

**ADOLESCENTS' APPROACHES TO SEEKING HELP
FROM INFORMAL HELPERS**

by

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ABSTRACT

Adolescents generally turn to informal helpers (e.g., their mother, friends) for assistance when they have personal problems (Rickwood et al., 2005). Research has distinguished between three approaches to seeking help (i.e., autonomous, dependent, and avoidance) (Komissarouk et al., 2017; Newman, 2008), but little information is available on adolescents' engagement in these approaches. This study examined adolescents' use of the three approaches with their mother and a close friend for a personal problem by investigating the relationships between adolescents' use of each approach and (1) the frequency of their help-seeking behaviour, (2) established correlates of help seeking, and (3) markers of autonomy development. Adolescents (N= 299) enrolled in two high schools completed an anonymous survey at school. Results indicated that autonomous help seeking was adolescents' preferred approach across the two helpers, while the relative use of dependent help seeking and avoidance of help seeking differed for each helper. All three approaches were linked to the frequency of their help seeking from both helpers. Regression and commonality analyses showed that positive relationship quality with each helper provided a foundation for adolescents' use of each help-seeking approach that was supported by other established correlates of help seeking (e.g., gender norms, self-disclosure skills). A parallel pattern for the autonomy variables showed that autonomy support from each helper provided a basis for using each approach that was supported primarily by adolescents' cognitive autonomy. The established correlates of help seeking accounted for considerable variance in adolescents' use of specific approaches whereas the autonomy variables accounted for much less variance. There were similarities and differences across the two helpers in the variables that were

associated with adolescents' use of specific approaches. These results highlight substantial diversity in how young people use help seeking to manage a personal problem. This diversity reflects complex combinations of individual and relationship characteristics whose importance varies when different informal helpers are involved. They also suggest ways in which intervention programs to promote adaptive help seeking can be strengthened.

DEDICATION

To everyone who has provided me with advice, solutions, or redirected avoidance along this journey – thank you for your kindness, wisdom, and patience that has helped me to persevere.

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What a truly humbling experience the past seven years have been. As much as I have learned about how adolescents ask for help, I have been equally enlightened about my own attitudes and approach to help seeking through doing this work and for that I am deeply grateful.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Overview

Help seeking involves making a request for advice, assistance, or emotional support to manage a problem (Gourash, 1978; Rickwood et al., 2005). The act of seeking help is viewed as a dynamic process, typically comprised of at least three stages: recognizing a problem, deciding to seek assistance, and identifying and accessing a helper (Goldsmith et al., 1988; Gross & McMullen, 1983; Srebnik et al., 1996). Steps of the process may occur simultaneously, interact, or be revisited multiple times before help is sought (Gross & McMullen, 1983; Newman, 2008; Srebnik et al., 1996). The primary aim of seeking assistance is to solve a problem or reduce distress, but it can also provide individuals with perspective about themselves and their problems and with opportunities to build skills for solving future problems independently (Karabenick & Newman, 2009; Rickwood, 1995; Wilson & Deane, 2001). Thus, seeking help is both an active coping process and an adaptive, self-regulatory behaviour (Karabenick & Newman, 2009; Nelson-Le Gall, 1981; Rickwood & Thomas, 2012).

Empirical work with adolescents has shown that help seeking is one of multiple coping strategies used to manage problems (Seiffge-Krenke et al., 2009; Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2011). Adolescence is a key time to examine help seeking as it is both a critical period of development and a critical period for mental health and well-being (Rickwood et al., 2005). Developmentally, extensive physical, cognitive, emotional, and social changes occur during adolescence, so having an ability to seek help is a key tool for coping with related stress (Rickwood et al., 2005; Seiffge-Krenke

et al., 2009; Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2011). These significant normative changes also promote the development of cognitive, emotional, and social skills that can be used to seek assistance (Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2016). Simultaneously, the emergence of friends as a primary source of assistance outside of their family increases the amount of social support available to many youths (Furman & Buhrmester, 1992; Szwedlo et al., 2017). Taken together, aspects of normative adolescent development can promote help seeking during a time when coping with a variety of stressors is critical to a youth's current and longer-term functioning (Rickwood et al., 2005; Szwedlo et al., 2017). In fact, adaptively coping with typical, everyday stressors reduces the risk of developing significant mental health difficulties, many of which onset during adolescence and young adulthood (Rickwood et al. 2005; Seiffge-Krenke et al., 2009). Therefore, understanding help seeking during adolescence is important.

A substantial focus of the empirical work on adolescents' help-seeking behaviour has been on seeking help from formal helpers (i.e., professionals) (Rickwood et al., 2005). Consistently, studies report that young people are reluctant to seek professional help (Rickwood, 2020; Sears, 2004; Singh et al., 2019). However, reported rates of adolescents seeking help from professionals (e.g., doctors, mental health workers) vary considerably (e.g., 7% to 44%) (e.g., Rickwood & Braithwaite, 1994; Sears, 2004; Sylwestrzak et al., 2015), with higher rates reported in studies using clinical samples or including teachers as a helper (e.g., Boldero & Fallon, 1995; Schonert-Reichl & Muller, 1996; Zwaanswijk et al., 2007).

Several factors increase the likelihood that adolescents will seek formal help. Demographically, adolescents who are older, Caucasian, reside in urban areas, live in a

two-parent family, or have a family with a higher socioeconomic status are more likely to seek help from a professional (Saunders et al., 1994; Sears, 2004; Zwaanswijk et al., 2003). Some research has also found that girls report more favorable attitudes than boys about seeking formal help and are more likely to seek formal help than boys (e.g., Addis & Mahalik, 2003; Garland & Zigler, 1994; Haavik et al., 2017; Schonert-Reichl & Muller, 1996), yet other research has not found a gender difference (e.g., Boldero & Fallon, 1995).

As for individual characteristics, adolescents who report a higher level of emotional competence or a lower level of hopelessness are more willing to seek formal help (Ciarrochi et al., 2003). In contrast, adolescents who report a higher need for autonomy or believe they should be self-reliant and handle problems themselves are less likely to seek professional help (e.g., Gulliver et al., 2010; Rickwood, 2020; Sheppard et al., 2018; Wilson & Deane, 2012). In addition, some research has shown that adolescents who experience more symptoms of depression and anxiety, suicidal ideation, and behaviour problems are more likely to seek formal help (Raviv et al., 2000; Rickwood & Braithwaite, 1994; Zwaanswijk et al., 2007). However, other studies have reported that youths with emotional or behavioural difficulties and lower self-esteem are less likely to seek assistance from a professional (Dubow et al., 1990; Saunders et al., 1994; Schonert-Reichl & Muller, 1996; Wilson et al., 2005). Thus, findings are mixed as to what symptoms or whether symptom severity is more likely to facilitate or inhibit accessing a professional.

Contextually, youths who have trusted relationships with professional helpers (e.g., family doctors, school-based counsellors) and have had previous positive

experiences with mental health services are more likely to seek formal help (Aguirre Velasco et al., 2020; Rickwood, 2020; Rickwood et al., 2007). Additionally, various parent and family factors are associated with professional help seeking by young people with mental health problems, such as a parent's perceived burden or perception of the problem and need for assistance (Ryan et al., 2015). Rickwood and colleagues (2015) concluded that family was a stronger influence than friends on youths' self-referral for seeking in-person, professional help. Finally, the availability and accessibility of formal services, in person and online, contribute to whether and how often adolescents access professional help. Therefore, youths' primary caregivers, various aspects of their environment, and their individual characteristics facilitate or inhibit formal help seeking.

Adolescents prefer to access informal helpers, such as parents and friends, to manage problems rather than formal helpers (Boldero & Fallon, 1995; Raviv et al., 2000; Rickwood, 2020; Rickwood et al., 2005). For example, when adolescents (ages 12-19 years) were asked from whom they had sought help within the past year, 61% had sought help from friends, 33% had sought help from family, and 7% had sought help from professionals (Sears, 2004). Friends are adolescents first target for assistance (Rickwood et al., 2005; Schonert-Reichl & Muller, 1996; Sullivan et al., 2002) and both girls and boys report a preference for seeking assistance from female friends (Poulin & Pedersen, 2007; Sears et al., 2009; Sears & McAfee, 2017). Romantic partners can also be a source of help during adolescence (Kuttler & Le Greca, 2004; Murphy, 2008). Nevertheless, parents remain a preferred source of assistance and are accessed often for help (Boldero & Fallon, 1995; Schonert-Reichl & Muller, 1996; Sears, 2020). Studies examining adolescents' help seeking from their mother and their father separately have

shown that youths typically prefer to access their mother for help relative to their father (Schonert-Reichl & Muller, 1996; Leavey et al., 2011; Sears, 2008b). Moreover, Leavey and colleagues (2011) found that 60% or more of adolescents viewed their friends and their mother as a potential confidant whereas less than 30% of youths viewed their father as a potential confidant. Taken together, these results suggest that adolescents regard their close friends and their mother as primary sources of informal help when they have problems.

Various demographic, individual, and contextual characteristics have been linked to adolescents' informal help-seeking behaviour. Demographically, gender is a key factor. Typically, girls seek informal help more frequently and have higher intentions to seek informal help in the future than boys (Boldero & Fallon, 1995; Garland & Zigler, 1994; Raviv et al., 2000). When specific informal helpers are considered, girls are more likely to seek help from friends than boys (Boldero & Fallon, 1995; Pearson & Hyde, 2020; Rickwood et al., 2005). In contrast, research on gender differences in help seeking from parents during adolescence is inconsistent, with some research suggesting that boys are more likely to seek help from parents than girls (Boldero & Fallon, 1995), some research reporting that girls are more likely to seek help from parents than boys (Raviv et al., 2000), and some research finding no gender difference in adolescents' use of parents as helpers (Dubow et al., 1990). Looking at help seeking from their mother and their father separately, in some studies more girls than boys seek help from their mother and in other studies there is no gender difference (Halamay & Sears, 2018; Schonert-Reichl & Muller, 1996; Sears, 2008b). Studies of adolescents' help seeking from their father have shown no gender difference (Halamay & Sears, 2018; Schonert-

Reichl & Muller, 1996; Sears, 2008b).

Regarding individual characteristics that have been linked to adolescents' help seeking from informal sources, emotional competence and social competence have been related to girls' and boys' higher intentions to seek help from their family, friends, and romantic partners and to more frequent help seeking from their mother, father, best friend, and romantic partner (Ciarrochi et al., 2003; Halamay et al., 2016; Murphy, 2008). Schonert-Reichl and Muller (1996) examined how adolescents' internal locus of control, external locus of control, and self-consciousness were each related to their help seeking from their mother, their father, and friends. Only adolescents' internal locus of control was related to more help seeking from their mother, whereas an external locus of control was related to more help seeking from friends. In addition, less self-consciousness was related to more help seeking from their father and from friends (Schonert-Reichl & Muller, 1996).

Finally, contextual variables have been linked to seeking help from informal sources. Informal help seeking is more likely when a parent or friend is perceived as being trustworthy, a good listener, and able to maintain confidentiality (Sears et al., 2005; Wilson & Deane, 2001). The quality of their relationship with a potential helper is key to adolescents seeking assistance (Rickwood et al., 2005; Robinson, 2015; Sears, 2008a). For example, Sears (2008a) found that adolescents who reported a more positive relationship with their mother or their father sought help from that parent more often. Similarly, more frequent help seeking from a best friend and a romantic partner by adolescent girls has been linked to more positive relationship qualities, whereas more negative relationship qualities has been associated with less frequent help seeking from

a best friend (Murphy, 2008). Further, mutual help provision among adolescents and their friends positively contributes to the maintenance of the friendships and provides a context for help seeking to occur (van Rijsewijk et al., 2020). In addition, adolescents who reported feeling that their prior help-seeking experiences with their friends, mother, or father were positive were more willing to seek assistance from that helper in the future and reported seeking help more frequently (MacIntyre & Sears, 2012; Robinson, 2015; Sears, 2008b). In contrast, negative or unhelpful past help-seeking experiences have been related to lower intentions to seek help in the future (Wilson & Deane, 2001). Together, these studies indicate the importance of adolescents' relationships with their peers and family members for their routine engagement in help-seeking behaviour.

Many theoretical models and studies now contribute to our understanding of help-seeking behaviour. However, much of this work has focused on adults seeking professional help. While some researchers have reconceptualized these models and adults' experiences to highlight the experiences of children and adolescents, including the normative experience of seeking assistance from informal helpers (e.g., Costello et al., 1998; Logan & King, 2001; Srebnik et al., 1996), multiple gaps in the adolescent help-seeking literature remain.

First, existing research has largely focused on whether or not or how often adolescents seek help from others. However, these markers of help seeking do not capture an individual's approach to seeking help. While researchers have proposed three general approaches to seeking help (i.e., autonomous help seeking, dependent help seeking, and avoidance of help seeking) (e.g., Komissarouk et al., 2017, Nadler, 1997; Newman, 2008), endorsement of these approaches by adolescents has not been

evaluated among high school students who are solving a personal problem. Second, although a relationship between the approaches to seeking help and variation in the frequency of help seeking has been proposed (Nadler, 1997), this relationship has not been formally examined. Third, models and research on help seeking are primarily descriptive, so the utilization of a conceptual approach to the selection of correlates of adolescents' approaches to seeking help has been largely absent from existing studies. Fourth, models and research on help seeking by adolescents have paid inadequate attention to features of typical adolescent development (e.g., increasing executive functioning, identity development). Specifically, the normative experience of increasing autonomy during adolescence may deter some youths from requesting assistance from others or prompt others to seek assistance in a particular way, yet autonomy has had minimal consideration in research on adolescents seeking help (Oudekerk et al. 2015; Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2011).

This study addressed these limitations by investigating adolescents' self-reported engagement in three approaches to seeking help from their mother and a close friend for a personal problem. This study also explored the relationship between their use of these three approaches and the frequency of their help seeking from these two helpers. The present study then used a conceptual framework to guide the selection of established correlates of help-seeking behaviour which were evaluated as potential correlates of these help-seeking approaches. Finally, this research assessed whether markers of autonomy development were related to adolescents' use of the help-seeking approaches.

To contextualize this research, the next section of this chapter reviews conceptual models of help seeking and is followed by a discussion of specific

limitations of these models and the help-seeking literature. Then, the three approaches to help seeking are described. Established correlates of adolescents' help-seeking behaviour are then presented as potential correlates of their use of the help-seeking approaches. Subsequently, markers of adolescents' autonomy development are discussed as potential correlates of their approaches to seeking help. Finally, the research questions and hypotheses that guided this study are presented.

Models of Help-Seeking Behaviour

Several models of help seeking have been formulated to describe the complex sequence of actions and decisions involved in requesting assistance, primarily from formal sources. Earlier models were adult focused whereas more recent models are adaptations of these early models that reflect the experiences of children and adolescents. Help-seeking models have been generated to capture a range of experiences, including accessing medical care, accessing mental health services, and accessing help in normative situations (e.g., at school).

Medical Models

Medical models aim to explain conditions that facilitate or impede seeking professional medical care and health services, with a focus on symptoms most likely to be recognized as problematic (Gross & McMullen, 1983). These theoretical frameworks suggest that the process of seeking medical care is a function of three primary influences (Andersen, 1995). Predisposing factors (e.g., demographic variables, health beliefs and attitudes) exist prior to the problem for which an individual may be seeking help. Enabling conditions (e.g., accessibility of services, personal resources) are factors in an individual's environment that may facilitate or inhibit whether that person seeks medical

assistance. Finally, illness or need factors (e.g., severity, perceived or evaluated need for service) describe the most immediate influences on service engagement (Andersen, 1995).

Mental Health Care Models

Mental health care models focus on psychological concerns and target accessing services as the result of the help-seeking process. Like medical models, the help-seeking process for mental health concerns is linked to predisposing factors (e.g., attitudes towards seeking help, psychological resources, coping strategies), enabling factors (e.g., availability of services, social pressures to seek help), and an individual's illness profile (e.g., symptom type and severity as perceived by individuals or professionally assessed) (Goldsmith et al., 1988). Relative to medical models, however, a greater emphasis on cultural and contextual factors (e.g., stigma, cultural beliefs about mental illness and about help seeking and usefulness of services) is incorporated into an understanding of seeking help for mental health difficulties (Cauce et al., 2002; Goldsmith et al., 1988).

Help-Seeking Models for Children and Adolescents with Mental Health Difficulties

Significant efforts have been made to revise earlier adult-focused models of help seeking to explain children and adolescents' help-seeking behavior (e.g., Costello et al., 1998; Logan & King, 2001; Srebnik et al., 1996). Srebnik and colleagues (1996) revised Goldsmith et al.'s (1996) framework for mental health help seeking to propose that a child's illness profile (i.e., clinical and subjective need for help) and family characteristics (e.g., family size, parental education, parent-child relationship) influence the likelihood that children and families will recognize a problem and deem that problem as needing assistance. Subsequent steps in the help-seeking pathway are

impacted by predisposing factors (e.g., stable conditions of an individual, such as age, gender, and coping styles of the child and parent/family) that may affect the child's and family's readiness to seek help. Barriers and facilitators (i.e., social and environmental pressures, availability of services, income) are also represented in the model. Central to their adaptation is that most children rely on members of their immediate social network to access informal and formal assistance (Srebnik et al., 1996). Similarly, the family network-based model formulated by Costello et al. (1998) describes characteristics of children and their families that are critical to help seeking. This model also emphasizes social support systems (e.g., schools and community services) as determinants of seeking help and recognizes that social support networks undergo shifts throughout development, which may have implications for pathways to accessing assistance (e.g., increased peer group involvement, decreased reliance on parents) (Costello et al., 1998). Finally, Logan and King's (2001) parentally mediated help-seeking pathway to mental health services acknowledges the critical role of parents in accessing professional services for their adolescents. In this model, an adolescent's response (i.e., attitudes, behaviours) to a parent's attempt to assist as well as an adolescent's ability to recognize a problem and request assistance are acknowledged as having potential impacts on the help-seeking process (Logan & King, 2001).

Influenced by these earlier models, Zwaanswijk and colleagues (2005, 2007) tested comprehensive models of the help-seeking process for mental health difficulties in separate samples of children and adolescents. Their models incorporated various steps of the help-seeking process and considered the involvement of various actors and service providers (e.g., parents, teachers, physicians, friends). For children (ages 4-11

years), parents played a predominant role in recognizing problems and obtaining help; school personnel also played a significant role in the help-seeking process. Family characteristics were prominent correlates (e.g., family functioning, changes in family structure), while child characteristics (e.g., age, gender) played only a minor role (Zwaanswijk et al., 2005). In comparison, for adolescents (ages 12-17 years), family physicians were more likely to have connected youths to mental health services than teachers, and both adolescents and their parents contributed to recognizing problems and accessing services. Of note, this help-seeking process was similar for girls and boys (Zwaanswijk et al., 2007).

Cognitive Decision-Making Models

Cognitive decision-making models of help-seeking behaviour focus on multiple decision points in the help-seeking process: deciding whether there is a problem, deciding whether to seek assistance, and deciding from whom to seek help (Gross & McMullen, 1983). Various attributions are proposed to influence how an individual makes each of these decisions. For example, the attribution of a problem to factors that are situational (e.g., controllability of problem, visibility of help seeking) or dispositional (e.g., personality characteristic of help seeker) are proposed to impact these decisions. Analysis of the costs and benefits of seeking help are also theorized to be influential to decisions made throughout the process (Gross & McMullen, 1983; Wills & DePaulo, 1991). In an information-processing model of the decision to seek professional help for mental health concerns, Vogel and colleagues (2006) acknowledged that people often have habitual patterns regarding their decision making, such that they decide what to do based on their habit to shortcut the process rather than use the information unique

to each problem scenario. As a result, to “save cognitive effort”, the way individuals make decisions required for help seeking may become more dispositional with time.

Social Models

Evolving from research on why and when people help others, examinations of help seeking in social psychology have considered the processes that lead to a help exchange, including a willingness to seek help, a willingness to receive help, and the consequences of receiving help (Nadler, 2012). Social frameworks have acknowledged that a willingness to seek help is broadly impacted by individual and situational factors (Nadler, 1991, 1997; Wills & DePaulo, 1991). As such, social models often consider help-seeking interactions as involving three components: (1) characteristics of the person in need (e.g., gender, personality variables, beliefs), (2) the need state itself (e.g., ego-centrality, external attributions for problem, visibility of seeking help), and (3) characteristics of the potential helper (e.g., personal or impersonal source of help, similarity to help seeker, attractiveness) (Nadler, 1991; Wills & DePaulo, 1991).

Notably, early social psychology literature related to the help-seeking process was characterized primarily by social-normative frameworks (i.e., how cultural values and social roles explain help-seeking behaviour) or self-esteem frameworks (i.e., how personal beliefs and perceptions of the self can moderate the decision to seek help) (Nelson-Le Gall, 1985). Other frameworks drew connections between help seeking as a social phenomenon and help seeking as a coping behaviour (Nadler, 1990; Wills & DePaulo, 1991). For example, when seeking help poses a minimal threat to oneself, Nadler (1990) argued that it tends to occur in a habitual manner and that requests for help may typically be for full solutions. When help seeking has a greater potential for

self-threat, however, an individual's self-regulation may be activated and costs and rewards of seeking help become salient. If self-evaluative processes are triggered, individuals may be deterred from seeking help or they may be able to view seeking help as a deliberate, instrumental, and effective form of coping (Nadler, 1990).

Similarly, Wills and DePaulo (1991) proposed a social framework of help seeking from a coping perspective that emphasized perceptions of seeking help as either a direct coping behaviour or as a dependency-based behaviour. When seeking help is used with other coping behaviours (e.g., problem solving), this form of coping is more consistent with a positive self-image, favourable social comparisons, and increased competence. However, when help seeking is perceived as the only coping response available and the help seeker depends on the helper to solve the problem, it may result in greater threat to one's self-image and have limited long-term benefits (Wills & DePaulo, 1991). These models highlight the complexity of help seeking, including that qualitatively distinct approaches to help seeking exist (i.e., habitual, instrumental, or avoidance of help-seeking). The antecedents to engaging in these approaches to seeking help are of particular interest to social psychology.

Academic Models

Academic models examine youths' help-seeking behaviour within the school context. These models highlight help seeking as important for academic achievement as well as positive adjustment (Karabenick & Newman, 2010). Further, researchers have recognized the significance of cognitive, social, and emotional development for the competencies and skills necessary to ask for help (Nelson-Le Gall, 1981; Newman, 2008). While early literature discussed help seeking as a dependent and self-threatening

behaviour, Nelson Le-Gall (1981) shifted perceptions of help seeking by young people by redefining this behaviour as an instrumental problem-solving skill and social-cognitive response to problems. Her model described a five-component process involving an awareness of the need for help, the decision to seek help, identifying a potential helper, implementing strategies for engaging that person's help, and evaluating the outcome of the help-seeking episode.

Building on Nelson-Le Gall's work, Newman (1991, 2000, 2008) created a framework that describes children's help seeking in academic settings as an adaptive strategy of self-regulated learners. Self-regulated learners are believed to possess competencies and resources which together explain whether students seek help (Newman, 2003, 2008). Specifically, cognitive competencies include knowing when assistance is necessary and knowing how to ask for help in a way that increases the likelihood that it will be provided. Social competencies include knowing that others can help and knowing how to carry out a request in a socially acceptable manner. Affective-motivational resources include the goals, attitudes, self-beliefs, and feelings associated with a student's sense of agency or control, desire for challenges, tolerance for task difficulty, willingness to admit personal difficulty, and desire for social interaction with more knowledgeable helpers. Finally, contextual or environmental factors support the use of social-cognitive skills and affective-motivational resources (Karabenick & Newman, 2010; Newman, 2008). For example, characteristics of the classroom (e.g., availability of helpers) and the type of incident or problem (e.g., difficulties in a specific class) have been evaluated in relation to help seeking (Newman, 2000, 2003, 2008). Further, students' feelings towards a potential helper have been identified as important

for help seeking (Newman, 2000).

Newman has extended his framework from predicting students' help-seeking behaviour for academic problems to explaining seeking assistance for other problems, including personal safety and peer harassment (Newman, 2008; Newman, & Murray, 2005; Newman et al., 2001). In addition, independent research has supported the prediction of adolescents' help-seeking behaviour using each of the main components of this model (Murphy 2008; Robinson, 2015). Specifically, Murphy (2008) examined the three components of the framework simultaneously and found support for markers of each component and for extending use of the model to help seeking within adolescents' peer relationships outside the classroom. Similarly, Robinson (2015) found support for markers of the model's three components in her application of the model to adolescent boys seeking help from their mother and their father.

As academic models have evolved, researchers have consistently emphasized that students' objectives for seeking help are important for understanding this behaviour because some goals are more adaptive than others (Karabenick & Newman, 2009). According to Nelson-Le Gall and colleagues (1983), help seeking may be driven by a variety of goals, including to complete a task without comprehension, to complete a task to avoid criticism, or to complete a task to enhance one's competence. To reflect these goals, she distinguished between executive help seeking (i.e., asking for a direct solution and intending for someone else to solve the problem) and instrumental help seeking (i.e., requesting explanations or hints but maintaining responsibility for solving the problem). Newman and others continued to emphasize this distinction between more and less adaptive help-seeking strategies (Karabenick, 2011; Newman, 2008), and research on

children's and adolescents' help-seeking behaviour with teachers and peers in the classroom has examined these two forms of help seeking as well as the avoidance of help seeking.

Limitations of Help-Seeking Models and Literature

As indicated by the previous review, several models and a significant body of research now exist that describe various aspects of help seeking. The overarching aim of this work has been to identify factors that are associated with individuals' engagement in help seeking (or not) when they have a problem. While this work has advanced our understanding of help seeking significantly, multiple issues limit what we know about when and how adolescents seek help. Four issues will be discussed next.

First, many of the help-seeking models and much of the previous research on help seeking by adolescents have focused on whether or how frequently, young people have sought help for a problem. While these indicators of help seeking are important for documenting the occurrence of this behaviour, they do not capture an individual's approach to using this complex form of coping (Komissarouk et al., 2017; Nadler, 1997; Newman, 2008). Researchers rooted in the social psychology and the educational psychology literatures recognized this issue some time ago (e.g., Asser, 1978; Nelson-Le Gall, 1981) and described styles or ways in which individuals behaved when they were seeking assistance (e.g., a request for a full solution versus a partial solution). Since then, they have identified three qualitatively different approaches to help seeking: autonomous help seeking (i.e., those who seek help by requesting explanations or suggestions that allow them to solve the problem themselves), dependent help seeking (i.e., those who seek help to have another person solve the problem), and avoidance of

help seeking (i.e., those who opt not to ask for help despite facing a problem) (Nadler, 1997; Nelson-Le Gall, 1985; Newman, 2000, 2008; Wills & DePaulo, 1991).

However, research on help-seeking approaches that has been guided by either one of these two literatures has been conducted quite independently of the other literature. Studies in the social psychology domain have often viewed help seeking as a disposition and have conducted studies with adults in experimental as well as everyday situations, such as college or work settings and parents seeking help from teachers on their child's behalf (e.g., Harpaz & Grinshtain, 2020; Komissarouk et al., 2017; Komissarouk & Nadler, 2014). In contrast, studies in the educational psychology domain have viewed help seeking as a behaviour that is more context-dependent (e.g., type of helper, type of problem) and have been conducted primarily with younger adolescents (i.e., middle school students) in the classroom (e.g., Ryan et al., 2005; Ryan & Shim, 2012; Shin, 2018). Only one study has evaluated how high school students used autonomous and dependent approaches to seeking help (Schenke et al., 2015), and only one study has examined the extent to which adolescents in high school used all three approaches to seek formal help for compulsive sexual behaviour (Efrati, 2018).

The present study provided context for adolescents' use of the three help-seeking approaches by specifying helpers and a type of problem. This approach is consistent with studies in the educational psychology domain that have focused exclusively on the help-seeking experiences of children and adolescents who are still developing this coping skill. It has been shown consistently that youths prefer to seek help from informal helpers (e.g., friends, parents), but because they often access different helpers at different rates (Boldero & Fallon, 1995; Leavey et al., 2011; Raviv et al., 2000;

Rickwood et al., 2005), their use of specific help-seeking approaches with their mother and with a close friend was assessed. With respect to the type of problem, studies of help-seeking approaches have been limited to young adolescents seeking help from teachers or peers for an academic problem, which has often been further specified as problems experienced in math class (e.g., Kiefer & Shim, 2016; Ryan et al., 2005; Ryan & Pintrich, 1997; Schenke et al., 2015). Even though problems with managing feelings of stress and negative emotions, such as sadness, anger, or worry, are encountered by most youths (e.g., Arbel et al., 2018; Schonert-Reichl & Muller, 1996; Seiffge-Krenke et al., 2009), adolescents' approach to asking for help from their mother or a close friend with such normative personal problems has not been examined.

A second limitation of the help-seeking literature is that various markers of help seeking (e.g., attitudes, intentions, frequency of behaviour, approaches) are typically evaluated in isolation. This has contributed to a fragmented literature on this topic. Considering the frequency of individuals' requests for assistance alongside their use of specific approaches to help seeking is a potentially important question. According to Nadler (1997), variation in the effectiveness of help seeking as a coping strategy, as indicated by the three approaches to help seeking, may be implied by the frequency of its use. If individuals frequently turn to others for help (e.g., report seeking help more than "often" or "most of the time"), even when they can solve their problem on their own, this would be an overutilization of help. If individuals typically avoid seeking help (e.g., report seeking help "never" or "rarely"), this would be an underutilization of help. In comparison, individuals who seek help in an autonomous way are expected to approach others at a moderate frequency (e.g., report seeking help somewhere between

“sometimes” or “often”) and are viewed as using help adaptively. Even though this relationship between specific approaches to seeking help and the frequency of help seeking has been described, no studies have examined this relationship directly.

A third limitation is that help-seeking models and research on help-seeking behaviour are primarily descriptive. As a result, the correlates examined in individual studies often vary considerably across studies and how these correlates operate in relation to one another is often not considered. Use of a conceptual model to guide the selection of potential correlates may provide a more organized approach to investigations of help seeking by adolescents and may provide insight into the considerable variation reported in this behaviour. In this study, Newman’s model of adaptive help seeking (1991, 2000, 2008) was used to guide the selection of correlates that were assessed in relation to adolescents’ approaches to help seeking from specific informal helpers for a personal problem. Consistent with Newman’s model, markers of social-cognitive skills (i.e., competence at self-disclosure), affective-motivational resources (i.e., conformity to specific masculine and feminine gender norms), and environmental factors (i.e., positive dyadic relationship with their mother and with a close friend) were evaluated. Markers of each of these three domains provide a comprehensive analysis of the extent to which these domains and established correlates of help-seeking behaviour contribute to the approaches adolescents use to seek help. The rationale for the selection of specific variables will be provided in a subsequent section.

A fourth limitation is that models of and research on adolescents’ help seeking have not paid adequate attention to the extent to which normative changes associated with adolescent development (e.g., increasing executive functioning, identity

development, involvement in romantic relationships) may impact young people's help-seeking behaviour. One normative change, establishing autonomy, appears to be at odds with turning to others for assistance (Oudekerk et al., 2015; Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2011). Researchers have long recognized that individuals often refrain from and even avoid seeking help because doing so involves some level of dependence on others and competes with a desire to be independent (Nadler, 1998; Nelson-Le Gall, 1985; Rickwood et al., 2005; Ryan et al., 2001). However, there has been little consideration of whether autonomy during adolescence factors into youths' use of help seeking, and the work that has been done has focused on help seeking from professionals. For example, Logan and King (2001) acknowledged the prominence of autonomy in their parentally mediated help-seeking pathway to mental health services for adolescents, but they did not evaluate the role of autonomy. Wilson and Deane (2012) examined adolescents' intentions to seek professional mental health care and reported that a higher perceived need for autonomy was related to youths' lower intentions of seeking this assistance. While autonomy may play a role in adolescents' help seeking from professionals, it is not known if it is also salient for their approaches to help seeking from informal helpers.

Approaches to Seeking Help

After individuals recognize that they need or want help with a problem, they establish a goal that informs the approach they will take when they seek help (Karabenick, 2011; Karabneick & Newman, 2009; Nelson-Le Gall, 1981). There is agreement on three different approaches – autonomous help seeking, dependent help seeking, and avoidance of help seeking. Each approach has correlates and implications

for outcomes consequent to the help-seeking behaviour.

Autonomous Help Seeking

Engaging in autonomous help seeking involves asking for hints, information, advice, support, or clarification that may assist with solving a problem rather than asking for a full solution to a problem (Nadler, 1997; Nelson-Le Gall, 1985; Newman, 2008). Seeking assistance in this way does not always solve the problem, but it is expected to encourage greater autonomy in solving similar problems in the future (Komissarouk et al., 2017; Nelson-Le Gall, 1981, 1985; Newman, 2008). As Nadler (1998) explained, this kind of help is a “means to an end” such that a need for guidance is recognized, but help seekers still intend to solve the problem themselves. Seeking autonomous help is thought to minimize the psychological costs of help seeking (e.g., threats to feeling competent or independent), maximize the instrumental benefits (e.g., solving a problem, reducing suffering), and encourage a sense of independence (Nadler, 1991, 2018; Newman, 2008). Thus, autonomous help seeking is recognized as effective coping, as an important strategy of self-regulated learning, and is considered an adequate utilization of help (Karabenick, 1998; Nadler, 1998; Ryan et al., 2005; Ryan & Shin, 2011). This approach to help seeking has also been described as instrumental, adaptive, strategic, and appropriate (Komissarouk et al., 2017; Nelson-Le Gall et al., 1983; Newman 2008; Ryan et al., 2005).

Research suggests that gender and age may be linked to autonomous help seeking. Specific to gender, some studies have shown that girls seek more autonomous help than boys from teachers and peers in the classroom and when specific helpers in the classroom are unspecified (Kiefer & Shim, 2016; Marchand & Skinner, 2007; Ryan &

Shim, 2012; Schneke et al., 2015; Shin, 2018). However, other studies have found that similar proportions of boys and girls seek autonomous help (Kessels & Steinmayr, 2013), including when behaviours were observed by teachers or during experimental tasks (Butler, 1998; Ryan et al., 2005). Regarding age, high school students reported more autonomous help seeking than middle school students (Schenke et al., 2015). Autonomous help seeking from peers, however, was found to decline during the transition from elementary to middle school (i.e., early adolescence), which may suggest that age-related changes in use of certain approaches with certain helpers occur during adolescence (Ryan & Shim, 2012).

Individual and contextual factors have also been related to autonomous help seeking. Among younger adolescents, more autonomous help seeking has been linked to mastery achievement goal orientation, academic self-efficacy, greater perceived benefits of help seeking, more positive affective experiences in the classroom, and more positive social relationships with teachers (Gonida et al., 2014; Gonida et al., 2019; Roussel et al., 2010; Ryan et al., 2005; Ryan & Pintrich, 1997; Ryan & Shin, 2011). Social goals (e.g., more intimacy) have also been associated with autonomous help seeking (Kiefer & Shim, 2016; Roussel et al., 2010; Ryan & Shin, 2011). Additionally, contextual variables, such as experiencing a classroom environment that encourages developing competence, making personal progress, and valuing the learning process, have been connected to more autonomous help seeking among middle school and high school students (Schenke et al., 2015; Shim et al., 2013).

Further, the general expectation is that autonomous help seeking is associated with positive outcomes (Nadler, 1997, 1998; Nelson-Le Gall et al., 1983; Newman,

2008). Research with children and adolescents has examined this relationship in academic settings and generally supports this claim. For example, Scheneke et al. (2015) found that, even when controlling for previous mathematics scores and other covariates, autonomous help seeking predicted higher mathematics achievement among middle school and high school students. Seeking autonomous help has also been associated with higher academic achievement over short periods of time (Ryan et al., 2005; Ryan & Shin, 2011; Ryan & Shim, 2012). In one study, however, changes in seeking autonomous help in the classroom from peers was unrelated to changes in grades during the first year of middle school (Ryan & Shim, 2012). It is not known to what extent autonomous help seeking is related to other outcomes among adolescents.

Dependent Help Seeking

Engaging in dependent help seeking involves requesting a solution to a problem (Nadler, 1998, 2015). These requests for help are often made after minimal effort is afforded to solving the problem independently (Newman, 2008). Instead, individuals aim to have another solve their problem for them (Nadler, 1998). Given that the focus is on the immediate outcome, this kind of help is unlikely to provide an individual with a learning experience or enhanced ability to cope with similar difficulties in the future (Komissarouk et al., 2017; Nadler, 1997, Nelson-Le Gall et al., 1983). While dependent help seeking is sometimes considered to be as maladaptive as avoidance of seeking help, it may be situationally appropriate (e.g., in some cultures, interdependency and relying on experts are perceived as more beneficial than learning to do it oneself; or in situations that do not prompt self-evaluation) (Komissarouk & Nadler, 2014; Nadler, 1990; Nelson-Le Gall et al., 1983; Newman, 2008). This approach to help seeking has also

been described as executive, expedient, and less adaptive (Butler, 1998; Karabenick, 1998; Nelson-Le Gall et al., 1983; Newman 2008; Ryan et al., 2005).

Research suggests that gender and age are linked to dependent help seeking. Specific to gender, research among middle school and high school students indicates that boys seek more dependent help than girls (Butler, 1998; Ryan & Shim, 2012; Schenke et al., 2015). In studies where students' dependent help seeking was observed, however, gender differences were not found (Butler, 1998; Ryan et al., 2005). Specific to age, Schenke et al. (2015) reported no differences in levels of dependent help seeking between students in middle school and students in high school (type of helper was not specified). Nevertheless, seeking dependent help from peers increased during the transition from elementary school to middle school, which may suggest a shift in this behaviour in early adolescence (Ryan & Shim, 2012).

Dependent help seeking has been linked to various individual and contextual factors. Factors related to children and adolescents' academic achievement, motivation, emotional functioning, social functioning, and the classroom context have been linked to more dependent help seeking. For example, Ryan et al. (2005) found that students classified as typically seeking more dependent help from their teacher had lower grades, lower academic self-efficacy, and higher anxiety related to math class. Socially, students who endorsed popularity goals engaged in more dependent help seeking from peers, whereas students who endorsed intimacy goals engaged in less dependent help seeking (Kiefer & Shim, 2016). Interestingly, boys who endorsed dominance goals were more likely to seek dependent help, whereas girls who endorsed dominance goals were less likely to seek dependent help (Kiefer & Shim, 2016). Additionally, students were more

likely to seek dependent help in classrooms that encouraged competition between students or placed less emphasis on learning and on working hard to develop personal competence (Schenke et al., 2015; Shim et al. 2013).

Despite often resolving problems in the short-term, dependent help seeking is expected to be negatively related to various outcomes in the long-term. However, studies have demonstrated mixed results when investigating links between this approach and achievement outcomes. Research with middle school students found that seeking dependent help from teachers and peers was related to lower achievement over time (Ryan et al., 2005; Ryan & Shim, 2012), yet Schenke et al. (2015) found that dependent help seeking was not associated with changes in standardized test scores. Relationships between dependent help seeking and other adolescent outcomes have not been examined.

Avoidance of Help Seeking

Choosing to not seek help is a third alternative for someone who is managing a problem (Butler, 1998; Komissarouk et al., 2017; Newman, 2008; Ryan et al., 2005). Those who endorse more avoidance of help seeking typically prefer to solve problems alone and they find it more important to accomplish things in this manner, even if one cost of this approach is that their difficulties continue (Komissarouk et al., 2017). As such, avoidance can be detrimental as it prevents help seeking from occurring (Ryan et al., 2009). Further, not seeking help can have negative consequences, such as the development of coping vulnerabilities (e.g., lower self-efficacy) and an increased likelihood of future failure (Nadler, 1990; Newman, 2008).

A variety of factors underpin help avoidance (Butler, 1998; Komissarouk &

Nadler, 2014; Nadler, 1991). Not seeking help may reflect feelings of helplessness or a perceived lack of personal control over difficulties (Komissarouk et al., 2017; Nadler, 1990). Specific to the classroom, students may avoid seeking help because a competent helper is not perceived as being available, seeking help seems like it will take too much time, or they have concerns about how their competence will be perceived (Butler, 1998; Newman, 2008; Ryan et al., 1997; Ryan & Pintrich, 1997). Avoidance may also be motivated by intentions to direct efforts towards helping oneself. Butler (1998) found that autonomy reasons for help avoidance were more strongly endorsed than competence concerns among students 10-12 years old. As such, in some instances when help is not sought, it may be inferred that an individual prefers independence, even if the cost of doing so is an unresolved problem (Nadler, 1990). Not seeking help may be adaptive, however, when individuals are aware that they are capable of solving the problem independently and achievement is possible (Komissarouk & Nadler, 2014; Newman, 2008). Thus, in some instances, avoidance of help seeking does not reflect an underutilization of others as a source of assistance.

Studies suggest a possible relationship between avoidance of help seeking and gender and age. Regarding gender, boys avoid seeking help from teachers more than girls (Butler, 1998; Marchand & Skinner, 2007; Ryan et al., 1997; Ryan et al., 2005), but no gender difference has been found for avoidance of help seeking from peers (Kiefer & Shim, 2016; Shin, 2018). Interestingly, Ryan et al. (2009) found that European American boys were higher on help avoidance than European American girls, but no gender difference was found between African American girls and African American boys or European American boys. Ryan et al. (2009) reasoned that gender

role norms may explain the differences, such that European American girls are expected to adhere to feminine norms of communal qualities (e.g., dependence, warmth) which support help seeking, whereas African American girls are encouraged to display masculine, agentic qualities (i.e., self-reliance) and communal qualities, which may inhibit the effect of femininity and result in avoidance. Regarding age, avoidance of seeking academic help increased across early adolescence in one study (Ryan et al., 2009), but age was not examined in other samples of youths.

Avoidance of help seeking has been linked to multiple individual and contextual variables. Studies with youths have found that students who avoid seeking help have less confidence in their cognitive abilities, display the lowest levels of achievement, endorse greater concerns about their ability and performance relative to other students, and report less focus on learning and mastery of material (e.g., Ryan et al., 2001; Ryan et al., 2005; Ryan & Shin, 2011). Socially, students reporting lower social competence were more likely to feel threatened when asking their peers for help or to have more concerns about their reputation in relation to academics or their peers (Kiefer & Shim, 2016; Ryan et al., 2001; Ryan & Pintrich, 1997). Contextually, students who avoid seeking help in the classroom perceive less emotional and academic support from their teacher (Ryan et al., 2005). Further, students are more likely to avoid seeking help in classrooms that place greater focus on students' performance and comparing students' abilities (Ryan et al., 2001; Shin et al., 2013; Shin, 2018).

Deciding not to seek help when individuals can solve their own problem is appropriate, but in situations where help is truly necessary avoidance is expected to be associated with negative outcomes. Avoidance of help seeking has been linked to lower

grades for high school students across academic subjects (Leaper et al., 2018). Further, longitudinal studies have found that tendencies to avoid help seeking in the classroom were associated with lower achievement over time (Ryan et al., 2005; Ryan et al., 2009; Ryan & Shin, 2011). A longitudinal study by Shin (2018) also revealed that students were more likely to select friends who showed a higher tendency to avoid help seeking. They also showed increased avoidance over time when they perceived higher classroom performance goals (e.g., demonstrating superior ability and outperforming others). Research directly examining other outcomes of avoidance is limited, but available studies suggest that avoidance of seeking help can have consequences beyond failing to solve one's problem, such as making youths less attractive as friends to peers (Shin, 2018). Of course, avoidance of help seeking is also considered a significant barrier to adolescents receiving appropriate care for mental health problems (Rickwood, 2020; Wilson & Deane, 2012).

In summary, meaningful distinctions between autonomous help seeking, dependent help seeking, and avoidance of help seeking have been documented among youths. A variety of individual (e.g., motivational, social, affective) and contextual (e.g., cultural norms, classroom climate) correlates have been identified and provide insight into what makes individuals more or less likely to engage in each approach. Further, each approach appears to have implications for problem resolution, stress reduction, and future coping behaviour, although relatively little research has examined this issue. Two features of this body of work stand out and warrant discussion.

First, much of the research on approaches to help seeking has examined these approaches either as individual dispositions that are expected to occur across situations

or within specific contexts (i.e., classrooms). As a result, details about the context in which a help-seeking interaction may occur are either not specified or do not generalize to adolescents' normative experience of seeking help from a parent or a friend. This information is important to determine if adolescents engage key helpers using similar or different approaches. Variation in the frequency with which youths access their mother or their friends for help with normative problems outside of the classroom suggests that they may engage these helpers differently (e.g., Rickwood et al., 2005; Schonert-Reichl & Muller, 1996; Sears, 2008a, 2008b). Similarly, the type of problem is a potentially important consideration for understanding adolescents' approach to help seeking. However, research examining help-seeking approaches with youths has been limited to navigating problems in math class (e.g., Schenke et al., 2015) or problems with schoolwork in general (e.g., Ryan & Shim, 2012). Adolescents' approaches to help seeking for a personal problem were of interest in this study because it is typical for youths to have this type of problem at some point and it can sometimes cause considerable distress (e.g., Boldero & Fallon, 1995; Rickwood & Braithwaite, 1994; Seiffge-Krenke et al., 2009). Examining the approaches adolescents take to seeking help for a personal problem may identify ways to promote their use of approaches that will ultimately be adaptive. Thus, this study evaluated adolescents' use of autonomous, dependent, and avoidant approaches to help seeking from their mother and a close friend for a personal problem.

Second, with only a few exceptions, research has not evaluated the extent to which several aspects of help seeking intersect. Butler (1998) examined fifth- and sixth-grade students' reasons for avoiding asking for help in relation to various markers of

help-seeking behaviour. Results revealed that students' reasons for typically avoiding help seeking (i.e., autonomous, expedient, or ability focused concerns) were related to different patterns of behaviour when solving math problems, including the type of help they requested, the amount of time before they asked for help, and how they handled solving problems after receiving assistance. For example, students who typically avoided help for autonomous reasons tried to solve the problem longer before asking for help, asked for more hints when requesting assistance, and were able to solve more subsequent problems alone. Importantly, students who typically avoided seeking help because they wanted to maintain autonomy requested help more frequently during the experimental task than students who avoided asking for help to mask incompetence or avoided asking because they did not perceive it would expedite the resolution of the problem. Given that adolescents report seeking help from specific informal helpers at different frequencies (Murphy, 2008; Robinson, 2015; Sears, 2008a), it is important to assess whether this aspect of help seeking is associated with different approaches to help seeking. A more comprehensive understanding of help seeking was expected to be gained by examining how, from whom, for what, and how often adolescents were seeking help. Another aim was to advance the literature by evaluating the extent to which established correlates of adolescents' help-seeking behaviour were related to the three approaches to seeking help. A selection of these correlates and a review of relevant literature is described next.

Potential Correlates of Adolescents' Approaches to Seeking Help: Established Correlates of Help-Seeking Behaviour

Newman's framework for adaptive help seeking (2000, 2008) was used in this

study to guide the selection of variables that were examined in relation to adolescents' approaches to seeking help from specific informal helpers for a personal problem. Newman's framework was selected for two primary reasons. First, this framework is based on normative developmental theory rather than clinical research. It recognizes that both individual competencies (e.g., social and cognitive skills) and affective-motivational resources of adolescents are involved in shaping their help-seeking behaviour. Although evaluation of Newman's model outside of an academic setting is limited to two studies, these studies indicated that markers of social-cognitive skills and affective-motivational resources have strong predictive value. Specifically, these domains have accounted for at least 30% of the variance in adolescent girls' or boys' help seeking from their mother, their father, a best friend, or a romantic partner (Murphy, 2008; Robinson, 2015). Second, Newman's framework aligns with the basic principles of earlier academic and social models of help seeking (e.g., Nadler, 1997; Nelson-Le Gall et al., 1983; Wills & DePaulo, 1991), which acknowledge that the approaches individuals use when they seek help are impacted by both individual and environmental factors. This alignment provided greater confidence that the social and cognitive skills and affective-motivational resources that have been linked to help-seeking behaviour are also likely to contribute to adolescents' use of specific approaches to asking for help with a personal problem. Literature to support examination of specific potential correlates is reviewed next.

Social-Cognitive Skills

Social and cognitive competencies are understood as prerequisite to an ability to seek help in an autonomous or adaptive way. According to Newman (2000, 2008), these

competencies are skills that contribute to knowing when assistance is necessary, that others can help, who is the best person to approach, how to formulate questions that will yield appropriate assistance, and how to carry out a request in a socially appropriate manner. In the current study, adolescents' perceived competence at disclosing their personal thoughts and feelings to others was proposed as a relevant social-cognitive skill likely to be important for understanding adolescents' endorsement of each approach to seeking help.

Self-Disclosure. Self-disclosure entails any interaction in which an individual intentionally shares something personal or private (e.g., feelings, thoughts, beliefs) with at least one other individual and is considered a key component of social competence (Buhrmester et al., 1988; Greene et al., 2006). Self-disclosures can have different features or dimensions, such that they may vary in breadth and depth, may be spontaneous or planned, and may be enacted in ways that are consistent or inconsistent with social norms (Greene et al., 2006; Vijayakumar & Pfeifer, 2020). Self-disclosure is ultimately used to address some concern or provide some benefit to the discloser, but it can serve several functions, including receiving social validation, gaining social control, achieving self-clarification, self-expression, mobilizing coping assistance, and enhancing relationship development (Buhrmester & Prager, 1995; Vijayakumar & Pfeifer, 2020).

Research has shown that girls report more self-disclosure to their mother, same-sex friends, and opposite-sex friends than boys (Buhrmester & Prager, 1995; Rose & Rudolph, 2006; Valkenburg et al., 2011; Vijayakumar & Pfeifer, 2020). Self-disclosure also appears to increase overall during early and middle adolescence relative to

childhood and typically reflects a decrease in adolescents' self-disclosure to parents and a dramatic increase in self-disclosure to peers (Buhrmester & Prager, 1995; Vijayakumar & Pfeifer, 2020). Youths report being more likely to self-disclose to parents when they view their parents as accepting and trustworthy, when they experience greater relationship satisfaction and more family cohesion, and when they believe disclosing will be beneficial (Darling et al., 2006; Smetana et al., 2006; Tokić & Pećnik, 2011). Self-disclosure to friends is more likely when adolescents have a positive self-evaluation and hold specific expectations about the consequences of discussing problems with friends (Papini et al., 1990; Rose et al., 2012).

According to Newman's (2008) model, adolescents who are more socially competent are expected to seek help more often as social competence makes individuals more comfortable interacting with others, more likely to behave in ways that maintain relationships that can be a source of help, and more likely to have skills needed for a help-seeking interaction (e.g., making a self-disclosure). Research has supported this expectation. Sears (2020) found that more frequent self-disclosure to friends and to parents were related to youths' selection of friends and parents as their first choice for help with an emotional problem. Similarly, adolescents in Grade 12 who were more willing to self-disclose mental health problems reported more frequent help seeking from friends and family (Rickwood & Braithwaite, 1994). Further, boys who reported more self-disclosure to each parent also reported more frequent help seeking from that parent (Robinson, 2015), and girls with higher perceived competence at self-disclosure had higher intentions to seek help from a female friend (Sears & McAfee, 2017).

Research has yet to examine adolescents' perceived competence at self-

disclosure and their engagement in the three approaches to help seeking. However, some relationships are plausible. For example, Sears and Halamay (2017) found that adolescents who were lower on competence at self-disclosure reported higher intentions to seek help from no one, suggesting a relationship between youths' competence at self-disclosure and avoidance of help seeking. Similarly, Sears (2020) found that youths who indicated that they would seek help from no one when faced with a range of problems also reported disclosing to friends and to parents less often. Research from an academic context suggests that students' broader perceptions of social competence or social efficacy, of which self-disclosure may be a component, is related to different help-seeking approaches. For example, youths who reported lower social efficacy with teachers or with peers were also more likely to avoid seeking help from them (Kiefer & Shim, 2016; Ryan et al., 2005), whereas those who endorsed more intimacy goals reported more autonomous help seeking from peers (girls only) and less dependent help seeking from peers (girls and boys) (Kiefer & Shim, 2016). It seems likely that perceived competence at self-disclosure may be congruent with more autonomous help seeking because it involves voluntarily sharing information to gain information relevant for solving one's problem. Adolescents with less self-disclosure competence, however, may be more inclined to avoid seeking help to eliminate the need to engage in personal disclosures.

Given that no previous research has examined the relationships between self-disclosure and the three help-seeking approaches, it is understandable that gender differences in these relationships have not been considered. It seemed reasonable, however, to expect that adolescent gender may moderate the association between

adolescents' perceived competence at self-disclosure and their use of an autonomous approach to seeking help from their mother and from a close friend. A moderator is any third variable that affects the direction or magnitude of the relationship between one or more predictor variables and a criterion variable (Hayes, 2017). As outlined above, adolescent girls report more self-disclosure to their mother and to their friends than adolescent boys. In addition, girls, but not boys, who strive to have more intimate relationships (one function of self-disclosure) report seeking more autonomous help from peers (Kiefer & Shim, 2016). Combining these previous findings, it seems likely that girls in general have a higher level of competence and comfort with self-disclosure than boys which may allow them to use self-disclosure in multiple or more complex ways in their relationships, including seeking help in an adaptive way. As a result, this study explored whether adolescent gender moderated the relationships between adolescents' reports of perceived competence at self-disclosure and autonomous help seeking from their mother and from their close friend.

Affective-Motivational Resources

Affective and motivational resources that support adaptive help-seeking behaviour include goals, attitudes, self-beliefs, and feelings associated with an individual's sense of agency or control, desire for challenge, tolerance for task difficulty, willingness to admit personal struggles, and the desire for social interaction (Newman, 2000, 2008). To better understand adolescents' engagement in various approaches to seeking help, conformity to specific traditional masculine gender role norms (i.e., emotional control and self-reliance) and conformity to a specific traditional feminine gender role norm (i.e., nice in relationships) were explored as relevant

affective-motivational resources. Gender role norms involve expectations or rules for behaviour that a particular culture or society considers appropriate for men and women (Addis & Mahalik, 2003; Mahalik et al., 2003). Individuals can range from exhibiting extreme conformity to extreme nonconformity in relation to both masculine and feminine norms.

From a young age, stress and coping responses, including help-seeking behaviour, develop in a manner consistent with the normative expectations of sex-typed behaviour (Nelson-Le Gall, 1981; Newman, 2000; Rose & Rudolph, 2006). Across help-seeking research, the most prominent pattern is that men and women seek help at different rates. Accordingly, the interpretation of this discrepancy typically reflects the belief that men and women behave in ways that are consistent with their respective gender roles (Addis & Mahalik, 2003; Nadler, 2018). Components of the help-seeking process, such as recognizing a need for help or being willing to rely on others for assistance, are viewed as being consistent with traditional feminine norms and inconsistent with traditional masculine norms (Mahalik et al., 2003, 2005; Nelson-Le Gall, 1981). Nelson-Le Gall (1990) argued that the focus on absolute gender differences in help seeking ignores individual differences on other factors, such as gender-role stereotyping within male and female groups, that may also contribute to help seeking.

Consequently, there has been longstanding acknowledgement that an individual's adherence to gender norms may be a contributing factor to their help-seeking behaviour. Adolescents' gender-related beliefs and behaviours have been of particular interest to researchers because some work suggests that pressures to conform to gender norms increase during adolescence, and that gender norm conformity and

nonconformity have implications for youths' social experiences (e.g., peer support) and psychological well-being (e.g., depressive symptoms, self-esteem) (Galambos et al., 2009; MacLean et al., 2010; Rogers et al., 2021; Rogers et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2018). The subsequent two sections address the proposed relationship between help seeking and conformity to masculine gender role norms and conformity to feminine gender role norms, respectively.

Conformity to Traditional Masculine Gender Role Norms. Traditionally, masculine gender norms include maintaining emotional control and being self-reliant, achievement-oriented, dominant, and aggressive (Mahalik et al., 2003). Conformity to the masculine gender norms emotional control (i.e., the tendency to inhibit expressions of emotions) and self-reliance (i.e., dependence on one's own abilities) specifically deter use of help seeking as a coping strategy (Addis & Mahalik, 2003; Vogel & Heath, 2016). Wong and colleagues (2017) conducted a meta-analysis of studies examining the relationship between conformity to masculine norms and mental health-related outcomes. Their evaluation of 78 samples and over 19,000 participants, which included adolescents, adults, older adults, and females, found that conformity to emotional control and to self-reliance were significantly associated with less psychological help seeking, with these components of masculinity demonstrating two of the largest effect sizes (Wong et al., 2017). However, there were too few effect sizes available to evaluate gender and age differences in these patterns.

Given that the nature of help seeking is contrary to these masculine gender role expectations, boys may experience help seeking as a greater threat to their autonomy than girls (Garland & Zigler, 1994). Likewise, qualitative work indicates that adolescent

boys who endorse the belief that they should solve their own problems and who are uncomfortable discussing their emotions with others are less likely to seek help from informal or formal sources (Lindsey et al., 2006; Rogers et al., 2021; Timlin-Scalera et al., 2003). Quantitative studies with adolescent boys have also shown that a stronger endorsement of emotional control predicted lower intentions to seek help from their male friends and female friends, and that a stronger endorsement of emotional control and self-reliance was related to less frequent help seeking from their mother and their father (Robinson, 2015; Sears et al., 2009).

Girls and women have typically been underrepresented in research on masculinity and how traditional masculine norms may impact their behaviour (Whorley & Addis, 2006; Worthley et al., 2016). However, some studies suggest that more conformity to masculine norms may be related to girls' and women's help-seeking intentions and behaviour. For example, Rughani and colleagues (2011) reported that stoicism (i.e., emotional control, attitudes of toughness and self-reliance) had a small but significant negative correlation with adolescent girls' and boys' intentions to seek professional help. Sears and Halamay (2017) found that adolescent girls' and boys' conformity to emotional control and self-reliance norms predicted their intentions to seek help from no one for both a personal problem and a family problem. Further, Rogers and colleagues (2019) found that girls' adherence to norms of masculine autonomy, toughness, and stoicism within peer relationships specifically were related to lower perceived peer support. Taken together, these findings indicate that one's conformity to masculine gender norms, especially emotional control and self-reliance, are related to whether and how often boys and girls seek help.

Conformity to masculine gender norms and its link to specific approaches to seeking help have been examined in student samples. For example, Wimer and Levant (2011) found that, among male college students, more conformity to the self-reliance norm, but not the emotional control norm, predicted more avoidance of academic help seeking. More self-reliance was also significantly correlated with more dependent help seeking and less autonomous help seeking. Kessels and Steinmayr (2013) found that Grade 11 students' endorsements of more socially desirable masculine attributes (e.g., being brave) had a small but significant relationship with higher intentions to seek autonomous help in the classroom. In contrast, endorsement of socially undesirable masculine attributes (e.g., being aggressive) was related to higher intentions to avoid seeking help, higher intentions to seek dependent help, and lower intentions to seek autonomous help. Similarly, Leaper and colleagues (2018) found that adolescent boys and girls who endorsed more masculine beliefs about emotional restriction reported more avoidance of help seeking in English class, but these beliefs were related to avoidance in math class for girls only. Together, these relationships suggest that individuals' endorsement of masculine gender norms is related to different approaches to seeking help, and that consideration of emotional control and self-reliance as endorsed by boys and girls merits further consideration. Thus, this study examined the relationship between adolescents' conformity to the traditional masculine norms emotional control and self-reliance and the approaches adolescents use to seek help from their mother and their close friend for a personal problem.

Conformity to Traditional Feminine Gender Role Norms. Traditional feminine gender norms include being relationship-oriented, nurturing, domestic, modest,

and concerned with appearance (Mahalik et al., 2005). It has been argued that a relational-orientation encourages help seeking because actively using one's personal relationships to cope with problems is viewed as a socially acceptable aspect of femininity (Addis & Mahalik, 2003; Nadler, 2018; Nelson-Le Gall, 1981). It appears that this notion is established by adolescence, with girls recognizing an ability to confide in or comfort friends as a positive component of femininity (MacLean et al., 2010). Initial conceptualizations of help seeking as a dependent behaviour contributed to the perception that help seeking was more normative for girls and assumed that girls would be less concerned with autonomy than boys (Nelson-Le Gall, 1990). However, Nadler (1998) argued that stronger endorsement of femininity is likely related to more autonomous help seeking because femininity is linked to a greater willingness to actively seek support when needed. Individuals without this orientation do not view relationships as a tool for coping and are likely to underutilize help seeking.

Research with women and men during late adolescence and young adulthood has found that endorsement of femininity is linked to distress disclosure as well as broader coping strategies (e.g., emotion focused, problem focused) (e.g., Feng & Xiu, 2016; Greenland et al., 2009; Renk & Creasey, 2003). Specific to help-seeking behaviour, young women who reported more endorsement of feminine stereotypes requested help significantly more often during an experimental puzzle task (Juvrud & Rennels, 2017). Examination of conformity to feminine gender roles is limited among youth samples, yet there is some initial support for a relationship between endorsement of feminine gender norms and help-seeking behaviour. For example, Kessels and Steinmayr (2013) examined Grade 11 students' endorsement of feminine sex-typed attributes and

intentions to seek academic help. Boys' and girls' conformity to socially desirable feminine attributes (e.g., being sensitive) had a small but significant relationship with higher intentions to seek autonomous help, lower intentions to seek dependent help, and lower intentions to avoid seeking help. While these results are promising, no work has examined norms pertinent to relational expectations of femininity and participation in help seeking. This study examined the relationship between adolescents' conformity to a specific feminine gender role norm, called "Nice in Relationships", and the approaches they use to seek help from their mother and their close friend for a personal problem.

Environmental Factors

Newman's model of adaptive help seeking also proposes that other factors contribute to youths' engagement in help seeking. Parents and peers, for example, are central to this social transaction as adolescents turn to a friend or a parent most often for assistance. Research on help seeking has indicated that young people's perceptions of support from others are related to how they seek help (e.g., Shin, 2018). By extension, it seemed reasonable to expect that adolescents' views of their relationship with a potential helper may encourage or deter them from approaching that helper in a specific way. This study evaluated the extent to which adolescents' perceptions of positive relationship quality with their mother and with a close friend are relevant to the approaches they use to seek help from these individuals.

Positive Relationship Quality. Relationship quality represents individuals' subjective evaluation of their relationship with another person and is typically informed by positive and negative aspects of their interactions (Farooqi, 2014; Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). Adolescents often seek and receive specific social provisions (e.g.,

companionship, intimacy, enhancement of worth) from their relationships that are beneficial, including encouragement to cope with personal challenges (Buhrmester & Prager, 1995). Within their network of relationships, relationships with parents and friends are ranked by adolescents as the closest and most impactful (Furman & Buhrmester, 1992; Smetana et al., 2006). Adolescents' perceptions of the quality of their relationship with a potential helper are important for predicting from whom they will seek help (Rickwood et al., 2005; Wilson & Deane, 2001). Research indicates that adolescents seek help more often and are more willing to seek help from individuals with whom they have a positive or supportive relationship, including their mother, their father, a best friend, or a romantic partner (Murphy, 2008; Robinson, 2015; Sears, 2020; Wilson & Deane, 2001). Adolescent girls who reported more companionship and more closeness in their friendships also reported higher intentions to seek help from a female friend (Sears & McAfee, 2017). In addition, positive qualities in their relationships are more important than negative qualities for understanding adolescents' help-seeking behaviour (Halamay & Sears, 2018).

Other work has recognized that one's relationship with a potential helper is relevant to the approaches used to seek help (Nadler, 1997, 1998). According to Nadler (1998), ongoing and long-term relationships make autonomous help seeking a viable option, whereas more limited relationships may encourage use of a dependent help-seeking approach. Sears (2020) found that youths who indicated intentions to seek help from no one across a range of problem types reported less perceived support from friends and from parents. Research on help seeking in academic contexts has found that adolescents' perceptions of more supportive teacher relationships are related to more

autonomous help seeking from teachers and that students who reported less support from teachers were more likely to avoid seeking help from them (Ryan et al., 2005; Ryan & Shin, 2011). Schenke and colleagues (2015) also found small but significant correlations between students' reports of more emotional support from teachers and higher intentions to seek autonomous help and lower intentions to seek dependent help. This work indicates that a relationship characterized by positive qualities is important for promoting opportunities for dyadic helping interactions to occur. In addition, more positive and supportive relationships have been consistently related to more autonomous help seeking and less avoidance of help seeking, but they have been examined less consistently in relation to dependent help seeking.

Potential Correlates of Adolescents' Approaches to Seeking Help: Markers of Autonomy

Becoming an autonomous person is viewed as a major developmental task of adolescence. As a result, considerable research has tried to understand autonomy development during this period of the lifespan. Studies have shown that adolescents increasingly see themselves as individuals who have their own perspectives as well as more involvement in how they conduct themselves in their daily lives (McElhaney et al., 2009; Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2003). While this work has been driven by multiple theoretical perspectives, it has generally converged around a broad understanding of autonomy as involving self-governance, including developing independence, self-regulation, personal choice, and volition (McElhaney et al., 2009; Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2011). Currently, autonomy is viewed as manifesting cognitively, behaviourally, and emotionally, and is reflected in youths' ability to think and act independently and to feel

independent (Beckert, 2012; McElhaney et al., 2009; Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2011). However, research has focused more on behavioural autonomy and emotional autonomy than cognitive autonomy, even though efforts to understand the nature and functions of autonomy emphasize the importance of all three types (Beckert, 2012; Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2011).

Autonomy development during adolescence is prompted and impacted by biological, cognitive, and social maturation as well as by social relationships (e.g., with parents and peers) and environmental opportunities (e.g., leisure activities) (McElhaney et al., 2009; Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2011). While autonomy development has been examined predominately in the context of parent-adolescent relationships, behaviours of and interactions with both parents and peers (e.g., behaving in ways that are autonomy supportive versus coercive or controlling) are considered facilitators or inhibitors of autonomy development (McElhaney et al., 2009; Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2003). Research has indicated that interpersonal relationships are important not only for the development of autonomy but also for how youths learn to balance autonomy and desires for close relationships (Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2011).

Thinking, feeling, and acting autonomously may conflict with seeking help from others (Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2011). Researchers have long recognized that some individuals refrain from seeking help because doing so may require dependence on others, which may compete with a desire to be independent (Nadler, 1998; Nelson-Le Gall, 1985). Despite this apparent conflict, few studies have investigated how autonomy and help seeking intersect during adolescence, and those that have either focused on help seeking from professionals (e.g., Logan & King, 2001; Wilson & Deane, 2012) or

on help seeking in an academic context (e.g., Butler, 1998). For example, adolescents who reported a higher need for autonomy or the belief that they should be self-sufficient were less likely to seek professional help (e.g., Gulliver et al., 2010; Sheppard et al., 2018; Wilson & Deane, 2012). It is not known if distinct aspects of autonomy contribute to the approaches youths take to seek help from informal helpers, such as their mother or a close friend, for a personal problem. In this study, markers of cognitive, behavioural, and emotional autonomy and adolescents' perceptions of autonomy support from their mother and from a close friend were evaluated in relation to adolescents' approaches to help seeking from these two helpers.

Cognitive Autonomy

Cognitive autonomy is reflected in one's perceived ability to think independently and to make decisions without the validation of others (Beckert, 2012; Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2003). While some research has considered decision-making as the conceptual and operational definition of cognitive autonomy, other research has taken a broader view and considered changes in personal values, desires, and regulating goals (Beckert, 2007; Noom et al., 2001; Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2011). Partially in response to a lack of clarity about the scope of cognitive autonomy, Beckert (2007) developed a multidimensional measure of cognitive autonomy that assesses an individual's ability to evaluate thought (e.g., weighing possible risks and long-term effects of decisions), voice opinions, make decisions (e.g., thinking more about the future), self-reflect, and capitalize on comparative validations (e.g., weighing the influence of family and friends in their decisions) (Beckert, 2007, 2012).

Using this broader conceptualization of cognitive autonomy, results from studies

by Beckert and others have found that adolescents' level of cognitive autonomy is related to both their individual characteristics and their perceptions of relationships. For example, adolescents' older age has been related to higher scores on multiple aspects of cognitive autonomy (e.g., Beckert, 2007; Michael & Attias, 2016). Gender and community status also may be important. Lee and colleagues (2010) reported that, in their sample of Taiwanese high school students, boys had higher scores than girls on voicing opinions, self-reflection, and comparative validation regardless of urban or rural status, but boys from urban regions had higher scores than girls from urban regions on evaluative thinking and decision making. With respect to the role of relationships, Beckert et al. (2015) reported a link between higher cognitive autonomy and more satisfaction in adolescents' relationships with their parents and with perceived friendship support. Likewise, Michael and Attias (2016) found that youths' perceptions of higher social support from family predicted higher scores on evaluative thinking, voicing opinions, and decision making. Further, using a composite score of cognitive autonomy, Lee and Beckert (2011) found that higher cognitive autonomy was related to more secure parent attachment and more secure peer attachment. Kaur and colleagues (2019) also found that family and friend engagement had a moderate correlation with a composite score of cognitive autonomy.

It is not clear to what extent cognitive autonomy is related to youths' help-seeking behaviour, including the approaches they take to seeking help. Some research, however, suggests that aspects of cognitive autonomy may be relevant. Ryan et al. (2009) reported that adolescents who had a greater ability to voice their opinions and point of view with their teacher engaged in less help avoidance. Newman (2008)

proposed that youths who have a sense of their personal strengths and weaknesses may be more likely to use an autonomous approach to seeking help. In contrast, Sears et al. (2009) found no relationship between adolescent boys' perceived decision-making competency and their intentions to seek help from their male friends and female friends.

A multidimensional construct of cognitive autonomy may be a stronger correlate of how adolescents approach seeking help. For example, it seems likely that adolescents who report use of self-reflection and abilities to think independently and to weigh the costs and benefits of their decisions and actions, all of which indicate a higher level of cognitive autonomy, will also report more use of an autonomous approach to help seeking, in part because they have more confidence in their ability to solve their problems. However, some youths who report a higher level of cognitive autonomy may also report more use of avoidance of help seeking. In contrast, youths who have fewer of these skills, therefore reporting lower cognitive autonomy, may find it more challenging to conceptualize how to request help that will position them to solve their problem. Instead, they may be more likely to rely on others in a dependent manner when help is needed.

Behavioural Autonomy

Behavioural autonomy is reflected in one's ability to act on decisions and to self-govern or take responsibility for one's behaviour; it is considered the observable manifestation of independent functioning (Beckert, 2012; Smetana et al., 2004; Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2003). Throughout adolescence, opportunities within and outside the family to establish behavioural autonomy are often sought and provided to youths (Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2003). Interestingly, reports of adolescents' involvement

in decision-making (i.e., who in the family makes decisions about a variety of adolescent-related issues) have been used most to operationalize behavioural autonomy (e.g., Campione-Barr et al., 2015; Dornbusch et al., 1990; Smetana et al., 2004). While early studies focused on a small sample of personal decisions (e.g., what clothes to wear, curfew) (e.g., Dornbusch et al., 1990), more recent work has expanded measures of decision-making to assess a wide range of issues that youths may make decisions about with their parents (e.g., Campione-Barr et al., 2015; Smetana et al., 2004). Adolescents' level of behavioural autonomy is captured by reports of whether decisions about specific issues are largely made by youths on their own (indicating total independence) or made completely by parents (indicating total dependence), with joint decision making falling in between these two points. Studies have shown that youths' decision-making independence increases across adolescence (Campione-Barr et al., 2015; Smetana et al., 2004).

Various correlates of behavioural autonomy have been evaluated. For example, increasing age is related to more independent decision-making by adolescents (Fousiani et al., 2014; Van Petegem, Beyers, et al., 2013). Results for gender, however, have been mixed, with some studies reporting no gender difference in decision-making among high school students (Fousiani et al., 2014; Smetana et al., 2004) and others finding that boys engage in more independent decision-making than girls (Dornbusch et al., 1990; Van Petegem et al., 2012). In addition, youths report more independent decision-making when they perceive their parents as being more encouraging of independent decision-making, when they have less emotional reliance on parents, and when they are less dependent on the opinions of others (Fousiani et al., 2014; Van Petegem, Vansteenkiste,

et al., 2013). Research has also indicated that joint parent-adolescent decision-making or some independent decision-making is linked to positive adolescent adjustment, including better school grades, higher emotional functioning, fewer depressive symptoms (e.g., Dornbusch et al., 1990; Qin et al., 2009), whereas predominantly independent decision-making has been related to more oppositional defiance, behavioural problems, and lower academic achievement (e.g., Van Petegem et al., 2012). However, Smetana et al. (2004) found that links between independent decision-making and adolescents' development varied by the type of issue being decided on and by the period of adolescence when more independent decision making was occurring (e.g., earlier or later in adolescence).

How adolescents' behavioural autonomy as decision making within the family relates to their experiences with their peers has received little examination. However, Fuligini and Eccles (1993) reported that early adolescents (i.e., youths in sixth or seventh grade) who perceived fewer opportunities to make decisions in their relationships with parents reported more peer advice seeking, such that youths were turning to their parents less and to their peers more rather than seeking support from peers and not seeking support from parents. This pattern suggests that the development of behavioural autonomy does not negate adolescents looking to parents for guidance and instead may encourage them to also seek support from other potential helpers, such as their peers. As a result, it was expected that adolescents' behavioural autonomy would contribute to their help seeking from a close friend as well as from their mother.

No research has considered whether adolescents' level of behavioural autonomy is related to how they approach seeking help from their mother or a close friend, yet

relationships seem plausible. For example, adolescents' reports of higher behavioural autonomy indicate more independent decision making and may be related to more avoidance of help seeking and less autonomous or dependent help seeking from their mother as these youths may be less likely to perceive a need for help at all. This same scenario may facilitate seeking assistance from non-parent helpers, such as friends. In comparison, adolescents who report more joint decision making with their parents, or what may be considered "moderate" behavioural autonomy, may be more open to the contributions and influence of others, and therefore may be more likely to use an autonomous approach to help seeking. These youths may have had experiences with their parents where their input has been considered important and they have maintained at least some responsibility for their decision. Finally, lower behavioural autonomy suggests a degree of dependency on parents for decision making and by extension these adolescents may be more likely to use a dependent help-seeking approach with each helper.

Emotional Autonomy

Emotional autonomy is reflected in an individual's sharpened sense of self and feelings of independence that emerge from changes in their perceptions, usually of their parents and of themselves in relation to their parents (Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2011). Youths increasingly define themselves as individuals with their own ideas and feelings, develop more confidence in these ideas and feelings, become less reliant on their parents for emotion regulation and emotional support, and maintain some privacy about their personal experiences (Beyers et al., 2005; McElhaney et al., 2009). This separation, but not detachment, from parents involves a transformation in the parent-adolescent

relationship that is prompted in part by adolescents' deidealization of their parents, such that they replace their idealistic views of their parents as all-knowing and infallible with more mature and realistic views. The development of emotional autonomy is thought to occur gradually, beginning in adolescence and continuing into young adulthood for most youths (McElhaney et al., 2009; Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2011).

Research on emotional autonomy has been complicated by measurement concerns. While emotional autonomy measures aim to capture the emotional change in relationships that prompt recognition of oneself as an individual (Beckert, 2012), the construct validity of a widely used measure, the Emotional Autonomy Scale (EAS, Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986) has been questioned. Some researchers suggest that a portion of the measure evaluates detachment, a more atypical, problematic or pejorative form of distance in the parent-adolescent relationship than separation which is regarded as normative and developmentally appropriate during adolescence (Beyers et al., 2005; Ryan & Lynch, 1989; Schmitz & Baer, 2001). To address this issue, Beyers and colleagues (2005) presented a revised two-factor model of emotional autonomy using the EAS that includes a Separation factor (which captures experiences of a healthy distance in parent-adolescent relationships and the view of parents as individuals) and a Detachment factor (which captures experiences of distrust and pejorative feelings towards the parent-adolescent relationship).

Using this two-factor model, research has shown that emotional autonomy operationalized as separation is linked to various adolescent characteristics and adjustment. For example, more separation (i.e., higher emotional autonomy) has been related to middle adolescents' satisfaction with their sense of self as well as in older age,

more self-directed behaviour, balanced identity formation, less connectedness to parents, more feelings of rejection and isolation in the parent-adolescent relationship, less empathic concern for others, and less perspective taking (Beyers et al., 2003; Ingoglia et al., 2011; Majorano et al., 2015; Pace & Zappula, 2009; Sugimura et al., 2018).

However, results from studies examining separation and markers of adjustment, such as internalizing problems, and separation and adolescents' peer relationships, such as youths' perceived capacity to make close friends, have been mixed (Ingoglia et al., 2011; Jager et al., 2015; Majorano et al., 2015), and gender differences have typically not been found (Ingoglia et al., 2011; Majorano et al., 2015).

It is not clear to what extent emotional autonomy is related to adolescents' help-seeking behaviour. One study, however, has suggested there may be a connection, at least between adolescents' experiences of deidealization as a marker of emotional autonomy and their help seeking from parents and from friends. Levpušček (2006) found that Slovenian youths in Grade 7 to 12 who reported deidealization of their parents (a component of emotional autonomy) also reported a lower need for support from their parents. In addition, the study showed that deidealization of parents was not related to support seeking from friends, although more idealization of friends had a small but significant relationship with more support seeking from parents. It may be that as adolescents become more emotionally autonomous from parents, they may seek help from them less often; however, when they also perceive themselves as less emotionally autonomous from friends, they may seek support from parents more often. Whether a sense of emotional autonomy from parents is related to adolescents' engagement in help seeking from a friend requires additional investigation.

No research has considered whether adolescents' emotional autonomy is related to the approaches they use to seek help from informal helpers, but relationships are conceivable. It may be that a higher level of emotional autonomy is associated with more autonomous help seeking and less dependent help seeking from their mother in an effort to reconcile their need to maintain separation with the dependence that is associated with asking for help. Whether emotional autonomy and adolescents' approaches to seeking help from a close friend are related is less clear, but it seems plausible that more emotional autonomy, indicated by more separation from parents, may be related to approaching a close friend for autonomous or dependent help to ensure access to other sources of support beyond their parents.

Autonomy Support

Autonomy support describes adolescents' views that their parents or close friends acknowledge and support their personal thoughts, feelings, choices, and needs (McCurdy et al., 2020; Van der Giessen et al., 2014). Adolescents who perceive more autonomy support from their mother and their father tend to report various positive outcomes, including higher academic achievement, psychological health, and life satisfaction (Duineveld et al., 2017; Ferguson et al., 2011; Vasquez et al., 2015). Studies also have found that adolescents' perceptions of autonomy support, particularly from parents, are related to their preparedness for more adaptive coping and use of coping behaviours. For example, more autonomy support from parents has been related to better emotion regulation, higher emotional intelligence, use of more active coping with family-related problems, and use of more constructive coping responses (e.g., more negotiation and accommodation, less defiance) (Brenning et al., 2015; Costa et al.,

2018; Seiffge-Krenke & Pakalniskiene, 2011; Van Petegem et al., 2017). Thus, the provision of autonomy support from parents is related to adolescents' emotional skills, coping behaviour, and even the disclosure of information, all of which are pertinent to help seeking.

In comparison, no studies have examined the role of autonomy support from close friends and adolescents' help-seeking behaviour. However, two studies with undergraduate students found that students' perceptions of a close friend as more autonomy supportive were related to greater willingness to turn to or rely on their friend in emotionally-salient situations (Deci, La Guardia, Moller, Scheiner, & Ryan, 2006; Lynch, 2013). Given the overlap between emotional reliance and seeking help, these findings suggest that perceived autonomy support in a close friendship may also contribute to adolescents' engagement in help seeking.

There also has been little consideration of whether perceived autonomy support from a potential helper contributes to the approach adolescents use to seek assistance from that person. However, two studies have indicated that perceived autonomy support from parents and from teachers is related to less avoidance of academic help seeking (Shih, 2009, 2012). When these results are combined with the patterns reported above, it seems reasonable to expect that when adolescents perceive more autonomy support, they may be more likely to use autonomous help seeking and less likely to avoid seeking help. However, no studies have evaluated whether autonomy support from their mother or a close friend may contribute to adolescents' use of specific help-seeking approaches for a personal problem.

Adolescent Age as a Moderator. Previous research has shown that adolescents'

cognitive, behavioural, and emotional autonomy typically increase with age (Fousiani et al., 2014; Lee & Beckert, 2011; Majorano et al., 2015; Qin et al., 2009). For example, Fousiani et al. (2014) found in their sample of high school students (13-20 years old) that age was positively correlated with behavioural autonomy. Similarly, when age was examined using groups, Majorano et al. (2015) found that older youths (16-17 years old and 18-19 years old) showed more emotional autonomy than younger adolescents (13-15 years old). Drawing on this work, it seemed reasonable to question whether the level of autonomy at specific points in adolescence (i.e., earlier versus later) may have implications for adolescents' help-seeking experiences, at least in relation to a parent. Because the evidence linking adolescents' autonomy markers and their friendships is very limited, the interaction effect for adolescents' autonomy markers and age was investigated in relation to their help seeking from their mother only. When adolescents seek autonomous help, they are balancing their desire to retain responsibility for solving their problem with their need to access another, in this case their mother, for assistance. However, the contributions of adolescents' autonomy to their ability to find that balance and engage in autonomous help seeking from their mother may be stronger later in adolescence (i.e., toward the end of high school) rather than earlier in adolescence (i.e., at the beginning of high school), reflecting the development of their autonomy cognitively, behaviourally, and emotionally, as well as more optimal timing for expressing their autonomy. Thus, whether adolescents' age moderated the relationships between the three types of autonomy and their use of an autonomous approach to help seeking from their mother was evaluated in this study.

Summary and Research Questions

Help seeking is one of multiple coping strategies adolescents use to manage problems and is usually viewed as an adaptive means of coping (Rickwood et al., 2005; Seiffge-Krenke et al., 2009; Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2011). Researchers have distinguished between three approaches to seeking help (i.e., autonomous, dependent, and avoidant). Studies with adults have explored the dispositional nature of these help-seeking approaches. Studies with younger adolescents have focused only on the use of these help-seeking approaches with teachers and peers for academic problems (e.g., Komissarouk et al., 2017; Ryan et al., 2005; Ryan & Shim, 2012). No research has considered how adolescents approach help seeking from their mother or a close friend for a personal problem, even though many adolescents experience personal problems and access their friends or their mother more often than other informal helpers for assistance with these problems (Rickwood et al., 2005; Schonert-Reichl & Muller, 1996; Sears, 2020). Further, there has been no empirical examination of the extent to which adolescents' use of various approaches to help seeking is related to the frequency of their help-seeking behaviour from their mother and their close friend, established correlates of adolescents' help-seeking behaviour, or markers of normative autonomy development. Thus, this study aimed to address these gaps by examining adolescents' use of the three identified approaches to help seeking from their mother and from a close friend for a personal problem. Four research questions and several hypotheses were formulated.

Research Question 1: To what extent do adolescents in high school use each of the three help-seeking approaches when they seek assistance from their mother and a close friend for a personal problem? Does their use of these approaches differ by

their gender or their age?

Hypothesis 1: Adolescents were expected to use more autonomous help seeking with their mother, followed by avoidance of help seeking and then dependent help seeking.

Hypothesis 2: Adolescents were expected to use more autonomous help seeking with their close friend, followed by avoidance of help seeking and then dependent help seeking.

Hypothesis 3: Girls were expected to report a higher mean score on autonomous help seeking, a lower mean score on dependent help seeking, and a lower mean score on avoidance of help seeking from their mother than boys.

Hypothesis 4: Girls were expected to report a higher mean score on autonomous help seeking and a lower mean score on dependent help seeking from their close friend than boys. No gender difference was expected for avoidance of help seeking.

Hypothesis 5: Older adolescents were expected to report a higher mean score on autonomous help seeking and a lower mean score on avoidance of help seeking from their mother than younger adolescents. No age difference was expected for dependent help seeking.

Hypothesis 6: Older adolescents were expected to report a higher mean score on autonomous help seeking, a lower mean score on dependent help seeking, and a lower mean score on avoidance of help seeking from their close friend than younger adolescents.

Research Question 2: Is the frequency with which adolescents report seeking help

from their mother and a close friend for a personal problem related to the help-seeking approaches they use with these helpers?

Hypothesis 7: Adolescents who reported seeking help from their mother and from a close friend at a moderate frequency were expected to report more autonomous help seeking from their mother and from their close friend, respectively.

Hypothesis 8: Adolescents who reported help seeking from their mother and a close friend at a higher frequency were expected to report more dependent help seeking from their mother and from their close friend, respectively.

Hypothesis 9: Adolescents who reported help seeking from their mother and a close friend at a lower frequency were expected to report more avoidance of help seeking from their mother and from their close friend, respectively.

Research Question 3: Are adolescents' reports of established correlates of help-seeking behaviour (i.e., competence at self-disclosure, conformity to specific masculine and feminine gender norms, and positive relationship quality) related to the help-seeking approaches used with their mother and a close friend for a personal problem? Do the relationships between adolescents' competence at self-disclosure and their autonomous help seeking from their mother and their close friend vary by gender?

Hypothesis 10: Adolescents who perceived more competence at self-disclosure, less conformity to the masculine gender norms emotional control and self-reliance, more conformity to the feminine norm being nice in relationships, and a more positive relationship with the helper were expected to report more

autonomous help seeking and more dependent help seeking.

Hypothesis 11: Adolescents who perceived less competence at self-disclosure, more conformity to the masculine gender norms emotional control and self-reliance, less conformity to the feminine norm being nice in relationships, and a less positive relationship with the helper were expected to report more avoidance of help seeking from their mother and from their close friend.

Hypothesis 12: The relationship between adolescents' reports of competence at self-disclosure and autonomous help seeking from their mother and from a close friend were expected to be moderated by gender, such that the relationship between these variables was expected to be stronger for girls than boys.

Research Question 4: Are markers of adolescents' autonomy related to the help-seeking approaches they use with their mother and a close friend for a personal problem? Do the relationships between the autonomy markers and autonomous help seeking from their mother vary by adolescents' age?

Hypothesis 13: Adolescents who reported more cognitive autonomy, moderate behavioural autonomy, more emotional autonomy, and more autonomy support were expected to report more autonomous help seeking from their mother and from their close friend.

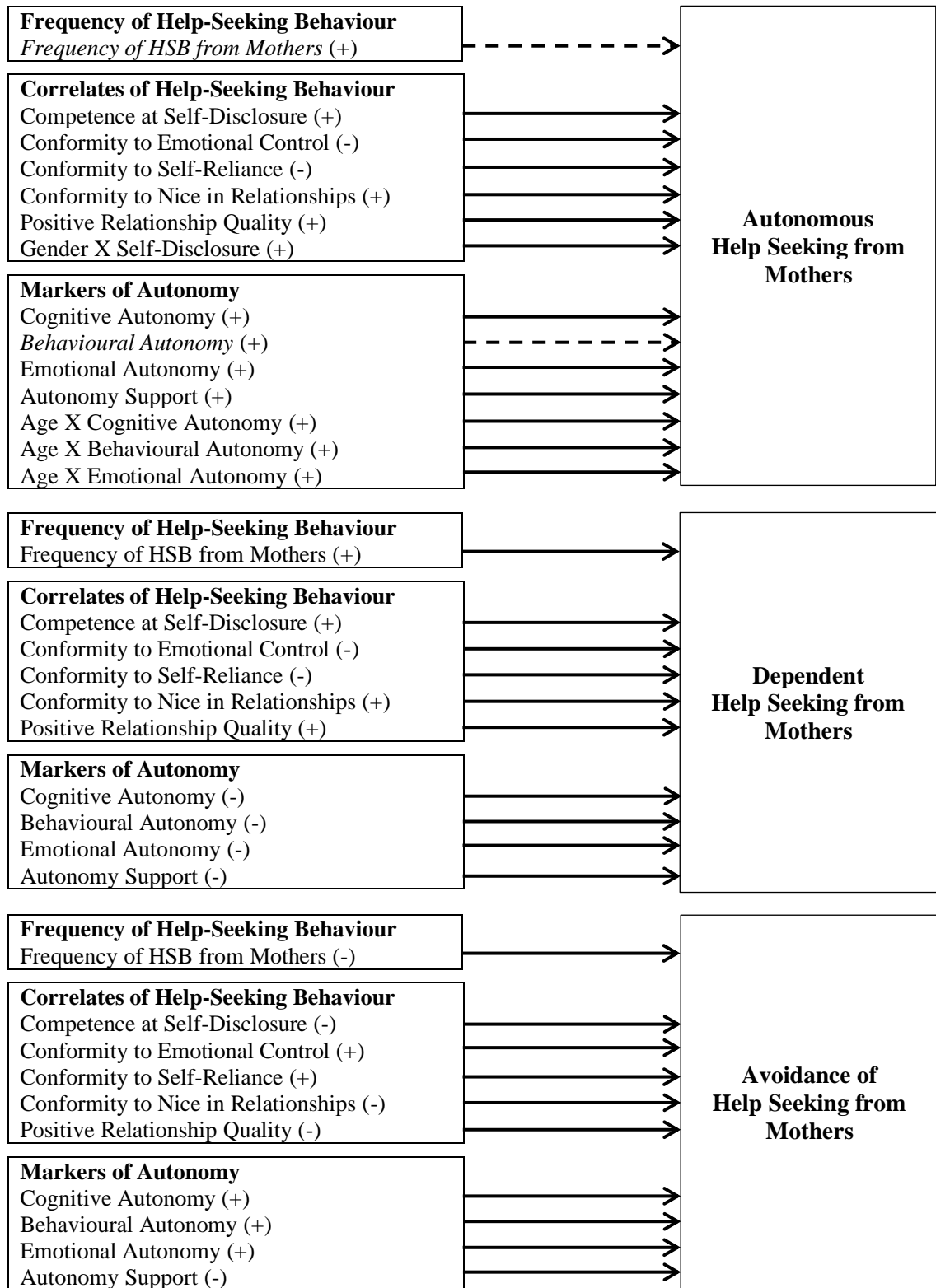
Hypothesis 14: Adolescents who reported less cognitive autonomy, less behavioural autonomy, less emotional autonomy, and less autonomy support were expected to report more dependent help seeking from their mother and from their close friend.

Hypothesis 15: Adolescents who reported more cognitive autonomy, more

behavioural autonomy, more emotional autonomy, and less autonomy support were expected to report more avoidance of help seeking from their mother and from their close friend.

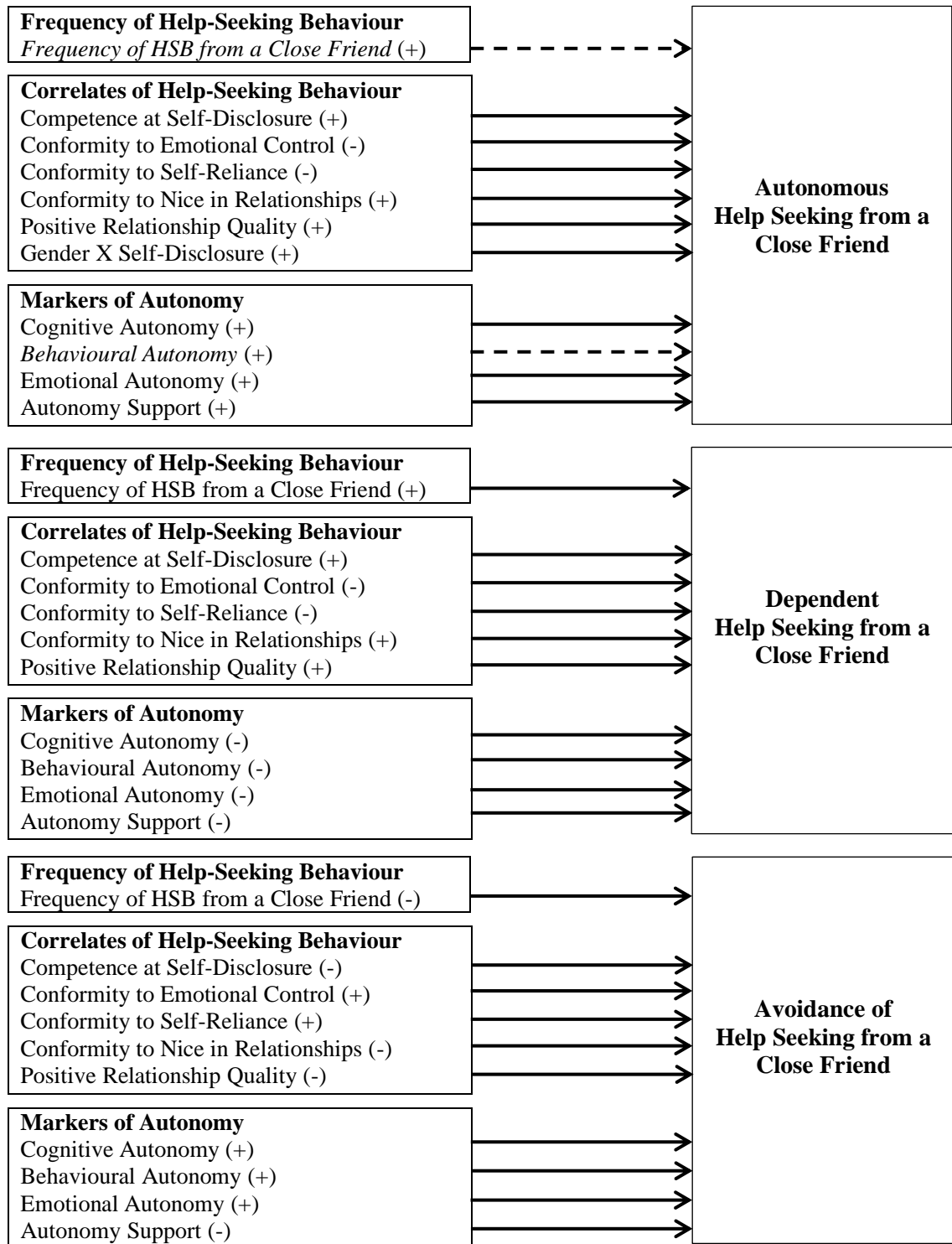
Hypothesis 16: The relationships between adolescents' reports of cognitive autonomy, behavioural autonomy, and emotional autonomy, and their autonomous help seeking from their mother were expected to be moderated by adolescents' age, such that the relationship between each type of autonomy and autonomous help seeking from their mother was expected to be stronger for older adolescents than younger adolescents.

Figure 1. Proposed relationships between all variables and each approach to help seeking from their mother.



Note. Italics and dashed lines indicate a hypothesized non-linear relationship.

Figure 2. Proposed relationships between all variables and each approach to help seeking from their close friend.



Note. Italics and dashed lines indicate a hypothesized non-linear relationship.

CHAPTER TWO

Method

Participants

Participants in the current study were 299 adolescents (171 girls, 122 boys, 6 self-identifying as a gender other than male or female) who were attending two New Brunswick high schools (Grades 9-12). Youths ranged in age from 14 to 18 years ($M = 15.47$, $SD = 1.12$). Most adolescents reported living with both parents (58%). Additionally, 13% of youths reported living with a parent and a stepparent, 22% reported living with one parent only, and 7% reported living with someone other than a parent. Adolescents also reported that 65% of mothers and 58% of fathers had completed some form of post-secondary education and an additional 22% of mothers and 21% of fathers had completed high school. Another 12% of youths reported not knowing their mother's level of education and 18% reported not knowing their father's level of education. Finally, 83% of adolescents reported that their mother was employed and 87% reported that their father was employed.

Procedure

Following approval from the Department of Psychology Ethics Review Committee and the University of New Brunswick Research Ethics Board, officials at one school district in New Brunswick were approached for access to adolescents. The superintendent identified two schools to participate in the research. The researchers provided the schools with a letter to send home to parents describing the study (see Appendix A) and requested that principals also notify parents and caregivers about the study by sharing the letter via email or other typical communication means used by the

school. A passive consent procedure was used with parents such that if parents objected to their adolescent's participation in the study, they were asked to contact the school or the researchers by telephone or email. None did.

On the day of the data collection at each school, all adolescents who were present in the requested number of classes for each grade were invited to read and sign a consent form (see Appendix B). Students who agreed to participate were asked to complete an anonymous survey during one class period (approximately one hour). Signed consent forms and completed response booklets were collected separately from adolescents. Three versions of the survey were created to counterbalance the order in which adolescents completed the measures (i.e., help-seeking behaviour frequency, established correlates of help-seeking behaviour, and markers of adolescent autonomy). The demographic information and the two versions of the measure of help-seeking approaches (one for a parent and one for a close friend) were presented, in that order, at the beginning of each survey. At the end of the class period, each participant received an information sheet that described the study in more detail and provided a list of community and online mental health resources available to adolescents (see Appendix C). Following completion of the data collection in each classroom, adolescents' consent forms were entered into a draw for a \$10 gift certificate that was awarded to a participant in that class. It is important to note that data collection occurred in mid-December of 2019. Thus, all data was collected prior to the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Based on reported attendance from teachers for the classes that were sampled, 318 of a possible 355 adolescents were present and only 9 adolescents declined to

participate. The response rate was calculated at 97%. Surveys from 10 students were excluded: 1 survey was excluded because items used to calculate the dependent variables were not completed, 6 surveys were excluded because of excessive missing data, and 3 surveys were excluded because they were completed about someone other than their mother (i.e., their father, grandparent) *and* they reported that they did not have a close friend. It is important to note that 75 adolescents (35 girls, 37 boys, 3 youths identifying their gender as other than male or female) completed the survey with reference to someone other than their mother or stepmother and that four adolescents (1 girl, 3 boys) reported that they did not have a close friend. Thus, analyses involving participants with a close friend are based on a sample of 295 youths (170 girls, 119 boys, 6 youths identifying as other than male or female) that overlaps with, but is not identical to, the sample of 224 participants who reported on their mother or stepmother (136 girls, 85 males, 3 youths identifying as other than male or female). Power analyses conducted with G-Power software (Faul et al., 2009) showed that for a mixed design analysis of variance (ANOVA), specifying a medium effect size and an alpha of .05, a sample size of 40 was required. For multiple regression analyses involving 10 predictors, specifying a medium effect size and an alpha of .05, a sample size of at least 160 participants was needed.

Measures

Demographic Information

Adolescents reported on which school they attended, their grade, age, identified gender, with whom they were living at the time of the survey, and each parent's level of education and employment status (see Appendix D). Although this study focused on

adolescents seeking help from their mother, it was recognized that some adolescents may not have a mother or a mother figure in their lives. To provide an opportunity for all youths to participate in the study, adolescents were instructed to complete the sections of the survey that asked about a parent while thinking of a specific parent or caregiver of their choosing with whom they lived at least half the time. Adolescents were asked to indicate which parent would be the focus of their responses (e.g., mother, father, stepmother, stepfather, another caregiver). Youths who completed the survey focusing on their mother or stepmother were included in the analyses. When asked to provide information about the close friend they had chosen to be the focus of their responses, 58% of youths reported that their close friend was female, 40% chose a close friend who was male, and 1% selected a close friend who identified as a gender other than male or female. According to the youths, the close friends ranged in age from 12 to 20 years old ($M = 15.60$, $SD = 1.37$). The majority of young people (75%) also reported that they had been friends with their close friend for over 2 years, 12% had been friends for 1-2 years, and 13% had been friends for less than 1 year. Finally, 83% of the adolescents attended the same school as their close friend.

Approaches to Seeking Help

Three approaches to seeking help (i.e., autonomous help seeking, dependent help seeking, and avoidance of help seeking) were assessed using an adapted version of the Help Seeking Styles measure (Komissarouk et al., 2017). The measure consists of 14 items: 4 items that assess respondents' tendency to cope with their problems by seeking help in a manner that maintains personal responsibility for coping with the problem (e.g., "I tend to ask for advice from other people regarding the problems I deal with if it

helps me cope better”), 5 items that assess a tendency to depend on others to resolve their problems (e.g., “I often ask for help in resolving a problem, even if I can deal with it on my own”), and 5 items that assess a tendency to not seek help even though they may need it (e.g., “When I cannot resolve a problem on my own, I do not typically ask for help”). Participants rated each item on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from -3 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 3 (*Strongly Agree*). Six scores were calculated for each participant by averaging the responses for each help-seeking approach ($n = 3$) for each helper ($n = 2$) (see Appendix E). Higher scores reflect adolescents’ endorsement of coping with personal problems using that particular approach to help seeking.

For the current study, the Help Seeking Styles measure was adapted in two ways. First, adolescents were prompted to respond based on “how they typically think and feel when they are faced with *a personal problem* (e.g., they feel stressed a lot, do not feel like themselves, feel sad or depressed, feel angry or worried, are not acting like they normally do)”. Accordingly, in Item 3 the phrase “my performance” was changed to “how I feel”. Second, because adolescents were asked to complete the measure two times to evaluate the approaches to help seeking they typically use with their parent and with a close friend, items were modified to incorporate reference to the specific helper as appropriate (e.g., “If it helps me cope better, I ask for my parent’s advice regarding my problems”; “I frequently ask my close friend for help with a problem before I try to solve it on my own”).

The measure used by Komissarouk et al. (2017) was derived from a questionnaire developed by Harpaz-Gorodeisky and Nadler (2008) that included 28 items and showed preliminary validity (Komissarouk & Nadler, 2014). Komissarouk et

al. (2017) used Confirmatory Factor Analysis and advice from experts from 3 cultures to reduce the measure to 14 items. The authors reported good internal consistencies for the three subscales and construct validity and convergent validity in samples of adults. Evidence of the ecological and predictive validity of the measure was provided with separate samples (e.g., university students, male technicians) (Komissarouk et al., 2017). Only one published study has adapted Komissarouk et al.'s measure for use with adolescents. Efrati (2018) adapted the 28-item version of the Help Seeking Scale to assess youths' (aged 14-18 years) help-seeking approaches with formal resources for compulsive sexual behaviour. Efrati reported reliability coefficients at or above .87 for each approach and linked adolescents' help-seeking approaches to their emotional adjustment and behavioural outcomes, providing further validity evidence.

Frequency of Seeking Help

The frequency with which adolescents sought help from their parent and from their close friend were measured using the support from mother/father/guardian subscale (four items) and the support from peers subscale (four items) of the Children's Coping Strategies Checklist-Revision 2 (CCSC-R2; Ayers et al., 2002; Ayers et al., 1996). The original and revised version of the CCSC is a dispositional measure of coping behaviour, which evaluates active, avoidant, distraction, and support seeking strategies (Ayers et al., 1996). A revision of the support seeking subscale permits respondents to report seeking help from multiple sources (i.e., mother/father/guardian, other adults, peers, and siblings) (Ayers et al., 2002). In this study, adolescents reported how often they had sought support from their parent and from a close friend during the past month (i.e., "You told your parent how you felt about the problem"; "You told your friend how

you would like to solve the problem”) (see Appendix F). Responses are made using a 4-point Likert-type scale (1 = *Never*; 4 = *Most of the Time*). Higher mean scores reflect more frequent help seeking from that helper.

In constructing the CCSC, Ayers et al. (1996) cross-validated the measure on two independent samples of children in Grades 4, 5, and 6 and demonstrated that the four latent constructs (active, avoidant, distraction, support seeking) were invariant across gender and age using confirmatory factor analysis. Moderate to high correlations were found between the CCSC support seeking subscale and a similar measure of situational coping (How I Cope Under Pressure Scale-HICUPS; Ayers et al., 1996; Sandler et al., 1994). With a sample of 344 children and adolescents, Ayers et al. (2002) reported Cronbach’s alphas for the support from mother/father/guardian subscale of .83 and the support from peers subscale of .85. Sears (2008a) reported an internal consistency of .92 for adolescents seeking help from their mother and Murphy (2008) reported an internal consistency of .83 for adolescent girls seeking help from a best friend.

Self-Disclosure

To measure adolescents’ perceptions of their competence at sharing information about themselves with others, the 8-item self-disclosure subscale of the Adolescent Interpersonal Competence measure (AICQ, Buhrmester, 1990) was used (see Appendix G). The full scale assesses five domains of social competence important for close relationships, including initiating relationships, self-disclosure, providing emotional support to friends, conflict resolution, and asserting influence. The AICQ is a modified version of the Interpersonal Competence Questionnaire (ICQ) created by Buhrmester

and colleagues (1988) to assess perceived interpersonal competence among college students. Adolescents were asked to rate each item (e.g., “How good are you at sharing personal thoughts and feelings with others?”) on a 5-point scale (1= *Poor at This*; 5 = *Extremely Good at This*). Scores were computed as a mean, with higher scores indicating higher perceived competence at self-disclosure.

Support for the measure’s reliability and validity was reported by the authors (Buhrmester, 1990; Buhrmester et al., 1988). For example, Buhrmester (1990) reported an internal consistency of .92 for the AICQ scale in a sample of adolescents aged 13–16 years. With respect to the self-disclosure subscale, Sears and McAfee (2017) reported an internal consistency of .86 in a sample of adolescent girls. In addition, the self-disclosure subscale has been correlated with various aspects of social and emotional adjustment (e.g., emotional competence, emotional sensitivity, self-esteem, and popularity) (Buhrmester et al., 1988; Sears & McAfee, 2017) and with friendship features (e.g., level of companionship, friendship closeness) (Chow et al., 2013; Sears & McAfee, 2017).

Conformity to Specific Masculine Gender Norms

Conformity to two specific masculine gender norms were evaluated using the Emotional Control subscale (11 items) (e.g., “It is best to keep your emotions hidden”) and the Self-Reliance subscale (6 items) (e.g., “It bothers me when I have to ask for help”) of the Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory (CMNI; Mahalik et al., 2003) (see Appendix H). The CMNI is a 94-item measure created to assess the extent to which an individual conforms or does not conform to the actions, thoughts, and feelings that reflect masculinity norms of traditional Western culture. Based on factor analysis, 11

distinct norms are assessed by the full measure (i.e., Winning, Emotional Control, Risk-Taking, Violence, Dominance, Playboy, Self-Reliance, Primacy of Work, Power Over Women, Disdain for Homosexuality, and Pursuit of Status). Adolescents responded to each item using a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 3 (*Strongly Agree*). Following the reverse-coding of appropriate items, scores were summed for each norm. Higher scores reflect greater conformity to the specific norm.

Mahalik et al. (2003) demonstrated reliability of the overall total score and the emotional control and self-reliance subscales with a sample of men and women, with coefficients of .94, .91, and .85, respectively. Stability coefficients, as indicated by 2-to-3-week test-retest scores, were also strong (i.e., .90 for emotional control and .80 for self-reliance). Similar internal consistencies were reported for the two subscales in two samples of adolescent boys (Robinson, 2015; Sears et al., 2009). Validity of the measure was demonstrated by Mahalik et al. (2003). Men scored significantly higher than women on the Emotional Control and Self-Reliance subscales and the CMNI total score. Further, a moderate correlation was found between the Emotional Control and Self-Reliance subscales. These subscales also showed significant inverse relationships with attitudes towards seeking professional psychological help among young men (Mahalik et al., 2003). A recent meta-analysis indicated that the CMNI masculine norms were positively associated with markers of negative mental health and negatively associated with markers of positive mental health and psychological help seeking, and that the relationship between conformity to masculine norms and mental health outcomes differed by the specific masculine norm endorsed (i.e., Self-Reliance and Emotional Control) (Wong et al., 2017).

Conformity to a Specific Feminine Gender Norm

Conformity to a specific feminine gender norm was measured using the Nice in Relationships subscale (18 items) of the Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory (CFNI; Mahalik et al., 2005) (see Appendix I). The CFNI is an 84-item inventory of eight femininity norms of traditional Western culture (i.e., Nice in Relationships, Thinness, Modesty, Domestic, Care for Children, Romantic Relationship, Sexual Fidelity, and Invest in Appearance). This measure was created to assess the extent to which an individual conforms or does not conform to the actions, thoughts, and feelings that reflect norms of femininity in North American culture. The Nice in Relationships subscale assesses the extent to which an individual conforms to the feminine expectation to develop and maintain friendly and supportive relationships with others (e.g., “I try to be sweet and nice”). Adolescents rated each item on 4-point scale ranging from 0 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 3 (*Strongly Agree*). After reverse-coding items, items were summed. A higher score reflects more conformity to the Nice in Relationships norm.

Mahalik et al. (2005) reported internal consistencies of .88 and .84 for the CFNI total score and the Nice in Relationships subscale score, respectively, in a sample of women and men and a stability coefficient of .83 based on 2-to-3-week test-retest scores. Sears and MacIntyre (2019) reported an internal consistency of .81 in a sample of adolescent girls and boys. Validity of the measure was demonstrated by the authors (Mahalik et al., 2005). For example, women scored significantly higher than men on the Nice in Relationships subscale and on the CFNI total score, and correlations between the CFNI subscales were low to moderate in expected directions. In addition, in their sample of young women, Mahalik et al. (2005) found that the Nice in Relationships

subscale and the CNFI total score were significantly and positively related to another measure of femininity.

Positive Relationship Quality

Adolescents' perceptions of positive qualities in their relationship with their mother and with a close friend were examined using a composite of multiple subscales of the Network of Relationships Inventory-Social Provisions Version (NRI-SPV; Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). Typically, the NRI-SPV evaluates seven positive social provisions of close relationships (i.e., companionship, affection, enhancement of worth, nurturance, reliable alliance, instrumental aid, and intimate disclosure). Because instrumental aid and intimate disclosure have significant conceptual overlap with other variables in this study, they were not included in the composite measure. Each social provision subscale has 3 items. Thus, 15 items reflecting adolescents' perceptions of five social provisions contributed to positive relationship quality (see Appendix J).

Adolescents were asked to indicate how much or how often a specific quality occurs in their relationship with their parent and in their relationship with a close friend using a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*Little or None*) to 5 (*The Most*). Sample items include "How often do you and this person go places and do things together?" (companionship) and "How much does this person treat you like you're good at many things?" (enhancement of worth). Positive relationship quality scores were computed for each relationship by averaging the scores on the five positive qualities subscales for each relationship, with higher scores reflecting more positive relationship qualities present in that relationship. Past research has been conducted using shorter versions of the NRI-SPV or using select subscales (e.g., Furman & Buhrmester, 2009; Halamay & Sears, 2017; Moilanen &

Raffaelli, 2010; Wood et al., 2018).

The original NRI-SPV showed three factors, which included Support Provisions (i.e., positive qualities subscales), Negative Interactions (i.e., negative qualities subscales), and Relative Power (i.e., relative power subscale) (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). Internal consistencies were at or greater than .80 for all subscales for mothers and for best friends (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). Use of positive relationship quality as a composite has also shown strong internal consistencies (e.g., Hill & Swenson, 2014; Seiffge-Krenke & Persike, 2017; Van Lissa et al., 2018). Further, other researchers (e.g., Halamay & Sears, 2017; Molianen & Raffaelli, 2010) have administered only some of the support subscales and reported reliabilities that were comparable to those found in prior studies with all subscales included (e.g., Furman & Buhrmester, 1992). The NRI-SPV has been validated by several studies linking positive and negative interactions among adolescents and individuals in their social network (i.e., family members, same-sex friends, other-sex friends, and romantic partners) with measures of positive adjustment, negative adjustment, social competence, emotion regulation, and psychopathology (e.g., Gavin & Furman, 1996; Seiffge-Krenke & Persike, 2017; Van Lissa et al., 2018).

Cognitive Autonomy

Cognitive autonomy was assessed using the Cognitive Autonomy and Self-Evaluation Inventory (CASE) (Beckert, 2007; Beckert et al., 2015). The CASE Inventory is a 27-item measure that evaluates adolescents' perceptions of five components of cognitive autonomy: evaluative thinking (8 items) (e.g., "I think about the consequences of my decisions"), voicing opinions (5 items) (e.g., "I feel that my

opinions are valuable enough to share”), decision making (6 items) (e.g., “There are consequences to my decisions”), self-assessing (3 items) (e.g., “I am good at identifying my own strengths”), and comparative validation (5 items) (e.g., “I need family members to approve my decision”) (see Appendix K). Adolescents responded to each item using a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*).

Using their original North American sample of adolescents, the authors reported a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .85 for the scale and alpha coefficients for each of the five components ranging from .64 for comparative validation to .87 for evaluating thinking (Beckert, 2007). Alpha coefficients in this same range were found in subsequent studies (Beckert et al., 2015; Lee & Beckert, 2011; Michael & Attis, 2016). In the present study, one item (Item 19 “At school I keep my opinions to myself”) negatively correlated with the other items on its subscale, so it was reverse coded. Although reports by the authors indicated that factor analysis has supported a five-factor solution and that small to moderate positive correlations between the components also support subscale distinctions (Beckert, 2007; Beckert et al., 2015), a single-factor solution was documented by Lee and Beckert (2011) and this approach (i.e., one scale score) was used in this study. Evaluation of this measure has shown that several of the components differ across age groups (i.e., 7th grade, 9th grade, 11th grade, college) (Beckert, 2007), and that CASE scores are positively correlated with a common measure of emotional and behavioural autonomy (Beckert, 2012).

Behavioural Autonomy

To assess behavioural autonomy, adolescents reported on their involvement in family decision-making using a 20-item scale (Smetana et al., 2004), adapted from

Dornbusch and colleagues (1985, 1990). Topics for decision are drawn from conventional (4 items, e.g., doing chores), prudential (4 items, e.g., drinking alcohol), personal (4 items, e.g., how to spend free time) and multifaceted (8 items, e.g., what music to listen to) domains (see Appendix L). Adolescents were asked to report on who makes most of the decisions in their family about each topic using a 5-point Likert scale: (1) *the adolescent decides without discussing the issue with their parent(s)*, (2) *the adolescent makes the final decision after discussing it with their parent(s)*, (3) *the parent(s) and the adolescent make the decision together*, (4) *the parent(s) make the final decision after discussing it with their adolescent*, or (5) *the parent(s) decide without discussing the issue with their adolescent*. Responses were reverse scored, with higher mean scores indicating a higher level of behavioural autonomy (Smetana et al., 2004).

Smetana et al. (2004) did not report an internal consistency for their 20-item measure. Using the same scale, however, Van Petegem et al. (2012) reported an internal consistency of .85 in a large sample of adolescents. Evidence of convergent and divergent validity is provided by multiple studies finding small relationships with other markers of adolescent autonomy (e.g., more sense of choice in one's action, lower pressure to act in a specific way, lower controlled motives for making decisions, less emotional connectedness, lower perceptions of parents as overpowering) and with adolescent adjustment (e.g., academics, psychosocial development, deviance) (Smetana et al., 2004; Van Petegem et al., 2012; Van Petegem et al., 2013).

Emotional Autonomy

Emotional autonomy was assessed using 12 items from the Emotional Autonomy Scale (EAS; Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986) that were identified by Beyers et

al. (2005) as contributing to a construct labeled Separation (i.e., measuring adaptive and developmentally appropriate emotional autonomy). The Separation factor evaluates the extent to which adolescents acknowledge their parents as capable of making mistakes (Deidealization; 4 items; “My parents hardly ever make mistakes”); do not rely excessively on their parents for support (Nondependency; 4 items; “I go to my parents for help before trying to solve a problem myself”); maintain some privacy (Privacy; 2 items; “There are some things about me that my parents don’t know”); and do not desire to imitate their parents (Nonimitation; 2 items; “There are things that I will do differently from my mother and father when I become a parent”) (see Appendix M). For each item, adolescents were asked to respond using a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 4 (*Strongly Agree*). Nine items were reverse coded. In the present study, prior to computing a composite score, 3 items (Items 2, 5, and 9) were excluded because they have significant overlap with help seeking and could potentially inflate the relationship between emotional autonomy and the help-seeking approach variables. The mean of the remaining responses was calculated, with a higher score indicating a higher level of emotional autonomy.

The psychometric properties of the original 20-item EAS scale (Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986) were called into question by multiple researchers (e.g., Ryan & Lynch, 1989; Schmitz & Baer, 2001), and subsequent confirmatory factor analyses with independent samples demonstrated that its original four-factor structure displayed poor construct validity and low reliability (Beyers et al., 2005; Schmitz & Baer, 2001). The alternative factor structure identified by Beyers et al. (2005) showed seven first-order factors and two second-order factors (Separation and Detachment) and was replicated

across two samples. Beyers et al. (2005) reported an internal consistency of .80 for the 12-item separation factor. Independent studies with adolescents and young adults have reported internal consistencies above .80 for the separation subscale (e.g., Lamborn & Groh, 2009; Sugimura et al., 2018). Beyers et al. (2005) also reported that their EAS factor structure was invariant across gender and across grades 7 through 12. Convergent, discriminant, and construct validity have been supported in subsequent work linking separation to a range of other variables, such as connectedness, parental trust, and loneliness, internalizing symptoms, and identity status (Beyers et al., 2005; Ingoglia et al., 2011; Jager et al., 2015; Lamborn & Groh, 2009; Sugimura et al., 2018).

Autonomy Support

Adolescents' perceptions of autonomy support from their mother and from a close friend were measured using a modified version of the Balanced Relatedness Scale (Shulman et al., 1997) as described by Van der Giessen and colleagues (2014). This scale captures the degree to which adolescents perceive that the differing opinions and ideas they express are respected and negotiated within a relationship. As per Van der Giessen et al. (2014), youths were asked to respond to 7 items, and to indicate the degree to which the item fit their relationship with a specific person using a 4-point Likert scale (1 = *Absolutely Disagree* to 4 = *Absolutely Agree*). Sample items include my parent/close friend "considers my opinions" and "thinks it is right to sometimes disagree with him/her" (see Appendix N). Two mean scores were computed, one for perceived autonomy support from mother and one for perceived autonomy support from a close friend, with a higher score indicating more perceived autonomy support within that relationship.

The original scale created by Shulman and colleagues (1997) demonstrated good reliability and was positively related to aspects of friendship intimacy (e.g., emotional closeness, respect for a friend) and negatively related to control within a friendship, supporting convergent and divergent validity. Younger students also had lower Balanced Relatedness scores, supporting the measure's sensitivity to development (Shulman et al., 1997). In a large sample of adolescents and across five waves of measurement, Van der Giessen et al. (2014) reported Cronbach's alphas ranging from .84 to .90 for mothers and .90 to .91 for a best friend for a Dutch version of the scale. Research has supported the validity of this adapted subscale for adolescents' friendships and their relationships with their parents (Doeslaar et al., 2016; Selfhout et al., 2009; Van der Giessen et al., 2014).

CHAPTER THREE

Results

Data Conditioning

Missing Data

Patterns of missing data were examined first. None of the variables had more than 5% missing data. No missing data were estimated for the dependent variables. Because the missing data points were observed to be randomly distributed, gender-based mean substitution was used to estimate missing values for the predictor variables (Cohen et al., 2003). For frequency of help-seeking behaviour, 2 data points were estimated for mother (both boys), and 4 data points were estimated for a close friend (1 girl, 3 boys). Specific to established correlates of help-seeking behaviour, 2 data points were estimated for self-disclosure (1 girl, 1 boy), 6 data points were estimated for conformity to the masculine norm emotional control (3 girls, 3 boys), 4 data points were estimated for conformity to the masculine norm self-reliance (2 girls, 2 boys), and 13 data points were estimated for conformity to the feminine norm nice in relationships (6 girls, 7 boys). Additionally, 4 data points were estimated for positive relationship quality with their mother (2 girls, 2 boys) and 6 data points were estimated for positive relationship quality with a close friend (4 girls, 2 boys). Specific to the autonomy variables, 6 data points were estimated for cognitive autonomy (1 girl, 5 boys), 11 data points were estimated for behavioural autonomy (4 girls, 7 boys), 3 data points were estimated for emotional autonomy (1 girl, 2 boys), 2 data points were estimated for autonomy support from mother (1 girl, 1 boy), and 4 data points were estimated for autonomy support from a close friend (1 girl, 3 boys).

Univariate and Multivariate Outliers

To detect univariate outliers, histograms and frequency distributions of raw and standardized scores were examined, and cases with standardized scores in excess of ± 3.29 and disconnected from the distribution were considered (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). In preparation for analyses with ungrouped data, one univariate outlier was detected. The score was for conformity to the feminine gender norm nice in relationships. Because the score was disconnected from the distribution but was not a multivariate outlier, the score was rescaled so that it remained extreme, but was no longer an extreme outlier. Given the grouped nature of the data for Research Question 1, the help-seeking approaches variables were screened for outliers within each group of adolescents (younger girls, older girls, younger boys, older boys) for the subsample pertaining to mothers and the subsample pertaining to close friends. Two participants (1 younger girl, 1 older girl) scored more than 3.29 standard deviations below the mean on their ratings for autonomous help-seeking from a close friend. Because the scores were disconnected from the distribution but were not also multivariate outliers, they were rescaled so that they remained extreme for their group (i.e., were the lowest score on the variable), but were no longer extreme outliers.

To detect multivariate outliers, Mahalanobis and Cook's Distances were examined separately for variables included in analyses for mothers and for variables included in analyses for close friends. Prior to the two analyses with grouped data, multivariate outliers were screened for the relevant variables (i.e., use of each of the help-seeking approaches) within each of the four groups (i.e., younger adolescent girls, older adolescent girls, younger adolescent boys, older adolescent boys), in accordance

with Tabachnick and Fidell (2013). No multivariate outliers were identified for the analysis pertaining to adolescents seeking help from their mother, but two multivariate outliers were identified pertaining to their help seeking from a close friend (1 younger girl, 1 older girl). Each analysis was run with and without outliers to see how they impacted the results. Because the pattern of results was consistent with and without the multivariate outliers, the two cases were retained in the final analyses.

In preparation for ungrouped analyses, five multivariate outliers were identified in the mothers subsample and six multivariate outliers were identified in the close friends subsample. Each multivariate regression was run with and without the respective multivariate outliers to see how they impacted the results. For five analyses, multivariate outliers changed the pattern of results (i.e., significance of models or predictors, direction and magnitude of coefficients). In accordance with Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), these cases were excluded from the appropriate analysis, but were retained in the analyses where they did not significantly change the pattern of results.

Normality, Linearity, and Homoscedasticity

Normality was screened for using histograms of variables along with skewness and kurtosis values. Five of the six dependent variables (i.e., autonomous help seeking, dependent help seeking, and avoidance of help seeking from mother; dependent help seeking and avoidance of help seeking from a close friend), the frequency of help-seeking behaviour from mother and from a close friend, four of the established correlates of help seeking (i.e., self-disclosure, emotional control, self-reliance, and nice in relationships), and three markers of autonomy (i.e., cognitive autonomy, behavioural autonomy, and emotional autonomy) were normally distributed.

Three variables showed considerable deviation from normality. Autonomous help seeking from a close friend, skewness = $-.84$ ($SE = .16$), positive relationship quality for mother, skewness = -1.01 ($SE = .16$), and autonomy support from mother, skewness = $-.76$ ($SE = .16$) were all negatively skewed. Log transformations for autonomous help seeking from a close friend and positive relationship quality for mother and a square root transformation for autonomy support for mother made each distribution relatively normal. However, when the multivariate analyses were computed with the transformed variables, the results (i.e., significance of models or predictors, direction of coefficients) did not differ from the results that were found with the original variables. As a result, in accordance with Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), analyses using the original variables are reported. Positive relationship quality for a close friend was also moderately negatively skewed, skewness = -0.50 ($SE = .14$), and the frequency of help seeking from their mother was slightly positively skewed, skewness = 0.48 ($SE = .16$). Given that the degree of skewness for each of these variables was not deemed severe and they were skewed in ways that are consistent with theoretically-based predictions of the study, no transformation was applied to these variables. Finally, a review of scatterplots showed that the variables had acceptable linearity and homoscedasticity.

Multicollinearity and Singularity

Zero-order correlations among all variables were examined for multicollinearity and singularity. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), correlations greater than $.90$ indicate the presence of multicollinearity and correlations above $.70$ may indicate redundancy, so these variables should be reviewed for omission from an analysis. No

variables were found to be multicollinear using a criterion of correlations greater than .90 or considered to be singular. However, the two conformity to the masculine gender norms subscales (i.e., emotional control and self-reliance) were correlated at .70 in the subsample of youths who reported on help seeking from their mother. These variables were both retained but their relationships were closely considered in the context of the relevant analyses.

Centered Variables

Prior to conducting the regression analyses, all predictor variables were centered around their respective means (i.e., standardized) as the analyses included interaction terms (Cohen et al., 2003).

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics for the dependent variables (i.e., use of approaches to help seeking from their mother and use of approaches to help seeking from their close friend) and the predictor variables are presented in Table 1. Internal consistencies for each variable are also presented, with the Cronbach's alphas ranging from .77 to .94.

With respect to help-seeking approaches from their mother, the mean for autonomous help seeking fell just above the midpoint, indicating that, on average, adolescents slightly agreed that they used an autonomous approach to help seeking from their mother. The mean for dependent help seeking fell just below the midpoint indicating that, on average, adolescents slightly disagreed that they engaged in dependent help seeking from their mother. For avoidance of help seeking, the mean fell just above the midpoint, indicating that, on average, adolescents slightly agreed that they typically avoid asking their mother for help.

Table 1*Descriptive Statistics for the Dependent and Independent Variables*

Variables	Possible Range	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>α</i>
Dependent Variables				
Help-Seeking Approaches — Mother				
Autonomous	-3.0 - 3.0	.32(1.64)	224	.89
Dependent	-3.0 - 3.0	-.22(1.43)	224	.83
Avoidance of	-3.0 - 3.0	.45(1.35)	224	.78
Help-Seeking Approaches — Close Friend				
Autonomous	-3.0 - 3.0	1.29(1.28)	295	.88
Dependent	-3.0 - 3.0	.29(1.30)	295	.81
Avoidance of	-3.0 - 3.0	-.25(1.23)	295	.78
Predictor Variables				
Frequency of Help-Seeking Behaviour				
Mother	1 - 4	2.10(.83)	224	.89
Close Friend	1 - 4	2.70(.86)	295	.92
Established Correlates of Help-Seeking Behaviour				
Self-Disclosure	1 - 5	2.76(.85)	299	.85
Emotional Control	0 - 33	17.92(5.70)	299	.88
Self-Reliance	0 - 18	8.19(3.49)	299	.81
Nice in Relationships	0 - 54	36.45(7.09)	299	.86
Positive Relationship Quality – Mother	1 - 5	3.92(.85)	224	.94
Positive Relationship Quality – Close Friend	1 - 5	3.87(.75)	295	.93
Markers of Autonomy				
Cognitive Autonomy	1 - 5	3.41(.47)	299	.84
Behavioural Autonomy	1 - 5	3.38(.72)	299	.88
Emotional Autonomy	1 - 4	2.92(.51)	299	.77
Autonomy Support – Mother	1 - 4	3.01(.65)	224	.92
Autonomy Support – Close Friend	1 - 4	3.25(.46)	295	.86

With respect to their close friend, the mean for autonomous help seeking fell above the midpoint, indicating that, on average, adolescents “somewhat agreed” that they take an autonomous approach to help seeking from their close friend. The mean for dependent help seeking also fell just above the midpoint, indicating that, on average, adolescents slightly agreed that they used a dependent approach when asking for help from their close friend. Finally, the mean for avoidance of help seeking fell just below the midpoint, indicating that, on average, adolescents slightly disagreed that they typically avoid asking their close friend for help.

Turning to the predictor variables, the mean for how often adolescents reported having sought help from their mother fell just above the midpoint, indicating that, on average, youths sought help from their mother “sometimes” when they experienced a problem. The mean for how often they reported having sought help from their close friend also fell above the midpoint, indicating that, on average, adolescents sought help from their close friend more than “sometimes” but less than “often” when they experienced a problem.

With respect to the established correlates of help seeking, the mean for self-disclosure fell just above the midpoint, suggesting that adolescents perceived themselves as having more than a “fair” ability to self-disclose to others. In terms of conformity to the masculine gender norms, the mean for emotional control fell above the midpoint, indicating that adolescents somewhat agreed that they conform to the emotional control norm, while the mean for self-reliance fell below the midpoint, suggesting that, on average, adolescents conform to the self-reliance norm to a lesser extent. For conformity to the feminine gender norm nice in relationships, the mean fell above the midpoint,

indicating that adolescents moderately conform to this gender norm. Finally, the mean for positive relationship quality with their mother fell above the midpoint, suggesting that, on average, adolescents reported experiencing more positive relationship qualities with their mother. Likewise, the mean for positive relationship quality with their close friend fell above the midpoint, indicating that, on average, adolescents reported experiencing more positive relationship qualities with their close friend.

Specific to the autonomy variables, the mean for cognitive autonomy fell above the midpoint, suggesting that, on average, adolescents perceived themselves as having slightly higher cognitive autonomy. The mean for behavioural autonomy also fell above the midpoint, suggesting that, on average, adolescents reported making most decisions together with their parents. The mean for emotional autonomy also fell above the midpoint indicating that, on average, adolescents reported experiencing some emotional autonomy. Finally, the means for autonomy support from their mother and a close friend each fell above the midpoint, indicating that, on average, adolescents agreed that they experienced autonomy support from their mother and their close friend.

Pearson Correlations

Mother Subsample

Intercorrelations specific to adolescents' use of the approaches to help seeking from their mother and with the frequency of their help seeking from their mother are presented in Table 2. With respect to the intercorrelations within the three approaches of help seeking from their mother, adolescents' autonomous help seeking was strongly and positively correlated with dependent help seeking and was strongly and negatively correlated with avoidance of help seeking. Adolescents' dependent help seeking from

Table 2

Intercorrelations Among Adolescents' Approaches to Help Seeking and the Frequency of Help Seeking from their Mother

Variables	2	3	4
1. Autonomous Help Seeking	.78***	-.65***	.69***
2. Dependent Help Seeking	--	-.60***	.63***
3. Avoidance of Help Seeking		--	-.56***
4. Frequency of Help Seeking			--

Note. $N = 224$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

their mother was also strongly and negatively correlated with avoidance of help seeking from their mother. Autonomous help seeking from their mother and dependent help seeking from their mother were also both strongly and positively correlated with the frequency of adolescents' help seeking from their mother. However, avoidance of help seeking from their mother and the frequency of help seeking from their mother were moderately and negatively correlated.

Intercorrelations between the three help-seeking approaches from their mother and the correlates of help-seeking behaviour are presented in Table 3. Adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother was not significantly correlated with adolescent gender, but it was moderately and positively correlated with their perceived competence at self-disclosure, moderately and negatively correlated with emotional control and self-reliance, modestly and positively correlated with nice in relationships, and strongly and positively correlated with positive relationship quality. Similarly, adolescents' dependent help seeking from their mother was not significantly correlated with adolescent gender, but it was modestly and positively correlated with their perceived competence at self-disclosure, moderately and negatively correlated with emotional control and self-reliance, modestly and positively correlated with nice in relationships, and moderately and positively correlated with positive relationship quality. Finally, adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother was not significantly correlated with adolescent gender, but it was moderately and negatively correlated with their perceived competence at self-disclosure, moderately and positively correlated with emotional control and self-reliance, modestly and negatively correlated with nice in relationships, and moderately and negatively correlated with positive

Table 3*Intercorrelations Among Adolescents' Approaches to Help Seeking from their Mother and Established Correlates of Help-Seeking**Behaviour*

Variables	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Autonomous Help Seeking	.78***	-.65***	-.11	.31***	-.38***	-.40***	.24***	.65***
2. Dependent Help Seeking	--	-.60***	-.08	.22**	-.35***	-.32***	.17**	.58***
3. Avoidance of Help Seeking	--	--	.12	-.28***	.47***	.54***	-.19**	-.44**
4. Adolescent Gender	--	--	--	.01	.12	.01	-.25***	-.05
5. Self-Disclosure	--	--	--	--	-.62***	-.41***	.26***	.23**
6. Emotional Control	--	--	--	--	--	.70***	-.28***	-.24***
7. Self-Reliance	--	--	--	--	--	--	-.29***	-.29***
8. Nice in Relationships	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	.25***
9. Positive Relationship Quality	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Note. $N = 224$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

relationship quality.

With respect to intercorrelations within the correlates of help seeking (see Table 3), adolescent gender was not significantly correlated with perceived competence at self-disclosure, emotional control, or self-reliance. Adolescent gender was modestly and negatively correlated with nice in relationships, indicating that youths who identified as female reported more conformity to nice in relationships than other youths. Adolescent gender, however, was not significantly correlated with positive relationship quality. Adolescents' perceived competence at self-disclosure was strongly and negatively correlated with emotional control, moderately and negatively correlated with self-reliance, and modestly and positively correlated with nice in relationships and positive relationship quality. Emotional control was strongly and positively correlated with self-reliance and was modestly and negatively correlated with nice in relationships and positive relationship quality. Similarly, self-reliance was modestly and negatively correlated with nice in relationships and positive relationship quality. Finally, nice in relationships was modestly and positively correlated with positive relationship quality.

Intercorrelations between adolescents' use of the three approaches to help seeking from their mother, adolescent age, and the markers of autonomy are presented in Table 4. Autonomous help seeking from their mother was not significantly correlated with adolescent age, was moderately and positively correlated with cognitive autonomy, was not significantly correlated with behavioural autonomy, was modestly and negatively correlated with emotional autonomy, and was moderately and positively correlated with autonomy support. Dependent help seeking from their mother was not significantly correlated with adolescent age, was moderately and positively correlated

Table 4*Intercorrelations Among Adolescents' Approaches to Help Seeking from their Mother and Markers of Autonomy*

Variables	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Autonomous Help Seeking	.78***	-.65***	.00	.39***	.08	-.22**	.54***
2. Dependent Help Seeking	--	-.60***	-.05	.31***	.04	-.35***	.47***
3. Avoidance of Help Seeking	--	--	.02	-.26***	-.06	.23**	-.35***
4. Adolescent Age	--	--	--	.04	.21**	.02	.01
5. Cognitive Autonomy	--	--	--	--	-.04	-.09	.29***
6. Behavioural Autonomy	--	--	--	--	--	-.03	.24**
7. Emotional Autonomy	--	--	--	--	--	--	-.25***
8. Autonomy Support	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Note. $N = 224$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

with cognitive autonomy, was not significantly correlated with behavioural autonomy, was moderately and negatively correlated with emotional autonomy, and was moderately and positively correlated with autonomy support. Finally, adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother was not significantly correlated with adolescent age, was moderately and negatively correlated with cognitive autonomy, was not significantly correlated with behavioural autonomy, was strongly and positively correlated with emotional autonomy, and was moderately and negatively correlated with autonomy support from their mother.

With respect to intercorrelations within adolescent age and the markers of adolescent autonomy (see Table 4), adolescent age was not significantly correlated with cognitive autonomy, was modestly and positively correlated with behavioural autonomy, was not significantly correlated with emotional autonomy, and was not significantly correlated with autonomy support. Cognitive autonomy was not significantly correlated with behavioural autonomy or with emotional autonomy, but it was moderately and positively related to autonomy support from their mother. Similarly, behavioural autonomy was not significantly correlated with emotional autonomy, but was modestly and positively related to autonomy support from their mother. Lastly, emotional autonomy was moderately and negatively correlated with autonomy support from their mother.

Close Friend Subsample

Intercorrelations specific to adolescents' use of the three approaches of help seeking from their close friend and with the frequency of help seeking from a close friend are presented in Table 5. With respect to the intercorrelations within the three

Table 5

Intercorrelations Among Adolescents' Approaches to Help Seeking and Frequency of Help Seeking from their Close Friend

Variables	2	3	4
1. Autonomous Help Seeking	.59***	-.52***	.55***
2. Dependent Help Seeking	--	-.44***	.45***
3. Avoidance of Help Seeking		--	-.44***
4. Frequency of Help Seeking			--

Note. $N = 295$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

approaches of help seeking from their close friend, adolescents' autonomous help seeking was moderately and positively correlated with dependent help seeking and was moderately and negatively correlated with avoidance of help seeking from their close friend. Adolescents' dependent help seeking from their close friend was also moderately and negatively correlated with avoidance of help seeking from their close friend. Autonomous help seeking and dependent help seeking from their close friend and frequency of help seeking from their close friend were both moderately and positively correlated with the frequency of help seeking from their close friend. However, avoidance of help seeking from their close friend and frequency of help seeking from their close friend were moderately and negatively correlated.

Intercorrelations between the three help-seeking approaches from their close friend and the correlates of help-seeking behaviour are presented in Table 6. Youths' autonomous help seeking from a close friend was moderately and negatively correlated with gender, indicating that youths who identified as female reported more autonomous help seeking than other youths. Autonomous help seeking from a close friend was also moderately and positively correlated with perceived competence at self-disclosure, moderately and negatively correlated with emotional control, modestly and negatively correlated with self-reliance, moderately and positively correlated with nice in relationships, and moderately and positively correlated with positive relationship quality. Adolescents' dependent help seeking from a close friend was modestly and negatively correlated with gender, indicating that youths who identified as female reported more dependent help seeking from a close friend than other youths. Dependent help seeking from a close friend was also modestly and positively correlated with

Table 6*Intercorrelations Among Adolescents' Approaches to Help Seeking from their Close Friend and Established Correlates of Help-**Seeking Behaviour*

Variables	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Autonomous Help Seeking	.59***	-.52***	-.31***	.33***	-.31***	-.21***	.36***	.41***
2. Dependent Help Seeking	--	-.44***	-.18**	.20***	-.26***	-.16**	.20**	.30***
3. Avoidance of Help Seeking		--	.13*	-.31***	.42***	.34***	-.22***	-.25***
4. Adolescent Gender			--	.05	.09	-.04	-.25***	-.26***
5. Self-Disclosure				--	-.60***	-.37***	.24***	.26***
6. Emotional Control					--	.63***	-.26***	-.21***
7. Self-Reliance						--	-.26***	-.18**
8. Nice in Relationships							--	.37***
9. Positive Relationship Quality								-

Note. N = 295. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

adolescents' perceived competence at self-disclosure, modestly and negatively correlated with emotional control and self-reliance, modestly and positively correlated with nice in relationships, and moderately and positively correlated with positive relationship quality. Finally, adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from a close friend was modestly and positively correlated with gender, indicating that youths who identified as male or as other than male or female reported more avoidance of help seeking from a close friend than other youths. Avoidance of help seeking from a close friend was also moderately and negatively correlated with adolescents' perceived competence at self-disclosure, moderately and positively correlated with emotional control and self-reliance, modestly and negatively correlated with nice in relationships, and modestly and negatively related to positive relationship quality.

With respect to intercorrelations within correlates of help seeking (see Table 6), adolescent gender was not significantly correlated with self-disclosure, emotional control, or self-reliance. Adolescent gender was modestly and negatively correlated with nice in relationships, indicating that youths who identified as female reported more conformity to nice in relationships than other youths. Adolescent gender was also modestly and negatively correlated with positive relationship quality, indicating that youths who identified as female reported more positive relationship quality than other youths. Adolescents' perceived competence at self-disclose was moderately and negatively correlated with emotional control and self-reliance, and modestly and positively correlated with nice in relationships and with positive relationship quality. Emotional control was moderately and positively correlated with self-reliance, and modestly and negatively correlated with nice in relationships and positive relationship

quality. Self-reliance was modestly and negatively correlated with nice in relationships and positive relationship quality. Finally, nice in relationships was modestly and positively correlated with positive relationship quality.

Intercorrelations between adolescents' use of the three approaches to seeking help from their close friend, adolescent age, and the markers of autonomy are presented in Table 7. Autonomous help seeking from their close friend was not significantly correlated with adolescent age, but it was modestly and positively correlated with cognitive autonomy, modestly and negatively correlated with behavioural autonomy, was not significantly correlated with emotional autonomy, and was moderately and positively correlated with autonomy support. Similarly, dependent help seeking from a close friend was not correlated with adolescent age, but it was modestly and positively correlated with cognitive autonomy, modestly and negatively correlated with behavioural autonomy, was not significantly correlated with emotional autonomy, and was modestly and positively correlated with autonomy support. Finally, adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their close friend was not correlated with adolescent age or cognitive autonomy, but it was modestly and positively correlated with behavioural autonomy, was not significantly related to emotional autonomy, and was modestly and negatively correlated with autonomy support.

With respect to intercorrelations within markers of autonomy (see Table 7), adolescent age was not related to cognitive autonomy, was modestly and positively related to behavioural autonomy, and was not related to emotional autonomy or autonomy support. Cognitive autonomy was not significantly correlated with behavioural autonomy, but was modestly and negatively related to emotional autonomy,

Table 7*Intercorrelations Among Adolescents' Approaches to Help Seeking from their Close Friend and Markers of Autonomy*

Variables	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Autonomous Help Seeking	.59***	-.52***	.07	.26***	-.19**	.10	.44***
2. Dependent Help Seeking	--	-.44***	-.05	.19**	-.17**	-.02	.28***
3. Avoidance of Help Seeking		--	-.05	-.09	.16**	-.07	-.29***
4. Adolescent Age			--	.04	.19**	.03	-.01
5. Cognitive Autonomy				--	-.02	-.15**	.26***
6. Behavioural Autonomy					--	-.08	-.01
7. Emotional Autonomy						--	.08
8. Autonomy Support							--

Note. $N = 295$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

and modestly and positively correlated with autonomy support. Behavioural autonomy was not significantly correlated with emotional autonomy or autonomy support. Lastly, emotional autonomy was not significantly correlated with autonomy support.

Analysis of Potential Covariates

Correlations and ANOVA analyses (using a Bonferroni criterion of $p \leq .002$ for statistical significance to adjust for multiple comparisons) were conducted to assess whether specific variables should be included in the analyses as covariates. The demographic variables considered included adolescents' age, grade, family status, father's education level and employment status, and mother's education level and employment status. School and order of measures in the survey booklet were also examined as potential covariates.

Correlation results showed that adolescents' age was not significantly related to autonomous, dependent, or avoidance of help seeking from their mother ($r = -.00, p = .97, r = -.05, p = .47, \text{ and } r = .02, p = .78$, respectively). Likewise, grade was not significantly related to autonomous, dependent, or avoidance of help seeking from their mother ($r = -.02, p = .80, r = -.07, p = .27, \text{ and } r = .02, p = .75$, respectively). Correlation results also showed that adolescents' age was not significantly related to autonomous, dependent, or avoidance of help seeking from their close friend ($r = .07, p = .24, r = -.05, p = .38, \text{ and } r = -.05, p = .43$, respectively). Likewise, grade was not significantly related to autonomous, dependent, or avoidance of help seeking from their close friend ($r = .08, p = .15, r = -.04, p = .45, \text{ and } r = -.07, p = .22$, respectively).

A series of ANOVA analyses (see Table 8 & Table 9) showed that none of the remaining demographic variables were related to adolescents' autonomous, dependent,

Table 8*Potential Covariates and Adolescents' Approaches to Help Seeking from their Mother*

Potential Covariates	Help-Seeking Approaches — Mother								
	Autonomous			Dependent			Avoidance		
	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>F(df)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>F(df)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>F(df)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>F(df)</i>	
Family Status		1.47(3,220)		.52(3,220)		.20(3,220)			
Both parents	.40(1.69)		-.21(1.49)		.40(1.33)				
Parent and stepparent	.44(1.60)		-.40(1.35)		.51(1.48)				
One parent	-.01(1.56)		-.16(1.38)		.56(1.28)				
Someone other than a parent	1.21(1.04)		.37(1.29)		.33(1.87)				
Father's Education		2.66(3,182)		1.41(3,182)		2.70(3,182)			
Elementary	.97(1.19)		.42(1.22)		.02(1.05)				
High School	.38(1.52)		-.10(1.22)		.47(1.37)				
College	.01(1.69)		-.44(1.46)		.70(1.30)				
University	.74(1.45)		-.12(1.41)		.06(1.31)				
Father's Employment		1.23(1,210)		1.25(1,210)		1.53(1,210)			
Employed	.34(1.69)		-.23(1.46)		.46(1.36)				
Not Employed	.74(1.14)		.13(1.29)		.09(1.24)				
Mother's Education		.64(3,204)		.25(3,204)		.04(3,204)			
Elementary	-.75(3.18)		-.80(1.41)		.20(3.96)				
High School	.23(1.60)		-.12(1.28)		.48(1.32)				
College	.53(1.77)		-.25(1.43)		.48(1.33)				
University	.30(1.51)		-.28(1.50)		.44(1.32)				

Mother's Employment								
Employed	.37(1.59)	.87(1,214)	-.20(1.43)	.11(1,214)	.48(1.33)	.48(1,214)		
Not Employed	.05(2.00)		-.30(1.49)		.29(1.54)			
School		1.37(1,222)		.75(1,222)		1.38(1,222)		
School A	.45(1.52)		-.13(1.43)		.35(1.37)			
School B	.20(1.75)		-.29(1.44)		.55(1.32)			
Order of Measures		.45(2, 221)		.66(2,221)		1.98(2,221)		
Order 1 (36%)	.47(1.65)		-.06(1.52)		.29(1.49)			
Order 2 (33%)	.29(1.75)		-.27(1.45)		.38(1.31)			
Order 3 (31%)	.21(1.51)		-.32(1.32)		.72(1.19)			

Note. Analyses are all non-significant at $p \leq .002$ (adjusted Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons).

Table 9*Potential Covariates and Adolescents' Approaches to Help Seeking from their Close Friend*

Potential Covariates	Help-Seeking Approaches — Close Friend					
	Autonomous		Dependent		Avoidance	
	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>F(df)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>F(df)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>F(df)</i>
Family Status		.07(3, 291)		.08(3, 291)		.55(3, 291)
Both parents	1.31(1.34)		.27(1.30)		-.29(1.28)	
Parent and stepparent	1.31(1.25)		.34(1.32)		-.02(1.22)	
One parent	1.23(1.20)		.34(1.32)		-.09(1.09)	
Someone other than a parent	1.26(1.09)		.24(1.31)		-.42(1.16)	
Father's Education		.61(3,234)		1.40(4,234)		1.04(3,234)
Elementary	.80(1.99)		.64(1.28)		-.58(1.08)	
High School	1.23(1.09)		.12(1.23)		-.09(.91)	
College	1.35(1.32)		.41(1.34)		-.29(1.29)	
University	1.28(1.27)		.42(1.30)		-.45(1.28)	
Father's Employment		.02(1,279)		.62(1,279)		.01(1,279)
Employed	1.28(1.29)		.29(1.29)		-.28(1.22)	
Not Employed	1.32(1.25)		.47(1.40)		-.26(1.22)	
Mother's Education		3.01(3, 255)		2.19(3, 255)		4.09(3, 255)
Elementary	1.83(.96)		1.38(.69)		-1.37(1.35)	
High School	1.09(1.19)		-.03(1.31)		.15(.95)	
College	1.72(1.20)		.38(1.38)		-.48(1.26)	
University	1.17(1.31)		.34(1.22)		-.33(1.20)	

Mother's Employment							
Employed	1.36(1.22)	.77(1,280)	.34(1.26)	2.55(1,280)	-.28(1.23)	.77(1,280)	
Not Employed	1.18(1.39)		.01(1.47)		-.11(1.23)		
School							
School A	1.23(1.16)	.67(1,293)	.34(1.26)	.44(1,293)	-.26(1.17)	.06(1,293)	
School B	1.35(1.40)		.24(1.34)		-.23(1.29)		
Order of Measures							
Order 1 (36%)	1.40(1.24)	.71(2,292)	.47(1.31)	1.50(2,292)	-.37(1.31)	2.47(2,292)	
Order 2 (33%)	1.20(1.38)		.18(1.33)		-.33(1.23)		
Order 3 (31%)	1.24(1.21)		.21(1.30)		-.01(1.10)		

Note. Analyses are non-significant at $p \leq .002$ (adjusted Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons).

or avoidance of help seeking in relation to their mother or their close friend. Similarly, the school attended and the order in which the measures were presented across the surveys were not related to the dependent variables. As a result, no variables were used as covariates in the multivariate analyses.

Research Question 1: Adolescents' Use of Autonomous, Dependent, and Avoidance of Help Seeking with their Mother and their Close Friend

To address Research Question 1, two mixed design analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted to examine whether adolescents' use of each help-seeking approach with their mother or with their close friend differed as a function of their gender or age. In each analysis, the help-seeking approaches (autonomous, dependent, and avoidance of help seeking) were a repeated measure variable. Two variables were examined as independent group factors: gender (girls, boys), and age which was divided into younger (14-15-year-olds) and older (16-18-year-olds) groups. Given the small number of youths who self-identified their gender as other than male or female ($n = 6$), these participants were excluded from this analysis, reducing the sample size for adolescents seeking help from their mother to 221 youths, and for adolescents seeking help from their close friend to 289 youths.

Mother

In this analysis, the two independent factors created four groups: younger girls ($n = 72$), older girls ($n = 64$), younger boys ($n = 46$), and older boys ($n = 39$). The Box's M value was not significant ($p = .30$), suggesting that the covariance matrices were equal. While the variables were normally distributed, the Levene's test revealed that the assumption of homoscedasticity was violated. The variance was unequal for

autonomous help seeking, $F(3, 217) = 3.01, p = .03$, for dependent help seeking, $F(3, 217) = 4.37, p = .01$, and for avoidance of help seeking, $F(3, 217) = 3.99, p = .01$.

Accordingly, logarithmic transformations were applied to these three variables. With the transformations, Box's M remained nonsignificant ($p = .13$) and the measures of equal error variance did not improve (autonomous help seeking, $F(3, 217) = 3.27, p = .02$, dependent help seeking, $F(3, 217) = 3.68, p = .01$, and avoidant help seeking, $F(3, 217) = 3.93, p = .01$). Analyses were conducted with and without the transformed variables and showed an identical pattern of results. The assumption of sphericity was violated for the help-seeking approaches' main effect with transformed and untransformed data, so a Greenhouse-Geiser correction was applied. The results using untransformed data are reported and should be interpreted with caution.

Results of the analysis of variance revealed a significant main effect of help-seeking approach, $F(1.23, 267.48) = 11.49, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .05$. Examination of the means and pairwise comparisons with a Sidak correction revealed that adolescents reported significantly more autonomous help seeking ($M = .35, SD = 1.63$) than dependent help seeking ($M = -.20, SD = 1.44$) ($p < .001$) from their mother. Adolescents did not report significantly more autonomous help seeking than avoidance of help seeking ($M = .44, SD = 1.35$) ($p = .80$) from their mother. However, they reported significantly more avoidance of help seeking than dependent help seeking ($p < .001$). Thus, adolescents reported using autonomous help seeking and avoidance of help seeking with their mother to a similar degree, followed by dependent help seeking to a lesser degree, partially supporting Hypothesis 1.

Gender differences. The main effect of gender was not significant, $F(1, 217) =$

.10, $p = .75$. Moreover, the help-seeking approach by gender interaction was not significant, $F(1.23, 267.48) = 1.72$, $p = .19$. Thus, Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Age differences. The main effect of age was not significant, $F(1, 217) = .08$, $p = .74$. Further, the help-seeking approach by age interaction was not significant, $F(1.23, 267.48) = .07$, $p = .84$. Thus, Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

Other interactions. Neither the gender by age interaction ($F(1, 217) = .14$, $p = .71$) nor the gender by age by help-seeking approach interaction ($F(1.23, 267.48) = .11$, $p = .79$) was significant.

Close Friend

In this analysis, the two independent factors created four groups: younger girls ($n = 91$), older girls ($n = 79$), younger boys ($n = 61$), and older boys ($n = 58$). The Box's M value was not significant ($p = .07$), suggesting the covariance matrices were equal. Levene's test revealed that the assumption of homoscedasticity was met for autonomous help seeking, $F(3, 285) = 2.18$, $p = .09$, dependent help seeking, $F(3, 285) = .69$, $p = .56$, and avoidance of help seeking, $F(3, 285) = 1.99$, $p = .12$. However, a Greenhouse-Geiser correction was applied as the assumption of sphericity was violated for the main effect of help-seeking approaches.

The main effect of help-seeking approach, $F(1.45, 413.62) = 90.49$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .24$, was significant. Examination of the means and pairwise comparisons with a Sidak correction revealed that adolescents reported significantly more autonomous help seeking ($M = 1.30$, $SD = 1.26$) than dependent help seeking ($M = .30$, $SD = 1.30$) ($p < .001$) from their close friend. They also reported significantly more autonomous help seeking than avoidance of help seeking ($M = -.25$, $SD = 1.23$) ($p < .001$) from their close

friend. In addition, they reported significantly more dependent help seeking than avoidance of help seeking ($p = .001$). Thus, adolescents reported using more autonomous help seeking with their close friend, followed by dependent help seeking, then avoidance of help seeking, partially supporting Hypothesis 2.

Gender differences. The main effect of gender was significant, $F(1, 285) = 14.85, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .05$, but the significant help-seeking approach by gender interaction qualified this effect, $F(1.45, 413.62) = 14.09, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .05$. Simple main effects revealed that the effect of gender was significant for each of the three approaches: autonomous help seeking, $F(1, 285) = 28.52, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .09$, dependent help seeking, $F(1, 285) = 9.08, p = .003, \eta_p^2 = .03$, and avoidance of help seeking, $F(1, 285) = 6.32, p = .002, \eta_p^2 = .01$. Examination of the means and pairwise comparisons with a Sidak correction revealed that girls ($M = 1.62, SD = 1.12$) endorsed significantly more autonomous help seeking from their close friend than boys ($M = .86, SD = 1.31$) ($p < .001$). Girls also reported more dependent help seeking ($M = .49, SD = 1.29$) than boys ($M = .03, SD = 1.27$) ($p = .003$), and less avoidance of help seeking ($M = -.40, SD = 1.30$) than boys ($M = -.03, SD = 1.13$) ($p = .01$). Thus, Hypothesis 4 was partially supported.

Age differences. The main effect of age was not significant, $F(1, 285) = .08, p = .78$. Further, the help-seeking approach by age interaction was not significant, $F(1.45, 413.62) = 1.05, p = .33$. As such, Hypothesis 6 was not supported.

Other interactions. Neither the gender by age interaction ($F(1, 285) = .34, p = .56$) nor the gender by age by help-seeking approach interaction ($F(1.45, 413.62) = .59, p = .50$) was significant.

Research Question 2: Relationships between Adolescents' Use of the Three Help-Seeking Approaches and the Frequency of Help Seeking from their Mother and their Close Friend

Two sets of three regressions were conducted to examine the contribution of adolescents' frequency of help seeking from their mother or from their close friend to their use of each of the three approaches to help seeking with these helpers. Within the first set of regressions, one analysis examined adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother, the second assessed dependent help seeking, and the third assessed avoidance of help seeking. The second set of regressions included one analysis for each approach to help seeking from their close friend. For each analysis, the linear effect of adolescents' frequency of help seeking and the quadratic effect of the frequency of their help seeking were entered simultaneously.

Mother

In the first regression analysis, the model accounted for 50% of the variance in adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother, $F(2, 221) = 111.7, p < .001$ (see Table 10). Both the linear effect and the quadratic effect of the frequency of help seeking were significant. The positive value of the linear effect suggests that a higher frequency of adolescents' help seeking from their mother was related to more autonomous help seeking from their mother. However, the negative value of the quadratic effect suggests that past a certain point (e.g., a moderate frequency), a higher frequency of adolescents seeking help from their mother was related to a decrease in autonomous help seeking. Thus, Hypothesis 7 was partially supported.

In the second regression analysis, the model explained 39% of the variance in

Table 10*Frequency of Adolescents Seeking Help from their Mother and their Close Friend**Predicting their Approaches to Help Seeking from these Helpers*

Predictors	Help-Seeking Approaches — Mother (<i>N</i> = 224)					
	Autonomous		Dependent		Avoidance	
	β	<i>sr</i>	β	<i>sr</i>	β	<i>sr</i>
Frequency of Help Seeking – Mother (Linear)	.76***	.69	.66***	.60	-.59***	-.54
Frequency of Help Seeking – Mother (Quadratic)	-.16**	-.15	-.07	-.07	.08	.07
Final Adjusted R ²	.50		.39		.31	
Predictors	Help-Seeking Approaches — Close Friend (<i>N</i> = 295)					
	Autonomous		Dependent		Avoidance of	
	β	<i>sr</i>	β	<i>sr</i>	β	<i>sr</i>
Frequency of Help Seeking – Close Friend (Linear)	.55***	.55	.45***	.45	-.44***	-.44
Frequency of Help Seeking – Close Friend (Quadratic)	.00	.00	.02	.02	-.04	-.04
Final Adjusted R ²	.30		.19		.19	

Note. **p* < .05. ***p* < .01. ****p* < .001

adolescents' dependent help seeking from their mother, $F(2, 221) = 73.00, p < .001$ (see Table 10).

The linear effect for frequency of help seeking from their mother was significant, but the quadratic effect was not significant. Thus, adolescents who reported more frequent help seeking from their mother also reported more dependent help seeking from their mother, supporting Hypothesis 8.

The results of the third regression analysis showed that the model explained 31% of the variance in adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother, $F(2, 221) = 50.89, p < .001$ (see Table 10). The linear effect for frequency of help seeking was significant, but the quadratic effect was not significant. Thus, adolescents who reported seeking help from their mother less often also reported more avoidance of help seeking from their mother, supporting Hypothesis 9.

Close Friend

The first regression analysis in this set showed that the model accounted for 30% of the variance in adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their close friend, $F(2, 292) = 64.18, p < .001$. The linear effect of frequency of help seeking from their close friend significantly predicted autonomous help seeking. However, the quadratic effect was not significant (see Table 10). Thus, adolescents who reported seeking help from their close friend more often also reported seeking more autonomous help from their close friend, which does not support Hypothesis 7.

In the second regression analysis, the model explained 19% of the variance in adolescents' dependent help seeking from their close friend, $F(2, 292) = 36.48, p < .001$. The linear effect of frequency of help seeking from their close friend was significant,

but the quadratic effect was not significant (see Table 10). Thus, adolescents who reported seeking help from their close friend more often also reported more dependent help seeking from their close friend, supporting Hypothesis 8.

Results from the third regression analysis showed that the model explained 19% of the variance in adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their close friend, $F(2, 292) = 35.05, p < .001$. The linear effect was significant, but the quadratic effect was not significant (see Table 10). Thus, adolescents who reported help seeking from their close friend less often also reported more avoidance of help seeking from their close friend, supporting Hypothesis 9.

Research Question 3: Relationships between Adolescents' Use of the Three Help-Seeking Approaches and Established Correlates of Help-Seeking Behaviour

To address Research Question 3, two sets of three hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted to examine the relationships between established correlates of help-seeking behaviour and adolescents' use of each help-seeking approach with their mother and with a close friend. Markers of social-cognitive skills, affective-motivational resources, and an environmental factor were evaluated. A statistical modeling approach to data analysis, such as path analysis, was not used to address this question for a few reasons. First, this research question was exploratory and was not developed to test a model. Instead, the focus was on learning more about adolescents' use of each of the three help-seeking approaches. Second, no indirect paths or mediational relationships between the variables were conceived as part of this research question. As a result, path analysis was not deemed an appropriate approach for this initial exploration of correlates of the three help-seeking approaches.

For each set of three regressions, one analysis examined adolescents' autonomous help seeking, one analysis assessed dependent help seeking, and one analysis assessed avoidance of help seeking. Analyses specific to help seeking from their mother are reviewed first and are followed by analyses specific to help seeking from a close friend. In these regression analyses, adolescent gender, as well as markers of adolescents' social-cognitive skills (i.e., perceived competence at self-disclosure), affective-motivational resources (i.e., conformity to the masculine gender norms emotional control and self-reliance and conformity to the feminine gender norm nice in relationships), and an environmental factor (i.e., positive relationship quality with the helper) were entered on Step 1. Whether gender moderated the relationship between adolescents' perceived competence at self-disclosure and autonomous help seeking from their mother and autonomous help seeking from their close friend was also assessed by entering a gender by perceived competence at self-disclosure interaction term on Step 2.

For each analysis, beta weights and squared structure coefficients were reviewed as recommended by Nathans and colleagues (2012). A structure coefficient is a bivariate correlation that indicates the size of the relationship between an independent variable and the predicted dependent variable score resulting from the regression model (Nathans et al., 2012). Structure coefficients aid interpretation of results because they are not impacted by the associations between independent variables in the way that beta weights are impacted. A squared structure coefficient then indicates how much variance in the predicted scores for the dependent variable can be attributed to each independent variable. Notably, when a variable has a smaller beta weight but a larger squared structure coefficient, it suggests that shared variance is present in the regression effect

(Nathans et al., 2012). Thus, considering both beta weights and structure coefficients provides a more comprehensive understanding of regression findings.

However, examining beta weights and structure coefficients does not identify which variables share variance or how much variance is shared, thus requiring further evaluation, such as by means of commonality analysis (Nathans et al., 2012). A commonality analysis is a statistical method used in combination with multiple regression to quantify the unique variance explained by each predictor as well as the variance common to all combinations of the predictors (Nathans et al., 2012; Nimon et al., 2008). In each commonality analysis, unique effects (i.e., how much variance a predictor contributes to a regression equation that is not shared with other independent variables) and common effects (i.e., contributions to the regression effect that each variable shares with every other variable combination) are calculated. The common effects for each predictor are then compared to its unique effect to identify whether it contributes more to the regression effect on its own or when it is combined with other variables (Nathans et al., 2012). Commonality analysis is beneficial when moderate to strong correlations between predictors complicate the interpretation of results and when a review of the beta weights and structure coefficients for predictors suggests that shared variance between independent variables is contributing to the regression equation (Nathans et al., 2012; Nimon et al., 2008). Commonality analysis can also be used to quantify the amount of a regression effect that is attributable to suppression by summing the commonalities values that are negative. Suppression occurs when an independent variable contributes minimal or no variance to the dependent variable, yet it has a non-zero beta weight because of its relationship with other independent variables (Nathans et

al., 2012; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). A suppressor variable enhances the effect of other independent variables because it accounts for variance that is irrelevant to the prediction of the dependent variable, which allows the predictive power of other variables to be enhanced (Nathans et al., 2012; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). A suppressor variable can be identified using commonality analysis when a variable is involved in negative common effect(s) and has a small structure coefficient and a small zero-order correlation with the dependent variable (Nathans et al., 2012).

Following each regression analysis, a commonality analysis was used to explore the variance explained in adolescents' use of each help-seeking approach. In each commonality analysis, adolescents' use of each help-seeking approach with their mother or with their close friend served as the criterion variable and adolescent gender, self-disclosure, emotional control, self-reliance, nice in relationships, and positive relationship quality with each helper served as the predictors. Each analysis produced 6 unique effects and 57 common effects. Suppression was calculated by summing the negative common effects. Then negative common effects, along with beta weights and structure coefficients, were reviewed to identify suppressor variables.

Autonomous Help Seeking from Mother

Results of the first regression analysis showed that the entry of adolescent gender and the established correlates of help-seeking behaviour on Step 1 was significant, $F(6, 217) = 34.46, p < .001$, and accounted for 49% of the variance in adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother (see Table 11). Only adolescents' reports of positive relationship quality with their mother significantly predicted autonomous help seeking from their mother. That is, adolescents who reported more positive relationship

Table 11

Correlates of Help Seeking Predicting Adolescents' Approaches to Help Seeking from their Mother

Predictors	R^2	R^2_{adj}	β	p	r	r_s	r_s^2	Unique	Common	Total
Autonomous Help Seeking — Mother ($N = 224$)										
Model (Step 1)	.49	.47								
Gender			-.07	.19	-.11	-.16	.02	.00	.01	.01
Self-Disclosure			.07	.27	.32	.45	.20	.00	.10	.10
Emotional Control			-.10	.20	-.38	-.55	.30	.00	.14	.15
Self-Reliance			-.13	.07	-.40	-.57	.32	.01	.15	.16
Nice in Relationships			.00	.99	.24	.35	.12	.00	.06	.06
Positive Relationship Quality — Mother			.57	.00	.65	.93	.87	.28	.14	.42
Dependent Help Seeking — Mother ($N = 224$)										
Model	.39	.37								
Gender			-.03	.62	-.08	-.12	.02	.00	.01	.01
Self-Disclosure			-.05	.49	.23	.36	.13	.00	.05	.05
Emotional Control			-.24	.01	-.35	-.56	.32	.02	.10	.12
Self-Reliance			-.02	.75	-.32	-.52	.27	.00	.10	.10
Nice in Relationships			-.03	.63	.17	.28	.08	.00	.03	.03
Positive Relationship Quality — Mother			.53	.00	.58	.93	.87	.25	.09	.34
Avoidance of Help Seeking — Mother ($N = 224$)										
Model	.41	.39								
Gender			.10	.09	.12	.19	.04	.01	.01	.01
Self-Disclosure			.03	.69	-.28	-.43	.19	.00	.08	.08
Emotional Control			.15	.08	.47	.73	.54	.01	.21	.22
Self-Reliance			.37	.00	.54	.85	.73	.06	.23	.29
Nice in Relationships			.06	.34	.19	-.30	.09	.00	.03	.04
Positive Relationship Quality — Mother			-.31	.00	-.45	-.70	.49	.09	.11	.20

Note. r_s^2 (% of R^2) = Total/ R^2 ; Unique = x 's unique effect, Common = $\sum x$'s common effects; Total = Unique + Common.

qualities endorsed more autonomous help seeking from their mother. The squared structure coefficient also indicated that positive relationship quality explained the largest amount of variance (87%) in the predicted scores of adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother. The smaller beta weights for adolescent gender, self-disclosure, emotional control, self-reliance, and nice in relationships were all nonsignificant. Thus, Hypothesis 10 was partially supported. However, the squared structure coefficients for self-disclosure (20%), emotional control (30%), and self-reliance (32%) indicated that each of these variables accounted for variance in the predicted scores for autonomous help seeking from their mother.

A commonality analysis was conducted to examine how the predictors entered on Step 1 of the model contributed unique and shared variance to the regression equation (see Table 11). A review of the total contributions of each variable indicated that positive relationship quality accounted for the most explained variance, followed by lesser contributions from self-reliance, emotional control, self-disclosure, and nice in relationships, in that order, and little contribution from adolescent gender. Further, the unique effect of positive relationship quality with their mother was stronger than its common effect. However, the common effects for adolescent gender, self-disclosure, emotional control, self-reliance, and nice in relationships were all larger than their unique effects. A review of the 22 common effects with negative coefficients (not shown) revealed that 2.56% of the regression effect was due to suppression. Adolescent gender was involved in 11 negative effects, positive relationship quality was involved in 10 effects, and all the other variables were involved in 9 or less negative effects. Given adolescent gender's small structure coefficient and small zero-order correlation with

adolescents' use of autonomous help seeking from their mother, adolescent gender appears to be acting as a suppressor of other variables. This means that adolescent gender seems to enhance the effect of other independent variables in the regression analysis because it accounted for variance that is irrelevant to the prediction of adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother.

Returning to the regression analysis, the interaction between adolescent gender and self-disclosure, entered on Step 2 of the regression model, did not account for significant additional variance, R^2 change = .00, $F(1, 216) = .55$, $p = .46$. Accordingly, Hypothesis 12 was not supported.

Dependent Help Seeking from Mother

Results showed that the regression model with adolescent gender and the established correlates of help-seeking behaviour was significant, $F(6, 217) = 22.81$, $p < .001$, and accounted for 39% of the variance in adolescents' dependent help seeking from their mother (see Table 11). Adolescents who reported more positive relationship quality with their mother and less conformity to the masculine gender norm emotional control endorsed more dependent help seeking from their mother. The squared structure coefficients also showed that positive relationship quality explained 87% of the variance in the predicted scores for dependent help seeking from their mother while emotional control explained 32%. The smaller beta weights for adolescent gender, self-disclosure, self-reliance, and nice in relationships were all nonsignificant. Thus, these findings partially support Hypothesis 10. However, the squared structure coefficients for self-disclosure (13%), self-reliance (27%), and nice in relationships (12%) indicated that each of these predictors contributed to variance in the predicted scores for dependent

help seeking from their mother.

A commonality analysis was conducted to examine how the variables contributed unique and shared variance to the regression equation (see Table 11). A review of the total contributions of each variable indicated that positive relationship quality accounted for the most explained variance, followed by emotional control, self-reliance, and self-disclosure, in that order, and little contribution from adolescent gender and nice in relationships. The unique effect of adolescents' positive relationship quality was stronger than its common effect, whereas the common effects for adolescent gender, self-disclosure, emotional control, self-reliance, and nice in relationships were stronger than their unique effects. A review of the 21 common effects with negative coefficients (not shown) revealed that 2.59% of the regression effect was due to suppression.

Adolescent gender, self-disclosure, and self-reliance were each involved in 12 negative effects, nice in relationships was involved in 11 negative effects, and emotional control and positive relationship quality were each involved in 10 or less negative effects. Given adolescent gender's small structure coefficient and small zero-order correlation with adolescents' use of dependent help seeking from their mother, this variable appears to be acting as a suppressor of other variables. This means that adolescent gender seems to enhance the effect of other independent variables in the regression analysis because it accounted for variance that is irrelevant to the prediction of adolescents' dependent help seeking from their mother.

Avoidance of Help Seeking from Mother

Results showed that the regression model with adolescent gender and the established correlates of help-seeking behaviour was significant, $F(6, 217) = 24.65, p <$

.001, and accounted for 41% of the variance in adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother (see Table 11). Adolescents who reported more self-reliance and less positive relationship quality with their mother also reported more avoidance of help seeking from their mother. The squared structure coefficients indicated that self-reliance explained 73% of the variance in the predicted scores for adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother, while positive relationship quality explained 49% of the variance in the predicted scores. The smaller beta weights for adolescent gender, self-disclosure, emotional control, and nice in relationships were all nonsignificant. Thus, Hypothesis 11 was partially supported. However, the squared structure coefficients for self-disclosure (19%) and emotional control (54%) indicated that these predictors accounted for variance in the predicted scores for youths' avoidance of help seeking from their mother.

A commonality analysis was conducted to examine how the variables contributed unique and shared variance to the regression equation (see Table 11). A review of the total contributions of each variable indicated that self-reliance made the largest total contribution to the regression effect, followed by emotional control and then positive relationship quality, while self-disclosure, nice in relationships, and adolescent gender made much smaller total contributions. With the exception of gender, whose unique and common contributions were equal, the common effect of every other predictor was stronger than its unique effect. A review of the 24 common effects with negative coefficients (not shown) revealed that 5.57% of the regression effect was due to suppression. Nice in relationships was involved in 14 negative effects, while adolescent gender, self-disclosure, and positive relationship quality were each involved in 13

negative effects, and emotional control in 9 negative effects. However, only adolescent gender had a smaller structure coefficient and a smaller zero-order correlation with adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother, thus this variable appears to be acting as a suppressor of other variables. This means that adolescent gender seems to enhance the effect of other independent variables in the regression analysis because it accounted for variance that is irrelevant to the prediction of adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother.

Autonomous Help Seeking from A Close Friend

Results of the regression analysis showed that the entry of adolescent gender and the established correlates of help-seeking behaviour on Step 1 was significant, $F(6, 288) = 21.10, p < .001$, and accounted for 31% of the variance (see Table 12). Adolescent gender, more self-disclosure, more conformity to the feminine gender norm nice in relationships, and more positive relationship quality with their close friend predicted more autonomous help seeking by adolescents from their close friend. The squared structure coefficients also indicated that adolescent gender (31%), self-disclosure (36%), nice in relationships (43%), and positive relationship quality (55%) explained variance in the predicted values of autonomous help seeking from a close friend. The smaller beta weights for emotional control and self-reliance were not significant. Taken together, Hypothesis 10 was partially supported. However, the squared structure coefficients suggested that emotional control and self-reliance also accounted for variance in the predicted scores of autonomous help seeking from their close friend (31% and 14%, respectively).

A commonality analysis was conducted to examine how the predictors entered

Table 12

Correlates of Help Seeking Predicting Adolescents' Approaches to Help Seeking from their Close Friend

Predictors	R^2	R^2_{adj}	β	p	r	r_s	r_s^2	Unique	Common	Total
Autonomous Help Seeking – Close Friend ($N = 295$)										
Model (Step 1)	.31	.29								
Gender			-.21	.00	-.31	-.55	.31	.04	.06	.09
Self-Disclosure			.19	.00	.33	.60	.36	.02	.09	.11
Emotional Control			-.08	.31	-.31	-.56	.31	.00	.09	.09
Self-Reliance			-.01	.85	-.21	-.38	.14	.00	.04	.04
Nice in Relationships			.16	.00	.36	.66	.43	.02	.11	.13
Positive Relationship Quality — Close Friend			.23	.00	.41	.74	.55	.04	.13	.17
Dependent Help Seeking – Close Friend ($N = 295$)										
Model	.15	.13								
Gender			-.09	.13	-.18	-.46	.21	.01	.02	.03
Self-Disclosure			.03	.67	.20	.53	.28	.00	.04	.04
Emotional Control			-.19	.02	-.26	-.69	.48	.02	.05	.07
Self-Reliance			.02	.80	-.16	-.43	.18	.00	.03	.03
Nice in Relationships			.05	.45	.20	.53	.28	.00	.04	.04
Positive Relationship Quality — Close Friend			.22	.00	.31	.80	.64	.04	.05	.09
Avoidance of Help Seeking – Close Friend ($N = 289$)										
Model	.22	.20								
Gender			.10	.10	.15	.32	.10	.01	.01	.02
Self-Disclosure			-.09	.19	-.31	-.65	.42	.00	.09	.09
Emotional Control			.22	.01	.41	.88	.77	.02	.15	.17
Self-Reliance			.15	.03	.35	.75	.56	.01	.11	.12
Nice in Relationships			-.04	.53	-.23	-.49	.23	.00	.05	.05
Positive Relationship Quality — Close Friend			-.11	.06	-.25	-.54	.29	.01	.05	.06

Note. $r_s^2(\% \text{ of } R^2) = \text{Total}/R^2$; Unique = x 's unique effect, Common = $\sum x$'s common effects; Total = Unique + Common.

on Step 1 contributed unique and shared variance to the regression equation (see Table 12). A review of the total contributions of each variable indicated that positive relationship quality accounted for the largest proportion of explained variance, followed by nice in relationships and self-disclosure, with smaller overall contributions from adolescent gender, emotional control, and self-reliance. For all predictors, the common effects were stronger than the unique effects. A review of the 17 common effects with negative coefficients (not shown) revealed that 9.08% of the regression effect was due to suppression. Adolescent gender was involved in 12 negative effects, self-disclosure and self-reliance were each involved in 11 negative effects, and all other variables were involved in 9 or less negative effects. However, only self-reliance showed a small structure coefficient and small zero-order correlation with adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their close friend, thus this variable appears to be acting as a suppressor of other variables. This means that self-reliance seems to enhance the effect of other independent variables in the regression analysis because it accounted for variance that is irrelevant to the prediction of youths' autonomous help seeking from their close friend.

Returning to the regression analysis, the interaction between adolescents' gender and self-disclosure was entered on Step 2, but did not account for additional variance, R^2 change = .00, $F(1, 287) = .10$, $p = .75$. Accordingly, Hypothesis 12 was not supported.

Dependent Help Seeking from A Close Friend

Results showed that the regression model with adolescent gender and the established correlates of help-seeking behaviour was significant, $F(6, 288) = 8.18$, $p < .001$, and accounted for 13% of the variance in adolescents' dependent help seeking from their close friend (see Table 12). Adolescents who reported less emotional control

and more positive relationship quality with their close friend also reported seeking more dependent help from their close friend. The squared structure coefficients also indicated that emotional control (28%) and positive relationship quality with their close friend (64%) explained substantial variance in the predicted values of dependent help seeking. The smaller beta weights for adolescent gender, self-disclosure, self-reliance, and nice in relationships were all nonsignificant. These findings partially support Hypothesis 10. However, the squared structure coefficients indicated that each of these predictors accounted for variance ranging from 18% to 28% in the predicted scores of dependent help seeking.

A commonality analysis was conducted to examine how the variables contributed unique and shared variance to the regression equation (see Table 12). A review of the total contributions of each variable indicated that positive relationship quality accounted for the most explained variance in the regression effect, followed by emotional control, with less of but still a noteworthy contribution from adolescent gender, self-disclosure, self-reliance, and nice in relationships. For all predictors, the common effects were stronger than their unique effects. A review of the 15 common effects with negative coefficients (not shown) revealed that 7.93% of the regression effect was due to suppression. Adolescent gender and self-reliance were each involved in 14 negative effects and self-disclosure was involved in 12 negative effects. The other variables were involved in 11 or less negative effects. However, only adolescent gender and self-reliance showed smaller structure coefficients and smaller zero-order correlations with adolescents' dependent help seeking from their close friend. Thus, these variables appear to be acting as suppressors of other variables. This means that

adolescent gender and self-reliance seem to enhance the effect of other independent variables in the regression analysis because they accounted for variance that is irrelevant to the prediction of adolescents' dependent help seeking from their close friend.

Avoidance of Help Seeking from A Close Friend

Results showed that the regression model with adolescent gender and the established correlates of help-seeking behaviour was significant, $F(6, 282) = 13.35, p < .001$, and accounted for 20% of the variance in adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their close friend (see Table 12). Adolescents who reported more emotional control and more self-reliance also reported more avoidance of help seeking from their close friend. The squared structure coefficients also indicated that emotional control (77%) and self-reliance (56%) explained substantial variance in the predicted score of adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their close friend. The smaller beta weights for adolescent gender, self-disclosure, nice in relationships, and positive relationship quality were all nonsignificant. Thus, Hypothesis 11 was partially supported. However, the squared structure coefficients suggested that self-disclosure (42%), nice in relationships (23%), and positive relationship quality with a close friend (29%) accounted for variance in the predicted scores for adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from a close friend.

A commonality analysis was conducted to examine how the variables contributed unique and shared variance to the regression equation (see Table 12). A review of the total contributions of each variable indicated that emotional control and self-reliance contributed most to the explained variance, followed by self-disclosure, positive relationship quality, and nice in relationships, with little overall contribution

from adolescent gender. Except for adolescent gender, whose unique and common contributions were equal, all the variables contributed more shared than unique variance. A review of the 19 common effects with negative coefficients (not shown) revealed that 8.06% of the regression effect was due to suppression. Adolescent gender was involved in 15 negative effects, self-disclosure and self-reliance were each involved in 13 negative effects, and the other three variables were each involved in less than 8 negative effects. However, only adolescent gender showed a smaller structure coefficient and smaller zero-order correlation with adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their close friend. This variable appears to be acting as a suppressor of other variables. This means that adolescent gender seems to enhance the effect of other independent variables in the regression analysis because it accounted for variance that is irrelevant to the prediction of adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their close friend.

Research Question 4: Relationships between Adolescents' Use of the Three Help-Seeking Approaches and Markers of Autonomy

To address Research Question 4, two sets of three hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted to examine the contributions of adolescents' perceptions of their cognitive autonomy, behavioural autonomy, emotional autonomy, and autonomy support from their mother and from a close friend to each approach to help seeking. The quadratic effect of behavioural autonomy was also examined as a predictor of adolescents' use of autonomous help seeking with their mother and their close friend. Whether the relationships between the autonomy markers and adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother varied by adolescent age was also of interest. Thus, two-way interactions between age and adolescents' reports of cognitive autonomy,

behavioural autonomy, and emotional autonomy were also examined for autonomous help seeking from their mother. Hierarchical multiple regression was used rather than a statistical modelling approach, such as path analysis, because this research question was not testing a model or examining any indirect relationships among the variables. Analyses specific to adolescents' help seeking from their mother are reviewed first followed by analyses specific to their help seeking from a close friend.

In all analyses, adolescents' age and markers of their cognitive autonomy, behavioural autonomy, emotional autonomy, and perceived autonomy support from the helper were entered on Step 1. For the regressions assessing autonomous help seeking from their mother and from their close friend, the quadratic effect of behavioural autonomy was entered on Step 2. For the regression assessing adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother, the two-way interactions between adolescents' age and the three autonomy types were entered on Step 3. The beta weights and structure coefficients associated with each predictor were examined for each analysis. Then a commonality analysis was used to decompose the variance explained in adolescents' use of each help-seeking approach. In each commonality analysis, adolescents' use of each help-seeking approach with their mother and with their close friend served as the criterion variable and adolescents' age, cognitive autonomy, behavioural autonomy, emotional autonomy, and autonomy support with the specific helper served as the predictors. Each analysis for autonomous help seeking produced 6 unique effects and 57 common effects, while the analyses for dependent help seeking and for avoidance of help seeking each produced 5 unique effects and 26 common effects. Suppression was also calculated by summing the negative common effects. Then negative common

effects, along with beta and structure coefficients, were reviewed to identify suppressor variables.

Autonomous Help Seeking from Mother

Results showed that the entry of adolescent age and the four markers of autonomy on Step 1 was significant, $F(5, 213) = 26.35, p < .001$, and accounted for 41% of the variance in adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother (see Table 13). Adolescents who reported more cognitive autonomy, less emotional autonomy, and more autonomy support endorsed more autonomous help seeking from their mother. The squared structure coefficients showed that autonomy support explained 76% of the regression effect, while cognitive autonomy explained 35% and emotional autonomy explained 13% of the variance in the predicted scores for adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother. The smaller beta weights for adolescent age and the linear effect of behavioural autonomy were not significant and their small structure coefficients indicated that these predictors accounted for almost no variance in the predicted scores for adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother. The second step of the regression analysis was significant, $F(6, 212) = 24.85, p < .001$, and accounted for an additional 3% of the variance, R^2 change = .03, $F(1, 212) = 11.07, p = .001$. The quadratic effect of behavioural autonomy uniquely predicted adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother and explained 20% of the variance in the predicted scores. Taken together, these results partially support Hypothesis 13.

A commonality analysis was conducted to examine how the variables contributed unique and shared variance to the regression equation for the variables included in Step 2 of the model (see Table 13). A review of the total contributions of

Table 13

Markers of Autonomy Predicting Adolescents' Approaches to Help Seeking from their Mother

Predictors	R^2	R^2_{adj}	β	p	r	r_s	r_s^2	Unique	Common	Total
Autonomous Help Seeking – Mother ($N = 219$)										
Model (Step 2)	.41	.40								
Age			.01	.82	.01	.01	.00	.00	.00	.00
Cognitive Autonomy			.22	.00	.38	.59	.35	.04	.10	.15
Behavioural Autonomy			-.08	.18	.05	.08	.01	.01	-.00	.00
Emotional Autonomy			-.12	.03	-.23	-.36	.13	.01	.04	.05
Autonomy Support			.45	.00	.56	.87	.76	.16	.15	.31
Behavioural Autonomy (Quadratic Effect)			-.18	.00	-.29	-.44	.20	.03	.05	.08
Dependent Help Seeking – Mother ($N = 224$)										
Model	.31	.30								
Age			-.05	.54	-.05	-.09	.01	.00	.00	.00
Cognitive Autonomy			.18	.01	.31	.55	.30	.03	.07	.10
Behavioural Autonomy (Linear Effect)			-.03	.23	.04	.07	.00	.00	.00	.00
Emotional Autonomy			-.24	.00	-.35	-.62	.39	.05	.07	.12
Autonomy Support			.37	.00	.47	.84	.71	.11	.12	.22
Avoidance of Help Seeking – Mother ($N = 219$)										
Model	.16	.14								
Age			.03	.59	.02	.05	.00	.00	-.00	.00
Cognitive Autonomy			-.18	.01	-.27	-.66	.43	.03	.04	.07
Behavioural Autonomy			.00	.96	-.05	-.13	.02	.00	.00	.00
Emotional Autonomy			.14	.03	.21	.51	.26	.02	.02	.04
Autonomy Support			-.26	.00	-.34	-.83	.69	.05	.06	.11

Note. r_s^2 (% of R^2) = Total/ R^2 ; Unique = x 's unique effect, Common = $\sum x$'s common effects; Total = Unique + Common.

each variable indicated that autonomy support accounted for the largest proportion of the variance explained, followed by cognitive autonomy, and emotional autonomy and the quadratic effect of behavioural autonomy each made smaller contributions to the regression effect. Adolescent age and the linear effect of behavioural autonomy each accounted for zero total variance. The unique effect for autonomy support and for the linear effect of behavioural autonomy was almost identical to its common effect, while cognitive autonomy, emotional autonomy, and the quadratic effect of behavioural autonomy showed stronger common effects than unique effects. A review of the 24 common effects with negative coefficients (not shown) revealed that 3.35% of the regression effect was due to suppression. Adolescent age and the linear effect of behavioural autonomy were involved in 15 and 14 negative effects, respectively, autonomy support was involved in 13 negative effects, cognitive autonomy was involved in 12 negative effects, and emotional autonomy and the quadratic effect of behavioural autonomy were each involved in 11 negative effects. However, only adolescent age and the linear effect of behavioural autonomy showed small structure coefficients and smaller zero-order correlations with adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother. Thus, these variables were likely acting as suppressors of other variables. This means that adolescent age and the linear effect of behavioural autonomy seemed to enhance the effect of other independent variables in the regression analysis because they accounted for variance that is irrelevant to the prediction of adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother.

Returning to the regression analysis, the block of two-way interactions between adolescent age and three of the autonomy markers entered on Step 3 was not significant,

R^2 change = .01, $F(3, 209) = 1.20$, $p = .31$. As such, Hypothesis 16 was not supported.

Dependent Help Seeking from Mother

Results showed that the regression model with adolescent age and four markers of autonomy was significant, $F(5, 218) = 20.00$, $p < .001$, and accounted for 31% of the variance in adolescents' dependent help seeking from their mother (see Table 13).

Adolescents who reported more cognitive autonomy, less emotional autonomy, and more autonomy support from their mother also reported more dependent help seeking from their mother. The squared structure coefficients indicated that autonomy support (71%), emotional autonomy (39%), and cognitive autonomy (30%) explained variance in the predicted scores for dependent help seeking from their mother. The small beta weights for adolescent age and behavioural autonomy (linear effect) were not significant and explained almost no variance in the predicted values for adolescents' dependent help seeking from their mother. Thus, Hypothesis 14 was partially supported.

A commonality analysis was conducted to examine how the variables contributed unique and shared variance to the regression equation (see Table 13). A review of the total contributions of each variable indicated that autonomy support accounted for the largest proportion of the variance explained in the regression effect, followed by emotional autonomy and cognitive autonomy. Adolescent age and the linear effect of behavioural autonomy each contributed zero total variance. The unique and common effects for autonomy support were very similar whereas the common effects for cognitive autonomy and emotional autonomy were larger than their unique effects. A review of the 10 common effects with negative coefficients (not shown) revealed that 3.33% of the regression effect was due to suppression. Adolescent age, cognitive

autonomy, and autonomy support were involved in seven negative effects, while the linear effect of behavioural autonomy and emotional autonomy were each involved in six negative effects. However, only adolescent age and the linear effect of behavioural autonomy showed small structure coefficients and small zero-order correlations with adolescents' dependent help seeking from their mother. Thus, these variables appear to be suppressing other variables. This means that adolescent age and the linear effect of behavioural autonomy seemed to enhance the effect of other independent variables in the regression analysis because they accounted for variance that is irrelevant to the prediction of adolescents' dependent help seeking from their mother.

Avoidance of Help Seeking from Mother

Results revealed that the regression model with adolescent age and the markers of autonomy was significant, $F(5, 213) = 8.34, p < .001$, and accounted for 16% of the variance in avoidance of help seeking from their mother (see Table 13). Adolescents who reported less cognitive autonomy, more emotional autonomy, and less autonomy support reported more avoidance of help seeking from their mother. The squared structure coefficients also indicated that autonomy support explained 69% of the variance in the predicted scores for adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother, followed by cognitive autonomy (43%) and emotional autonomy (26%). The smaller beta weights for adolescent age and the linear effect of behavioural autonomy were not significant. Hypothesis 15 was partially supported. The small structure coefficients for adolescent age and behavioural autonomy indicated that these two variables accounted for almost no variance in the predicted scores for adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother.

A commonality analysis was conducted to examine how the variables contributed unique and shared variance to the regression equation (see Table 13). A review of the total contributions of each variable indicated that autonomy support accounted for the most variance in the regression effect, followed by cognitive autonomy and emotional autonomy, while adolescent age and the linear effect of behavioural autonomy each contributed zero total variance. The common effects for autonomy support and cognitive autonomy were slightly larger than their unique effects, while the unique and common effects for emotional autonomy were equal. A review of the nine common effects with negative coefficients (not shown) revealed that 2.76% of the regression effect was due to suppression. Adolescent age and cognitive autonomy were each involved in seven negative effects, autonomy support in six negative effects, and behavioural autonomy and emotional autonomy were each involved in five negative effects. However, only adolescent age and behavioural autonomy showed small structure coefficients and smaller zero-order correlations with adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother. Thus, it appears that these variables were acting as suppressors of other variables. This means that adolescent age and the linear effect of behavioural autonomy seemed to enhance the effect of other independent variables in the regression analysis because they accounted for variance that is irrelevant to the prediction of adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother.

Autonomous Help Seeking from a Close Friend

Results indicated that the entry of adolescent age and the markers of autonomy on Step 1 was significant, $F(5, 283) = 18.72, p < .001$, and accounted for 25% of the variance in adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their close friend (see Table 14).

Adolescents who reported more cognitive autonomy, less behavioural autonomy, and more autonomy support from their close friend also reported seeking more autonomous help from their close friend. The squared structure coefficients indicated that cognitive autonomy (27%), behavioural autonomy (11%), and autonomy support (73%) explained substantial variance in the predicted scores for autonomous help seeking from a close friend. However, the smaller beta weights for adolescent age and emotional autonomy were not significant and their small structure coefficients suggested that these variables accounted for minimal variance in the predicted scores for adolescents' autonomous help seeking from a close friend.

A commonality analysis was conducted to examine how the variables contributed unique and shared variance to the regression equation for the variables included in Step 1 of the model (see Table 14). A review of the total contributions of each variable indicated that autonomy support accounted for the most variance in the regression effect, followed by cognitive autonomy, and that behavioural autonomy made a small contribution. Adolescent age and emotional autonomy each contributed near zero variance. The unique effects of autonomy support and behavioural autonomy were stronger than their common effects, whereas the common effect and unique effect for cognitive autonomy were similar. A review of the 12 common effects with negative coefficients (not shown) revealed that 10.55% of the regression effect was due to suppression. Adolescent age, cognitive autonomy, and emotional autonomy were each involved in seven negative effects, behavioural autonomy was involved in eight negative effects, and autonomy support was involved in six negative effects. However, only adolescent age and emotional autonomy showed smaller structure coefficients and

Table 14

Markers of Autonomy Predicting Adolescents' Approaches to Help Seeking from their Close Friend

Predictors	R^2	R^2_{adj}	β	p	r	r_s	r_s^2	Unique	Common	Total
Model (Step 1)	.25	.24								
Age			.10	.05	.06	.11	.01	.01	-.01	.00
Cognitive Autonomy			.17	.00	.26	.52	.27	.03	.04	.07
Behavioural Autonomy			-.19	.00	-.16	-.32	.11	.03	-.01	.03
Emotional Autonomy			.06	.24	.09	.18	.03	.00	.00	.01
Autonomy Support			.38	.00	.43	.85	.73	.13	.05	.18
Dependent Help Seeking – Close Friend ($N = 289$)										
Model	.11	.09								
Age			-.02	.78	-.06	-.17	.03	.00	.00	.00
Cognitive Autonomy			.11	.05	.18	.55	.30	.01	.02	.03
Behavioural Autonomy			-.16	.01	-.16	-.47	.22	.02	.00	.02
Emotional Autonomy			-.03	.63	-.01	-.04	.00	.00	-.00	.00
Autonomy Support			.24	.00	.26	.79	.62	.05	.02	.07
Avoidance of Help Seeking – Close Friend ($N = 295$)										
Model	.12	.10								
Age			-.08	.16	-.05	-.13	.02	.01	-.00	.00
Cognitive Autonomy			-.02	.74	-.10	-.28	.08	.00	.01	.01
Behavioural Autonomy			.16	.00	.16	.45	.21	.03	-.00	.02
Emotional Autonomy			-.03	.56	-.07	-.20	.04	.00	.00	.00
Autonomy Support			-.29	.00	-.30	-.86	.74	.08	.01	.09

Note. r_s^2 (% of R^2) = Total/ R^2 ; Unique = x 's unique effect, Common = $\sum x$'s common effects; Total = Unique + Common.

smaller zero-order correlations with adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their close friend. Thus, these variables appear to be suppressing other variables. This means that adolescent age and emotional autonomy seemed to enhance the effect of other independent variables in the regression analysis because they accounted for variance that is irrelevant to the prediction of autonomous help seeking from a close friend.

Returning to the regression analysis, adding the quadratic effect of behavioural autonomy on Step 2 did not account for a significant amount of additional variance, R^2 change = .47, $F(1, 282) = .47, p = .49$. Thus, Hypothesis 13 was partially supported.

Dependent Help Seeking from a Close Friend

Results revealed that the regression model with adolescent age and the four markers of autonomy was significant, $F(5, 283) = 6.85, p < .001$, and accounted for 11% of the variance in adolescents' dependent help seeking from their close friend (see Table 14). Adolescents who reported more cognitive autonomy, less behavioural autonomy, and more autonomy support endorsed more dependent help seeking from their close friend. The squared structure coefficients showed that autonomy support (62%) and behavioural autonomy (22%) explained substantial variance in the predicted scores for dependent help seeking. The smaller beta weights for adolescent age, cognitive autonomy, and emotional autonomy were not significant. Thus, Hypothesis 14 was partially supported. However, the squared structure coefficients indicated that cognitive autonomy (30%) also explained substantial variance in the predicted scores for dependent help seeking, and that adolescent age and emotional autonomy explained minimal variance in the predicted scores.

A commonality analysis was conducted to examine how the variables

contributed unique and shared variance to the regression equation (see Table 14). A review of the total contributions of each variable revealed that autonomy support accounted for the most variance in the regression effect, followed by cognitive autonomy and then behavioural autonomy. Adolescent age and emotional autonomy each contributed near zero variance. The unique effects of behavioural autonomy and autonomy support were stronger than their common effects, whereas the common effect for cognitive autonomy was slightly stronger than its unique effect. A review of the 13 common effects with negative coefficients (not shown) revealed that 6.29% of the regression effect was due to suppression. Adolescent age and behavioural autonomy were each involved in seven negative effects, while cognitive autonomy, emotional autonomy, and autonomy support were each involved in eight negative effects. However, only adolescent age and emotional autonomy each showed a small structure coefficient and a small zero-order correlation with adolescents' dependent help seeking from their close friend. Thus, it appears that these variables were acting as suppressors of other variables. This means that adolescent age and emotional autonomy seemed to enhance the effect of other independent variables in the regression analysis because they accounted for variance that is irrelevant to the prediction of adolescents' dependent help seeking from their close friend.

Avoidance of Help Seeking from a Close Friend

Results revealed that the regression model with adolescent age and the four markers of adolescent autonomy was significant, $F(5, 289) = 7.69, p < .001$, and accounted for 12% of the variance in adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their close friend (see Table 14). Adolescents who reported more behavioural autonomy and

less autonomy support from their close friend also reported more avoidance of help seeking from their close friend. The squared structure coefficients indicated that autonomy support explained 74% and behavioural autonomy explained 21% of the variance in the predicted scores for adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from a close friend. The smaller beta weights for adolescent age, cognitive autonomy, and emotional autonomy were not significant. Thus, Hypothesis 15 was partially supported. However, the structure coefficients suggested that each of these variables accounted for some variance in the predicted scores for adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their close friend.

A commonality analysis was conducted to examine how these variables contributed unique and shared variance to the regression equation (see Table 14). A review of total contributions of each variable indicated that autonomy support accounted for the most variance in the regression effect, followed by behavioural autonomy and cognitive autonomy, and that adolescent age and emotional autonomy each contributed zero total variance. The unique effects for behavioural autonomy and autonomy support were stronger than their common effects, whereas cognitive autonomy had a small common effect but no unique effect. A review of the 13 common effects with negative coefficients (not shown) revealed that 7.33% of the regression effect was due to suppression. Adolescent age, cognitive autonomy, behavioural autonomy, and emotional autonomy were each involved in eight negative effects, while autonomy support was involved in seven negative effects. However, only adolescent age, cognitive autonomy, and emotional autonomy showed small structure coefficients and smaller zero-order correlations with adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from a close friend. Thus, it

appears that these variables were acting as suppressors of other variables. This means that adolescent age, cognitive autonomy, and emotional autonomy seemed to enhance the effect of other independent variables in the regression analysis because they accounted for variance that is irrelevant to the prediction of adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their close friend.

CHAPTER FOUR

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine adolescents' engagement in three approaches to seeking help from their mother and from a close friend for a personal problem. Four research goals were pursued, including examining the extent to which adolescents in high school use each of the three help-seeking approaches with their mother and with a close friend, and evaluating the relationships between their use of these approaches and (1) the frequency of help seeking from each helper, (2) established correlates of help seeking, and (3) markers of their autonomy development. In this chapter, a review of the results is presented first. Implications of the findings are then considered, followed by a discussion of some limitations of this study and suggested directions for future research.

Adolescents' Approaches to Seeking Help from their Mother and a Close Friend

The first goal of this study was to evaluate the extent to which adolescents use three approaches to seek help from their mother and from a close friend for a personal problem. Focusing first on help seeking from their mother, it was hypothesized that adolescents would report using more autonomous help seeking, followed by avoidance of help seeking, and then dependent help seeking (Hypothesis 1). In partial support of this prediction, adolescents, on average, endorsed using autonomous help seeking more than dependent help seeking, but their use of autonomous help seeking and avoidance of help seeking did not differ significantly. This result highlights adolescence as a crucial time for young people to establish greater independence, especially from their parents. Accordingly, autonomous help seeking and avoidance of help seeking both reflect a

desire to maintain responsibility for solving one's problems. In the case of autonomous help seeking, at least some adolescents may feel comfortable asking their mother for help because they anticipate that her advice and guidance will enhance their ability to solve the problem on their own. Avoidance of help seeking may also reflect adolescents' recognition that they can solve their problem independently (e.g., with other coping strategies). As various skills and resources required for help seeking develop, adolescents may better recognize the costs and benefits of using each help-seeking approach (Newman, 2008). Thus, they likely understand that expecting their mother to solve their personal problem on their behalf (i.e., dependent help seeking) may be less beneficial than other approaches. Other research has shown that pre- and early adolescents also engage in more autonomous help seeking and more avoidance of help seeking relative to dependent help seeking with teachers (Ryan et al, 2005; Ryan & Shin, 2011). This consistency across familiar adult helpers suggests that, throughout adolescence, youths may prefer to access assistance from an adult helper in a manner that allows them to maintain responsibility for their problem rather than depending on that person to solve their problem.

Turning to help seeking from a close friend, it was hypothesized that adolescents would report using more autonomous help seeking, followed by avoidance of help seeking, and then dependent help seeking (Hypothesis 2). This prediction was partially supported in that adolescents' highest endorsement was for seeking autonomous help, but unexpectedly they also reported significantly more dependent help seeking than avoidance of help seeking. This pattern may be explained in part by the nature of friendships during adolescence. It is possible that ratings of dependent help seeking

from a close friend were higher than expected because close friendships are typically characterized as being of high quality and intimate, two features that facilitate adolescents' engagement in help seeking (Sears & McAfee, 2017; Wilson & Deane, 2001). As a result, these relationships may be higher quality relationships than the peer relationships that have been examined in prior research on academic help seeking. The increased trust in adolescents' close friendships may make asking a close friend for a full solution to a problem less costly than it would be if that request were made of another type of peer. Access to both autonomous help and dependent help may also make it less likely that a youth would avoid asking for help. Although no previous research has reported mean ratings of adolescents' use of each help-seeking approach with peers, past studies have reported a general pattern of use of autonomous help seeking followed by avoidance of help seeking and then dependent help seeking from classroom peers (e.g., Kiefer & Shim, 2016; Shim et al., 2016). Differences between these studies and the current study in the age of the participants, the type of problem (i.e., academic versus personal), and the type of helper (i.e., classroom peer versus close friend) may account for the difference in the relative pattern. Nevertheless, the results show that adolescents use all three help-seeking approaches with their close friend for a personal problem.

Adolescent Gender, Age, and Use of the Help-Seeking Approaches

Whether adolescents' engagement in the three help-seeking approaches differed by their gender and age was also examined. It was hypothesized that girls would report more autonomous help seeking, less dependent help seeking, and less avoidance of help seeking from their mother than boys (Hypothesis 3). This hypothesis was not supported.

Girls and boys did not differ significantly in their reported use of any approach to help seeking from their mother. This result indicates that, regardless of the type of engagement, both girls and boys regard their mother as an important and preferred source for assistance when they have a problem (Rickwood et al., 2005; Sullivan et al., 2002). It also likely reflects that both girls and boys generally regard their mother as someone who is available and they have opportunities to seek help from her when they need it (Larson & Richards, 1994; Sullivan et al., 2002). Additionally, the absence of a gender difference for autonomous help seeking and dependent help seeking from their mother may reflect the notion that adolescents' decision about which approach to use to ask for help occurs *after* they decide to seek help and from who (Karabenick & Newman, 2009). Once they have decided to seek help and, in this case, from their mother, factors other than gender (e.g., desire for independence) appear to guide their use of an autonomous approach or a dependent approach with her. Specific to avoidance of help seeking, it is developmentally appropriate for boys and girls to reduce their reliance on their mother for support. Thus, it is possible that the extent to which boys and girls engage in avoidance of help seeking from their mother may be impacted to a similar extent by this typical developmental task.

For seeking help from a close friend, it was hypothesized that girls would report more autonomous help seeking and less dependent help seeking than boys; no gender difference was expected for avoidance of help seeking (Hypothesis 4). Consistent with the prediction, girls reported more autonomous help seeking than boys. However, contrary to the prediction, girls also reported significantly more dependent help seeking and less avoidance of help seeking than boys. This gendered pattern of engagement in

the help-seeking approaches with a close friend aligns with other aspects of adolescents seeking help from friends. First, it is reasonable that girls would be more likely to engage in both approaches that involve asking for help from a friend with a personal problem than boys given that research on adolescents seeking help for personal problems has shown consistently that girls seek help from their friends more often than boys (Boldero & Fallon, 1995; Pearson & Hyde, 2020; Raviv et al., 2000). Second, girls' friendships, particularly with other girls, often have features that make help seeking more likely (e.g., higher levels of intimacy, more frequent self-disclosures) (Rose & Rudolph, 2006; Sears & Murphy, 2017; Sullivan et al., 2002). The high occurrence of help seeking in adolescent girls' friendships and the value placed on intimacy in these friendships likely increases girls' opportunities to engage in both autonomous and dependent approaches to help seeking from a close friend and reduces their avoidance of help seeking compared to boys.

Whether adolescents' engagement in specific help-seeking approaches differed by age was also examined. Older adolescents (ages 16-18 years) were expected to report more autonomous help seeking and less avoidance of help seeking from their mother than younger adolescents (ages 14-15 years); no age difference was expected for dependent help seeking (Hypothesis 5). Older adolescents were also expected to report more autonomous help seeking, less dependent help seeking, and less avoidance of help seeking from their close friend than younger adolescents (Hypothesis 6). The results showed that adolescents' use of the three help-seeking approaches did not differ by age for either helper. Age differences in adolescents' informal help-seeking behaviour for personal problems has been inconsistent in past research (e.g., Boldero & Fallon, 1995;

Rickwood et al., 2005; Sears, 2004). In contrast, studies of academic problems have shown that, by the end of elementary school, young adolescents are engaging in more autonomous help seeking, more avoidance of help seeking, and less dependent help seeking (Butler, 1998; Ryan et al., 2005). Thus, it appears that by the time they are in high school, the way adolescents typically approach seeking help from two frequently accessed helpers may be largely established.

Adolescents' Approaches to Help Seeking and the Frequency of Help Seeking from their Mother and a Close Friend

The second goal of this study was to assess whether the frequency with which adolescents reported seeking help from their mother and from a close friend was related to their engagement in the three help-seeking approaches. Adolescents who reported seeking help from each of these helpers at a moderate frequency were expected to report more autonomous help seeking from their mother and from a close friend (Hypothesis 7). This hypothesis was partially supported. Adolescents who reported seeking help from their mother at a moderate frequency (i.e., the quadratic effect) also reported more autonomous help seeking from their mother. However, adolescents who reported seeking help from their close friend more often (i.e., the linear effect), rather than at a moderate frequency (i.e., the quadratic effect), endorsed more autonomous help seeking from their close friend. The result for adolescents' help seeking from their mother is consistent with Nadler's (1997) concept that individuals who seek help at a moderate frequency are likely to use an autonomous approach. In the context of a parent-adolescent relationship, help seeking at a moderate frequency (e.g., between "sometimes" or "often") using an autonomous approach may reflect adolescents

requesting assistance with a problem in a way that allows them to pursue a balance between seeking support from their parent and maintaining at least some of their developing independence.

With a close friend, however, engagement in help seeking and help giving may be regarded as key components of the friendship as these activities often contribute to the quality and maintenance of this relationship (Asher et al., 1996; Sullivan et al., 2002; van Rijsewijk et al., 2020). Thus, more engagement (i.e., seeking help “often” or “most of the time”) rather than moderate engagement (i.e., seeking help “sometimes”) in help seeking from a friend may benefit the friendship to the extent that frequent help seeking functions as both a coping strategy and a friendship maintenance behaviour (van Rijsewijk et al., 2020). Seeking autonomous help from a close friend may feel more collaborative, so it may be more likely to be perceived as a positive experience. Alternatively, it is possible that while adolescents may believe they are asking their close friend for help in an autonomous manner, their close friend may not actually provide them with advice or guidance that they can use to independently solve similar problems in the future. Such situations may instead result in adolescents engaging in autonomous help seeking more frequently from their close friend.

It was also predicted that adolescents who reported help seeking from their mother and from a close friend at a higher frequency would report more dependent help seeking from each helper (Hypothesis 8). This hypothesis was supported. These results are consistent with Nadler’s (1997) expectation that individuals who typically depend on others to solve their problems may be more likely to overutilize help seeking because they do not learn or enhance their own coping abilities to handle problems in the future.

Consequently, these individuals likely need to reengage their mother and their close friend for assistance when problems occur.

Lastly, it was predicted that adolescents who reported help seeking from their mother and from a close friend at a lower frequency would report more avoidance of help seeking from each helper (Hypothesis 9). This hypothesis was supported. The relationship between less frequent help seeking and more avoidance of help seeking is expected by the definitions of these constructs. Less frequent help seeking provides fewer opportunities for youths to have positive help-seeking experiences that could challenge any maladaptive beliefs they may have about this behaviour, which may in turn make avoidance of asking for help more likely when they experience personal problems. Taken together, these findings largely support Nader's (1997) idea that there is a relationship between the frequency with which individuals ask for help and the approach they use to do so. Given that no research has directly assessed this relationship, this result is important because it links the concepts of help-seeking frequency and the approaches to help seeking, and further supports evaluating markers of help seeking simultaneously rather than in isolation.

Adolescents' Use of the Three Help-Seeking Approaches and Established

Correlates of Help-Seeking Behaviour

The third goal of this study was to examine whether established correlates of help seeking were related to adolescents' use of each approach to help seeking from their mother and a close friend. The selection of established correlates was guided by Newman's (1991, 2000) framework of adaptive help seeking, which identifies social-cognitive skills, affective-motivational resources, and environmental factors as integral

to this behaviour. In addition to adolescent gender, five correlates (competence at self-disclosure, conformity to the masculine gender norms emotional control and self-reliance, conformity to the feminine gender norm nice in relationships, and positive relationship quality with the helper) representing these three domains were examined as predictors of each approach to help seeking.

Autonomous Help Seeking

It was hypothesized that adolescents who reported more competence at self-disclosure, less conformity to the masculine norms emotional control and self-reliance, more conformity to the feminine norm nice in relationships, and more positive relationship quality with the helper would also report more autonomous help seeking from their mother and from a close friend (Hypothesis 10). The regression and commonality analysis results provided partial support for the hypothesis. The results for mothers revealed a significant unique effect for positive relationship quality, such that adolescents who reported more positive relationship quality with their mother also reported more autonomous help seeking from her. This finding is consistent with previous research on youths seeking help for personal and academic problems which has identified the importance of a positive relationship with a potential helper for adolescents' engagement in this behaviour (Rickwood et al., 2005; Ryan & Shin, 2011; Wilson & Deane, 2001). It also extends this work by indicating that a positive mother-adolescent relationship contributes to adolescents' use of an autonomous approach to help seeking from their mother. Likely multiple features of positive relationship quality (e.g., spending enjoyable time together, affection, dependability) provide adolescents with a context within which they can pursue support in a collaborative manner. A

relationship with more positive features may reflect past interactions that have balanced a mother's provision of support and her advice for her youth on how to solve a problem.

Although the other four proposed correlates were not significant unique predictors of adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother, the commonality analysis revealed that perceived competence at self-disclosure and conformity to the masculine gender norms emotional control and self-reliance each accounted for variance explained by way of shared variance with other predictors. This pattern indicates that, consistent with Newman's framework, social-cognitive skills and affective-motivational resources support adolescents' use of an autonomous approach to asking their mother for help, even though their respective contributions appear less important when they are evaluated along with a positive mother-adolescent relationship. In the context of a more positive mother-adolescent relationship, it may be easier for adolescents to ask for advice about how to solve their problem, which may reduce the relative importance of needing to feel more competent at making a self-disclosure or to demonstrate conformity to specific gender norms. It also highlights that adolescents' use of an autonomous approach to help seeking, even from their mother, depends on a combination of their characteristics and circumstances.

The results for a close friend also partially supported the hypothesis. Having a more positive relationship with a close friend, identifying as female, more perceived competence at self-disclosure, and more conformity to the feminine norm nice in relationships significantly and uniquely predicted more autonomous help seeking from that close friend. A more positive relationship and female gender made larger unique contributions to the variance accounted for in autonomous help seeking from a close

friend than the other variables. These two results are not surprising because specific features of a positive relationship (e.g., companionship, intimacy) are important for adolescents' engagement in help seeking from friends, irrespective of the approach used (Sears & McAfee, 2017; Wilson & Deane, 2001), and help seeking is a central way for girls to enhance and maintain closeness in their friendships (Sears & McAfee et al., 2017; Sullivan et al., 2002). Interestingly, competence at self-disclosure and conformity to the feminine norm nice in relationships made even larger contributions to shared variance than unique variance, so it is important to consider what is common to these variables. Perhaps these characteristics capture a stronger relational orientation. According to Nadler (1998), having a relational orientation encourages autonomous help seeking because relationships are regarded as an essential resource for support. Sears (2020) found that adolescents whose first choice for help with an emotional problem was a friend reported more frequent self-disclosures to and more perceived support from friends. Adolescents who feel confident in their ability to share personal information and who emphasize having supportive relationships may be better equipped with friendships that provide them with autonomously-oriented guidance when it is needed.

Gender as a Moderator of the Relationship Between Competence at Self-Disclosure and Autonomous Help Seeking. It was hypothesized that the relationship between adolescents' reports of competence at self-disclosure and autonomous help seeking from their mother and from a close friend would be moderated by gender, such that the relationships would be stronger for girls than boys (Hypothesis 12). This hypothesis was not supported for adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother or from a close friend. These results may reflect differences between this study

and previous research that suggested moderation could be possible. For example, adolescents' perceived competence at self-disclosure in general (i.e., their confidence in their ability to share personal thoughts with others) was the focus in this study, whereas other studies have assessed how much self-disclosure occurs or self-disclosure taking place in relation to specific targets (i.e., to parents or friends) (Tilton-Weaver et al., 2013; Valkenburg et al., 2011). A more precise evaluation of youths' self-disclosure to the specific helpers may have provided a different result. Another possible explanation is that gender has a stronger relationship with self-disclosure earlier in the help-seeking process which then dissipates at later points in the process. It has been proposed that individuals typically decide on the approach they will use to ask for help only after they decide to seek help (Karabenick & Newman, 2009). The initial decision to seek help is usually informed, in part, by one's gender. Consequently, gender may make only a minor contribution to adolescents' decision to use an autonomous approach to help seeking and to the relationship between girls' and boys' self-disclosure and their use of this approach with informal helpers.

Dependent Help Seeking

It was hypothesized that adolescents who reported more competence at self-disclosure, less conformity to the masculine norms emotional control and self-reliance, more conformity to the feminine norm nice in relationships, and more positive relationship quality with the helper would also report more dependent help seeking from their mother and from a close friend (Hypothesis 10). The regression and commonality analysis results provided partial support for the hypothesis. The results for mothers showed two significant unique predictors: Adolescents who reported a more positive

relationship with their mother and less conformity to the masculine norm emotional control also reported more dependent help seeking from their mother. The stronger relationship between a positive parent-adolescent relationship and adolescents' engagement in dependent help seeking is supported by social psychology research that shows a link between an interdependent social orientation, which emphasizes connectedness and encourages reliance on others, and this help-seeking approach (Komissarouk et al., 2017). By seeking their mother's assistance using a dependent approach, adolescents may be able to draw on their mother's expertise and solve their problem more efficiently (Komissarouk & Nadler, 2014; Nadler, 1997; Sullivan et al., 2002). According to Nadler (1998), individuals who are willing to depend on another to solve their problem may also be highly motivated to terminate an uncomfortable situation. Thus, adolescents who are more comfortable with emotional expression may also be more likely to seek dependent help from their mother because displaying their feelings and sharing their problem results in a faster reduction of more uncomfortable or distressing situations.

The commonality analysis also revealed that the contributions of the other four correlates to adolescents' dependent help seeking from their mother were common rather than unique and relatively small (i.e., 10% or less). The overall contribution of self-reliance was the largest of these four correlates and only slightly less than the contribution of emotional control. It appears that less conformity to these two masculine norms play a role, albeit small, in situations where adolescents are seeking assistance from their mother to expedite solving their problem, allowing them to move forward with using this coping strategy. Adolescents who feel less threatened by, and more

comfortable engaging in, emotionally vulnerable interactions may also be more open to relying fully on a helper for a solution to their problem. That the other correlates were even less important to adolescents' engagement to dependent help seeking from their mother suggests that adolescents' gender, perceived competence at self-disclosure, and commitment to being nice in their relationships may be more relevant for deciding whether to ask their mother for help than for how they go about asking for her assistance.

The results for a close friend also partially supported the hypothesis. Again, positive relationship quality and conformity to the masculine norm emotional control were the significant unique predictors, such that adolescents who reported more positive relationship quality with a close friend and less conformity to the masculine norm emotional control also reported more dependent help seeking from a close friend. The commonality analysis indicated that positive relationship quality accounted for almost two-thirds of the variance that was explained in dependent help seeking from their close friend. Close friendships usually involve adolescents having high familiarity with one another which may position youths to know when they can draw on their friend's experiences with problems to solve their own problems. Given that seeking help from a friend also contributes to the maintenance of that relationship (van Rijsewijk et al., 2020), some youths may use a dependent help-seeking approach with their friend as a strategy to enhance their relationship. As with mothers, lower emotional control is also likely related to dependent help seeking from a close friend because adolescents who are more willing to express their emotions may feel comfortable with a close friend solving a personal problem on their behalf or may be motivated to find an efficient solution for

reducing distress.

As was the case for dependent help seeking from their mother, the contributions made by the other correlates to adolescents' dependent help seeking from a close friend were common rather than unique and small (i.e., less than 5%). However, each of these correlates made a minor contribution to the shared variance explained, suggesting that they support dependent help seeking indirectly through what they share with one another. While these variables are correlates of youths' engagement in help-seeking behaviour, they appear to matter less for adolescents' use of a dependent approach to help seeking from a close friend, at least in the context of a positive relationship and less conformity to the masculine norm emotional control.

Avoidance of Help Seeking

It was hypothesized that adolescents who reported less competence at self-disclosure, more conformity to the masculine norms emotional control and self-reliance, less conformity to the feminine norm nice in relationships, and less positive relationship quality with the helper would report more avoidance of help seeking from their mother and from their close friend (Hypothesis 11). The regression and commonality analysis results provided partial support for the hypothesis. The results for mothers showed two unique predictors: Adolescents who reported more conformity to the self-reliance masculine norm and a less positive relationship with their mother also reported more avoidance of help seeking from their mother. These variables have been identified previously as important barriers (self-reliance) and facilitators (positive relationship) to help seeking by adolescents (Rickwood et al., 2005; Ryan et al., 2011).

The commonality analysis revealed that conformity to self-reliance made the

largest overall contribution to the variance explained in adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother, followed by conformity to emotional control and then positive relationship quality. The common effects for these three variables were stronger than their unique effects. When youths hold more negative beliefs about expressing feelings and asking others for help (e.g., that it is a sign of weakness or failure) and have a less positive relationship with their mother, they may be more likely to avoid help seeking because they view asking for help as threatening to their self-concept or ability to accomplish things on their own (Camara et al., 2015; Wilson & Deane, 2001). This combination of variables illustrates the potential impact of conformity to specific masculine norms on adolescents' engagement in help seeking, even from their mother, and the relative contribution of specific masculine norms and relationship quality to avoidance of help seeking.

The results also showed that adolescent gender, competence at self-disclosure, and conformity to the feminine norm nice in relationships did not uniquely predict adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother and accounted for only a small proportion of the shared variance. While these variables may be less relevant to adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother, the shared variance suggests they are still indirectly relevant to youths' engagement in avoidance of help seeking. Even if youths are skilled at sharing personal information or approach relationships in a friendly manner, these factors may be less relevant to their engagement in avoidance of help seeking if they are not open to help seeking in the first place, as indicated by particularly negative beliefs about help seeking and an absence of a positive relationship with their mother. This combination of variables reinforces the powerful roles that

youths' personal beliefs about help seeking and their relationships with helpers play in their avoidance of help seeking.

Turning to the results for a close friend, the hypothesis was also partially supported. Adolescents' conformity to the masculine norms emotional control and self-reliance were significant unique predictors, such that more conformity to these two gender norms predicted more avoidance of help seeking from a close friend. The commonality analysis revealed that much of the variance explained by these two correlates was shared with other variables. The relevance of the beliefs pertaining to inhibition of emotion and handling problems independently with the avoidance of help seeking has been documented (Sears & Halamay, 2017; Wong et al., 2017). By at least early adolescence, girls and boys report expectations to react in a stoic and independent manner when faced with personal problems, in part because asking for help is perceived as having social consequences, especially in settings where peers may become aware of such requests (MacLean et al., 2010). Thus, when youths feel more pressure to control their emotions and solve their problems on their own, they may not seek help from friends in order to reduce the likelihood of experiencing negative social consequences.

As was the case for adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother, the contributions made by adolescent gender, competence at self-disclosure, and conformity to the nice in relationships gender norm to adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from a close friend were common rather than unique and small (i.e., less than 10%). The shared variance suggests that these variables are indirectly relevant to youths' engagement in avoidance of help seeking. This result reinforces the argument that, even if adolescents have underlying skills, resources, and positive relationships that

can facilitate asking for help, their personal beliefs about help seeking and about emotion management may override the contributions of these factors. It was surprising that a positive relationship with a close friend accounted for only a small proportion of the variance in adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from a close friend, however. This result suggests that avoidance of help seeking from a close friend is linked primarily to personal characteristics. Even if adolescents have a positive relationship with their close friend, having personal characteristics that deter help seeking may make avoidance of help seeking from a close friend more likely.

Summary of Adolescents' Approaches to Help Seeking and the Established Correlates of Help Seeking. In summary, positive relationship quality with a helper was a consistent predictor of adolescents' autonomous and dependent help seeking across helpers and avoidance of help seeking from their mother. Adolescents' conformity to the masculine norms emotional control and self-reliance also contributed consistently, but to a lesser degree, to autonomous and dependent help seeking from their mother and to a greater degree to their avoidance of help seeking from their mother. These variables were also associated with adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from a close friend, while less conformity to emotional control was related to more dependent help seeking from a close friend. Conformity to the feminine norm of nice in relationships made relatively minor contributions to adolescents' help-seeking approaches across helpers with one exception: it accounted for unique and shared variance in adolescents' use of autonomous help seeking with a close friend. Adolescents' competence at self-disclosure also accounted for less variance than the previous variables, although it did make a small, primarily shared, contribution to

adolescents' autonomous help seeking across helpers. Finally, adolescents' gender contributed in a very minor way to the prediction of their help-seeking approaches, except for autonomous help seeking from a close friend.

Adolescents' Use of the Three Help-Seeking Approaches and Markers of Autonomy

The final goal of this study was to evaluate whether markers of autonomy development were related to adolescents' use of the three help-seeking approaches. Markers of adolescents' cognitive, behavioural, and emotional autonomy along with their perceptions of autonomy support from their mother and from a close friend were assessed. Whether adolescents' age moderated the relationships between the three markers of autonomy and their use of an autonomous approach to help seeking from their mother was also examined.

Autonomous Help Seeking

It was hypothesized that adolescents who reported more cognitive autonomy, moderate behavioural autonomy, more emotional autonomy, and more autonomy support from the helper would also report more autonomous help seeking from their mother and from a close friend (Hypothesis 13). The regression and commonality analysis results partially supported the hypothesis. The results for mothers showed four significant unique predictors, such that more autonomy support, more cognitive autonomy, moderate behavioural autonomy, and less emotional autonomy were associated with adolescents seeking more autonomous help from their mother. Autonomy support was the most substantial of these correlates, accounting for almost a third of the variance explained, and cognitive autonomy was the largest contributor of

the other three markers of autonomy. The relevance of all four autonomy constructs aligns with previous research that has linked these markers of autonomy with aspects of seeking support. For example, autonomy support from parents has been related to emotion regulation and active coping among adolescents (Brenning et al., 2015; Seiffge-Krenke & Pakalniskiene, 2011). Further, aspects of evaluative thinking, voicing opinions, decision-making, and self-assessing have been positively correlated with youths' perceived social support from family (Michael & Attias, 2016). Research has also documented a negative relationship between emotional autonomy and youths' perceived connectedness with parents (Ingoglia et al., 2011).

It seems that adolescents who are developing a healthy sense of self, through thinking, feeling, and acting somewhat independent from their parents are more likely to engage their mother for help in an autonomous manner than adolescents who think, feel, and act less autonomously, especially when they recognize their mother is supportive of them being independent. These mothers may encourage autonomous help seeking through a pattern of interaction with their adolescent that involves considering their adolescent's perspective, supporting them, and collaborating with them on a range of typical adolescent decisions, including how to manage problems. Being able to think about oneself as having more decision-making capacity and an ability to evaluate alternative solutions may also allow a youth to conceptualize that asking for help can involve both maintaining responsibility for their problem and receiving support and the benefits of doing so. Conversely, adolescents who feel less emotionally autonomous may seek autonomous help from their mother because they are still in the process of developing a healthy emotional distance in their parent-adolescent relationship. Lower

perceptions of emotional autonomy may allow adolescents to balance their desire to feel independent with relying on their mother for assistance.

Turning to the results for a close friend, the hypothesis was also partially supported. Autonomy support, cognitive autonomy, and behavioural autonomy were significant unique predictors, such that adolescents who reported more autonomy support, more cognitive autonomy, and less behavioural autonomy also reported more autonomous help seeking from a close friend. These relationships are consistent with those found in previous studies. Specifically, emerging adults' perceptions of autonomy support have been linked to their willingness to turn to a friend during emotionally salient experiences (Deci et al., 2006; Lynch, 2013), and more autonomous thinking by adolescents has been related to more perceived friendship support (Beckert et al., 2015). Adolescents with more cognitive autonomy may also be more likely to consider that asking a close friend for advice may have multiple benefits (e.g., maintenance of the friendship and assistance with managing a problem). Although less, and not moderate, behavioural autonomy was associated with more autonomous help seeking from a close friend, this result may reflect adolescents seeking validation for their opinions and preferences by consulting a friend when they have fewer opportunities to make decisions in the context of their parent-adolescent relationship (Fuligni & Eccles, 1993).

Adolescents' emotional autonomy, however, was not related to their autonomous help seeking from a close friend. This aligns with Levpušček's (2006) finding that deidealizing parents, an aspect of emotional autonomy, was not linked to help seeking from friends. Given that the nature of emotional autonomy is focused on differentiation of oneself as unique from parents, it makes sense that this marker may be less relevant

to interactions involving a close friend. Feeling autonomous may matter less to asking for autonomous help from a close friend because close friendships are typically egalitarian. Because of the dyadic nature of help seeking, adolescents may not need to feel independent within another dyad to ask their close friend for autonomous help.

Age as a Moderator of the Relationships between Adolescents' Autonomy Markers and Autonomous Help Seeking from their Mother. It was hypothesized that adolescents' age would moderate the relationships between their cognitive, behavioural, and emotional autonomy and their autonomous help seeking from their mother, such that the relationships would be stronger for older adolescents than younger adolescents (Hypothesis 16). This hypothesis was not supported. That these relationships were not significant may be linked to the age range of the participants in this study. Some research has shown that age effects with autonomy variables may be more prominent in early adolescence (i.e., 12-13 years old) when many young people are first focused on establishing autonomy (Beyers & Gossens, 1999). Levpušček (2006) also concluded that aspects of emotional autonomy changed from early to middle adolescence, but they were not different between middle and late adolescence. Given that the youngest adolescents in this study were in middle adolescence, it seems likely that any variation in the relationship with specific types of adolescents' autonomy and autonomous help seeking from their mother was not captured by their age. Future research should examine the proposed relationships in a sample of adolescents with a broader age range and include young people in early adolescence.

Dependent Help Seeking

It was hypothesized that adolescents who reported less cognitive autonomy, less

behavioural autonomy, less emotional autonomy, and less autonomy support would also report more dependent help seeking from their mother and from a close friend (Hypothesis 14). The regression and commonality analysis results partially supported the hypothesis. The results for mothers showed three significant unique predictors, such that adolescents who reported more autonomy support, more cognitive autonomy, and less emotional autonomy predicted more dependent help seeking from their mother. Autonomy support made the largest contribution to the variance explained, with cognitive autonomy and emotional autonomy making smaller similar contributions. The positive relationship between autonomy support and dependent help seeking aligns with previous research showing that autonomy support from parents is associated with adolescents' engagement in coping and disclosure of information (Brenning et al., 2015; Van Petegem et al., 2017). Adolescents who endorsed more dependent help seeking and more autonomy support from their mother may have greater confidence that their mother will provide a full solution to their personal problems in ways that feel supportive and respectful. The finding that adolescents who perceived themselves as thinking more autonomously engaged in the dependent approach to help seeking is consistent with previous work connecting support from family and aspects of cognitive autonomy (Michael & Atias, 2016). Adolescents who think of themselves as independent may be better at identifying appropriate opportunities to depend on their mother to solve problems and this may result in this type of help feeling less threatening to their autonomy or self-concept.

Adolescents who felt less autonomous also sought more dependent help from their mother. This finding is consistent with work that linked adolescents' idealization of

parents (i.e., reflecting lower emotional autonomy) with a higher need for support from parents (Levpušček, 2006). Youth who are still developing their sense of self may feel more comfortable with relinquishing the responsibility for solving personal problems to their mother. However, there was no relationship between adolescents' behavioural autonomy and dependent help seeking from their mother. Acting autonomously may matter less to dependent help seeking because, in the context of an autonomy supportive relationship, youths may believe that relying on their mother is a personal decision and they may not feel negatively about depending on her.

Turning to the results for a close friend, the hypothesis was partially supported. Autonomy support, cognitive autonomy, and behavioural autonomy were significant unique predictors, such that adolescents who reported more autonomy support, more cognitive autonomy, and less behavioural autonomy also reported more dependent help seeking from a close friend. Autonomy support explained the largest proportion of the variance accounted for in dependent help seeking from a close friend, although the combination of the four autonomy markers accounted for only 11% of the variance. That more autonomy support was a significant predictor of dependent help seeking is consistent with research showing that this marker is linked to young people's willingness to rely on a friend for support (Deci et al., 2006; Lynch, 2013). It is possible that adolescents are more likely to approach autonomy supportive friends for help in a dependent manner because they anticipate that their friend will solve their problem taking into consideration what they may value or prefer. The commonality analysis revealed that cognitive autonomy accounted for a small proportion of variance in dependent help seeking from a close friend. However, similar positive relationships

have been found between more cognitive autonomy and friendship support and secure peer attachments (Beckert et al., 2015; Lee & Beckert, 2011), which are qualities that support adolescents seeking help from friends.

Similarly, the relationship between less behavioural autonomy and more dependent help seeking from a close friend aligns with research showing that early adolescents who had fewer opportunities to make decisions in their relationship with their parents sought more advice from peers (Fuligni & Eccles, 1993). This result implies that youths who report acting less independently (in the context of their parent-adolescent relationship) may demonstrate some dependency on close friends when in need of assistance. However, emotional autonomy was not related to adolescents' use of a dependent approach to seek help from a close friend. Given the role that help seeking plays in friendships, it is possible that feeling autonomous emotionally matters less to asking for dependent help from a close friend because adolescents may not need to feel independent from their parents to rely on their close friend to solve their problem.

Avoidance of Help Seeking

It was hypothesized that adolescents who reported more cognitive autonomy, more behavioural autonomy, more emotional autonomy, and less autonomy support from a helper would also report more avoidance of help seeking from their mother and from a close friend (Hypothesis 15). The regression and commonality analysis results partially supported the hypothesis. The results for mothers showed three significant unique predictors, such that adolescents who reported less autonomy support, less cognitive autonomy, and more emotional autonomy also reported more avoidance of help seeking from their mother. Together, the four autonomy variables accounted for

only 16% of the variance in adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother, however. Again, autonomy support accounted for the largest proportion of the variance explained, with cognitive autonomy and emotional autonomy making smaller contributions. The inverse relationship between autonomy support and avoidance of help seeking is consistent with past work that connected more parental autonomy support to less avoidance of academic help seeking in the classroom (Shih, 2009) and extends this link to a context outside of school. That less cognitive autonomy also predicted adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother is consistent with previous work that showed that a perceived inability to voice one's opinions, one aspect of cognitive autonomy, may threaten one's sense of independence and increase avoidance of help seeking (Ryan et al., 2009). Adolescents who think of themselves as less independent also may have more difficulty identifying how to ask their mother for help in a way that allows them to retain responsibility for solving the problem or the potential benefits of doing so, so they opt to avoid help seeking instead.

Adolescents who felt more autonomous also avoided help seeking from their mother. This result may reflect a link between higher emotional autonomy and adolescents' feelings of less connectedness, and even isolation, in their relationship with parents, which may make it difficult for youths to talk openly with them (Ingoglia et al., 2011; Majorano et al., 2015). As adolescents develop a sense of self separate from their parents, they may also be more committed to solving problems on their own or may believe that their mother will not be able to help solve their problem. However, there was no relationship between adolescents' behavioural autonomy and avoidance of help seeking from their mother. Adolescents' perceived degree of involvement in decision-

making can differ based on the domain of the matter at hand (e.g., moral, conventional, personal, prudential, or multifaceted) (Campion-Barr et al., 2015; Smetana et al., 2004). The current measure of behavioural autonomy included a range of areas of decision-making, and adolescents may believe that their parents still have at least some jurisdiction over some issues. As such, acting autonomously may be less relevant to avoidance of help seeking from their mother because managing personal problems can occur without a parent's awareness that their adolescent has a problem.

Turning to the results for a close friend, the hypothesis was also partially supported. Autonomy support and behavioural autonomy were significant unique predictors, such that adolescents who reported less autonomy support and more behavioural autonomy also reported more avoidance of help seeking from a close friend. The combination of the four autonomy markers accounted for only 12% of the variance, and autonomy support again was the primary predictor. The importance of this variable is consistent with past research on autonomy support and young people's engagement in their friendships (e.g., Deci et al, 2006; Lynch, 2013). Even in the context of a close friendship, adolescents may be more likely to avoid seeking help when their friend is less respectful of their thoughts and feelings. Behavioural autonomy also accounted for a small amount of variance. It seems plausible that adolescents who report making decisions more independently may also prefer to solve personal problems on their own, and, as such, may be inclined to avoid asking for help, even from a close friend.

In contrast, cognitive autonomy and emotional autonomy were not significantly related to adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from a close friend. Previous research has been mixed as to whether and how cognitive and emotional autonomy development

are linked to adolescent friendships (Beckert et al., 2015; Lee & Beckert, 2011; Levpušček, 2006). It was initially anticipated that youths' perceptions of thinking and feeling autonomously may be related to how they interact with their friends by conceptualizing diverse approaches to solving their problems and possibly offsetting the reduction in relying on parents for support. Given how little variance was accounted for, however, it appears that adolescents' perceptions of their autonomy do not actively facilitate their avoidance of help seeking from a close friend and that other factors discourage help seeking from a close friend. One possible explanation for the absence of these relationships may be because a close friendship can still be perceived by an adolescent as a less appropriate source of help for a personal problem, regardless of how autonomously they may think and feel.

Summary of Approaches to Help Seeking and Markers of Autonomy. In summary, autonomy support was consistently the most substantial predictor of each of the three approaches to seeking help across the two informal helpers. Adolescents' cognitive autonomy was the most important of the remaining three autonomy markers, explaining additional variance in autonomous help seeking from each helper, dependent help-seeking from each helper, and avoidance of help seeking from their mother. The contributions of adolescents' behavioural autonomy and emotional autonomy were typically smaller and tended to be linked to one helper or the other. Although both behavioural autonomy and emotional autonomy predicted adolescents' autonomous help seeking from their mother, of these two variables, only emotional autonomy was related to adolescents' dependent help seeking and avoidance of help seeking from their mother and only behavioural autonomy was related to the three approaches adolescents used to

seek help from a close friend.

Implications for Understanding Adolescents' Approaches to Seeking Help

The current research has several implications for understanding how adolescents approach asking for assistance from informal helpers and their use of each help-seeking approach (i.e., autonomous, dependent, avoidance). It also has implications for understanding how adolescents' use of these help-seeking approaches is related to their gender, age, and their choice of helper. Each of these issues merits further discussion.

Use of Help-Seeking Approaches in General

This first study of high school students' use of help-seeking approaches with their mother and with a close friend to manage a personal problem showed that adolescents use each of these approaches with these two informal helpers for this type of problem and make meaningful distinctions between them. This information indicates that there is diversity in how young people use help seeking to manage a personal problem, at least with these two informal helpers. It also highlights the importance of distinguishing between adolescents' use of autonomous and dependent ways of engaging in help seeking with informal helpers. Further understanding of similarities and differences between these two types of engagement would be a potential benefit of moving beyond conceptualizing and researching help seeking by adolescents as a dichotomous coping response that involves engagement or avoidance. Instead, researchers should consider help seeking as a multi-faceted coping response that involves at least two types of engagement and the avoidance of help seeking.

Examining adolescents' use of the three help-seeking approaches also revealed that autonomous help seeking was a preferred approach with both informal helpers. This

finding is important because the use of autonomous help seeking (i.e., a request for advice for help that allows the help seeker to maintain responsibility for solving a problem) is typically viewed as the most adaptive form of seeking help (Nadler, 1997; Newman, 2008). It suggests that, by the time they are in high school, many adolescents are at least somewhat prepared to manage personal problems by seeking help in an adaptive way. Interestingly, adolescents endorsed dependent help seeking (i.e., a request for a solution to a problem) to a lesser degree than autonomous help seeking. This finding may reflect the specific features of the help-seeking contexts they were asked to describe (i.e., seeking help from their mother and from a close friend for a personal problem). It is plausible that dependent help seeking would be endorsed to a stronger degree than the other approaches if the adolescents had been asked to report on their experience with a different type of problem (e.g., academic, physical health) or asked about help seeking from formal or other informal helpers.

Autonomous Help Seeking

Seeking help in an autonomous way is typically viewed as optimal and implies that regular engagement in help seeking using this approach is desirable. However, this study appears to be the first empirical examination of adolescents' use of an autonomous approach to help seeking in relation to the frequency of their help-seeking behaviour. Adolescents' help seeking from their mother at a moderate frequency (i.e., seeking help "sometimes" or "often") rather than at a high frequency (i.e., "most of the time") was related to more autonomous help seeking from her, whereas with a close friend a higher frequency of help seeking predicted this approach. Differences in adolescents' relationships with their mother and with a close friend, particularly their need at this

point in their development to balance dependence and independence with their mother but not with their close friend, may be key. It may also be that youths are able to use what they have learned during previous autonomous help-seeking interactions with their mother to solve similar problems on their own, reducing the likelihood of overutilizing or underutilizing help from her. The shorter duration of their relationship with a close friend may not have provided the same opportunities. The intersection of these two aspects of help seeking indicates that more comprehensive evaluations of help seeking, including combinations of adolescents' attitudes toward help seeking, their intentions to seek help, their use of specific approaches, and the frequency of their behaviour, are needed in future studies.

Turning to adolescents' use of an autonomous help-seeking approach with each informal helper and the established correlates of help-seeking behaviour and the autonomy correlates, the multivariate analyses indicated that a positive relationship with each helper provides a foundation for autonomous help seeking that is supported by a variety of other established correlates of help seeking, including conformity to specific gender norms and self-disclosure skills. A parallel pattern for the autonomy variables showed that autonomy support from each informal helper also provides a basis for autonomous help seeking that was supported by adolescents' level of cognitive autonomy and, to a lesser extent, their levels of behavioural autonomy and emotional autonomy. However, some differences across the two informal helpers were also observed. For example, positive relationship quality and autonomy support played larger roles in adolescents' use of an autonomous approach with their mother than with a close friend, whereas adolescent gender played a larger role in autonomous help seeking from

a close friend than from their mother. Thus, it seems that autonomous help seeking is guided by multiple help seeking and autonomy characteristics that combine with one another in diverse ways for different helpers (and with other characteristics not measured) to allow adolescents to maximize the benefits and minimize the costs of using this approach. Clearly, a complex range of factors is associated with youths' use of this approach to access assistance, highlighting why it may be challenging for some adolescents to incorporate this approach into their array of coping responses and to use it consistently.

Dependent Help Seeking

To date, there is little information available on adolescents' use of a dependent approach to help seeking (i.e., requesting a full solution to a problem). This study showed that a positive relationship with their mother and with a close friend and autonomy support from their mother and from their close friend are key correlates of adolescents' use of a dependent help-seeking approach, and that these variables are supported by other help-seeking correlates and autonomy correlates. However, the distributions of the other correlates differed across the two helpers for this approach. Whereas adolescents' conformity to the two masculine gender norms made larger contributions to their dependent help seeking from their mother than the remaining correlates, all the correlates made similar contributions to adolescents' dependent help seeking from a close friend. Accordingly, while the relative contributions of some key correlates (e.g., positive relationship quality) were consistent across these two important informal helpers, the relative contributions of other characteristics (e.g., self-reliance, emotional autonomy) were more pronounced for a specific informal helper. Overall, it

appears that a dependent approach to help seeking is also complex.

It is noteworthy that both the established correlates of help seeking and the autonomy variables accounted for more than twice the variance in adolescents' dependent help seeking from their mother than dependent help seeking from a close friend. Thus, adolescents' experiences approaching their mother for help in a dependent manner appear to be somewhat different from those approaching a close friend for dependent help, despite the same underlying goal. This difference across helpers was accounted for primarily by the larger contribution of positive relationship quality to adolescents' use of a dependent approach with their mother than with a close friend. Perhaps having a positive quality relationship is more essential for dependent help seeking from one's mother as it allows adolescents to solve their problem with less of an impact on their self-competence or their mother's perceptions of them. In comparison, a positive quality relationship with a close friend may not provide youths with the same experience. An alternative explanation may be that youths' social goals (e.g., intimacy, popularity, dominance) supersede a positive quality relationship for understanding their use of dependent help seeking (Kiefer & Shim, 2016). Interviews with adolescents who report experiences with dependent help seeking from a close friend would be valuable to identify characteristics of the adolescent, of their close friend, and of the help-seeking situation that are linked to their use of this approach.

It is also interesting to consider similarities and differences in the findings for dependent help seeking relative to autonomous help seeking. With respect to similarities, there was overlap in the variables that were related to these two help-seeking approaches, which indicates that some variables facilitate adolescents seeking

help generally and are not specific to using a particular approach to help seeking. In this research, the nature of the relationship with a helper, as indicated by positive relationship quality and perceived autonomy support, was of high importance to youths' use of each approach with each helper. This result is not surprising as the nature of the relationship with a helper is known to be critical to help-seeking engagement. Further, the overlap in the patterns of predictors across the two approaches was more consistent for the same helper than it was across the two helpers. For example, the markers of autonomy that predicted autonomous help seeking and dependent help seeking from their mother and from a close friend were almost identical for each helper, but they differed across these two helpers. While some factors may not distinguish between use of the two approaches in a specific context (e.g., with the same helper), other contexts (e.g., use of a different helper) may highlight situations in which factors associated with autonomous help seeking and dependent help seeking are more relevant or less relevant.

With respect to differences between dependent help seeking and autonomous help seeking, adolescents' greater endorsement of autonomous help seeking relative to dependent help seeking, regardless of helper, indicates that youths are aware that these two approaches have different goals. The established correlates of help seeking and the markers of autonomy also accounted for more variance in autonomous help seeking than dependent help seeking across the two helpers. This finding indicates that much of what we know already about help seeking by adolescents likely explains their use of an autonomous approach and there is more to learn about their use of a dependent approach. In addition, some variables that significantly predicted dependent help seeking and autonomous help seeking differed. For example, adolescents' conformity to

the masculine gender norm emotional control was a unique predictor of dependent help seeking, but not autonomous help seeking, for both helpers, suggesting that dependent help seeking and autonomous help seeking may be unique emotional experiences.

Overall, while some findings in this study are similar for adolescents' engagement in autonomous help seeking and dependent help seeking, multiple differences suggest that these two approaches merit further empirical attention to identify unique precursors to and consequences of their use by adolescents.

Avoidance of Help Seeking

Adolescents' avoidance of help seeking in relation to both informal and formal helpers has received considerable attention as researchers attempt to understand young people's reluctance to use this form of coping for a variety of problems (Aguirre Velasco et al., 2020; Gulliver et al., 2010; Ryan et al., 2001). Adolescents' conformity to the two traditional masculine gender norms were the primary correlates associated with avoidance of help seeking across the two helpers. This result shows that youths' beliefs about controlling and concealing their emotions and about needing to solve their problems independently are key to their avoidance, relative to other established help-seeking correlates and in contexts in which help seeking is likely to occur (i.e., from informal helpers). However, differences in the relative contributions of the two masculine norms for each informal helper were identified. More focus on managing problems alone played a larger role in adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from their mother and may be tied to their developing self-competence and emotion regulation abilities. In contrast, youths' beliefs that their emotions should be controlled and concealed played a relatively larger role in their avoidance of help seeking from a close

friend perhaps because such views would prevent help seeking from occurring given that emotional expression may be perceived negatively by at least some peers (MacLean et al., 2010; Rogers et al., 2021). A less positive relationship also contributed to adolescents' avoidance of seeking help from their mother, which is consistent with the importance of this variable for engagement in help seeking. In contrast, this variable played only a minor role in adolescents' avoidance of help seeking from a close friend, suggesting that other factors are more relevant to understanding why youths avoid asking their close friend for help. Concerns about friends dismissing their problem or treating them differently for disclosing a problem may be pertinent (Griffiths et al., 2011; MacLean et al., 2010).

Perhaps most surprising is that adolescents' perceptions of their autonomy played only a minor role in understanding their avoidance of help seeking from both informal helpers. Even though help-seeking models and research have described youths' desire for autonomy as a significant inhibitor of help-seeking behaviour (e.g., Aguirre Velasco et al., 2020; Logan & King, 2001), adolescents' discomfort with engaging others to help solve their problems is distinct from their perceptions of themselves as able to think, feel, and act autonomously. Instead, it appears that adolescents' avoidance of help seeking reflects their endorsement of specific attitudes and beliefs (e.g., the importance of self-reliance) that negate the help-seeking process. Thus, it is critical that help-seeking models and research clearly distinguish self-reliance and developmentally appropriate autonomy. However, it is important to note that in this study adolescents were asked about their avoidance of help seeking from helpers who they are most likely to turn to for assistance. To develop a comprehensive understanding of avoidance of

help seeking, it would be useful to also evaluate adolescents' avoidance of help seeking with informal helpers who they access less frequently (e.g., father, male friend) as well as characteristics of young people who appear to have a broader orientation to avoidance of help seeking as indicated by their intentions to seek help from "no one" (e.g., Sears, 2020; Wilson et al., 2005). It may also be informative to evaluate the relative contributions of variables expected to deter help seeking (e.g., lower emotional competence, fear of stigma or embarrassment, negative past help-seeking experiences) (Aguirre Velasco et al., 2020; Gulliver et al., 2010; Rickwood et al., 2005). Together, these results emphasize that adolescents' avoidance of help seeking is not simply the opposite of their engagement in help seeking, and they point to the need for additional research to identify unique factors that are associated with avoidance of help seeking.

The Roles of Adolescents' Gender and Age

Adolescent girls in this study reported more autonomous help seeking, more dependent help seeking, and less avoidance of help seeking from their close friend than boys, which is consistent with previous research on adolescents' help-seeking behaviour (Boldero & Fallon, 1995; Pearson & Hyde, 2020; Raviv et al., 2000; Sotardi et al., 2020). As discussed by other authors (e.g., Rose & Rudolph, 2006; Sears & Murphy, 2017; Sullivan et al., 2002), girls' friendships often have features that make help seeking more likely and they also may use help seeking to enhance intimacy in their friendships. However, except for autonomous help seeking from a close friend, gender did not explain variance in adolescents' use of specific approaches. It seems that while gender is frequently linked to youths' decision to seek help and to their choice of some helpers, these mean-level gender differences do not extend to gender differences in how multiple

variables (e.g., self-disclosure skills or beliefs about the importance of emotional control) are associated with adolescents' use of help-seeking approaches.

The multivariate analyses, however, showed that gender acted as a suppressor variable in many of the evaluations of the relationships between the three approaches to help seeking and the established correlates of help seeking. Although the proportion of variance attributed to suppression was relatively small in some analyses, in other analyses, particularly those predicting adolescents' use of specific help-seeking approaches with a close friend, suppression accounted for 8-11% of the regression effect. This calls attention to the role of gender in enhancing the apparent effects of other variables in this study, a pattern that should be evaluated in future research. The presence and absence of gender differences in various aspects of help seeking (e.g., choice of helper, role of masculine and feminine gender norms) and the possible additional role of gender in shaping our interpretation of other variables that are more or less important for help seeking are among the most interesting aspects of this form of coping and merit ongoing investigation.

No age differences in adolescents' use of each of the three help-seeking approaches were found. This result suggests that the extent to which young people use specific approaches with frequently accessed informal helpers, such as their mother and a close friend, is stable throughout high school. Studies of other aspects of help seeking, such as youths' choice of an informal helper or their intentions to seek help from male friends and female friends, have also shown no age differences in high school samples (Sears, 2020; Sears et al., 2009). Interestingly, however, like gender, age also acted as suppressor in many of the analyses examining the relationships between the markers of

autonomy and the three approaches to adolescents seeking help from their mother and their close friend, increasing the contributions of one or more autonomy markers to the prediction of the help-seeking approaches. This more complex role for age in understanding adolescents' use of specific approaches to seeking help during high school requires consideration in future research. Although it is not clear when this understanding develops and how it is acquired, research with younger adolescents indicates that young people's ability to conceptualize differences in how they may ask for assistance are present during middle school (Arbreton, 1998; Newman & Schwager, 1995; Ryan et al., 2005). Given that help seeking is evident in young children (Nelson-Le Gall, 1981; Newman, 2000), by the time they are adolescents, youths have likely encountered opportunities to engage in all three approaches to help seeking.

Longitudinal studies of how young people engage in help seeking, starting in the later elementary school years and continuing through to the high school years, are needed to clarify our understanding of when approaches to help seeking develop, whether they are acquired concurrently or sequentially, and how they are acquired and refined with age.

Specifying an Informal Helper

The results of this study emphasize the importance of specifying helpers when examining help seeking by adolescents. Previous research has shown similarities and differences in young people's help-seeking intentions and help-seeking behaviour in response to specific informal helpers (MacIntyre, 2014; Robinson, 2015; Sears et al., 2009; Sullivan et al., 2002). This study extends this pattern to include adolescents' approaches to seeking help. Multiple similarities in variables that were important for the help-seeking approaches adolescents used with their mother and with a close friend were

found (e.g., positive relationship quality, cognitive autonomy). These similarities draw attention to adolescents' individual and relationship characteristics that provide a foundation for or a general orientation to help seeking from multiple informal helpers. With the aid of commonality analysis, the relative importance of these characteristics for predicting adolescents' use of specific help-seeking approaches with each helper was also revealed. This more fine-grained analysis is essential for identifying combinations of characteristics that are linked to adolescents seeking help from different helpers.

The importance of identifying a specific informal helper was also highlighted by different patterns in adolescents' relative use of dependent help seeking and avoidance of help seeking, by the relative importance of the established correlates of help seeking, and by differences in the amount of variance explained by groups of correlates for each approach to help seeking depending on the helper. Differences in specific features of mother-adolescent relationships and adolescent friendships likely contribute to the nuances identified in how adolescents approach each helper for assistance. The parent-child relationship sets the stage for learning help seeking as a skill early in development. From the time their children are very young, mothers are a source of support and model for their child how to cope with problems (Newman, 2000). Across childhood and adolescence, mothers tend to be actively involved with and responsible for monitoring their children, while also providing companionship, support, and warmth (Crouter et al., 2005; Furman & Buhrmester, 1985; Laursen & Collins, 2009). One consequence of this long-standing relationship is that adolescents largely continue to view their mother as a valued and reliable source of support (De Goede et al., 2009; Shearer et al., 2005). Adolescents often select their mother as a helper, particularly when they are seeking

expertise about a situation or when they view maturity as an asset to solving their problem (Camara et al., 2017; Sullivan et al., 2002). This selection is also influenced by adolescents' ongoing negotiation for more autonomy, primarily through more involvement in decision-making (Lam et al., 2012; Smetana et al., 2004).

In contrast, friendships become more important during adolescence than they were in childhood. Key features of adolescents' friendships, such as companionship and intimacy, create contexts in which help seeking to manage problems is more likely to occur (Sears & McAfee, 2017). Help seeking from a friend may also be used to develop and maintain the friendship (Sullivan et al., 2002; van Rijeswijk et al., 2020). Although friends may not have experience with managing the problem an adolescent is seeking to solve, and they may find it more challenging to provide an explanation on how to solve a problem (i.e., autonomous help) than to provide a solution or answer (i.e., dependent help) (Ryan & Shim, 2012), adolescents are especially likely to choose a friend for help when they expect that their friend will provide them with emotional support (Sullivan et al., 2002). However, friendships, even close friendships, are not necessarily ongoing in the way that a parent-child relationship is. This difference in continuity likely contributes to how youths interact with their peers. Friendships are also embedded within a larger peer context and features of adolescents within this context, such as a youth's social goals, concerns about perceived competence, or fears of rejection, may also contribute to adolescents' use of specific help-seeking approaches with a close friend (Kiefer & Shim, 2016; Ryan & Shin, 2012; Ryan et al., 2001). Taken together, experiences that are unique to the mother-adolescent relationship and to adolescents' close friendships likely factor into differences in adolescents' use of specific approaches

to asking their mother versus a close friend for help.

Implications for Prevention and Coping Interventions

Help seeking is a skill. Thus, it requires building proficiency in utilizing this strategy (Newman, 2000; Rickwood et al., 2005). A fundamental purpose of help-seeking research is to identify strategies that encourage individuals to ask for help in an adaptive way and discourage avoidance of help seeking when help would be beneficial or is necessary. A systematic review of interventions focused on help seeking by adolescents concluded that studies to date have been of low to medium quality (Aguirre Velasco et al., 2020). Although programs differ widely in quality, targeted outcomes, and delivery approach, school-based interventions for adolescents can be beneficial for improving mental health and reducing stress (Feiss et al., 2019; Skeen et al., 2019; van Loon et al., 2020). In fact, interventions targeting interpersonal skills and emotion regulation have shown strong associations with improving adolescents' well-being and mental health outcomes (Skeen et al., 2019). By also incorporating information about how adolescents may approach asking for help, intervention programs may improve adolescents' understanding and use of help seeking to manage normative stressors. The results of this study have several implications for ways in which intervention programs may promote help seeking, including (1) reinforcing adolescents' understanding of approaches to help seeking, (2) promoting positive engagement in interpersonal relationships, and (3) encouraging adolescents to increase comfort with their emotions and seek support from others, despite social pressures that discourage this behaviour.

First, programs could benefit from explicitly outlining the three approaches to asking for help. At the outset of any intervention, it should be positively reinforced that

most adolescents, regardless of gender, report using an autonomous approach to seek help. However, the realities of why youths may sometimes use dependent help seeking and avoidance of help seeking should also be discussed. Collaborative discussions with adolescents about the short- and long-term advantages and disadvantages of each approach would also be beneficial. This could include discussions, using their own or media examples, about when to use each approach appropriately, how each approach may be used with various types of problems (e.g., personal, academic, physical/health), and when each approach may be used with specific informal helpers.

Second, a key finding of this research was that supportive relationships are central to adolescents' engagement in both autonomous help seeking and dependent help seeking. As a result, programs may benefit from including discussions and interpersonal skills training targeting how young people may maintain positive relationships with a parent and their close friends. This may include explicitly outlining features of positive relationships and autonomy support (e.g., finding opportunities to engage in enjoyable activities, building trust, importance of enhancing each other's worth, respect for each other's ideas and opinions). Activities that involve modeling and coaching of how one may request help from others using the help-seeking approaches and may respond to help-seeking requests could also be useful. Opportunities to collaboratively build practical scripts that adolescents can use may build confidence in their abilities to engage in help seeking and may encourage their consideration of how they can respond to help requests from others, especially peers.

Although the perspectives of the two types of helpers were not collected in this study, interventions or modules within interventions designed for adolescents'

caregivers or peers may also be valuable given the dyadic nature of help seeking. Modules for caregivers may help them understand the different approaches to help seeking and factors that encourage or discourage adolescents' use of each approach with personal problems. While presentations, handouts, and role plays may be beneficial, active discussions amongst caregivers may allow for more natural and relevant examples of how parents observe adolescents using each approach to seek help. Moreover, helping caregivers understand that youths' avoidance of help seeking is a distinct way of managing problems is important as is psychoeducation about factors that are likely to negate help seeking. Similarly, collaborative discussions and demonstrations for peers that provide scripts and ideas to help them recognize how their friends approach asking for help, and in return, how they can help their friends could be useful. Interestingly, promising findings show that peer-led interventions can be beneficial for promoting help seeking (Aguirre Velasco et al., 2020). As such, training adolescents to deliver this content to their peers may be a particularly appropriate method for sharing this information.

Third, interventions targeting help seeking by adolescents should address adherence to beliefs about emotional control and self-reliance and discuss adaptive emotion regulation strategies. It appears that adherence to these masculine gender norms for all adolescents, not just boys, is related to how they approach help seeking from both informal helpers, making this a key intervention target. School-based programs often involve normalizing feelings, managing emotions, and turning to others for support as part of the psychoeducation and skill-building modules (Frydenberg et al., 2004; Hayes & Morgan, 2005), but they may not explicitly target adherence to beliefs about

emotional control and self-reliance. Collaborative discussions with adolescents about these societal beliefs could help dispel myths and challenge maladaptive thinking in relation to help seeking. Clearly outlining the difference between self-reliance and developmentally appropriate autonomy would also be important. Interventions addressing adherence to masculine gender norms specifically must offer ideas about how these beliefs could be addressed. For example, using group settings, autonomous help seeking could be reframed as a form of mature emotional control and a way to maintain responsibility for one's problems (Sagar-Ourighli et al., 2020). Including celebrities and role models who can speak to their experiences with seeking help and who deliver messages that counter beliefs about the need for self-reliance or emotional control could also be useful (Calear et al., 2021; Sagar-Ourighli et al., 2020).

Limitations of the Study

While the current study provides additional insight into adolescents' help-seeking behaviour, it does so in light of some limitations. One limitation is related to some characteristics of the sample. The sample used in this research consisted of adolescents attending Grades 9 through 12 in two Anglophone high schools in one predominantly English-speaking region of New Brunswick, the overwhelming majority of whom were observed to be Caucasian. Consequently, these results may not generalize to youths who are from diverse ethnic or cultural backgrounds, youths who do not attend public high schools, or youths who are living in larger urban areas. Research on approaches to help seeking has considered the role of culture and ethnicity in individuals' preference for how they approach asking for help. For example, Komissarouk and colleagues (2017) showed cultural differences in adults' ratings of

help-seeking approach tendencies, especially dependent help seeking. Ryan et al. (2009) also found differences related to culture among adolescents who reported avoidance of academic help seeking. Accordingly, it is important to consider the cultural context in which help seeking is occurring when generalizing these findings.

Similarly, because only a small subset of this sample openly identified their gender as non-binary or gender nonconforming, it was not possible to assess whether there are any unique aspects to their experiences with the help-seeking approaches. For example, their experiences with conformity to traditional masculine and feminine gender norms may have different relationships with their use of specific help-seeking approaches. Consideration of these youths' engagement in the approaches to help seeking may be especially important given the higher number of personal, emotional, and social problems they often face and that they may not often be represented in data that are collected in school-based surveys (Clark et al., 2018; McDermott et al., 2017). Thus, more work examining help seeking with youths who are gender nonconforming is needed to better understand their help-seeking experiences and behaviour.

Another limitation is that adolescents' approaches to asking for help were measured using a survey. This method revealed that adolescents differentiate between the three approaches when they are seeking help for personal problems. However, this method does not provide the same level of depth that qualitative methods could offer. Interviews, focus groups, or coded behavioural interactions would provide further insight into how adolescents perceive and enact the different approaches to help seeking. It would be fascinating to hear youths discuss when they perceive use of each approach to be appropriate. Moreover, only assessing the perspective of the adolescent as a help

seeker may have introduced shared methods variance and inflated the relationship between some variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Thus, use of a mixed methods approach in future studies would be desirable to reduce this potential impact. It is also possible that having all adolescents complete the measure of their use of the three help-seeking approaches with their mother before they completed the parallel measure of their use of the three approaches with a close friend may have impacted their ratings, particularly of their use of each approach with a close friend. Whether ratings of specific helpers vary based on the order in which they are presented should be evaluated in future research and randomization of the dependent variables by helper should be used to minimize any potential priming effect.

Finally, the results of the current study are limited to youths' experiences accessing assistance for a personal problem, such as feeling stressed a lot, not feeling like themselves, or feeling sad or worried. While they add to previous findings on youths' approaches to seeking help in the classroom, young people experience a variety of problems in their everyday lives. Given that adolescents' selection of a helper is partially impacted by the type of problem they are facing (Sears, 2020; Sullivan et al., 2002), it is important to assess the extent to which the type of problem is also linked to adolescents' use of specific help-seeking approaches.

Directions for Future Research

The findings of this study provide several suggestions for future research on help seeking by adolescents. First, at the mean-level, the strength of adolescents' ratings of the approaches to help seeking generally hovered between *somewhat disagreeing* and *somewhat agreeing* that they had used the approach. While these results showed that

adolescents can report on using the three approaches to help seeking with two key informal helpers, much is left to be understood about how adolescents' actual engagement in these approaches plays out. It would be instructive to conduct focus groups or interviews with adolescents about their approaches to help seeking to gather comprehensive examples of how they use these approaches when they have a personal problem.

Second, help seeking is dyadic in nature, so it would be ideal to gain a more balanced understanding of these social transactions by collecting data from both help seekers and help givers. Educational and social psychology studies have used mixed-reporter approaches. For example, Ryan et al. (2005) had teachers rate their students on approaches to asking for help in the classroom and then examined the relationships between these ratings and variables reported by Grade 6 students. Similarly, Komissarouk and colleagues (2017) examined workers' self-reported help-seeking approaches and supervisors' ratings of the type of help-seeking style that worker used. Future research with adolescent help seekers and help givers may highlight ways in which adolescents' use of various help-seeking approaches are similar and different across helpers.

Third, greater insight into other correlates of each help-seeking approach is also needed. For example, the role of past help-seeking experiences as another marker of the approaches to help seeking would be interesting to examine. Research has shown that positive and negative past help-seeking experiences are related to adolescents' help-seeking behaviour and their intentions to seek help (e.g., Robinson, 2015; Wilson & Deane, 2001). Whether emotion regulation and emotional competence play roles in

adolescents' use of specific help-seeking approaches would also be of interest, particularly whether the role of this factor was similar or different across helpers.

Fourth, future research should incorporate statistical modeling approaches, such as path analysis, to examine simultaneously adolescents' use of the help-seeking approaches with specific informal helpers and to explore potential indirect or mediational relationships. For example, path analysis could be used to assess whether positive relationship quality mediates relationships between adolescents' characteristics and their use of specific help-seeking approaches. For close friends, it may be that a positive quality relationship mediates the association between adolescents' social goals (e.g., intimacy, popularity) and their use of specific help-seeking approaches. Similarly, for mothers, a positive quality relationship may mediate the association between adolescents' level of emotion regulation and their use of specific approaches.

Lastly, it is often assumed that help seeking is an effective tool for coping with personal challenges (Nadler, 1997; Rickwood et al., 2005). Limited research, however, has explicitly examined outcomes of adolescents' help-seeking behaviour, so it would be useful to identify circumstances in which help seeking is more effective or less effective. Evaluation of models depicting proposed direct and indirect relationships between adolescents' use of specific help-seeking approaches and a variety of possible outcomes would be potentially informative. It also has been suggested that some helpers, such as peers, may not always provide help that is beneficial (Rickwood et al., 2005). Building on this view, it would be interesting to compare help sought from and provided by various helpers and the usefulness of this help to the adolescent help seeker in terms of its relationship to various markers of their development and well-being.

Conclusion

Although the frequency with which adolescents turn to others for assistance with personal problems has received considerable empirical attention, their use of specific approaches when they seek help has been evaluated in a very limited way. This first study of adolescents' engagement in autonomous and dependent help seeking and avoidance of help seeking from their mother and a close friend for a personal problem found that adolescents use each of these approaches to seek help from these two informal helpers. Their use of specific approaches with these helpers was related to similarities and differences in the relative importance of various individual and relationship characteristics. Collectively, the results provide a more comprehensive understanding of adolescents' use of help seeking by drawing attention to various goals associated with adolescents' choice of this form of coping. They also emphasize the importance of examining help seeking in relation to specific helpers and they highlight the complex combinations of factors that underlie adolescents' use of a specific approach with a specific helper. Additional evaluations of the extent to which adolescents' approaches to help seeking vary by other informal helpers and by other types of problems are now needed.

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Appendix A

Information Letter for Parents and Adolescents

Dear Parents/Caregivers and Students:

I am a Ph.D. student studying clinical psychology at the University of New Brunswick. Dr. Heather Sears and I are interested in understanding adolescents' experiences of seeking help when they have a problem, so we have developed a study to examine various ways that adolescents approach a parent/caregiver and a close friend for help. We also are interested in factors that contribute to using certain approaches more than others. For this study, we are asking girls and boys in Grades 9-12 to complete an anonymous survey during one class period. The survey contains background information questions (e.g., youth's age, parent/caregiver level of education) and questions about how adolescents typically approach a parent/caregiver and a friend for help and how often they do so. Adolescents will then be asked questions about how well they share information about themselves, how important they think it is to behave in ways expected of boys or of girls, and how they see their relationship with each helper. Finally, we have questions about youths' ability to think, act, and feel independently and about how supportive each helper is when youths express different opinions or ideas.

Classes of students have been selected by their school to participate in this research. On the day of the data collection, students in these classes will be encouraged to ask questions about the study and then asked to read and sign a consent form. Their decision to participate or not in this study will have no effect on their grades or school placement. Youths who choose to participate may refuse to answer any item in the survey and may withdraw from the study at any time. All information collected will be confidential and the background information cannot be used to identify individual participants. When the surveys are completed, signed consent forms will be entered into one of multiple draws for a \$10 gift card. The expected chance of winning a gift card is about 1/25. Completed surveys will be stored in a locked research room and will be identified only by a code number. Signed consent forms will not be stored with the surveys. A summary of the results will be distributed to the school district, the school principal, and any interested parents/caregivers and adolescents.

This research project has been approved by the School District Superintendent and your school principal; it is also on file with the University of New Brunswick Research Ethics Board (REB 2019-106). If either of you has any questions before you decide whether or not to participate in this research, please contact me at tl.halamay@unb.ca or Dr. Heather Sears at hsears@unb.ca or (506) 458-7122. You also are welcome to contact Dr. Biljana Stevanovski, Chair of the Psychology Department Ethics Committee, at (506) 458-7693 or bstevano@unb.ca if you have questions or concerns. If a parent/caregiver does not wish for their adolescent to participate in this study, they may use the above contact information to notify me or Dr. Sears, or they may contact the school principal. Thank you for considering this request. Some of the information collected will be used to complete my Ph.D. thesis. It also will help us better understand the various ways in which adolescents approach people for help with problems and factors that determine why any specific approach is used.

Trisha-Lee Halamay, B.A. (Hons)
Ph.D. Student, Clinical Psychology

Heather Sears, Ph.D.
Professor, Clinical Psychology

Appendix B Adolescents' Consent Form

I understand that Trisha-Lee Halamay and Dr. Heather Sears of the Department of Psychology at the University of New Brunswick are conducting a survey study examining how adolescents approach a parent or caregiver and a close friend for help with a problem and factors related to using certain approaches. If I agree to participate in this research, I understand I will be asked to complete an anonymous survey at school during one class period. The survey contains background information questions and questions about how adolescents typically approach seeking help as well as how often youths ask for help from a parent/caregiver and a close friend. It also contains questions about how well youths are able to share information about themselves, how important they think it is to behave in ways expected of boys or expected of girls, and how they view their relationship with a parent and their close friend. The survey will also ask about how independent youths feel, act, and think they are and about how supportive their parent or caregiver and close friend are of them expressing their own opinions or ideas.

I understand that my decision to participate or not in this study will have no effect on my grades or school placement; and that if I choose to participate, I may refuse to answer any item in the survey, and I can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. After the surveys are collected, I will receive an information sheet describing the study in more detail, and my consent form will be entered into one of multiple draws for a \$10.00 gift card with an expected chance of winning being about 1/25.

I understand that all information collected during the study will be confidential, and that the background information cannot be used to identify individual participants. Completed survey booklets will be stored in a locked research room and will be identified only by a code number. Signed consent forms will **not** be stored with the surveys. School district officials and the school principal will receive a summary of the results when available. A summary of the results will also be available to me if I request one below. This summary will report on groups of adolescents only and not on specific individuals.

- I have read and understood the information above and agree to participate in this survey study.

- I have delivered the Information Letter for Parents and Adolescents to my parent/caregiver giving them the opportunity to learn about this research project.

Youth's Name (Please Print): _____

Youth's Signature: _____ Date: _____

- I wish to receive a copy of the summary of results when it becomes available.

E-mail or Mailing Address: _____

Appendix C Debriefing Form

Teenagers' Approaches to Problems (TAP)

Teenagers face a range of problems in their everyday lives. One way they manage these problems is by seeking help from others. Help seeking involves turning to others for support, advice, and assistance. We know that adolescents usually prefer to seek help from a close friend or a parent rather than a professional, and that girls typically seek help more often than boys. We also know that asking for help can have benefits, such as solving a problem or reducing stress, but it can be difficult to do.

Approaches to Seeking Help

Previous studies have shown that individuals can approach others for help in three different ways. In this study, we are interested in understanding how much adolescents use each one of these three approaches:

1. **Autonomous help seeking:** Sometimes people ask for suggestions or advice about how to cope with a problem, but still want to solve the problem themselves. This is a positive way to seek help because it may allow people to solve similar problems in the future and to feel more independent.
2. **Dependent help seeking:** Sometimes people ask the other person to solve the problem for them, and often they have not tried to solve the problem themselves. Sometimes asking someone to solve a problem may be okay (e.g., asking a parent to call the doctor to arrange an appointment, or asking a friend to share class notes if you are worried about a test). Other times though asking someone to solve a problem takes away a chance to build skills you can use in the future.
3. **Avoidant help seeking:** Sometimes people prefer to solve the problem on their own without help, even if they know asking for assistance may be helpful and that their problem may continue. This approach is less positive because it stops you from trying to seek help, it often does not solve the problem, and it may make it harder to cope with similar problems in the future.

Questions about You and Your Relationships with a Parent and a Close Friend

Your responses to this survey will also help us answer questions about what makes adolescents more or less likely to use the different approaches to seeking help. For example, we asked about your relationships with a parent and with a close friend to see if these relationships affect how you approach these helpers for assistance. We also asked questions about how independent you are because research has not considered whether a teenager's level of independence may be related to how they ask for help.

Thank you for participating in our study and completing our survey! Your responses will help us better understand adolescents' experiences when they ask others for help with a personal problem.

Finding Help If You Need It

The following resources are available if you, a friend, or a family member could use some assistance or would like someone to talk to.

- **Community Mental Health Service:** Provides a range of mental health services for individuals, youths, and family members. (506) XXX- XXXX; NB
- **CHIMO:** A confidential crisis telephone line that is accessible 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to all residents of New Brunswick. 1 (800) 667-5005
- **Kids Help Phone:** A toll-free, 24-hour, bilingual and anonymous telephone counselling, referral and Internet service for children and youths across Canada (<https://kidshelpphone.ca>). 1 (800) 668-6868 or Text CONNECT to 686868

Appendix D
Demographic Information

1. What school do you attend? _____
2. What grade are you in? _____
3. Age: I am _____ years old.
4. Gender (please check **ONE** box):
 Female Male Other: I identify as _____
5. With whom do you live right now (please check **ONE** box):
 mother and father
 mother and stepfather
 father and stepmother
 mother only
 father only
 mother half the time and father half the time
 mother and mother
 father and father
 someone other than a parent (e.g., a grandparent(s), group home, friend)
 on my own
6. My mother/stepmother/female caregiver completed (please check **ONE** box)
 elementary school
 high school
 community college, technical school
 university
 I don't know
7. Is your mother/stepmother/female caregiver employed right now? **NO** **YES**
8. My father/stepfather/male caregiver completed (please check **ONE** box)
 elementary school
 high school
 college, technical school
 university
 I don't know
9. Is your father/stepfather/male caregiver employed right now? **NO** **YES**

In this survey, we are interested in your experiences with a **parent or caregiver** and with a **close friend**.

Please select **ONE parent or caregiver** to focus on in this survey. This parent or caregiver should be someone you **live with** at least **half of the time**. If you do not live with a parent, please focus on a caregiver important to you. Please note that the term “parent” in this survey refers to your current primary caregiver, whether it is a parent or another caregiver.

In this survey, I will answer questions focusing on my (please check **ONE** box):

- Mother
- Father
- Stepmother
- Stepfather
- Other Caregiver (who?): _____

Now, please select **ONE close friend** and tell us about him/her below. A close friend is someone you talk to and/or spend time with on a regular basis, is one of the first people you think of when you want to make plans and is someone you trust and with whom you often share personal information. This friend should **NOT** be a romantic partner, should **NOT** be someone you have ever had any type of sexual involvement with, and should **NOT** be someone you have a current romantic interest in.

10. Do you have a close friend? **NO** **YES**

If you selected **NO**, please skip all items in this survey about a close friend.

11. My close friend is _____ years old.

12. My close friend is (please check **ONE** box):

- Female Male Other gender

13. My close friend and I have been friends for (please check **ONE** box):

- 0-6 months
- 7 months–1 year
- 1-2 years
- 2+ years

14. My close friend and I go to the same school. **NO** **YES**

15. My close friend and I are in the same class at school. **NO** **YES**

Appendix E
Help-Seeking Approaches
(Adapted from Komissarouk et al., 2017)

Think about how you typically think and feel about **asking your parent for help** when you have a **personal problem** (e.g., feel stressed a lot, do not feel like yourself, feel sad or depressed, feel angry or worried, are not acting like you normally do).

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements using the scale below.

Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Do Not Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3

1. I often ask **my parent** for help in resolving a problem, even if I can deal with it on my own.^a

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

2. Instead of dealing with a problem on my own, I prefer to rely on **my parent** who knows more than me.^a

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

3. I usually do not ask for help from **my parent**, even if this may hinder how I feel.^b

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

4. It is more important for me to accomplish things on my own, even if I would be better off receiving help from **my parent**.^b

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

5. If it helps me cope better, I ask for **my parent's** advice regarding my problems.^c

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

6. I frequently ask **my parent** for help with a problem before I try to solve it on my own.^a

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

7. When I cannot resolve a problem on my own, I do not typically ask **my parent** for help.^b

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

8. I am happy when **my parent** can solve my problem and save me the trouble of having to deal with it on my own.^a

-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

9. When I encounter a problem, I tend to ask for **my parent's** opinions to gain a new perspective, and then I face the problem again on my own.^c
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
10. When I encounter a problem, I talk to **my parent** to improve my ability to cope with the problem.^c
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
11. When I encounter a problem, I ask others who have had a similar problem, **like my parent**, how they solved it and try to learn from their experience.^c
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
12. When I try to solve a problem, I only count on myself and not on anyone else.^b
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
13. I do not typically ask **my parent** for help in solving my problems.^b
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
14. I feel better when I know that **my parent** is taking care of the problems.^a
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

Now, we would like you to think about how you typically think and feel about **asking your close friend for help** when faced with a **personal problem** (e.g., feel stressed a lot, do not feel like yourself, feel sad or depressed, feel angry or worried, are not acting like you normally do).

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

1. I often ask **my close friend** for help in resolving a problem, even if I can deal with it on my own.^a
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
2. Instead of dealing with a problem on my own, I prefer to rely on **my close friend** who knows more than me.^a
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
3. I usually do not ask for help from **my close friend**, even if this may hinder how I feel.^b
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
4. It is more important for me to accomplish things on my own, even if I would be better off receiving help from **my close friend**.^b
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

5. If it helps me cope better, I ask for **my close friend's** advice regarding my problems.^c
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
6. I frequently ask **my close friend** for help with a problem before I try to solve it on my own.^a
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
7. When I cannot resolve a problem on my own, I do not typically ask **my close friend** for help.^b
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
8. I am happy when **my close friend** can solve my problem and save me the trouble of having to deal with it on my own.^a
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
9. When I encounter a problem, I tend to ask for **my close friend's** opinions to gain a new perspective, and then I face the problem again on my own.^c
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
10. When I encounter a problem, I talk to **my close friend** to improve my ability to cope with the problem.^c
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
11. When I encounter a problem, I ask others who have had a similar problem, **like my close friend**, how they solved it and try to learn from their experience.^c
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
12. When I try to solve a problem, I only count on myself and not on anyone else.^b
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
13. I do not typically ask **my close friend** for help in solving my problems.^b
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3
14. I feel better when I know that **my close friend** is taking care of the problems.^a
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

^a Item on dependent help-seeking scale

^b Item on avoidant help-seeking scale

^c Item on autonomous help-seeking scale

Appendix F
Frequency of Help-Seeking Behaviour
 (Adapted from Ayers et al., 1996, 2002)

Sometimes teenagers have problems that make them feel stressed or upset. When this happens, they think or do many different things to help make their situation better or to make themselves feel better. Please tell us how much you thought about or did each of the different things listed below to try and make things better or to make yourself feel better when you had a problem during the past month. There are no right or wrong answers, just mark how often **you usually** did each thing in order to solve your problems or make yourself feel better **during the past month.**

When you had a problem in the past month, you....

PARENT	Never	Sometimes	Often	Most of the Time
asked your parent for help in figuring out what to do	1	2	3	4
told your parent how you felt about the problem	1	2	3	4
told your parent how you would like to solve the problem	1	2	3	4
you told your parent how you felt	1	2	3	4

When you had a problem in the past month, you....

CLOSE FRIEND	Never	Sometimes	Often	Most of the Time
figured out what you could do by talking with your friend	1	2	3	4
told your friend about what made you feel the way you did	1	2	3	4
talked with your friend about what you would like to happen	1	2	3	4
talked with your friend about your feelings	1	2	3	4

Appendix G
Perceived Competence at Self-Disclosure
Self-Disclosure Subscale of the Adolescent Interpersonal Competence Scale
(Buhrmester, 1990)

Please answer these questions about yourself using the scale below. Write a number from 1 to 5 on each blank line.

1 = **Poor at this**; would be so uncomfortable and unable to handle this situation that it would be avoided if possible.

2 = **Fair at this**; would feel uncomfortable and would have some difficulty handling this situation.

3 = **O.K. at this**; would feel somewhat uncomfortable and have a little difficulty handling this situation.

4 = **Good at this**; would feel comfortable and able to handle this situation very well.

5 = **Extremely good at this**; would feel very comfortable and could handle this situation

1. How good are you at telling people private things about yourself? _____
2. How good are you at letting someone see your sensitive side? _____
3. How good are you at telling someone embarrassing things about yourself? _____
4. How good are you at opening up and letting someone get to know everything about yourself? _____
5. How good are you at sharing personal thoughts and feelings with others? _____
6. How good are you at telling someone things that you do not want everyone to know? _____
7. How good are you at telling someone your true feelings about other people? _____
8. How good are you at telling someone what you personally think about important things? _____

Appendix H
Conformity to Masculine Gender Role Norms
 Emotional Control and Self-Reliance Subscales
 (Mahalik et al., 2003)

Thinking about your own actions, feelings and beliefs, please indicate how much you personally agree or disagree with each statement by circling SD for "Strongly Disagree", D for "Disagree", A for "Agree", or SA for "Strongly Agree" to the right of the statement.

There are no right or wrong responses to the statements. You should give the response that most accurately describe your personal actions, feelings and beliefs. It is best if you respond with your first impression when answering.

1.	It is best to keep your emotions hidden	SD	D	A	SA
2.	I hate asking for help ^a	SD	D	A	SA
3.	I should take every opportunity to show my feelings*	SD	D	A	SA
4.	Feelings are important to show*	SD	D	A	SA
5.	I love to explore my feelings with others*	SD	D	A	SA
6.	I ask for help when I need it* ^a	SD	D	A	SA
7.	I bring up my feelings when talking to others*	SD	D	A	SA
8.	I never share my feelings	SD	D	A	SA
9.	Asking for help is a sign of failure ^a	SD	D	A	SA
10.	I like to talk about my feelings*	SD	D	A	SA
11.	I never ask for help ^a	SD	D	A	SA
12.	I tend to keep my feelings to myself	SD	D	A	SA
13.	I am not ashamed to ask for help* ^a	SD	D	A	SA
14.	I tend to share my feelings*	SD	D	A	SA
15.	It bothers me when I have to ask for help ^a	SD	D	A	SA
16.	I hate it when people ask me to talk about my feelings	SD	D	A	SA
17.	I prefer to stay unemotional	SD	D	A	SA

*Item was reverse coded

^aItem on self-reliance subscale

Appendix I
Conformity to Feminine Gender Role Norms
 Nice in Relationships Subscale
 (Mahalik et al., 2005)

Thinking about your own actions, feelings and beliefs, please indicate how much **you personally agree or disagree with each statement** by circling SD for "Strongly Disagree", D for "Disagree", A for "Agree", or SA for "Strongly Agree" to the right of the statement.

There are no right or wrong responses to the statements. You should give the responses that most accurately describe your personal actions, feelings and beliefs. It is best if you respond with your first impression when answering.

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|----|---|---|----|
| 1. | It is important to let people know they are special | SD | D | A | SA |
| 2. | Putting energy into friendships is a waste of time* | SD | D | A | SA |
| 3. | Being mean gets you ahead in life* | SD | D | A | SA |
| 4. | I believe that my friendships should be maintained at all costs | SD | D | A | SA |
| 5. | I feel good about myself when others know that I care about them | SD | D | A | SA |
| 6. | Being nice to others is extremely important | SD | D | A | SA |
| 7. | I don't go out of my way to keep in touch with friends* | SD | D | A | SA |
| 8. | It is impossible to always be nice to others* | SD | D | A | SA |
| 9. | I would feel burdened if I had to maintain a lot of friendships* | SD | D | A | SA |
| 10. | I make it a point to get together with my friends regularly | SD | D | A | SA |
| 11. | I always try to make people feel special | SD | D | A | SA |
| 12. | If a friendship isn't working, I'll end it* | SD | D | A | SA |
| 13. | I try to be sweet and nice | SD | D | A | SA |
| 14. | I am not afraid to hurt people's feelings to get what I want* | SD | D | A | SA |
| 15. | I rarely go out of my way to act nice* | SD | D | A | SA |
| 16. | I am only nice to people I like* | SD | D | A | SA |
| 17. | I don't feel guilty if I lose contact with a friend* | SD | D | A | SA |
| 18. | I would be ashamed if someone thought I was mean | SD | D | A | SA |

*Item was reverse coded.

Appendix J
Positive Relationship Quality

Subscales from Network of Relationships Inventory-Social Provisions Version
(Furman & Buhrmester, 1985)

We would like you to answer the following questions about your parent and your close friend. Sometimes the answers for these two people will be the same and sometimes they will be different.

1. How often do you spend fun time with this person?

	Little or None	Somewhat	Very Much	Extremely Much	The Most
Parent	1	2	3	4	5
Close Friend	1	2	3	4	5

2. How much do you help this person with things she/he can't do by her/himself?

	Little or None	Somewhat	Very Much	Extremely Much	The Most
Parent	1	2	3	4	5
Close Friend	1	2	3	4	5

3. How much does this person like or love you?

	Little or None	Somewhat	Very Much	Extremely Much	The Most
Parent	1	2	3	4	5
Close Friend	1	2	3	4	5

4. How much does this person treat you like you're admired and respected?

	Little or None	Somewhat	Very Much	Extremely Much	The Most
Parent	1	2	3	4	5
Close Friend	1	2	3	4	5

5. How sure are you that this relationship will last no matter what?

	Little or None	Somewhat	Very Much	Extremely Much	The Most
Parent	1	2	3	4	5
Close Friend	1	2	3	4	5

6. How often do you and this person go places and do things together?					
	Little or None	Somewhat	Very Much	Extremely Much	The Most
Parent	1	2	3	4	5
Close Friend	1	2	3	4	5
7. How much do you protect and look out for this person?					
	Little or None	Somewhat	Very Much	Extremely Much	The Most
Parent	1	2	3	4	5
Close Friend	1	2	3	4	5
8. How much does this person really care about you?					
	Little or None	Somewhat	Very Much	Extremely Much	The Most
Parent	1	2	3	4	5
Close Friend	1	2	3	4	5
9. How much does this person treat you like you're good at many things?					
	Little or None	Somewhat	Very Much	Extremely Much	The Most
Parent	1	2	3	4	5
Close Friend	1	2	3	4	5
10. How sure are you that your relationship will last in spite of fights?					
	Little or None	Somewhat	Very Much	Extremely Much	The Most
Parent	1	2	3	4	5
Close Friend	1	2	3	4	5
11. How often do you play around and have fun with this person?					
	Little or None	Somewhat	Very Much	Extremely Much	The Most
Parent	1	2	3	4	5
Close Friend	1	2	3	4	5

12. How much do you take care of this person?

	Little or None	Somewhat	Very Much	Extremely Much	The Most
Parent	1	2	3	4	5
Close Friend	1	2	3	4	5

13. How much does this person have a strong feeling of affection (loving or liking) toward you?

	Little or None	Somewhat	Very Much	Extremely Much	The Most
Parent	1	2	3	4	5
Close Friend	1	2	3	4	5

14. How much does this person like or approve of the things you do?

	Little or None	Somewhat	Very Much	Extremely Much	The Most
Parent	1	2	3	4	5
Close Friend	1	2	3	4	5

15. How sure are you that your relationship will continue in the years to come?

	Little or None	Somewhat	Very Much	Extremely Much	The Most
Parent	1	2	3	4	5
Close Friend	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix K
Cognitive Autonomy
(Beckert, 2007)

For each item, circle the answer that best represents your thoughts today. Answer all of the questions clearly by circling one of the five choices.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. If I have something to add to a class discussion I speak up.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I think about the consequences of my decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I look at every situation from other people's perspectives before making my own judgments.	1	2	3	4	5
4. When I disagree with others I share my views.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I need family members to approve my decisions.*	1	2	3	4	5
6. I think of all possible risks before acting on a situation.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I like to evaluate my daily actions.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I consider alternatives before making decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I stand up for what I think is right regardless of the situation.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I think about how my actions will affect others.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I think about how my actions will affect me in the long run.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I like to evaluate my thoughts.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I feel that my opinions are valuable enough to share.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I need my views to match those of my parents.*	1	2	3	4	5
15. I am good at identifying my own strengths.	1	2	3	4	5

16. It is important to me that my friends approve of my decisions.*	1	2	3	4	5
17. There are consequences to my decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I can tell that my way of thinking has improved with age.	1	2	3	4	5
19. At school I keep my opinions to myself.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I think more about the future today than I did when I was younger.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I am best at identifying my abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
22. My decision-making ability has improved with age.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I need my views to match those of my friends.*	1	2	3	4	5
24. I am good at evaluating my feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I am better at decision making than my friends.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I care about what others think of me.*	1	2	3	4	5
27. I am the best judge of my talents.	1	2	3	4	5

*Items were reverse coded

Appendix L
Behavioural Autonomy
 Family Decision-Making Scale (Smetana et al., 2004)

Who makes most of the decisions about each of the following topics in your family?

For each topic, circle a number from 1 to 5 to indicate who makes each decision.

- 1** = My parents leave the decision entirely up to me
- 2** = My parents leave the decision up to me after we discuss it together
- 3** = We make the decision together
- 4** = My parents ask my opinion but retain the final say
- 5** = My parents decide the issue without discussing it

	1	2	3	4	5
1. The type of language I use	1	2	3	4	5
2. How I talk to my parents	1	2	3	4	5
3. Using manners	1	2	3	4	5
4. Who should be friends	1	2	3	4	5
5. What music I can listen to	1	2	3	4	5
6. Choosing clothes	1	2	3	4	5
7. How I spend my own money	1	2	3	4	5
8. Smoking cigarettes	1	2	3	4	5
9. Drinking alcohol	1	2	3	4	5
10. Doing drugs	1	2	3	4	5
11. How much time spent with friends	1	2	3	4	5
12. Doing chores	1	2	3	4	5
13. Time for getting up	1	2	3	4	5
14. When to clean my bedroom	1	2	3	4	5
15. Having sex	1	2	3	4	5
16. How I spend free time	1	2	3	4	5
17. When to start dating	1	2	3	4	5
18. How late at night to stay out	1	2	3	4	5
19. Going places with friends	1	2	3	4	5
20. What TV programs I can watch	1	2	3	4	5

*all items were reverse coded to indicate more behavioural autonomy

Appendix M
Emotional Autonomy
 Separation Factor of the Emotional Autonomy Scale
 (Beyers et al., 2005)

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My parent and I agree on everything	1	2	3	4
2. I go to my parent for help before trying to solve a problem myself	1	2	3	4
3. Even when my parent and I disagree, my parent is always right	1	2	3	4
4. It's better for kids to go to their best friend than to their parent for advice on some things	1	2	3	4
5. When I've done something wrong, I depend on my parent to straighten things out for me	1	2	3	4
6. There are some things about me that my parent doesn't know	1	2	3	4
7. My parent knows everything there is to know about me	1	2	3	4
8. I try to have the same opinions as my parent	1	2	3	4
9. If I was having a problem with one of my friends, I would discuss it with my parent before deciding what to do about it	1	2	3	4
10. When I become a parent, I'm going to treat my children in exactly the same way that my parent has treated me	1	2	3	4
11. There are things that I will do differently from my parent when I become a parent	1	2	3	4
12. My parents hardly ever make mistakes	1	2	3	4

Appendix N
Autonomy Support

(Adapted from Shulman et al., 1997 & Van der Giessen et al., 2014)

To what extent do the following statements characterize your relationship with your parent ?	Absolutely Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Absolutely Agree
1. My parent considers my opinion.	1	2	3	4
2. My parent thinks it is right to sometimes disagree with them.	1	2	3	4
3. My parent is not hurt when I have other friends or business.	1	2	3	4
4. My parent respects my ideas.	1	2	3	4
5. My parent allows me to think over my ideas.	1	2	3	4
6. My parent respects my decisions.	1	2	3	4
7. My parent encourages my suggestions.	1	2	3	4
To what extent do the following statements characterize your relationship with your close friend ?	Absolutely Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Absolutely Agree
1. My close friend considers my opinion.	1	2	3	4
2. My close friend thinks it is right to sometimes disagree with them.	1	2	3	4
3. My close friend is not hurt when I have other friends or business.	1	2	3	4
4. My close friend respects my ideas.	1	2	3	4
5. My close friend allows me to think over my ideas.	1	2	3	4
6. My close friend respects my decisions.	1	2	3	4
7. My close friend encourages my suggestions.	1	2	3	4

CURRICULUM VITAE

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UNIVERSITIES ATTENDED

- 2014 – 2022 Ph.D., Clinical Psychology*
University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB, Canada
Supervisor: Heather A. Sears, Ph.D.
*Full Accreditation, Canadian Psychological Association
- 2010 – 2014 B.A. (Hons). Psychology with Co-Op Option
Brock University, St. Catharines, ON, Canada

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Halamay, T.** & Sears, H. (2018, May). *The contributions of parent-adolescent relationship features to adolescents seeking help from each parent*. Poster presented at Development 2018 – A Canadian Conference on Developmental Psychology, St. Catharines, ON.
- Halamay, T.** & Sears, H. (2017, August). *Factors distinguishing how actively adolescents seek help from their father and mother*. Poster presented at the 18th European Conference on Developmental Psychology, Utrecht, Netherlands.
- Sears, H. & **Halamay, T.** (2017, August). *Adolescents who choose no one, a friend, or a parent for help*. Poster presented at the 18th European Conference on Developmental Psychology, Utrecht, Netherlands.
- Halamay, T.** & Sears, H. (2017, June). *Adolescents' individual characteristics and their intentions of seeking help from informal resources*. Poster presented at the Canadian Psychological Association National Convention, Toronto, ON.
- Sears, H. & **Halamay, T.** (2017, June). *Predictors of adolescents' reluctance to seek help from others*. Poster presented at the Canadian Psychological Association National Convention, Toronto, ON.
- Halamay, T.**, Robinson, B., & Sears, H. (2016, April). *Social-cognitive, affective-motivational, and environmental factors predicting youths' help seeking from their father and mother*. Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence, Baltimore, MD.
- Sears, H. & **Halamay, T.** (2016, March). *Which positive and negative relationship features predict adolescent girls' help seeking from their mother and from a female friend?* Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence, Baltimore, MD.
- Halamay, T.**, Tavernier, R., & Willoughby, T. (2015, June). *Psychological well-being and meaning-making within emerging adults' turning point narratives*. Poster presented at the Annual Convention of the Canadian Psychological Association, Ottawa, ON.