Hypothetical associations with paternal depression: an overview

**Method**

**Participants:**
- Parents with a history of depression were taken from a larger sample of 112 depressed parents.
- A total of 17 fathers
  - (mean age = 48.84, SD = 6.78)
  - (mean BDI score = 18.21, SD = 12.44)
  - 88.3% employed for pay; 82.4% married; 47% had a gross annual income of $40,000-89,000)
- 31 mothers were selected from a sample of 95 mothers for data comparison
  - (mean age = 48.84, SD = 6.78)
  - (mean BDI score = 18.21, SD = 12.44)
  - 80.6% employed for pay; 87.1% married; 54.9% had an annual income of $40,000-89,000)

**Measures:**
- Coded with the Iowa Family Interaction Rating Scales (IFIRS)
- *Codes:
  - **Negative Parenting/Child-Centered (CC),
  - Positive Reinforcement (PO), Quality Time (QT), Child Monitoring (CM)
  - Communication: Listener Responsiveness (LR), Communication (CO)

**Procedures:**
- Information was gathered at baseline before any treatment had taken place
- Each parent-child interaction was watched through 5 times by two independent coders
- Focusing on either the child or the parent
- Each coder scored the codes based on the IFIRS coding rules from a 1 (behavior never occurs) to a 9 (behavior very frequently occurs)
- Consensus coding was completed between the 2 coders to obtain the consensus scores that were used in the analyses

**Results:**

**Hypotheses 1 & 4**

**Hypothetical associations with paternal depression: an overview

**Discussion and Conclusions**

- Overall it appears that father’s depressive symptoms correlate with a broader range of negative parenting behaviors
- Depressive symptoms correlate with a decreased ability for fathers to discuss positive topics.
- With little discussion of positive topics, this could possibly cause a negative outlook on life for children of depressed fathers.
- Depressive symptoms correlate with a decreased ability for fathers to listen to their children discussing stressful topics, perhaps when they need a supportive listener, the model does not provide emotional support, this could possibly exacerbate depressive symptoms in children of depressed fathers.
- Depressive symptoms correlate with a decrease in the amount of positive reinforcemnt given to a child by their father (builds on Jacob et al., 1997 & 2000).
- Without praise for age-appropriate behaviors and achievements, this could lead to lower levels of self-esteem in children of depressed fathers.
- Even when discussing positive situations, deppressions appears to correlate with increased anger and rejection in fathers (builds on Elgar et al, 2007; Kane et al., 2004). Increased anger and rejection could possibly lead to less prosocial behaviors carried out by children of depressed fathers within interactions with other children

**References**


Studies in Mental Health Nursing. 27, 867-883.

**Acknowledgments**

This research was supported by National Institute of Mental Health grants R01MH0669940 and R01MH0669928.

Dr. Bruce E. Compas, for his unavering support and attention to my educational success. His unerring encouragement helped me to reach my utmost academic potential.