



Volume 5, Number 2
Summer 2010

Contents

Feature Articles

Parenting Style and the Timing of Jewish Adolescents' Sexual Debut

[Article 100502FA001]

Etzkin, Robby; Barnett, Rosemary V.; Smith, Suzanna; Schwartz, Stuart E.; Baugh, Eboni J.

Parenting style and its effect on the timing of Jewish adolescents' sexual debuts were examined in the reported study. One hundred sixty-eight research participants between the ages of 18 and 22 from a large university in the Southeast participated in the study. A survey instrument was administered at three fraternities and two sororities to examine parenting style and sexual debut retrospectively. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, frequency chi square tests, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA); while post hoc results were determined through Tukey's honestly significant difference.

Results found that authoritative parenting provides a delay in the age of sexual debut for Jewish adolescents. All other parenting styles had mean ages less than the overall mean age of sexual debut, 17.10 years old, with indifferent parenting having the earliest debut. These findings suggest that parenting style may affect the timing of Jewish adolescents' sexual debut. The study has implications for understanding factors that may affect the timing of a Jewish adolescent's sexual debut and may help parents protect their adolescent from the negative effects associated with early sexual debut, such as low academic achievement.

Recommendations for future research include exploring the effects of family structure and peer networks to understand fully the many factors that affect the timing of adolescents' sexual debut.

Getting Real Results with Ohio State University Extension's *Real Money. Real World.* Program [Article 100502FA002]

Ferrari, Theresa M.; Bateson, Lisa; Hudson, Nancy; Bridgeman, Beth; Cochran, Graham

Youth development organizations have a unique opportunity to offer programs that help young people develop financial skills they need to become successful adults. This article describes Ohio State University Extension's *Real Money. Real World.* (RMRW) and the systematic approach used to evaluate its effectiveness. The RMRW curriculum includes an active, hands-on experience that gives young people the opportunity to make lifestyle and budget choices similar to those they will make as adults. The realistic simulation creates a teachable moment. The outcomes of the statewide evaluation clearly indicate the curriculum accomplishes its goals of raising awareness, changing attitudes, and motivating students to plan for behavior changes concerning financial management, education, and career choices. The article concludes with a discussion of the organizational outcomes of conducting the evaluation.

Structural Social Work Lens: A View of Youth Engagement in the Social Policy Life of their Communities [Article 100502FA003]

Hardy Cox, Donna; Sullivan, E. Michelle; Sullivan, Nancy E.

Presented through a structural social work lens, this paper is a description and analysis of an action research project designed to explore factors that encourage or impede the engagement of youth in the social policy life of their communities. The project was conceptualized in a geographic region characterized by the erosion of community sustainability due to social economic disadvantage and out migration. The project aimed to strengthen communities by enhancing participation of youth in social policy development. It utilized a workshop designed and delivered by youth for youth and the development a Social Policy Action Plan (SPAP) to address a policy issue of concern in youth's local community. Principles of structural social work, with particular attention to power sharing, unmasking the structures, collective consciousness, transformation of power/political and personal change, social action and community capacity building are applied as a lens to explore this project.

Program Articles

Pairing Educational Robotics with Geospatial Technologies in Informal Learning Environments [Article 100502PA001]

Barker, Bradley S.; Grandgenett, Neal; Nugent, Gwen; Adamchuk, Viacheslav I.

Educational robotics, when paired with geospatial technologies and taught in an informal educational environment, can be an innovative strategy to teach youth about science, technology, engineering, and mathematic (STEM) concepts. However, little is known about the true effects on conceptual knowledge and associated attitudes. Therefore, this study was conducted to examine the short-term effects of a series of five-day summer robotics/geospatial camps held in Nebraska. The study was conducted at six diverse locations and consisted of a five-day 4-H camp experience. The study examined the experiences of 147 youth between the ages of 10 and 15. A pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design was used in the study. Instrumentation consisted of a 37-question multiple-choice assessment targeting various STEM topics and a 38-question attitude questionnaire assessing STEM interests and attitudes. Results suggest that the 4-H robotics and geospatial summer camp program is a promising approach for supporting STEM-related learning and enhancing attitudes towards STEM.

Service Learning Through Disaster Relief [Article 100502PA002]

Duerst, Donna J.

The Rock County 4-H Disaster Relief Committee raised \$1,550 to aid tsunami victims in Sri Lanka and then turned its attention to Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. Thirty-one 4-H youth participated in a service learning trip to the South with the objectives of helping hurricane victims, learning about new cultures and achieving personal growth during three days of service projects in Louisiana and Mississippi. Their written reflections and other evaluative measures revealed they learned about southern culture, gained a greater appreciation for their lives, gained self confidence and developed a desire to help others more often. The trip was a valuable developmental experience for the youth, and information from the trip could be utilized to create similar experiences based on service learning. This article provides an overview of the trip and describes the evaluation methods used to measure learning and assess personal growth.

Using an Active Learning Approach (the 4-H model) to Stimulate Social Change: Youth and Community Development in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan

[Article 100502PA003]

Kock, Timothy K.

As Kyrgyzstan recovers from the collapse of the Soviet Union, the youth of this Newly Independent State (NIS) face troubling times. Poverty has become all too familiar throughout the country; its people, including youth, are losing hope and question their ability to be productive members of society (Lines & Kock, 2004). Kyrgyzstan's future leaders – like all nations - are found among its youth of today. Therefore, it behooves the government and citizens of Kyrgyzstan to develop youth centers designed to enhance the skills young people need to succeed now and in the future.

This paper describes a program designed to teach Kyrgyz youth and adults teamwork, and civic responsibility through experiential learning activities. The paper outlines the steps taken and results derived from the hands-on trainings provided to the participants in one location in Kyrgyzstan. Findings from this study may have implications for other international youth development projects.

Research and Evaluation Strategies

What's Going On? Developing Program Theory for Evaluation [Article 100502RS001]

Arnold, Mary E.; Nott, Brooke D.

This paper outlines the process undertaken to develop a program logic model into a program theory that could be tested through a large scale evaluation. Logic models are widely promoted to establish program intention and outcomes, thus setting the stage for effective program evaluation. However, the causal links in program logic models are often assumptive in nature, and lack the specificity of conditions needed in order for the program to achieve its planned success.

The authors share a process of observation and focus groups that allowed them to probe some of the links of the program logic model. The result presented is an "enhanced" logic model that reveals possible moderators of program success, which leads to the development of evaluation questions that will be used in a subsequent large-scale evaluation. The value of using an enhanced logic model for program evaluation leading to program policy changes and improvement is underscored.

Connecting and Communicating Effectively with Teens – An Online Survey of Teen Communication Styles [Article 100502RS002]

Bovitz, Laura

The lives of most teens are rapidly changing and involve methods of communication that are unfamiliar to many adults. An online teen communication survey was developed to assess how and why teens communicate in order to assist adult educators in developing more effective methods of communication with this audience. The survey was completed by 148 teens ranging in age from 13 to 19. The results of the survey provide insight into teen viewpoints on their preferred methods of communication and provides valuable lessons for adults who work with this age group.

Resource Review

Local Food: Does it Matter What You Eat? [Article 100502RR001]

Raison, Brian

Everybody eats. Period. Some of us prefer hamburgers. Some like veggies. But *what* we eat is only the beginning. Increasingly, interest in *where* our foods are grown and processed has

emerged. As numerous grass roots organizations proffer information on local foods, it becomes critical for research-based youth programs to also encourage study on this topic. This article introduces a new curriculum that aims to help students learn about what we eat, where it comes from, and how it impacts the environment. The main goal is to help participants understand the concept of *local food systems*, how they operate, and how students and their families can be involved in creating positive changes. It targets students in grade school thru high school. By stimulating their interest at an early age, we can encourage their participation in the local food systems movement. The curriculum is available as a self-study guide at no cost. Email: raison.1@osu.edu.