Session II

*What are the key elements of parent-child relationships that facilitate successful transitions during young adulthood?*

The second session focused on the diversity and multi-faceted nature of young adults’ relationships with their parents, including the developmental history of those relationships. Speakers discussed ways in which children's early socio-emotional development and parent-child relationship quality are linked to young adult health, adjustment, achievement, and the parent-young adult relationship. Also of importance is how dimensions of parent-child relationships in young adulthood, ranging from emotional connectedness and contact to provision of material support, are linked to young adults’ well-being. Of special interest is whether family support and family relationships vary across groups defined by social class and race/ethnicity and by family members' values, cultural practices, and health and adjustment.

**Lead Speaker**

Karen Fingerman, Berner-Hanley Professor in Gerontology, Department Of Child Development & Family Studies, Purdue University

**Abstract**

Relationships between young adults and their parents have received considerable media attention in recent years. Research addressing this topic during the transition to adulthood are scant, however. Using data from the Family Exchanges Study and national data sets, we document parental involvement in the lives of young adult children (aged 18 to 24). Parents and offspring are highly involved in one another’s lives as evident by their phone conversations (more than once a week) and frequent parental financial, practical, and emotional support. This involvement represents an increase from parental involvement 30 years ago. Students are more likely to talk with parents by phone, and non-students are more likely to see parents in person. Students received more support from their parents than non-students, and that support contributed to their life satisfaction. Parents also use student status as an indicator of the offspring’s potential future success and experience more positive relationships with grown children they view as on target for achieving adult milestones.