

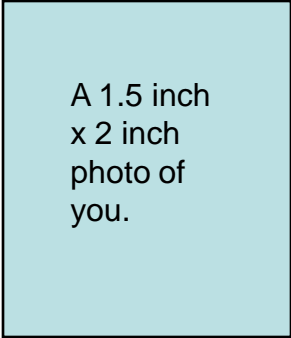
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POST-INSTITUTIONALIZED ADOLESCENT ROMANTIC AND FRIENDSHIP RELATIONSHIP FORMATION

Previous research has shown that children adopted from institutions overseas (post-institutionalized children, PI), can exhibit an abnormal pattern of friendliness that tends to be impersonal and very seldom reciprocal (Gunnar 2001). Studies of abnormal patterns of friendliness in PI children motivate questions of how these children develop and maintain friendships and romantic relationships as they transition into adolescence. The present study seeks to examine whether post-institutionalized adolescents will have more difficulty than their non-adopted counterparts, in making and maintaining both friendships and romantic relationships. Method: The full study will have 160 adolescents (80 girls) aged 12-14 years who are just entering or close to entering puberty, and are typically developing. Participants in this study fit into one of two groups, post-institutionalized (having spent most of their pre-adoptive life in an institution) or a non-adopted comparison group. Both of these groups will contain 40 adolescents who are pubertal, and 40 who are non-pubertal. Friendships and romantic relationships will be assessed by the Network of Relationships Inventory (NRI), which yields subscales for companionship, conflict, instrumental aid, antagonism, intimacy, nurturance, affection, admiration, relative power, and reliable alliance. Results: Data collection for this study is ongoing, but results will be available at the time of presentation. It is hypothesized that the PI group will score higher on conflict antagonism scales and lower on intimacy, affection, and companionship scales of the NRI, indicating more difficulty creating and maintaining friendships and romantic relationships than the comparison group.



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