

Sabbatical Leave Report

During my sabbatical leave, I reexamined my previous research, "Ecological Influences on Adolescent Behavior," and the variables that contributed to successful, at-risk, and delinquent behavior in adolescents. Interestingly, some of the most significant contributions to adolescent outcomes found in the original study were parental and family influences. Although these variables were included in the study, they were not the primary focus. However, I found that adolescents engaging in more prosocial activities and fewer delinquent behaviors reported engaging in more family activities each week than adolescents engaging in at-risk or delinquent behaviors. These results supported the positive effect for families engaging in frequent family activities, which in turn increased adolescent involvement and interaction with family members. During my sabbatical, I analyzed the parenting and family variables that were included in my original research project that were not a focus of the study. After completing these analyses, I completed my review of the current literature in the field and became more familiar with the recent research. Familiarizing myself with the current literature provided direction for the future research that is needed in the field. My sabbatical project allowed me to extend my original research by creating a more sophisticated experimental design that combines adolescent and parent pairs. This pairing of adolescents and parents will allow for additional analyses and go beyond the previous research that only examined adolescents' perspectives and reports of parenting and family issues. Unfortunately, social distancing and limitations caused by Covid related shut-downs created some roadblocks for my research. The pace of my research has slowed in some areas, but has become more focused and taken on a qualitative research approach. The parent-child interaction and "play" will continue to be examined and its direct and indirect connections to family therapy frameworks.