Pew Research Proposal Union University

Cover Sheet

Name(s) of Applicant(s): Mollie D. K. Carter

Title of Proposed Project:

From Train up a Child to Remain in Me: How Perceived Parenting Styles, Faith Maturity, and Satisfaction Predict Social Media Self-Control

Primary Discipline:

Psychology

Has this proposal been submitted to another agency, publication, or program (including for the Union University Research/Study Leave)? No

If so, which one(s)? N/A

Location of proposed research: Union University Department of Psychology

Desired start date: The method will begin October 31, 2023.

Recommending Scholars and their disciplines:

External: K. Paul Nesselroade, Chair of the Department of Psychology and Director of the Honors Program at Asbury University

Union: David Vickery, University Professor of Psychology, Union University

In consultation together, we recommend the approval of the proposal as an acceptable project and affirm that the applicant has the professional wherewithal to accomplish the project satisfactorily.

From Train Up a Child to Remain in Me: How Perceived Parenting Styles, Faith Maturity, and Satisfaction Predict Social Media Self-Control

Mollie D. K. Carter

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the PEW grant at Union University 2023-2024

2. Statement of the End Products

I intend to present this research at the Union University PEW luncheon in April of 2025 and at the Christian Association of Psychological Science conference in Spring of 2025. I also intend to present this research at the American Association of Christian Counseling conference in Fall of 2025. I intend to submit a journal article to the Journal of Psychology and Theology, the Journal of Psychology and Christianity, or another similar journal. I hope that this study will begin a line of research on satisfaction in Christ and the fruit of self-control/moderation.

3. Project Description/ Explanation of the Scholarly Activity

I. Statement of the Scholarly Activity

The current mixed methods study will 1) qualitatively explore perceived parenting styles and perceived parental social media mediation styles in adolescence as they relate to emerging adult social media self-control; 2) qualitatively explore faith maturity, satisfaction, and social media self-control; 3) seek to confirm the findings of the qualitative exploration with quantitative data.

II. Description of the Activity and its Goals

Activity

The current study is a mixed methods interview and survey study of perceptions of parenting styles, perceptions of parental mediation of social media use, faith maturity, and satisfaction on social media self-control. The current study will involve sequential mixed methods, where the qualitative portion will be completed first. The researchers intend to use a grounded theory approach to qualitative data gathering and analysis. Grounded theory is well-suited for comparing previous knowledge with new responses (Strauss 1987). The researcher will sort the responses by question and use the participants' own words to derive initial categories (Strauss 1987). Next, focused coding will occur when certain responses are noted frequently (Glaser and Holton 2004). Then, constant comparison was carried out between categories that emerged with prior coding steps for the final themes to emerge. Throughout the coding process, the researcher will write notes to make connections from emerging themes to concepts in psychological literature (Corbin and Strauss 1990). Two additional coders will be trained and will code the data to ensure inter-coder reliability.

Participants will respond to interview questions about the way they were parented and give examples of the standards their parents implemented for their behavior and achievement, the ways parents supported their efforts, and how parents monitored their social media use. Next, participants will respond to questions about their personal religious practices, such as frequency, intensity, and type of spiritual disciplines. Participants will respond to interview questions about their satisfaction with their life and the source(s) of their satisfaction. Finally, participants will respond to interview questions about their social media use that will attempt to identify the frequency, duration, intensity, emotions, and concerns about their social media use to determine the extent to which they can control their use. The IRB will approve the interview questions prior to gathering qualitative data, although one advantage to grounded theory is that additional questions can emerge during data gathering.

Subsequent to the qualitative data-analysis, a survey will be set up in Qualtrics to assess emerging adults' perceptions of their parents' style of parenting, perceptions of their parents social media mediation styles, faith maturity, satisfaction, and social media self-control.

Variables may be added or removed based on the qualitative portion, as is the case with data-driven, mixed methods research.

Participants for the qualitative portion (n = 20-30) will be recruited from undergraduate Psychology courses. Participants in the qualitative portion will be compensated for their time with an Amazon gift card (see the Budget).

Participants for the quantitative survey will be recruited from the population of traditional undergraduate students of the host university. Prospective participants will be recruited by social media, university group chats, text message, email, and QR codes advertised outside the dining hall and around the university. Prospective participants will follow the link or QR code to the

Qualtrics webpage that introduces the study with informed consent. Participants will endorse their consent and proceed to the survey. All participants must be 18-29 to fit the category of emerging adult.

The primary investigator will clean the data and conduct the analyses in SPSS and PROCESS for SPSS. The investigator will likely consult an additional statistician to confirm the results (see the Budget). The analysis will consist of correlations and path models using structural equation modeling.

Goals

The overarching goal of the study is to begin a line of research to help Christian parents teach their youth to be good stewards of social media. The first objective of this study is to establish any connection that may exist between perceived parenting styles and social media mediation styles used by parents of emerging adults when they were adolescents. The second objective of this study is to determine if perceived parental social media mediation styles used by parents of emerging adults when they were adolescents contributed to social media self-control. The third objective of this study is to determine if a path exists from emerging adult faith maturity to life satisfaction, to social media self-control, extending McCullough and Willoughby's (2009) framework to self-control on social media, specifically. The final objective is to quantitatively determine if a path exists from parenting styles to social media mediation styles to social media self-control, where the segment of the path from parental social media mediation styles is moderated by faith maturity and life satisfaction.

III. Theoretical Framework

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of development suggests that functioning occurs at the level of what an individual can do on their own or what they can do with help (Fox &

Riconscente, 2008). Vygotsky's theory has been extended to the understanding of emotional and behavioral regulation, which proceeds from being completely externally controlled in infancy, to being controlled with help in childhood and adolescence, to eventually being internally controlled in adolescence and adulthood (Holodynski, 2013). Researchers use the term *coregulation* to describe the process of scaffolding the regulation of emotions and behavior. Parents engage in co-regulating their children's behavior according to a theoretical framework known as parenting styles (Baumrind, 2005), which we expect to be directly related to the theoretical framework of parental mediation of media use (Nikken & Jansz, 2013), such that parenting style influences parental mediation of media use, which influences social media self-control.

Additionally, since self-control is due to more than co-regulatory factors, I have developed the current study using an additional theoretical framework that indicates that faith maturity is associated with self-control (McCullough & Willoughby, 2009; Carter et al., 2012), and I will extend this theory to specifically examine faith maturity and social media self-control (see statement on Christian faith).

IV. Brief examination of scholarly literature or context of the activity within your discipline.

Baumrind (2005) developed a theory of parenting styles with four dominant parenting styles arranged along two continuum: demandingness and warmth. Authoritarian parents are high in demandingness and low in warmth, and their children tend to grow into adults who are submissive but may lack *self*-control due to unrelenting external control. Authoritative parents are high in demandingness and warmth, and their children tend to grow into adults who are self-controlled because their parents talked to them and negotiated such that they internalized behavioral standards (Baumrind, 2005). Permissive parents are low in demandingness and high in warmth, and their children tend to grow into adults who exhibit lack of self-control because they had few rules to follow. Finally, neglectful parents were low in demandingness and warmth

or demonstrated inconsistency, which yields adults who are the least self-controlled. Overall, parenting styles represent patterns of behavior that parents use to socialize their children (Baumrind, 2005).

Since individuals raised by authoritative parents are known to demonstrate self-control more than individuals raised by parents using other styles (Li et al., 2019), I hypothesize that emerging adults who report they were raised by parents with an authoritative parenting style will demonstrate higher social media self-control than those raised by parents who used an authoritarian, permissive, or neglectful/inconsistent style. See Figure 1.

Social media expansion in the 21st century has presented the need for parental mediation of social media related behaviors, such as the content viewed and the time spent on social media. Previous research conceptualizes parental mediation of social media use in two categories (Nikken & Jansz, 2006). Some parents use *restrictive mediation* by restricting the content and time a youth spends on social media. Other parents provide direct instruction and use conversations to discuss their youth's social media habits, known as *active mediation* (Nikken & Jansz, 2006).

Although previous research has studied parenting styles and parental mediation of adolescent media (Hwang et al., 2017), no previous research has established a *relationship* between parenting styles and styles of parental mediation of adolescent social media use. We hypothesize that emerging adults who report being raised by authoritative parents, who demonstrate warm communication with their adolescents, will also report their parents actively mediated their social media use in adolescence by having conversations about social media habits. We hypothesize that the emerging adults who report being raised by authoritarian parents, who set limitations without explanations, will also report their parents used restrictive mediation

by limiting the content and time spent on social media without explanation. We hypothesize that emerging adults who report being raised by parents with a permissive parenting style will report their parents demonstrated neither restrictive nor active social media mediation. We hypothesize that emerging adults who report being raised by parents with a neglectful/inconsistent parents will report their parents demonstrated neither restrictive nor active social media mediation or that they did so inconsistently. Taken together, these hypotheses form a path from parenting styles to social media self-control and propose parental social media mediation style as a mediator of the path. See Figure 1.

Emerging adult behavior is not only influenced by parenting styles and parental mediation but also by individual factors. One individual factor known to influence self-control is personal religiosity (McCullough & Willoughby, 2009). I propose an extension to this framework by substituting faith maturity for personal religiosity (see Christian faith statement) and social media self-control for general self-control because of the increasing extent to which lives and relationships are being carried out online. Although self-monitoring has been proposed as a mediator of the path from faith maturity to self-control (Carter et al., 2012), I hypothesize that satisfaction will also be a mediator of this path. Previous research indicates that faith maturity is associated with satisfaction (Gauthier et al., 2006), and that individuals lower in satisfaction have less control over their social media use (Longstreet & Brooks, 2017). See Figure 2.

Finally, I propose a moderated mediation model with each of the previous elements, such that a mediation path will exist from parenting styles to parental mediation on social media to emerging adult social media self-control, and that the path from parental mediation to social

media self-control will be stronger (moderated) for individuals who report faith maturity and that they are satisfied in life. See Figure 3.

V. Connection to Ernest Boyer's Model of Scholarship.

Ernest Boyer's (1990) model of scholarship supports discovery, integration, application, and innovative teaching as scholarship. The current research fits into each of these categories. The current study is original research because while there is general knowledge that satisfaction is associated with self-control, and that self-control is associated with social media outcomes. However, there is no theoretical framework of the path from satisfaction to social media outcomes. The current research is integrative because scripture informs the proposed theoretical framework that the ability to control oneself regarding moderate use of anything, including social media, is rooted in satisfaction in Christ. The current research is applicable and teachable because it is important for parents and mentors to teach how to be satisfied in Christ and how to monitor thoughts associated with social media use.

Figure 1

Mediation Path from Parenting Style to Social Media Self-Control

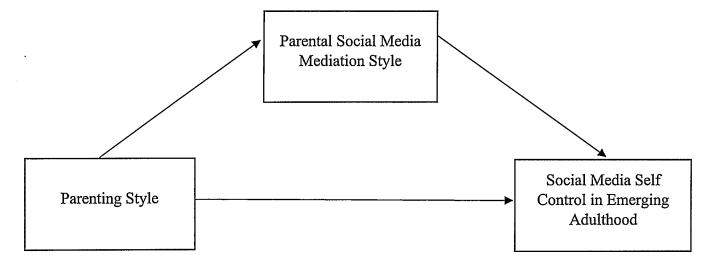


Figure 2

Mediation Path from Faith Maturity to Social Media Self-Control

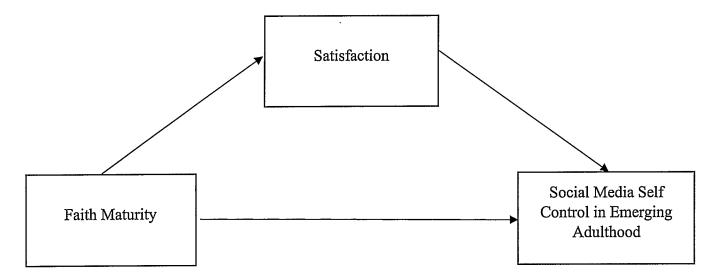
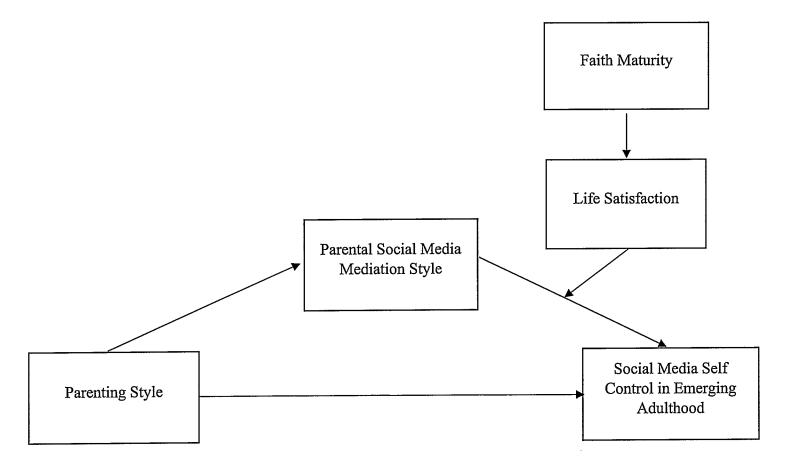


Figure 3

Moderated Mediation Path Model to Social Media Self-Control



References

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- Longstreet, P., & Brooks, S. (2017). Life satisfaction: A key to managing internet and social media addiction. Technology in Society, 50, 73-77.

 https://doi.org/10/1016/j.techsoc.2017.05.003
- McCullough, M. E., & Willoughby, B. L. B. (2009). Religion, self-regulation, and self-control:

 Associations, explanations, and implications. Psychological Bulletin.

 https://doi.org/10/1037/0033-2909
- Nikken, P., & Jansz, J. (2014). Developing scales to measure potential mediation of young children's internet use. Learning, Media, and Technology, 39(2), 250-266. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2013.782038
- Strauss, Ansel L. 1987. Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

4. An essay (500 - 1000 words) describing how the Christian faith relates to your understanding of your discipline and how it relates to this scholarly endeavor.

Discipline Specific

The Christian faith is the foundation of my understanding of the discipline of Psychology. Psychological traditions propose varying views on topics such as human nature, psychopathology, human flourishing, and relationships. No theory of psychology is comprehensive, and each theory has flaws and well-known criticisms. Thus, it is important to look outside the field of psychology for a reliable source of truth from which to evaluate the foundation, contributions, and evidence-based practices associated with each psychological tradition. The Bible is the ultimate source of truth—living, active, infallible, and historically accurate. The Bible reliably asserts that humans are made in the image of God, but due to the fall of mankind, humans are sinful and incapable of doing good apart from God without selfish motives. The Bible explains that pathology and death are the consequences of original sin, and that suffering is the result of personal sin, the sin of others, the impact of sin on the world and the human body, an opportunity for the glory of God to be on display, or a combination of these factors. The Bible provides wisdom for living and flourishing, both individually and in relationships with others. Therefore, I assess the foundations and assumptions of psychological theories based on these truths. I acknowledge and utilize evidence-based practices that have arisen from traditions that are manmade, and therefore faulty, but I do not elevate the use of theories or evidence-based practices over the truth and wisdom of scripture.

Due to human inability to atone for sin, Jesus took on flesh, lived a sinless life, and took our sin upon himself as He died. Jesus rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven, where He sits at the right hand of God and intercedes for believers. Following Jesus's ascent, the Holy Spirit

was poured out initially on the Day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit convicts of sin, points to Jesus, fills believers at salvation and continuously thereafter, and gives gifts to believers for the equipping and edifying of the body of Christ. These truths are the cornerstone of transformational psychology and doing psychology well in the Spirit, as proposed by John Coe and Todd Hall (2010).

Project Specific

The very framework of the current study is distinctly Christian. First, I assert that parents have an opportunity to instill values associated with social media self-control that could impact an emerging adult's self-control of social media use. It is up to parents to instill what is right in a child/adolescent (Christian Standard Bible, 2017, Proverbs 22:6), but, especially concerning novel social media, sometimes parents don't know how to teach media literacy and sometimes children to not internalize that instruction. An Old Testament scholar once told me that a more accurate interpretation of Proverbs 22:6 is, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he won't be able to get away from it" (Christian Standard Bible, 2017). That is a powerful translation that removes the sole focus of good outcomes in adulthood away from parenting and puts the focus on the One who leaves the 99 sheep to go after the one who has strayed (Christian Standard Bible, 2017, Matthew 18:13). Thus, since parenting cannot be the sole impetus for cultivating self-control, the second path of the current study focuses on the potential for the Christ to perform the sanctifying work of social media self-control in the life of a believer. Jesus said:

I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. Every branch in me that does not produce fruit he removes, and he prunes every branch that produces fruit so that it will

produce more fruit. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I in you. Just as a branch is unable to produce fruit by itself unless it remains on the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me. (Christian Standard Bible, 2017, John 15: 1-6).

The second point of integration in the current study is that, while parenting may have to do with social media self-control, it is the faith maturing that results from remaining in Christ that produce the fruit of self-control (Christian Standard Bible, 2017, Galatians 5:22), and in this case, social media self-control. I hypothesize that the mechanism mediating faith maturity and social media self-control is satisfaction. A branch that is attached to the vine is nourished and stabilized by the vine, just as an emerging adult who is mature in their faith will be nourished and satisfied by the Bread of Life (Christian Standard Bible, 2017, John 6:35). In turn, an emerging adult who is satisfied in Christ will be able to control their use of social media because their satisfaction is not found in likes, shares, comments, and followers.

5. A time frame for the completion and a plan for the dissemination of the project.

Date/Date Range	Event
October 2023	Obtain IRB approval for qualitative
November-December 2023	Qualitative interviews
December-February 2023-2024	Coding qualitative data
March 2024	Obtain IRB approval for quantitative
April 2024	Gather quantitative data
May 2024	Analyze data
June 2024	Write the report and submit to JPC or JPT –
	do revisions as the article is returned
September 2024	Submit the abstract to present research at
•	Christian Association of Psychological
	Studies 2025 conference
March 2025	Present research at CAPS
April 2025	Present research at PEW research luncheon
September 2025	Present research at American Association of
	Christian Counselors

6. A Brief Budget

Item	Cost
Statistical Consulting – I run analyses myself,	Up to \$200.00
but I like to have a consultant check over my	
work and run any additional analyses I need –	
up to 4 hours of work.	
Participant compensation for qualitative	Up to \$600.00
research (approximately 30 \$20.00 gift cards)	
Registration for Christian Association of	Approximately \$480.00
Psychological Studies Conference (CAPS)	
2025 (approximately \$480.00)	
Conference Hotel CAPS (approximately	Approximately \$800.00
\$800.00)	
Flight to CAPS (I believe it will be in	Approximately \$1,000.00
California in 2025)	
CAPS meals (\$60.00 per day for 4 days =	Approximately \$240.00
\$240.00)	
Open Source Publication Fees (remaining	Approximately \$1180.00
\$1180.00)	
Total (approximate)	\$4500.00

7. Synopsis of the previous Pew grant

I am grateful to have received a Pew research grant for the 2022-2023 academic year. I successfully designed the Christian self-compassion curriculum, carried it out in seven undergraduate psychology courses as a character-development assignment, and assessed the intervention with a baseline and application measure of self-compassion, academic grit, state anxiety, and trait anxiety. I am happy to report that the Christian self-compassion curriculum was effective at increasing self-compassion and decreasing trait anxiety. The intervention did not produce a change in academic grit or state anxiety.

This project has been fully disseminated. On September 16th, 2023, I presented this research at the biennial conference of the American Association of Christian Counselors. Two-hundred fifty counselors attended my 75-minute workshop to learn how to understand and implement the Christian self-compassion intervention. I have submitted this research to present it at the Christian Association of Christian Counselors conference in 2024. Additionally, this article has been accepted for publication in the Journal of Psychology and Christianity, and in currently in press. Please accept this as evidence that I can produce faithful scholarship in accordance with a proposed timeline.

Mollie D. K. Carter, PhD, LPC/MHSP

Personal Information

mdcarter@uu.edu

Professional License

State of Tennessee Department of Health

March 2017-present

Licensed Professional Counselor with Mental Health Service Provider designation License Number LPC0000003847

Education

Ph.D The University of Memphis

May 2020

Educational Psychology and Research

M.A. Oral Roberts University; Tulsa, OK

May 2013

Mental Health Counseling

B.S. Union University; Jackson, TN

May 2011

Psychology Minor: Biology

Research Experience

Presentations

- Carter, M. D. K., Blalack, J. L. (2023). The introduction of a Christian self-compassion curriculum. 75-minute workshop presented at American Association of Christian Counseling World Conference. Nashville, TN.: September, 2023.
- Carter, M. D. K., Dean, J., & Miller-Eschlemann, M. (2022). A path from spiritual abuse to attachment to God: Adult attachment as a mediator. Poster presented at Christian Association of Psychological Science Convention. Louisville, KY.: April, 2022.
- Carter, M. D. K., & Blalack, J. L. (2021). Spiritual modeling and perspective-taking in the discipleship of emerging adults. 75-minute workshop presented at American Association of Christian Counseling World Conference. Orlando, FL.: September, 2021.
- Walden, L., Carter, M. D. K., & Carmack, R. (2021). Harm Reducing A-CRA Implementation Decreases Truancy and Disciplinary Action. Paper presented at National Association of School Psychologists Conference. Virtual.: February, 2021.

- Carter, M. D. K., & Yang, C-c. (2019). A path to compulsive social media use: Social media social comparison as a moderator. Poster presented at American Association of Christian Counseling World Conference. Nashville, TN.: October, 2019.
- Carter, M. D. K., & Yang, C-c. (2018). A path to compulsive social media use: Entrapment as a mediator, gender as a moderator. Poster presented at Society for Research on Adolescence. Minneapolis, MN.: April, 2018.
- Carter, M. D. K., Yang, C-c., & Holden, S. M. (2017). Loneliness, entrapment, and compulsive social media use: A path model. Presented at Society for Studies of Emerging Adulthood. Washington, D. C.: November, 2017.

Publications

- Carter, M. D. K., Blalack, J. L., and King, K. L. (2023). The translation and efficacy of a Christian self-compassion intervention. Manuscript accepted for publication by the *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*.
- Carter, M. D. K. (2023). The social psychology of masking among undergraduates in a predominantly conservative region. *PS: Political Science and Politics* special issue on COVID-19 and Higher Education, 56(3), 373-376. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096523000185.
- Carter, M. D. K. (2022). Paths from spiritual support to college self-efficacy in southeastern Christian and southeastern public university students. *Journal of Curriculum Studies Research* special issue 4(1): 1-17. http://doi.org/10.46303/jcsr.2022.2
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- Yang, C-c., Holden, S. M., & Carter, M. D. K. (2018). Social media social comparison of ability (but not opinion) predicts lower identity clarity: Identity processing style as a mediator. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, doi: 10.1007/s10964-017-0801-6.

Yang, C-c., Holden, S. M., & Carter, M. D. K. (2017). Emerging adults' social media self-presentation and identity development at college transition: Mindfulness as a moderator. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, *52*, doi: 10.1016.j.appdev.2017.08.006.

University Experience

Assistant Professor

July 2022-present

Department of Psychology

School of Arts and Sciences

Union University

Courses I teach: Introduction to Psychology; Behavioral and Cognitive Theories of Learning; Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences; Applied Research; Issues in Psychology and Religion.

Assistant Professor

August 2021-July 2022

Department of Psychology

School of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Asbury University

Courses taught: Psychology in Everyday Life; Advanced Psychology and Professional Life; Statistics for the Social and Behavioral Sciences; Counseling I; Expressive Therapies

Program Director and Assistant Professor

August 2020-present

Psychology Program

School of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Lincoln Memorial University

Courses taught: PSYC-100 Introduction to Psychology; PSYC-221 Child, Adolescent Development; PSYC-255 Social Psychology; PSYC-450 Health Psychology; PSYC-460 Counseling Theories and Techniques; PSYC-498 Internship in Psychological Services

Adjunct Instructor of Psychology

August 2014-May 2022

Department of Psychology, Union University

Courses taught: PSY-213 Introduction to Psychology; PSY-316 Behavioral/Cognitive Theories of Learning; PSY-324 Child Growth and Development; PSY-338 Issues in Psychology and Religion

Teaching Assistant

January 2016-May 2020

Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology and Research

The University of Memphis

Courses taught: EDPR-2111 Lifespan Development; EDPR-3302 Child and Adolescent Development EDPR-4301 Child Development in Education

Counseling Experience

Private Practice

August 2017-present

Provide individual and family counseling.

School Based Liaison for At Risk Youth

October 2014-January 2016

Parkview Learning Center, alternative school
Jackson Madison County School System in partnership with
Pathways Behavioral Health services, an affiliate of West Tennessee Healthcare
Conduct intakes, individual counseling, and group counseling.

Supervisor of Program Implementation

January 2015-January 2016

Treatment and Recovery for Youth Initiative, State of Tennessee in partnership with Pathways Behavioral Health Services, an affiliate of West Tennessee Healthcare As part of a clinical research trial, support staff by continually monitoring implementation of the Adolescent Community Reinforcement approach to ensure fidelity to the model. Instruct clinicians on how to use the Adolescent Community Reinforcement approach effectively with a variety of presenting problems. Assist research evaluator by relaying intake, assessment, and discharge information. Participate in state and federal compliance visits. Maintain contact with stakeholders.

Program Counselor

January 2014-January 2016

Treatment and Recovery for Youth Initiative, State of Tennessee in partnership with Pathways Behavioral Health Services, an affiliate of West Tennessee Healthcare As part of a clinical trial, implement individual, caregiver, and family therapy consistent with the Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach.

Program Counselor/Coordinator

June 2013-October 2014

Adolescent Substance Abuse/Co-occurring Disorders Intensive Outpatient Program Pathways Behavioral Health Services, an affiliate of West Tennessee Healthcare Conduct group therapy for adolescents with co-occurring disorders in three hour sessions for four days each week. Perform assessments to determine eligibility for admission. Administer chemical dependence assessments and write reports for juvenile court systems across Northwest Tennessee.