, we are left with an impression of the aspects of friendship that early adolescents anticipate in a peer relationship and; second, we have a small window into the features of their actual friendships.

Bigelow and La Gaipa (1980) maintained that children's friendship expectations, defined as behaviours and qualities that one anticipates or values in another, are constrained by the child's cognitive development. Indeed, there appears to be ample support for this assumption. Research has revealed that conceptions and expectations for friendship broaden and become increasingly cognitively complex during later childhood and adolescence.

In one of the earlier studies of this notion, Bigelow (1977) examined the development of friendship expectations for children ages six to fourteen years. The results revealed that most dimensions of friendship, such as intimacy and loyalty, were significantly predicted by age. This supported the contention that friendship expectations develop in a relatively fixed sequence.

Berndt (1986) also investigated children's conceptions of friendship, in a study of children in kindergarten, grade three and grade six. Berndt noted that the reported decline in mutual liking might be due to the fact that older children take this feature for granted, focusing instead on more crucial features of interpersonal relationships. Indeed, sixth graders frequently endorsed intimacy and trust, loyalty, faithfulness and prosocial

behaviour as important features of friendship. Results from recent research have suggested that expectations for mutual activities also decrease during early adolescence (Clark & Bittle, 1992), perhaps because this feature is also taken for granted.

These findings are consistent with those of Furman and Bierman (1984) who investigated children's conceptions of friendship in grades two, four and six. Friendship conceptions were comprised of both behavioural and dispositional characteristics.

Behavioural expectations were based on concrete behaviours; dispositional expectations referred to underlying dispositions beyond specific behaviours.

Their findings revealed that at all age levels, five behavioural characteristics were reported; sharing/helping, sharing secrets/talking, propinquity/companionship, shared activities/mutual play and overt liking. Behavioural intimacy (sharing secrets/talking) increased with age, while behavioural affection (overt liking) and similarity (shared activities/mutual play) decreased with age. In terms of the dispositional conceptions, dispositional support (dependable for help/considerate of other's feelings), dispositional intimacy (trusting/understanding), dispositional association (faithful/loyal) and dispositional affection (acceptance/admiration) all increased with age.

These results suggest that early adolescents are capable of interpreting the behaviour of others and making inferences about their dispositional characteristics. This shift in focus from behavioural to dispositional conceptions of friendship provides support for the notion of increasing complexity of friendship relations as children approach adolescence.

In a study designed to assess age differences in children's perceptions of the supportive function of friendship, Berndt and Perry (1986) assessed perceptions of

friendship and acquaintance relations of children in grades two, four, six and eight.

Interviews with these children revealed that reported intimacy was the only feature of friendship that increased with age. Analyses of the comments that children provided for their ratings of friendship features revealed that older children made more comments about co-operative behaviour, and emotional support. Comments about unfriendly behaviour also increased, peaking at the sixth grade.

Berndt and Perry (1986) provided a number of conclusions with regards to children's perceptions and attributions at different stages, particularly for the sixth and eighth graders. They found a higher number of comments concerning the negative behaviour of acquaintances for children in the sixth grade. In explanation, the authors suggested that children at this age may rely on personal characteristics when making attributions about behaviour (i.e., reporting that their acquaintance was mean, selfish or obnoxious). In contrast, by the eighth grade, early adolescents began to rely on situational determinants, or the interaction between situational and personal determinants to explain their relationships with acquaintances. Early adolescents were more likely to say that their interactions with acquaintances were infrequent due to different class schedules, or different social networks.

Thus, compared to younger children, early adolescents' friendship expectations and conceptions are more likely to be characterized by intimacy (e.g., Furman & Bierman, 1984; Berndt & Perry, 1986), trust and loyalty (e.g., Bigelow, 1977; Furman & Bierman, 1984; Berndt, 1986;), admiration (e.g., Bigelow, 1977; Furman & Bierman, 1984) support (Furman & Bierman, 1984; Berndt & Perry, 1986), and companionship (e.g., Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). Furthermore, the increasing recognition of unfriendly (Berndt &

Perry, 1986) and aggressive behaviour (Berndt, 1986) by older children suggests that conflict is more likely to be recognized by early adolescents as a negative friendship feature.

In concert, the results of these studies suggest children's conceptions of their peer relationships operate on a continuum. During early childhood, children tend to focus on the behavioural characteristics of their peers when describing these relationships (Furman & Bierman, 1984); during middle childhood, children rely on dispositional or personal characteristics (Furman & Bierman, 1984; Berndt & Perry, 1986); and by early adolescence, situational attributions play an increasingly important role in conceptions of peer relationships (Berndt & Perry, 1986).

Behaviour between friends

It is reasonable to expect that children will behave differently when interacting with friends rather than with non-friends (Rubin, Coplan, Nelson, Cheah, & Lagace-Seguin, 1999). According to Newcomb and Bagwell (1996), the comparison of mutual friends to those of non-friends, or acquaintances, can further clarify and provide greater insight into the attributes associated with friendship relations and the developmental context of friendship (Newcomb & Bagwell, 1996).

Newcomb and Bagwell (1995) conducted a meta-analysis of the literature pertaining to behaviours between friends and non-friends. Part of this meta-analytic review provided a quantitative examination of the differences between children's friend and non-friend relations. To promote the systematic analysis of the various friendship characteristics chosen by researchers across the studies, Newcomb and Bagwell (1995) grouped friendship features into the following four broadband categories (the constituents

of these categories are in parentheses); positive engagement (social contact, talking, co-operation, positive affect), conflict management (conflict instigation, conflict resolution), task activity (task communication, task performance), and relationship properties (similarity, equality, dominance, mutual liking, closeness and loyalty).

Of importance to this review were the reciprocal friend (i.e., both children nominate the other) and acquaintance (i.e., neutral, excludes disliked peers and strangers) pairings. In general, the results of this analysis supported the contention that friendship relations differ significantly from non-friend relations for most of the features associated with friendship in the literature. Support was also provided for the notion that friendships are more affiliative and intense compared to relations between acquaintances (Newcomb & Bagwell, 1996).

Friends, as compared to acquaintances, evidenced more co-operation, positive affect, social contact, talking, similarity, equality, mutual liking, closeness, and loyalty. Also, although friends did not differ in their instigation of conflict, they placed greater emphasis on conflict resolution. Acquaintances were more likely to be dominant in their interactions than were reciprocal friends, suggesting that there is a power differential in these relationships, with one, or perhaps both members of the dyad trying to assert their control over the other.

In light of these findings, Newcomb and Bagwell (1995, 1996) provided a number of speculations and presumptions concerning friendships in comparison to less affiliative relationships. Primarily, friends tend to spend more time with each other than do children who do not maintain a close relationship with one another. Social contact (i.e., play behaviours, common activities, out-of-school contact) proved to be one of the strongest

characteristics for distinguishing between friends and non-friends. Indeed, early adolescents experience frequent interactions with their friends, often on a daily basis (Crockett, Losoff, Petersen, 1984). However, the nature of this interaction is also essential. Friendship relations evidence a strong positive component and greater intensity of affective components (Newcomb & Bagwell, 1995).

Friends also tend to experience greater similarity than do non-friends. Aboud and Mendelson (1996) suggested that children are likely to be similar to their friends in sex, age, race and activity preferences. However, this may be a function of the 'perception' of similarity and not 'actual' similarity. Adolescents in particular are less likely to focus on similarity and more likely to emphasize personal characteristics (Aboud & Mendelson, 1996). Furthermore, it has often been noted that although similarity is a widely accepted feature of friendships compared to non-friendships, the corresponding empirical literature is insufficient to draw specific conclusions on the exact nature of similarity (Newcomb & Bagwell, 1995; Aboud & Mendelson, 1996).

Newcomb and Bagwell's (1995) meta-analysis revealed that friends evidenced more frequent expressions of mutual liking, closeness and loyalty than non-friends, suggesting that these relationships are characterized by greater intimacy, particularly during early adolescence (see also, Berndt, 1982; Clark & Bittle, 1992; Bukowski, Hoza & Boivin, 1994). Furman & Bierman (1984) reported that late school age children and early adolescents perceive their friendships to be characterized by greater intimacy, support, association, affection and similarity, than relations with acquaintances. Reported intimacy has been found to increase significantly with age for friends, and decrease for acquaintances (Berndt & Perry, 1986). Not surprisingly, friends are also perceived to be

more supportive than acquaintances (Berndt & Perry, 1986). The extent to which early adolescents differentiate between friends and non-friends is greater than in late childhood, particularly for dispositional characteristics, reflecting their greater understanding of underlying friendship characteristics that transcend observable behaviour (Furman & Bierman, 1984).

There is also evidence that adolescent friendships are characterized by greater altruism and affective perspective-taking than less affiliative relationships (McGuire & Weisz, 1982), and greater self-disclosure than younger children (Sharabany, Gershoni, Hofman, 1981; Papini et al. 1990). Clark and Bittle (1992) found that early adolescents reported higher levels of empathy and understanding more frequently than younger children did. These affective features of friendship are believed to reinforce and promote the development of interpersonal competencies, providing early adolescents with an adequate foundation to engage in future relationships (Newcomb & Bagwell, 1995).

Generally, friendship relations tend to be balanced, in that the members view themselves as equals (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). The meta-analysis revealed that friendships are characterized by less dominance and competition and more equality than are relationships between individuals who were not friends (Newcomb & Bagwell, 1995). However, some researchers have cautioned that further investigation into the function of equality is warranted given the paucity of knowledge on the nature of inequality in childrens' friendship relations (Bukowski & Sippola, 1996). Berndt (1996) asserted that tension surrounding equality (i.e., inequality) must be considered a negative feature of friendship.

Finally, despite the positive environment that characterizes friends' interactions, these relationships are not without their difficulties. Until relatively recently, research has largely ignored the negative features of friendship such as conflict, competition, rivalry and inequality (Berndt, 1996). Nevertheless, factor analyses of friendship features have revealed two dimensions, one positive and one negative (e.g., Keefe & Berndt, 1996). However, this varies with age. Berndt and Perry (1986) reported that for school age children (i.e., grades two, four, and six), perceptions of friendship features varied along one dimension. However, for eighth graders, the negative feature (i.e., conflict) loaded on a factor separate from the positive features, suggesting that the recognition of negative friendship attributes increases with age. Early adolescents were more likely to recognize the existence of negative features of friendship than were younger children.

Given the amount of time that friends spend together, it is not surprising that friendships are also characterized by conflict. Early adolescent friendships in particular are more likely to be characterized by greater conflict than those of late adolescents (Claes, 1992). However, whether friends and non-friends differ in their experience of conflict is debatable. Newcomb and Bagwell (1995) discovered that friends and acquaintances do not differ in their instigation of conflict. In contrast, Bukowski, Hoza and Boivin (1994) found that conflict was more frequent in non-reciprocated friendships compared to reciprocated friendships of early adolescents. Nevertheless, these studies both revealed that friends are more concerned than non-friends with resolving their disagreements (Bukowski, Hoza, Boivin, 1994; Newcomb & Bagwell, 1995). This is likely because conflict has greater repercussions for close friendships compared to adolescents with less affective ties (Newcomb & Bagwell, 1995).

There is general agreement that conflict serves an important positive function in adolescents' friendships (see Laursen, 1996 for review; Newcomb and Bagwell, 1995), allowing them to enhance their skills of effective conflict management and resolution (see Hartup, 1992). Undoubtedly, conflict can also have potentially negative consequences. The implications that conflictive friendship can have for the lives of adolescents is illustrated by Berndt and Keefe (1995). Their study indicated that early adolescents involved in friendships with more negative features, such as conflict, tended to be less involved and more disruptive at school. Conflict, particularly in the form of aggression, also has implications for early adolescents' relationships (e.g., Dodge et al, 1990; Grotzinger & Crick, 1996). Given the relevance of these findings for the present study, the associated research will be discussed in greater detail in later sections of this review.

Summary. In light of the research, it appears that friends experience greater affect and affiliative intensity in their relationships than do mere acquaintances, particularly as children get older (e.g., Sharabany, Gershoni, Hofman, 1981; Furman & Bierman, 1984; Berndt & Perry, 1986; Clark & Bittle, 1992; Newcomb & Bagwell, 1995). The research pertaining to friendship expectations, and behaviours between friends compared to non-friends has also identified some important features of early adolescents' friendship, including; companionship, support, intimacy, conflict resolution, loyalty, and equality (e.g., Furman & Bierman, 1984; Berndt & Perry, 1986; Newcomb & Bagwell, 1995). However, to "accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative" would be inaccurate (Berndt, 1996). The fact that conflict is a frequent occurrence in adolescent friendships suggests that it constitutes a meaningful friendship feature (Berndt, 1996). The common

attributes of childrens' and adolescents' relationships constitute the foundation for the qualitative aspect of friendship, to which we now turn.

Friendship Quality

Distinction between friendship quality and friendship features

The distinction between friendship quality and friendship features seems to be a relatively recent differentiation in the literature (e.g., Berndt, 1996). While understanding early adolescent friendships with respect to features provides general knowledge of the characteristics of these relationships, it does not offer much information regarding the quality of these relationships.

Berndt (1996) has made a fundamental differentiation between the terms feature and quality. Friendship features are its attributes or characteristics which include, among others, intimacy, companionship and conflict. The term 'feature' implies that these characteristics can be either positive or negative. Quality on the other hand, refers to the affective nature of the friendship (Berndt, 1996), providing an indication of whether the relationship is fulfilling and satisfying to those involved. A dyadic relationship often consists of both positive and negative attributes. Together, these positive and negative features delineate the quality of a friendship. Simply put, a friendship with more positive features, such as intimacy and companionship, is of higher quality than one with more negative components, such as conflict and competition (Berndt, 1996).

Negative aspects of friendship quality

As previously mentioned, negative features of friendship such as conflict, competition, rivalry and inequality (Berndt, 1996) are a reality for early adolescent friendships. Indeed, the features of early adolescent friendship can be classified on the

basis of a positive dimension and a negative dimension (e.g., Berndt and Perry, 1986; Berndt & Miller, 1993; Berndt & Keefe, 1995; Keefe & Berndt, 1996). These two dimensions have been found to be weakly negatively correlated (Berndt, 1996). Furthermore, the extent to which negative features are present in the friendship compared to positive features determines the quality of that relationship (Berndt, 1996).

Berndt (1996) contended that extant research concerning friendship quality is characterized by two conspicuous limitations. First, insufficient attention has been conferred upon negative aspects of friendship (such as conflict). Second, the tendency has been to assume that equality is an inherent feature of childrens' friendship relations. However, according to Berndt (1996), inequality in the form of domination and bossiness must constitute a negative aspect of friendship. As such, for the present research, a concerted effort was made to ensure that negative friendship qualities were addressed, resulting in the inclusion of subscales to assess conflict and inequality in early adolescent friendships.

Measuring friendship quality

Several friendship quality questionnaires have recently been developed. For example, the Friendship Qualities Questionnaire (Parker & Asher, 1993) presents a reliable self-report measure of friendship quality for children in grades three through six. However, relatively few measures are appropriate for use with early adolescents.

Friendship Qualities Scale (FQS) (Bukowski, Hoza, & Boivin, 1994). To address the need for a reliable scale to assess friendship quality in early adolescence, Bukowski, Hoza and Boivin (1994) developed and pilot tested the Friendship Qualities Scale (FQS). They noted that existing measures of friendship relations were inadequate. As a result,

Bukowski and his colleagues (1994) offered a number of methodological and conceptual justifications underlying the development of the FQS (Bukowski, Hoza, Boivin, 1994).

Primarily, these authors wanted to develop a scale to measure friendship quality in early adolescence consistent with the basic features of friendship. They also emphasized that the most logical indicator of the quality of friendship is the child's own interpretation, or impression of the relationship. Furthermore, to facilitate the advancement of research into early adolescents' friendship, the authors wanted to create a scale that was flexible, permitting the addition or deletion of items in accordance with other researchers' requirements. Finally, to address the problem of high correlations between subscales in other measures, their goal was to develop subscales with lower levels of association.

The first version of the FQS was based on Berndt and Perry's study (as cited in Bukowski, Hoza and Boivin, 1994) which employed an interview format to measure the friendship quality of early adolescent relationships. The questions were adapted to a written questionnaire format consisting of six subscales (30 items); play/association, pro-sociality, intimacy, loyalty, conflict and self-esteem/attachment. After several pilot studies, this measure was then pared down to five basic dimensions of friendship; companionship, conflict, help, closeness and security.

Bukowski and his associates (1994) justified their inclusion of these subscales based on a review of the corresponding literature. A number of authors have supported the importance of companionship and play as an important feature in child and adolescent relationships (e.g., Bigelow, 1977, Berndt, 1982). As mentioned previously, conflict is also present in early adolescent relationships (Claes, 1992). Indeed, some researchers contend that conflict serves an important positive function in adolescents' friendships (see

Laursen, 1996 for review; Newcomb & Bagwell, 1995). Help figures prominently in childrens' and early adolescents' relationships (Berndt, 1986). This feature is sub-divided into two subsections in the FQS. *Aid*, which refers to providing assistance to the friend, and *protection from victimization*, which encompasses the child's willingness to defend their friend. According to Bukowski and his colleagues (1994), security is believed to be one of the most important features of friendship at this age level. This component is also divided into two subsections. *Reliable alliance*, which refers to availability of the friend in times of need, and *transcending problems*, which is similar to conflict resolution, specifically, that the friendship can withstand disagreements and fights. Finally, closeness is included given that one of the most important features of friendships is that they provide acceptance and validation (Bukowski, et al., 1994).

Although not immediately apparent, the constructs of intimacy and loyalty are also assessed in this measure. The intimacy items are subsumed under closeness and the loyalty items are dispersed across the reliable alliance, closeness and protection from victimization subscales (Bukowski, personal communication, 1998).

To validate the scale, Bukowski and his colleagues (1994) conducted a pilot study with two samples. The first sample employed children in grades five and six; the second consisted of children in grades five, six, and seven. In the first sample, subjects were asked to identify their best friends using an unlimited choice method. Children from reciprocal friendships were then asked to answer the items on the FQS with this person in mind, using a five-point Likert scale. Reciprocal nominations were also used for sample two. Friends were considered to be those children who rated each other for the FQS.

Like Parker and Asher's (1993) measure of friendship quality, the FQS (Bukowski et al., 1994) was driven by those aspects identified in the literature as important to early adolescents' friendship relations. In addition, the scale uses a questionnaire format to permit consistent administration across subjects (Bukowski et al., 1994). In keeping with their goal, the authors of the FQS developed a measure with considerably lower intercorrelations between subscales. The average correlations ranged from .34 to .38 across the two studies. Consistent with previous research (e.g., Berndt & Perry, 1986; Berndt & Miller, 1993; Berndt & Keefe, 1995; Keefe & Berndt, 1996), two factors emerged, one for the positive items and one for the negative items. The authors concluded that the scale demonstrates good internal consistency and criterion validity. This will be addressed in greater detail in the methodology section. Given the acceptable psychometric properties of the FQS (Bukowski et al., 1994) and its suitability for use with early adolescents, it was considered the most appropriate measure for the present study.

Correlates of friendship quality

Friendship quality and self-perceptions. The majority of research conducted on the correlates of friendship quality has involved aspects of the self-system, including perceived competence, self-worth and self-esteem. At the outset, it requires mention that although significant correlations between measures of the self-system and friendship quality do exist, the direction of this relation has yet to be established. For example, higher levels of self-esteem could facilitate the initiation and maintenance of a mutual friendship. Conversely, engaging in a satisfying, high quality friendship could promote higher levels of self-esteem (Keefe & Berndt, 1996; Berndt, 1996).

Keefe and Berndt (1996) examined the relation between friendship quality and early adolescents' perceived self-esteem. Results from previous research (i.e., Mannarino, 1980) have suggested that mutual friendships contribute to an individual's self-worth. Based on this notion, Keefe and Berndt hypothesized that positive friendship features would be associated with an individual's self-esteem. In addition, these researchers proposed that the negative friendship features such as conflict could also have an impact on the quality of the relationship.

Their study included close to 300 early adolescents in grades seven and eight, tested in the late fall and again five months later. To measure friendship perceptions, students were asked to provide the names of their three best friends, in order of closeness. Participants then answered questions about the features of each of their best friendships. These 26 questions, adapted from Berndt and Perry (1986), included 12 to assess the positive aspects of friendship; 8 pertaining to negative aspects; and 6 questions measuring frequency of contact. The participants also completed the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Children (Harter, 1985). This scale includes six subscales; scholastic competence, athletic competence, physical appearance, behavioural conduct, and global self-worth.

As expected, results revealed that positive features were moderately related to both perceived social acceptance and general self-worth, though more strongly with the former. Positive features of friendship were also positively related to behavioural conduct and scholastic competence. Students who reported their friendships as having more negative features were less happy with themselves overall (i.e., they reported lower levels of self-worth, social acceptance, and scholastic competence). On the basis of their

findings, these authors suggested that engaging in supportive friendships may have wide ranging implications, effecting adolescents socially, behaviourally, and academically.

Berndt and Miller (1993) have also conducted research examining self-esteem and friendship. Seventh graders were assessed with regards to their friendship features and various aspects of self-esteem, using similar measures as the Keefe and Berndt (1996) study. Self- and teacher-reports were also used to obtain a measure of school adjustment (i.e., their perception of the value of school, involvement in classroom activities and their engagement in disruptive behaviour). Not surprisingly, the results of this study echoed those of Keefe and Berndt (1996). Adolescents with friendships characterized by more positive features had higher scores for scholastic competence, social acceptance, behavioural conduct, and global self-worth. They also valued their schooling more. Those adolescents with more negative friendship features had lower levels of scholastic competence and behavioural conduct, but not global self-worth as Keefe and Berndt (1996) found with their sample. They also valued school less and participated in fewer activities. Thus, these findings supported those of Keefe and Berndt (1996) and provided support for the inference that positive and negative features of friendship (i.e., friendship quality) may be important influences on various domains of early adolescents' self-esteem.

Friendship quality and peer status. It was noted earlier that while unpopular children were less likely to have a reciprocal friendship than their more popular peers, many of these children do maintain mutual friendships (Parker & Asher, 1993; George & Hartmann, 1996). Recent research has been conducted to examine the differences between reciprocal and unilateral (i.e., unreciprocated) friendships (Berndt & Miller, 1993) with respect to friendship quality.

The early adolescents in Berndt and Miller's (1993) study were asked to list the names of their best friends. Those who named more than 3 close friends were asked to identify their very best friend, their second best friend and their next best friend. They then completed a measure of friendship features adapted from Berndt and Perry (1986) for each of their identified friendships.

Results revealed that over two-thirds of the very best friend nominations were reciprocated (i.e., 69%); while second and third best friends were less often reciprocated (36.3% and 27.8%, respectively). Their hypothesis that reciprocal friendships would evidence more positive features and fewer negative features than unilateral friendships was partially supported. Specifically, only reciprocally nominated very best friendships exhibited more positive features than non-reciprocated friendships. They did not have fewer negative features than unilateral relationships. Additionally, differences in friendship quality between reciprocated and non-reciprocated friendships for second and third best friends did not emerge in this study.

While this research provided some intriguing preliminary evidence concerning the quality of reciprocated friendships versus non-reciprocated friendships, it would be erroneous to make the assumption that non-reciprocated friendships involve less popular children. Indeed, there is evidence that some popular children may also lack a close, reciprocal friendship (i.e., Parker & Asher, 1996; George & Hartmann, 1996).

There is, however, a surprising lack of research concerning friendship and peer status (Berndt & Perry, 1990). In a doctoral dissertation described by Berndt & Perry (1990), there was some support for the notion that peer status may be related to friendship features for adolescents. Popular eighth graders characterized their friendships as more

positive and less conflictive than their less popular peers. Rejected adolescents reported more conflict within their friendships, but not fewer positive features. Conversely, sociometrically neglected adolescents divulged fewer positive features, but not greater levels of conflict. These findings suggest that popular early adolescents may experience higher quality friendships than their less popular counterparts. Parker and Asher (1993) have conducted the most extensive research in the area of peer status and friendship.

Parker and Asher (1993) explored the friendship qualities of 881 high, average and low accepted children in grades three through five. Children were given a class roster and asked to identify their three best friends. In the second stage, they were asked to review these choices and select their 'very best friend'. Children were considered to have a 'very best friend' if another child in his or her three best friend choices reciprocally nominated them. Thus, to be considered very best friends, it was not necessary for children to designate each other as very best friends. On average, just under one (.90) non-classmate was included on the children's list of friends. To assess acceptance, children were asked to rate how much they liked to play with their classmates on a five-point scale. The average rating that children received determined their level of acceptance.

Overall, 78% of the entire sample reported at least one reciprocal friend. In general, the greater their levels of acceptance, the more likely subjects were to have a reciprocal best, or very best friendship (Parker & Asher, 1993). Constituents of friendship quality were also examined at each level of acceptance. The only feature for which level of acceptance did not vary was companionship and recreation, suggesting that this component was likely to be present in children's friendships to a similar extent, regardless of acceptance status. However, for each of the remaining subscales, low accepted

children indicated less quality, reporting that they experienced significantly greater difficulty resolving conflict, less validation and caring, and lower levels of help and guidance, than did average or high accepted children, who did not differ for these features. Low accepted children also reported less intimacy in their friendships than did high accepted children, but not significantly more conflict and betrayal. Low accepted children indicated significantly more conflict and betrayal than average accepted children did. Interestingly, although not significant, highly accepted children indicated more conflict and betrayal than average children did.

Friendship quality and satisfaction. Like the other correlates of friendship quality, surprisingly little research has been conducted on friendship satisfaction. Again, Parker and Asher (1993) provide the only research on the relation between friendship quality and satisfaction. Parker and Asher sought to examine the friendship satisfaction of children in grades three through five. To assess satisfaction within their reciprocal friendship, the children were administered two questions. The first inquired how the friendship was proceeding; the second, how happy the child was with the friendship. Not surprisingly, satisfaction was positively related to friendship quality.

Early adolescents' friendship satisfaction would seem to compliment the knowledge gained from investigations into their friendship quality, providing additional information about how they feel about their relationships. This information seems particularly pertinent when examining dyadic friendship relations involving an aggressive individual. It is reasonable to assume that friendship satisfaction may be disproportionate under these circumstances. Indeed, there has been some suggestion that antisocial children do have slightly lower levels of friendship satisfaction (e.g., Dishion, Andrews &

Crosby, 1995). Given the lack of studies investigating the friendship satisfaction of aggressive children in particular, an assessment of early adolescents' friendship satisfaction was included in this study.

Friendship quality and stability. Research results have indicated that positive friendship features play a more important role in friendship selection than negative friendship features (Bukowski & Newcomb, 1984). But to what extent do the positive and negative friendship features relate to the stability of the relationship? Given that friendship relations are central to early adolescent development (Berndt & Savin-Williams, 1993), and that friendships at this stage of development are relatively stable (i.e., Berndt, 1982), it is reasonable to assume that friendship features can have implications for the stability of friendship. Due to the paucity of research in this area, relationship properties and their association with friendship stability require further research (Bukowski, Newcomb & Hartup, 1996).

To investigate the association between friendship stability and quality, Bukowski, Hoza and Boivin (1994) identified reciprocal friendship nominations using an unlimited choice method and asked children in grades five and six to complete the FQS with their mutual friend in mind. They were further instructed to consider the relationship in its present condition, and not their ideal conception. Data were collected twice for this sample over a six-month period to assess the stability of these friendships.

A positive relation between friendship stability and quality emerged in this study. Significant differences between stable and non-stable friendships were evident for help, companionship, security and closeness, indicating that stable friendships were more likely to evidence higher quality. These researchers proposed that children who have difficulty

establishing and maintaining a high quality relationship would experience more frequent changes in their friendship relations. In addition, the fact that conflict did not differ between stable and non-stable friendships would seem to contradict the assumption that conflict is a salient feature for the stability of these relationships (e.g., Berndt, 1982).

Perhaps of most significance was the finding that the FQS differentiated between reciprocal and non-reciprocal friendships. Higher levels of companionship, closeness, security and help and lower levels of conflict were present in the reciprocated dyads. Since greater positive features and less negative features (i.e., higher quality) would be expected for mutual friendships, it can be inferred that the FQS is a good measure of friendship quality for friendship relations.

Gender differences in friendship quality. Parker and Asher (1993) revealed some interesting findings for gender and level of acceptance with respect to quality. Although boys and girls did not differ in their very best friendships for conflict/betrayal or companionship/recreation, boys' friendships were characterized by less intimate exchange, greater difficulty resolving conflict, less validation and caring and less help and guidance than were girls' mutual friendships.

The finding that girls experienced greater intimacy in their relationships is consistent with research by Buhrmester and Furman (1987; Furman & Buhrmester, 1985) where girls reported more frequent displays of intimacy and rated the importance of intimacy higher than boys. This result is also concordant with Claes (1992) and Crockett, Losoff and Petersen (1984) whose studies revealed that girls experienced greater intimacy with their friends. However, they are not congruous with the results from Berndt and Perry's (1986) study, which indicated that boys and girls did not differ in their perceptions

of intimacy in their best friendships. Sharabany and colleagues (1981) reported that girls evidenced greater intimacy with a same sex best friend than boys for some aspects of this feature, namely giving and sharing, and trust and loyalty. However, sex differences did not emerge for other aspects, including frankness and intimate knowledge. Buhrmester and Furman (1987) also reported that girls' friendships evidenced greater companionship than did boys' friendships, which would appear to contrast the findings of Parker and Asher (1993) that both genders were similar in this respect.

Parker and Asher (1993) attributed the differences between boys' and girls' friendships to the structure of group activities and social networks associated with each gender. The fact that boys tend to prefer to interact in larger groups with greater emphasis on dominance and a pecking order may give rise to the lower intensity of their affiliations. In contrast, girls have a tendency to orient themselves in smaller, more intensive groupings of two or three children, thus the greater prominence of intimacy, caring and assistance in their friendships (Maccoby, 1986). In general, the findings that girls experienced greater intimacy, more effective conflict resolution, more validation and caring and greater help and guidance than boys lends support to Furman and Buhrmester's (1985) contention that girls depend on their best friends more heavily than boys do.

Summary. Friendship quality represents the affective nature of the relationship, providing a measure of whether the children themselves consider their friendships to be satisfying and affectively fulfilling, especially when children are providing these reports (i.e., as opposed to observations). Indeed, children who are engaged in a mutual friendship as opposed to one that is not reciprocated, tend to experience fewer negative features such as conflict and greater positive attributes, such as closeness and trust

(Bukowski, et al. 1994). Furthermore, friendship quality is related to various facets of self-perception (Berndt & Miller, 1993; Keefe & Berndt, 1996), peer status, friendship satisfaction (Parker & Asher, 1993) and stability (Bukowski, et al., 1994).

Aggression in Middle Childhood and Early Adolescence

Thus far, this literature review has largely been concerned with the positive and negative aspects of friendship for the 'average' child. In general, average accepted and highly accepted children experience satisfactory peer relations (Parker & Asher, 1993). However, compared to their more socially successful counterparts, there is evidence to suggest that while poorly accepted children have friends (e.g., George & Hartmann, 1996), their friendship relations are characterized by less affiliative quality (Parker & Asher, 1993).

There is ample evidence in support of the notion that a large subset of poorly accepted children tend to exhibit relatively high levels of aggression (e.g., Coie & Kupersmidt, 1983; Dodge, 1983; Ray, Cohen, Secrist & Duncan, 1997). Nevertheless, children and early adolescents who are considered aggressive do maintain mutual friendships (e.g., Cairns et al., 1988; Grotperter & Crick, 1996; Rys & Bear, 1997). Since the friendship status of aggressive children has been established, the question becomes to what extent are the typical features of friendship present in the relationships of aggressive early adolescents compared to those of average individuals? More specifically, do aggressive early adolescents' friendships differ qualitatively from those of non-aggressive early adolescents?

While there has been some research into peer acceptance and friendships in general for aggressive children and early adolescents (e.g., Cairns et al., 1988; Dishion, Andrews

& Crosby, 1995; Rys & Bear, 1997), there has been limited study into the qualitative aspect of these relationships. Moreover, among the few studies where the friendship quality of aggressive children has been addressed (e.g., Grotmeter & Crick, 1996), there has been no research with early adolescents. Furthermore, until relatively recently, the overwhelming majority of previous research has focused on overt aggression (physical and verbal) and boys (see Block, 1983; Parke & Slaby, 1983, for reviews). For the most part, this restricted approach to the study of aggression has resulted in the exclusion of girls and the aggressive behaviour salient to their gender (Crick & Grotmeter, 1995).

The widely held belief that boys are more aggressive than girls has prevailed for many years, both within the academic community and among the general population. However, this past decade has witnessed a shift in the assumption that girls are much less aggressive than their male counterparts. Researchers have begun to postulate that the forms of aggression assessed in earlier research are much less salient to girls, resulting in equivocal findings for this gender. This obvious limitation has led to the contemplation that girls are not necessarily non-aggressive, but that the type of aggression which they exhibit is unique and has been overlooked in past research (Crick and Grotmeter, 1995).

Although the general definitions of aggression vary, for the purpose of the present research, aggression is defined as malicious behaviour that is intended to harm or injure another person (Parke & Slaby, 1983). Past research has tended to focus on the two forms of overt aggression. Physical aggression involves actual harm or the threat of harm to others through the use of physical means (i.e. hitting, pushing, biting, etc.). Verbal aggression is interpreted as psychological abuse through insults (Parke & Slaby, 1983).

Relational aggression

Recently, Crick and her colleagues (i.e., Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick, Bigbee & Howes, 1996; Crick, 1996) have identified an additional form of aggression, which they have labelled relational aggression. This form of aggression is characterized by behaviour that threatens or purposefully damages another child's friendships and promotes feelings of exclusion from the peer group (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). The intent of relationally aggressive acts is to manipulate and control the behaviour of others. Such relationally aggressive behaviour may include giving a peer the 'silent treatment' as punishment, becoming friends with another child out of revenge, spreading rumours about another child so the peer group will reject this individual, or threatening to withdraw friendship to gain compliance with a request (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick et al., in press).

Other conceptually related forms of aggression have also been identified in the literature (Crick et al., in press). Like relational aggression, indirect aggression also involves social manipulation (Feshbach, 1969; Bjorkqvist et al., 1992). The objective of this behaviour is to inflict harm, but also to remain unidentified by the victim, thus avoiding retaliation (Lagerspetz et al., 1988). According to Crick and her colleagues (in press), although relational and indirect aggression share some of the same features (i.e., rumour spreading), indirect aggression does not involve direct confrontation with the victim, such as threatening to withdraw friendship.

Social aggression is also comparable to relational aggression (Crick et al., in press). Like relational aggression, social aggression is also characterized by social exclusion and rumour spreading (Galen & Underwood, 1997). However, social aggression differs from relational aggression as it includes elements of verbal aggression

(e.g., verbal rejection), and negative body language and facial expressions (e.g., rolling eyes). In addition, where relational aggression focuses on damage to children's peer relations, social aggression is directed toward damaging another's social status and self-esteem (Galen & Underwood, 1997).

The primary focus of this review will be relational aggression as described by Crick and Grotpeter (1995). However, due to the lack of extensive research in this area, where applicable, research on indirect aggression and social aggression will be addressed to supplement the findings.

A distinct construct. Results of recent research have substantiated the notion that relational aggression and overt aggression are distinct forms of hostile behaviour. Using a peer nomination measure, Crick and Grotpeter (1995) assessed children's social behaviour on the basis of three subscales assessing relational aggression (5 items), overt aggression (3 items), and prosocial behaviour (5 items). Children in grades three to six were asked to identify three peers who engaged in relational aggression (i.e., when mad at a person, ignores them or stops talking to them); overt aggression (i.e., hits, pushes others); prosocial behaviour (i.e., helps others); and isolation (i.e., plays alone a lot). A factor analysis of these responses revealed that relational aggression emerged as a separate factor. The two forms of aggression (i.e., overt and relational) were moderately related ($r = .54$). On the basis of their findings, the researchers concluded that relational aggression and overt aggression are "different forms of the same general behaviour" and that, although related, relational aggression is independent of overt aggression (p. 715). Relational aggression and overt aggression have also been reliably distinguished in a

preschool sample (Crick, Casas & Mosher, 1997) and a college sample (Wellman & Crick, in press).

Gender. Relational aggression seems to be more salient for young girls than boys (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick, 1997; Crick, Casas and Mosher, 1997). In a study of school age children (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995), peer nominations revealed that girls were more likely than boys to be classified as relationally aggressive, and were more likely to be identified in an extreme group of relationally aggressive children. Conversely, boys were more likely to be overtly aggressive and characteristic of an extreme group of overtly aggressive children. However, when self-reports were taken into account, boys were more overtly aggressive and relationally aggressive than girls. These researchers also reported that when relational aggression and overt aggression were both used as determinants of aggressive behaviour, both boys and girls were identified as aggressive with relatively equal frequency (27% of the boys versus 21.7% of the girls).

Gender differences have also been found for preschool children. However, these findings have depended upon the type of assessment employed. In Crick, Casas and Mosher's (1997) study, children's peer nominations did not reveal significant gender differences for aggression. Nevertheless, teacher ratings revealed that boys were more overtly aggressive than girls, and girls more relationally aggressive than boys. When extreme groups of aggression were taken into account, the relationally aggressive group consisted mostly of girls and the overtly aggressive group mainly of boys. The combined group (relationally plus overtly aggressive) was also mainly boys.

Not all researchers have reached the same conclusion regarding gender differences for children at these ages. Using the same peer assessment technique as Crick and

Grottpeter (1995) to assess aggressive behaviours, girls in grades three to six were not found to be more relationally aggressive than boys in general (Rys & Bear, 1997). However, when groups were defined on the basis of aggression status rather than gender, girls were more representative of the relationally aggressive group and boys more characteristic of the overtly aggressive group. Using Crick's (Crick, et al., 1997) teacher measure of aggression for preschoolers, Hart and colleagues (1998) reported no significant sex differences for overt and relational aggression in their sample of nursery-school age children.

As with the overwhelming majority of research on relational aggression, these studies were conducted on younger subjects. However, in the only study investigating relational aggression in an early adolescent sample, girls in grades six and seven were more likely to engage in self-reported relational aggression than boys (MacDonald & O'Laughlin, 1997). Peer report procedures with early adolescents have also revealed gender differences for related forms of aggression. In a study of 11 year olds, girls were more likely to use of indirect means of aggression, whereas boys engaged in more direct aggression (Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist & Peltonen, 1988). In one of the few studies of relational aggression involving older subjects, gender differences did not emerge for a sample of young adults who provided self-reports of their aggressive behaviours (Crick et al., in press). A study of indirect aggression and direct aggression revealed similar findings with a college sample (Green, Richardson, & Lago, 1996).

The discrepancy between these studies suggests that the identification of males and females as relationally or overtly aggressive is sensitive to a number of factors, including the subjects' age, the methodology employed (i.e., self-report, peer nominations, or

teacher report) and the analysis of the data (i.e., classifying children as aggressive on the basis of gender, or examining gender differences on the basis of aggression).

Children's normative beliefs about aggression. Despite the lack of clear gender differences on the basis of teacher and peer nominations and self-report measures, there is evidence that children themselves associate these behaviours with gender. When children were queried about their perceptions of aggressive behaviour it appeared that girls in particular are capable of differentiating between overtly and relationally aggressive behaviour (Crick, Bigbee & Howes, 1996).

Crick, Bigbee and Howes (1996) assessed whether children's (grades three to six) perceptions of aggressive behaviour were associated with anger and the intent to harm, two of the defining features of aggression. Both boys and girls endorsed physical aggression as more normative of boys' angry and harmful behaviour, however, their responses differed concerning girls' angry and harmful behaviour. Boys were more likely to cite physical aggression as normative of girls' angry and harmful behaviours toward others, whereas girls reported relationally manipulative behaviour as being more typical of girls' angry and harmful behaviour. Furthermore, the older the girls were, the more likely they were to view relational aggression as angry behaviour.

Since girls were more likely to describe their angry and harmful behaviour as relationally manipulative, it appears that they associate these relationally manipulative acts with aggression more readily than boys do. However, in a study of children's perceptions of aggressive behaviour, Delveaux (1997a) found that both boys and girls were able to make direct comparisons between three types of aggressive behaviour.

After being presented with three hypothetical characters (one relationally aggressive, one verbally aggressive one physically aggressive), children in grades one through six were asked who they liked the most, liked the least, which of the three characters was the meanest, and which would make them feel the worst if they were the target of the character's aggression. The children reported the relationally aggressive character was the person with whom they would most like to be friends, and the physically aggressive character with which they would least like to be friends. The results suggested that children were able to distinguish between these three manifestations of aggression. Given the discrepancy between these two studies, it seems that more research needs to be done concerning the ability of children to label acts intended to manipulate other children's affiliations as aggressive.

Social goals. Although not empirically established, it has been postulated that the differential use of these distinct types of aggression by boys and girls is a reflection of their respective social goals. These goals are also likely to have implications for the type of behaviour that aggressive children will exhibit in a conflict situation, particularly within the context of friendship relations.

Behaviour that is intended to hurt or harm another will be most successful when it damages or impedes the objectives valued by the peer group (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Boys tend to interact in larger, less intimate groups, with an emphasis on dominance and the maintenance of a hierarchy. Given that physical fighting is often the chosen method for achieving their dominance goals (see Maccoby, 1986 for review), it is not surprising that they report harming others through physical and verbal aggression (Crick, Bigbee and

Howes, 1996). Furthermore, boys anticipate less guilt and upset from their victims than girls when acting in an overtly aggressive way (Perry, Perry & Weiss, 1989).

Social goals for girls are more relational in nature, emphasizing the formation and maintenance of close, intimate connections (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). These friendships are often so intense that new friendships are commonly formed at the expense of older ones (Daniels-Beirness, 1989). Given the significance of intimate social connections to girls, aggression salient to girls is more likely to involve harming others through social manipulation (i.e., promoting feelings of exclusion) and damage of peer relations (i.e., spreading rumours to cause rejection) (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). As a result, the formation and maintenance of close intimate connections with peers is obstructed (Crick, Bigbee and Howes, 1996). Indeed, girls have reported relationally aggressive acts as representative of both their angry and harmful behaviours toward other children (Crick, Bigbee and Howes, 1996).

Not only does relational aggression provide girls with an aggressive outlet consistent with their social goals, but the fact that some aspects of this form of aggression are relatively covert may provide them some protection from negative consequences from others (Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, Peltonen, 1988). Indeed, girls expect more peer disapproval in response to their overt aggression than boys do (Perry, Perry & Weiss, 1989). Moreover, Bjorkqvist and his colleagues (1992) suggested that the close friendship ties of girls' relationships facilitates their use of friendship manipulation as an aggressive strategy. Since boys do not place as much importance on close, intimate connections with friends, they are not as likely to engage in relational manipulation. The

“loose” structure of their friendships would likely render relationally aggressive strategies relatively ineffective (Delveaux, 1997b).

Age differences. Some researchers have suggested a developmental trend in children’s aggressive strategies, particularly for girls. Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz and Kaukiainen (1992) suggested that children progress from less to more refined aggressive strategies as they get older. Lacking verbal skills, young children will resort to physical aggression to satisfy their motives. As they get older, verbal and social skills develop allowing children greater competency at social manipulation.

In support of this contention, Bjorkqvist and colleagues (Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992) reported that physically aggressive behaviour was significantly more normative for boys than girls in samples of 8, 11 and 15 year olds. At age eight, girls exhibited slightly, though not significantly, more indirect aggression than boys. However, they did not yet appear to engage in indirect aggression more frequently than physical aggression. By ages 11 and 15, indirect aggression was significantly more prevalent among girls. These results must be interpreted somewhat cautiously, however, since the measure of indirect aggression employed in this study was confounded with other forms of aggression (i.e., verbal).

Foster, DeLawyer and Guevremont (1986) reported similar results. By the age of 10 years, behaviours consistent with aspects of relational aggression (i.e., exclusion) approached the same frequency as physically aggressive acts and by age 13 years, their frequency exceeded physically aggressive acts. At these ages, relationally manipulative behaviour (i.e., exclusion) was more likely to be perpetrated by girls than boys. According

to Bjorkqvist and his colleagues (1992), the greater usage of indirect aggression by middle school age girls reflects the earlier development of their social knowledge and verbal skills.

A longitudinal study by Cairns and colleagues (1989) of children and adolescents from middle childhood through to early adolescence provides some support for Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz and Kaukiainen's (1992) contention that aggressive strategies evolve throughout development. Children were asked a series of questions assessing their conflicts and the extent to which physical aggression (i.e., hitting, shoving) and social ostracism (i.e., rejection of children from the clique, gossiping, alienation) were present in these altercations.

For girls, themes of ostracism and social alienation significantly increased into early adolescence, particularly for conflicts with girls, while their use of physical aggression decreased. Social alienation and ostracism were rarely present in boys' conflicts, and did not increase with age, regardless of the gender of the target. However, boys' use of physical aggression significantly decreased with age for conflicts with girls and increased for conflicts with boys. Self-perceptions of aggression, both physical and "social", decreased with age. Thus, this study provides evidence that manipulative behaviours of the same essence as relational aggression may increase with age, but only for girls.

Although these findings suggest that behaviours consistent with those that characterize relational aggression increase with age, they do not provide convincing evidence for a similar age-related trend for relational aggression. Unfortunately, little research has been conducted into the existence of relational aggression at various stages in development. Since most research has focused on middle childhood (i.e., grades three to six), little is known about this form of aggression beyond this stage of development.

Relational aggression in early adolescence. There is some preliminary evidence to suggest that children as young as three years engage in relational aggression (Crick, Casas & Mosher, 1997) and that relational aggression persists into early adulthood (Wellman & Crick, in press). However, there is a paucity of evidence concerning the extent to which early adolescents engage in these behaviours. Existing research provides little conclusive evidence of the nature of aggression for boys and girls at this developmental stage.

To date, only one study has specifically examined relational aggression in a sample of early adolescents. The results of MacDonald and O’Laughlin’s (1997) research revealed that, consistent with younger samples (e.g., Crick & Grotpeter, 1995), relational aggression appeared to be associated with gender. In this study, girls were more likely to engage in relational aggression than boys were. However, given that this is the only study of relational aggression with this age group, more research is needed before any firm conclusions can be drawn.

Paquette and Underwood (in press) offered some confirmation of MacDonald and O’Laughlin’s (1997) findings, with results that revealed that early adolescent boys and girls were both victimized by relationally motivated aggressive behaviour. Girls reported being more distressed by these behaviours than boys. However, while this research indicated that both boys and girls in early adolescence might be targets of relational aggression, it did not confirm gender differences for their engagement in those acts.

Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz and Kaukiainen (1992) found that early adolescent girls engaged in indirect aggression. However, indirect aggression differs from relational aggression in that it does not include more direct forms of relational aggression such as friendship manipulation (Crick et al., in press). Given that they employed a longitudinal

design, Cairns and his colleagues (1989) offer persuasive evidence that aggressive behaviours similar to relational aggression may increase with age. However, there is still a need for further study to clarify the existence of relational aggression in both boys' and girls' interactions in early adolescence.

Thus, given the serious lack of research into relational aggression during early adolescence, this area certainly warrants further attention. More research is required to clarify the gender issue at this stage in adolescent development. The current study addressed this concern by looking at aggressive behaviour in a sample of early adolescents in grades seven and eight.

Outcomes of relational aggression. There is ample evidence that overtly aggressive behaviour has the potential to be psychologically and socially damaging to both perpetrators and their victims (e.g., Parker & Asher, 1987; Dodge, 1983; Bukowski & Newcomb, 1984; Perry, Kusel & Perry, 1988; Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Olweus, 1993). Results of recent research supports these findings, and indicate that relational aggression may also give rise to similar social-psychological difficulties (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick & Grotpeter, 1996; Wellman & Crick, in press). The following studies allow some insight into the damaging effects of relational aggression, indicating its seriousness.

School age girls who engage in relational aggression are more likely to be rejected and isolated by their peers (Crick, 1996; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Rys & Bear, 1997) and to experience greater social-psychological maladjustment such as loneliness, and social anxiety (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995), compared to non-relationally aggressive children. Relationally aggressive children, both boys and girls, reported higher levels of depression

than non-relationally aggressive children. Similar difficulties have been found for older samples. Young female adults (i.e., college students) who exhibit relationally aggressive behaviours have reported greater peer rejection, stress, negative relationships and lower levels of life satisfaction. Relational aggression among young adult males has also been correlated with negative relationships (Wellman & Crick, in press).

Although these findings are intriguing, caution must be exercised when interpreting the cause-and-effect direction of these results. Although it appears that relational aggression has implications for the perpetrator's social-psychological adjustment, the opposite could also be true. It is entirely possible that peer rejection and feelings of psychological distress may compel children to react in a relationally aggressive manner. For example, a rejected child may engage in relationally aggressive behaviour to compensate, or retaliate against the peer group for her own social shortcomings (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). However, a longitudinal study by Crick (1996) revealed that relationally aggressive girls were increasingly rejected by their peers over the course of a school year.

Children who are victimized by relational aggression experience similar social-psychological distress as those who perpetrate these acts including; rejection, loneliness, depression, social anxiety and social avoidance (Crick & Grotpeter, 1996). It is worth mentioning that these difficulties were independent of overt aggression. Furthermore, there is some indication that children who engage in gender non-normative forms of aggression (i.e., relationally aggressive boys, overtly aggressive girls) suffer greater maladjustment than children who engage in gender normative forms of aggression (i.e., overtly aggressive boys and relationally aggressive girls) (Crick, 1997).

Thus, it is apparent that relational aggression is associated with peer rejection and psychological maladjustment, independent of overt aggression. Most of the indices of maladjustment (i.e., loneliness, social avoidance, social anxiety) experienced by both the perpetrators and victims of relational aggression are specific to social contexts, particularly relationships (Crick & Grotpeter, 1996). These findings suggest that individuals involved in a dyadic relationship characterized by relational aggression are at greater risk for social rejection and psychological distress.

The manipulation of affiliative ties is the hallmark of relational aggression (Crick and Grotpeter, 1995). Furthermore, this behaviour has serious and potentially damaging social and psychological ramifications. Given these two factors, the function that relational aggression serves in peer relationships warrants further attention and research. The next section of this paper will review existing research concerning the nature and implications of aggression in early adolescent friendship relations.

Friendships of Aggressive Children

Aggression has potentially serious implications for children with respect to their social acceptance and in some cases, their emotional well-being (e.g., Cairns et al., 1988; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick, 1996; Rys & Bear, 1997; Wellman & Crick, in press). Results from previous research have indicated that there is a relation between the aversive nature of overtly aggressive behaviour and peer dislike (e.g., Coie & Kupersmidt, 1983; Dodge, 1983). Quite simply, children do not want to interact with peers whose behaviour they consider unpleasant or offensive. The same relation has been suggested for behaviours characterized by relational aggression (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). In addition, Crick and Grotpeter (1995) have hypothesized that the greater social psychological

maladjustment of relationally aggressive children may be due in part to their restricted access to peer relationships. This assumption can also be extended to overtly aggressive children.

Since aggression has an impact on children's entry into the peer group, these behaviours are also likely to influence affiliative relationships. The aversive behaviours that aggressive early adolescents exhibit may create high levels of conflict within their friendships, compromising the positive aspects, such as closeness and companionship. As such, the poor quality of these friendships may limit the extent to which they are satisfying and emotionally intense. In this section, the extant research examining the friendships of both overtly and relationally aggressive children will be addressed. Unfortunately, a considerable void exists in this literature, particularly with respect to the quality of aggressive children's friendships. In addition, like most research concerning relational aggression, the paucity of research concerning friendship quality is particularly conspicuous for early adolescence.

Friendship and physical aggression

In a large study by Cairns and his colleagues (Cairns et al., 1988), the social networks and aggressive behaviours of children and adolescents (both boys and girls) in grades four and seven were examined. Of particular interest was the interplay between aggression and the social system. Specifically, the social position of highly aggressive children in the peer group and the extent to which members of the peer group support the aggressive behaviours of these children was explored.

Cairns and his associates expected that aggressive adolescents would be just as likely as non-aggressive adolescents to report that they engage in reciprocal friendships.

Furthermore, they hypothesized that children and adolescents would be similar with respect to aggressive tendencies. The authors endorsed an ‘aggression begets aggression’ principle, proposing that aggressive behaviours tend to be reciprocal and contagious in social situations.

From the larger sample, 40 participants were identified who were considered by school personnel to be highly aggressive. The subjects were then matched on a variety of variables (i.e., physical size, chronological age, sex, and race) with forty control subjects. To assess social networks, each subject was asked to identify cliques of children, children who were socially isolated, and their own best friends. Friendship choices were compared across all subjects to confirm reciprocity. Based on this information, the researchers generated a “map” of the social clusters and networks.

Peer nominations of conflict instigation were then conducted to establish a peer nomination conflict score for each subject by summing nominations from male and female peers. Teachers completed an assessment of popularity, aggression and academic competence for each student. Each student also completed a comparable self-report measure.

Consistent with results from other research (e.g., Rys & Bear, 1997), aggressive children and adolescents were less popular than their non-aggressive counterparts. However, aggressive and control children did not differ in terms of the likelihood of reciprocal friendship nominations. This finding is also consistent with other research results suggesting that aggressive children are just as likely as their non-aggressive counterparts to maintain a reciprocal friendship (Grotmeter & Crick, 1996; Rys & Bear, 1997).

The hypothesis that aggressive children would be more likely to associate with each other was partially supported. For the children in grade four, central members (i.e., nuclear) of male clusters were highly similar for aggression, but members of female clusters were not. For the early adolescent subjects, nuclear members of both the male and female clusters were highly similar with respect to aggression. Furthermore, reciprocal best friend analyses revealed that boys in grade four, and both boys and girls in grade seven tended to affiliate with peers who evidenced similar aggressive tendencies.

Thus, it appears that while highly aggressive children and adolescents were considered to be less popular than their non-aggressive peers, they are just as likely to be members of a social cluster (though slightly less likely to be nuclear members and slightly more likely to be isolated). Furthermore, highly aggressive and non-aggressive children were equally likely to engage in a reciprocal friendship. However, there was also evidence to suggest that highly aggressive adolescents maintain friendships with equally aggressive peers. These findings are consistent with those of Farver (1996) who reported that children are likely to engage in mutual friendships within social networks of aggressive children.

It is unclear which forms of aggression the participants in the Cairns et al. (1988) study exhibited. The researchers stated that the teachers identified the subjects as highly aggressive. They did not disclose the basis upon which these judgements had been made. As such, it is quite possible that aggressive behaviours consistent with relational aggression were confounded with overt aggression in this case. As a result, while there is evidence of aggressive homophily (i.e., similarity) in reciprocated friendships of aggressive

early adolescents, it is impossible to know for sure whether this finding extends to relational aggression.

In light of their own research findings, Dodge, Price, Coie and Christopoulos (1990) implicated dyadic peer relations as being problematic for aggressive boys. Aggressive boys tended to consistently concentrate the majority of their aversive efforts in a small number of dyadic relationships. Relationships involving high levels of conflict were also characterized by greater dislike for each other. As a result, these authors concluded that studies of dyadic relationships in particular are greatly needed, particularly those involving high levels of conflict and aggressive behaviours.

Research to this effect has been conducted with anti-social early adolescent boys and their dyadic relationships (Dishion, Andrews & Crosby, 1995). Although these researchers confounded friendship quality with friendship satisfaction, their results still offer some useful information. The level of antisocial behaviour in the dyads was negatively correlated with friendship satisfaction, suggesting that these aversive actions may have compromised the quality of the affiliation. Wellman and Crick (in press) also found a positive association between physical aggression and perceptions of low social support for early adult males. Taken together, these findings imply that friendships of aggressive males involve less affiliative quality that may effect the course of the relationship.

Friendship and relational aggression

The preceding studies focused on physically aggressive behaviours, which may not provide an accurate portrayal of females in aggressive friendships. Research on relational aggression is still emerging, and as such, to date relatively few studies exist in the

empirical literature that assess the peer relations of children who engage in relationally aggressive behaviours. However, since the manipulation of social connections is a critical feature of relational aggression, it would be reasonable to assume that engaging in these behaviours would have some significance for the friendships of these children.

Friendship quality. To investigate whether relationally aggressive children's dyadic friendships differ qualitatively from their non-aggressive counterparts, Grotmeter (as cited in Grotmeter & Crick, 1996) conducted pilot research assessing the friendship attributes, and their relative importance, of overtly and relationally aggressive children in grades four and five. Children identified as aggressive, using the peer nomination measure developed by Crick and Grotmeter (1995), were asked to nominate up to three best friends. Children who reciprocally nominated each other as a "best friend", a "second best friend" or a "next best friend" were defined as friends. Wherever possible, the child's highest rated friendship was included.

These children were then administered the Friendship Qualities Measure (FQM), a self-report questionnaire based on Parker and Asher's (1993) Friendship Qualities Questionnaire designed to examine the positive and negative aspects of friendship (e.g., companionship, intimate exchange, conflict and conflict resolution). Subscales assessing the degree of overt and relational aggression within the friendship and the degree to which the children in the dyad used relational aggression toward their peers were also included in this measure. The Importance of Friendship Qualities Measure, developed by Grotmeter and Crick (1996) was employed to assess the relative importance that overtly and relationally aggressive children place on these friendship attributes. Only those girls

designated as relationally aggressive using a half standard deviation cut off were employed for this pilot research.

Results revealed that relationally aggressive girls were just as likely to have at least one mutual friend as non-aggressive girls (see also Rys & Bear, 1997). Furthermore, relationally aggressive girls did not buffer their friends from their relationally aggressive acts. Girls who were identified as relationally aggressive cited more relationally aggressive behaviour, but also more intimacy in their friendships than did non-aggressive girls. Girls who had befriended relationally aggressive girls confirmed these reports. However, they also described their relationships with these relationally aggressive girls as involving more conflict and betrayal, greater levels of relational aggression and more exclusivity than girls who were friends with non-relationally aggressive girls.

Grottpeter and Crick (1996) expanded upon Grottpeter's pilot study by including both relationally and overtly aggressive children of both genders from grades three to six ($n = 315$). The same friendship assessment procedure was used. To assess aggression, a peer nomination measure developed by Crick and Grottpeter (1995) was employed. The measure consists of three subscales; relational aggression, overt aggression and prosocial behaviour. Children were given a class roster and asked to nominate up to three peers for each item of the subscales. The number of nominations children received was then standardized. Children whose scores were one standard deviation above the mean for overt aggression and relational aggression were considered overtly and relationally aggressive respectively, and the remaining children were considered non-aggressive.

Some of the items and subscales of the FQM were rewritten to reflect the respondent's perception of their relationship with the other child. The exclusivity, intimate

exchange and conflict subscales were improved, allowing researchers to investigate what these children received from the friendship and what they offer the relationship (i.e., “she gets mad at me” and “I get mad at her”).

The findings were consistent with Grotmeter’s pilot research. Compared to their non-aggressive peers, relationally aggressive children reported higher levels of intimacy and exclusivity. Children who were friends with relationally aggressive children cited higher levels of relational aggression within the friendship and higher levels of exclusivity than non-aggressive children did.

An interesting clarification of the intimacy experienced by relationally aggressive children and their friends emerged in this research. While relationally aggressive children did not report high levels of self-disclosure to their friends, their friends could certainly divulge private information to them. Grotmeter and Crick (1996) hypothesized that relationally aggressive girls may encourage high levels of intimacy in their friendships to establish control over their friends (i.e., threatening to divulge secrets if the friend does not comply). However, these researchers point out that this finding could be bi-directional. It is feasible that relationally aggressive children may prefer friends who are more revealing of their personal information.

Interestingly, Grotmeter and Crick (1996) discovered that overtly aggressive children and their friends, unlike relationally aggressive children, were likely to direct overt aggression towards others. They also placed more importance on directing relationally and overtly aggressive behaviours toward others outside the friendship. This is in contrast to relationally aggressive children who reported directing their aggression within the

friendship, and do not significantly engage in relational aggression toward those outside the relationship.

Overtly aggressive children reported less intimacy in their friendships than their non-aggressive counterparts. Children who were friends with these children confirmed these reports and also divulged that their relationship was characterized by less relational aggression. These authors did not report on the other friendship qualities (e.g., validation and caring, conflict resolution) except to state that there were no significant differences between aggressive and non-aggressive children on these variables.

Dyadic friendship composition. Grotper and Crick (1996) did not state the composition of the dyadic friendships present in their study. Although school age children generally prefer to play with children of the same gender (Maccoby, 1986), it was not clear whether the dyads were exclusively same-sex or included mixed-sex friendships. This could have potential implications for the results of this study in terms of the type of aggression predominant in mixed sex dyads. Specifically, girls who are friends with boys may use relationally manipulative techniques or, given the target's gender, perhaps physical aggression would be more successful.

There is evidence to suggest that boys do not detect relational aggression as normative angry and harmful behaviour for girls, despite the fact that girls report engaging in these behaviours toward boys (Crick, Bigbee & Howes, 1996). Given that relational aggression is not as salient for boys, it may not be fruitful for girls to use this method in a mixed sex dyadic friendship, prompting them to use alternative methods that are more salient to boys, such as physical aggression. On the other hand, girls may be reluctant to use physical aggression against boys due to their smaller physical size and society's

discouragement of such behaviour by girls; the very reasons why they may prefer relationally aggressive behaviours. Investigating the aggressive strategies of mixed sex dyads may provide some interesting answers to this speculation, particularly since opposite sex friendships are more likely in early adolescent relationships. However, in the present study, the focus was on same-sex dyads to reduce the potential confound of gender and quality.

Friendship inequality. As mentioned previously, inequality between friends in early adolescent relationships warrants further research due to the relative lack of attention on this feature (e.g., Berndt, 1996; Bukowski & Sippola, 1996). Given that high levels of manipulation and control (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995) characterize relational aggression, it is possible that inequality exists in dyadic friendships involving relational aggression. Specifically, the relational aggressor is likely to possess more power than the friend since he or she tries to control the friend through manipulation.

Indeed, the findings of Grotpeter and Crick's (1996) research alluded to the fact that this manipulation exists in the reciprocated friendships of relationally aggressive children since they tend to encourage their partner to divulge private details without self-disclosing themselves, perhaps providing themselves with information to use against their friend. These findings suggest a power differential in these relationships, with one child maintaining control over the other. It would be beneficial to ascertain the relative power, or status differential within the friendship and the possessor of this control. In the current study, this notion was addressed by investigating the existence of inequality as a negative quality of friendship, particularly for relationally aggressive dyads.

Friendship satisfaction. Results from previous research have suggested that children who are participants in a physically aggressive friendship tend to experience less satisfaction with the relationship (Dishion, Andrews and Crosby, 1995). Given that relationally aggressive children's friendships were characterized by greater levels of relational aggression, assessments of how satisfied children and their friends are with the relationship would likely provide more insight into the quality of these affiliations (Grotmeter & Crick, 1996). Thus, as previously noted, in the current research project the friendship satisfaction of early adolescent friendship dyads was also examined.

Summary. Recently, an additional form of aggression has been identified (Crick & Grotmeter, 1995), one that is distinct from overt aggression (Crick & Grotmeter, 1995; Crick et al., 1997; Wellman & Crick, in press). Relational aggression is characterized by the manipulation of friendship ties and, according to Crick and her colleagues, appears to be more salient to girls, particularly in childhood (Crick & Grotmeter, 1995; Crick et al., 1997). However, other researchers have not found gender differences in aggression (Rys and Bear, 1997).

Yet relationally manipulative behaviour seems to be consistent with girls' social goals, and as such, may have implications for their friendships (Crick & Grotmeter, 1995). Furthermore, relational aggression is associated with indices of psychological maladjustment, particularly those specific to social contexts, such as loneliness, social anxiety and social avoidance (Crick & Grotmeter, 1996). Indeed, research results have suggested that high levels of relationally manipulative behaviour, exclusivity and conflict (Grotmeter & Crick, 1996) characterize the friendships of relationally aggressive children.

The empirical literature on relational aggression is still in its infancy, particularly with regards to the relevance that these behaviours have for peer relationships. Moreover, the literature on relational aggression is based almost exclusively on the work by Crick and her colleagues (e.g., Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick & Grotpeter, 1996; Grotpeter & Crick, 1996). While this may provide consistency between studies in terms of the actual construct defined as relational aggression, the relative lack of replication of Crick's research is a serious limitation in this area. Without it, the entire body of literature on relational aggression is restricted to relatively few samples (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick, Casas & Mosher, 1997). Needless to say, replication is a powerful to verify, compliment and amend previous findings, a necessary advancement in this area of study.

While Crick and her colleagues have described the various facets of relational aggression and its relation to aspects of childrens' lives, such as social-psychological maladjustment (e.g., Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick et al., 1997), a paucity exists in the literature for early adolescents (e.g., MacDonald & O'Laughlin, 1997). This study intended to replicate and expand upon the findings of Grotpeter and Crick (1996) by examining the friendship quality of early adolescents. It is also anticipated that this research will make a contribution to the literature concerning gender differences of relationally aggressive early adolescents.

The Current Study

Goals

The primary purpose of the present research was to examine whether the reciprocal friendships of aggressive early adolescents (relational and overt) qualitatively differ from those of non-aggressive friend dyads. This included assessments of

companionate qualities such as closeness and security, as well as inequality and satisfaction. The decision to focus on the early adolescent stage of development was based on two factors. First, a conspicuous paucity in the literature exists concerning the existence of relational aggression for this group. Second, while there has been some research on the quality of aggressive childrens' friendship relations (e.g. Grotmeter & Crick, 1996), to date, there has been no such research for early adolescents. It was anticipated that this research would replicate and extend Grotmeter & Crick's (1996) research of childrens' friendship quality, providing greater insight into the implications that aggressive behaviours, both physical and relational, have for early adolescents' close relationships.

Hypotheses

Generally, it was anticipated that although aggressive early adolescents might be likely to engage reciprocal friendships, these friendship relations would differ qualitatively from those of their non-aggressive peers. These hypotheses will now be discussed in terms of specific predictions.

Reciprocal friendships. Consistent with previous research (Grotmeter & Crick, 1996; Rys & Bear, 1997), it was expected that relationally aggressive and overtly aggressive early adolescents would be as likely as non-aggressive early adolescents to have reciprocal friendship nominations.

Gender differences in aggression. Previous research has demonstrated that extreme groups of relationally aggressive preschool and school-age children are more likely to be comprised of girls (Crick & Grotmeter, 1995; Rys & Bear, 1997; Crick et al., 1997). Though similar findings (i.e., girls are more relationally aggressive than boys) have

been reported for research involving early adolescents (MacDonald & O’Laughlin, 1997), no specific direction was hypothesized for the current research. Given that gender differences have not emerged for older subjects (e.g., Crick & Wellman, in press), it is entirely possible that significant gender differences are obscured for adolescents. Males may begin to engage in relationally aggressive behaviour to the same extent as females as overt aggression becomes less socially acceptable.

Friendship quality and satisfaction in overtly aggressive dyads. Previous research has revealed that peer relations are particularly problematic for overtly aggressive individuals (e.g., Coie & Kupersmidt, 1983; Dodge, 1983; Ray, Cohen, Secrist & Duncan, 1997). However, given the paucity of research concerning the friendship relations of overtly aggressive early adolescents, hypotheses for the present research were exploratory. In terms of aggressive behaviour, consistent with previous research (Grotmeter & Crick, 1996), it was expected that overtly aggressive early adolescents and their friends would report that they engage in higher levels of overt aggression toward others compared to their non-aggressive peers.

Friendship quality and satisfaction in relationally aggressive dyads. Consistent with Grotmeter and Crick’s (1996) findings for children, it was hypothesized that relationally aggressive early adolescent dyads would evidence higher levels of exclusivity, intimacy, conflict and relational aggression within the friendship, compared to non-aggressive dyads. Furthermore, it was expected that relationally aggressive dyads would report more inequality than their non-aggressive peers would. Given the paucity of research, no specific predictions were made for the remaining subscales of friendship quality.

Methods

Subjects

A total of 528 boys and girls in grade seven and eight were solicited for their participation in this study. This represented the students in all grade seven and eight classrooms from four schools (21 classrooms). The schools were located in the outskirts of a mid-sized Canadian city.

Of the 528 early adolescents solicited, 323 children (61%) were given parental consent to participate. The remaining children either did not return their consent forms, or were not given permission to participate. Participants were predominantly Caucasian and came from middle class families. Parents were most likely to have had some form of formal education (i.e., 27% had a high school diploma, 40% had some university and 16% had a university degree). The initial sample included 143 males and 180 females ranging in age from 11 years to 15 years with a mean age of 12.63 (SD = .63) years.

Only early adolescents identified with reciprocal friendships within the sample were included in the study. Of the initial sample of 323 early adolescents, 218 (67% of the initial sample) had a mutual friendship and received the questionnaire for Phase Two of the study. However, since some children failed to return the second questionnaire or completed the measure on the wrong person (i.e., not the friend they had been paired up with), friendship data was available for 184 early adolescents (92 dyads; 57% of the initial 323 participants), 64 males and 120 females.

Measures

Overview. In Phase One of the data collection, subjects were asked to complete a friendship nomination measure, a self-report questionnaire of social behaviour, and a self-

report measure of conflict strategies. Subjects with a mutual friendship (identified on the basis of the friendship nomination measure) participated in Phase Two of the study, where they were asked to complete a measure of friendship quality and friendship satisfaction on their reciprocally nominated friendship identified in Phase One.

Friendship Nomination Measure (Parker & Asher, 1993)

To establish reciprocal friendship nominations, early adolescents were asked to identify five of their good friends; a “best friend”, a “second best friend”, and three “next best friends” (see Appendix A) in their grade and at their school. Using the procedures described by Parker and Asher (1993) and Grotmeter and Crick (1996), early adolescents were identified as having a mutual friendship if the individual they identified as a friend included him/her in their list of friendship choices.

It was not necessary for the chosen child to have indicated the choosing child as a “best friend” (i.e., designations of “second best friend” or “next best friend” were also accepted as a mutual friendship). However, consistent with other researchers (i.e., Grotmeter & Crick, 1996; Schneider, in press), attempts were made to include the individual’s highest rated friendship. This was difficult in some instances as children included nominations of their peers who did not have parental permission to participate or who did not attend their school.

Though some children nominated classmates of the opposite sex in their list of choices, none of these nominations were reciprocated and as such only dyads of same-sex friends were studied. No child was selected as a member of more than one dyad.

Children's Peer Relationship Scale; CPRS (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995)

This self-report measure of social behaviour parallels Crick and Grotpeter's (1995) widely used peer nomination instrument. The CPRS (see Appendix B) consists of five subscales, though only 3 were used in this study; relational aggression (e.g., Some kids tell lies about a classmate so that the other kids won't like the classmate anymore. How often do you do this?), overt aggression (e.g., Some kids hit other kids at school. How often do you do this?), and prosocial behaviour (e.g., Some kids say or do nice things for other kids. How often do you do this?). Items on the isolation from peers and negative affect subscales were not administered. Respondents are asked to indicate on a five-point Likert scale how often they engage in each behaviour (i.e., 1 = "never" to 5 = "all the time").

Factor analyses of the peer nomination instrument employed with a school age sample support the validity of relational aggression, revealing it to be relatively distinct from overt aggression (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Factor loadings for the items of the peer nomination measure were quite high, ranging from .73 to .92. Test-retest reliability for the peer-report and self-report measures has not yet been reported.

Analyses were conducted with the data from the current study to determine the psychometric properties of the CPRS when used with a slightly older sample. Since Crick and Grotpeter have not made available the results of a factor analysis for the self-report measure, it was important to explore the various subscales of the CPRS.

The data were subjected to an exploratory factor analysis using principal component extraction and VARIMAX rotation. Results indicated a three-factor solution, accounting for 59.0% of the variance. For the most part, the factor loadings confirmed the theoretical assumptions underlying the various items (see Table 1).

Table 1

Factor Loadings for the Three Factor Solution to the CPRS (n = 323)

Factor and Item (abbreviated)	I	II	III
I. Relational Aggression (Eigenvalue = 2.65)			
Not letting the person be in their group	.72		
Stop liking friend unless do what they say	.45		
Saying mean things about the classmate	.76		
Tell lies about classmate	.75		
Try to keep people from being in the group	.66		
II. Caring Acts (Eigenvalue = 2.48)			
Cheer up other children		.79	
Say or do nice things for others		.78	
Let others know they care		.79	
Help out other kids when they need it		.74	
III. Overt Aggression (Eigenvalue = 1.95)			
Push and shove others			.85
Hit other kids			.86
Yell at others and call them mean names	.49		.57

Note: Only factor loadings above .30 are displayed.

One item “Some kids yell at others and call them mean names” cross-loaded onto the relational aggression and overt aggression scales. Verbal aggression is considered a primary component of overt aggression. However, verbal aggression has been found to cross-load on these two types of aggression (Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist & Peltonen, 1988). For the present study, the factor score for overt aggression was computed to include the verbal aggression item.

The internal consistency of each of the subscales was examined using Cronbach’s alpha. Alpha coefficients were calculated at .73, .79, and .78 for relational aggression, overt aggression and prosocial behaviour, respectively. These findings clearly support the psychometric validity of the CPRS for use with an early adolescent sample.

Conflict Resolution Measure (adapted by Delveaux, 1997b from Chung & Asher, 1996)

This measure was designed to assess children’s strategies and goals in conflict situations (see Appendix C). It was used as an additional test of construct validity for the CPRS. As such, only the strategy portion of this measure was administered in the current study, as the relation between self-reported social behaviour and strategy selection was of interest.

Subjects were presented with nine hypothetical vignettes, each describing an interpersonal conflict situation that could occur between two children. Each situation involves an obvious discrepancy between two children’s interests. An example of one of these conflict situations is as follows: “You are shooting basketball by yourself on the playground during recess. A classmate comes over and says he wants the ball. You tell him you just got the ball from someone else and you want to play with it for a couple of

minutes. But this classmate says he wants the ball now and tries to take the ball away from you”.

After each vignette, children were asked to imagine that this really happened to them. Six different strategies were presented and children were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert scale how likely they would be to engage in each strategy (i.e., 1= “definitely not” to 5= “definitely would”). These strategies reflected; extreme physical aggression, mild physical aggression, extreme relational aggression (relational aggression directed toward the group), mild relational aggression (relational aggression directed toward a peer), polite request and compromise. Children were also asked to indicate the strategy that they would perform first.

The construct validity of the CRM was demonstrated by Delveaux (1997b), who reported that physically aggressive and relationally aggressive strategies were positively correlated with goals involving personal control, self-interest, and revenge. Strategies for relationally and physically aggressive children were also negatively correlated with the maintenance of relationships with the focus peer and maintenance of equality goals. Relationally aggressive strategies were positively correlated with goals concerning the avoidance of trouble and the maintenance of relationships among the peer group. Test-retest reliability of this measure is not yet available.

This measure has been found to be highly reliable in previous research, with Cronbach alpha ranging from .86 to .94 (Delveaux, 1997b). An examination of the internal consistency of the CRM with the present data revealed this measure to demonstrate excellent reliability. Alpha coefficients were similar to those reported by Delveaux (1997b); compromise (alpha = .88), polite request (alpha = .93), extreme

physical aggression ($\alpha = .93$), mild physical aggression ($\alpha = .94$), extreme relational aggression ($\alpha = .88$), and mild relational aggression ($\alpha = .88$).

Friendship Qualities Scale (FQS; Bukowski, Hoza, Boivin, 1994)

In a questionnaire format, the early adolescent was asked a series of questions concerning their reciprocal friendship. These questions represent the features of friendship that have been identified in the literature as central to friendship relations in early adolescence. The questions are organized into five scales, some of which have two subscales, consisting of 37 total items (see Appendix D). The subscales of this measure include; (1) companionship (“My friend and I go to each other’s houses after school and on weekends”), (2) conflict (“My friend and I can argue a lot”), (3) help (a) *aid* (“My friend would help me if I needed it”), (b) *protection* (“If other kids were bothering me, my friend would help me”), (4) security (a) *reliable alliance* (“If I have a problem at school or at home, I can talk to my friend about it”), (b) *transcending problems* (“If I said I was sorry after a fight with my friend, he would still stay mad at me”), (5) closeness (a) *affective bond* (“I feel happy when I am with my friend”), (b) *reflected appraisal* (“When I do a good job at something, my friend is happy for me”). Respondents are asked to rate how true each quality is of their mutual friendship (i.e., 1 = “not true” to 5 = “really true”).

Subsequent to the paper outlining this scale (Bukowski, et al., 1994), two other subscales were added; balance, which seems to reflect the child’s impression of whether he/she is affectively more giving of themselves and dependent on the friendship (i.e., “Sometimes it seems that I care more about our friendship than my friend does”), and guidance (i.e., “My friend gives me advice when I need it”). However, the author

reported that these scales were highly related to other subscales (Bukowski, personal communication, 1998) and as such, they were not included in the present study.

Results of previous psychometric analyses of this measure have revealed that individual items in each subscale were uniquely related to that subscale (i.e., the correlation between the item and its own subscale was at least .34, and not more than .30 with other subscales). This measure was also found to be reliable, with acceptable Cronbach alpha coefficients ranging from .71 to .86 across the scales (Bukowski, Hoza, Boivin, 1994). At least one researcher has contended that these alphas are slightly low, though they acknowledge that this may be due to the small number of items for each subscale (Furman, 1996).

Confirmatory factor analyses have revealed that conflict was most highly related to security, suggesting that conflict in the relationship is likely to threaten security and possibly, the continuity of the friendship (Bukowski, Hoza, Boivin, 1994). There were also strong associations between companionship, security and closeness, and closeness, security and help.

This measure also demonstrates good criterion validity. In general, reciprocated friendships evidenced more positive qualities than non-mutual friendships. Furthermore, friendship quality was related to stability. Stable friendships had higher ratings of positive qualities (Bukowski, Hoza, Boivin, 1994).

Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated for this measure with the current data. All of the friendship qualities on this measure were found to be reliable and slightly higher than those reported by Bukowski and colleagues (1994), ranging from .77 to .88. There is no information to date on the test-retest reliability of this instrument.

Friendship Qualities Measure (FQM; Grotmeter & Crick, 1996)

Adapted from Parker and Asher (1993), the FQM was created to assess the friendship quality of overtly aggressive and relationally aggressive children in grades three through six. Since Grotmeter and Crick (1996) were particularly interested in the friendship quality of aggressive children, they developed additional subscales designed to provide more information about the potentially negative experiences children may encounter in their friendships (see Appendix D). To assess the degree of overt and relational aggression within the friendship, two subscales were created; overt aggression within the friendship (i.e., “my friend hits and kicks me when mad at me”) and relational aggression within the friendship (i.e., “my friend ignores me when mad at me”). Also of interest was the extent to which friends engaged in overtly aggressive behaviours and relationally aggressive behaviours together, toward their peers. Thus, the following subscales were included in the FQM; overt aggression toward others (i.e., “my friend and I hit and kick others we are mad at”) and relational aggression toward others (i.e., when my friend and I don’t like someone, we won’t let them play with us”). Finally, because of the substantial value that relationally aggressive children place on friendship ties (Crick & Grotmeter, 1995), subscales to assess the individual’s demand for exclusive access to the friend were included. The exclusivity subscales were designed to yield a measure of what each child gives to the relationship and receives from the relationship. Thus, two subscales were created; subject desire for exclusivity (i.e., “I feel jealous if I see my friend playing with another kid”) and friend demands for exclusivity (i.e., “My friend feels jealous if he/she sees me playing with another kid”).

Children were asked to rate the extent to which these qualities described in the FQM characterize their reciprocal friendships (i.e., 1 = “not at all true” to 5 = “always true”). Given the focus on aggressive early adolescents in the current research, these six subscales specific to aggressive relationships were added to the friendship quality measure, resulting in the addition of 19 items. To maintain consistency across measures, Grotmeter and Crick’s (1996) rating scale was used for the items from their measure and for the items from the Friendship Qualities Scale (Bukowski, Hoza, Boivin, 1994).

After collapsing the 14 subscales of the Friendship Quality Measure into 12 subscales (i.e., the two conflict subscales and the two exclusivity subscales became one subscale each), previous research indicates that internal reliabilities were acceptable, with Cronbach’s alpha ranging from .61 to .87. The following alphas were reported by Grotmeter and Crick (1996) for the subscales to be included in the current study; relational aggression within the friendship (.73), overt aggression within the friendship (.79), relational aggression toward others (.71), overt aggression toward others (.86), and exclusivity (.61). Interscale correlations ranged from .05 to .76 (Grotmeter & Crick, 1996). No information is currently available regarding the test-retest reliability of this measure.

Reliability coefficients for this measure with the current sample were alpha = .89, alpha = .78, and alpha = .68 for the overt aggression toward others, overt aggression toward friend, and relational aggression toward friend subscales, respectively. Three of the subscales evidenced surprisingly low reliability; relational aggression toward others (alpha = .59), subject desire for exclusivity (alpha = .53), and friend desire for exclusivity (alpha = .59). When the two exclusivity subscales were combined, as Grotmeter and Crick

(1996) reported with their sample, the alpha increased to .74. Thus, the two exclusivity subscales, subject desire and friend desire, were combined for all further analyses.

Network of Relationship Inventory (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985)

To ascertain the existence of a power differential in the early adolescents' friendships, the Relative Power subscale from the Network of Relationship Inventory (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985) was included in the present study. Grottpeter and Crick (1996) had adapted the balance scale from the Friendship Qualities Scale (Bukowski, Hoza & Boivin, 1994) to assess the existence of a power differential, however, it proved difficult to interpret. They found it impossible to distinguish which member of the dyad possessed more power. The relative power subscale of the NRI does not pose this difficulty, and as such was considered valuable for this study. Note that the first author of the NRI considers the use of only one subscale to be perfectly acceptable, though all three items of the particular subscale must be used to facilitate comparability of results across studies (Furman, personal communication, 1998; see Appendix D).

According to Furman (1996), the NRI has been used with a wide age range, from second grade to college-age students. Respondents are asked to rate their relationships on a five-point Likert scale. Most evaluations of the relationship qualities in the NRI are based on the extent to which the child feels the particular quality is characteristic of their relationship with the target person (i.e., 1 = "little or none" to 5 = "the most"). However, the three items of the relative power subscale (i.e., "who tells the other what to do more, you or this person?") require the child to indicate who possesses more power (i.e., 1 = "She almost always does" to 5 = "I almost always do"). Given the obvious value of the rating scale for this measure, it was retained rather than making it consistent with the rating scale

of the other items for the current study. The authors reported that the internal consistency of this instrument was satisfactory (with mean Cronbach alphas of .80). Reliability analyses from the present sample revealed an alpha of .79 for the Relative Power subscale. Test-retest reliability for this subscale is currently not available.

Friendship satisfaction

Two questions from Parker and Asher's (1993) study of friendship quality were employed to assess the extent of friendship satisfaction in the early adolescent dyads (see Appendix D). The first question asks "How is this friendship going?" (i.e., 1 = "It's going really badly" to 5 = "It's going really well"). The second asks "How happy are you with this friendship?" (i.e., 1 = "Very unhappy" to "Very happy"). In Parker and Asher's (1993) study, children were asked to indicate on a continuum represented by happy faces how satisfied they are with their friendship. At the low end of the continuum is a frowning face, and at the high end, a smiling face. Since the participants in the present study were older than Parker and Asher's (1993) sample, the five-point Likert scale that appeared in Grotzinger and Crick's FQM (though they did not use this measure with their sample) was considered more appropriate.

Validation evidence for this scale is apparent given significant relations between satisfaction and quality. Positive qualities were associated with greater satisfaction, and negative qualities associated with lower levels of satisfaction (Parker & Asher, 1993). Reliability analyses for the Friendship Satisfaction subscale were computed with current data, demonstrating good reliability ($\alpha = .79$). The test-retest reliability of this scale has not been reported.

Table 2

Friendship Quality Measures and Subscales Used in the Current Study

Measure: **Friendship Qualities Subscale** (Bukowski, Hoza & Boivin, 1994)

Subscales: Closeness

Companionship

Security

Help

Conflict

Measure: **Friendship Qualities Measure** (Grotmeter & Crick, 1996)

Subscales: Overt Aggression toward Others

Relational Aggression toward Others

Overt Aggression toward Friend

Relational Aggression toward Friend

Exclusivity

Measure: **Network of Relationships Inventory** (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985)

Subscale: Relative Power

Measure: **Friendship Satisfaction** (Parker & Asher, 1993)

Subscale: Friendship Satisfaction

A complete summary of the measures and subscales used in the current study is provided in Table 2.

Procedures

The principal investigator and a psychology undergraduate student visited grade seven and eight classrooms in each of the four schools. During a short presentation (5 to 10 minutes) students were briefed on the objectives of the research, the importance of parental consent, and given a short description of each of the questionnaires. Each student was presented with a package to take home which included: 1) a parental consent letter and form (see Appendices E, F); 2) a demographic questionnaire; 3) Friendship Nomination Measure (see Appendix A); 3) Children's Peer Relationships Scale (see Appendix B); and 4) Conflict Resolution Measure (see Appendix C).

Students were asked to take the package home and obtain parental consent. If they were granted consent to participate, they were instructed to complete the questionnaires at home and return them, along with the signed consent form, to their homeroom teacher by a specified date (usually by the end of the school week). If the parent did not give the child consent to participate, they were asked to have their parent indicate this on the consent form and return the uncompleted questionnaires.

Reciprocal nominations were matched on the basis of the Friendship Nomination Measure. Reciprocal friends were recorded, and each member of the dyad was asked to complete the friendship quality instrument (see Appendix D) on the basis of the reciprocal friendship. Only those children with an identified reciprocal friendship received the friendship quality instrument. The questionnaire was distributed to participating children approximately three weeks after the first package was sent home. Again, they were asked

to complete the questionnaire at home and return it to their homeroom teacher. When all the questionnaires had been collected from each school, a parental debriefing letter (see Appendix G) was sent home with the children.

Results

Part I: Preliminary analyses

Preliminary analyses were conducted to: 1) explore sex differences; 2) classify children into groups; 3) determine whether the groups differed with respect to the demographic variables; and 4) examine the construct validity of the self-reported social behaviour measure (i.e., CPRS). These preliminary analyses were conducted with data from the entire sample of 323 subjects.

Sex differences. A series of independent *t*-tests was conducted to investigate gender differences in self-reported relational, overt and prosocial behaviour and the use of relational, physical and prosocial strategies. Means and standard deviations are displayed in Table 3.

Results revealed that females were significantly more likely to report engaging in prosocial behaviour than males; while males reported engaging in significantly more overt aggression than females. There were no significant sex differences for self-reported relational aggression.

A similar pattern of findings emerged for strategy selection in conflict situations. Consistent with their self-reported social behaviour styles, females were significantly more likely than boys to indicate they would select prosocial strategies in conflict situations; while boys were more likely than girls to favour physically aggressive strategies. Again, males and females did not significantly differ with respect to relationally aggressive

strategies.

Classification of children into groups. Following similar procedures outlined by Grotjeter and Crick (1996), children's self-reports of their social behaviours were used to create four extreme groups: overtly aggressive, relationally aggressive, prosocial and average early adolescents. To begin with, subjects' total scores on the three subscales were standardized across the entire sample.

Subjects whose scores were greater than 1 SD above the sample mean on the relational aggression scale, and not above 1 SD on the overt or prosocial scales, were classified as Relationally Aggressive. Subjects who scored more than 1 SD above the sample mean for the overt aggression scale, and not above 1 SD on the relational and prosocial scales were identified as Overtly Aggressive. Subjects were classified as Prosocial if their scores were greater than 1 SD above the mean for prosocial behaviour, and not above 1 SD on the relational and overt aggression scales. Finally, subjects whose scores were less than 1 SD above the mean on the relational, overt and prosocial subscales were classified as Average. This procedure resulted in the identification of 18 relationally aggressive (10 male, 8 female), 32 overtly aggressive (22 male, 10 female), 49 prosocial (7 male, 42 female), and 184 average (81 male, 103 female) early adolescents. Thus, 283 subjects from the total sample of 323 (88%) could be classified into a group with this procedure¹.

Verifying extreme groups. To verify the classification of subjects into the four groups, a one way analysis of variance was conducted in which group classification served

¹ It was also possible to identify an additional 26 early adolescents who were both relationally and overtly aggressive (i.e., scores above 1 SD on both these subscales). Since no specific predictions were made for this group and there

as the independent variable and scores on the CPRS (relational aggression, overt aggression, and prosocial behaviour) served as the dependent variable. Findings indicated significant differences between the three groups for; relational aggression ($F(3, 279) = 55.78, p < .001$), overt aggression ($F(3, 279) = 86.13, p < .001$), and prosocial behaviour ($F(3, 279) = 112.87, p < .001$).

Follow up tests (Least Significant Difference tests), with an overall significance level of $p < .025^2$, were conducted to examine the differences between the extreme groups for self-reported overt aggression (see Table 4 for means and standard deviations). The overtly aggressive group was more likely to report engaging in overt aggression than the relationally aggressive, prosocial and average groups. The relationally aggressive group reported engaging in significantly more overt aggression than the prosocial group; and more overt aggression than the average group ($p < .04$) though this difference did not reach significance due to the application of the more stringent alpha level. The prosocial group reported less overt aggression than the average group.

Least Significant Difference follow up tests also revealed differences between the extreme groups for self-reported relationally aggressive behaviour. Early adolescents classified as extremely relationally aggressive were more likely to report engaging in relationally aggressive behaviours than were all of the other groups. The overt group reported more relationally aggressive behaviour than both the average and prosocial groups. The prosocial group reported less relationally aggressive behaviour than the

were not enough of them with reciprocal friends (9 dyads), they were dropped from further analyses. Preliminary analyses indicated that they did not differ from the overtly aggressive group.

² Homogeneity of variance was violated for self-reported relational aggression ($F(3, 279) = 7.26, p < .001$), overt aggression ($F(3, 279) = 5.06, p < .002$), and prosocial behaviour ($F(3, 279) = 12.12, p < .001$). To account for this violation, a more stringent alpha level (i.e., $p < .025$ rather than $p < .05$) was applied when determining whether a significant difference existed between the groups for self-reported relational aggression, overt aggression, and

average group.

Finally, the prosocial group reported engaging in significantly more prosocial behaviour than all other groups. The average group reported more prosocial behaviour than the overtly aggressive group only. No significant differences were found between extreme groups of relationally aggressive and overtly aggressive early adolescents; or between relationally aggressive and average early adolescents for self-reported prosocial behaviour.

The extremely aggressive groups were more likely to report engaging in aggressive behaviour, and were more likely to engage in the type of aggression that their group classification would suggest. Conversely, the non-aggressive groups were less likely to engage in aggression and more likely to engage in prosocial behaviour. Thus, it appears that the procedure used to classify early adolescents into extreme groups was effective and valid.

Analyses of demographic variables. Two separate one way ANOVA's were conducted to determine whether the groups differed with respect to age and parental education (aggregated score of mother and father education). Results of these analyses revealed that the groups did not differ with respect to age or socio-economic status. Thus, these variables were not controlled for in subsequent analyses.

Next, a chi-square analysis was performed to examine the relation between social behaviour status and gender. A significant finding was obtained ($\chi^2(3) = 26.43, p < .001$), indicating that gender and group were not independent. Examination of the observed frequencies of gender for each group revealed that the overtly aggressive group

was comprised of significantly more males and less females (22 males, 10 females) than expected ($z = 3.2, p < .01$), and the prosocial group had more females and less males (7 males, 42 females) than expected by chance ($z = 4.4, p < .001$).

Finally, to determine whether friend status was related to social behaviour status, a chi-square analysis was also conducted. The results were not significant ($\chi^2(3) = .89, ns$), indicating that aggressive early adolescents are equally likely to have a reciprocal friendship as non-aggressive early adolescents. See table 5 for a breakdown of social behaviour group by friendship status and gender.

Since no specific hypotheses were made concerning the prosocial group, they were excluded from further analyses at this point.

Construct validity for the measure of self-reported social behaviour. The construct validity of the CPRS was examined by assessing the relation between self-reported social behaviour and strategy selection. Specifically, whether early adolescents who reported specific types of social behaviour, as assessed by the CPRS, would be more likely to endorse similar strategies when presented with hypothetical conflict situations. Social strategies were assessed using the Conflict Resolution Measure.

Following procedures outlined by Delveaux (1997b), correlations between the strategies (i.e., polite request and compromise; mild and extreme relational aggression; and mild and extreme physical aggression) were examined. These variables were highly related (i.e., $r = .78, .78, \text{ and } .89$, respectively, $p < .001$) and the categories were collapsed into three new variables; prosocial, relationally aggressive, and overtly aggressive strategies.

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations for Self-Reported Social Behaviour and Strategy Selection by Gender

	Male	Female	T-Value
Social Behaviour	<u>M (SD)</u>	<u>M (SD)</u>	
Relational Aggression	8.85 (2.85)	8.39 (2.51)	1.53
Overt Aggression	7.40 (2.32)	5.76 (2.19)	6.52**
Prosocial Behaviour	12.77 (2.52)	14.88 (2.58)	-7.40**
Strategy Selection			
Relational Aggression	24.89 (8.57)	24.95 (8.05)	-0.06
Physical Aggression	40.09 (19.16)	29.99 (13.66)	4.60**
Prosocial Behaviour	61.85 (16.49)	71.72 (11.92)	-5.15**

** p <.001

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations for Self-Ratings of Social Behaviour by Group Classification

	Group Classification			
	Relational (n = 18)	Overt (n = 32)	Prosocial (n = 49)	Average (n = 184)
Self- Reported Behaviour	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)
Relational Aggression	12.61 _a (.70)	9.13 _b (1.45)	6.84 _c (1.71)	7.74 _d (1.84)
Overt Aggression	6.33 _a (1.33)	9.88 _b (1.04)	4.90 _c (1.36)	5.58 _{ad} (1.60)
Prosocial Behaviour	13.06 _{ab} (1.73)	11.94 _a (2.44)	18.14 _c (.94)	13.23 _b (1.86)

Note: Means with different subscripts differ at the $p < .025$ level

Table 5

Social Behaviour Group Classification by Friendship Status and Gender

Group	Friend	<u>Gender</u>		Total
		Male	Female	
Relational	No	4	2	6
	Yes	6	6	12
	Total	10	8	18
Overt	No	7	4	11
	Yes	15	6	21
	Total	22	10	32
Prosocial	No	6	7	13
	Yes	1	35	36
	Total	7	42	49
Average	No	36	25	61
	Yes	45	78	123
	Total	81	103	184

Results from a series of one-way analyses of variance revealed significant differences between the groups for the selection of relationally aggressive strategies ($F(2, 177) = 5.38, p < .01$), physically aggressive strategies ($F(2, 176) = 34.94, p < .001$), and prosocial strategies ($F(2, 170) = 17.48, p < .001$). Means and standard deviations are displayed in Table 6.

Least Significant Difference tests, with an overall significance level of .025³, were conducted to determine the differences in strategy selection due to group membership. Results revealed that the overt group rated physically aggressive strategies higher than both the relationally aggressive and average groups. The relationally aggressive group also rated physical strategies higher than the average group.

In terms of relationally aggressive strategies, Least Squares Difference tests revealed that the relational group did not rate these strategies significantly higher than the overt group. In addition, the relational group rated these strategies higher than the average group ($p < .04$) this difference did not reach significance given the employment of the more stringent alpha. The overt group however, rated relational strategies significantly higher than the average group.

Finally, Least Significant Difference tests were conducted to investigate the difference between the groups in terms of their ratings of prosocial strategies. The average group rated prosocial strategies more favourably than both the overt and relational groups. There were no significant differences between the overtly aggressive and relationally aggressive groups in this regard.

³ Homogeneity of variance was violated for relationally aggressive strategies ($F(2, 177) = 4.97, p < .01$), physically aggressive strategies ($F(2, 176) = 4.25, p < .02$), and prosocial strategies ($F(2, 170) = 14.56, p < .001$). To account for this violation, a more stringent alpha level (i.e., $p < .025$ rather than $p < .05$) was applied when evaluating

Part II: Friendship quality as a function of self-reported behavioural style

Since early adolescents with an identified friendship were the focus of study for the present investigation, only those subjects with reciprocal friendship nominations were included for the remainder of the analyses investigating the relation between friendship quality and self-reported social behaviour. While 218 early adolescents were identified as having a reciprocal friendship nomination, friendship data was available for 184 of these individuals. Some subjects did not return the friendship questionnaire, or filled it out on the wrong person (i.e., not the person they had been matched up with). As mentioned previously, because specific hypotheses had been proposed for the relational, overt and average groups, only these groups were included in the analysis of friendship quality, resulting in the inclusion of 75 dyads (150 early adolescents).

Individuals in each dyad were identified as either a “target” or a “friend”. Since aggressive early adolescents were of particular interest, an attempt was made to identify as many early adolescents who were relationally aggressive, overtly aggressive, or average as Targets in order to maximize the number of early adolescents in this group. The Friends group consisted of the early adolescents who were paired with these subjects on the basis of the Friendship Nomination Measure. In two instances, two overtly aggressive early adolescents were mutual friends, and on 31 occasions, two average subjects were reciprocal friends. On these occasions, one subject was randomly designated as the target, and the other as the friend. For this reason, there were some aggressive early adolescents in the Friend group. However, none of the average Targets were paired with an early

adolescent in the Friend group who was aggressive⁴.

Seventy-five dyads were included in the analysis of friendship quality. Of the Target early adolescents, 11 were relationally aggressive (6 male, 5 female), 18 were overtly aggressive (12 male, 6 female), and 46 were average (10 male, 36 female). Friendship pairs were comprised of same-sex individuals. See Tables 7 and 8 for the reciprocation status of the dyads, and social behaviour constitution of the dyads, respectively.

Chi-square analyses were again conducted with these three groups to look for differences in gender composition. Results were significant ($\chi^2(2) = 12.74, p < .01$). Consistent with the preliminary analyses, the overtly aggressive group evidenced a gender imbalance, with more boys and less girls than expected ($z = 3.0, p < .01$). In addition, the average group also evidenced a gender imbalance, with more girls and less boys than expected ($z = 3.5, p < .01$).

Assessing friendship quality: overt and average groups

A series of ANCOVAs with self-reported behaviour status as the independent variable (two levels) and the friendship qualities as the dependent variables were conducted to examine whether the average and overt groups differed with respect to friendship quality. To account for the tendency for the overt group to report (i) engaging in more relationally aggressive behaviour; and (ii) to be more likely to select relationally aggressive strategies in hypothetical conflict situations than the average group, relational aggression was held constant (i.e., entered as a covariate) when comparing the friendship quality of overtly aggressive and average early adolescents. This procedure is consistent

⁴ Three dyads where the target child was average and the friend was relationally plus overtly aggressive were

with previous research of this kind by Grotzinger and Crick (1996).

Scores on the friendship quality instrument were analyzed separately for Target and Friend status. Means and Standard deviations for the overtly aggressive and average groups for each of the friendship variables can be found in Table 9.

Target group: Reports of friendship quality. Results from a series of univariate analyses revealed differences between the overtly aggressive group and the average group for most of the friendship variables. Levene's tests of homogeneity of variance were violated for closeness, help, and balance of power. As such, findings for these variables should be interpreted with some caution.

The overtly aggressive group reported lower levels of closeness than did the average group ($F(1, 60) = 4.84, p < .05; \eta^2 = .08$); and a trend towards lower levels of companionship than the average group ($F(1, 60) = 2.99, p < .09; \eta^2 = .05$). A significant difference was also evident between the groups for help ($F(1, 61) = 4.58, p < .05; \eta^2 = .07$); the overtly aggressive group tended to report less help in their friendship than the average group. Finally, a marginally significant difference was also evident for security ($F(1, 60) = 2.8, p < .09; \eta^2 = .05$); such that the overt group reported less security in their friendships than the average group.

Examination of the scores for conflict, the negative subscale on the FQS, indicated that overtly aggressive and average early adolescents did not differ in this regard ($F(1, 61) = .28, ns$).

Results from univariate analyses indicated that the overt and average groups significantly differed for overt aggression towards friend ($F(1, 58) = 11.01, p < .01; \eta^2 =$

removed from the analyses to avoid having average targets with aggressive friends.

.16) and toward others ($F(1, 59) = 15.42, p < .001; \eta^2 = .21$). The overtly aggressive group reported more overt aggression within the friendship than their average peers; and more overt aggression toward the peer group together with their friend than did the average group.

The overt and average groups also differed with respect to relational aggression toward others ($F(1, 59) = 3.96, p < .05; \eta^2 = .06$). The overtly aggressive group was more likely to report engaging in relational aggression toward others with their friend than the average group. The two groups did not differ with respect to relational aggression toward the friend ($F(1, 59) = 2.77, ns$).

Results from univariate analyses revealed a significant difference between the two groups for power, such that the overtly aggressive group reported a greater power differential in their friendship than the average group ($F(1, 59) = 4.46, p < .05; \eta^2 = .07$). Not surprisingly, the direction of this effect was such that overtly aggressive early adolescents felt they held more power in the relationship than their friend; average early adolescents on the other hand, indicated they held slightly less power than their friend.

Overtly aggressive early adolescents and average early adolescents also differed for friendship satisfaction ($F(1, 59) = 3.38, p < .08; \eta^2 = .05$); such that the overt group tended to report less satisfaction than the average group. The groups did not differ with respect to exclusivity ($F(1, 58) = .52, ns$).

Friend group: Reports of friendship quality. Analyses of the Friends' perception of the friendship were conducted in much the same way. Again, relational aggression was the covariate in the analyses of friendship quality for the friends of overtly aggressive and average early adolescents. The dependent variables in these analyses were the Friends'

ratings of friendship quality. The independent variable was the Target child's social behaviour style.

Results from univariate analyses revealed that the friends of the overtly aggressive group reported significantly less security in their friendship than the friends of the average group ($F(1, 59) = 7.02, p < .01; \eta^2 = .11$).

Results from univariate analyses also revealed significant differences between the friends of the overtly aggressive group and the friends of the average group for overt aggression toward others ($F(1, 60) = 8.57, p < .01; \eta^2 = .13$) and overt aggression toward the friend ($F(1, 58) = 9.17, p < .01; \eta^2 = .14$). Friends of the overtly aggressive group reported more overt aggression within the friendship than their average peers, and more overt aggression toward the peer group together with their friend than did the friends of the average group.

Results from univariate analyses yielded a marginally significant difference between the friends of the overtly aggressive group and friends of the average group for relational aggression toward friend ($F(1, 59) = 3.83, p < .06; \eta^2 = .06$). Friends of overtly aggressive early adolescents were more likely to report the existence of relational aggression within their friendship than the friends of average early adolescents. However, this finding must be interpreted with some caution. There were no differences between the groups for relational aggression toward others ($F(1, 60) = .119, ns$).

Results from univariate analyses yielded a significant difference between the friends of the overtly aggressive and average groups for exclusivity ($F(1, 58) = 5.25, p < .05; \eta^2 = .08$). Friends of overtly aggressive early adolescents were more likely to report greater levels of exclusivity in their friendship than average early adolescents.

Table 6
Means and Standard Deviations for Self-Ratings of Strategies by Self-Reported Group Classification

	Group Classification		
	Relational	Overt	Average ⁵
Self-Rated Strategies	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)
Physical Aggression	42.92 _a (10.54)	54.43 _b (18.81)	29.92 _c (12.45)
Relational Aggression	29.36 _a (10.19)	29.15 _{ab} (11.19)	23.91 _{ac} (7.58)
Prosocial Behaviour	60.18 _a (11.43)	51.84 _a (21.98)	69.83 _b (11.63)

Note: Means with different subscripts differ at the .025 level.

⁵ Due to the fact that some children had difficulty completing the strategies measure, complete data on this instrument is not available on all subjects. As a result, the *n* for each group varies by strategy. For the overtly aggressive group the *n* ranged between 19 and 20; relationally aggressive group the *n* ranged between 11 and 13; and average between 143 and 149.

Table 7

Reciprocation Status of Dyads

Level of reciprocation	Number of dyads
First rated paired with first rated	24
First paired with second	10
First paired with third	7
First paired with fourth	4
First paired with fifth	3
Second paired with second	3
Second paired with third	3
Second paired with fourth	5
Second paired with fifth	1
Third paired with third	3
Third paired with fourth	4
Third paired with fifth	-
Fourth paired with fourth	3
Fourth paired with fifth	2
Fifth paired with fifth	3
Total	75

Table 8

Composition of the Dyads by Target Social Behaviour Group Membership

Friend Group						
Target Group	Relational	Overt	Average	Prosocial	Rel + Overt	Total
Relational	0	3	6	2	0	11
Overt	0	2	11	0	5	18
Average	0	0	31	15	0	46

Table 9: Means and Standard Deviations for the Overtly Aggressive Group for Friendship Variables

Friendship Variables	Target		Friend	
	Overt (n = 18)	Average (n = 46)	Overt (n = 18)	Average (n = 46)
Closeness	29.00 (7.62)*	32.06 (4.32)	31.76 (4.13)	33.43 (4.40)
Companionship	21.61 (4.39)+	23.49 (3.53)	22.39 (3.07)	23.70 (3.81)
Help	34.89 (8.35)*	38.35 (4.48)	36.72 (4.66)	38.41 (4.63)
Security	36.39 (6.18)+	38.82 (4.83)	35.67 (4.55)**	38.89 (4.52)
Conflict	11.39 (4.33)	10.61 (3.39)	11.11 (3.58)	10.50 (4.08)
Rel Agg t/w Friend	8.17 (3.47)	6.84 (2.23)	8.25 (3.36)+	6.59 (2.34)
Rel Agg t/w Peers	8.39 (2.75)*	6.98 (2.18)	7.65 (2.29)	7.28 (2.64)
Overt Agg t/w Friend	5.41 (2.76)**	3.64 (1.24)	5.19 (2.48)**	3.60 (1.34)
Overt Agg t/w Peers	5.44 (2.81)***	3.45 (.98)	5.71 (3.29)**	3.78 (1.61)
Exclusivity	10.12 (4.17)	9.23 (2.89)	11.69 (4.09)*	9.47 (2.95)
Power	9.44 (1.34)*	8.93 (0.66)	9.41 (1.42)+	8.83 (1.02)
Satisfaction	8.72 (1.45)+	9.38 (1.13)	9.12 (1.45)	9.39 (.95)

* p < .05
 ** p < .01
 *** p < .001
 + trend

Finally, a marginally significant difference was also evident for balance of power ($F(1, 60) = 2.80, p < .10; \eta^2 = .05$). Friends of overtly aggressive early adolescents reported a greater power differential in their friendships than average early adolescents. Again, as with all trends, this finding must be interpreted with some caution.

Assessing friendship quality: relational and average groups

To account for the tendency for the relational group to report (i) engaging in more overtly aggressive behaviour; and (ii) to be more likely to select overtly aggressive strategies in hypothetical conflict situations than the average group, overt aggression was held constant (i.e., entered as a covariate) when comparing the friendship quality of relationally aggressive and average early adolescents. Again, this procedure is consistent with previous research of this kind by Grotzinger and Crick (1996). Scores were analyzed separately for Target and Friend ratings of friendship quality. Means and standard deviations are displayed in Table 10.

Target group: Reports of friendship quality. Results from univariate analyses revealed significant differences between the relational and average group for help ($F(1, 54) = 5.96, p < .05; \eta^2 = .10$) and closeness ($F(1, 54) = 6.01, p < .05; \eta^2 = .10$). The relationally aggressive group reported less help and less closeness in their friendships than did the average group. Univariate analyses also revealed that the relationally aggressive group reported less security than the average group ($F(1, 53) = 5.06, p < .05; \eta^2 = .09$). It is worth mentioning that Levene's tests of equality of variances were violated for security, overt aggression toward peers, and power. Consequently, these findings should be interpreted with caution.

Table 10: Means and Standard Deviations for the Relationally Aggressive Group for Friendship Variables

Friendship Variables	Target		Friend	
	Relational (n = 11)	Average (n = 46)	Relational (n = 11)	Average (n = 46)
Closeness	28.09 (5.91)*	32.06 (4.32)	29.91 (5.17)*	33.43 (4.40)
Companionship	22.82 (5.23)	23.49 (3.53)	23.18 (3.84)	23.70 (3.81)
Help	34.55 (6.17)*	38.35 (4.48)	35.82 (5.86)	38.41 (4.63)
Security	34.91 (7.33)*	38.82 (4.83)	35.64 (6.58)+	38.89 (4.52)
Conflict	11.82 (2.79)	10.61 (3.39)	10.73 (3.35)	10.50 (4.08)
Rel Agg t/w Friend	7.09 (2.07)	6.84 (2.23)	7.64 (2.91)	6.59 (2.34)
Rel Agg t/w Peers	8.45 (2.38)+	6.98 (2.18)	8.55 (2.30)	7.28 (2.64)
Overt Agg t/w Friend	3.64 (1.29)	3.64 (1.24)	4.73 (2.45)+	3.60 (1.34)
Overt Agg t/w Peers	4.36 (1.63)*	3.45 (.98)	5.00 (2.57)+	3.78 (1.61)
Exclusivity	9.18 (2.64)	9.23 (2.89)	9.00 (2.97)	9.47 (2.95)
Power	9.64 (1.80)*	8.93 (0.66)	9.55 (1.37)+	8.83 (1.02)
Satisfaction	9.00 (1.48)	9.38 (1.13)	8.82 (1.40)	9.39 (.95)

* p < .05
 ** p < .01
 *** p < .001
 + trend

A marginally significant difference was evident for relational aggression toward peers ($F(1, 52) = 3.27, p < .08; \eta^2 = .06$). Not surprisingly, the relationally aggressive group reported engaging in more relational aggression toward others with their friends than the average group. The relationally aggressive group also reported more overt aggression toward others than the average group ($F(1, 53) = 6.24, p < .05; \eta^2 = .09$).

A significant difference between the groups was also discovered for power ($F(1, 52) = 4.48, p < .05; \eta^2 = .08$). The friendships of the relational group seem to be characterized by a greater power differential than the average group. Like overtly aggressive early adolescents, the relationally aggressive group felt they held more power in their relationship than their friend; average early adolescents indicated relatively equal power.

Friend group: Reports of friendship quality. Analyses of the friend's ratings of friendship quality revealed only one significant difference between the friends of relationally aggressive early adolescents and the friends of average early adolescents. The friends of the relationally aggressive group reported significantly less closeness in their friendships than did the friends of the average group ($F(1, 52) = 4.36, p < .05; \eta^2 = .08$). However, some trends were also apparent.

Results from univariate analyses revealed that the friends of relationally aggressive early adolescents reported less security in their friendship than did the friends of average early adolescents ($F(1, 52) = 3.83, p < .06; \eta^2 = .07$). Marginally significant differences were also evident for overt aggression toward others ($F(1, 54) = 3.48, p < .07; \eta^2 = .06$) and overt aggression toward friend ($F(1, 53) = 3.04, p < .09; \eta^2 = .05$). Not surprisingly,

friends of relationally aggressive early adolescents were more likely to report more of both types of behaviour in their friendships than were friends of average early adolescents.

Finally, the friends of the relationally aggressive group indicated a marginally greater power differential in their relationships than the friends of average early adolescents ($F(1, 54) = 3.60, p < .07; \eta^2 = .06$). The direction of the means was such that the friends of relationally aggressive early adolescents reported that they held more power than the relationally aggressive target. The friends of average early adolescents reported that they held slightly less power than their friend.

Part III: Dealing with the gender imbalance

One possible explanation to account for differences between the overt and average groups with respect to friendship quality is the gender imbalance in these two groups (i.e., the overt group was comprised mostly of boys; the average group mostly of girls). To investigate whether differences between the overt and average groups were an artifact of the gender imbalance in these groups, analyses were conducted for each of the friendship variables for the Target boys only. As evident in Table 11, the overall direction of results held, though some previous findings became non-significant, likely due to the smaller sample sizes. Nevertheless, these findings suggest that the differences between these groups were not entirely due to gender.

Trends and Effect Sizes

Given the number of trends found in the present research, effect sizes were calculated to help with their interpretation. Traditionally, a cut-off of 10% of variance is used to indicate that a reasonable proportion of variability in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable. Most of the effect sizes in the current study ranged

from 5% to 7% for the trends. Thus, these results must be interpreted with some caution.

Table 11

Means, Standard Deviations and F-Ratios for Target Boys for Friendship Variables

	Overt (n = 12)	Average (n = 10)	F-Ratio
Friendship Variables			
Closeness	26.00 (7.06)	27.50 (1.84)	.28
Companionship	20.00 (3.84)	24.00 (2.87)	5.51*
Help	31.75 (8.43)	37.20 (5.18)	2.60
Security	34.08 (5.66)	38.11 (4.43)	2.57
Conflict	10.42 (3.03)	9.60 (2.46)	.15
Rel Agg t/w Friend	8.50 (3.50)	5.89 (1.45)	3.99+
Rel Agg t/w Peers	8.50 (3.32)	6.33 (2.50)	2.22
Overt Agg t/w Friend	6.00 (3.05)	3.55 (1.33)	4.12+
Overt Agg t/w Peers	5.92 (3.18)	3.44 (1.01)	4.06+
Exclusivity	9.83 (4.17)	7.44 (2.07)	2.23
Power	9.67 (1.56)	8.89 (0.33)	2.18
Satisfaction	8.17 (1.47)	9.56 (0.88)	4.95*

* $p < .05$

+ trend

Discussion

The primary goal of this study was to examine whether the friendships of aggressive early adolescents (i.e., overt and relational) would differ qualitatively from those of average early adolescents. This represented an attempt to replicate and extend the results of previous research involving school-age children (e.g., Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Grotpeter & Crick, 1996; Rys & Bear, 1997). Of particular interest were the negative aspects of friendship, a relatively under-investigated area. It was expected that the friendships of aggressive early adolescents would differ from those of their average counterparts in significant and meaningful ways. A second goal was to investigate gender differences in the frequency and correlates of relational aggression at this stage of development.

In general, results suggested that early adolescents perpetrated relational aggression. Furthermore, findings revealed that while overt aggression had potentially serious implications for friendship quality, relational aggression seemed to be somewhat less problematic in this respect. The utility of the self-report measure and gender differences will be addressed first, followed by a review of the findings concerning strategy selection in hypothetical conflict situations. Findings related to the friendship quality of overtly aggressive and relationally aggressive early adolescents will then be presented. Finally, caveats and limitations of the present research will be addressed in addition to suggestions for future research.

Self-reported aggressive behaviour

Unlike previous research into relational aggression (i.e., Grotpeter & Crick, 1996; Rys & Bear, 1997) which relied upon peer-reports of behaviours, in the present study,

early adolescents were classified into extreme groups on the basis of self-reported social behaviour. The Children's Peer Relationships Scale (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995) was adapted for use with an adolescent sample. Consistent with findings with younger children (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995), investigations into the psychometric properties of this measure confirmed it to be both reliable and valid. For example, this measure demonstrated adequate reliability and the factor structure was replicated. One of the items "Some kids yell at others and call them mean names" cross-loaded onto both the relational and overt aggression subscales. As mentioned previously, this item was designed to reflect the verbal abuse component of overt aggression. However, relational aggression has a strong verbal component (i.e., spreading rumours, making up lies, etc.) which may explain why this item was consistent with both forms of aggression. Indeed, other researchers have reported similar cross-loadings for verbal abuse items (Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist & Peltonen, 1988).

The CPRS has been employed only once prior to the present investigation (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Though some researchers tend to prefer peer reports to reduce the risk of social desirability when assessing behaviour (Ledingham, Younger, Schwartzman, Bergeron, 1982), this method can also be problematic as it depends upon children's nominations and as such can be time consuming for both data collection and data entry. Though not used as often, self-report methods offer advantages over other procedures, including ease of data collection and the rater's access to numerous instances of behaviour across settings (see Ledingham et al., 1982 for review). The present investigation has demonstrated that the CPRS can be successfully employed with an early adolescent sample. In concert with its inherent advantages, this self-report measure of social

behaviour has proven utility, making it a promising tool for future research with this age group.

Gender differences in aggression

In the present study we found that the gender constitution of the extreme overtly aggressive group resembled that of earlier research in this area (i.e., more boys than girls) (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick, Casas, & Mosher, 1997; Rys & Bear, 1997). However, previous findings have been mixed with respect to relational aggression, presumably as function of both the assessment method and age group under investigation. For example, in Crick's research, peer reports have generally yielded a fairly uniform gender split, with more males classified as overtly aggressive, and females as relationally aggressive (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Rys and Bear (1997) uncovered the same gender separation for extreme groups of overtly aggressive and relationally aggressive children. However, these findings were exclusive to school-age children.

Findings concerning gender differences have not been consistent in earlier research employing self-reports. When self-reports of social behaviour were considered, MacDonald and O'Laughlin (1997) found that early adolescent females reported higher levels of relational aggression than males. In contrast, using self-reports, Crick and Grotpeter (1995) found that boys were more likely to report relationally aggressive behaviour than girls, albeit in a younger sample (school-age). Though the number of extremely relationally aggressive subjects in the present study was relatively small (i.e., less than 5% of the entire sample), a clear gender division was not evident. That is, a significant sex difference was not discovered for the group of extremely relationally

aggressive early adolescents. In the present sample, the extreme relational group was essentially evenly divided on the basis of gender, with 10 males and 8 females.

Further support for this finding was revealed in the overall sex differences for overt and relational aggression. Comparisons between males and females were conducted for the entire sample to examine gender differences in self-reported behaviour. Overall, while males were more likely than females to report engaging in overt aggression, no gender differences emerged for relationally aggressive behaviour. Previous research by Cairns and colleagues (1989) has also revealed a lack of sex differences with respect to self-reported aggression in adolescence, supporting the present findings.

It is possible that the even gender split uncovered in this research was an artifact of the self-report method used in this study. Girls may be more inclined to withhold sensitive information about themselves, which may have resulted in lower numbers of girls classified as relationally aggressive. Had peer reports been used, more girls may have been identified as relationally aggressive since peer reports are based upon the opinion of more than one individual and tend to be more impartial. Indeed, in Crick's research with peer reports (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995), 17.4% of the girls in her sample were found to be relationally aggressive, while only 4.4% of girls in the present study were classified as extremely relationally aggressive.

However, this discrepancy may also be a function of the age difference between the subjects in Crick and Grotpeter's (1995) research (i.e., school age children) and those of the present study (i.e., early adolescents). It is quite possible that aggression is perpetrated less by children as they progress through adolescence, accounting for the discrepancy between these two studies. Indeed, Cairns and colleagues (1989) reported a

decline in self-perceived aggression from school age to adolescence. These findings suggest that age differences, and not assessment method, may explain why fewer girls were relationally aggressive in our research than in Crick and Grotpeter's (1995) study.

Alternatively, rather than a decline in relational aggression for girls as they age, perhaps the even gender split for relational aggression in this research was due to an increase in relational aggression by boys as they get older. In light of previous research with older adolescents in which gender differences were not evident for relational aggression (i.e., Crick & Wellman, in press), the present findings appear to provide support for an emerging trend toward the increasing use of relational aggression by boys as they progress through adolescence. As they mature, boys may “catch up” to girls in their use of relational aggression, thereby obscuring the gender differences that were evident for school age children.

Given the decrease in physical aggression as boys mature (Cairns et al., 1989), and the declining tolerance of physical aggression by others, particularly adults, it is possible that males may rely more on relationally aggressive behaviours in their attempts to be more covert. Relationally manipulative behaviours are more attractive as they provide greater assurance to the perpetrator that they will not be detected and retaliated against (Bjorkqvist, et al., 1991). Furthermore, research by Bjorkqvist and colleagues (1991) suggested that the usage of relational aggression is dependent upon maturation. Since girls tend to mature faster verbally than boys, it is possible that when boys catch up to girls in terms of verbal ability, they may also catch up in terms of their use of relational aggression, since this form of aggression involves a strong verbal component. However, Cairns and colleagues (1989) found that behaviours consistent with relational aggression

(i.e., social alienation and ostracism) did not increase with age for boys. Nevertheless, while this theory is compelling, until longitudinal research employing larger samples is conducted to verify this phenomenon, conclusive evidence for this trend will be lacking.

Strategy selection

Children's behavioural responses to peer conflict is an area of significant interest given the potential influence of conflict and conflict management on social development (Chung & Asher, 1996). Previous research has revealed mixed results concerning the relation between conflict strategies and behavioural style. For example, while Chung & Asher (1996) found that peer nominations of children's behavioural style tend to be consistent with self-rated strategy selection, Delveaux's (1997b) findings were inconsistent.

In a study involving aggressive (physical, relational, physical plus relational) and non-aggressive school-age children, Delveaux (1997b) revealed that peer-nominated physically plus relationally aggressive children rated physically aggressive strategies more favourably than the prosocial group only. Interestingly, there were no differences between the groups for relationally aggressive strategies and prosocial strategies. In contrast, findings from the present study indicated that for the most part, early adolescents were more likely to select conflict strategies that were consistent with their overall behavioural style. Overtly aggressive adolescents rated physically aggressive strategies more highly than either prosocial or relational adolescents; and prosocial adolescents were more inclined to select prosocial strategies than aggressive early adolescents. Relationally aggressive early adolescents tended to be more likely to select relational strategies than were average early adolescents. Additionally, the same pattern of findings for gender

differences in self-reported behaviour were discovered for strategy selection; while boys rated physical strategies higher than girls, there were no differences in the selection of relationally aggressive strategies.

The current findings are important for two reasons. First, the fact that early adolescents responded to hypothetical conflict situations in ways that were consistent with their social behaviour lends more credibility to the utility of self-reports to assess behavioural style. Secondly, the Conflict Resolution Measure (Delveaux, 1997b) has been used only once prior to this study. Surprisingly, in the previous research with this instrument, a significant difference between the groups did not emerge for relationally aggressive or prosocial strategies. Delveaux (1997b) speculated that this might have been due to the difficulty that school-age children had nominating their peers for relationally aggressive items in particular. The fact that the CRM demonstrated good construct validity with self-reported behaviour in the present research lends support to Delveaux's (1997b) contention, and suggests that this measure may actually provide useful information with respect to behavioural styles.

Consistent with Chung and Asher's (1996) and Delveaux's (1997b) findings, an examination of gender differences for early adolescent's strategy selection revealed that while boys tended to rate physical strategies higher than girls, girls were more likely to select prosocial strategies in response to hypothetical conflicts. Similar to school-age children (Delveaux, 1997b), male and female early adolescents did not differ in their selection of relationally aggressive strategies. These findings contradict those of Crick and Grotpeter (1995), who reported that boys were more likely to report more relationally and overtly aggressive behaviour.

Some of the findings for the conflict strategies were particularly striking. First, the relational and overtly aggressive early adolescents did not significantly differ for their ratings of prosocial strategies. Relational aggression is more covert and ideally, permits the perpetrator to avoid detection and retaliation (Lagerspetz et al., 1988). Given this logic, the assumption can be made that children who engage in this behaviour are likely to be concerned about the image they portray and wish to remain socially desirable. For this reason, it is surprising that relationally aggressive early adolescents were not significantly more likely to endorse prosocial strategies than their overtly aggressive peers. Nevertheless, an inspection of the means revealed that these two groups differed slightly for self-ratings of prosocial behaviour, with relationally aggressive early adolescents reporting that they engage in more prosocial behaviour than overtly aggressive early adolescents ($M = 13.06$ and $M = 11.94$, respectively). Thus, when it comes to their actual behaviour, relationally aggressive individuals may be more inclined to act in a prosocial way.

Second, a visual inspection of the overall means for each of the strategies revealed that as a group, early adolescents rated physically aggressive strategies more favourably than relational strategies (i.e., $M = 33.74$ and $M = 24.83$, respectively). This finding can be interpreted in various ways. It could be that overt aggression is more acceptable than relational aggression. Or, perhaps overtly aggressive acts are more salient than relationally aggressive acts and as such, are more readily selected. Encouragingly though, prosocial strategies were endorsed more frequently than the aggressive strategies. However, when reviewing the findings concerning strategy selection, it is important to

keep in mind that early adolescents do not necessarily do what they say they would do (Delveaux, 1997b).

Friendships of early adolescents

Estimates of unreciprocated friendship vary widely in the literature. Previous research has found that between 10% (Berndt & Hoyle, 1985) and 38% (Grotmeter & Crick, 1996) of children and adolescents do not have reciprocated friendships. In the present study, 32.5% of early adolescents did not have a mutual friendship. Though the participants were entitled to nominate up to 5 friends, many of those without reciprocal friendships nominated peers who had not been given permission to participate. In addition, though they were instructed otherwise, some participants selected friends who were not in their grade, or did not attend their school. This was not surprising since, compared to school age children, adolescents are more likely to maintain friendships outside the classroom (Buhrmester, 1996). Finally, there were quite a few instances in which a small group of children nominated one another. It was not possible to accommodate everyone's friendship choices as higher rated friendships were given preference. These factors likely resulted in the relatively high number of early adolescents without mutual friendships in this study, although this figure did fall within reported range.

Consistent with expectations and the previous literature (Grotmeter & Crick, 1996; Ray, Cohen, Secrist & Duncan, 1997; Rys & Bear, 1997), aggressive early adolescents were found to be just as likely to have a reciprocal friend as their non-aggressive counterparts. In the present research, approximately two-thirds of the early adolescents in each social behaviour group (i.e., overt, relational, average, and prosocial) had a reciprocal friend. These percentages did not differ significantly by group.

As Rys and Bear (1997) have pointed out, the fact that aggressive individuals maintain reciprocal friendships is likely because they often tend to associate with other aggressive individuals (Cairns et al., 1988). This notion is consistent with our own results, which revealed that nearly half the overtly aggressive group befriended other aggressive individuals. In addition, relational aggression is characterized by the manipulation of friendship ties (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995) thus there must be at least one other person in the friendship circle, implying that these children maintain mutual friendships (Rys & Bear, 1997).

Fulfilling, successful friendships are essential for the social and emotional development of children (Newcomb & Bagwell, 1996). Though it would seem pertinent to investigate factors that may compromise the integrity of friendships, a considerable void in the literature exists with respect to the quality of aggressive adolescent's friendships. As such, there is a paucity of literature available to permit a comparison of the present findings with those of other researchers. For this reason, the results of the current investigation will be presented with reference to similar work by Grotpeter and Crick (1996).

However, it must be noted that Grotpeter and Crick's (1996) findings apply to middle childhood. Many of the results from the present investigation with respect to aggressive early adolescents' friendships contradict the results of Grotpeter and Crick's (1996) research. In particular, it appeared as though the overtly aggressive subjects in this study experienced lower levels of affiliative quality, and greater instances of conflict (i.e., aggression) than the subjects described in Grotpeter and Crick's (1996) study of school

age children. These discrepancies are most likely due to the fact that two different stages of development were the focus of these investigations.

Compared to children, adolescents tend to have broader and better-defined conceptions and expectations of their friendships (e.g., Bigelow & LaGaipa, 1980; Furman & Bierman, 1984; Berndt & Perry, 1986). Improved cognitive abilities and an increased consciousness of self (Berndt, 1982) allow adolescents to be more aware of the status of their friendships and to provide more accurate and insightful reports of the features of those friendships. In addition, friendships at this stage of development are extremely important (Berndt, 1982; Berndt & Savin-Williams, 1993). Unlike younger children, adolescents are less susceptible to social desirability (Clark & Bittle, 1992). As a result, they are more likely to be open about aspects of their relationships, both positive and negative. These factors likely account for the inconsistencies between previous research (i.e., Grotmeter & Crick, 1996) and the present investigation.

Overtly aggressive adolescents. With respect to their friendships, overtly aggressive early adolescents appeared to have lower levels of positive friendship features, and higher levels of negative friendship features than average early adolescents did. For example, overtly aggressive early adolescents reported lower levels of closeness, and help, and a trend toward lower levels of companionship and security than their average counterparts. These findings are in stark contrast to those of Grotmeter and Crick (1996).

In terms of affiliate quality, Grotmeter and Crick (1996) found that overtly aggressive children (grades three through six) only evidenced lower levels of intimacy than non-aggressive children. This discovery led them to conclude that perhaps the friendship goals of overtly aggressive children differ from non-aggressive children in that their focus

is simply spending time with others. Our findings contradict this contention, since overtly aggressive early adolescents also had lower ratings of companionship than average early adolescents. Furthermore, overtly aggressive early adolescents also reported lower levels of satisfaction, providing support for the notion that lower levels of affiliative quality may be problematic, and suggesting that they desire more from the friendship. However, both these findings were trends and must be interpreted with some caution.

There is also some indication that Grotzinger and Crick (1996) recognized that lower quality friendship interactions of overtly aggressive children might be due to the fact that these children are more likely to be boys. Certainly, it is entirely possible that these findings are simply an artifact of gender differences, as the overtly aggressive group was comprised of mostly boys, and the average group of mostly girls in this study. Boys' friendships tend to be characterized by a lower intensity of affiliations than the friendships of girls, as boys tend to focus on the pursuit of instrumental goals and maintaining the hierarchy. Girls, on the other hand, experience more intensive groupings with an emphasis on intimacy and caring (Maccoby, 1986).

To investigate whether these findings were a function of gender differences, the analyses were re-run using only overtly aggressive boys and average boys. The pattern of results was identical, indicating that the differences between overtly aggressive early adolescents and average early adolescents are likely not entirely due to gender. An inspection of the means revealed that compared to average boys, overtly aggressive boys experienced lower levels of closeness, companionship, help and security; greater aggression within the friendship and toward others; greater exclusivity; a more pronounced power differential and lower levels of satisfaction.

Besides having lower levels of affiliative quality, the friendships of overtly aggressive early adolescents also seemed be characterized by higher levels of conflict than the friendships of average early adolescents. While there were no differences between the overt and average early adolescents for the actual conflict measure, the friendships of overtly aggressive early adolescents appeared to involve considerably more overt aggression.

Similar to the results obtained by Grotmeter and Crick (1996), overtly aggressive early adolescents reported engaging in significantly more overt aggression with their friends toward their peers than their average counterparts. The fact that the overtly aggressive group was comprised mostly of boys, and that boys are more inclined to pursue instrumental goals such as gaining dominant status in the hierarchy (Maccoby, 1986) likely has some bearing on these findings.

Surprisingly, the overtly aggressive early adolescents were also more likely than average adolescents to use relational aggression with their friend to harm those outside the friendship. Since these dyads are also more likely to perpetrate overt aggression against others, it would appear that overtly aggressive adolescents are recruiting their friends into aggressive encounters. This influence that overtly aggressive adolescents have on their friends suggests that these relationships are highly detrimental to their friends in particular.

In addition, and contrary to the findings of Grotmeter & Crick (1996), there was also more likely to be overt aggression within the friendships of overtly aggressive early adolescents than average dyads. This finding is consistent with that of Dodge and colleagues (1990) who have reported that aggressive individuals tend to concentrate the majority of their aversive efforts within their dyadic relationships.

The direction of the questions to assess overt aggression within the friendship are such that overt aggression as perpetrated by the other person is in question (i.e., “My friend hits and kicks me when mad at me”). That the overtly aggressive target reported overt aggression within the friendship indicates that the friends of overtly aggressive early adolescents are committing these acts. This finding would seem to suggest that the friends of overtly aggressive early adolescents are retaliating against the overtly aggressive individual. Not surprisingly, the friends of overtly aggressive early adolescents also reported greater levels of overt aggression within the friendship, indicating that the aggressive early adolescent (or the target) is victimizing the friend. Thus, a considerable amount of overt aggression is occurring within the friendship.

While the discovery that overt aggression is perpetrated by both the target and friend in these affiliations is certainly compelling, it must be noted that the alliances of overtly aggressive participants were such that nearly half (i.e., 7 of 18) were friends with aggressive early adolescents. This finding is consistent with research by Cairns and colleagues (1988) who reported that aggressive early adolescents tend to affiliate with other aggressive individuals. The existence of aggressive dyads may account for the high levels of overt aggression toward each other, and toward the peer group. The fact that many of the overtly aggressive early adolescents were friends with other aggressive individuals suggests that it may be easy for them to find a willing partner to collaborate with to perpetrate overt and relational aggression to satisfy mutual goals.

Additionally, high levels of aggression in these friendships may be associated with gender. Generally, compared to children, adolescents are increasingly aware of the costs associated with conflict. However, compared to females, males tend to be delayed in their

appreciation of the potential costs of conflict and the actions required to preserve friendship harmony (see Laursen, 1996 for review). Since the overtly aggressive group was comprised mostly of males, the difficulty that overtly aggressive adolescents have in avoiding conflict may have had some bearing on these findings.

Nevertheless, the finding that overtly aggressive early adolescents are able to coerce their friends into committing aggression toward their peers suggests that they tend to possess more power and control in their relationships. Not surprisingly, the alliances of overtly aggressive early adolescents were characterized by a noticeable power differential. The pattern of means indicates that the aggressive individual perceives that they possess slightly more power in the relationship than their friend.

This finding is particularly interesting in light of research concerning equality in early adolescence (e.g., Berndt, 1982; Laursen, 1996). Adolescents are more likely to value equality in their friendships than children are. For example, in a competitive task involving friend pairs, eighth graders were more likely to pursue equality, and less likely to compete with each other than were younger children (see Berndt, 1982; Berndt & Perry, 1990). That overtly aggressive adolescents' friendships are characterized by greater inequality suggests that their friendship quality may be in jeopardy. Indeed, at least one researcher contends that inequality is a significant barrier to intimacy in adolescents' friendships (Berndt, 1982). However, it is important to keep in mind that most of the overtly aggressive early adolescents were boys, and boys tend to focus on agentic (i.e., individualistic) needs and rewards (Buhrmester, 1996). In turn, agentic needs likely give rise to greater inequality, and possibly, greater conflict.

Friendship ratings by the friends of overtly aggressive early adolescents largely confirmed those of the overtly aggressive targets, particularly with respect to the existence of aggression within the friendship and toward their peers. However, they did not seem to indicate that the affiliative quality was a problem to the same extent that the aggressive individuals did. Only security was rated lower by the friends of overtly aggressive early adolescents than the friends of average early adolescents. This discrepancy between friendship ratings of overtly aggressive subjects and their friends suggests that the overtly aggressive adolescents find their friendships more problematic than their friends do.

Quite unexpectedly, the friends of overtly aggressive early adolescents indicated that their friendship was characterized by more jealousy and possessiveness than average dyads. This is in direct contrast to the findings of Grotzinger and Crick (1996) who found that the friendships of relationally aggressive children involved greater exclusivity. Since the two subscales subject desire for exclusivity and friend desire for exclusivity were combined, it is not possible to determine which partner in the friendship is more demanding of their friend's time and loyalty.

This discovery is somewhat surprising since exclusivity is more consistent with girls' friendships given their emphasis on intimacy and closeness (Maccoby, 1986). Furthermore, relational aggression is more likely to give rise to exclusivity since one of the hallmarks of this type of aggression is the manipulation of friendship relations in order to maintain friendship relations with a particular individual. It is unclear why the friendships of overtly aggressive early adolescents should involve exclusivity. Perhaps it is because overtly aggressive individuals require strict loyalty from their friends in order to maintain the hierarchy. Relatedly, they could be trying to increase their dominance in the peer

group with the help of their friend via the use of aggression toward their peers. Future research is required to replicate these findings and to confirm this speculation.

Summary. The findings of this research suggest that, compared to average peers, low levels of affiliative quality and emotional closeness, and high levels of aggression characterize the friendships of overtly aggressive early adolescents. Moreover, there was some evidence to suggest that the aggressive individual in particular was dissatisfied with the relationship. These findings are particularly disturbing given recent evidence which suggested that satisfying and companionate adolescent friendships are related to various indices of adjustment, including: greater sociability, less hostility, less anxiety and depression, and higher levels of self-esteem (Buhrmester, 1990).

Certainly, these findings are also an indication that the friendships of overtly aggressive individuals may be emotionally void. What is disconcerting about these findings is the fact that such low affiliative quality suggests a lack of social support. Adequate social support is vital, particularly during the tumultuous years of adolescence. Indeed, there is some evidence to suggest that lower social resources (i.e., poor peer relations) are associated with greater internalizing difficulties for early adolescents (Herman-Stahl & Petersen, 1995). There is also evidence of a relation between higher levels of perceived friend support and fewer school-related problems and psychological difficulties, suggesting that poor friend support may also have implications in these areas (see Berndt & Savin-Williams, 1993).

Though this study is only one of few to investigate the friendship relations of aggressive early adolescents, these findings are consistent with the literature on sociometric status, which finds that aggressive individuals are more likely to be rejected by

their peers (e.g., Coie & Kupersmidt, 1983; Dodge, 1983; Ray, Cohen, Secrist & Duncan, 1997). In concert with the sociometric status literature, it appears that overt aggression has implications for early adolescents for both peer relations and mutual friendships. As a result, intervention efforts should focus not only on relations within the context of the peer group, but also within early adolescents' dyadic friendships. This is particularly important given the results of recent research that have found that conflictive mutual friendships may promote an aggressive interaction style, exacerbating maladjustment (Hoza, Molina, Bukowski, & Sippola, 1995).

Relationally aggressive adolescents. While the friendships of overtly aggressive early adolescents were found to be highly problematic, those of relationally aggressive early adolescents appeared to be somewhat less troublesome. Contrary to overtly aggressive early adolescents, who reported much less affiliative quality in their friendships than their average peers, relationally aggressive early adolescents reported only less help, closeness, and a trend towards less security than average dyads. Most notably, compared to their average counterparts, relationally aggressive friendships did not involve as much conflict as those of overtly aggressive early adolescents.

While Grotzinger and Crick (1996) reported that the friendships of relationally aggressive children evidenced greater intimacy and exclusivity than average dyads, our results were not consistent with these findings. In stark contrast to our expectations, the present research revealed that the friendships of relationally aggressive early adolescents were characterized by less intimacy than those of the average group (evident in lower levels of closeness). Given that intimacy is a key component of friendship in adolescence (Berndt & Perry, 1990; Buhrmester, 1996), the finding of lower intimacy in relationally

aggressive dyads is particularly problematic. In fact, one of the best-documented age trends for early adolescent friendships is the substantial increase in intimacy and self-disclosure (Berndt, 1986; Buhrmester, 1996; Berndt & Savin-Williams, 1993).

Contrary to our hypothesis, there was also no evidence to suggest that these friendships involved greater levels of exclusivity than average dyads. This is somewhat surprising given that relational aggression typically involves the manipulation of friendship relations such that the individual attempts to gain exclusive access to their friend to the exclusion of the peer group (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995).

In addition, while Grotpeter and Crick (1996) found greater levels of relational aggression within the friendship, our results did not indicate more relational aggression directed toward the friend than average dyads. It is unclear how this finding should be interpreted. One possibility is that everyone, including average early adolescents, uses relational aggression to a certain degree. Alternatively, perhaps relationally aggressive early adolescents buffer their friends from their behaviour. Since self-reports were successfully used to identify an extreme group of relationally aggressive early adolescents, it would appear that while these individuals do admit to this behaviour, they do not perpetrate it against their friend. If they were willing to divulge that they engage in relational aggression on the social behaviour questionnaire, it can be assumed that they would also confess to using it against their friend if they do indeed victimize their friends in this way.

However, this contrasts previous research that has found that they do not buffer their friends from their aggressive behaviour in middle childhood (Grotpeter & Crick, 1996). It is entirely possible that the relationally aggressive target is committing these acts

and simply did not admit to them in their attempt to remain socially desirable. While they will disclose that they engage in this behaviour in general, they will not acknowledge it with reference to a specific target. However, if their friends are being victimized by this behaviour, why did they not disclose its occurrence?

Perhaps relationally aggressive target early adolescents are more relationally aggressive toward their friends than average peers, but the friends did not report it simply because they do not see it as problematic. Relatedly, perhaps the friends of relationally aggressive early adolescents are being victimized, but did not report this behaviour because they are trying to protect their friend. Or, perhaps they didn't report the target child's noxious behaviour simply because they have difficulty admitting that they are being bullied by someone who is supposed to be their friend.

While all these scenarios are certainly reasonable possibilities, it is likely that relational aggression within the friendship does not occur simply because it is not required. The finding that the target early adolescent reported a trend toward more relational aggression against the peer group than average targets suggests that the focus of the relationally aggressive individual is not on maintaining the relationship by manipulating their friend, but by manipulating the peer group. Exploiting both their own and their friend's relationships with the peer group may grant them exclusive access to their friend. In addition, recruiting their friend into perpetrating this behaviour against the peer group may further destroy their friend's relationships with other peers. This would guarantee that their friend will be more likely to maintain the friendship with the relationally aggressive child since the friend will have alienated themselves from the rest of the peer group.

In turn, this may explain why there was less intimacy, and similar levels of exclusivity, in these relationships compared to average early adolescents. According to Grotzinger and Crick (1996), a high level of intimacy in the friendships of relationally aggressive children is indicative of high levels of disclosure by the friend. They have suggested that relationally aggressive children may elicit private information from their friends to use to their own advantage. Divulging secrets to the relationally aggressive individual leaves the friend susceptible to manipulation as one of the characteristics of relationally aggressive behaviour is spreading rumours. Lower levels of intimacy and similar levels of exclusivity (compared to average early adolescents) may be related to the fact that relational aggression against the peer group occurs more frequently than relational aggression within the friendship. Eliciting private information from their friend and trying to gain exclusive access to them is not required as the goal of relationally aggressive individuals appears to be alienating the peer group at large, rather than the direct manipulation of their friend.

Alternatively, manipulating friends by threatening to breach their confidentiality is likely not effective in early adolescence. A strong desire to confide in, and to disclose sensitive information to friends is a central feature of early adolescent friendships (e.g., Berndt, 1986). Confiding private thoughts and opinions in friends leaves the individual susceptible to exposure. As such, loyalty becomes a highly valued characteristic in friends (see Berndt & Perry, 1990; Buhrmester, 1996 for reviews). Given the importance of self-disclosure and loyalty to early adolescents, becoming friends with someone who does not value these characteristics themselves is unlikely. In fact, when relationships lack intimacy and loyalty, early adolescents do not consider themselves close friends (Berndt, 1986). As

such, early adolescents may refuse to be friends with these individuals, which may explain our findings concerning the absence of relational aggression within the friendship at this stage of development.

Part of the inability to determine the friends' motivation for maintaining friendship relations with the relationally aggressive child arises from the fact that very little is known about them. If the findings revealed here are accurate, and the friends of relationally aggressive individuals do collaborate to perpetrate relational aggression against the peer group, then their affiliation with the relationally aggressive individual is likely detrimental to their own social status and peer relations. It would be beneficial to investigate the attributes of the individuals who continue to preserve relationships with relationally aggressive individuals.

Future research should investigate the sociometric and social-psychological characteristics of these individuals in adolescence. It is plausible that the friends of relationally aggressive early adolescents may remain in the relationship because they tend to be rejected by the peer group. Indeed, previous research has shown that victims of relational aggression are more likely to be rejected by their peers (Crick & Grotpeter, 1996). Though the friends of relationally aggressive early adolescents did not report direct victimization from the target child, being coerced into participating in relationally aggressive acts against the peer group can be construed as indirect victimization. However, whether this rejection precedes or results from the friendship with the relationally aggressive early adolescent is also worth investigating. Furthermore, it has been suggested that adolescents who view themselves negatively might also perceive their friendships negatively (Berndt & Savin-Williams, 1993). Thus, the degree to which the

friends of relationally aggressive individuals report feeling insecure and socially anxious may provide insight into why they don't pursue more gratifying friendships.

Unexpectedly, both the relationally aggressive early adolescent and their friend disclosed that they collaborated to commit overtly aggressive acts against their peers more often than their average peers. Furthermore, compared to their average peers, the friends of relationally aggressive early adolescents reported that their friend commits more overtly aggressive acts against them. This finding is somewhat surprising, particularly since there does not appear to be much relational aggression within the friendship. It is possible that this finding is spurious due to the small sample size and, like many of these findings, was a trend.

Consistent with our expectations, relationally aggressive affiliations evidenced greater inequality than their average peers. Given that relational aggression involves a high degree of manipulation, it would follow that a power differential would likely be evident, with the relationally aggressive individual possessing greater power in the friendship than their friend. However, in light of the finding that the friendships of relationally aggressive individuals were characterized by much less relational aggression than expected, the existence of a power differential is surprising. Furthermore, a clear picture did not emerge to indicate which partner possesses greater power in the relationship. According to their own reports, each individual felt they possessed greater control than the other.

Perhaps the power and control that exists in these affiliations is a reflection of relational aggression but was not recognized as such by the participants. This is unlikely, however, since previous research has found that children do recognize relationally

aggressive behaviours as being angry and hurtful (Crick, Bigbee & Howes, 1996), suggesting that they are aware of its occurrence. Nevertheless, in a recent study (Delveaux, 1997a), compared to a hypothetical overtly aggressive child, children reported that they would most likely be friends with the relationally aggressive character. In concert, these two studies suggest that while children are aware of relational aggression, they do not view it as problematic. Thus, perhaps relational aggression does exist within the friendships of early adolescents, but was under-reported and misinterpreted as an issue of power.

Summary. Though most of the expectations for relationally aggressive dyads in the present research were not confirmed, some interesting findings emerged. Specifically, in comparison to the average dyads, it appears that these friendships were characterized by less conflict than anticipated, evident in lower than expected levels of relational aggression within the friendship, and the absence of conflict itself. Lower levels of conflict than expected could be due to adolescents' increasing recognition of its detrimental impact on friendship (Laursen, 1996). Given their focus on maintaining relationships with the focal individual (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995), relationally aggressive adolescents in particular may be keenly aware of the costs of conflict within the friendship. As such, they may be more prudent of its existence in their friendships, focusing their efforts toward the peer group instead.

Furthermore, they do not seem to involve higher levels of exclusivity as found in previous research (Grotpeter & Crick, 1996). In concert, these findings suggest that the friendships of relationally aggressive early adolescents may not be as problematic as expected, particularly when compared to those of overtly aggressive early adolescents.

Perhaps this is because relational aggression, if it does occur in the friendship, is normative. Early adolescents may be accustomed to its presence and since they do not view it as problematic, it tends not to impact upon the quality of their friendships to a significant degree.

However, given the importance of intimacy to adolescents' friendships (e.g., Berndt, 1986), lower levels of intimacy in relationally aggressive friendships is particularly problematic. Some researchers suggest that adolescent friendships that lack interpersonal competencies, such as self-disclosure, may be superficial as the quality of these affiliations is sacrificed and the fulfilment of interpersonal needs is not met (Buhrmester, 1996). Intimacy of friendship is related to interpersonal competency and adjustment in adolescence (Buhrmester, 1990). Furthermore, competency in close friendships is associated with personal well being and interpersonal success during early adolescence (Buhrmester, 1996). Thus, the lack of intimacy in these relationships may have broader implications than just poor friendship quality.

Only one aspect of the lives of relationally aggressive early adolescents was investigated in the present research. It would be an unqualified leap to suggest that relationally aggressive behaviour does not impact on the lives of these individuals to a significant degree, as there are other areas where relationally aggressive children and their victims suffer.

Ample evidence exists to suggest that relationally aggressive behaviours have the potential to be psychologically and socially damaging to both perpetrators and their victims (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick & Grotpeter, 1996; Wellman & Crick, in press). For example, perpetrators and their victims are more likely to experience rejection,

isolation, loneliness, depression, social anxiety, and social avoidance (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick, 1996; Crick & Grotpeter, 1996; Rys & Bear, 1997). The fact that most indices of maladjustment are specific to social contexts, particularly relationships (Crick & Grotpeter, 1996), suggests that individuals involved in a dyadic relationship characterized by relational aggression are at greater risk for social rejection and psychological distress.

Furthermore, there are other, under-investigated areas where these individuals may experience greater difficulties. Adolescent friendships have been found to be a protective factor of the self-system and to have positive effects on scholastic competence (Berndt & Miller, 1993; Keefe and Berndt, 1996). While relationally aggressive individuals are just as likely to have friends (Grotpeter & Crick, 1996; Rys & Bear, 1997); it is possible that the existence of relational aggression may negate the positive effects of friendship on these aspects of adolescent functioning. Future research is warranted to examine whether relational aggression has implications for academic success and the self-system.

Caveats, limitations and future research

The goal of this research was to attempt to address the considerable paucity in the literature concerning the friendships of aggressive early adolescents. Though a number of significant differences were found between overtly aggressive early adolescents and their average counterparts, many of the findings interpreted here were trends, particularly with respect to the friendship quality of relationally aggressive early adolescents. Fewer significant findings in this research may simply be due in part to small group sizes, rather than a lack of genuine differences between the groups.

Sample size issues. Over 500 potential subjects were solicited for their participation in this research. A large initial sample was required to achieve an acceptable

sample size after accounting for the fact that not all individuals would get permission to participate, some would not return their questionnaires, and not all our subjects would have a friendship that met our criteria. Furthermore, the focus of the investigation was a particular group of individuals who engage in deviant behaviour. Thus, initial samples had to be large enough to capture an adequate number of aggressive individuals. Despite our attempts to procure a sufficient sample size, our aggressive group numbers were less than ideal. Perhaps future researchers should consider doubling their initial sample to achieve larger numbers of aggressive early adolescents.

The limited sample sizes for the aggressive groups could also be a direct result of the self-report method. Though the Children's Peer Relationship Scale (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995) proved an effective and valid method of identifying aggressive groups in this research, it is possible that the number of aggressive early adolescents was underestimated. Traditionally, self-reports have been viewed as having limited utility as they are susceptible to social desirability (Ledingham, Younger, Schwartzman, & Bergeron, 1982). Peer reports are generally preferable as they are not subject to the same bias, and are based on the impressions of a number of individuals and as such, are more likely to be accurate.

Indeed, previous research has found that self-ratings tend to provide the highest ratings of likability and the lowest ratings of deviant behaviour when compared to peer and teacher reports (Ledingham et al., 1982). However, correlations between peer-rated and self-reported aggressive behaviour for early adolescents are relatively modest ($r = .54$) (Ledingham et al., 1982), suggesting that self-ratings have some utility. Thus, the proportions of relationally and overtly aggressive early adolescents identified in the

present study may be an accurate reflection of reality, regardless of the identification method.

Nonetheless, the small sample sizes and the existence of many trends pose a definite limitation in the present study. Consequently, caution should be exercised when interpreting these findings. Despite these shortcomings, given the paucity in the literature for friendship quality of aggressive early adolescents, these results present a reasonable first step. Rather than drawing firm conclusions from this research, the objective is to stimulate researchers' consideration of these issues, and to compel them to conduct more methodologically sound research. For example, future studies should endeavour to expand upon and replicate these findings, employing larger samples of aggressive individuals.

Friendship pairings. A second limitation of the present study arises from the fact that a conspicuous number of overtly aggressive early adolescents were paired with either overtly aggressive or relationally plus overtly aggressive friends. As mentioned previously, this could have had some bearing on the findings for this group, particularly for aggression within the friendship and toward the peer group. To avoid the confound that this presents and to have a better comparison group, future research could include only those pairs with an aggressive early adolescent and an average early adolescent.

Unfortunately, in the present research, the sample sizes of aggressive early adolescents did not permit the exclusion of purely aggressive dyads (i.e., where both individuals are aggressive). Alternatively, since previous research has shown that aggressive individuals tend to befriend aggressive peers (Cairns et al., 1988); it may not be

realistic to exclude these pairs when an accurate picture of the friendships of aggressive individuals is desired.

Additionally, while an attempt was made to include participants' highest rated friendship choices, this was not always feasible. As such, some early adolescents were paired with friends that were lower down in their list of friendship choices. Furthermore, subjects were instructed to avoid choosing friends who were not at their school or in their grade. This likely resulted in some students having to nominate individuals who they may be friends with, but not best friends since those friends did not meet our criteria.

Relying on friendship pairs that do not reflect best friendships likely presented a confound in this research. There is evidence to suggest that early adolescents describe their very best friendships more positively and less negatively than their second or third best friendships (Berndt & Miller, 1993). Given that aggressive individuals are more poorly accepted by their peers (e.g., Rys & Bear, 1997), they could have been rated further down in their friend's nomination list. Thus, the finding that aggressive early adolescents had lower quality friendships could be due to the fact that they were more likely to be paired with lower rated friendships. However, relying on reciprocal nominations would likely account for some of these problems since they are an indication of mutual liking.

Gender. Another difficulty with the present research was the uneven gender breakdown of the average and overtly aggressive friendship groups. While it was not surprising that our overtly aggressive group had more males than expected, we did not anticipate a gender difference in our average group. This was likely due to the fact that while a relatively equal number of males and females were solicited for their participation

in this research, girls were more likely to return consent forms and completed questionnaires. Consequently, more friendship nomination information was available for girls, resulting in more female friendship pairs.

In our efforts to design a practical method of data collection, we decided to send home the consent letter and form and the questionnaires together. Those who chose to participate were asked to complete the questionnaires and return them to their homeroom teacher. Since attrition was a concern, an incentive was offered to encourage students to return their questionnaires. We did not anticipate a gender difference in the return rate.

However, given the reasonable response to our solicitation, this method seemed to have been successful for the most part. Still, our sample size may have been improved had the study had been conducted within the classroom, providing a better guarantee that our questionnaires would be returned. Should circumstances permit, future researchers may benefit from collecting data in a controlled setting (i.e., the classroom), potentially increasing the participation rate and avoiding a gender-biased return rate.

Unfortunately, the gender split also resulted in a less than ideal comparison group, particularly when examining the friendships of overtly aggressive early adolescents. Due to the gender constitution of these two groups, we were presented with a gender confound. In addition to comparing overtly aggressive early adolescents and average early adolescents, we were also comparing boys and girls. Nevertheless, we did not feel that this warranted the manipulation of our average group to include fewer females. In addition, we were reluctant to exclude any data. Instead, to verify that our differences between the overtly aggressive group and the average group were genuine, boys in these two groups were analysed separately. Encouragingly, the pattern of results held,

indicating that the differences between the overt and average groups were likely authentic. However, future researchers may attempt to create a better comparison group by motivating males in particular to return their consent forms.

Additional adjustment measures. Since peer relations were of interest in the present research, it may have been fruitful to include a measure of sociometric status. It is quite possible that the relationally aggressive and overtly aggressive early adolescents in this study were found to have friendships of lower quality because they are often more poorly accepted than their average peers (Rys & Bear, 1997). Indeed, Parker and Asher (1993) have reported that low accepted children have friendships characterized by less quality. These children report that they experienced significantly greater difficulty resolving conflict, less validation and caring, and lower levels of help and guidance, than do average or high accepted children. Low accepted children also report significantly more conflict and betrayal than average accepted children did. Future research into the quality of relationally aggressive and overtly aggressive children's friendships should include a measure of sociometric status to qualify the relation between aggression and friendship quality.

Before concluding that aggressive early adolescents have friendships characterized by less quality than their average peers, it is worth noting that the findings of this research reflect one friendship. Given that some children rated friends who were not participating in the study, or were not in their school underscores the possibility that aggressive early adolescents have closer, more positive friendships that were simply not included in this study. Perhaps a larger scale research effort could investigate multiple friendships,

providing a more accurate and complete picture of the friendship relations of aggressive individuals.

Summary

In closing, the present study replicates and extends previous research concerning relational aggression, a relatively recently identified phenomenon in the literature. Primarily, this research has provided evidence that early adolescents, like school age children (e.g., Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Rys & Bear, 1997) perpetrate relational aggression. Additionally, the present findings suggest that this behaviour may not be exclusive to girls as has been found by other researchers with younger samples (i.e., Crick & Grotpeter, 1995).

The present research has also yielded validation evidence for the Conflict Resolution Measure (Delveaux, 1997b), revealing it to be a reliable measure of early adolescents' conflict strategies. Additionally, use of this measure with the current sample has verified the utility of self-report techniques for identifying relationally aggressive, overtly aggressive and average early adolescents.

Despite our predictions in terms of friendship quality, it appears that while relational aggression has some implications for the friendships of early adolescents, overt aggression appears to be much more problematic. High levels of conflict, combined with low levels of affiliative quality in these relationships are certainly cause for concern. While these findings may be compelling, future research is required to extend, confirm and perhaps amend these results.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Friendship Nomination Measure (Parker & Asher, 1993)

Friendships

We would like to know who your close friends are. Please write down the first and last names of up to five of your best friends **in your grade** (at this school):

First Best Friend:

first name

last name

Second Best Friend:

first name

last name

Next Best Friend:

first name

last name

Next Best Friend:

first name

last name

Next Best Friend:

first name

last name

Appendix B**Children's Peer Relationship Scale
(Crick & Grotpeter, 1995)**

<u>Subscales</u>	<u>Items</u>
Prosocial behaviour	1, 5, 6, 15
Overt aggression	3, 8, 11
Relational aggression	4, 7, 10, 12, 14

Things I do at School

Name: _____

School: _____

Here is a list of things that some kids do at school. Please read these sentences carefully and tell us how true they are of the things you do at school. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. We will not tell anyone your answers.

Please complete this questionnaire in a quiet place on your own.

After each sentence is a scale that goes from 1 to 5. Please put an 'X' in the box that is right for you.

Example:

A. Some kids watch movies at school. How often do you do this?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Almost never	Sometimes	Almost all the time	All the time

1. Some kids try to cheer up other kids who feel upset or sad. How often do you do this?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Almost never	Sometimes	Almost all the time	All the time

2. Some kids have a lot of friends in their class. How often do you feel you have a lot of friends in your class?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Almost never	Sometimes	Almost all the time	All the time

3. Some kids hit other kids at school. How often do you do this?

1 Never	2 Almost never	3 Sometimes	4 Almost all the time	5 All the time
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4. Some kids tell lies about a classmate so that the other kids won't like the classmate anymore. How often do you do this?

1 Never	2 Almost never	3 Sometimes	4 Almost all the time	5 All the time
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5. Some kids let others know that they care about them. How often do you do this?

1 Never	2 Almost never	3 Sometimes	4 Almost all the time	5 All the time
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6. Some kids help out other kids when they need it. How often do you do this?

1 Never	2 Almost never	3 Sometimes	4 Almost all the time	5 All the time
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7. Some kids try to keep certain people from being in their group when it is time to play or do an activity. How often do you do this?

1 Never	2 Almost never	3 Sometimes	4 Almost all the time	5 All the time
------------	-------------------	----------------	-----------------------------	-------------------

8. Some kids yell at others and call them mean names. How often do you do this?

1 Never	2 Almost never	3 Sometimes	4 Almost all the time	5 All the time
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9. Some kids wish they had more friends at school. How often do you feel this way?

1 Never	2 Almost never	3 Sometimes	4 Almost all the time	5 All the time
------------	-------------------	----------------	-----------------------------	-------------------

10. When they are mad at someone, some kids get back at the person by not letting the person be in their group anymore. How often do you do this?

1 Never	2 Almost never	3 Sometimes	4 Almost all the time	5 All the time
------------	-------------------	----------------	-----------------------------	-------------------

11. Some kids push and shove other kids at school. How often do you do this?

1 Never	2 Almost never	3 Sometimes	4 Almost all the time	5 All the time
------------	-------------------	----------------	-----------------------------	-------------------

12. Some kids tell their friends that they will stop liking them unless the friends do what they say. How often do you do this?

1 Never	2 Almost never	3 Sometimes	4 Almost all the time	5 All the time
------------	-------------------	----------------	-----------------------------	-------------------

13. Some kids have a lot of classmates who like to play with them. How often do the kids in your class like to play with you?

1 Never	2 Almost never	3 Sometimes	4 Almost all the time	5 All the time
------------	-------------------	----------------	-----------------------------	-------------------

14. Some kids try to keep others from liking a classmate by saying mean things about the classmate. How often do you do this?

1 Never	2 Almost never	3 Sometimes	4 Almost all the time	5 All the time
------------	-------------------	----------------	-----------------------------	-------------------

15. Some kids say or do nice things for other kids. How often do you do this?

1 Never	2 Almost never	3 Sometimes	4 Almost all the time	5 All the time
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Appendix C

The Conflict Resolution Measure (Delveaux, 1997, adapted from Chung & Asher, 1996)

Strategies:

- Extreme physical aggression
- Mild physical aggression
- Extreme relational aggression
- Mild relational aggression
- Polite request
- Compromise

What I Would Do

Name: _____

School: _____

Grade: _____

Instructions

The following questions describe situations that might happen to you and your classmates. If you are a boy, I want you to imagine that these classmates are also boys. If you are a girl, I want you to imagine that these classmates are girls. Although these situations are not real, I would like you to think about each one carefully, and imagine that these things have really happened to you. After each situation is a list of six things you might do if this happened to you. There are two steps to answering the questions:

1. Please rate how likely you would be to do each action.
2. Put a check mark beside the one that you would do first.

**** If you need some help with these instructions, please ask an adult.**

Watching TV

You and two classmates are watching TV at your house one afternoon. The three of you are watching a show that you really like a lot. In the middle of the show, one classmate says he/she doesn't like it anymore and he/she wants to watch something different. You tell this classmate that you and the other classmates like the show a lot and the two of you want to watch it. This classmate says he/she is getting bored and then changes the TV to a different channel.

Imagine that this has really happened.

1. What would you do?

	Definitely Not	Probably Not	Neutral	Probably Would	Definitely Would
___ Ask him/her nicely to turn the channel...	1	2	3	4	5
___ Punch him/her or slap his/her hands off the TV ...	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her that if he/she doesn't turn the channel back, I'm going to tell all the kids at school not to invite him/her to their place	1	2	3	4	5
___ Push him/her away from the TV	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her that if he/she doesn't turn the channel back, we are not going to talk to him/her for the rest of the day.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her we will finish the show and then watch what he/she wants.....	1	2	3	4	5

2. Put a check mark () next to the thing you would do first.

Working on a Puzzle

You are putting together a puzzle during the lunch break. You've worked very hard on the puzzle, and it is almost finished. A classmate comes over, picks up some puzzle pieces, and wants to put them in the puzzle you are doing. You tell this classmate that you really want to finish the puzzle by yourself, and you ask him/her to give back the puzzle pieces. But this classmate doesn't want to give you back the puzzle pieces.

Imagine that this has really happened.

1. What would you do?

	Definitely Not	Probably Not	Neutral	Probably Would	Definitely Would
___ Tell him/her to give back the puzzle pieces, or I'll ignore him/her for the rest of the day...	1	2	3	4	5
___ Slap him/her or knock the puzzle pieces out of his/her hand.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Ask him/her nicely to give back the puzzle pieces.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Push him/her away.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her I'll do the puzzle with him/her again after I finish this puzzle	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her to give back the puzzle pieces or I'll tell all the other kids not to play with him/her at recess.....	1	2	3	4	5

2. Put a check mark () next to the thing you would do first.

Playing on the Swing

You go out for recess and decide that you want to play on the swings. There is only one swing left. As you are about to get on the swing, a classmate comes over and says he/she wants to play on that swing too. You tell him/her that he/she can get on after you are done, but he/she tries to take the swing away from you.

Imagine that this has really happened.

1. What would you do?

	Definitely Not	Probably Not	Neutral	Probably Would	Definitely Would
___ Tell him/her to let me have the swing, or I'm not going to talk to him/her anymore ...	1	2	3	4	5
___ Push him/her away from the swing	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her that we take turns	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her to let me have the swing, or I'll tell all the other kids not to play with him/her anymore.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Ask him/her nicely to let me get on the swing first.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Pull him/her off the swing and beat him/her up..	1	2	3	4	5

2. Put a check mark () next to the thing you would do first.

In the Art Class

Your class goes outside for an art class one afternoon. The teacher wants everyone to choose a place around school and draw a picture of the school. You find a place that has a good view of the school and you want to draw your picture there. As you put your pencils and art pad on the ground, a classmate comes over and says to you, "Hey, you can't sit there. I want this place." You say, "Yes I can. I got here before you." But this classmate ignores you and puts his/her crayons and art pad where you are going to sit.

Imagine that this has really happened.

1. What would you do?

	Definitely Not	Probably Not	Neutral	Probably Would	Definitely Would
___ Ask him/her nicely to move his/her art pad and pencils.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Throw away his/her art pad and break his/her pencils.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her to move his/her art pad and pencils or I am not going to talk to him/her anymore	1	2	3	4	5
___ Push him/her away.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her to move his/her art pad and pencils, or I'll tell all the other kids not to play with him/her at recess.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her that we can both draw the picture in the same place.....	1	2	3	4	5

2. Put a check mark () next to the thing you would do first.

Shooting Basketball

You are shooting basketball by yourself on the playground during recess. A classmate comes over and says, "I want the ball." You tell him/her that you just got the ball from someone else and you want to play with it for a couple of minutes. But this classmate says he/she wants the ball now and tries to take the ball away from you.

Imagine that this has really happened.

1. What would you do?

	Definitely Not	Probably Not	Neutral	Probably Would	Definitely Would
___ Push him/her away	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her we take turns or play a basketball game together.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her to give me the ball, or I'm not going to talk to him/her for the rest of the day	1	2	3	4	5
___ Punch him/her	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her to give me the ball or I'll tell all the other kids not to play with him/her anymore.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Ask him/her nicely to let me shoot the ball for awhile.....	1	2	3	4	5

2. Put a check mark () next to the thing you would do first.

Reading Time

It is now reading time. Your teacher tells the class that everyone chooses something from the bookshelf to read. You find an interesting story in a book that you haven't read before. A classmate comes over and asks you to give him/her the book because he/she wants to read that book too. You tell him/her that you really want to read the book now, but as you are going back to your desk, this classmate blocks your way and puts his/her hands on the book.

Imagine that this has really happened.

1. What would you do?

	Definitely Not	Probably Not	Neutral	Probably Would	Definitely Would
___ Tell him/her to give me back the book, or I'll tell all the other kids not to play with him/her at recess.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Ask him/her nicely to let me read the book first.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her to give me the book, or I'm not going to be friends with him/her anymore....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Push him/her out of the way.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her I'll give him/her the book as soon as I am finished the story I want.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Knock his/her hands off the book.....	1	2	3	4	5

2. Put a check mark () next to the thing you would do first.

Computer Games

Your class has a new computer which has some fun computer games. The teacher tells the class that everyone should take turns trying these games during recess. You have waited for a while and now it's your turn. A classmate comes over and starts to play the computer games. You tell him/her that it's your turn and he/she is supposed to play after you, but this classmate says that he/she doesn't want to wait any longer and he/she wants to play the games now.

Imagine that this has really happened.

1. What would you do?

	Definitely Not	Probably Not	Neutral	Probably Would	Definitely Would
___ Push him/her away.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her I'll play only a few games and I'll let him/her play very soon.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her to let me play the games, or I'm not going to talk to him/her anymore.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Punch him/her.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her to let me play the games, or I'll tell all the other kids not to play with him/her at recess.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Ask him/her nicely to wait and let me play the games.....	1	2	3	4	5

2. Put a check mark () next to the thing you would do first.

Lunch Time

You and several classmates want to eat lunch together. You put your lunch on a table where these classmates are sitting. You then walk away to get a drink. As you come back, a classmate is putting down his/her lunch where you wanted to sit, and your lunch has been moved aside. You tell this classmate that he/she is in your seat, but he/she doesn't want to leave.

Imagine that this has really happened.

1. What would you do?

	Definitely Not	Probably Not	Neutral	Probably Would	Definitely Would
___ Pull him/her off the chair or beat him/her up...	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her that if he/she doesn't leave, I'm going to tell all the other kids in the class not to sit with him/her at lunch time anymore.	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her that if he/she moves over a little bit, we can both sit there.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Push him/her away.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Ask him/her nicely to find another seat.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her that if he/she doesn't get out of my seat, I'm never going to speak to him/her again	1	2	3	4	5

2. Put a check mark () next to the thing you would do first.

In Front of a Water Fountain

After gym class, you and several classmates run to a water fountain to get a drink. You get to the water fountain first, but a classmate tries to get a drink before you. You tell him that he/she should wait and drink after you, but this classmate says, "Why should I?"

Imagine that this has really happened.

1. What would you do?

	Definitely Not	Probably Not	Neutral	Probably Would	Definitely Would
___ Push him/her away from the water fountain...	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her that if he/she doesn't let me drink first, I'm going to tell all the other kids to pick him/her last for teams in our next gym class.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Ask him/her nicely to let me drink first.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her I'll drink first, but I won't be long.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Punch him/her.....	1	2	3	4	5
___ Tell him/her that if he/she doesn't let me drink first, I won't be partners with him/her in gym class the next day.....	1	2	3	4	5

2. Put a check mark () next to the thing you would do first.

Appendix D

Friendship Quality Instrument

This instrument is a combination of three measures, as follows:

Friendship Qualities Scale (Bukowski, Hoza & Boivin, 1994)

<u>Scale</u>	<u>Subscale</u>	<u>Item number</u>
Companionship		1, 2, 5, 18, 24, 25
Conflict		13, 16, 20, 33, 34
Help	Aid	3, 8, 21, 23, 28, 31
	Protection from Victimization	6, 15, 17
Security	Transcending Problems	4, 11, 22*, 32, 35
	Reliable Alliance	7, 19, 26, 29
Closeness	Affective Bond	9, 14, 36, 37
	Reflected Appraisal	10, 12, 27, 30

* reverse coded

Friendship Qualities Measure (Grottpeter & Crick, 1996)

<u>Scales</u>	<u>Items</u>
Overt Aggression Towards Others	42, 48, 54
Relational Aggression Towards Others	41, 47, 52
Overt Aggression Toward Friend	40, 46, 51
Relational Aggression Toward Friend	38, 44, 50, 55

Subject Desire for Exclusivity 39, 45*, 56

Friend Desire for Exclusivity 43, 49, 53*,

* reverse coded

Network of Relationships Inventory (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985)

<u>Scale</u>	<u>Items</u>
Relative Power	57, 58, 59

Friendship Satisfaction (Parker & Asher, 1993)

Items 60, 61

My Friendship

Your name: _____ School: _____

We want to ask you some questions about you and _____ so that we can know what your friendship is like.

Please answer the following questions with only _____ in mind. It is important that you answer these questions about the way your friendship is now and not how you want it to be.

We would like you to read the following sentences carefully. Please tell us whether this sentence describes your friendship or not. Some of the sentences might be really true for your friendship while other sentences might not be very true for your friendship. We simply want you to read the sentence and tell us how true the sentence is for your friendship. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, and you can use any of the numbers on the scale.

We will NOT tell anyone about the information you give us, not your friend, your teachers, or the school. It is up to you if you want to tell your parents.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO THE STUDY THAT YOU COMPLETE THIS MEASURE IN A QUIET PLACE BY YOURSELF. PLEASE DO NOT SHARE YOUR ANSWERS WITH YOUR FRIEND.

After each sentence, there is a scale that goes from 1 to 5. Please put an 'X' in the box that is best for you. Be sure to read each question carefully and answer as honestly as possible.

1. My friend and I spend a lot of our free time together.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

2. My friend and I do things together.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

3. My friend and I help each other.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

4. Even if my friend and I have an argument we would still be able to be friends with each other.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

5. My friend and I play together at recess.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

6. If other kids were bothering me, my friend would help me.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

7. I can trust and rely upon my friend.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

8. My friend helps me when I am having trouble with something.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

9. If my friend had to move away I would miss him/her.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

10. When I do a good job at something my friend is happy for me.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

11. There is nothing that would stop my friend and I from being friends.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

12. Sometimes my friend does things for me or makes me feel special.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

13. When my friend and I have an argument, he/she hurts my feelings.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

14. When I have not been with my friend for awhile I really miss being with him/her.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

15. If somebody tried to push me around, my friend would help me.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

16. I get into fights with my friend.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

17. My friend would stick up for me if another kid was causing me trouble.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

18. When we have free time at school, such as at lunch time or recess, my friend and I usually do something together or spend time with each other.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

19. If I have a problem at school or home I can talk to my friend about it.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

20. My friend bugs me or annoys me even though I ask him/her not to.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

21. If I forgot my lunch or needed a little money my friend would loan it to me.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

22. If I said I was sorry after I had a fight with my friend he/she would still stay mad at me.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

23. My friend helps me with tasks that are hard or need two people.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

24. My friend and I go to each other's houses after school and on weekends.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

25. Sometimes my friend and I just sit around and talk about things like school, sports, and other things we like.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

26. Even if the other people stopped liking me, my friend would still be my friend.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

27. I know that I am important to my friend.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

28. My friend would help me if I needed it.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

29. If there is something bothering me I can tell my friend about it even if it is something I can not tell to other people.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

30. My friend puts our friendship ahead of other things.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

31. When I have to do something that is hard I can count on my friend for help.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

32. If my friend or I do something that bothers the other one of us we can make up easily.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

33. My friend and I argue a lot.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

34. My friend and I disagree about many things.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

35. If my friend and I have a fight or argument we can say "I'm sorry" and everything will be all right.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

36. I feel happy when I am with my friend.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

37. I think about my friend even when my friend is not around.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

38. My friend ignores me when he/she is mad at me.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

39. I feel jealous if I see my friend playing with another kid.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

40. My friend hits and kicks me when he/she is mad at me.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

41. When my friend and I don't like someone, we won't let them play with us.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

42. My friend and I threaten to beat others up if they don't do what we tell them to do.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

43. My friend would rather play alone with me, and not with other kids.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

44. My friend tells my secrets to other kids when he/she is mad at me.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

45. It's OK with me if my friend plays with other kids when I am busy.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

46. My friend says he/she will beat me up unless I do what he/she says.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

47. When my friend and I are mad at someone, we ignore them or don't talk to them.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

48. My friend and I hit and kick others we are mad at.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

49. My friend gets jealous if he/she sees me playing with another kid.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

50. My friend tells me he/she won't like me anymore unless I do what he/she says.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

51. My friend pushes and shoves me when he/she is mad at me.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

52. When one of us hears a rumour about someone we don't like, we tell each other and pass it on.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

53. It's OK with my friend if I play with other kids when he/she is busy.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

54. My friend and I push and shove others when we are mad at them.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

55. My friend won't let me play with him/her and his/her other friends when he/she is mad at me.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

56. I would rather play alone with my friend, and not other kids, too.

not at all true	hardly ever true	sometimes true	almost always true	always true
-----------------	------------------	----------------	--------------------	-------------

57. Who tells the other person what to do more often, you or your friend?

He/She almost always does	He/She often does	about the same	I often do	I almost always do
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58. Between you and your friend, who tends to be the BOSS in this relationship?

He/She almost always does	He/She often does	about the same	I often do	I almost always do
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59. In your relationship with your friend, who tends to take charge and decide what should be done?

He/She almost always does	He/She often does	about the same	I often do	I almost always do
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60. How is this friendship going?

It's going really badly	It's going kind of badly	It's going OK	It's going pretty well	It's going really well
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61. How happy are you with this friendship?

Very unhappy	A little unhappy	Not really happy or unhappy	Kind of happy	Very happy
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Appendix E

Dear Parents,

We are writing to request your permission for your son/daughter's participation in a research project being conducted at your school by researchers at Carleton University. The purpose of this study is to examine the quality of early adolescent friendships and the implications that friendship and friendship satisfaction have for early adolescents' self perception. Early adolescence is perhaps the most meaningful developmental stage for the development of friendship. Thus, it is important to understand the nature of early adolescent friendship and the influence that friendships can have on feelings of self-worth and acceptance.

If you give consent to participate in this study, your child's class time will not be interrupted in any way. Your child has been given a package at school that they are asked to complete at home. This package contains this consent form. Please indicate whether you give your child permission to participate on the consent form. If you consent, please ask your child to fill out the remaining questionnaires in the package (see attached) and return them to their classroom teacher over the next couple of days. If your child does not have your consent, please indicate this on the attached form and have your child return the completed consent form and the uncompleted questionnaires to their teacher.

Attached you will also find some questions about basic demographic information. On the back is a question which asks the adolescent to name their best friends. The next two sets of questions asks about their social behaviour. The last questionnaire is a self-perception measure which asks the early adolescent to rate how true certain statements are for them. We ask that your child complete these questionnaires individually. These questionnaires should take less than an hour to complete. Please feel free to review these questionnaires before giving them to your child.

Two to three weeks from now, some of the participants will be given a second package at school to complete at home. Due to limited resources, not all children will receive the second package. This second package will contain additional questions about one of their friendships with a classmate. We expect this task to take about 45 minutes. It is important to the study that your child complete this questionnaire without consulting their friend. Again, adolescents are asked to return this package to their teacher within a few days. Once all packages are returned, a debriefing will be sent home with your child. Extra copies of the debriefing will be available from your child's teacher, school principle, and the researchers of this project. As an incentive to participants to bring back completed packages, the class that returns the most consent forms in each school will be offered a pizza party by the researchers.

All information collected for this study is completely confidential and will not appear in any school records. Questionnaires will be used only to extract data for study and data analysis. Your child has the right to not answer any questions. He/she also has the right to refuse participation and to withdraw at any time without penalty. This project has been approved by the Department of Psychology Ethics Committee at Carleton University, the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario and by the principal of your child's school. If you have any questions or concerns with regards to this study, please feel free to contact us at the numbers listed below. You may also

contact Dr. Mary Gick, Chair of the Ethics Committee (613-520-2600, ext. 2664) or Dr. Kim Matheson, Chair of the Department of Psychology (613-520-2600, ext. 2648). Thank you for your assistance!

Sincerely,

Catherine Mills (613) 692-4941

Dr. Robert Coplan (613) 520-2600, ext. 8691

Appendix F

Consent Form

The information collected for this project is confidential and protected under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1989.

I have read and understood the request for my son/daughter to participate in the study of Early Adolescent Friendship Quality. I have discussed it with my son/daughter and....

_____ I give permission for my child to participate

_____ I do not give permission for my child to participate

Date: _____

Name of student (please print): _____

Name of Parent or Guardian (please print): _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____

**Please have your child return the signed consent form (and completed package, if participating) to school by next week.
Thank you.**

Appendix G

Debriefing

Dear Parents,

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your child for your participation in the study of friendship quality. While much is known about the positive aspects of friendship such as companionship and closeness, little is known about the negative aspects, such as inequality and conflict, particularly for early adolescents. There have also been relatively few studies comparing early adolescents' impressions of their mutual friendships to the impression of their friends. These comparisons are valuable as they provide greater insight into the quality of friendship.

We anticipate that the information gained from this study will provide researchers with a better understanding of early adolescent friendships and the implications their relationships may have for the various facets of self-esteem.

If you have any questions or concerns about your own child's friendships, or if you have any further questions about this study, please feel free to contact us at the numbers listed below. Should you have any further ethical concerns, you may contact Dr. Mary Gick (Chair, Department of Psychology Ethics Committee, 613-520-2600, ext. 2664) or Dr. Kim Matheson (Chair of the Department of Psychology (613-520-2600, ext. 2648).

Thank you once again for your participation.

Sincerely,

Catherine Mills (692-4941)

Dr. Robert Coplan (520-2600, ext. 8691)