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## **Is It Cheating?: Examining Parenting Styles and Attitudes Towards Infidelity**

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Is it cheating?: Examining Parenting Styles and Attitudes Towards Infidelity  
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As one enters adolescence and emerging adulthood, the attitudes and identity formed by our earliest relationships come to the forefront. During this developmental stage, the attitudes and beliefs that we have internalized based on the relationships we observed in our early life may contribute to the health of a relationship. Successful maintenance of a monogamous relationship may be impacted by the behaviors and attitudes we have internalized from our earliest relationships.

Attitudes toward infidelity may be one such inheritance from our caregivers. Past studies suggest that attitudes toward infidelity are linked to both intentions to cheat, and cheating behaviors (Jackman, 2015). Infidelity puts a strain on a monogamous relationship-- it may be linked to domestic violence and mental health challenges, and can be the determinant of the relationship status itself (Pereira et. al., 2014). Given the importance of our earliest relationships in our development of adult attachments, it makes sense that some studies have revealed a link between the type of parenting style (authoritative, authoritarian, permissive) one's caregiver utilizes and later attitudes toward infidelity for emerging adults (Estep and Olsen, 2011).

The present study examines whether attitudes toward infidelity differ by parenting style of young adults' parents and by gender. Additionally the interaction of these two variables on attitudes toward infidelity will be explored. Participants will include approximately 75 young women and men, ages 18 to 35, of diverse ethnic backgrounds. Students attending a small liberal arts college will be recruited on campus, and a sample of community participants will be recruited via social media. Data will be collected and analyzed in early 2017.

We hypothesize that mean attitudes toward infidelity will differ by gender and parenting style. This study will further the understanding of attitudes and beliefs toward romantic relationships for emerging adults.

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