



2016

Effects of Timing of Parental Divorce on Children's Romantic Relationships in Adulthood: A Review

Adrian Weldon

University of Kentucky, asweldon@gmail.com

Right click to open a feedback form in a new tab to let us know how this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://uknowledge.uky.edu/honprog>

 Part of the [Child Psychology Commons](#), [Family, Life Course, and Society Commons](#), and the [Social Psychology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Weldon, Adrian, "Effects of Timing of Parental Divorce on Children's Romantic Relationships in Adulthood: A Review" (2016). *Lewis Honors College Capstone Collection*. 26.

<https://uknowledge.uky.edu/honprog/26>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Lewis Honors College at UKnowledge. It has been accepted for inclusion in Lewis Honors College Capstone Collection by an authorized administrator of UKnowledge. For more information, please contact UKnowledge@lsv.uky.edu.

Effects of Timing of Parental Divorce on Children's Romantic Relationships in Adulthood:

A Review

Adrian Weldon and Diana Haleman

University of Kentucky

Abstract

A literature review was conducted to determine what age children are most vulnerable to the impact of parental divorce on their romantic relationships in adulthood. Fourteen articles were included in this review. Results of the review showed different outcomes based on stage of life. Parental divorce in infancy, early childhood, late childhood, and adolescence resulted in the most negative long-term effects on the children's intimate relationships later in life. Children in middle childhood and young adulthood at the time of their parents' marital dissolution appeared to be most resilient to its impact on their romantic relationships in adulthood. Literature on this association is still very limited. This review can be used as a starting point for future research.

Effects of Timing of Parental Divorce on Children's Romantic Relationships in Adulthood:
A Review

It has been well-documented that parental divorce can have negative consequences for children, because it causes great distress during a developmentally critical point of life. These consequences can be seen in the emotional, psychological, educational, social, and interpersonal reactions of the children. Many of these consequences are carried into adulthood. Sociological theories suggest that the time and financial constraints associated with divorce mean that divorced parents are less able able to regulate children's behavior, provide stimulation, exercise social control, and give individual attention (Furstenberg & Kiernan, 2001). As a result, parental divorce has been linked to depression in adulthood, emotional disorders, lower academic achievement, and even higher premature mortality risk, to name just a few (Aseltine Jr, 1996; Chase-Lansdale, Cherlin, & Kiernan, 1995; Tucker et al., 1997).

A particularly crucial consequence of parental divorce is its effect on the future romantic relationships of the children involved. Huurre, Junkkari, and Aro (2006) report that females especially faced more interpersonal problems if they came from a divorced home background. Female children of divorced parents are more likely to divorce, while male children are less likely to marry at all (Keith & Finlay, 1988). Children who have experienced the marital dissolution of their families are also more likely to become sexually active at earlier ages and enter partnerships earlier (Kiernan & Hobcraft, 1997). They tend to develop more negative attitudes toward marriage in general and are less likely to be in close relationships (Segrin, Taylor, & Altman, 2005).

The interpersonal relationships of children from divorced families is of particular concern because it creates a cycle known as the intergenerational transmission of divorce. Children of

divorced parents are more likely to get divorced themselves, which continues the effects of parental divorce in the next generation (Wolfinger, 1999). Divorce also has a drastic effect on their development and adjustment to adulthood. Developing romantic relationships is a key milestone during adulthood. Erikson studied the developmental life stages of humans and determined that the crisis faced during young adulthood is creating intimate relationships (as cited in McLeod, 2008). If this process is interfered with, perhaps because of the lingering effects of parental divorce, then the young adult will develop feelings of isolation instead (McLeod, 2008).

For these reasons, it is important to identify risk factors for maladaptive interpersonal relationships due to parental divorce in order to attenuate the long-term, negative consequences that children experience. Age is one factor that has been studied because children have different perceptions of and responses to divorce depending on their age and development (Leon, 2003). However, most research has focused on the differences between children of divorce and children in intact families, rather than the differences between children who experience parental divorce at various ages.

The purpose of this study was to analyze the research in order to determine if there are certain ages at which parental divorce occurs where children are most vulnerable to experiencing problems in developing and/or maintaining romantic relationships as adults. Although research on this topic refers to families with divorced parents as “disrupted families” or “broken families,” they will be referred to as divorced families in this review in order to avoid the negative connotations “disrupted” and “broken” gives to this family structure.

Methods

For the purpose of this review, articles were collected from databases such as PsycInfo and Google Scholar. Keywords used to search for related articles included “parental divorce,” “time since parental divorce,” “age,” “age effects,” “age difference,” “childhood divorce,” “divorce during adolescence,” “interpersonal effects,” “relationships,” “romantic relationships,” and others in various combinations. Fifty-eight articles were identified containing relevant information. Experimental, correlational, observational, and qualitative studies were all included.

Some articles had to be excluded from the review. Only articles written in English, or with an English translation, were used. Additionally, articles had to be published in peer reviewed journals within the past fifty years (since 1966) in order to obtain the most reliable and current information. Exclusion criteria also omitted articles that only studied children who experienced parental divorce without identifying the age of the children when the parents divorced.

Since age is continuous, it would be impossible to analyze the effects of parental divorce for children at every age. Therefore, for the purposes of this review, the ages were categorized by the 12 Stages of the Human Life Cycle as defined by Dr. Thomas Armstrong. The stages used are infancy (0-2), early childhood (3-5), middle childhood (6-8), late childhood (9-11), adolescence (12-20), and early adulthood (21-35) (American Institute for Learning and Human Development, n.d.). These life stages correspond closely to the age groups studied in most of the research. No research was included after early adulthood due to the lack of research pertaining to parental divorce after this stage, and because most people have already entered committed relationships by this point in life.

Included articles also had to address the romantic relationships of the children who experienced parental divorce. Many studies considered both permanent separation and legal divorce as parental divorce. Romantic relationships included any sexual, dating, cohabitating, or marital relationships. Relationships could also be of any sexual orientation, although there is not much research addressing the differences between children of divorce in heterosexual or homosexual relationships.

Results

Fourteen articles met the inclusion criteria and are utilized in this review. The research found is broken down by life stage below. Not all studies explicitly addressed age at parental divorce. Measures of time since divorce and age of children undergoing parental divorce during data collection were used to determine the stage of life at which the children experienced the marital dissolution of their parents.

Some variables were found to be consistent across all life stages. For example, most courting behaviors in adulthood, including long-term relationships, premarital sex, cohabitation, and relationship quality, did not vary by age at time parental marriage dissolution (Booth, Brinkerhoff, & White, 1984). Additionally, trust of intimate partners was not found to be different for any life stage at which parental divorce occurred (King, 2002). However, a majority of research did find differences between children who experienced parental divorce at different times.

Infancy (0-2)

Research on the effects of parental divorce in infancy on outcomes in adulthood is difficult to find due to the assumption that the effects of divorce weaken over time, thus not affecting children during infancy as severely as those experiencing it in later developmental

stages. There are some inconsistencies in the literature regarding this assumption. Amato and Keith (1991) stated that there is a weak relationship between parental divorce and later negative outcomes. According to the recency theory, divorce is a trauma for children, but one they can recover from in a few years (Kalter & Rembar, 1981). Therefore, negative outcomes in adulthood, at least 18 years after parental divorce in infancy, are unlikely.

On the other hand, the cumulative theory states that the earlier in childhood that the divorce occurs, the more of an impact it will have on the child (Kalter & Rembar, 1981). Earlier divorce gives the negative effects more time to accumulate throughout the child's life. Also, during this period the child is too young to understand and is unable to mourn the loss, even if they feel the emotional disturbances (Kalter & Rembar, 1981). This inability to mourn can be detrimental to their coping with the change and have long-term emotional consequences. Disadvantages children face due to parental divorce have also been found to be stable over time (Sigle-Rushton, Hobcraft, & Kiernan, 2005). The same disadvantages observed in childhood are still present when the child is an adult. This inconsistency implies a gap in the literature that should be addressed in future research.

Despite the inability to examine the direct outcome in adulthood, there are some effects of parental divorce during infancy that can be extrapolated to later life. First, infants with divorced parents tested lower on social skills (Clarke-Stewart, Vandell, McCartney, Owen, & Booth, 2000). It was suggested that single parents are not able to provide as much stimulation to infants, resulting in poorer social skills in the early years of life (Clarke-Stewart et al., 2000). Since these years are crucial to development, these poor social skills could follow them throughout their life. Poorer social skills might make it difficult to establish relationships in adulthood.

Additionally, infants were less securely attached to their mothers if the parents were divorced (Clarke-Stewart et al., 2000). The association between secure attachment to mother in infancy and secure attachment in adult relationships is well-established in attachment theory. Hazan and Shaver found that the attachment an infant has to its caregiver is highly related to the attachment the child exhibits in later social relationships, including to romantic partners (as cited in Collins & Read, 1990, p. 513). Infants who are securely attached are more likely to be in relationships with trust and honesty, suggesting a more successful relationship (Collins & Read, 1990). However, it is important to note that Clarke-Stewart et al. (2000) believe that single parenting was more of a predictor of negative outcomes than the divorce itself, since single parents have less time to provide attention and stimulation to infants than a two-parent home would.

Early Childhood (3-5)

It is difficult to know whether children in this age group are able to properly understand what is happening in regards to their parents' marital dissolution. They are now verbal and capable of more advanced cognitive processes than infants, but they are still at a cognitively early stage of development. They may have difficulty regulating emotions of fear, loss, or sorrow, or be unable to adequately verbalize them (Leon, 2003).

The critical stage hypothesis identifies these years as the "Oedipal years," based off of the psychodynamic concept of the Oedipal complex (Kalter & Rembar, 1981, p. 86). At this stage, divorce can be traumatic, because it can lead to guilt, anxiety, and possible identity formation deficiencies (Kalter & Rembar, 1981). This would be especially true for males and in situations where divorce leads to the absence of a parental figure (Kalter & Rembar, 1981).

As far as romantic relationships, children experiencing divorce at this life stage have a lower premarital birth rate and divorce rate than children who experience divorce in late childhood or adolescence (McLanahan & Bumpass, 1988). On the other hand, they have higher rates than children in the middle childhood stage (McLanahan & Bumpass, 1988). However, research supporting these findings did not reach significance. The authors also defined early childhood as the entire first four years of life, which does not correspond completely to our age range.

Observational studies found that girls who experienced divorce in this age group were able to develop relationships, but they were superficial in nature and did not establish true emotional connections (McDermott, 1968). Children who experienced divorce during the preschool age were also more likely to engage in premarital sexual activity, although this relationship was moderated by likelihood of parental remarriage (Booth, Brinkerhoff, & White, 1984).

Middle Childhood (6-8)

Although this stage has a narrow range of years, it is very formative for children. During this time, they begin school and start developing more stable social peer relationships. A stressful life event at this age could impair their ability to successfully develop these relationships, which could affect their relationships in adulthood. However, research shows that children in this stage seem to undergo fewer negative consequences. McLanahan and Bumpass (1988) found that children in middle childhood were less likely to have a premarital birth or divorce in adulthood than either children in early childhood or adolescence. However, even though this relationship was found, it was not significant. Only increased premarital births among African Americans with parents divorcing at this age was significant. Middle childhood

was defined between 5-9 years old by this study, which is outside our age range, but still representative of children in this age group.

Late Childhood (9-11)

During this stage of life, children are more able to understand the processes and loss involved in divorce, which may help them cope more effectively. However, childhood is still a developmentally vulnerable stage at which children can be negatively impacted by life changes. Erikson suggested that this stage, also referred to as the latency period, is “socially, a most decisive stage” (as cited in Wallerstein & Kelly, 1976, p. 256). Children who experienced divorce between 9 and 10 years old were interviewed, and half of them were found to have difficulties in peer relationships, which could be extended to difficulties in adulthood when they are trying to establish romantic relationships (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1976). However, they were also more likely to be empathetic and show an understanding of the feelings of others, which is an indicator of successful romantic relationships in the future (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1976).

McLanahan and Bumpass (1988) studied children ages 10-14 in order to determine their outcomes in adulthood. This age range extends into adolescence, but it will be included in late childhood since that is the earliest life stage of the children in this group. Children who experienced parental divorce during this time were the most likely to have premarital births and get divorced of any other age group (McLanahan & Bumpass, 1988). Once again, this relationship was only significant for the premarital birth rates of African American children.

Adolescence (12-20)

This stage of life is particularly interesting, because it is when most people first begin their involvement with dating. Since the concept of romantic relationships is more salient at this age, children might be more likely to be affected by observing the maladaptive events in the

romantic relationships of their parents (Lansford, 2009). At this age they are also making life-transitioning decisions, such as sexual activity, and preparing to leave home where they will be without parental supervision (McLanahan & Bumpass, 1988). The stress and social control hypothesis suggests that it is possible that parental divorce during this time is especially detrimental to their ability to have healthy romantic relationships and make positive decisions because of the stress and disturbances they are experiencing (McLanahan & Bumpass, 1988).

Summers, Forehand, Armistead, & Tannenbaum (1998) reported that females who experienced parental divorce in early adolescence, with average age of 13 years, exhibited lower levels of secure attachment to their romantic partners ten years later. However, they showed no difference in general interpersonal skill, emotional distress, and externalizing behaviors from females with married parents. (Summers et al., 1998).

Early Adulthood (21-35)

Little research exists on the effects of parental divorce when the children are young adults. Of the studies that have been conducted, findings were mostly focused on depression and the parent-child relationship following divorce (Aquilino, 1994; Cooney et al., 1986). The lack of research during this stage of life could, in part, be attributed to the lower likelihood of divorce the longer the marriage lasts. If a marriage lasts long enough to raise children to adulthood, then it is less likely to end in divorce. However, this might change because we are seeing an increase in mid-life divorces in the United States.

According to the U.S Census Bureau (2011), of all couples married in 1990-1994, about 25% of them ended the marriage in the first ten years, with the average marriage length before dissolution being about 8 years. Consequently, in 2009 around 35% of married couples involved a partner that had been married before (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Although termination of

marriage could be due to death or divorce, divorce is more common. This suggests that the majority of couples that will divorce do so in the early years of the marriage, before their children would have reached adulthood. However, some parents wait until the children reach young adulthood and begin transitioning to their own lives before ending a marriage in order to avoid the disruption it would cause the children. Some research suggests that waiting for divorce does not necessarily avoid the disruption to children if they are exposed to high conflict in their parents' marriage (Furstenberg & Kiernan, 2001).

Another possible reason for the lack of research on age at time of parental divorce and romantic relationships could be that young adults are considered to have already developed the skills and behaviors involved in establishing intimate partnerships. Therefore, parental divorce would not impact this process for adult children as it would for developing children. However, with the age of first marriage increasing from 20 to 26 since 1950, young adults are often still not in committed long-term relationships at this point in their life (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Parental divorce during this time could affect the way they view marriage. Research on parental divorce during this stage could still provide valuable insight on whether or not it affects young adults, and to what extent.

One study did examine the differences between parental divorce in young adulthood and childhood. Children who experienced parental divorce in their youth, under the age of 21 in this study, were more likely to enter into sexual relationships at an earlier age than children who experienced parental divorce in young adulthood (Furstenberg & Kiernan, 2001). Due to earlier age of sexual activity, youth also entered partnerships sooner and ended the partnerships quicker (Furstenberg & Kiernan, 2001). Adults were less likely than youth to have children earlier and out-of-wedlock (Furstenberg & Kiernan, 2001).

Kiernan and Cherlin (1999) also found differences between adults and children with divorced parents. Children over 20 at the time of parental divorce were less likely to have dissolved their own partnerships by the time they were 33 than people whose parents divorced when they were children (Kiernan & Cherlin, 1999). However, adults experiencing parental divorce were still more likely to be divorced themselves than children in intact families (Kiernan & Cherlin, 1999). Earlier age at first partnerships, which is found more often in children whose parents divorced at earlier ages, was found to moderate this relationship (Kiernan & Cherlin, 1999). These results suggest that adults are more resilient to the adverse consequences of parental divorce than children in earlier life stages.

Discussion

After comparing the research for each life stage, it appears that infancy, early childhood, late childhood, and adolescence are the life stages where children are most vulnerable to the effects of parental divorce in regards to their later romantic relationships. Children whose parents divorced while they are in middle childhood and young adulthood did not experience as many undesirable long-term effects. It should be noted that while certain life stages showed worse outcomes for children over time, the type of outcome was different depending on the life stage. In infancy and early childhood, parental divorce is mostly associated with less secure attachment, poor social skills, and difficulty establishing emotional connections. On the other hand, late childhood and adolescence is mostly associated with higher likelihood of premarital births and divorce rates.

Although middle childhood does not show these effects to the same extent, it still has a higher prevalence of premarital birth and divorce than non-divorced families. Young adulthood, when compared with childhood as a whole, seems to be the time when children are most resilient

to their parents' divorce. They are less likely to get divorced, instigate sexual activity at a later age, enter into partnerships later, and are less likely to dissolve these partnerships. This could be because the children are no longer at home and do not experience the disruptions resulting from divorce. By young adulthood, they are also more likely to have already developed patterns of behavior in romantic relationships.

It is difficult to determine which stage of life is the most vulnerable due to the variety of outcomes exhibited at each stage. There is also inconsistency in the literature about which time in life is the most disruptive for children. Earlier life stages could be the most vulnerable since children lack understanding and the ability to mourn their loss (Kalter & Rembar, 1981). It also provides for time for the negative consequences of divorce to accumulate (Kalter & Rembar, 1981). Other arguments suggest late childhood and adolescence are the most vulnerable, because romantic relationships are most salient at this life stage (Kalter & Rembar, 1981; Lansford, 2009). Children are beginning to learn how to be in romantic relationships, so parental divorce at this time can disrupt the developmental process.

The limitations of this literature review must be addressed. There are many intervening variables that could alter the children's experiences of parental divorce. Socioeconomic status, race, culture, and family structure are just a few of these variables. Current research aggregates information across these variables, so it is impossible to determine which effects are truly due to the timing of parental divorce.

Caution should be used when comparing the research on these life stages because of the differences in the breadth and depth of the information provided. Not all life stages were equally analyzed in research. For example, middle childhood showed fewer adverse consequences on their adulthood relationships, but it is possibly due to a lack of research on this age group rather

than a true lack of consequences. Additionally, the operationalization of romantic behaviors was different between studies. Some studies addressed the likelihood of divorce, while others looked at the age of first sexual activity or secure attachment. It is challenging to compare outcomes for different times of parental divorce if the behaviors being compared are not the same.

Due to the lack of available research, another limitation is the inability to examine the direct connection between parental divorce during a certain stage of life and romantic outcomes in adulthood. Much of the research examined social skills and relationships of the children. These findings can be used to make assumptions about romantic relationships in adulthood (i.e. poorer social skills would make it harder to establish relationships), but the direct link was not measured. This is especially true for the earlier life stages of infancy and early childhood, since there is a greater amount of time until adult outcomes become evident.

Additionally, age ranges used to define life stages are somewhat arbitrary. Many researchers and professionals disagree on the exact age ranges of the different life stages, as well as how many stages people go through. Within the literature, the age ranges are inconsistent, and many studies include participants with that fall into more than one life stage.

The varying lengths of the life stages should also be considered as a limitation. Many of the childhood stages were made up of only 2 or 3 years. This range is appropriate for childhood, since development happens at a rapid pace during youth. For example, a 6 year old is much more advanced physically, emotionally, and cognitively than a 3 year old. The difference of three years is more profound for children than it would be in adults, which explains why young adulthood has a much wider range of ages. However, adolescence is also a developmentally crucial stage and may have been too broadly defined. The life stages described by Armstrong (n.d.) considers adolescence to be 12-20 years, which are the ages utilized for this review. There

are a lot of changes a person goes through during these years, so it is difficult to assume a 12 and 20 year old would have similar reactions to parental divorce. Although findings were grouped together for this entire age group, it may be possible to further tease apart differences between early and late adolescence.

Although this review analyzed evidence that supports an association between the negative outcomes in adult relationships and timing of divorce, it does not explain why these associations occur or what causes them. The event of divorce includes other lifestyle changes and disruptions that could lead to these outcomes. Single parenthood comes with a unique set of challenges once a parent is the only caretaker and provider for their childhood. Several studies suggest that it is actually single parenthood, not divorce itself, that result in some of these negative outcomes, especially for younger children who spend more of their childhood growing up in a single-parent home (Furstenberg & Kiernan, 2001). Single parents often have less time, money, and resources to invest in children because of their increased responsibilities (Kiernan, 1997; Furstenberg & Kiernan, 2001). In fact, Amato (1988) found that if family-of-origin variables were held steady, many of the differences among children experiencing parental divorce disappeared.

Furstenberg and Kiernan (2001) also recognized that “the dissolution of marriage often involves a lengthy sequence of predivorce experiences, the effects of which may as important for children’s welfare as the separation itself” (p. 446). Basically, the marital distress and conflict exhibited by the parents may be as disruptive to children as the actual divorce. Children raised in high-conflict homes, even with two parents, showed problems in their romantic relationships in adulthood (Amato, Loomis, & Booth, 1995). One study found that males showed signs of the “predivorce familial stress” almost 11 years before the formal separation of the parents (Block,

Block, & Gjerde, 1986, p. 827). For this reason, it may not be the timing of divorce that affects the children, but rather their experience with parental marital conflict.

For those parents concerned about the effects of divorce on their children's subsequent partnerships, there are protective factors that were found to improve outcomes. While the child's age at time of divorce is significant, it is also important to consider other elements related to family demographics. Involvement of the noncustodial parent, often the father, was found to have better outcomes (Amato & Keith, 1991). Socioeconomic status (SES) also plays a role. Males of divorced parents were even less likely to ever marry if they also came from a lower SES background (Keith & Finlay, 1988). Parent-child relationships are also a critical part of the child's adjustment to divorce and the long-term impact. No matter what age the child is when parental divorce occurs, fostering a supportive, caring relationship between parent and child results in more positive outcomes for children (O'Connor, Thorpe, Dunn, & Golding, 1999).

Conclusion

This review aimed to determine whether timing of parental divorce has an effect on the romantic relationships of the children. Although some research on the topic was found, this phenomenon is not widely studied. Gaps exist in the literature that could be potential for future research. Sex difference and racial differences appeared in some of the research, so future studies can analyze the interaction between timing of parental divorce and race or sex on children's outcomes. Socioeconomic status also has a significant effect on the resources families have to adjust to life changes. More research is needed on how SES plays a role in the children's experience of parental divorce. There are also many family structures that are not included in current research, such as families with homosexual parents. With the changing cultural and societal norms, these families need to be better represented in the research. Future research can

also focus on age groups underrepresented in the current literature, such as infancy and adolescence.

Despite the negative consequences analyzed for families of divorce, it is important to note that these results compare the average behaviors of groups. Divorce is not the same experience for all children. Not all, or even most, of children of divorce are subjected to these undesirable outcomes. They are just more likely, as a group, to exhibit these effects compared to children without divorced parents.

In fact, there is hope for children of divorce and their subsequent romantic partnerships. Adults from divorced families have been found to be more realistic about limitations and challenges associated with marriage (Amato, 1998). Wolfinger (1999) found the intergenerational transmission of divorce has declined 50% in the past decades. Divorced families should not take the results of this review as a prediction of their own children's outcomes, but rather a topic of discussion on the potential challenges these children may face. Family therapists and other professionals should also consider these results when working with children and families facing divorce.

References

- Amato, P. R. (1988). Parental divorce and attitudes toward marriage and family life. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 50(2), 453-461.
- Amato, P. R., & Keith, B. (1991). Parental divorce and the well-being of children: a meta-analysis. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 53(1), 43-58.
- Amato, P. R., Loomis, L. S., & Booth, A. (1995). Parental divorce, marital conflict, and offspring well-being during early adulthood. *Social Forces*, 73(3), 895-915.
- American Institute for Learning and Human Development. (n.d.). *12 stages of the human life cycle*. Retrieved from http://www.institute4learning.com/stages_of_life.php.
- Aquilino, W. S. (1994). Later life parental divorce and widowhood: Impact on young adults' assessment of parent-child relations. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 56(4), 908-922.
- Aseltine Jr, R. H. (1996). Pathways linking parental divorce with adolescent depression. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 37(2), 133-148.
- Block, J. H., Block, J., & Gjerde, P. F. (1986). The personality of children prior to divorce: A prospective study. *Child development*, 57(4), 827-840.
- Booth, A., Brinkerhoff, D. B., & White, L. K. (1984). The impact of parental divorce on courtship. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 46(1), 85-94.
- Chase-Lansdale, P. L., Cherlin, A. J., & Kiernan, K. E. (1995). The long-term effects of parental divorce on the mental health of young adults: A developmental perspective. *Child development*, 66(6), 1614-1634.

- Clarke-Stewart, K. A., Vandell, D. L., McCartney, K., Owen, M. T., & Booth, C. (2000). Effects of parental separation and divorce on very young children. *Journal of Family Psychology, 14*(2), 304-326.
- Collins, N. L., & Read, S. J. (1990). Adult attachment, working models, and relationship quality in dating couples. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 58*(4), 644-663.
- Cooney, T. M., Smyer, M. A., Hagestad, G. O., & Klock, R. (1986). Parental divorce in young adulthood: Some preliminary findings. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 56*(3), 470-477.
- Erikson, E. H. (1994). *Identity and the life cycle*. WW Norton & Company.
- Furstenberg, F. F., & Kiernan, K. E. (2001). Delayed parental divorce: How much do children benefit?. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 63*(2), 446-457.
- Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 52*(3), 511-524.
- Huurte, T., Junkkari, H., & Aro, H. (2006). Long-term psychosocial effects of parental divorce. *European archives of psychiatry and clinical neuroscience, 256*(4), 256-263.
- Kalter, N., & Rembar, J. (1981). The significance of a child's age at the time of parental divorce. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 51*(1), 85-100.
- Keith, V. M., & Finlay, B. (1988). The impact of parental divorce on children's educational attainment, marital timing, and likelihood of divorce. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 50*(3), 797-809.
- Kiernan, K. E., & Cherlin, A. J. (1999). Parental divorce and partnership dissolution in adulthood: Evidence from a British cohort study. *Population Studies, 53*(1), 39-48.

- Kiernan, K. E., & Hobcraft, J. (1997). Parental divorce during childhood: Age at first intercourse, partnership and parenthood. *Population Studies*, 51(1), 41-55.
- King, V. (2002). Parental divorce and interpersonal trust in adult offspring. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 64(3), 642-656.
- Lansford, J. E. (2009). Parental divorce and children's adjustment. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 4(2), 140-152.
- Leon, K. (2003). Risk and protective factors in young children's adjustment to parental divorce: A review of the research. *Family Relations*, 52(3), 258-270.
- McDermott Jr, J. F. (1968). Parental divorce in early childhood. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 124(10), 1424-1432.
- McLanahan, S., & Bumpass, L. (1988). Intergenerational consequences of family disruption. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94(1) 130-152.
- McLeod, S. (2008). Erik Erikson. *Simply Psychology*. Retrieved from <http://www.simplypsychology.org/Erik-Erikson.html#intimacy>.
- O'Connor, T. G., Thorpe, K., Dunn, J., & Golding, J. (1999). Parental divorce and adjustment in adulthood: Findings from a community sample. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 40(5), 777-789.
- Segrin, C., Taylor, M. E., & Altman, J. (2005). Social cognitive mediators and relational outcomes associated with parental divorce. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 22(3), 361-377.
- Sigle-Rushton, W., Hobcraft, J., & Kiernan, K. (2005). Parental divorce and subsequent disadvantage: A cross-cohort comparison. *Demography*, 42(3), 427-446.

- Summers, P., Forehand, R., Armistead, L., & Tannenbaum, L. (1998). Parental divorce during early adolescence in Caucasian families: The role of family process variables in predicting the long-term consequences for early adult psychosocial adjustment. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 66*(2), 327-336.
- Tucker, J. S., Friedman, H. S., Schwartz, J. E., Criqui, M. H., Tomlinson-Keasey, C., Wingard, D. L., & Martin, L. R. (1997). Parental divorce: Effects on individual behavior and longevity. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 73*(2), 381-391.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2011, May). *Number, timing, and duration of marriages and divorces: 2009*. Retrieved November 15, 2016, from <https://www.census.gov/prod/2011pubs/p70-125.pdf>.
- Wallerstein, J. S., & Kelly, J. B. (1976). The effects of parental divorce: Experiences of the child in later latency. *American journal of Orthopsychiatry, 46*(2), 256-269.
- Wolfinger, N. H. (1999). Trends in the intergenerational transmission of divorce. *Demography, 36*(3), 415-420.