"Two for flinching": Children's and Adolescents' Narrative Accounts of Harming Their Friends

and Siblings

Holly Recchia

Concordia University

Cecilia Wainryb and Monisha Pasupathi

University of Utah

Abstract

This study investigated differences in children's and adolescents' experiences of harming their siblings and friends. Participants (N = 101; 7-, 11-, and 16-year-olds) provided accounts of events when they hurt a younger sibling and a friend. Harm against friends was described as unusual, unforeseeable, and circumstantial. By contrast, harm against siblings was described as typical, ruthless, angry, and provoked, but also elicited more negative moral judgments and more feelings of remorse and regret. Whereas younger children were more self-oriented with siblings and other-oriented with friends, accounts of harm across relationships became somewhat more similar with age. Results provide insight into how these two relationships serve as distinct contexts for sociomoral development.

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Friends and Siblings

It has long been recognized that children's close relationships with other children are fundamental contexts for their moral development (Piaget, 1932; Sullivan, 1953). Through their shared histories with familiar others, children learn about moral concepts such as rights, justice, benevolence, reciprocity, and trust (Bukowski & Sippola, 1996; Damon, 1977). Conflicts with peers may provide key opportunities for reflecting on these moral lessons, as children strive to find ways to balance concerns with their own desires and perspectives with their recognition of others' divergent needs and understandings (Pasupathi & Wainryb, 2010a; Wainryb, Brehl, & Matwin, 2005). Yet we contend that children's close relationships with different types of agemates may provide distinct opportunities for struggling with such issues. Indeed, it has been proposed that children demonstrate a particular moral concern for their friends (Youniss & Smollar, 1985). In contrast, less attention has been paid to children's sibling relationships as contexts for moral development. Perhaps this is not surprising: anecdotal descriptions of children's sibling relationships as characterized by a "devastating lack of inhibition" (Dunn, 1984), or as "emotionally charged with murderous tension" (Bank & Kahn, 1982) imply that sibling interactions may not be an ideal training ground for morally upstanding behavior.

Nevertheless, we propose that everyday experiences of conflict with both friends and siblings may serve as contexts for moral development, albeit in different ways. Due to the unique and evolving provisions of children's relationships with friends and siblings, we argue that opportunities for moral development implicated in the perpetration of harm against these two partners are likely to be different, and also to change with age. Therefore, the goal of this study was to examine the features of 7- to 16-year-olds' narrative accounts of harming their friends and

siblings, and thus to provide a window into the unique ways in which children and adolescents make sense of their distinct experiences of harm in particular close relationships.

Making Sense of Hurting or Upsetting Others

Being a moral person is typically equated with engaging in good deeds and refraining from hurting others. Yet in the course of their enduring relationships -- even those with cherished playmates -- children will inevitably act in ways that hurt or upset their peers, as their motivations and cognitions come into conflict with those of others. In this respect, developing a mature sense of moral agency requires acknowledging and making sense of the fact that sometimes we engage in behaviors while knowing (or suspecting) that such acts may result in harm to others. It also requires the ability to recognize that our behaviors can sometimes result in *unanticipated* harm, because of unexpected clashes between our own and others' desires or interpretations. Put another way, harm can certainly result from punching and name-calling, but also from more or less foreseeable goal conflicts (e.g., She wanted me to play with her but I wanted to go to the movies) as well as from unforseeable misunderstandings (e.g., I said something that made her think I don't like her, even though I *do* like her). Because children's interactions with friends and siblings tend to be quite distinct, these two relationships may provide opportunities for making sense of different experiences of harm.

Although children certainly have much to learn about the moral world from experiences in which they are the victims of others' harmful actions (e.g., Horn, 2006; MacEvoy & Asher, 2012; Wainryb et al., 2005), their attempts to make sense of experiences in which they themselves have caused harm to others may provide unique opportunities for reflecting on moral lessons. This study extends previous research that has shown that, in the process of struggling to reconcile the experience of having hurt another person with their view of themselves as good

people, children further their understandings of themselves and others as moral agents (Pasupathi & Wainryb, 2010a; Wainryb et al., 2005). For instance, past research reveals that when children and adolescents describe events in which they have perpetrated harm against a peer, they describe emotional and psychological consequences for the victim but simultaneously include references to their own justifiable intentions or mitigating circumstances (Wainryb et al., 2005). In line with this dual focus on self and other, children's evaluations of their own harmful actions tend to be varied; although some evaluate their behavior negatively, many others provide mixed evaluations, judging at least some aspects of their behavior to be acceptable. Overall, these data demonstrate that children's narrative accounts of their own harmful behavior may be a powerful window into how children's experiences undergird their sociomoral development.

Building on past research that broadly considered children's accounts of harm against peers in general, we propose that the manner in which children make sense of their experiences of harming agemates may be distinct, depending on the *particular* interpersonal relationship in which it occurs. In other words, we suggest that it is critical to consider how children's experiences and judgments of harm are embedded in the context of distinct relationship histories with others (Dunn, 1993; Reis, Collins, & Berscheid, 2000; Slomkowski & Killen, 1992). This proposition follows from previous research based on social domain theory (see Smetana, 2006) that underscores the ways in which children's reasoning about moral events is framed by the specific dimensions of their interpersonal relationships with others (friends and nonfriends, parents and children, men and women, ingroup and outgroup members; e.g., Horn, 2006; Slomkowski & Killen, 1992; Smetana & Asquith, 1994; Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). With this in mind, to inform our hypotheses, we summarize what is known about the features of children's relationships with siblings and friends, with an emphasis on the distinctive conflict processes that

have been observed in each relationship. Further, to address how age might moderate differences between children's narrative accounts of harming their friends and siblings, we also review how each relationship has been argued to change across development.

Relationships with Friends and Siblings: Implications for Conflict Processes

Children's relationships with close friends and siblings each have particular characteristics that differentiate them from relationships with peers in general, albeit in different ways, and that account for children's distinct conflict behaviors with these two relationship partners. Specifically, friendships are voluntary relationships defined by reciprocity and mutuality, and thus exhibit higher quality and intimacy than relationships with siblings or other same-aged peers (e.g., Buhrmester, 1992). Due to the voluntary nature of friendships, conflict may have especially serious consequences for friends as it can potentially result in the end of the relationship (Bukowski & Sippola, 1996). In line with this, friends deal with conflicts more constructively than peers who are not friends (Fonzi, Schneider, Tani, & Tomada, 1997; Vespo & Caplan, 1993), as well as siblings (DeHart, 1999; Raffaelli, 1997); friends are especially likely to use conciliatory strategies, to provide explanations, and to reach compromise resolutions on their own, without requesting the intervention of third parties.

In contrast to friendships, sibling relations during childhood are involuntary. For this reason, conflict may pose fewer risks for siblings than friends, because there is no danger of ending the relationship altogether (Vandell & Bailey, 1992). Thus, although sibling relationships can certainly be intimate, playful, and loving, interactions between brothers and sisters are also known for their intensity of conflict. As compared to peers, and especially to friends, conflicts between siblings are more likely to be characterized by power-assertive strategies and a lack of reasoning, to escalate to aggression, to be left unresolved, and to elicit outside intervention

(DeHart, 1999; Dunn, Slomkowski, Donela, & Herrera, 1995; Laursen & Collins, 1994; Laursen, Finkelstein, & Betts, 2001). Further, although siblings are close in age, there are inherent developmental and role differences between older and younger children within a dyad. Thus, unlike friends, older and younger siblings within the dyad take on complementary roles, with older siblings exhibiting more control over interactions (Howe & Recchia, 2008). That is, older siblings act as caretakers, teachers, and protectors to their younger counterparts, but also initiate (and win) more conflicts and engage in more aggressive behavior.

Developmental Differences in Sibling Relationships and Friendships

The above body of research demonstrates that conflict processes between siblings and friends are distinct, but there is surprisingly little research that directly examines whether these relationship effects for conflict processes are of the same magnitude throughout childhood and adolescence. Although methodological discrepancies between studies at different ages make comparisons problematic (see Laursen et al., 2001), research conducted separately with young children and adolescents reveals little developmental change in how conflict processes differ between siblings and friends (compare, e.g., relationship effects for aggressive conflict strategies and outsider intervention reported by DeHart, 1999 and Raffaelli, 1997).

Nevertheless, it is known that children's conceptions of sibling relationships and friendships change differentially with age. Specifically, relationships with friends become increasingly based on mutual understanding, trust, and intimate disclosure as children get older, and as they enter adolescence, young people begin to recognize that these relationships can withstand and overcome conflict (Buhrmester, 1992; Selman, 1980; Youniss, 1980). Conversely, younger children may perceive friendships as more fragile, and may therefore be more likely to subordinate their own needs and desires to those of their friends (Komolova & Wainryb, 2011).

In contrast, sibling relationships are described as becoming less intense and conflictual in adolescence, as teenagers place more emphasis on relationships outside of the family context (Kim, McHale, Osgood, & Crouter, 2006). At the same time, relationships between older and younger siblings become more egalitarian with age, and some studies report that sibling relationships remain a source of support and intimacy in the adolescent years (Buhrmester, 1992; Kim et al., 2006; Updegraff, McHale, & Crouter, 2002). Overall, this research seems to suggest that, in some respects, perceptions of conflict with friends and sibling may converge with age, as adolescents increasingly appreciate that friendships can withstand conflict, while sibling relationships are simultaneously becoming more symmetrical and less contentious.

Moral Dimensions of Children's Conflicts with Friends and Siblings

Given apparent differences in the features of children's conflicts with siblings and friends, what is known about how these differences may be implicated in children's moral development? In fact, there is very little research explicitly contrasting children's moral judgments of conflict in these two relationships. The few studies examining relationship effects for children's moral evaluations of aggression reveal that harmful acts are uniformly evaluated critically, regardless of whether they are committed against siblings or peers (Astor, 1994; Shantz & Pentz, 1972). In contrast, Dunn (1993) refers to unpublished data suggesting that children evaluate transgressions against friends more negatively than transgressions against siblings. Indeed, it has been widely argued that the characteristics of children's friendships (i.e., mutual positive regard, reciprocity, and fragility) may be linked to the particular salience of moral concerns in this relationship (e.g., Bukowski & Sippola, 1996). Research contrasting children's interpretations of harm against friends and nonfriends also suggests a recognition of the unique moral status of this relationship (Slomkowski & Killen, 1992; Walton & Brewer, 2001).

Observations of the singularly aggressive and emotionally volatile nature of sibling interactions also belie the apparent similarities suggested by children's explicit evaluations of hypothetical instances of harm in these two relationships. As noted above, children's sibling interactions are known to be affectively intense and unrestrained, and can be characterized by escalating cycles of aggression (Patterson, 1986). In fact, brothers and sisters (perhaps especially *younger* brothers and sisters) appear to have special status in children's lives as causes of their anger (Hughes & Dunn, 2002; Raffaelli, 1997; Recchia & Howe, 2010). Studies examining children's attributions of blame for sibling conflicts are also informative: children frequently perceive their brother or sister to be solely responsible for their fights (Recchia & Howe, 2010; Wilson, Smith, Ross, & Ross, 2004), although this tendency may diminish with age (e.g., Raffaelli, 1997). This latter finding provides converging evidence for our hypothesis (noted above) that descriptions of harm against siblings and friends may converge with age. However, as a whole, this research suggests that children may behave more impulsively, and demonstrate more self-interest and less moral concern with their siblings than their friends.

The Current Study

The present study examined children's and adolescents' narrative accounts of harm against friends and younger siblings to provide insight into their distinctive descriptions, explanations, and evaluations of harm in these two close relationships. Children's relationships with their younger (rather than older) siblings were selected as the focus of study in an effort to increase ecological validity; as noted above, research demonstrates that older siblings more often transgress against their younger siblings than vice versa (Ross, Filyer, Lollis, Perlman, & Martin, 1994).

We anticipated that children's accounts of transgressions against siblings and friends would each implicate fundamentally moral concerns such as fairness and welfare (e.g., Dunn, 1993). Nevertheless, we expected that their descriptions and evaluations of morally-laden experiences would differ systematically across relationships. Specifically, to capture differences between children's understandings of transgressions against friends and siblings, we coded various aspects of how children represented the harmful acts themselves, the reasons underlying them, the context in which they occurred, and their moral implications. We also assessed dimensions that were intended to reveal children's representations of the victims' perspectives, of victims' and others' responses to harm, as well as the extent to which the narrators undermined or invalidated the victim's point of view.

Although research on this issue is limited, we were able to formulate a number of specific hypotheses based on the above literature examining children's construals of conflicts with siblings and/or friends (e.g., Laursen et al., 2001; Raffaelli, 1997). First, we expected that the *types* of harm against siblings would more often implicate aggression, as well as property-related issues, whereas harm against friends would be more often based on relationship-oriented concerns (e.g., betrayal, exclusion). Further, with regards to the *nature* of the harm, we expected harm against siblings to be described as more provoked and less unilateral (i.e., occurring in a series of mutually harmful acts), as well as more impulsive (i.e., due to anger or disinhibition), intentional and/or ruthless (i.e., demonstrating a lack of concern for the other). Along the same lines, we expected harm against friends to be described as incongruent with broader *relationship histories*, whereas harm against siblings would be more consistent with the overall tenor of the relationship. With respect to children's relative evaluations of the *validity* of their own and others' perspectives, we anticipated that narrators would selectively invalidate their siblings'

points of view. Finally, we expected friends' *responses* to harm to be described as more reasoned (e.g., expressing) or avoidant (e.g., withdrawing), whereas siblings' responses to harm would be more intense or aggressive (e.g., crying, escalating), and that third parties would be more likely to get involved in conflicts between siblings than between friends.

Based on past research examining age differences in children's narrative accounts of their experiences (e.g., Pasupathi & Wainryb, 2010b; Wainryb et al., 2005), we expected that older children's accounts would be less concrete (e.g., less often based on property-related harms) and more psychological (e.g., referring more frequently to perspectives). More directly relevant to the present study, we also expected narrative accounts of harm against friends and siblings to change differentially with age. Specifically, due to adolescents' increased confidence in their friendships' ability to withstand conflict (implying age-related increases in children's consideration of their *own* needs, in addition to their friends' needs; Komolova & Wainryb, 2011) and the decreasing contentiousness of sibling relationships (implying age-related increases in children's consideration of their *siblings'* needs), we anticipated that narrative accounts of harm against siblings and friends would become more similar with age. More broadly, this hypothesis is also in line with theory and research suggesting developmental increases in children's ability to coordinate consideration of their own and others' needs as they reflect on social problems (Ross, Siddiqui, Ram, & Ward, 2004; Selman, 1980).

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited through advertisements in schools, daycares, community centers, and summer camps, as well as via word of mouth, in a mid-sized city in the western United States. To be eligible for the study, children had to have at least one younger sibling, and

the two children had to be born less than four years apart (*M* age gap = 2.46 years). The final

sample included a total of 101 participants, including 34 7-year-olds (*M* age = 7.28 years, range =

6.05 to 8.14), 33 11-year-olds (*M* age = 11.10 years, range = 10.0 to 12.11), and 34 16-year-olds

(*M* age = 16.10 years, range = 15.00 to 17.19). An additional two male participants (aged 7 and

11) were excluded because they could not remember a time that they had hurt or upset a friend.

Each age group included approximately equal numbers of girls and boys (20/34 girls, 16/33 girls,

and 16/34 girls, respectively). The sample was primarily Caucasian (83%), with the remaining

children representing a variety of ethnic groups (African-American, Hispanic, Asian, Middle

Eastern, Native American, and mixed descent). Parents provided written informed consent;

children provided written assent to all procedures. Each child received a movie gift certificate in

appreciation for his/her participation.

Procedure

Data for this study were drawn from a larger investigation of children's moral

development; only procedures relevant to the current investigation will be described here.

In individual interviews (conducted either at a university lab or the child's home),

children were privately asked to provide narrative accounts of (a) a time when they hurt or upset

a younger sibling, and (b) a time when they hurt or upset a friend ("Tell me about a time when

you did or said something that ended up hurting or upsetting *your brother/sister* OR *one of your*

good friends. Try to tell me everything you remember about that time."). The order of these two

narrative elicitations was counterbalanced within age and gender. Participants were asked to

choose events that were important to them and that they remembered well. If children nominated

a generic or recurrent event (e.g., "I always take his stuff"), they were asked to provide an

account of one specific episode. The interviewer encouraged participants to continue speaking by

using general prompts ("uh huh…", "and …?"), or by repeating verbatim what the child said ("so

then you left without her…"). When the child appeared to have come to the end of her/his

narrative, the interviewer asked, "Is there anything else you remember about that time?" This

procedure ensures that the interviewer provides no cues for the types of content (references to

reasons, emotions, etc.) that participants include in their narrative accounts (Wainryb et al.,

2005). Interviews were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Coding

Coding categories were adapted from research on children's narrative accounts of their

own transgressive behavior (Wainryb et al., 2005); revisions and additions to existing coding

schemes were informed by research examining children's distinct construals of relationships with

siblings and friends (e.g., Raffaelli, 1997; Recchia & Howe, 2010). Coders (i.e., the first author

and a second naïve coder) first discussed the categories and their definitions and then trained to

criterion by jointly coding a subset of 10% of the narratives; interrater reliability was then

established on an additional 20% of the narratives. Disagreements were resolved via discussion

and consensus. Cohen's *kappa*s are reported below.

Types of harm. Each narrative was coded for presence of six types of harm (*kappa* =

.92): (a) harm resulting from *offensive behavior* (e.g., yelling, insulting, teasing), (b) *physical*

harm (e.g., hitting, kicking, pushing), (c) *property*-related harm (e.g., failing to share, property

destruction), (d) *relationship*-based harm (e.g., physical or psychological separation, trust

violation), (e) harm resulting from the victim's *blocked goal* (e.g., incompatible plans for play,

winning a game), or (f) harm resulting from *honesty/insensitivity* (e.g., saying "Do I look fat in

this?" to an overweight friend, or that a sibling's writing assignment was only "pretty good").

Perpetrator's reasons for harm. Each narrative was coded for the presence of eight types of reasons for the harmful behavior (*kappa* = .93): (a) *unintentional* (i.e., accidents, jokes, or negligence), (b) *benevolent* (i.e., prosocial intent), (c) *emotional/impulsive* (i.e., driven by anger or a lack of control), (d) pursuit of an instrumental *goal* (e.g., to watch television, to pass a test), (e) *malicious* (i.e., retributive, intent to harm), (f) *perpetrator's misunderstanding* (i.e., mistaken assumptions, lack of knowledge), (g) *provocation* (i.e., a response to an offensive or irritating behavior by the victim), (h) *extenuating circumstances* (i.e., behavior resulting from factors beyond the perpetrator's control, such as parents' directives).

Ruthlessness. In addition to explicit references to the perpetrator's malicious intent, we also coded more implicit descriptions of ruthless behavior resulting in harm (*kappa* = .82). Specifically, for each narrative, we noted whether the narrator's behavior demonstrated an apparent disregard for the victim by deliberately and reflectively engaging in behavior that was clearly understood to be intrinsically harmful (e.g., "I was hitting her Barbies across the room with a golf club"), or using harmful means in service of a goal that could be accomplished in a much more straightforward or benign way (e.g., "He was chewing with his mouth open, so I called him a fag").

Mutuality. For each narrative, we coded whether the narrator described the event as one of unilateral harm (i.e., he/she was the sole perpetrator) or whether both protagonists engaged in mutually harmful behavior (*kappa* = .79).

Relationship context. For each narrative, we coded whether the narrator referred to the harmful act as being *congruent* with the overall history of the relationship with the victim (e.g., "This happens all the time"), *incongruent* with the relationship (e.g., "Normally I don't do that"), or whether they made *no reference* to the relationship context of the harm (*kappa* = .81).

Moral concerns surrounding harm. Each narrative was coded for spontaneous references to moral evaluations or moral emotions surrounding the harmful behavior (*kappa* = .79). Specifically, this category encompassed negative evaluations of the act (e.g., "It was really mean"), references to the absurdity or senselessness of the act or the conflict (e.g., "We fight about stupid things that don't even matter"), and references to remorse or regret (e.g., "I felt crummy about it").

References to the victim's perspective. For each narrative, we coded whether the narrator made reference to the victim's perspective explaining why he/she was hurt by the narrator's behavior (kappas > .76). Specifically, we coded any reference to the victim's conflicting *motivations* (e.g., "He wanted to play with us"), *cognitions* (e.g., "He thinks it's not fair"), and *emotions* (e.g., "He was feeling kind of cranky").

Victim's misunderstanding of the perpetrator's behavior. In addition to coding overall references to the victim's perspective, we also coded instances when narrators made reference to the *victim's misunderstanding of the perpetrator's behavior* that increased the potential for harm (e.g., "I was being sarcastic, and she took it the wrong way"; kappa = .93).

Invalidating the victim's perspective. For each narrative, we coded whether the narrator implicitly or explicitly *invalidated* the victim's point of view (*kappa* = .86). Specifically, this encompassed instances when the narrator described the victim as unreasonable or incomprehensible (e.g., "He makes no sense"), suggested that the victim's reaction to the narrator's behavior was overstated (e.g., "She overreacted and threw a fit"), or expressed a sense of righteous indignation (e.g., "I'm like-- do you want my help or not?").

Emotional consequences for the victim. Each narrative was coded for whether the narrator referred to an emotional consequence of the harm for the victim; these consequences

were further coded specifically for references to victims' *anger (*e.g., mad, pissed off, frustrated) and/or *sadness* (e.g., hurt feelings, felt bad; *kappa* = .88*).*

Responses to harm*.* Each narrative was coded for the presence of six possible responses to harm, including those of the victim as well as third parties (kappa = .95): (a) *victim avoiding* (e.g., running away), (b) *victim escalating* (e.g., hitting, yelling), (c) *victim expressing* a conflicting position (e.g., verbally expressing a blocked goal), (d) *victim crying* (e.g., "She started tearing up"*),* (e) *victim reacting with anger*, when such responses did not include escalation (e.g., "She glared at me"), and (f) *adult intervention* (e.g., "My mom said stop").

Results

Analyses were conducted separately for each type of narrative content as a function of relationship (friend, sibling), age (7-, 11-, and 16-year-olds), and gender, with relationship as a repeated measure. ANOVA-based procedures were used because they have been shown to be more appropriate for analyzing this type of data than are loglinear-based procedures, as the latter run into a distinct estimation problem (see Wainryb, Shaw, Laupa, & Smith, 2001). For each significant omnibus effect, effect size is reported as partial eta-squared (η^2). Bonferroni corrections (with an alpha level of $p < .05$) were used for all post-hoc pairwise comparisons.

How do narrators describe their own harmful behaviors with friends and younger siblings?

Types of harm. Narratives could include multiple categories of harm because some participants reported engaging in multiple harmful behaviors (19% of narratives included references to two or more harmful acts). As such, these codes were analyzed using a Relationship X Age X Gender MANOVA with the six types of harmful acts as dependent variables. This analysis revealed multivariate effects for relationship, Wilk's $\lambda = .67$, $\eta^2 = .33$, age, $\lambda = .77$, $\eta^2 = .12$, and the relationship by age by gender three-way interaction, $\lambda = .79$, $\eta^2 = .11$.

Follow-up ANOVAs revealed effects of relationship on *offensive behavior*, $F(1, 95) =$ 15.85, $\eta^2 = .14$, *property* harm, $F(1, 95) = 13.64$, $\eta^2 = .13$, *relationship* harm, $F(1, 95) = 13.24$, $\eta^2 = .12$, and *honesty/insensitivity*, $F(1, 95) = 9.81$, $\eta^2 = .09$. Results are reported in Table 1. Narratives about harm against siblings were more likely to include references to offensive behavior and property-related harms, whereas narratives about harm against friends were more likely to include references to relationship-based harms and honesty/insensitivity.

In addition, follow-up ANOVAs revealed age effects for *offensive behavior*, $F(2, 95) =$ 3.25, $\eta^2 = .06$, *property*-related harms, $F(2, 95) = 3.27$, $\eta^2 = .06$, *blocked goals*, $F(2, 95) = 3.64$, $\eta^2 = .07$, and *honesty/insensitivity*, $F(2, 95) = 3.36$, $\eta^2 = .07$. Follow-up t-tests revealed that offensive behavior was significantly more likely among 16-year-olds (M = .41) than 7-year-olds (M = .21), with 11-year-olds falling in between (M = .31). In contrast, property-related harms occurred more frequently among 7-year-olds (M = .34) than 11-year-olds (M = .15), with 16-year-olds not significantly different from either group (M = .21). Harm resulting from blocked goals was more frequent among 11-year-olds (M = .26) than 16-year-olds (M = .09), with 7-year-olds not significantly different from either group (M = .13). Finally, harm resulting from honesty/insensitivity was more likely among 16-year-olds (M = .18) than 7-year-olds (M = .04), with 11-year-olds not significantly different from either group (M = .08).

Main effects of relationship and age on *property-related* harms were qualified by relationship by age by gender interaction, $F(2, 95) = 3.33$, $\eta^2 = .07$. A follow-up analysis of the pattern of means revealed that the relationship effect for this type of harm was only statistically significant for 7-year-old girls and 11-year-old boys. For both genders, property-related harms among 16-year-olds were equally likely to occur with siblings and friends.

Perpetrator's reasons for harm. Similar to harmful acts, participants could refer to multiple intentions underlying their harmful behavior in the same narrative. Therefore, we conducted a Relationship X Age X Gender MANOVA with the eight types of reasons as dependent variables. This analysis revealed only a significant multivariate effect for relationship, $\lambda = .73$, $\eta^2 = .27$. Specifically, follow-up ANOVAs revealed relationship effects for *benevolent* reasons, $F (1, 95) = 4.16$, $\eta^2 = .04$, *emotional/impulsive* reasons, $F (1, 95) = 12.67$, $\eta^2 = .12$, *provocation,* $F (1, 95) = 4.45$, $\eta^2 = .05$, and *extenuating circumstances,* $F (1, 95) = 15.46$, $\eta^2 = .14$. Consistent with hypotheses, whereas benevolent reasons and extenuating circumstances were more frequent in accounts of harm against friends, emotional/impulsive reasons and provocation were described more often with siblings (see Table 1).

Ruthlessness. A Relationship X Age X Gender ANOVA with *ruthlessness* as the dependent variable revealed an effect of relationship, $F (1, 95) = 11.71$, $\eta^2 = .11$. As expected, narrators described behaving more ruthlessly with siblings than with friends (see Table 1).

Mutuality of harm. A Relationship X Age X Gender ANOVA with *mutuality* as the dependent variable revealed a relationship by age interaction, $F (2, 95) = 3.43$, $\eta^2 = .07$. Consistent with age-related predictions, post hoc t-tests revealed that 7-year-olds described mutual harms more often with siblings than with friends, whereas relationship effects were not significant for 11-year-olds or 16-year-olds (see Table 3).

Relationship context of harm. A Relationship X Age X Gender MANOVA with congruent and incongruent relationship contexts as dependent variables revealed a multivariate effect of relationship, $\lambda = .73$, $\eta^2 = .27$. Follow-up ANOVAs revealed that relationship effects were significant for both *congruent*, $F (1, 95) = 29.55$, $\eta^2 = .24$, and *incongruent* relationship

contexts, F (1, 95) = 13.20, η^2 = .12. Whereas sibling harm was more often congruent with the

relationship, harm against friends was more often incongruent with the relationship (see Table 1).

Moral concerns surrounding harm. A Relationship X Age X Gender ANOVA with

moral concerns as the dependent variable revealed an effect of relationship, F (1, 95) = 4.75, η^2 =

.05. References to moral concerns were more frequent with siblings than with friends (see Table

1).

Descriptions of harmful behavior: Summary of key findings. Consistent with

hypotheses, harm against friends was based on relationship-oriented concerns and relatively

benign behaviors such as honesty/insensitivity, and harm against siblings was due to more

objectively offensive behavior or property-related issues. In turn, in their accounts of harming

their friends, children described more benevolent goals and extenuating circumstances, whereas

harm against siblings was described as more emotional/impulsive, provoked, ruthless, and typical

of the relationship. Interestingly, children were more likely to spontaneously refer to moral

concerns in their accounts of harming their siblings. Finally, in line with hypotheses, relationship

differences in children's descriptions of the mutuality of harm were especially pronounced

among 7-year-olds.

How do narrators describe the victim's perspective and responses to harm?

References to the victim's perspective. Participants could refer to multiple aspects of

victims' overall perspectives in the same narrative. As such, we conducted a Relationship X Age

X Gender MANOVA with references to the victim's conflicting *goals*, *cognitions*, and *emotions*

as dependent variables. This analysis revealed multivariate effects of age, λ = .86, η^2 = .07, and

gender, λ = .92, η^2 = .08. Follow-up ANOVAs revealed an age effect on references to the

victim's *cognitions*, F (2, 95) = 3.42, η^2 = .07. Specifically, references to the victim's cognitions

were more frequent among 16-year-olds ($M = .41$) than 7- or 11-year-olds (both $Ms = .23$).

Similarly, ANOVAs revealed a gender effect for victim's cognitions, $F (1, 95) = 4.34$, $\eta^2 = .04$.

Girls ($M = .35$) referred to the victims' cognitions more often than boys ($M = .22$).

Victim's misunderstanding of the perpetrator's behavior. A Relationship X Age X

Gender ANOVA examining narrators' references to the *victim's misunderstanding of the*

perpetrator's behavior revealed only a main effect of relationship, $F (1, 95) = 6.34$, $\eta^2 = .06$.

These references were more frequent for friends than for siblings (see Table 2).

Invalidating the victim's perspective. A Relationship X Age X Gender ANOVA with

statements *invalidating the victim's perspective* as the dependent variable revealed a relationship

by age interaction, $F (2, 95) = 3.62$, $\eta^2 = .07$. In line with hypotheses, follow-up t-tests revealed

that 7-year-olds were more likely to invalidate their younger sibling's perspective than that of

their friend. In contrast, 11-year-olds and 16-year-olds were equally likely to invalidate their

younger siblings' and friends' perspectives (see Table 3).

Emotional consequences for the victim. Narrators could refer to multiple emotional

consequences. As such, we conducted a Relationship X Age X Gender MANOVA with the

victim's *anger* and *sadness* as dependent variables, revealing a multivariate effect of gender, $\lambda =$

$.91$, $\eta^2 = .09$, and a multivariate relationship by age interaction, $\lambda = .84$, $\eta^2 = .09$.

Follow-up ANOVAs revealed a gender effect for references to victims' *anger*, $F (1, 95) =$

5.94, $\eta^2 = .06$. Girls ($M = .52$) were more likely than boys ($M = .32$) to refer to anger. In turn,

ANOVAs revealed a relationship by age interaction for references to victims' *sadness*, $F (2, 95)$

$= 9.10$, $\eta^2 = .16$. T-tests revealed that 7-year-olds described their friends as experiencing sadness

more than their younger siblings, whereas 16-year-olds described their younger siblings as

experiencing sadness more than their friends. In contrast, 11-year-olds were equally likely to describe their friends and siblings as sad (see Table 3).

Responses to harm. Participants could refer to multiple responses to harm. As such, we conducted a Relationship X Age X Gender MANOVA with the six types of responses to harm as dependent variables. This analysis revealed multivariate effects for relationship, $\lambda = .64$, $\eta^2 = .36$, age, $\lambda = .72$, $\eta^2 = .15$, and a relationship by gender interaction, $\lambda = .86$, $\eta^2 = .14$.

Follow-up ANOVAs revealed relationship effects for *victim escalating*, $F(1, 95) = 3.84$, $\eta^2 = .04$, *victim expressing*, $F(1, 95) = 7.64$, $\eta^2 = .07$, *victim crying, F* $(1, 95) = 4.07$, $\eta^2 = .04$, *victim reacting with anger, F* $(1, 95) = 4.72$, $\eta^2 = .05$, and *adult intervention, F* $(1, 95) = 25.18$, $\eta^2 = .21$. As expected, whereas friend were more likely to express their perspectives, siblings were more likely to escalate, cry, and react with anger, and adults were more likely to intervene with siblings than with friends (see Table 2).

In turn, ANOVAs revealed age effects for *expressing* perspectives, $F(2, 95) = 9.16$, $\eta^2 = .16$, and *adult intervention*, $F(1, 95) = 4.09$, $\eta^2 = .08$. T-tests revealed that 16-year-olds ($M = .46$) were more likely to than 11-year-olds ($M = .17$) and 7-year-olds ($M = .23$) to describe victims as responding by expressing their perspective. In contrast, 7-year-olds ($M = .40$) were more likely to refer to adult intervention than 16-year-olds ($M = .18$), with 11-year-olds not significantly different from either group ($M = .26$).

Finally, ANOVAs revealed a relationship by gender interaction for *avoiding*, $F(1, 95) = 11.90$, $\eta^2 = .11$. Whereas girls described their friends ($M = .45$) as engaging in avoidant reactions more often than their siblings ($M = .17$), boys were equally likely to describe their friends and siblings as avoiding ($Ms = .11$ and .20, respectively).

The victim's perspective and responses to harm: Summary of key findings. Results revealed that friends, more than siblings, were described as experiencing harm due to their misinterpretations of the perpetrator's behavior. As expected, friends were described as responding to harm in more reasoned ways, whereas siblings were seen as more likely to escalate, cry, and react with anger, and adults were depicted as being more likely to intervene into sibling conflict. Also in line with hypotheses, 7-year-olds were especially likely to invalidate their sibling's perspective (relative to their friend's), and with increasing age, children became more likely to acknowledge siblings' hurt feelings.

Discussion

The goal of this study was to examine children's and adolescents' narrative accounts of harming their friends and siblings. In some ways, our results revealed considerable consistency across relationships in children's experiences of hurting or upsetting others, thus replicating overall patterns previously observed in children's narratives of perpetrating harm against agemates (Wainryb et al., 2005). For example, regardless of the relationship context in which it occurred, children rarely described hurting others for explicitly malicious reasons, and tended to maintain a dual focus on their own justifiable intentions and the victim's hurt feelings. Inasmuch as these patterns are distinct from those observed in children's accounts of being victimized by others (see Wainryb et al., 2005), our results add to a body of work suggesting that children's experiences of hurting or upsetting others provide unique opportunities for moral reflection (Pasupathi & Wainryb, 2010a).

Importantly, however, we also extended this research by revealing differences in how children make sense of their own harmful behavior in two distinctive close relationships with agemates. Furthermore, this study is the first to contrast children's construals of harm in these

two relationships across a wide age range. These findings build on research demonstrating that children's constructions of meanings and judgments about moral events vary as a function of their relationship histories with others (e.g., Slomkowski & Killen, 1992; Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). More specifically, analyses of participants' narratives revealed a number of descriptive and evaluative differences between children's accounts of harm in these two close relationships, as well as some intriguing age-related changes in the magnitude of these differences. Although our results revealed a few effects of gender, overall, the observed patterns were similar for boys and girls. Taken as a whole, our results suggest that children's reflections on their perpetration of harm in these two relational contexts may provide distinct but complementary opportunities for sociomoral development.

How do children make sense of their perpetration of harm against friends?

Inasmuch as children are both invested in their friendships and motivated to protect and preserve them, children may avoid harming their friends and thus risk damaging the relationship, especially prior to adolescence. Partly for these reasons, it has been proposed that friendships may be a context in which children demonstrate a heightened moral concern for the needs of others (Bukowski & Sippola, 1996). Nevertheless, in the course of repeated interactions, children will occasionally engage in behaviors that hurt or upset their friends. As such, given the apparent inevitability of these experiences, how might children make sense of these events in ways that contribute to their moral development?

Consistent with their views of friendships as supportive and affectively positive contexts (Buhrmester, 1992), our participants often noted that incidents of harm were discrepant with the overall tenor of their friendship histories. Furthermore, the *ways* in which children described harming their friends reflected the unique provisions of this relationship. First, and as expected,

our results revealed that, compared to siblings, harms against friends were more often described

as based on relationship-centered concerns, such as trust and the desire for connectedness,

reflecting children's strong investment in this relationship. Indeed, among our participants, the

most frequent source of harm against friends was simply failing to share time or space with the

other, rather than more unambiguous moral transgressions such as name-calling or refusing to

share material possessions. Furthermore, as compared to siblings, harm against friends was

described as less forseeable and more often resulting from external constraints, in that it resulted

from friends' interpretations of children's ambiguous, insensitive, or even benevolent (but

perhaps misguided) behavior, or circumstances beyond the narrator's control. Consider the

following example, which is fairly typical of children's accounts of harming friends (edited for

length where indicated; all names are pseudonyms):

> *[…] I'm an athletic girl. I like go and play kick ball and one of my really good friends
> named Jenna, she plays with these girls who […] are always doing a lot of athletic things
> […] so I was just playing with Jenna that day and Kelsey got mad at me and thought I
> hated her…cuz I wasn't playing with her. And so then we were talking on Facebook and I
> told her why and we, we hanged out after.* (11-year-old girl)

In this narrative, the harm both fundamentally implicates the relationship itself and is

described as an unfortunate, unanticipated consequence of goal-directed behavior that is

interpreted in a hurtful way by the other child. Extending previous research and theory, this

pattern demonstrates how children's particular moral sensitivity to their friends may be

manifested in the context of their experiences of harming others. Overall, these results suggest

that, even in a relationship in which they are highly attuned to the needs of others (e.g.,

Komolova & Wainryb, 2011), children recognize through these experiences that they cannot

always anticipate how their friends will react to their actions. Therefore, we argue that harming

one's friends provides children with important insights about their imperfect grasp of others'

perspectives, as well as others' imperfect grasp of their own.

How do children make sense of their perpetration of harm against siblings?

In contrast to children's friendships, the characteristics of sibling interactions are

presumed to be less conducive to moral lessons. Indeed, many of the narrative accounts in our

data reflect the uninhibited (and occasionally ruthless) nature of children's harmful behavior

against their siblings (edited for length where indicated):

> *Ben was making faces at me, and I'm not really good at faces, I'm actually really good with my hands […] and I hit him.* (7-year-old boy)

> *I called him a stupid, mean, nasty little elf-brother! He IS pretty short.* (11-year-old girl)

> *I learned this thing from my friends, like when you make somebody flinch, you punch them twice and say "two for flinching". So I did that to her and I just kept on doing it and doing it and doing it.* (11-year-old boy)

> *I put a sign on his back that said "poke me" […] I was like "oh, it would be really funny to put this sign on Kevin's back".* (16-year-old girl)

Nevertheless, despite the apparently callous nature of some of these acts, we propose that

children's experiences of engaging in behavior while knowing or suspecting that such behavior

might result in harm to others may be a critical context for moral development (Pasupathi &

Wainryb, 2010; Wainryb et al., 2005). With this in mind, what are the features of children's

narrative accounts of harming their siblings that might shed light on the particular insights that

children might be gaining from these experiences? First, and as expected, more so than with

friends, harm to siblings typically resulted from explicitly offensive behavior (e.g., teasing) or

property-related violations (e.g., sharing), although it should be noted that this latter effect was

qualified by age and gender. As illustrated in the examples above, harm to siblings was also more

often ruthless in tone. Further, also as expected, children described their harmful actions against

siblings as driven by anger or a lack of control, often in response to the other's provocation.

Indeed, the disinhibited nature of sibling interaction is also exemplified by siblings' responses to harm. More than friends, siblings who were the victims of harm were described as responding in emotionally expressive or explosive (rather than reasoned) ways by escalating, crying, and/or reacting with anger. Taken together, this pattern suggests that, even in the early school-aged years, children demonstrate an understanding of cycles of coercion: in many cases, they described how provocation by their sibling and their resultant anger led them to lash out in hurtful ways, which prompted an increasingly aggressive and emotional reaction from their sibling. In other words, children's accounts suggest that they recognize the coercive patterns that have been observed to characterize some sibling interactions (Patterson, 1986).

Even more importantly, our results suggest that not only are children capable of describing the more negative features of sibling interactions, but also that they themselves judge such interaction patterns to be problematic. Specifically, alongside their acknowledgement of the occasionally ruthless nature of their behavior with their sibling, as compared to their narrative accounts of harm against friends, children were more likely to make references to moral concerns surrounding these experiences, including references to the absurdity or senselessness of conflict, negative evaluations of their own hurtful actions, and feelings of remorse or regret. To illustrate, consider the following example (edited for length, where indicated):

> *[…] I'm kind of mean to her just 'cause she's my sister, you know? Cuz I'm kind of sarcastic but I'm kind of not, and so she gets upset, and then it is sad. […] Sometimes I tell her like, "oh just because you don't have any friends, that doesn't mean you can come and hang out with my friends" because that's something that usually gets to her, so you tend to lean towards that, to make her go away. […] One time […] she kept on trying to play with me and my friend, and we were yelling at her […]We hurt her a little bit and she started crying. And so that's when we realized like, ok, you can really hurt someone, like unintentionally, so it's important to watch what you're about to say and stuff. […] I wish it didn't happen. […] We were really mad at her, and I don't know why, and she just really wanted someone to play with.* (16-year-old girl)

In this example, the narrator depicts the transgression against her sibling as emotionally driven (i.e., based on anger) and ruthless (i.e., motivated to upset her sister so that she would go away) – both of these elements are consistent with the reckless nature of sibling harm. However, this participant also conveys a sense of clear remorse and a negative judgment of her own behavior. On its surface, this latter finding might appear to be counterintuitive: why might these references to moral judgments and emotions be more common in narrative accounts of harm against siblings than about friends? We suggest at least two possible explanations for this pattern. First, our findings imply that children's harmful actions against their sibling are experienced in more agentic ways than with their friends; whereas harm against friends was characterized as ambiguous, unanticipated, and due to extenuating circumstances, harm against siblings was more often described as internally motivated (e.g., by anger). Thus, to the extent that children construct an understanding of their transgressions against their sibling as explicit, ruthless, and internally-driven behaviors, these experiences may be more likely to pose a challenge to their views of themselves as moral people. As such, harm against one's sibling may be more accompanied by a sense of remorse or regret, and thus encourage young people to consider their actions in light of their moral values. Second, we suggest that the feedback that children receive from their siblings and parents might be particularly helpful in this regard. More specifically, awareness of the negative emotional consequences of behavior is a critical determinant of moral judgments (Arsenio, Gold, & Adams, 2006); in contrast to friends, our results demonstrate that siblings are more likely to provide emotionally intense (and apparently memorable) negative responses to children's hurtful actions. Further, because parents can scaffold children's understandings of their conflicts with others (Recchia, Wainryb, & Pasupathi, 2011; Thompson, 2006), to the extent that adults are described as intervening more frequently in situations involving siblings than

those involving friends, they may be helping children to draw meanings from experiences with their brothers and sisters. At any rate, these findings underscore that children's experiences of conflict with their sibling should not be overlooked as relational contexts for moral development, in that they appear to provide unique opportunities for moral learning in their own right.

How do children's understandings of harm against friends and siblings change with age?

Our results revealed a number of age-related changes in children's narrative accounts of harm that confirm well-established developmental trends in children's narrative accounts of their experiences (e.g., Pasupathi & Wainryb, 2010b). Specifically, property-related harms were particularly frequent among 7-year-olds (e.g., sharing toys), and harms resulting from blocked goals (e.g., conflicting plans for play) occurred especially among 11-year-olds. In contrast, harms resulting from offensive behavior and honesty/insensitivity were described more frequently with age. Consistent with this pattern, with age, narrators were also increasingly likely to refer to the cognitions of the victim. Taken together, these results suggest that experiences of harm became more psychologically-based and less concrete with increasing age.

More germane to the novel questions addressed in this study, we also examined how the magnitude of relationship differences changed with age. Indeed, it is known that the provisions of sibling relationships and friendships each change with development; with age, children becoming increasingly confident that their friendships can withstand and overcome disagreement (Komolova & Wainryb, 2011), while their sibling relationships are simultaneously becoming less contentious (e.g., Buhrmester, 1992). Further, with age, children become increasingly capable of coordinating multiple perspectives in ways that permit the simultaneous consideration of one's own and others' positions in the context of social conflict (Ross et al., 2004; Selman, 1980). Thus, although little research has examined developmental differences in children's construals of

conflicts with siblings and friends, we expected that children's accounts of harming their siblings

and friends would tend to converge with age.

Overall, it is important to underscore that our results revealed considerable continuity

across development with regards to the distinctiveness of children's accounts of harming their

siblings and friends. Results revealed many relationship effects that were consistent across age,

implying that differences between relationships with siblings and friends may be as salient for

adolescents as they are for younger children. Possibly, research documenting these patterns

across the transition into early adulthood may reveal more robust declines in the emotional

intensity of conflict between siblings than those observed here (e.g., Conger & Little, 2010).

Nevertheless, in the three instances when relationship effects were moderated by age, our

results were consistent with hypotheses. Specifically, in contrast to 11- and 16-year-olds, 7-year-

olds more frequently described their harmful acts against siblings as occurring in the context of a

mutual series of oppositional behaviors than their harmful acts against friends. Along the same

lines, 7-year-olds (but not older participants) selectively invalidated the conflict perspective of

their sibling by dismissing it as unreasonable or incomprehensible, whereas they were less likely

to do so with friends. Finally, as a consequence of their own harmful behavior, 7-year-olds were

more likely to refer to their friends' sadness than their siblings' sadness. Interestingly, the

opposite pattern was observed among 16-year-old participants, who were more likely to refer to

their siblings' sadness than that of their friends.

These findings demonstrate that, by the early school-aged years, children have

differentiated views of their close relationships that provide distinct opportunities for learning

about negotiating interactions with others. More specifically, based on these results, we suggest

that young children's conflicts with friends may be particularly conducive to considering the

needs of others; that one's own actions can make others sad, and that others' experience of sadness is legitimate and comprehensible. In contrast, the provisions of young children's sibling relationships appear to be linked to quite different construals: that sometimes one's own perspective has unique validity, and that one's own actions need not be considered in unilateral terms but rather that the roles of culprits and victims are not always differentiable. In this respect, experiences of harm against siblings and friends may provide complementary opportunities for young children to consider the needs of self and other.

Interestingly, our results also suggest that, with increasing age, their accounts of harming their siblings and friends become somewhat more similar. More specifically, given adolescents' changing conceptions of friendships, it may become less threatening to acknowledge that their friends' perspectives are sometimes invalid and in these cases, that it is justified to stand one's ground. Similarly, although adolescents continue to behave in disinhibited ways with their siblings, they also increasingly recognize the hurtful consequences of this behavior. When looked at as a whole, our results provide intriguing and novel insight into children's evolving experiences of harm in their varied close relationships.

Conclusions

Our study was designed to investigate children's and adolescents' construals of harm against siblings and friends across a wide age range. With this goal in mind, we asked children to furnish narrative accounts that captured their spontaneous descriptions and evaluations of their own past experiences. Although our interest was not in determining the objective or observable features of conflicts with siblings and friends, it is important to note that our methods do not reveal the actual range of conflict experiences that children might have with their siblings and friends. Indeed, as with all retrospective reports, our findings may be partially driven by selection

effects; for this reason, children's reasoning and judgments about hypothetical conflict scenarios involving friends and siblings may provide a useful complement to this work. In future research, it would also be interesting to examine within-person heterogeneity in accounts of sibling and friendship conflict; studies eliciting accounts of a variety of different conflicts with siblings and friends (e.g., welfare vs. justice; victim vs. perpetrator; resolved vs. unresolved) may provide further insight into children's and adolescents' experiences in different relationships. Moreover, it would be useful to determine whether the pattern of results for siblings would generalize to descriptions of harm perpetrated against older (rather than younger) brothers or sisters, given well-documented differences in older and younger siblings' roles in the family (Howe & Recchia, 2008); this is a critical issue for future work, given that status differences are known to influence children's moral reasoning and judgment (e.g., Horn, 2006; Wainryb & Turiel, 1994).

Nevertheless, our study makes a number of key contributions to research on moral development, conflict, and children's close relationships. Our findings build on past theory and research delineating how children's construals and judgments of conflict experiences are embedded in their differentiated histories of interactions with particular others (e.g., Slomkowski & Killen, 1992; Wainryb & Turiel, 1994) and documenting the manner in which children's own everyday experiences of harming others may contribute to the construction of moral agency (Pasupathi & Wainryb, 2010a) by. More specifically, our results reveal how, as they reflect on their own perpetration of harm against siblings and friends, children may struggle with the varied ways in which their own intentions, desires, and interpretations may inevitably clash with those of others. In this respect, our results provide new insight into how these relationships may make distinct contributions to children's understandings of themselves and others as imperfect but fundamentally moral agents. Finally, our results may have implications for how parents and

educators can intervene most fruitfully into children's conflicts with siblings and friends; by taking children's varied interpretations of their own experiences as a starting point (e.g., their relative emphasis on their own vs. others' perspectives), adults may be able to more effectively scaffold children's moral understandings across a wide variety of relationships.

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Table 1

Relationship Differences Between Descriptions of Harmful Behavior with Friends and Siblings

	Harm against Friends	Harm against Siblings	Overall
	M proportion of narratives *(SE)*	*M* proportion of narratives *(SE)*	*M* proportion of narratives *(SE)*
Types of Harm			
Offensive Behavior	.19 (.04)[a]	.43 (.05)[b]	.31 (.03)
Physical	.15 (.03)	.18 (.04)	.16 (.03)
Property	.13 (.03)[a]	.33 (.05)[b]	.23 (.03)
Relationship	.29 (.05)[a]	.09 (.03)[b]	.19 (.03)
Blocked Goal	.19 (.04)	.12 (.03)	.16 (.03)
Honesty/Insensitivity	.16 (.04)[a]	.04 (.02)[b]	.10 (.02)
Perpetrator's Reasons			
Unintentional	.12 (.03)	.16 (.04)	.14 (.02)
Benevolent	.08 (.03)[a]	.02 (.01)[b]	.05 (.02)
Emotional/impulsive	.11 (.03)[a]	.28 (.05)[b]	.20 (.03)
Goal	.32 (.05)	.36 (.05)	.34 (.03)
Malicious	.02 (.01)	.05 (.02)	.04 (.01)
Perpetrator's Misunderstanding	.12 (.03)	.09 (.03)	.10 (.02)
Provocation	.34 (.05)[a]	.47 (.05)[b]	.40 (.04)
Extenuating Circumstances	.16 (.04)[a]	.01 (.01)[b]	.09 (.02)
Ruthlessness	.12 (.03)[a]	.30 (.05)[b]	.21 (.03)
Mutuality	.46 (.05)	.51 (.05)	.49 (.04)
Relationship Context			
Congruent	.20 (.04)[a]	.54 (.05)[b]	.37 (.03)
Incongruent	.17 (.03)[a]	.03 (.02)[b]	.10 (.02)
Moral Concerns	.15 (.04)[a]	.26 (.04)[b]	.21 (.05)

*Note. M*s in the same row are labeled with different superscripts when posthoc Bonferroni tests revealed significant differences at *p* < .05. Proportions within a column may sum to greater than 1.0 for types of harm and reasons for harm because it was possible for multiple categories to be coded for the same narrative.

Table 2

Relationship Differences Between Descriptions of Friends' and Siblings' Perspectives and Responses to Harm

	Harm against Friends	Harm against Siblings	Overall
	M proportion of narratives *(SE)*	*M* proportion of narratives *(SE)*	*M* proportion of narratives *(SE)*
Victim's Perspective			
Goals	.47 (.05)	.49 (.05)	.48 (.03)
Cognitions	.34 (.05)	.24 (.04)	.29 (.03)
Emotions	.09 (.03)	.06 (.02)	.07 (.02)
Victim's Misunderstanding of Perpetrator's Behavior	.18 (.04)[a]	.06 (.02)[b]	.12 (.02)
Invalidating the Victim's Perspective	.18 (.04)	.27 (.05)	.22 (.03)
Emotional Consequences for the Victim			
Anger	.42 (.05)	.42 (.05)	.42 (.04)
Sadness	.30 (.05)	.25 (.04)	.27 (.04)
Responses to the Harm			
Victim Avoiding	.28 (.04)	.18 (.04)	.23 (.03)
Victim Escalating	.24 (.04)[a]	.35 (.05)[b]	.30 (.04)
Victim Expressing	.37 (.05)[a]	.20 (.04)[b]	.29 (.03)
Victim Crying	.13 (.03)[a]	.25 (.04)[b]	.19 (.03)
Victim Reacting with Anger	.01 (.01)[a]	.07 (.03)[b]	.04 (.01)
Adult Intervention	.14 (.03)[a]	.42 (.05)[b]	.28 (.03)

*Note. M*s in the same row are labeled with different superscripts when posthoc Bonferroni tests revealed significant differences at $p < .05$. Proportions within a column may sum to greater than 1.0 for victims' perspectives, emotional consequences, and responses, because it was possible for multiple categories to be coded for the same narrative.

Table 3

Age-Related Changes in the Differences Between Children's Accounts of Harming Their Friends and Siblings

	7-year-olds		11-year-olds		16-year-olds	
	Harm against Friends	Harm against Siblings	Harm against Friends	Harm against Siblings	Harm against Friends	Harm against Siblings
	M proportion of narratives *(SE)*	*M* proportion of narratives *(SE)*	*M* proportion of narratives *(SE)*	*M* proportion of narratives *(SE)*	*M* proportion of narratives *(SE)*	*M* proportion of narratives *(SE)*
Mutuality of Harm	.34 (.09)[a]	.60 (.09)[b]	.64 (.09)	.52 (.09)	.41 (.08)	.40 (.09)
Invalidating the Victim's Perspective	.08 (.07)[a]	.34 (.08)[b]	.15 (.07)	.27 (.08)	.30 (.07)	.21 (.08)
Emotional Consequences for the Victim (Sadness)	.35 (.08)[a]	.09 (.07)[b]	.33 (.08)	.21 (.08)	.21 (.08)[a]	.45 (.07)[b]

*Note. M*s in the same row are labeled with different superscripts when posthoc Bonferroni tests revealed significant simple effects of relationship type at *p* < .05.