



Adolescent Parents' Intersecting Identities and Experiences: A Qualitative Examination of Adolescents', Grandparents', and School Staff's Perspectives

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Abstract

This study aimed to identify the multiple and intersecting identities adolescent parents manage, and the social supports and constraints that inform their adjustment. Adolescents ($n = 13$; 70% cisgender women; 100% Latinx; $Mage = 19.37$, $SD = 0.92$) who became parents between the ages of 14–18, their parents ($n = 17$; 82% cisgender women; 94% Latinx), and school staff ($n = 7$; 100% cisgender women; 71% White) provided triangulating information on adolescent parents' experiences. Using focus group methodology and Qual-to-Qual coding techniques, we found that adolescents inhabit *intersecting social identities* based on their parenting status, adolescence/youth, student role, child/family role, and gender. These intersecting social identities informed the social and developmental contexts that adolescents navigated, which were experienced as *promotive or inhibiting environments*. Adolescents described the demands to be engaged in multigenerational familial contexts (e.g., large coparenting teams, power differentials between adolescents and their parents), their exposure to stereotypes, assumptions, and discrimination based on their intersecting identities, and the high social demands/resources imposed on them by family and school supports. These experiences led to *contextualized outcomes*, such as an increase in growth and maturity. The participants often described their experiences as both stressors and sources of support; therefore, we discuss the duality of these experiences and the implications for future interventions.

Keywords Adolescent parents · Coparenting · Grandparents · Identity · Intersectionality

Highlights

- This study explores adolescent parents' intersecting identities and how these identities inform their social and developmental contexts.
- Adolescents discussed five intersecting and often conflicting identities - parent, adolescent, student, child/family member, and gender.
- Adolescents discussed navigating multigenerational households, discrimination, and high demands/expectation from others.

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In 2019, 171,674 adolescents under the age of 20 gave birth in the United States and one third of these adolescents identified as Hispanic or Latinx (Martin et al., 2021). This transition into parenthood requires adolescents to take on these parenting roles while congruently navigating adolescent romantic relationships (Mollborn & Jacobs, 2015), relationships with non-residential coparents (Mollborn & Lovegrove, 2011), as well as relationships with their own parents (Perez-Brena et al., 2015) and friends (Humberstone, 2019). Despite our understanding that adolescents must navigate multiple relationships, there is limited research aimed at understanding the multilayered experience of

adolescent parents' intersecting identities (self and socially prescribed roles and categories) as they navigate diverse social roles (e.g., romantic partner, parent, daughter) in relation to other social categorizations (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity/race). The little work that exists has shown how ethnic/racial identity and parent status inform adolescent fathers' adjustment (Cedeño et al., 2021), and how youth face stigma from school staff and peers due to their parenting status (Bermea et al., 2018). This limited research showcases the way these intersecting social identities inform the opportunities and resources allocated to adolescent parents that ultimately inform their future success; however, few studies have aimed to assess how multiple salient identities inform one another and, in particular, how age is an important social positioning factor that informs the assumptions, constraints, and experiences of adolescent parents. As national trends in adolescent pregnancy have consistently declined since 1991 (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2017), adolescent parents face increased stigma and marginalization (Bermea et al., 2018), and it is important to understand the processes that create these promotive or inhibiting environments. Informed by the integrative model of youth development (García Coll et al., 1996), we aimed to understand the multiple and intersecting social identities that adolescent parents manage and the manner in which these identities inform adolescents' experiences of supports and constraints.

Theoretical Framework

The integrative model of youth development (García Coll et al., 1996) was created to counteract deficit perspectives that were historically presented when discussing the adjustment of ethnic minority youth and youth belonging to other marginalized populations. Informed by Kimberlé Crenshaw's work (1991), García Coll et al., 1996 posit that individuals inhabit multiple simultaneous and intersecting identities. These intersecting identities situate people in different levels of power and marginalization which are created through overlapping systems of marginalization (e.g., racism, sexism, classism, etc.) enforced within macro (e.g., education, financial, justice systems) and micro (e.g., teacher-child interactions) contexts by imposing constraints on individuals' behaviors and access to resources (Crenshaw, 1991). Depending on the level of imposed constraints and resource accessibility, an environment can be inhibiting or promotive of successful adjustment (García Coll et al., 1996). However, inhibiting environments can be counteracted by adaptive family (e.g., diverse parenting styles) and cultural systems (e.g., cultural values and norms) to create resilience factors that support positive and, often, unique developmental outcomes. When looking at U.S. Latinx

families for example, some adaptive cultural tools could include familism values that promote high family involvement and cohesion, or respect for elders' values (Knight et al., 2010). These cultural values are embodied in adaptive family dynamics such as high instrumental support (e.g., childcare), co-residence, and involvement with extended family (Sarkisian et al., 2006). Latinx families might also display "no-nonsense" parenting tactics that are embodied by high warmth and high control, especially those living in lower income and higher risk neighborhoods (Halgunseth et al., 2006; White et al., 2013).

Intersecting Identities and Age

Previous researchers have noted social positioning factors such as race/ethnicity, gender, social class, sexual orientation, and disability as important identities that elicit societal reactions and place individuals in different levels of power and marginalization (Crenshaw, 1991; García Coll et al., 1996). Recently, age/stage of development has received more attention as an important social position or identity (Calasanti & King, 2015; Pain & Hopkins, 2010). For example, age is a changing social identity that informs individuals' roles, responsibilities, and rights (e.g., norms and responsibilities for an adolescent vs. middle adult). Much of this work has emerged from research with elderly individuals and their experiences in losing agency as they enter late adulthood (e.g., loss of the right to drive; Calasanti & King, 2015; Pain & Hopkins, 2010). However, youth might also experience constrained agency as they have not aged into certain privileges (i.e., often due to legal age laws), such as the ability to drive or work (Manian, 2017). Although some of these restrictions might be developmentally appropriate (e.g., legal age for employment) and healthy for youth, some might be inflexible and restrictive for adolescents who do not follow traditional developmental pathways (e.g., living arrangements for teen coparents). Further, because of their stage of development, youth might face stigmas and stereotypes regarding their cognitive abilities (e.g., decision-making), egocentrism, intentions, maturity, and physical abilities (Arnett, 1999; Garstka et al., 2004). Adolescents, for example, might face *ageist* stereotypes that characterize them all as egocentric, risk-focused, and immature, and these stereotypes influence how they are treated within society and within their families. Often these stereotypes intersect with other social identities, such as gender. For example, gendered socialization practices inform the social contexts that boys (e.g., peer, work) and girls (e.g., family) are increasingly expected, or allowed, to inhabit when entering adolescence (Rafaelli & Ontai, 2004). Therefore, age is a dimension of one's social identity that informs access to resources, agency, and exposure to age-based stereotypes, discrimination, and socialization experiences.

The Intersecting Experiences of Adolescent Parenthood

By including age as a key social identity and ageism as a potential marginalizing system for adolescent parents, we can identify unique ways in which this group might face marginalization. For example, adolescent parents have shared that they are subject to prejudice and discrimination due to their “early” transition into parenthood (Bermea et al., 2018). Cultural scripts regarding gender and family dynamics (Knight et al., 2010; Raffaelli & Ontai, 2004) influence the norms and expectations of what it means to be a good mother/father and a good daughter/son. For example, social trends and expectations of *when* an individual becomes a parent (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2017) and traditional conceptualization of *what* makes a good mother (e.g., selfless, responsive, warm; Barclay et al., 1997) or father (e.g., provider; Cabrera et al., 2000) inform the social pressures youth face to embody social scripts of being a good mother/father/adolescent. This social pressure might be more difficult for adolescent parents because they become parents almost a decade before the majority population (i.e., average age of 26 for college educated; 24 for non-college educated; Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2017) and experience decreased group belonging and increased stigma. Further, by breaking the social script of becoming parents early in life, youth face discriminatory messages from social and school systems. For example, in a qualitative study of 83 adolescent parents, participants reported receiving explicit discriminatory messages from school staff and peers, along with experiencing oppressive school policies based on their parental status (Bermea et al., 2018).

Second, adolescent parents residing in the U.S. are legal dependents of their parental figures and do not hold the same autonomy and privileges as adults regarding their parenting choices, sexual reproductive health, and personal rights (Manian, 2017). Therefore, adolescent parents are subject to additional constraints on their behavior. Because of their underage status, most adolescents are required to live with their parent or legal guardian (Manian, 2017) and are required to attend some form of schooling (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007). For example, all U.S. states require students to attend school until age 16, and 21 states require students to remain in school until they graduate or until they reach age 18. These legal requirements, coupled with driving limits and employment laws, inform the level of agency in which adolescents transition into adult roles (e.g., parenting role).

These legal, residential, and school attendance requirements create both promotive and inhibitive environments that influence adolescents’ parenting behaviors and adjustment. In support of this statement, adolescent parents have reported that their primary sources of support are (in order of importance): residential parents (henceforth referenced as

grandparents), their child’s other biological parent, professional service providers (e.g., school staff and mentors), friends, and extended family (Gee & Rhodes, 2003; Nitz et al., 1995). These individuals provide emotional and instrumental support; however, they have also been described as sources of stress and gatekeeping, especially for fathers. Specifically, non-residential adolescent fathers reported experiencing more grandparent gatekeeping, compared to mothers, that physically (e.g., limiting time with a child) or emotionally (e.g., putting down a parents’ behavior) inhibited their involvement with their child (Krishnakumar & Black, 2003). As a result, although adolescent mothers wanted the father involved with the child, their reduced agency due to their age and economic dependence prevented such involvement. Turning to the role of schools, legal requirements to attend school might provide access to additional sources of support (e.g., teachers, mentors), while also exposing youth to discriminatory messages from other, non-supportive adults and peers (Bermea et al., 2018). In other words, youth’s age and legal requirements might provide access to certain social resources, but also expose them to additional constraints. Taken together, assumptions about youths’ abilities, maturity level, and intentions based on their stage of development, coupled with the constraints imposed on adolescents due to their age can impact adolescent parents’ ability to achieve their parenting and personal behaviors and goals.

Current Study

Informed by the integrative model of youth development (García Coll et al., 1996), our study had two aims: (1) to identify the multiple and intersecting identities adolescent parents manage and (2) to identify the social supports and constraints that might inform adolescent parents’ adjustment. Focus group interviews were conducted with adolescent parents, grandparents, and school staff to gather multiple perspectives on adolescent parents’ experiences. Further, informed by past research (Bermea et al., 2018; Calasanti & King, 2015; Gee & Rhodes, 2003; Manian, 2017), we hypothesized that age/stage of development would be a salient social identity that would inform the way social resources or demands were imposed upon adolescent parents.

Method

Participants

Data were collected from 13 adolescent parents who were recent high school graduates, 17 grandparents, and seven high school staff members in the Central Texas area who

were part of a larger study aimed at adapting and evaluating a school-based coparenting intervention for adolescent parents (Perez-Brena et al., 2022). Participants were selected to represent individuals residing in or serving four high schools in a large metropolitan city (5 adolescents, 5 grandparents, 4 school staff), as well as four high schools in surrounding suburban and rural areas (8 adolescents, 12 grandparents, 3 school staff). The eight high schools were chosen because each served a large enough population of parenting students to require the school to provide a parenting education program, which included relationship education and childcare assistance services, to adolescent parents attending these schools.

The 13 adolescent parents were all Latinx ($n = 13$; 84% identified as Mexican), primarily cisgender women ($n = 9$), and spoke English as their primary language ($n = 13$). They became pregnant, on average, at 16.6 years old ($SD = 0.87$; range = 14 - 18) and were, on average, 19.37 years old ($SD = 0.92$) when they participated in this study. They reported living with a romantic partner ($n = 2$), parents ($n = 2$), a partner and their parents ($n = 6$), or someone else ($n = 3$; e.g., roommate, older brother). The 17 grandparents were primarily Latinx ($n = 16$; $n = 1$ European American) cisgender women ($n = 14$). Each of the 13 adolescent parents had at least one parent participate in the focus groups, although three adolescent mothers had their mother and father participate. Three additional grandmothers joined the focus groups without the adolescent parents due to work or school responsibilities. The majority spoke English ($n = 13$), the remaining four spoke Spanish. The school staff worked in the eight high schools (one staff member served two schools) noted above and were identified by the school as the key contact to all pregnant or parenting students within their school (e.g., parenting class teacher, social worker). All school staff were cisgender women and mostly White ($n = 5$; $n = 1$ Latinx, $n = 1$ Black).

Procedure

Recruitment

School staff identified adolescent parents who had recently graduated from their respective high schools to provide insights into their experiences as adolescent parents to inform the development of a new intervention for school-age parents. School staff introduced each adolescent parent to the research staff who invited them and their families to participate in separate focus groups. If a participant noted they could not attend a pre-scheduled focus group, we offered a one-on-one interview as an option. Out of 20 adolescent parents and their families, 13 (65%) agreed to participate and attended our focus groups.

Focus groups were conducted to facilitate the generation of ideas between group members. However, to ensure successful focus groups, we chose to keep focus groups small to moderate in size (5-8 people per group), homogenous (separate groups for adolescents, grandparents, and school staff), and we minimized the number of questions asked (1–2 questions; Krueger, 2014; Umaña-Taylor & Bámaca, 2004). As such, we conducted two focus groups with adolescents, two focus groups with grandparents, and one focus groups with school staff. Additionally, we conducted three one-on-one phone interviews with Spanish-speaking grandparents who faced transportation limitations. Participants were informed of their rights and gave their informed consent/assent. All participants received a \$25 gift card for participating in the focus groups/interviews. The university Institutional Review Board reviewed and approved all procedures.

Focus group script development

A team of researchers, adolescent service providers, and native-English and native-Spanish speakers created the focus group script. Using recommendations from Krueger (2014), the team held a brainstorming session to identify the purpose of the focus groups and brainstorm questions, then these questions were used to develop a question route, and finally the question route (script) was reviewed to ensure the newly developed script addressed our study goals. A team of four bilingual Spanish speakers, two of whom were native-Spanish speakers, then translated the script into Spanish using a decentralized and consensus translation method recommended (Roosa et al., 2012). This process required one member to translate the script into Spanish, and then the translation team to review it and discuss discrepancies as a team to finalize the translated document. If the translation team could not easily translate a word or phrase into Spanish, the team also edited the English script to ensure parallel scripts were created.

Focus group moderation

Two trained female, White researchers moderated the English language focus groups. A female, Latinx, native-Spanish speaker moderated the one-on-one interviews in Spanish. All moderators used a pre-created focus group script with several qualitative prompts such as: “Who helps you parent your child and how do they support you?” “If you ever have moments of frustration or anger when interacting with the people who help you parent your child, what do you think are the main reasons for your frustration?” These prompts were meant to identify key sources of support and frustration that adolescent parents faced in their daily life to help inform an adaptation of a school-based

coparenting intervention (Perez-Brena et al., 2022). We asked school staff and grandparents similar questions, except the questions were phrased to ask their perceptions of adolescents' experiences (e.g., When the teens you work with share parenting duties with other people, who helps them?). Focus groups and interviews lasted 45 to 90 min.

Transcription and translation

Following the recommendations of Temple and Young (2004), we (a) transcribed all audio-recorded responses in the language in which the interview was conducted, (b) bilingual research assistants then translated them into English, and (c) bilingual members of the qualitative coding team validated the translations. We transcribed responses verbatim, thus preserving all original pronunciations, utterances (e.g., “mm-hmm,” “uh-huh”), nonverbal auditory sounds (e.g., laughter, sighs, coughs, claps, pen clicking), pauses, natural or unnatural disruptions, and inaudible moments. Quality control procedures were similar in the transcription and translation stages: (a) the entire interview was transcribed in the language in which it was conducted (English or Spanish), (b) a second person who listened to the audio-file checked the file while reading the transcribed document and noted any discrepancies, and (c) a third person reviewed the discrepancies and resolved them with the assistance of the research team. If a document was transcribed in Spanish, then the finalized Spanish translation was (a) translated into English, (b) a second bilingual research assistant reviewed and edited it, and (c) a third bilingual research assistant discussed and approved discrepancies.

Coding and analysis

We used a Qual-to-Qual coding technique to assess the results generated from these focus groups (Morse & Niehaus, 2009). This methodological approach allowed us to obtain data from multiple levels of abstraction that comprehensively addressed our research questions. The use of multiple groups also allowed us to triangulate experiences and perspectives to understand how adolescent parents and two key sources of adult support (i.e., grandparents and school staff) conceptualized the adolescent parenting role and the way they support or constrain adolescents' ability to enact their new parenting role. We grouped together transcripts from each subsection of focus groups (i.e., school staff, adolescent parents, and grandparents), and then a group of four trained coders (i.e., two Ph.D. faculty, one graduate student, and one undergraduate student) analyzed the transcripts using content analysis (Krippendorff, 2013). We uploaded the coded transcripts into QDA Miner Lite (Lewis & Maas, 2007) for analytic purposes. Our identification of prevalent codes within the focus groups was guided by (a) the research questions (i.e., what are the

identities that they hold?) and (b) inductive coding for any additional codes beyond the research questions and aims of this study (Thomas, 2006; Vannest et al., 2011). Specifically, for each subsection of focus groups (i.e., based on population such as grandparents), we began by reading through the transcripts in their entirety to identify prevalent codes. We created codes from these categories for each subsection, and then utilized the identified codes to code each of the focus group transcripts line-by-line. To reach inter-coder agreement, we used consensus coding methodology (Hill et al., 1997) wherein codes were compared across coders to check for consistency, and differences were discussed until agreement was reached for each code (Chenail, 2012). Additionally, we utilized an iterative process in which we discussed the salience of the codes and subcodes, combined or removed codes, and recoded as necessary. This was conducted until we felt that saturation and salience of the codes were met.

Next, to provide a second level of abstraction from the data, as observed in the Qual-to-Qual methodology, we used directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Specifically, we used pre-existing theoretical concepts (i.e., the integrative model of youth development) and our research questions as a guide for identifying intersecting identities and process-focused themes to understand how systems, assumptions, or relationship processes were informed by these intersecting identities. Once again, we used consensus coding to ensure coding trustworthiness. Upon coding completion, we reviewed the codes to see how certain statements represented multiple ideas, allowing us to understand the layered experiences and perceptions of adolescent parents, grandparents, and school staff.

Results

The use of multiple reporters in the focus groups allowed us to assess the unique experiences of adolescent parents from the perspectives of the adolescents, grandparents, and school staff. As such, we were able to identify sources of consensus as well as unique insights from each group's unique vantage point. Guided by the integrative model, we found adolescent parents inhabit *intersecting social identities*. These intersecting social identities informed the social and developmental contexts that adolescents navigated, which were experienced as *promotive/inhibitive environments* that led to *contextualized outcomes*, such as an increase in growth and maturity (See Table 1).

Intersecting Social Identities

The participants regularly discussed four main identities or social roles throughout the focus groups; these

Table 1 Qualitative Themes and Categories

Main Theme	Categories	Sub-categories
Intersecting Social Identities	Parent	Parent × adolescent/young Parent × gender
	Adolescence/young Student	Adolescent/young × parent Student × parent Student × parent × gender
	Child/family member	Child/family member × parent, Child/family member × parent × adolescent/young
Promotive and Inhibitive Environments	Multigenerational familial contexts	Coparenting teams Dependent parenting Adolescent stereotypes
		Loss of adolescence Discrimination
	Social demands and resources	Balance school and parenting High expectations and responsibilities Parenting control: Decisions and advice Parenting control: Family involvement Traditional gender roles
Contextualized Outcomes	Growth and maturity	

consisted of being a parent, an adolescent or young person, a student, and a child/family member. In alignment with intersectional perspectives, often these identities were discussed as intersecting and conflicting identities, rather than as separate identities. Identities were also often interwoven across two (e.g., being an adolescent and a parent) or three categories (e.g., being a student who is also an adolescent and a parent). In particular, a fifth social identity—gender—was often mentioned in relation to others. Below, we describe these identities in order of highest salience, and note when other identities were interwoven to create nuanced accounts of adolescent parents' roles and experiences.

Parent

The role of being a parent was the most salient identity to all groups. When discussing the role of a parent, participants focused on the responsibilities of being a mother/father (e.g., caretaking, feeding, involvement), along with obligations to be a good parent (e.g., going to school for the child's future, working to provide for the child). Also, grandparents and school staff stressed the importance of putting the parenting identity above all other identities because the infant depended on the adolescent. To illustrate, a grandparent stated: "When you have a child, you have no choice, you just have to step up

to the plate and she's done an awesome job." One school staff noted how the parenting role superseded the role of being an adolescent regardless of the adolescents' age.

One of the things that we've noticed is even though the grandparents may help a lot with the child, sometimes they stop parenting the teen. They treat, no matter what age she is, whether it's 13–14, when you're a parent you're grown now and they stop those kind of, you know, those parenting things that you would normally do.

This last quote highlighted how, from a school staff member's perspective, the adolescents' parenting role intersected with the role of being a child/family member in need of parenting/support (discussed below).

Two groups also mentioned the subcategory of gendered parenting, specifically when discussing the role of a father versus a mother. For example, one adolescent reflected on what it meant to be a mother versus a father:

Like, the moms are most of the time, they're more emotional, loving, and like "oh, come here, it's gonna be ok" type. And the dads are, like, kids are gonna see the dad as the fun parent. Just cause we're the dad and we can roughhouse with them.

Gendered parenting expectations were also salient to school staff who described how fathers were expected to fill a provider role: “As long as dad is working and contributing his piece, I think it’s all calm and copasetic (within the adolescent parent household).” Grandparents did not mention the salience of gender; however, it is possible that, as outsiders, the school staff were able to note when parents and adult family members imposed such expectations.

Adolescent/young

Being an *adolescent* or being *young* was the second most salient identity to all groups. For example, many grandparents referenced the adolescent parent as being young (“mine’s young”), while staff mentioned that adolescents’ “brains were still developing.” Adolescents also mentioned being young; however, their experiences focused on how their adolescent and parenting roles intersected to create unique social experiences. For example, one student stated: “as a young parent you’re not a...you’re more mature than the people your age, but you’re not old enough to hang out with the people who are 35 years old...”

Student

The role of being a *student* was the next most salient identity to adolescents, grandparents, and school staff. In fact, many described graduating as an important milestone to being a successful adolescent. In addition, grandparents and school staff discussed ways they attempted to support adolescents as they managed school responsibilities to ensure they maintained this student role while navigating the parenting role. To illustrate, one grandparent noted:

They had so many dreams and stuff and now they got a baby carrying along with that dream.... She’s still graduating, she’s still going to college, so I told her don’t let anything hold you back, just keep going.

School staff mentioned that messages adolescents received regarding the intersection of the student and parenting role varied by family. To illustrate, one school staff provided the following example:

Sometimes the student says I’m pregnant, I need to drop out. I need to work. I need to take care of my baby. And the mom is like “no you have to stay in school, you have to stay in school.” Sometimes it’s the opposite. The student wants to stay in school and the parent is saying “no you can’t stay in school, you’re having a baby.”

School staff noted that the intersection of being a father and a student was particularly difficult given how these roles were socially defined: “The teen fathers are looked at more as breadwinners and less of as students.” As such, the parenting and student roles intersected along with gendered expectations to create a unique, and potentially constraining, experience for adolescent fathers.

Child/family member

All participants discussed adolescent parents’ roles as a *child* or *family member*. Specifically, although the grandparents would emphasize that the adolescents’ main role was being a parent of the grandchild, they also emphasized that they were still their children (e.g., “she’s still my daughter”). Adolescents also discussed the importance of maintaining close and harmonious relationships with their families and the importance of respecting their parents. Further, adolescents and school staff emphasized maintaining positive parent-child relationships as this had implications for adolescents’ level of dependence on their parents to provide financial, residential, and transportation assistance.

Promotive and Inhibitive Environments

Adolescents’ intersecting social identities informed the social and developmental contexts that adolescents navigated and whether they experienced these contexts as promotive or inhibiting. In particular, the focus group data highlighted how adolescent parents engaged in *multi-generational familial contexts*, and were subject to *stereotypes, assumptions, and discrimination* based on their intersecting identities/roles as adolescent parents. Further adolescent parents experienced high *social demands/resources* imposed on them by family and school supports because they believed the stereotypes or because they wanted to help adolescents avoid falling victim to stereotypes. However, these promotive or inhibitive environments also led to *contextualized outcomes* of early growth and maturity to accommodate these intersecting identities. See Table 2 for quotes and frequencies supporting each code.

Multigenerational familial contexts

We identified two subcategories concerning the multi-generational familial contexts that adolescent parents navigated: the use of large multigenerational coparenting teams and dependent parenting. First, adolescent parents discussed the need to manage large, multi-generational *coparenting teams*. Coparenting is traditionally discussed as a dyadic experience (Feinberg, 2003); however, the adolescents in

Table 2 Qualitative Categories Discussed by Grandparents (GP), School Staff (SS), and Adolescents (AD)

Categories	Total	GP	SS	AD	Quote
Promotive and Prohibitive Environments					
Multigenerational Familial Contexts					
Coparenting team	42	18	6	18	Myself, my father, my mother, and uh, my son's godfather. (They) all help coparenting, that influence my son on a day-to-day basis.—Adolescent Yeah, it's that relationship is not just with your romantic partner that you have to have relationships with. All of these players and balance all of that kind of all of the time.—School Staff They're learning these things about co-parenting and that of their parent, the grandparent is the co-parent more often than not...—School Staff
Dependent parenting	39	23	6	10	I can't go anywhere cause you know, I'm stuck there with my parents. Financially can't afford it, you know?—Adolescent It's a balancing act with them. You know like well I live, you know, I live with them, they provide for me in this way. So I can't really tell them you know and they're taking care of my baby while I'm at work. I can't really tell them to not give them the bottle.—Adolescent And as long as she's in school, which she still is...But it's, we've always had that understanding with her that as long as she continued her education, she could live with us as long as she needed to, to complete her education. If she chose not to go to school, then it would probably be a different scenario.—Grandparent
Stereotypes, Assumptions, and Discrimination					
Adolescent stereotypes	8	1	7	0	I just think at a young age they just, I don't know how to say it, they think they know it all, you know what I mean?—Grandparent Anyway that's what you would imagine as your typical high school relationship is happening, but there's just a child in, involved in the middle and family conflict involved in that.—School staff
Loss of adolescence	17	14	2	1	Once a student gets pregnant her life changes immediately. Um you know physically like she is going through this pregnancy. If partner isn't really a hundred percent like right with her um I see a lot of kind of resentment. Like he's still going out with friends.—School staff She would get kind of conflicted, not jealous, but feel bad about that she couldn't do all the normal stuff, because she's a mom, that other kids were doing as far as sports or extracurricular or dances.—Grandparent
Discrimination	3	0	0	3	Especially at our campus, there's a lot of discrimination towards our group. So you kind of had to, like, it's not that we had to keep it a secret.—Adolescent We heard things like that. Like you, you're not gonna amount to anything, you're not gonna graduate high school, you're not gonna do anything. ALL of the negativity that we heard from my parents, or um teachers, or just anyone older than us who thought that they knew.—Adolescent
Social Demands and Resources					
Balance school and parenting	25	19	5	1	And I think with the moms it seems like it's one extreme or the other. They're either like you've gotta get your education. Sometimes the student says I'm pregnant, I need to drop out. I need to work. I need to take care of my baby.—School Staff I think when the baby is either sick or, you know, she's trying to finish up her homework and then, you know, the baby's right there wanting her attention. So just having to have, I guess, time management to try to adjust to the baby's needs and then, you know, keep going as far as whatever life throws at her.—Grandparent
High expectations and responsibility	19	12	2	5	I tell her that they both need to progress, go out for the girl more than anything, be mindful of [the baby]. Be as good of parents as teenagers, and to be responsible, and to always be mindful of the girl.—Grandparent I say, "well get out of that after school activity" but she says no, that she doesn't want to get out of that activity. I say to her, right now your priority is the girl not everything else—not anymore—Grandparent Yea... well no. They get mad when I try to do something for me or we try to do something for our relationship and they're like, what about the kid?—Adolescent

Table 2 (continued)

Categories	Total	GP	SS	AD	Quote
Parenting control— Decisions and advice	45	21	14	10	<p>And, we see a lot of power and control issues. You know, who's gonna get to make the decisions for the baby and then, is the dad going to be allowed to be there, and what is his role gonna be—School staff</p> <p>Well, I can't parent my child how I want to. It's not like, it's not my way, it's their way.—Adolescent</p> <p>She's very receptive to any parenting advice...we let her be mom but yeah when we give her any advice she is very receptive.—Grandparent.. cause I live with my mother she always wants to try to put her opinion in, and you know, "well you're in my house this is what I wanna be done" or something like that...—Adolescent</p>
Parenting control— Family involvement	16	8	4	4	<p>So, [child's father] wasn't allowed at my house. He wasn't allowed to really—they [grandparents] didn't let him be a father, um so he did everything that he could to like wanna be there and be there, but my parents just didn't let him.—Adolescent</p> <p>Well, uh you see, what I try to do is like during the week, no [father] visitation during the week. Let's wait for the weekend and kind of schedule it out on the weekend when you know we have a little bit more time you know and things are more relaxed and stuff.—Grandparent</p> <p>My goal was to help her have a relationship with [child]'s dad because I knew that if they had a good relationship, it would be the best thing for [child].—Grandparent</p>
Traditional gender roles	9	0	8	2	<p>So, sometimes [the family] takes the [teen father] and it's a really good thing, and then sometimes it's quite the opposite, where the, the female usually is kind of expected to take on a lot of the house keeping roles and things like that. Contribute to the home...almost seems like they're, like that they're paying to live there, to kind of do a lot of the work and a lot gets piled on them: cooking, cleaning, things like that.—School staff</p> <p>So, the teen fathers are, are looked at more as um breadwinners and less of as students.—School staff</p> <p>And, then I also see a lot of my dads who live with the mom and rather it's with his family or her family so he is involved, but he's already taking on this more of a husband like role where, you know, he's the bread winner.—School staff</p>
Contextualized Outcomes					
Growth and maturity	24	18	1	5	<p>My daughter also helps me a lot, with the house. I get home and the house is already clean, but she says, "I did it for you, mom, because you have supported me when I most needed you. This is nothing compared to what you guys do for me, and if one day I pay it back to you, I'll pay you back by continuing to study so that I will be able to provide a better education for my child." But, yeah so we get along well.—Grandparent</p> <p>Now I see her kinda taking more responsibility toward those things. You know, cause with my daughter we're trying to get her graduating so she's really encouraged to get an early college start and you know she's really trying to excel academically.—Grandparent</p> <p>Yes, it [communication] used to be a problem, but it was a problem like with me, but then, I realized that, it's more like, I need to listen. I should mainly just more listen cause I would say, I would just really like try to talk over her...—Adolescent</p>

Frequency counts reflect the number of times (sub)categories were mentioned

our study discussed having three-to-six members in their coparenting team who actively helped them raise their child. These teams often included grandparents, older siblings, and the other biological parent. These large multi-generational parenting teams also included maternal and paternal grandparents working with the adolescents. However, the multi-generational status of the parenting team meant that multiple power dynamics also emerged when managing these coparenting teams (see family involvement control below).

Related to this large, multigenerational coparenting team was a second unique context the adolescent parents experienced: *dependent parenting*. Dependent parenting represented the situation that being an adolescent and a parent, together, made youth more dependent on others for various forms of support. This subcategory emerged most often within grandparents' narratives, and within a couple of the adolescents' and staff's narratives, who discussed adolescents' financial dependence on grandparents due to their pregnancy, along with needing a place to raise the

baby, and someone to help take care of the baby when attending school or work. Although grandparents said they were willing to provide this support, often the grandparents discussed the need to impose conditions to continue providing support. Specifically, grandparents referenced only supporting the adolescents if they continued their education (i.e., high school or college) and/or remained the primary parent raising the child. Adolescents and school staff also mentioned that this dependence reduced adolescents' level of agency and ability to express or enact their parenting goals regarding feeding, discipline, etc. These multiple perspectives allowed us to identify several forms of support and constraints that were salient for all the groups, such as dependent parenting and large coparenting teams. They also allowed us to identify how these experiences were perceived differently between groups, such as when grandparents perceived dependent parenting as a source of support, whereas adolescents and school staff perceived it as diminishing adolescents' sense of autonomy.

Stereotypes, assumptions, discrimination

In addition to navigating unique social contexts, adolescent parents faced stereotypes and assumptions about their parenting intentions that manifested in discriminatory experiences or additional demands imposed by parents and school staff. First, grandparents and school staff discussed adolescents' emotional and cognitive states in stereotypical ways (i.e., *adolescent stereotypes*). School staff, in particular, supported this stereotype by noting that adolescents tend to be shortsighted and not think through the consequences of their actions. Specifically, school staff often described this as manifesting within their adolescent romantic and/or coparenting relationships that led to relationship turmoil. One grandparent also suggested that adolescents "think they know it all," an indication of immaturity.

In addition to discussing adolescents' immaturity, grandparents and two school staff discussed how they perceived the adolescents to be mourning the *loss of adolescence*. Specifically, they described how adolescents might feel jealous, sad, or resentful because of their loss of adolescence in the face of parenthood. In contrast, only one adolescent expressed this subcategory; however, when she discussed this theme, she described how she wanted to practice self-care in the form of "typical" adolescent activities (e.g., hanging out with friends), but her coparenting team invalidated this experience by calling it selfish or refused to acknowledge this need because parenting responsibilities came first. Across these three groups, we were able to see diverse perspectives and assumptions about adolescents' intentionality (e.g., self-care vs. rejection of parenting role) and commitment to parenthood. In other words, each group experienced the same behavior

differently based on their implicit stereotypes or assumptions about adolescents or based on the power dynamics enacted in an experience.

Lastly, adolescents mentioned experiencing *discrimination* from school staff and parents regarding their prospects. Adolescents mentioned that multiple adults told them they had ruined their futures, particularly their chances at school or a career, and they would never amount to anything. Further, fear of discrimination in the school informed students' intentions to keep their pregnancy status a secret; thus, pushing students into marginalized statuses. Neither school staff nor grandparents mentioned discrimination, highlighting how adults may not be aware of, or may be unwilling to discuss, the level of marginalization these youth face in their direct environments.

Social demands and resources

In addition to facing stereotypes, assumptions, and discrimination, adolescents navigated added social demands. Often, these demands were informed by adolescents' legal requirement to attend school (i.e., balancing school, parenting, and work) or were imposed on them by grandparents (e.g., added expectations and responsibilities, control/gatekeeping, advice, imposed gender roles). These grandparents reported engaging in protective and strict parenting practices to help their adolescent avoid becoming the previously mentioned negative stereotypes associated with adolescent parenthood.

Regarding the need to *balance school and parenting*, grandparents often reported the adolescents struggled with time management (e.g., they often had to stay up late with a child on a school day or needed to manage the child while completing homework). Grandparents discussed offering comfort and instrumental (e.g., babysitting) support to help their adolescent balance their multiple demands. To illustrate, one grandparent described her daughter's struggle to balance school, work, and parenting as a single parent:

I think mine is just having to do most of it on her own...she goes to school all day, she goes to work at night, and I have the baby in my room. And as soon as she gets home, it's like "okay take your baby because it's midnight and I have to go to sleep too" and that's been one of her things is, "mom I'm tired. I have to go to school and go to work and still watch the baby."

School staff also discussed this theme and described how grandparents played a big part in making students stay in school as a condition of them staying in their home. Thus, the grandparents' desire to have adolescent parents graduate from high school led adolescent parents to experience role strain when balancing multiple responsibilities.

It is possible the grandparents' push for the adolescents to stay in school was related to their wish for their child to succeed in parental and adolescent roles and avoid fulfilling negative stereotypes. In support of this assumption, we found that grandparents imposed additional *high expectations and responsibilities* on adolescent parents. Grandparents expressed the need to tell adolescent parents to "aim high," "be as good of parents as teenagers," and do everything "for the child." In this way, the grandparents no longer saw their children as adolescents, but as parents and, as parents, the grandparents expected them to engage in selfless, goal-oriented activities in pursuit of a larger goal. Further, grandparents described scenarios where they feared that adolescents would not want to forego their adolescent freedoms to be good (e.g., involved) parents and students, and therefore, enforced their conditional support dynamics (e.g., refusing to babysit a child when an adolescent wanted to go out). Adolescents also noted that grandparents imposed high expectations and responsibilities; however, adolescents felt these imposed responsibilities were too constraining, especially when an adolescent wanted to engage in a self-care activity, such as take a moment to relax or have fun with the other biological parent.

Next, the social demands of these intersecting identities led to grandparents asserting control over the adolescents in two main areas: (a) *parenting decisions and advice* and (b) *family involvement*. First, the adolescents and school staff reported *parenting control-decisions and advice* as they described how the grandparents often created rules regarding the way the adolescent parented their children (e.g., discipline or nutrition), overruled the adolescents' parenting goals, or provided unwanted advice. The grandparents often used the adolescents' age, dependent status, and lack of experience as the justification for engaging in such parenting control tactics. For example, one mother said "Mine's really young, so she doesn't, she won't tell me anything [if she disagrees with me]. I can discipline him [the baby] however I want." Adolescents expressed frustration that they could not parent how they wanted due to this parenting control. Some grandparents were less likely to explicitly mention using control tactics with their adolescents; however, they discussed helping raise the child in terms of "allowing" the adolescent to parent their own child or "letting" them make the decisions for the child. The use of words such as "letting" or "allowing" indicated the grandparents still held control over the adolescent and grandchild, and grandparents were allowing adolescents to have autonomy on their terms. School staff also mentioned this theme by describing how the adolescents were "overruled a lot." To illustrate, one school staff shared that when adolescent parents learned about child development or parenting at school, grandparents dismissed what adolescents learned by saying, "you don't know what you're doing because I've been parenting for thirty, forty, fifty years."

Adolescents also described feeling constrained by grandparents, especially when receiving unwanted parenting advice. It is important to note that adolescents described seeking advice because they were new parents and wanted help, affirmation, or advice on how to parent and balance school. Grandparents also noted they meant to provide advice to be helpful to these young parents. However, adolescents often described that the grandparents provided too much advice and this experience was "annoying" or "frustrating." At the same time, the adolescents were "grateful" for the wanted and unwanted advice unless they perceived it as coercive. For example, some adolescents reported they felt they had to abide by grandparents' advice because of their dependent status. Due to the unbalanced power structure between dependent parent and adult grandparent, adolescents perceived the advice as a directive, instead of a suggestion, and even described incidents when the grandparents confirmed these assumptions. School staff mentioned similar experiences and described adolescents' need to acknowledge grandparents' advice as a "balancing act" to ensure harmony in the household. Once again, these different groups interpreted the same behavior differently based on their perspective and level of power within the relationship. Specifically, grandparents described how their parenting advice was intended to be positive and supportive, yet school staff and adolescents often described it as coercive and undermining.

The participants also identified *parenting control-family involvement* to varying degrees. For example, adolescents and school staff described grandparents as exerting control over the family unit (e.g., coparenting relationship between adolescent parents). They described grandparents as getting involved with the secondary parent by trying to keep their adolescent from dating the other parent or by encouraging the couple to stay together for the child, despite the adolescent's own wishes about the relationship. Adolescents and school staff also discussed how grandparents enforced gatekeeping behaviors to prevent or dissuade adolescents from maintaining a romantic or coparenting relationship. Grandparents also discussed engaging in gatekeeping behaviors if they perceived the non-residential parent (often the father) as irresponsible or a bad influence. These acts of gatekeeping included barring a father from the house, imposing strict curfews, and creating an unwelcoming environment for the other parent. Such gatekeeping prevented adolescents from seeing each other, seeing the child, or coparenting in the way they wanted. In contrast, some grandparents used family involvement control to keep the family unit together, as several of the grandparents described how they would try to keep the coparent actively involved in the family. Specifically, grandparents would tell adolescents they believed the child would be better with both parents involved, despite adolescent parents' own wishes.

When adolescents were allowed to parent together, school staff noticed they were conscripted to take on *traditional gender roles* (e.g., female = caregiver; male = provider). This expectation was particularly detrimental to adolescent fathers who were expected to take on provider roles or else face potential gatekeeping from grandparents. The participants discussed how this pressure to provide influenced the adolescent fathers' decision to drop out of school, which allowed mothers to stay in school and achieve the goal of graduating high school. It is important to note, however, that only two adolescents, and no grandparents, mentioned this theme.

Contextualized outcomes

Although the intersection of the adolescent parents' social identities created many multigenerational familial contexts and social demands, it also led to what all three groups described as *growth and maturity* of the students. Specifically, although becoming a parent as an adolescent could lead to greater dependence on others and a loss of adolescence, the grandparents also described how many of the adolescents became strong parents and better family members. For example, several of the grandparents described how the adolescents had become more appreciative since becoming a parent. This appreciation included contributing more to the shared household, expressing increased gratitude for the coparenting team's support, and listening to the grandparents more when they gave advice. Further, as several of the adolescents were struggling to balance being a parent and a student, the grandparents described them as becoming more motivated to work hard in school (e.g., get straight A's) and still graduate. Lastly, despite the previous discussion about how immature or young the students were, grandparents and school staff described adolescent parents (i.e., typically the moms) as being "great moms" who worked hard to be better parents and be responsible adolescents. Of note, the affirmation towards mothers, and not fathers, is another way in which mother's role as a caretaker was reaffirmed while father's role as a caretaker was invalidated by adults. Adolescents also acknowledged how their new parenting status led to their growth, improved family dynamics, and increased appreciation for their family.

Discussion

The current study used the integrative model of youth development (García Coll et al., 1996) to understand how adolescent parents experience marginalization and support based on their adolescent and parenting status. Our study focused on this stage of development because age is seen as a changing social position factor that informs individuals'

roles (e.g., student vs. worker), responsibilities, rights (e.g., agency; Calasanti & King, 2015; Pain & Hopkins, 2010), and perceptions of abilities and intentions (Arnett, 1999; Garstka et al., 2004). Similarly, parenting, imposes social pressures on individuals as it is marked by culturally informed definitions of what it means to be a "good" mother or father (Barclay et al., 1997; Cabrera et al., 2000). Our use of multiple groups allowed us to triangulate experiences and perspectives to understand how different groups conceptualized the adolescent parenting role and the way they support or constrain adolescents' transition into this new role. These multiple perspectives allowed us to identify several forms of support and constraints that were salient for all the groups (e.g., dependent parenting and large coparenting teams), and some that were invisible to one group but salient to another (e.g., when gender roles were most salient to school staff, experiences of discrimination were most salient to adolescents). They also allowed us to identify areas where each group experienced the same behavior differently because of their implicit stereotypes or assumptions about adolescents or based on the power dynamics enacted in an experience (e.g., grandparent's well-meaning advice was perceived as coercive to adolescents). Thus, the use of multiple reporters in the focus groups painted a richly complex experience of intersecting social identities/roles and the promotive and inhibitive environments that inform adolescents' ability to navigate these identities/roles.

Findings from the data provide important implications for both research and practice. Concerning research implications, we first turn to the way our findings support the tenet of the integrative model and the notion that age is an important social positioning factor. The integrative model of youth development (García Coll et al., 1996) focuses on the importance of understanding how social identities/roles intersect, along with understanding how social systems create promotive and/or inhibitive environments that influence development and adjustment (García Coll et al., 1996). Two social categories (i.e., age, gender) and three social roles (parent, student, child/family member) emerged within the data. In most cases, these social identities were described in relation to one another, and often certain identities superseded other identities (e.g., parent superseded daughter, student, and adolescent) or certain identity combinations created unique contexts, expectations, and outcomes (e.g., gendered parenting expectations). Of note, contrary to the other social identities that emerged, no one explicitly mentioned gender as a salient social identity by itself. However, it informed how youth were perceived in their social roles (i.e., parent, student). Thus, gender impacted the social construction of other identities. These findings support the idea that adolescent parents are managing various intersecting identities that create unique social roles and

expectations, and diverse levels of marginalization. Further, the manner in which these intersecting identities informed adjustment was identified through various supports and imposed constraints that created a promotive and/or inhibitive environment for the adolescent. These supports and constraints were represented through the multigenerational familial contexts that adolescents navigated (i.e., dependent parenting, coparenting teams), stereotypes and discriminatory experiences that marginalized them, or assumptions that informed why adult support networks (e.g., parents, school staff) imposed additional social demands (i.e., balancing parenting and school, high expectations, grandparental control, gatekeeping, imposed gender roles) onto them. The results presented in this study support past research (Bermea et al., 2018) which suggests adolescent parents face stigma by school staff and non-parenting adolescents. However, our results extend this work by showing that even supportive adult networks, such as school staff who directly serve school-age parents, hold implicit biases that constrict adolescent parents.

Both grandparents and school staff, hold important power positions over the youth in two important contexts: home and school. Therefore, their implicit expectations and assumptions of adolescent parents have real world implications that may lead to reducing resources (e.g., threatening to kick a student out), constraining behaviors (e.g., imposing curfews that impact father involvement), and advice being interpreted as directives. Assumptions and stereotypes about adolescents' intentions and maturity further led these adults to, often, invalidate youth's opinions and requests; thus, reducing youth's potential voice and sense of empowerment in their own development and parental adjustment. Boys appeared to have been affected most by these assumptions and stereotypes, as gendered expectations of fathers being breadwinners were linked to grandparents encouraging boys to prioritize work over school, and sometimes barring fathers from being involved with their children until they proved themselves responsible (e.g., a provider). These demands, informed by gendered expectations and assumptions, sometimes led to fathers' dropping out of school. Being aware of these implicit biases and assumptions, and how they create promotive/inhibiting contexts will help inform trainings directed at these adult support networks, especially practitioner trainings.

Across these qualitative themes, age or being young was identified as a salient identity/social role that adolescents inhabited. Further, the role of being a student and child/family member were partially informed by the participants' age as adolescents are expected to attend school (e.g., legally or because of social scripts) and the role of being a child/family member was often related to participants' need to live with parents and behave according to their parents' rules. In addition, the developmental period of

adolescence was a prevalent factor in the way many of the "social demand and resources" themes were described through the legally required contexts in which adolescents resided, stereotypes that adults held about adolescents, and social expectation of what adolescents should accomplish. The prevalent role of an adolescent's age in the delineation of social roles and social demands supports the notion that age is an important social positioning factor that intersects with other identities to create a unique developmental context, which sometimes leads to stressful social demands for adolescent parents. Although the participants described these social demands as stressors, many of these experiences were also protective. The duality of these experiences as a stressor and a protective factor are important as they highlight the ambivalence created by transitioning into parenthood at an earlier age than most parents. For example, the legal requirement of living within the familial home (or another legal guardian) and attending school created a context where adolescent parents interacted with several supportive adults. These adults provided advice (even if it was unwanted at times), and monetary and instrumental support, while also constraining behaviors and access to resources.

The grandparents intended to impose some of the demands described above upon youth to support them through the transition to parenthood, and with the intention to avoid becoming negative stereotypes. The themes of parenting control and high expectations/responsibilities described multiple ways in which grandparents imposed high demands on youth with the intention to help adolescents achieve their academic potential and embrace their parenting role. These strategies might be reflective of a no-nonsense parenting style, which is common among Latinx parents and parents residing in low income and high-risk neighborhoods (Halgunseth et al., 2006; White et al., 2013). Previous research suggests that parents use this no-nonsense parenting style to help children and adolescents succeed in response to, or in anticipation of, environmental challenges (White et al., 2013). Within this study, it is possible that grandparents were utilizing a similar no-nonsense parenting style to help adolescent parents succeed in integrating and achieving the multiple, and often conflicting, tasks of transitioning out of adolescence and into parenthood. As noted within our final theme (i.e., maturity and growth), grandparents and adolescents describe that the challenges related to these transitions led adolescents to mature and embrace their parenting role – possibly because of this no-nonsense parenting. However, future research should explore the role of grandparents' parenting behaviors on adolescent parents' successful academic and parental adjustment to verify this perceived causal relation.

These findings support additional tenets from the integrative model (García Coll et al., 1996), which suggest that families and cultures develop unique adaptive tools (e.g.,

diverse parenting styles, cultural values) in response to environmental stressors. In line with recent work examining these adaptive processes (Perez-Brena et al., 2018), the data highlight how adaptive tools can be both protective and onerous, depending on the outcome of interest. However, future research should explore the nuances of parenting and coparenting within adolescent-headed families to understand elements that are both stressors and protective factors to increase our understanding of such factors and better inform intervention designs and clinical practice.

The information gleaned from these focus groups/interviews also provides other important implications for practice. For example, the qualitative codes and multiple voices represented in this study support previous research regarding the significant role grandparents play in coparenting with adolescents (Gee & Rhodes, 2003). Such information highlights the importance of incorporating an intergenerational component to allow grandparents to participate in services aimed for pregnant or parenting adolescents. These services should include opportunities for family members to communicate their parenting goals and intentions and alert participants to imbalanced power dynamics and their implications. Incorporating intergenerational components into these services might help decrease situations where misinterpretation and miscommunication among the coparenting team creates stress and conflict. Currently, coparenting programs have been created to help mothers and fathers negotiate such parenting goals; however, we do not know of any program that accounts for intergenerational coparenting. Such services would be beneficial for adolescents and their parents as it would allow them to receive individualized supports as they transition into their new roles, while helping them continue to foster a positive coparenting alliance. Participants also highlighted the stress and social demands caused by managing multiple adolescent and parenting identities. These multiple identities might lead to feelings of role overload by the adolescent parents. Programs would benefit from highlighting the importance of integrating self-care techniques to reduce parenting stress and role overload. Despite these stressors, many sources of family and cultural resilience (e.g., large coparenting teams, strong family support, shared high expectations) were noted, and practitioners should find ways to foster and validate these sources of resilience to empower adolescents and their families as they pursue their personal and family goals.

Limitations and Future Directions

Despite the importance of this study in examining intersecting identities among adolescent parents, we do acknowledge some limitations of our research. First, our sample was comprised of adolescent parents who were highly involved in an intervention program, had graduated from high school, and held positive relationships with their parents/guardians. Thus, the

narratives from this sample might represent only one type of adolescent parent experience. Future research would benefit from examining the experiences of a variety of adolescent parents who follow different family and life course paths.

Second, our sample consisted of families who resided in the U.S. and identified as Latinx. Although ethnic-homogenous designs are considered strong research practice because they allow researchers to identify within-group heterogeneity and develop a deeper, contextualized, understanding of human development (Fuller & García Coll, 2010); our ethnic-homogenous sample might be a reason why culture and ethnicity did not emerge as salient identities in the focus groups. Only one person mentioned culture explicitly—a school staff member. Therefore, cultural factors might not have been salient from an insider's perspective, but they were salient from an outsider's perspective. This is another reason why collecting data from multiple groups can help provide an opportunity to gather insider and outsider perspectives on a given topic (Rogoff, 2003). Further our sample was primarily comprised of Mexican-origin, English speaking Latinx families, which is representative of the region in which data were collected, but did not represent the diversity of national origin, acculturation, and generational status that exists within the U.S. Latinx population. Thus, additional research is needed to represent a wider array of experiences of Latinx adolescent parents. Future research should also replicate this study in other contexts to understand if our findings are generalizable to other U.S. and global populations. For example, the fact that Latinx families endorse higher family support and obligation values (Knight et al., 2010) might have led these adolescents to experience more support from family members during this transition into parenthood compared to other non-Latinx families.

Third, we conducted these focus groups with adolescent parents who had already graduated; thus, the retrospective nature of these qualitative responses might include perception or recollection biases. Perceived experiences are valid, as they are often most salient to the individual and thus recalled by the individual; however, future research using quantitative data and observational-ethnographic data would provide additional insights and another form of multi-level reporting found in qualitative data (e.g., qual-to-qual coding). Further, although our focus groups led to the identification of themes around intersecting identities that were important for our research, we did not set out to explore this topic in the focus groups/interviews. The fact that these themes emerged amongst the interviews and focus groups, speak to the salience of these experiences and challenges to adolescents and their support network. Future research would benefit from including explicit questions focused on the adolescent parents' identities, perhaps within one-on-one interview that could elicit more rich data and assumed confidentiality. Lastly, it is important to note that, as with any qualitative coding, coder biases might have

influenced theme identification within our results. Although our coders utilized multiple techniques to decrease potential biases (e.g., multiple coders, inter-coder agreement, and multiple rounds of review), biases might still have occurred. Future research would benefit from additional examinations that either confirm or supplement the results.

Conclusion

Even though adolescent parenthood within the U.S. is declining, 171,674 adolescents give birth every year (Martin et al. 2021). These adolescent parents face unique social roles and demands that inform their adjustment. The current study provides a nuanced account of youths' intersecting identities and their experiences navigating unique social demands imposed upon them by their primary social networks (e.g., parents, school staff) because of their age. These social demands include dependent parenting, large coparenting teams, social stereotypes regarding their stage of development, assumptions about their level of commitment to parenting, enforced high expectations and roles, and multiple responsibilities. Although the adolescents in this study described these demands as stressors, the grandparents imposed many of these demands to support youth through the transition to parenthood, and with the intention to help adolescents not conform to negative stereotypes. The duality of these experiences as a stressor and a protective factor are important as they highlight the nuanced experience of adolescent parenthood and the need to look beyond a deficit perspective to see how adolescent parents, and their support networks, develop and foster resilience during the transition to parenthood.

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Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of Interest The authors declare no competing interests.

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