

Tessa Fagle¹; Caroline C. Salafia¹, Christine McCauley Ohannessian^{1,2}
¹Connecticut Children's Medical Center; ²University of Connecticut School of Medicine

BACKGROUND

- ❖ Peer victimization is a pernicious and pervasive problem which peaks in prevalence during adolescence (Modecki et al., 2014).
- ❖ The psychosocial consequences of peer victimization are well documented (Schoeler et al., 2018). Specifically, exposure to peer victimization predicts increased risk for the onset and exacerbation of internalizing problems among adolescents.
- ❖ Further, there is cross-sectional evidence (Guarneri-White et al., 2015) that maladaptive interpersonal coping processes, such as co-rumination, exacerbate depressive symptoms following exposure to peer victimization.
- ❖ Therefore, it is of critical importance to examine the longitudinal psychosocial implications of co-rumination among victimized adolescents.



OBJECTIVE

- ❖ **Primary Objective:** To explore the potential moderating role of co-rumination on the longitudinal association between peer victimization and internalizing problems during

METHODS

Participants:

- ❖ 528 early adolescents from public middle schools located in the Northeast region of the United States
- ❖ 57% female
- ❖ Age: M = 12.58, SD = 0.67, Range = 11-14 years
- ❖ 65% Non-Hispanic White, 10% Hispanic or Latinx, 5% Black or African American, 5% Asian, 14% multi-racial/ethnic, and 1% other

Procedure:

- ❖ Self-report questionnaires were administered three times to students during school, separated by a 6-month interval between Fall of 2016 (T1) and Fall of 2017 (T3).
- ❖ Students received a \$10 movie pass as an incentive for completing the survey at each time point.

METHODS

Measures:

The following validated self-report measures were administered at T1 and T2:

Construct	Measure	Scales
Peer Victimization	Revised Peer Experiences Questionnaire (R-PEQ)	Assesses adolescent's experiences with victimization. ($\alpha = .87$)
Co-Rumination	Co-Rumination Questionnaire; Short Version (CRQ-S)	Assesses the extent to which adolescents typically co-ruminate with friends. ($\alpha = .92$)
Depressive Symptoms	Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale for Children (CES-DC)	Assesses adolescent's depressive symptoms in the past week. ($\alpha s = .91 - .93$)

Analytic Plan:

- ❖ Hierarchical Linear Regression Model
 - ❖ Independent Variable: Peer Victimization (T1)
 - ❖ Moderator: Co-Rumination (T1)
 - ❖ Dependent Variable: Depressive Symptoms (T3)
 - ❖ Covariates: Gender (T1), Age (T1), SES (T1), Race/Ethnicity (T1) and Depressive Symptoms (T1)

RESULTS

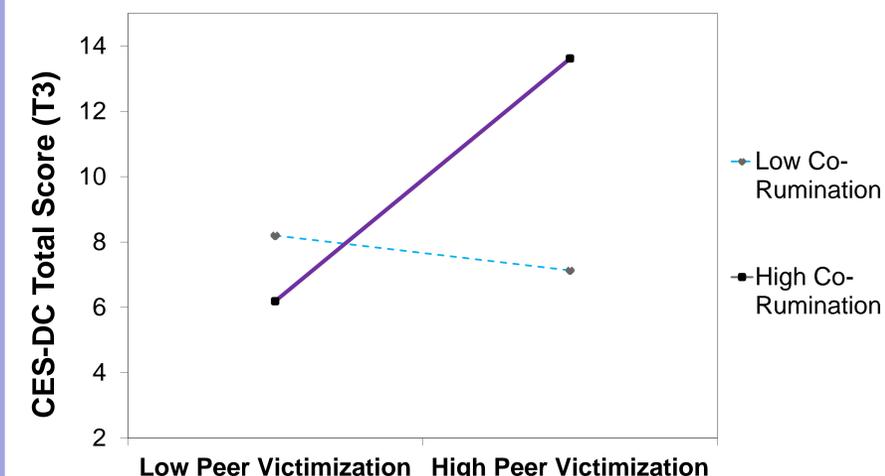
Table 1. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Depressive Symptoms (T3)

Variable	B	SE B	β
Step 1			
Baseline Depression	.59	.36	-.06***
Gender	2.34	1.06	.09*
Age	.12	.77	.01
Race/Ethnicity	-.27	.21	-.05
Perceived SES	-.57	.36	-.06
Step 2			
Peer Victimization (R-PEQ)	1.35	.67	.09*
Co-Rumination (CRQ-S)	.96	.54	.07
Step 3			
R-PEQ x CRQ-S	2.38	.52	.17***

Note: Z-scored were computed for Peer Victimization and CRQ-S
 * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

RESULTS

Figure 1. Simple Slopes for Depressive Symptoms



CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ The present findings are in line with prior research which indicates that engagement in co-ruminative behavior may exacerbate subsequent depressive symptoms following exposure to peer victimization during adolescence (Guarneri-White et al., 2015).
- ❖ It is possible that co-ruminating with close friends about severe interpersonal stressors, such as peer victimization, may generate negative affect and feelings of helplessness among victimized adolescents.

Implications:

- ❖ Future interventions addressing peer victimization in adolescent populations may benefit from providing youth with adaptive interpersonal coping skills in order to avoid engagement in co-ruminative behavior.

