

PENNSTATE



Resiliency and Thriving in Families and Youth

September 2001

Volume 2, Number 3

Hello!

I cannot believe it, but the school year has begun and the dog days of summer are behind us. I know most of you are happy to be done with summer and the fairs. I really like this time of year around a university because there is a sense of excitement.

The research briefs in this newsletter focus on families, and, in particular, on important findings about parents and their children. In addition, several of the web resources in this newsletter focus on sites for parents and adolescents. I hope you find them useful.

Have a super Fall! Best regards.

Sincerely,



Daniel F. Perkins
Associate Professor
Family and Youth Resiliency and Policy

... What's Inside ...

Family Activity

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p.s. Remember, a star (*) indicates information requested by you.

FAMILY ACTIVITY

As families begin a new school year, it is a good time to make "school year resolutions." Ask your children to name one thing they would like to accomplish this year. For young children it may be learning to read or to write in cursive. An older child may choose something like joining a sports team or volunteering after school. Talk with your children about how they can achieve their goals. Write down their ideas about how they will try to accomplish their goals. Make sure to write out the resolution on a piece of paper next to the family calendar so it remains highly visible. Make a plan to celebrate as a family if those goals are achieved. Each week during the school year ask your children about their goals. Encourage them to keep on trying!

RESEARCH BRIEFS



Parental Power Against Youth Smoking and Drinking

In the past, the view has been that parents' influence over their teens' use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco drops dramatically as their teens enter adolescence. Peer pressure has been credited as the major factor in influencing a teen's decision to smoke or drink. However, recent studies show that teens whose parents smoke or drink are far more likely than the teens of non-smokers and non-drinkers to engage in these behaviors. Researchers believe that when parents smoke and drink, teens come to view these behaviors as normal elements of everyday life and have a more positive attitude towards tobacco and alcohol. This attitude towards tobacco and alcohol can influence teens' choices of peers. Adolescents often choose peers based on similarity of beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes, and studies find that parents who smoke and drink set the stage for their teens to select peers who are likely to become similarly involved with the use of these substances.

Parents can influence their teens' decisions to drink and smoke by talking to them about the negative effects of tobacco and alcohol. Children and teens whose parents talk to them about the dangers of smoking and drinking receive not only information, but also clear messages about their parents' views on using substances. ***Even in homes where parents actually engage in drinking and smoking, talking about the negative effects of these behaviors was found to be a powerful preventive for teens engaging in the same behaviors.*** Failure to discuss the dangers of alcohol and tobacco or to warn youth to avoid these substances may be interpreted by adolescents as tacit approval of substance use, especially in homes where parents use these substances.



Another way that parents can influence their teens' use of alcohol and tobacco is by using sanctions when they become aware of their teens' use. By sanctioning a teen's behavior, parents send the message that negative consequences will follow the action, while lack of consequences may be interpreted to mean that the behavior is actually acceptable. The deterrent value of parental reprimands and sanctions has been shown in a number of recent studies, and it seems clear that parents can use their influence to deter their teens from drinking and smoking.

Professionals involved with both parents and their teens need to reinforce the importance of parental influence and provide support for parents' attempts to influence their teens.

Found in: Johnson, P. B., & Johnson, H. L. (2001). Reaffirming the Power of Parental Influence on Adolescent Smoking and Drinking Decisions. Adolescent and Family Health, 2, 37-43.



Single Parent Families and Adolescents' Constructive Use of Time *

The purpose of this article is to examine what features of single-parent families are related to children's spending time in developmentally constructive activities. The study focused on mother-headed families because they account for the majority of one-parent families in the United States, and on families with adolescents because single parents also view this as a challenging age. The survey examined the role of family management (e.g., firm parental control, family routines, and mother's time spent in child-supportive activities), single parent's own use of time (e.g., working hours and use of free time), parents' mental health (e.g., degree of problem drinking and level of anxiety), and cooperation with a nonresident father in adolescents' constructive use of time.

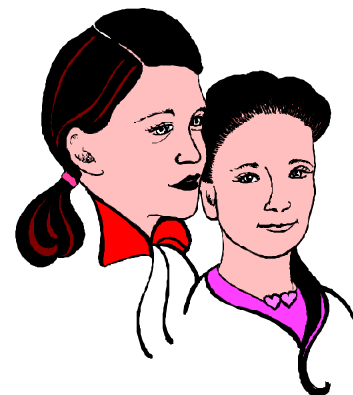
For the purposes of this article, constructive use of time was defined by four categories that research has shown have a longitudinal relationship with positive development: creative activities, sports, reading, and religious activities. Non-constructive time was defined as activities that have negative relations with development. TV watching has been associated with aggression, obesity, poor school performance, and other undesirable developmental outcomes and so was one of the non-constructive uses of time examined by this study. The other non-constructive use of time was "hanging out" in unstructured activities away from home, since it is related to deviant behaviors.

The results of this study showed that two of the "family management" variables were significant factors in adolescents' constructive use of time: firm parental control and family routines. When adolescents perceived that their mother exercised firm control, they spent more time in the constructive activities of reading and religious activities. Mothers who maintained firm control did not leave their children on their own or back off on their expectations. Many of these mothers described being actively involved in their

children's daily activities. Having a predictable family routine was also related to adolescents' constructive use of time, probably because, for older adolescents, being able to predict the behavior and schedules of their mothers and other family members allows them to be autonomous. Mothers' time spent in child-supportive activities had a less clear relation to adolescents' use of time. Adolescents whose mothers spent more time in such activities spent less time watching television, but did not seem to spend any more time in constructive activities. This suggests that having large amounts of available time is not critical for successful parenting of adolescents by single mothers.

In the "single parent's own use of time" category, only how mothers spent their free time appeared to effect adolescents' uses of free time. In families where mothers read more, teens also read more, and when mothers frequently attended religious activities, their children did, too. When mothers spent more of their free time watching television, adolescents spent less time in constructive activities. Having a job and the number of hours mothers worked was not found to affect how adolescents spent their time. There was also a relationship between quality of cooperation with a non-resident father and adolescents' constructive use of time. When cooperation was better, adolescents spent more time in constructive activities, particularly sports.

Found in: Larson, R., Dworkin, J., and Gillman, S. (2001). Facilitating Adolescents' Constructive Use of Time in One-Parent Families. Applied Developmental Science, 5, 143-157.



WEB RESOURCES

WWW Resilience Information
<http://resilnet.uiuc.edu/>

This site is a clearinghouse of information on resiliency. All areas of human resilience are included, although this site focuses on community resiliency, resiliency and life-long physical/mental health, resiliency related to culture, gender, and ethnicity, and children and adults at risk. Information is categorized as bibliographies, web sites, full text publications, conference information, and advice for everyday resiliency.



WWW After School Alliance
www.afterschoolalliance.org

The Afterschool Alliance is once again sponsoring *Lights On Afterschool!*, a national rally to support afterschool programs on October 11, 2001. On this day, communities around the country will participate in programs that highlight the afterschool programs at work in their hometown. At this site individuals can find a listing of events as well as information for planning a rally in their own community.

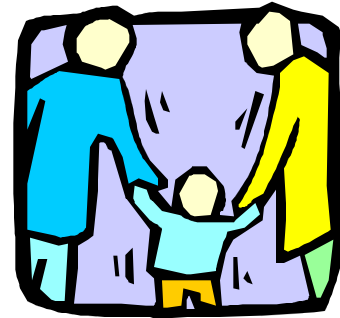
WWW CYFERnet Spanish Language Resources
http://twosocks.ces.ncsu.edu/cyfdb/search_1.php

To find Spanish Language resources on CYFERnet has resources in Spanish. You can search this website for exact results by completing as many fields in the search function as you want with titles, authors, or areas of interest and then change the "Language" field to Spanish. By leaving all the fields blank and only changing the "Language" field from English to Spanish, you can find all the resources entered into the CYFERnet database as Spanish language documents.

WWW Websites for Parents of Adolescents
<http://parentingteens.about.com/parenting/parentingteens> *

This informative site offers articles and discussion on a variety of topics for parents of adolescents. Some of the topics addressed include: drugs, sex, STD's, violence, money management, and college information. Links to other related sites are also included.

www.parentingresources.ncjrs.org
On this website, users can find links to other sites dealing with a spectrum of parenting and family issues. Links include youth and adolescent development, juvenile justice, health and safety, schooling concerns, and many others.



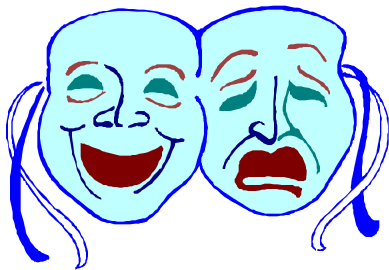
www.parenting.org
This website, sponsored by Boys Town USA, offers common sense advice on topics such as eating disorders, making friends, talking with your kids about school violence, and setting expectations. Parents' questions can be answered by a variety of parenting experts from Boys Town USA. A listing of parenting resources is also available.

<http://ag.del.edu/fam/resources/adolescence.htm>
This website from the University of Delaware's Cooperative Extension provides a variety of resources dealing with adolescents including current research, programming resources, and a listing of organizations dealing with adolescence and child advocacy.

WW Youth Theatre

http://members.nbc.com/_XMCM/pmartin/liberia/text_play_rehearsals.htm

P.O.W.E.R (Pupil Owned Written Enacted Recognized) offers a guide to using theatre as a way to develop youth creativity and self-esteem. It promotes youth ownership of the entire creative process and encourages their meaningful involvement in all aspects of the production. On the site, you may investigate the various steps followed to create a student written play or go directly to the play "Deep in the Bush, Where People Rarely Ever Go" based on an African folktale.



WW Coalition for Low Income Community Development

<http://www.clgcd.org/map/index.htm>

This site highlights the work of the CLICD, a national coalition that works to help low-income families and individuals benefit from the Community Development Block Grant Program and other community development programs. The Coalition provides information and assistance to aid communities in participating in their own development. It also helps with organization, training, and development of public policy. While visiting this site, guests can learn more about community mapping, census information, Block Grants, and citizen participation in community development.



WW COMING SOON

Reading Wizards: Parents and Children
Reading Together -- Additional Series

A series of six bulletins on reading with children was developed in spring of last year. These bulletins are designed for parents of children between the ages of 5 and 12. Another four bulletins are currently under development to address the needs of reading-improvised families. These new bulletins are written for young children and make use of Dr. Seuss books for reading enhancement. As before, the bulletins will include tips on how to make the most of reading time with your children, as well as activities for parents and children child to do together. An email flyer will be sent out this fall to educators for registration to receive the materials. Anyone who did not receive the first series can contact me via email to receive them.

PO\$\$IBLE FUNDING \$OURCES\$

\$ The Edward W. Hazen Foundation
<http://www.hazenfoundation.org/>

The Edward W. Hazen Foundation will distribute 7 million dollars over the years 1999-2003 to organizations that assist young people, (particularly minorities or impoverished people). Grants are awarded to grassroots and community-based organizations that focus on public education and youth development. Areas of interest to the Hazen Foundation include: the organization of communities to support public school reform, training of youth to be active in community issues, and development of leadership in communities. Grant guidelines can be downloaded in PDF format from this page.

\$ The John Deere Foundation
<http://www.deere.com/NR/rdonlyres/000065a1vjbjjejj.pdf>

The John Deere Foundation offers grants to non-profit organizations focusing on the following priorities: education, issues seen as important to research, recruitment or training in the John Deere Corporation, health and human development, civic and community development, and culture and the arts. Grants must be submitted in writing and are awarded on an as-needed basis. Previously funded programs include: Minority Engineering Program at Purdue University, The United Way Organization, Community Red Cross programs, and the national FFA foundation.

*Please check out new links for strengths-based programs
on the FYRP Website:
<http://AgExtEd.cas.psu.edu/fcs/dp/fyrrp.html>*



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