

## Introduction

- The experience of positive events can have a beneficial impact on the physical and mental health outcomes of adolescents (Gentzler, Morey, Palmer, & Yi, 2013).
- Positive affect (PA) is associated with the experience of positive events, such that PA is higher when individuals experience more positive events (Nezlek & Plesko, 2003).
- PA generated from positive events may help to widen individuals' attention and thinking, which in turn may expand their personal resources such as cognitive flexibility, problem solving capabilities, and the ability to connect socially (Fredrickson, 2001).
- Despite an increase in experience of important life events during adolescence, little research has examined the influence of positive events on affect reactivity.
- The current study examined individual differences in positive affect reactivity to particular types of daily positive events among adolescents.

## Hypotheses

1. Positive interpersonal events will predict greater PA reactivity compared to positive non-interpersonal events
2. Positive dependent events will predict greater PA reactivity compared to positive independent events
3. Positive dependent interpersonal events will predict greater PA reactivity than any other event domain
4. Sex will moderate the effects of positive events on PA reactivity

## Method

### Participants

- 136 adolescents (51.3% female) were recruited from three middle schools in the Pacific Northwest. Participants ranged in age from 11 to 14 years old ( $M = 13.03$ ,  $SD = .93$ ). Approximately 77.5% of participants identified as Caucasian, 9.8% Biracial, 8% Native American/Pacific Islander, 7.8% Asian-American, 1.6% African American, and 1.6% Hispanic/Latinx.

### Procedure

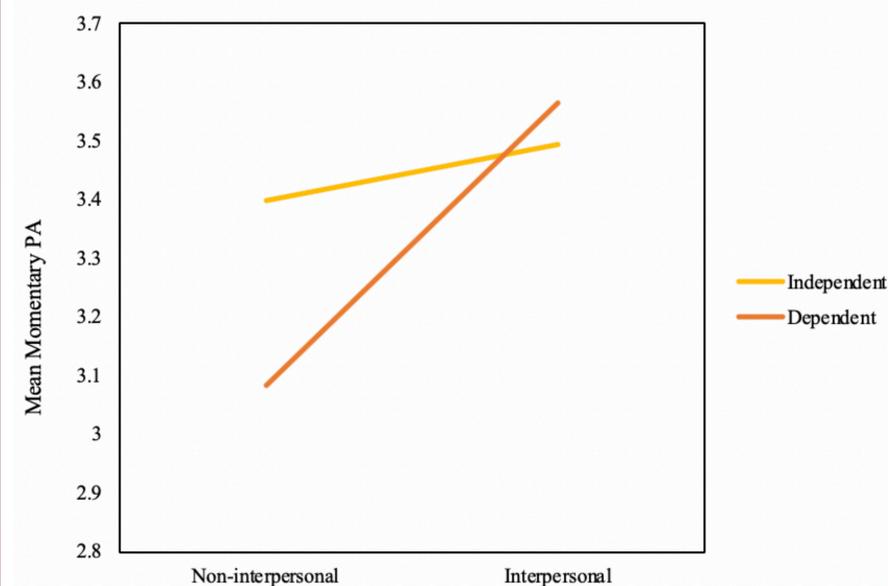
- Participants completed a baseline questionnaire followed by an ecological momentary assessment (EMA) method evaluating momentary PA in response to daily positive events.

**Table 1. Results of multilevel models for the effect of event type on adolescents momentary PA**

	Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
<b>Level 1</b>						
Intercept	1.93	0.31	6.19**	2.08	0.31	6.71**
Ping	-0.01	0.01	-1.50	-0.01	0.01	-1.48
Dependent	-0.17	0.08	-2.17*	-0.28	0.09	-3.16*
Interpersonal	0.45	0.06	7.15**	0.10	0.18	0.57
DEP X INT	—	—	—	0.42	0.19	2.24*
<b>Level 2</b>						
Trait PA	0.48	0.09	5.55**	0.47	0.09	5.40**
Depressive symptoms	-0.00	0.01	-0.21	-0.00	0.01	-0.24

*Note.* Independent coded: 0 = independent, 1 = dependent. Interpersonal coded: 0 = non-interpersonal, 1 = interpersonal. DEP X INT = interaction effect between independent and interpersonal event categories. Trait PA and depressive symptoms were entered in the model as z-scores.  
\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .001$ .

**Figure 1: Effects of positive event type on momentary PA**



*Please refer to handout for references.*

## Results

### Main Effect

- Consistent with hypotheses, results demonstrated that adolescents experienced greater momentary PA in response to positive interpersonal events compared to positive non-interpersonal events ( $\beta = 0.45$ ,  $p < .001$ ).
- Contrary to hypotheses, adolescents demonstrated less momentary PA reactivity in response to positive dependent events than compared to positive independent events ( $\beta = -0.17$ ,  $p = .033$ ).
- The effects of event type on momentary PA were not moderated by sex.

### Interaction Effect

- There was a significant interaction effect ( $\beta = 0.42$ ,  $p = .028$ ), indicating that the interaction between whether an event was independent or dependent and whether an event was non-interpersonal or interpersonal, impacted momentary PA.
- Consistent with hypotheses, findings indicated that positive interpersonal, dependent events produced the most momentary PA than any other combination of event types.

## Discussion

- Our findings suggest that adolescents respond with the highest amount of PA reactivity to positive events that are both dependent and interpersonal in nature.
- However, additional research is needed to understand our mixed findings related to the effects of dependent events on momentary PA.
- Clinically, our findings may inform clinicians implementing behavioral activation interventions, which have been shown to be an effective treatment for depression among adolescents.
- Limitations include the fact that EMA surveys were not distributed during school hours, that our sample was primarily Caucasian, gender normative, and that we used a non-clinical sample.
- Future studies should gather information about how adolescents respond to positive daily events during the school day, especially given the importance of peer relationships.
- Additional research should also consider investigating affective reactivity in response to positive events while taking into consideration the importance or severity of the events.