



Gender and Longitudinal Relationships Between LOC Eating, Anxiety, and Depression in Adolescents

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INTRODUCTION

- Internalizing problems are theorized to be involved in the origins and outcomes of loss of control (LOC) eating, a robust risk factor for excess weight gain, especially for adolescent girls.
- Most research to date has focused on depression.
- More research is needed to examine gender differences in the temporal relationships among LOC, anxiety, and depression.

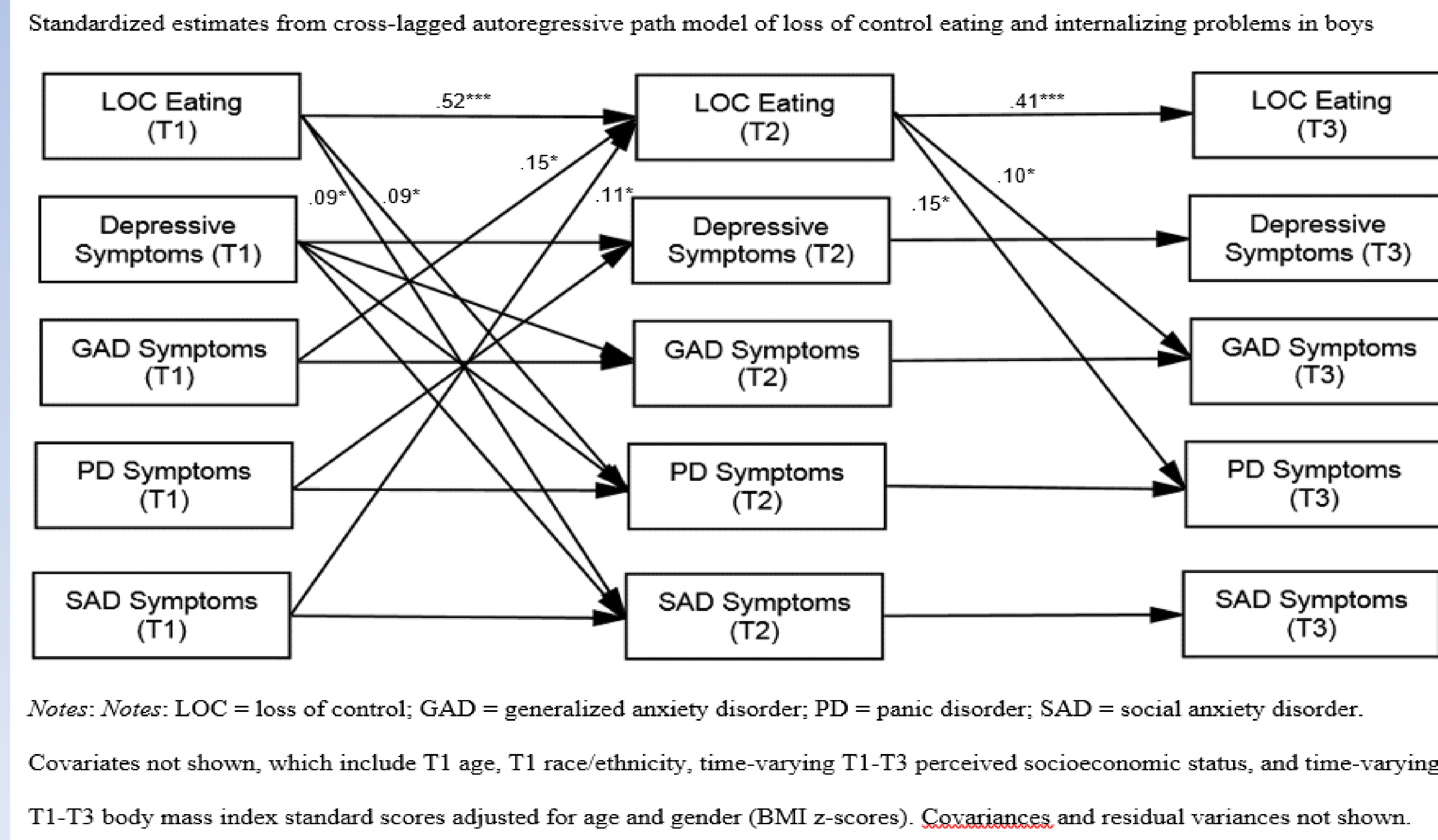
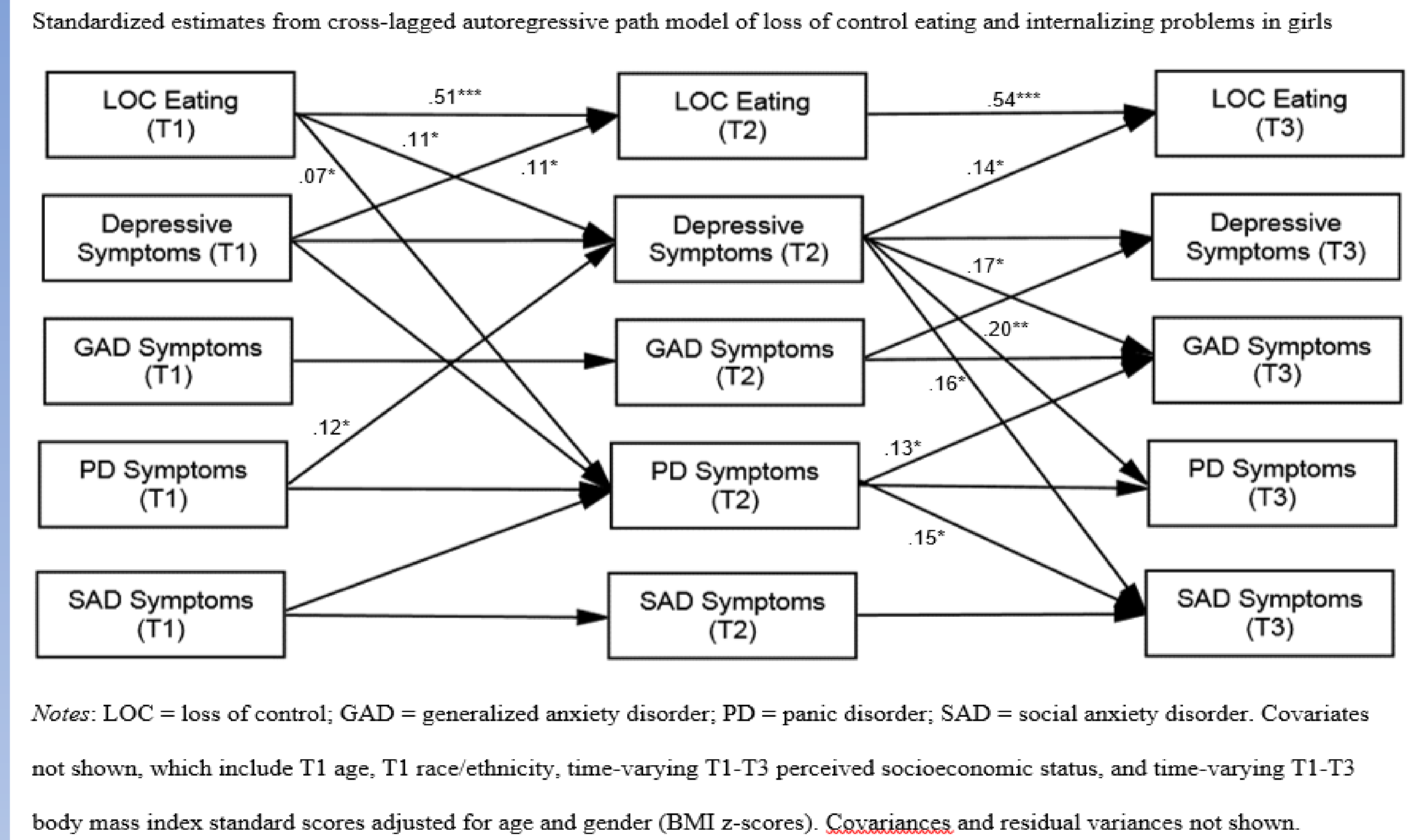
METHODS AND MATERIALS

- Participants were 1,344 U.S. adolescents (11-14 years; 51% girls; 51% non-Hispanic White).
- Validated questionnaires were administered during school in Fall 2016 (T1), Spring 2017 (T2), and Fall 2017 (T3)
- LOC eating (The Brief Loss of Control Eating Scale: α s=.93-.94)
- Anxiety (The Screen for Child Anxiety and Related Disorders: α s=.87-.91) and
- Depressive symptoms (The Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale for Children: α s=.91-.93)

RESULTS

- Gender differences were found for all parameters in multiple group analyses of an autoregressive cross-lagged path model ($ps < .001$; CFI=.97; RMSEA=.03, 90% CI_{RMSEA}=.02-.04).
- Covariates included age, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and BMI-z.
- Reciprocal longitudinal associations between LOC and depressive symptoms from T1 to T2 and T2 to T3 were found for girls (β s=.11-.14, $ps < .05$), but not boys (β s=.01-.04, $ps > .05$).
- Apart from LOC predicting increases in panic disorder symptoms from T1 to T2 (β =.07, $p < .05$), there were no direct relationships between LOC and anxiety in girls ($ps > .05$).
- Among boys, however, reciprocal longitudinal associations between LOC and generalized anxiety disorder symptoms were found from T1 to T2 and T2 to T3 (β s=.10-.11, $ps < .05$).
- Bidirectional associations between LOC and social anxiety disorder symptoms from T1 to T2 also were found for boys (β s=.09-.11, $ps < .05$).

RESULTS



CONCLUSIONS

- At baseline, gender differences were found for symptoms of depression and anxiety but not LOC.
- There was a bidirectional relationship between depressive symptoms and LOC for girls but not boys.
- A bidirectional relationship was found between anxiety and LOC for boys but not girls.

FUTURE RESEARCH

- These findings illuminate a relationship for boys as it relates to LOC that is not often reported upon, providing potential targets for intervention.
- Future research should further examine this relationship and whether intervention with one produces benefits in the other.
- Future research should also examine gender differences in youth identifying as transgender or gender diverse.