

**How Much Is Enough?**  
**Everything You Need to Know to Steer Clear of Overindulgence and Raise Likeable,  
 Responsible and Respectful Children**

**TECHNICAL APPENDIX**

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**Methodology and Selected Results  
 from the Overindulgence Project<sup>1</sup>**

**Introduction**

The overindulgence project began in 1996 with the mission of studying the relationship between childhood overindulgence and subsequent adult problems and parenting practices. To date, we (David Bredehoft, Jean Illsley Clarke, Connie Dawson and our research assistants) have conducted three studies investigating overindulgence involving a combined 1,195 participants (Bredehoft, Mennicke, Potter & Clarke, 1998; Bredehoft, Clarke & Dawson, 2001; Bredehoft, Clarke, Dawson & Morgart, 2003, Bredehoft, Dawson & Clarke, 2003). These studies provide the scientific basis for this book. We are convinced that the results add to the body of knowledge on overindulgence and give us new insights into the parenting problems associated with this issue. The purpose of this technical appendix is to present our methodology and selected results from these three studies:

**Study I:** *“Perceptions Attributed by Adults to Parental Overindulgence During Childhood”;*

**Study II:** *“Relationships Between Childhood Overindulgence, Family Cohesion and Adaptability, Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy, Self-Righteousness, Satisfaction with Life, Dysfunctional Attitudes and Life Distress in Late Adolescence and Young Adulthood”;* and

**Study III:** *“Relationships Between Childhood Overindulgence, Family Cohesion and Adaptability, Self-Esteem, Dysfunctional Attitudes and Locus of Control in Parents.”*

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# Study I

## Perceptions Attributed by Adults to Parental Overindulgence During Childhood

(Bredehoft, Mennicke, Potter & Clarke, 1998)

### Purpose of the Study

We had four main purposes in mind when we conducted **Study I**. First, we wanted to know who were the primary contributors to the overindulgence (e.g., mom, dad, both parents, grandparents, or others) and why it occurred. Second, we wanted to identify the areas of overindulgence. Was the overindulgence just about “too many things” or did the overindulgence occur in other areas of the parent – child relationship? Third, we wanted to see if there were any distinctive characteristics in adulthood that were associated with being overindulged as a child and if being overindulged had any negative effects. Fourth, we were interested in making comparisons between the adults who were overindulged as children and to those who were not.

### Method and Data Collection

We constructed our own questionnaire for this study using feedback from in-depth interviews with self-identified adult children of overindulgers (ACOs). The questionnaire gathered both quantitative and qualitative data. The 730 participants (85.5% female and 14.5% male) for **Study I** came from four groups: people attending our workshops; trained parent facilitators; parents attending parenting classes; and students in psychology classes at a local private university. After reading a definition of overindulgence each respondent answered the question; “Did you experience overindulgence as a child?” One hundred twenty four of our 730 participants said “yes.” The ACOs ranged from 19 to 80 years of age (average = 42.2 years) and were mostly female (87.7%), consistent with the whole sample (See Table 1).

### Statistical Analysis and Results

**Who was responsible for the overindulgence (mom, dad, both parents, grandparents, and others)?** ACOs most frequently reported that both parents overindulged them (43.4%). This was followed closely by the percent of ACOs who attributed their overindulgence to their mothers alone (41.6%). Far fewer said that they were overindulged by only their fathers (10.6%), grandmothers (3.5%), or grandfathers (0.9%).

**Why did the overindulgence occur?** More than half of the ACOs (57%) told us that it was related to some life event. When asked to specify what life event, most (48%) said it was an issue stemming from the parents’ experience such as growing up in poverty, feeling guilty, or working all of the time (See Table 2).

**Table 1 – Study 1 Demographic Characteristics**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Total Sample (n=730) Percentage</b>	<b>Overindulged (n=124) Percentage</b>
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	14.4	12.1
Female	84.5	86.3
Missing	1.1	1.6
<b>Age</b>		
17-20	3.6	2.4
21-30	8.8	7.3
31-40	27.0	29.0
41-50	37.2	44.4
51-60	14.4	8.9
61-70	5.9	5.6
71-83	1.1	1.6
Missing	1.8	0.8
<b>Education</b>		
≤ 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	5.2	4.8
Some college, no degree	17.7	21.8
BA	34.0	37.9
MA	34.2	29.0
Doctoral Degree	4.2	2.4
Trade School	3.3	3.2
Missing	1.4	0.8
<b>Parents' income compared to others when child</b>		
Lot more money	1.6	6.5
More money	16.4	26.6
Same amount	46.6	42.7
Less money	27.5	16.1
Lot less money	6.2	4.8
Missing	1.6	3.2

**Table 2 – Study 1 Life Events Related to Overindulgence**

<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Events</b>
48.4%	Issue stemming from parent (e.g., poverty, guilt, an addiction, family violence, worked all of the time etc.)
17.8%	Death of a loved one (sibling, parent etc.)
14.5%	Illness
9.7%	Birth order
4.8%	Holidays
3.2%	A reward for when I was good
1.6%	Lack of communication

n=62

***Was the overindulgence just about too many things?*** The answer to this question is clearly no (See Table 3). The ACOs identified seventeen different areas in which overindulgence happened. Certainly too many things like *clothes* (41%) and *toys* (35%) were high on the list, but the areas cited most frequently were *having things done for me that I could do or should do for myself* (53%), and *no consistent chores expected* (53%).

**Table 3 – Study 1 Areas of Overindulgence**

Percentage	Areas
53%	Having things done for me that I could or should do for myself
53%	No consistent chores expected
41%	Clothes
36%	Privileges
35%	Toys
32%	Freedom
32%	Being allowed to take the lead or dominate the family
32%	Not having to learn skills that were expected of other children
23%	Love
23%	Not having to follow rules
22%	Lessons
18%	Entertainment
17%	Holidays
14%	Summer camps
12%	Time with parents
10%	Sports
8%	Drugs

n=124. Subjects could select more than one response.

Intuitively these seventeen areas of overindulgence can be classified into three categories: Material Overindulgence (Too Many Things), Structural Overindulgence (Lack of Rules, Soft Structure), and Relational Overindulgence (Over-Nurture).

***Are there any negative personality traits in adulthood that are associated with childhood overindulgence?*** Overindulgence seems to affect people well into adulthood. The great majority (71%) of overindulged subjects reported having difficulty knowing what is enough, or what is normal as adults. Participants' written comments reveal their pain: "I have extreme difficulty making decisions." "I need praise and material rewards to feel worthy." "I don't have to grow up because other people will take care of me." "I feel like I need lots of things to feel good about myself." "I'm unlovable." "I have to buy gifts to be loved." "I constantly need outside affirmation from my friends." When we asked what feelings occurred when they were overindulged they responded with a mixture of positive and negative, but mostly negative (See Table 4). ACOs who had trouble "knowing what is enough" told us that they had the most difficulty in the areas of food (21%), followed by spending money and buying gifts (17%), parenting/child rearing (17%), feelings of what's normal (14%), conflict with interpersonal boundaries and

relationships (12%), decision making (11%), and excessive activities such as working, going to school, exercising, playing and having fun (9%). Further, ACOs lacked skills in the following areas: communication, interpersonal, and relationship skills (31%), domestic and home skills (13%), mental and personal health skills (12%), decision making skills (11%), money and time management skills (10%), and the ability to be responsible (8%).

**Table 4 – Study 1 Feelings Resulting From Overindulgence**

Percentage	Areas
48%	I felt loved
44%	I felt confused because it didn't feel right but couldn't complain because how can I fault someone who does so much for me
40%	I felt embarrassed because at times I was expected to know some skills that I never had to learn
31%	I felt guilty, bad, sad
29%	I felt good at the time but later I felt ashamed
28%	I felt good because I got everything I wanted
27%	I felt embarrassed because I knew it wasn't right
23%	I felt bad because other kids didn't get what I did
19%	No matter how much I got I never got enough so I felt sad
15%	I felt good because I got to decide about everything
15%	I felt bad because the other kids made fun of me
14%	I felt embarrassed because other kids didn't have stuff
13%	I felt ignored
13%	I felt confused
11%	I felt embarrassed because other kids teased me
11%	No matter how much I got I never got enough, so I felt mad

n=124. Subjects could select more than one response.

***How do adults who were overindulged as children compare to adults who were not?***

They are different in a number of ways. ACOs are more likely to overindulge their own children ( $\chi^2 (3) = 40.92, p = < .001$ ) as well as overindulge themselves ( $\chi^2 (3) = 39.1, p = < .001$ ). This self-indulgence resulted in gaining weight, feeling guilty, and experiencing lower self-esteem, poor health, and loneliness.

**Study II**  
**Relationships Between Childhood Overindulgence, Family Cohesion**  
**and Adaptability, Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy, Self-Righteousness,**  
**Satisfaction with Life, Dysfunctional Attitudes and Life Distress in Late**  
**Adolescence and Young Adulthood**  
**(Bredehoft, Clarke & Dawson, & Morgart, 2003)**

**Purpose of Study**

Our clinical work, feedback from workshops on overindulgence, and results from **Study I** prompted us to ask more questions about overindulgence, and led us to conduct Studies 2 and 3. We had two main purposes in mind when we conducted **Study II**. First, we wanted to know if overindulgence occurred more often in a specific type of family system. Second, we wanted to see if there was a relationship between childhood overindulgence and the following characteristics: lower self-esteem, a lower sense of self-efficacy, a higher degree of self-righteousness, higher levels of dysfunctional attitudes and greater life distress in late adolescence and young adulthood.

**Method and Data Collection**

We collected data from 74 participants (43 female/31 male; age 18-25) enrolled at a private midwestern university during November 2000 (See Table 5). We recruited participants from psychology classes and gave them bonus points for their participation. We told participants to bring their laptop computers to one of seven lab periods held in a network-accessible classroom. Research assistants met the participants and gave them both written and verbal instructions on how to log onto the university computer network and locate the study's web page.

After reading and agreeing to the consent form participants answered a 147-item web-based questionnaire made up of demographic data and eight inventories: FACES – the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales (Olson, Portner & Lavee, 1986); the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1979); the Dysfunctional Attitude Scale (Weissman, 1979 & 1980); the Life Distress Inventory (Thomas, Yoshioka, & Ager, 1994); the Self-efficacy Scale (Sherer et al., 1982); the Self-righteousness Scale (Falbo and Belk, 1985); the Satisfaction With Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985); and fourteen author-developed likert-style questions on overindulgence.

For this study we chose instruments that had established reliability and validity (see Fischer & Corcoran, 1994a and 1994b for a discussion on the reliability and validity for each instrument) with the exception of the fourteen indicators of overindulgence which were selected based on our findings from **Study I** (Table 3). Participants submitted their data electronically for analysis.

**Table 5 – Study 2 Demographic Characteristics**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Sex</b>	
Male	41.9
Female	58.1
<b>Age</b>	
≤ 17	1.4
18-25	87.8
26-35	9.5
36-45	1.4
<b>Education</b>	
≤ 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	24.4
Some college, no degree	62.2
AA	10.8
BA	2.7
<b>Parents' household income</b>	
Under \$29,999	12.2
\$30-49,999	20.3
\$50-69,999	32.4
\$70-89,999	21.6
\$90-99,999	4.1
Above \$100,000	9.5
<b>Marital Status</b>	
Never been married	86.5
Married	9.5
Divorced	4.1
<b>Race</b>	
Caucasian	89.2
African American	4.1
Asian or Pacific Islander	5.4
Hispanic	1.4
<b>Religious Preference</b>	
Protestant	60.8
Catholic	8.1
No religious identification	2.7
Other	28.4

n=74.

## Statistical Analysis and Results

**The Indicators of Overindulgence.** The literature search conducted at that time failed to reveal a measure of overindulgence. Therefore, we constructed and pre-tested 14 likert-type items based on the Areas of Overindulgence from **Study I** (see Table 3).

We correlated each of the Indicators of Overindulgence scores with a single item “Do you think you were overindulged as a child?” to determine if our indicators of overindulgence were related to individuals’ self-reported overindulgence. The correlations among these overindulgence items from **Study II** are presented in Table 6. We found statistical significance between the item “Do you think you were overindulged as a child?” and the following: chores ( $r = .403, p < .001$ ), clothes ( $r = .261, p < .05$ ), toys ( $r = .325, p < .01$ ), freedom ( $r = .325, p < .01$ ), parents were over-loving and gave too much attention ( $r = .467, p < .001$ ), rules ( $r = .334, p < .001$ ), enforced the rules ( $r = .417, p < .001$ ), and entertained me ( $r = .274, p < .05$ ).

**Does overindulgence occur in a specific type of family system?** The answer to this question appears to be no. We created an overindulgence score by summing subjects’ responses from the fourteen Indicators of Overindulgence and then plotted the overindulgence scores from FACES on the Circumplex Model (See Figure 1) according to their sixteen family types (for more about the Circumplex Model see Olson, 2000). A visual inspection shows that overindulgence occurs in all family types. This finding was also statistically supported using an ANOVA ( $F = .389; df = 2; p = .679$ ) comparing overindulgence in balanced, extreme and midrange families (**balanced families** = flexibly separated, flexibly connected, structurally separated, structurally connected; **extreme families** = chaotically disengaged, chaotically enmeshed, rigidly disengaged, rigidly enmeshed, and **midrange families** = chaotically separated, chaotically connected, flexibly enmeshed, structurally enmeshed, rigidly connected, rigidly separated, structurally disengaged, flexibly disengaged). A statistically non-significant ANOVA suggests that overindulgence occurs equally across family types.

**Table 6 – Study 2 Correlations Among Indicators of Overindulgence**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Overindulged as child	-													
2. Did things for me	.207													
3. Chores	.403***	.352**												
4. Clothes	.261*	.360**	.276*											
5. Privileges	.182	.213	.345**	.378**										
6. Toys	.325**	.345	.250*	.607**	.399**									
7. Freedom	.325**	-.030	.322**	.189	.560***	.183								
8. Dominate the family	.215	.075	.098	.316**	.330*	.205	.384**							
9. Skills	.079	.190	.394**	.079	.063	.022	.071	.106						
10. Parents over-loving	.467***	.083	.148	.089	.165	.059	.158	.264*	-.069					
11. Rules	.334**	-.028	.466***	.145	.267*	.130	.470***	.214	.095	.239*				
12. Enforce rules	.417***	.094	.355**	.088	.216	.178	.418***	.320**	.068	.284*	.615***			
13. Activities, sports, camps	-.162	.114	-.002	-.005	.120	-.006	-.224	-.214	-.184	.024	-.194	-.346**		
14. Entertained me	.274*	.201	.119	.154	.321**	.324**	.166	.145	-.026	.071	-.055	-.034	.336*	

n = 74, Note: \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

n = 74, Note: \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$



**Figure 1 – Study 2 Overindulgence Scores By Circumplex Family Type**

**Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scales (FACES)**

# Cohesion

Adaptability

<b>Chaotically Disengaged</b> UHOI = 1	<b>Chaotically Separated</b> LOI = 1 ULOI = 1	<b>Chaotically Connected</b> UHOI = 3 HOI = 1 LOI = 1 ULOI = 2	<b>Chaotically Enmeshed</b> UHOI = 2 LOI = 1 ULOI = 1
<b>Flexibly Disengaged</b> UHOI = 4 HOI = 2 LOI = 2 ULOI = 2	<b>Flexibly Separated</b> HOI = 4 LOI = 1	<b>Flexibly Connected</b> UHOI = 2 HOI = 6 LOI = 2 ULOI = 1	<b>Flexibly Enmeshed</b> UHOI = 1 HOI = 1
<b>Structurally Disengaged</b> UHOI = 3 HOI = 2 LOI = 3 ULOI = 1	<b>Structurally Separated</b> UHOI = 2 ULOI = 2	<b>Structurally Connected</b> HOI = 2 LOI = 1 ULOI = 2	<b>Structurally Enmeshed</b> LOI = 2 ULOI = 2
<b>Rigidly Disengaged</b> UHOI = 2 HOI = 1	<b>Rigidly Separated</b> HOI = 1 ULOI = 1	<b>Rigidly Connected</b> UHOI = 1 LOI = 2 ULOI = 1	<b>Rigidly Enmeshed</b> LOI = 1

n=74		Score	Quartile
Ultra High Overindulgence	(UHOI)	37-55	4
High Overindulgence	(HOI)	34-36	3
Low Overindulgence	(LOI)	31-33	2
Ultra Low Overindulgence	(ULOI)	21-30	1

***Is there a relationship between childhood overindulgence and self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-righteousness, dysfunctional attitudes and life distress in late adolescence/young adulthood?*** To answer this question we correlated our subjects' summative and subscale scores from the inventories used in this study with their response to the item: "Do you think you were overindulged as a child?" The results from these analyses appear in Table 7. The more young adults in our study were overindulged as children the less effective they saw themselves (e.g., "I give up easily" ( $r = -.242, p < .05$ ); "I do not seem capable of dealing with most problems that come up in my life" ( $r = -.269, p < .05$ ), the more self-righteous they believed themselves to be (e.g., "I can benefit other people by telling them the right way to live" ( $r = -.277, p < .05$ ), and they held greater number of dysfunctional attitudes (e.g., "I cannot be happy unless most people I know admire me" ( $r = -.234, p < .05$ ); "It is best to give up on your own interests in order to please other people" ( $r = -.305, p < .01$ ). We found no statistically significant relationships between childhood overindulgence and the summative scores on family adaptability, family cohesion, self-esteem, satisfaction with life, and life distress.

**Table 7: Study 2 Overindulged as a Child Correlated With Scale Sum Scores**


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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Overindulged as child	-										
2. Family Cohesion	-.151	-									
3. Family Adaptability	.169	.267*	-								
4. Rosenberg Self-Esteem	.089	.248*	.495***	-							
5. Self-Efficacy	-.237*	.119	.273*	.423***	-						
6. General Self-Efficacy	-.305**	.176	.263*	.449***	.941***	-					
7. Social Self-Efficacy	-.029	-.027	.200	.232*	.773***	.513***	-				
8. Self-Righteous	-.248*	.222	.023	.120	.339**	.327**	.246*	-			
9. Satisfaction with Life	-.107	.346**	.413***	.695***	.494***	.492***	.332**	.157	-		
10. Dysfunctional attitude	-.244*	.226	.353**	.530***	.531***	.528***	.356**	.436***	.514***	-	
11. Life Distress Inventory	-.170	.298*	.154	.429***	.382**	.418***	.186	.170	.602***	.415***	-

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n = 74. Note: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001

## Study III

### **Relationships Between Childhood Overindulgence, Family Cohesion and Adaptability, Self-Esteem, Dysfunctional Attitudes and Locus of Control in Parents**

**(Bredehoft, Dawson, & Clarke, 2003).**

#### **Purpose of the Study**

We had two purposes in mind when we conducted **Study III**. First, we wanted to see if there were any relationships between childhood overindulgence and a lower self-esteem, higher levels of dysfunctional attitudes, and lower levels of parental locus of control in adulthood. Second, we wanted to empirically test our hypothesis that there are three types of overindulgence: Material Overindulgence (Too Many Things), Structural Overindulgence (Lack of Rules, Soft Structure), and Relational Overindulgence (Over-Nurture).

#### **Method and Data Collection**

Using a web-based system, we collected data from 391 participants who came from 39 states and 12 additional countries from December 2000 to April 2001 (See Table 8 for sample demographics). We recruited participants for our study in the following ways: participants attending workshops; trained parent facilitators; parents attending parenting classes; a list serve for certified family life educators, and word of mouth. Participants logged onto the study's web page. Once participants read and agreed to the consent form they answered a questionnaire consisting of demographic data, a 14-item author developed likert-style inventory on overindulgence, and a series of normed, validated psychological inventories: Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales (FACES), Olson (1986); Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), Rosenberg (1979); Dysfunctional Attitude Scale (DAS), Weissman (1979 & 1980); and the Parental Locus of Control Scale (PLOC), Campis, Lyman, & Prentice-Dunn (1986). With the exception of the author-developed overindulgence items, all instruments had established reliability and validity (see Fischer & Corcoran, 1994a and 1994b for a discussion on the reliability and validity for each instrument). Participants submitted their data electronically for analysis.

#### **Statistical Analysis and Results**

*Is there a relationship between childhood overindulgence, family adaptability, family cohesion, self-esteem and dysfunctional attitudes in adulthood?* The answer to this question is yes and no (See Table 9). To analyze this we created a weighted overindulgence sum score by multiplying the correlation coefficient from each of the respective Indicators of Overindulgence (See Table 11) by the respondents' raw score. Following this we correlated the weighted overindulgence sum score with the sum score from FACES and the DAS. We found that childhood overindulgence is statistically related to family adaptability in participants' family of procreation ( $r = .129, p < .05$ ),

**Table 8 – Study 3 Demographic Characteristics\***

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Entire Sample (n=391) Percentage</b>	<b>Parent Sub-Sample (n=348) Percentage</b>
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	11.0	10.3
Female	89.0	89.7
<b>Age</b>		
18-25	0.3	0.0
26-35	10.0	4.6
36-45	21.5	20.1
46-55	30.4	33.3
56-65	28.1	31.3
66-75	7.4	8.0
76-85	2.0	2.3
86-95	0.3	0.3
<b>Education</b>		
≤ 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	4.6	4.6
Some college, no degree	15.9	12.9
Vocational Tech degree	3.1	3.4
AA	4.6	4.6
BA	38.4	39.4
MA	26.3	27.0
Doctoral Degree	7.2	8.0
<b>Household income</b>		
Under \$29,999	8.6	6.3
\$30-49,999	18.1	17.8
\$50-69,999	20.5	22.1
\$70-89,999	20.2	20.1
\$90-99,999	8.7	9.2
Above \$100,000	23.8	24.4
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Never been married	9.7	3.4
Married	80.1	85.6
Divorced	8.7	9.2
Widowed	1.5	1.7
<b>Race</b>		
Caucasian	93.9	94.5
African American	1.8	1.4
Native American, Eskimo, or Aleut	0.5	0.6
Asian	1.3	0.9
Hispanic	1.3	1.1
Others	1.3	1.4
<b>Religious Preference</b>		
Protestant	52.2	52.9
Catholic	18.7	19.0
Jewish	1.5	1.4
Muslim	0.5	0.6
Buddhist	0.5	0.6
No religious identification	14.3	12.9
Other	12.3	12.6

self-esteem ( $r = -.101, p < .05$ ) and dysfunctional attitudes ( $r = -.227, p < .001$ ). The greater the overindulgence, the more chaotic were our subjects' family of procreation. In addition, more overindulgence in childhood was associated with lower self-esteem and increased likelihood of dysfunctional attitudes in adulthood. The DAS finding is interesting because the DAS was designed to identify cognitive distortions especially those that underlie or cause depression. We did not find childhood overindulgence related to family cohesion.

**Table 9: Study 3 Weighted Overindulgence Sum Score Correlated With Scale Sum Score**

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Overindulgence Sum Score (♦♦)-					
2. Family Adaptability	.129*	-			
3. Family Cohesion	-.095	.193***	-		
4. Rosenberg Self-Esteem	-.101*	.102*	.277***	-	
5. Dysfunctional Attitude Scale	-.227***	.070	.184***	.611***	-

$n = 391$ . Note: \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ , (♦♦) = 14 item weighted overindulgence sum score.

***Is there a relationship between childhood overindulgence and parental locus of control?*** The answer to this question is yes (See Table 10). The more our subjects were overindulged as children the more likely they were to hold ineffective parenting beliefs ( $r = .244, p < .001$ ). Further, they believed they were not effective parents ( $r = .206, p < .001$ ), they thought that their child controlled their lives ( $r = .295, p < .001$ ), they believed they had little control over their children ( $r = .144, p < .01$ ), and they believed in fate or chance when it comes to parenting ( $r = .200, p < .001$ ). As predicted they also did not believe they were responsible for their children's behavior ( $r = .008, p < .879$ ).

***Are there three types of overindulgence: Overindulgence (Too Many Things), Structural Overindulgence (Lack of Rules, Soft Structure), and Relational Overindulgence (Over-nurture)?*** The answer to this question is clearly yes. To find our answer, we first correlated the "Indicators of Overindulgence" with the single item "Do you think you were overindulged as a child?" The correlations among the fourteen overindulgence items from **Study III** are presented in Table 11. We found statistically significant correlations between the responses to "Do you think you were overindulged as a child?" and every one of the thirteen Indicators of Overindulgence. We can confidently say that all of these items are related and are measuring overindulgence.

Second, we factor analyzed the Indicators of Overindulgence items (See Table 12) to see if there were indeed three types of overindulgence, and if so, which items measured each

type. The factor analysis verified our hypothesis by loading the Indicators of Overindulgence on three factors - Factor 1: Material Overindulgence; Factor 2: Structural Overindulgence; and Factor 3 Relationship Overindulgence.

**Table 10: Study 3 Weighted Overindulgence Sum Score Correlated with PLOC Sum Scores and Sub Scores**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Overindulgence Sum Score (♦♦)	-						
2. PLOC Sum Score	.244***	-					
3. Parental Efficacy	.206***	.681**	-				
4. Parental Responsibility	.008	.547***	.266***	-			
5. Child Control of Parent's Life	.295***	.623***	.428***	.079	-		
6. Parent Belief in Fate	.200***	.658***	.355***	.114*	.372***	-	
7. Parent Control of Child's Behavior	.144**	.769***	.377***	.289***	.352***	.324***	-

$n = 348$ . Note: \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ , (♦♦) = 14 item weighted overindulgence sum score.

**Table 11 – Study 3 Correlations Among Indicators of Overindulgence**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Overindulged as child	-													
2. Did things for me	.430***	-												
3. Chores	.322***	.381***	-											
4. Clothes	.443***	.264***	.201***	-										
5. Privileges	.443***	.270***	.253***	.572***	-									
6. Toys	.544***	.298***	.211***	.513***	.448***	-								
7. Freedom	.370***	.210***	.254***	.250***	.496***	.253***	-							
8. Dominate the family	.469***	.261***	.299***	.281***	.363***	.254***	.367***	-						
9. Skills	.151**	.117*	.291***	.047	-.004	.080	.243***	.122*	-					
10. Parents over-loving	.488***	.374***	.137*	.181**	.162**	.250***	.206***	.275***	.088	-				
11. Rules	.254***	.148**	.487***	.139**	.306***	.149**	.506***	.300***	.360***	.082	-			
12. Enforce rules	.259***	.174**	.422***	.121*	.279***	.164**	.505***	.313***	.333***	.096	.857***	-		
13. Activities, sports, camps	.273***	.169**	.015	.260***	.227***	.362***	.058	.084	-.071	.130*	-.146**	-.135*	-	
14. Entertained me	.469***	.222***	.088	.387***	.315***	.405***	.166**	.179**	.084	.333***	.045	.028	.465***	-

$n = 348$ , Note: \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

**Table 12 – Study 3 Factor Loadings for Indicators of Overindulgence**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Indicator of Overindulgence</b>	<b>Factor Loading</b>
<b>Factor 1 Material Overindulgence</b> (Too Many Things)	Clothes	.746
	Toys	.718
	Privileges	.767
	Entertained me	.638
	Activities, lessons, sports and camps	.593
<b>Factor 2 Structural Overindulgence</b> (Soft Structure)	Rules	.901
	Enforced rules	.874
	Chores	.588
	Freedom	.637
	Dominate the family	.389
	Skills	.499
<b>Factor 3 Relational Overindulgence</b> (Over-Nurture)	Parents over-loving	.745
	Did things for me	.707

Note: n= 390. Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser normalization. Rotation convergence in 5 iterations.



**Figure 3 - Conclusions and Summary Findings**

<b>Study</b>	<b>Conclusions and Summary of Findings</b>
<p><b>Study I:</b> <i>Perceptions Attributed by Adults to Parental Overindulgence During Childhood</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parents are responsible for the majority of overindulgence.</li> <li>2. The overindulgence was most often related to some issue from the parents' experience (e.g., growing up in poverty, or working all of the time).</li> <li>3. Overindulgence is complex. In addition to too many things, it involves lack of structure and over-nurture.</li> <li>4. Adults who were overindulged as children grow up with negative personality traits such as: feeling unlovable, needing constant outside affirmation, having a lack of skills, and not knowing how to take care of themselves.</li> <li>5. Adults who were overindulged as children are more likely to continue the cycle of overindulgence by overindulging their own children.</li> <li>6. Adults who were overindulged as children are more self-indulgent adults resulting in gaining weight, feeling guilty, lower self-esteem, poor health, and loneliness.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Study II:</b> <i>Relationships Between Childhood Overindulgence, Family Cohesion and Adaptability, Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy, Self-Righteousness, Satisfaction with Life, Dysfunctional Attitudes and Life Distress in Late Adolescence and Young Adulthood</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Overindulgence is complex. It is related to too many things (clothes, toys, being entertained), soft structure (didn't have rules, did not enforce rules), and over-nurture (too much attention).</li> <li>2. Overindulgence occurs in all family system types (balanced, midrange and extreme).</li> <li>3. Childhood overindulgence is related to adolescent/young adulthood dysfunctional thinking, feelings of ineffectiveness, and self-righteousness.</li> <li>4. Childhood overindulgence does not appear to be associated with late adolescent/young adulthood self-esteem, life satisfaction, or life distress.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Study III:</b> <i>Relationships Between Childhood Overindulgence, Family Cohesion and Adaptability, Self-Esteem, Dysfunctional Attitudes and Locus of Control in Parents</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Childhood overindulgence is related to self-esteem (adult parent), family adaptability (family of procreation) and dysfunctional attitudes.</li> <li>2. Childhood overindulgence is related to ineffective parenting beliefs such as: "My child controls my life." "I have little control over my child." and "I am not responsible for my child's behavior."</li> <li>3. There are three types of overindulgence: Material Overindulgence (Too Many Things), Structural Overindulgence (Soft Structure), and Relational Overindulgence (Over-Nurture).</li> </ol>

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