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 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S HEALTH IN SOCIAL CONTEXT

Adolescent Internalizing Symptoms Worsen Parenting and the Parent-Adolescent Relationship Quality, but Hardly the Other Way Around

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Teen Depression: An Urgent Problem

- 17% of adolescent girls and 6% of boys had a major depression episode in 2014 (NIMH).
- “We [believed to] know some things” (Steinberg, 2001): depressive symptoms can be prevented by psychological autonomy granting and parental warmth.
 - Psychological control and lack of warmth associated with depressive symptoms.
- But most findings cross-sectional, from longitudinal studies w/o control of previous symptoms, or inconsistent.
- Blaming parents might not be the solution. What are the processes in between adolescent internalizing and parenting?
 - This study is about depressive symptoms, loneliness, and low self-esteem. The focus is on depression.

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A Family Model of Adolescent Internalizing

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Study Design

Age	2013	2014
17		
16		1,274
15	1,281	824
14		195
13		236
Parents		290

- Survey at schools in Swedish municipality
- Mailed parent survey
- Total N= 1,760, 52% girls
- Reasons for missing data:
 - parent non-response
 - school change
 - absence at either wave
 - lack of correct ID #
- Multiple imputation of missing data

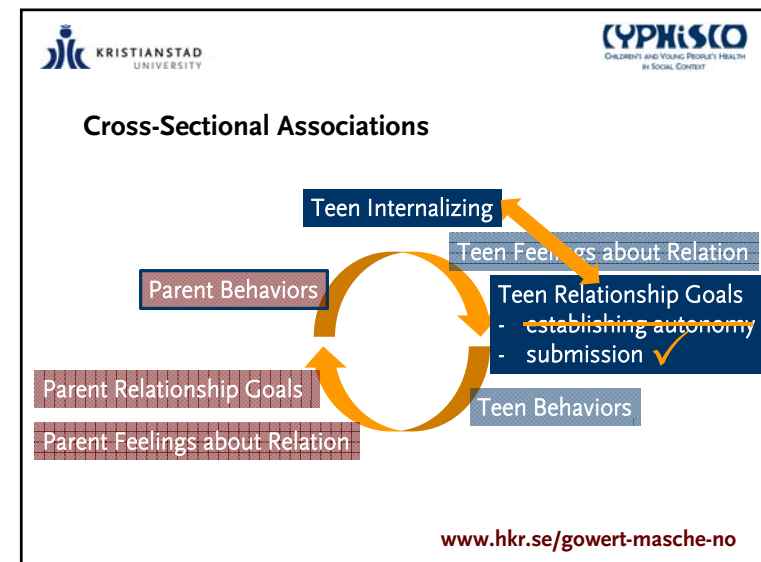
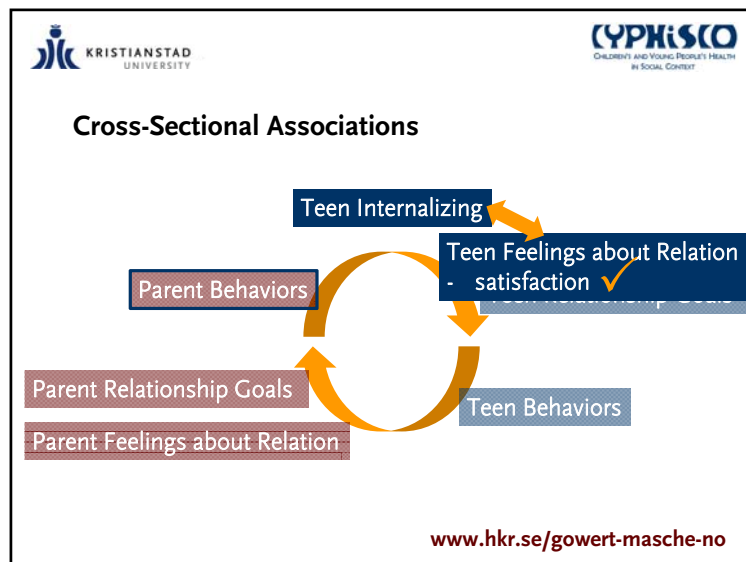
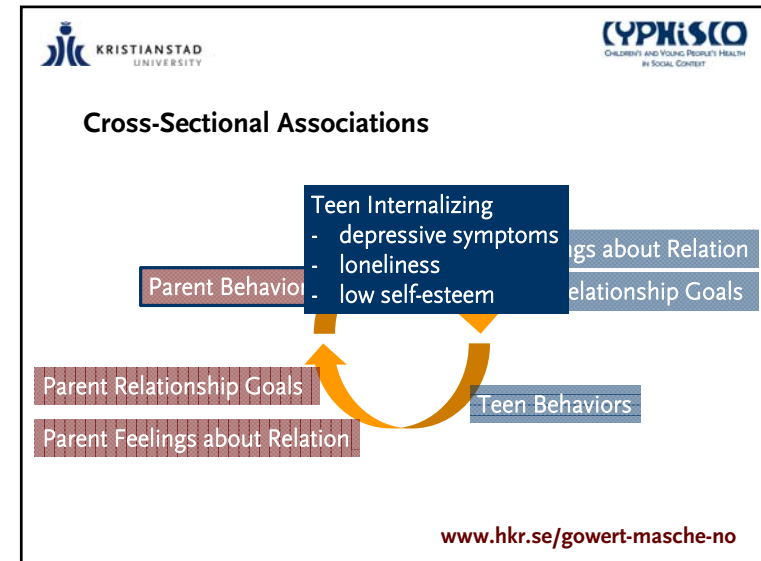
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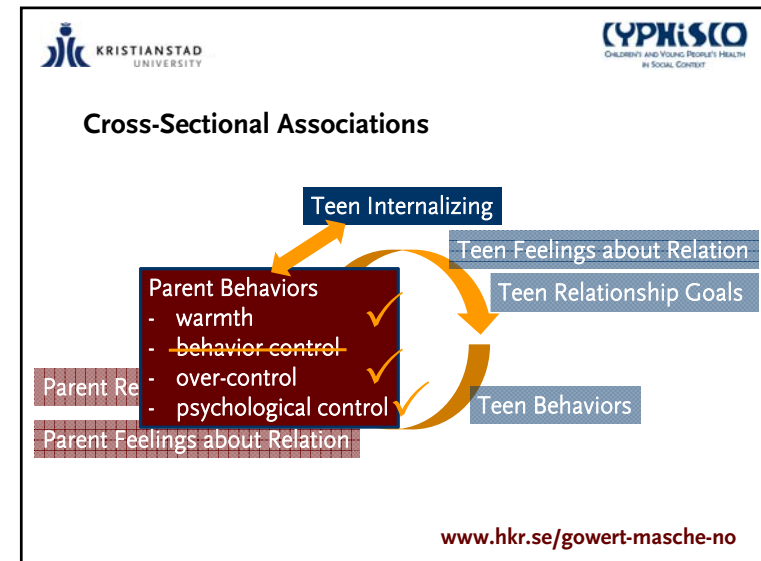
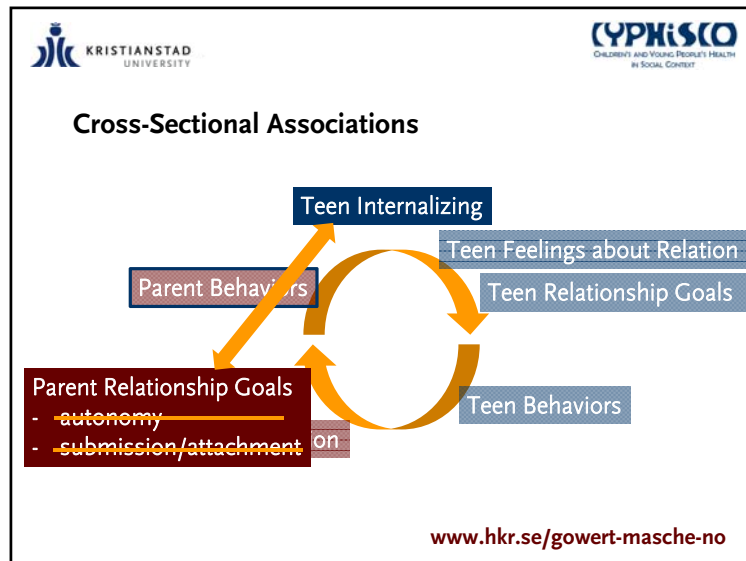
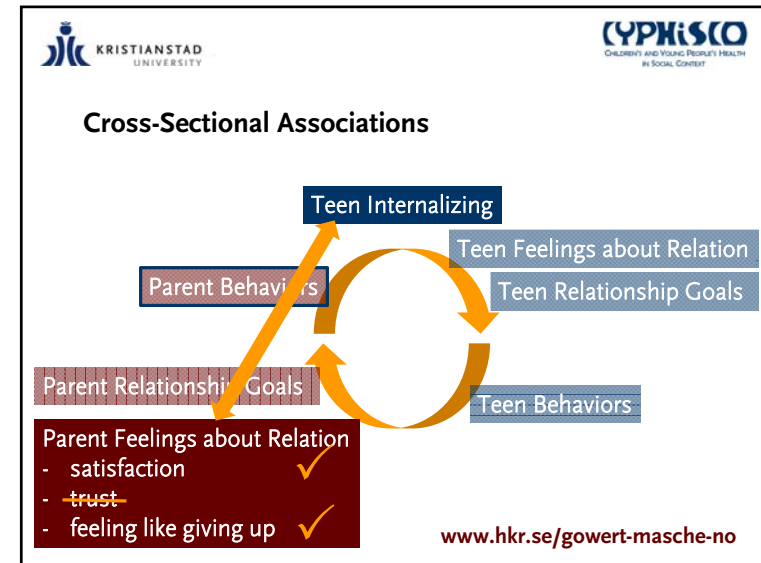
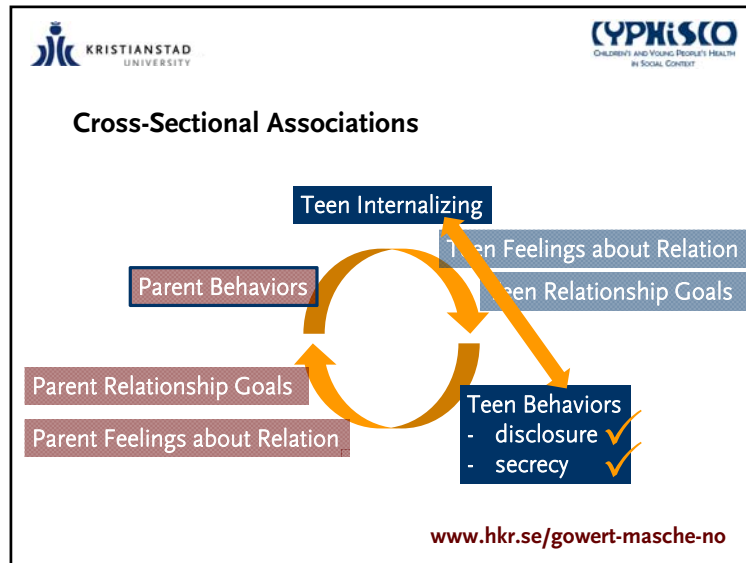
Overview over Analyses

- 1) Cross-sectional associations of internalizing with other variables
- 2) If associations significant and $\geq .15$
 - a) Cross-lagged effects over time, controlling Time 1, age, and gender
 - b) Mediation of parenting \leftrightarrow depression effects by feelings, goals, or teen behaviors

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J. Gowert Masche-No: Adolescent Internalizing Symptoms
Worsen Parenting...



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Internalizing Effects over Time

		Teen Internalizing		
		Depression	Loneliness	Self-Esteem
Teen Feelings about Relation	Satisfaction	-.10*	-.08†	.07
Teen Relationship Goals	Submission	-.07†	-.09†	.07
Teen Behaviors	Disclosure	-.07*	-.08**	.07*
	Secrecy	.13**	.12**	-.10*
Parent Feelings about Relation	Satisfaction	-.41***	-.29*	.39*
	Feeling like giving up	.50***	.35**	-.51***
Parent Behaviors	Warmth	-.10*	-.09*	.06
	Over-control	.11*	.12***	-.05
	Psychological control	.15**	.12*	-.09*

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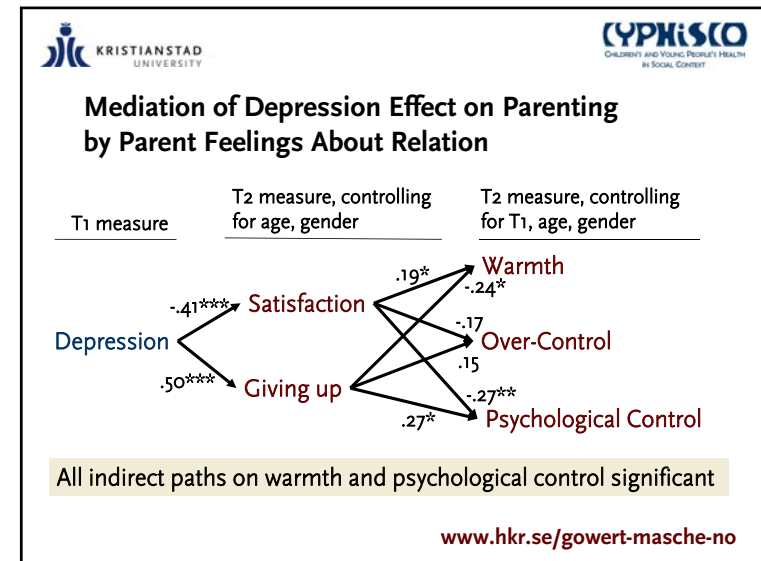
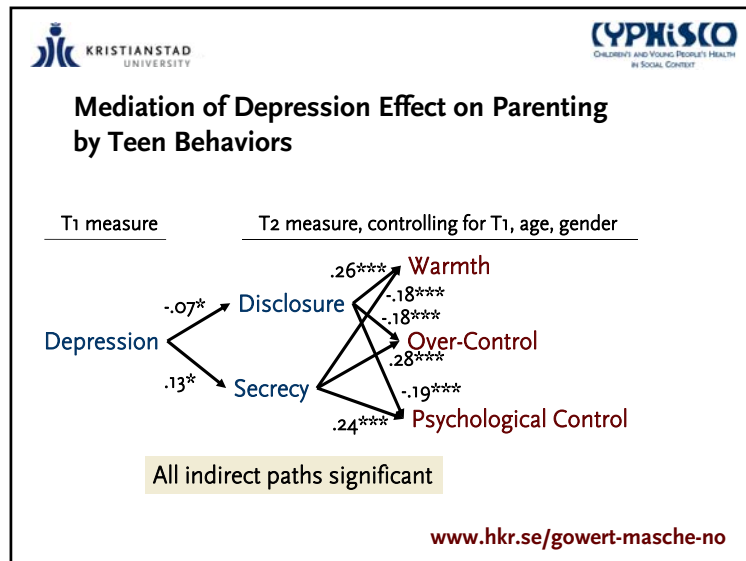
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Might they mediate the depression-parenting effect?

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Effects on Internalizing over Time



		Teen Internalizing		
		Depression	Loneliness	Self-Esteem
Teen Feelings about Relation	Satisfaction	-.01	-.05	-.01
Teen Relationship Goals	Submission	-.01	-.04	-.02
Teen Behaviors	Disclosure	-.04	-.09*	.03
	Secrecy	.02	.03	.02
Parent Feelings about Relation	Satisfaction	na	na	na
	Feeling like giving up	na	na	na
Parent Behaviors	Warmth	-.01	-.06	-.02
	Over-control	.07**	.03	-.04†
	Psychological control	.02	.01	.01

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We Learned Something 1: How (not) to Prevent Adolescent Internalizing

- Not the usual suspects: low warmth, high psychological control
 - Bad measures? New scale for psychological control/disrespect might be difficult to understand, but it worked as a dependent variable.
 - File drawer problem, selective attention to significant findings, wrong conclusion from cross-sectional data ⇒ overestimation of effects.
 - ⇒ No consistent effects of warmth & psychological control.
 - ⇒ Stop trusting in causal conclusions from cross-sectional analyses!
- What else?
 - Over-control
 - Frustrates teens' autonomy needs.
 - Fits into Expressed Emotion research since 1980's.
 - But no consistent effect either.
 - Other influences: friends, romantic relations, school...
 - Think outside the box! E.g., sensitivity, communication, emotion regulation coaching?

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