ILCFR

The 2012 Annual Conference for the Illinois Council on Family Relations (ILCFR) was held at the I-Hotel and Conference Center in Champaign, Illinois on March 31, 2012. The conference's theme this year was E-Families Supporting Families in a Technological Age. The conference examined how today's technology can help a large diversified population understand the needs of their families as well as how to cope with the new problems that technology can impose on family matters. The topics for the conference were presented in PowerPoint lectures, poster presentations, and student discussion groups.

Dr. Aaron Ebata
2012 ILCFR Keynote Speaker

Dr. Aaron Ebata gave an overview of computer and web based programs used in the past. He also focused on theoretical and pragmatic concerns of program development, implementation, and evaluation using three programs (1) web delivery, (2) email delivery, and (3) social media.

Parenting 24/7 was created by the Family Resiliency Center and University of Illinois Extension to provide information on raising children and managing family life. Since January of 2011, the program has had over 632,000 views. This program can be accessed online which greatly helps families in this period of time because in May of 2010, it was found that 80% of Americans are online and 94% of Americans have a personal email account. Parenting 24/7 also makes it quick and convenient for parents to access because it is online and parents can log on and search for what they need whenever they have the opportunity.

Just in Time Parenting is another email delivery program that sends out newsletters containing information for parents as their children age. However, with the percentage of emails that were being sent out, approximately 40% of those emails were being opened and once opened, only approximately 32% were being read. For lower income households or households that did not have Internet access, a hard copy version of the newsletter can be mailed.

Social media is another form of online advertisement for family programs. Facebook is the leading advertising site and more people spend time on Facebook than almost any other site. Eighty-nine percent of females will "like" something and by reaching out this way it is getting more and more people involved with pressing matters in parenting.

Parenting a Virtual Child: Cognitive and Affective Learning
Bill Anderson, Heidi Bliese, and Jenny Mussen, Illinois State University

Dr. Bill Anderson is a professor in the Family and Consumer Sciences department at Illinois State University. During this presentation, he gave an overview of a program used to teach students in a parent/child relationships class parenting skills during different stages of a child's life. This program was created by a professor at Stanford University to coincide with a lifespan textbook. Most of the assignments during the project targeted cognitive learning and focused on areas such as (1) temperament and attachment, (2) parenting and parenting styles, (3) puberty and adolescence, (4) marriage, and (5) accidents. Several students developed an emotional relationship with their child as they experienced their child aging and at one point, had to say good-bye. Feelings were associated with parenting decisions; not knowing if they were making the correct or incorrect decisions as a parent. Also, if the incorrect decisions were made, students as the parents had to overcome the mistakes and work through them. There is a significant limitation with the program that involves only primarily middle-class Caucasian families which indicates the program is currently not culturally sensitive.

The Use of Technology in Supporting Military Families During Deployment
Jacqueline Joines, Eastern Illinois University

Jacqueline Joines shared valuable information on how today's technology can make military deployment less challenging for families left back home. One program available is a Family Readiness Group. This group provides information, moral support, and a social outlet for families. The families are able to get together and use the Army Knowledge Online (AKD) to privately and securely talk to their deployed family member(s). The families also organized fundraisers to help keep these sites running. A few issues with social media is families would get to open with their online conversations and could potentially cause a threat to the deployed soldier if their location was revealed. While families are separated due to deployment, issues would with relationships, money, communication, missed events, and education. Jacqueline Joines shared a large list of websites that offers programs and important resources for families going through hard times and to help them better understand how to cope with the stress of having a loved one deployed overseas.

Educating Future Family Life Educators Using Online Techniques
Nancy Heath, PhD Purdue University

Nancy Heath is the director of the Child and Family Development Program at the American Public University System. Heath demonstrated many advantages that can come from taking online courses to become a Family Life Educator. Some of these advantages include reaching out to different types of people such as people who are in the military and cannot be in front of a computer at a specific day and time, people who prefer to study at home because they dislike classroom settings, and parents who have to take care of their children as well as work full-time. Other advantages to taking online courses include creating personal study schedules for convenience, online group discussions, affordability; online course are typically cheaper than courses at a university, and available assistive technologies for disabled students. The NCFR has approved the contents that is offered in becoming a Family Life Educator. In addition, the Department of Child & Family Development at both American Public University System and Concordia University-Saint Paul are CFLE approved.

Student Session led by Brian Ogolsky

During this presentation, Brian Ogolsky discussed helpful information and tips for people presenting at professional conferences, especially students. Ogolsky emphasized that people should believe in their work, know their topic and speech, practice, and proofread. Also, presenters should be cautious with visual aids and make sure the text is clear and easy to read on their presentations. Presenters should (1) ensure font size is large enough to read, and (2) avoid distracting pictures and backgrounds or colors that make font difficult to read. Ogolsky stressed for presenters to avoid putting too much detail and words on the slides because participants will focus more on reading and looking at the slides rather than attending to the presenter. In addition, the delivery should focus on approximately (1) 3 minutes for introduction, (2) 2 minutes for methods, (3) 4-5 minutes for results, and (4) 2 minutes for conclusion.

Attitudes and Ethical Concerns Related to Supporting Families through E-therapy
Marcus Brown, BSW Candidate, Southern Illinois University

The purpose of this study was to examine attitudes and ethical concerns among counseling practitioners and students in the social work graduate program regarding supporting families through e-therapy, a new service delivery method. One form of communication through online therapy is email, which indicates the therapist and client   exchange electronic letters. Another form of communication through online therapy is real-time video, such as Skype, which allows the therapist and the client to see and speak directly to each other. The last form of   communication is live chat, such as text or instant messaging, where the therapist and client can send each other brief written messages, not necessarily in real-time. This study also addressed four major ethical concerns current or future practitioners have about e-therapy: informed consent, privacy, confidentiality, and their views about the   perceived limitations of e-therapy. The study method included surveying 70 practitioners and students. Of those surveyed, 45 participated by returning the completed survey (64%).

Utilizing Technology in Rural Areas
Tracy Carrington, MS in FCS Graduate School, Eastern Illinois University

In this presentation, Carrington discussed concerns with rural families accessing services. In order to combat the disconnection with rural clients, technology utilization can connect the bridge with families who live in rural areas and service providers. This research considers the possibilities of implementing various Internet programs in order to unite families with community resources, specifically adolescents. Personal family experiences have provided examples of the critical need for counselors in rural areas of Illinois. Many other barriers exist for families under the poverty line, such as transportation to and from services, knowledge of available resources, and the availability of health care providers. Research in current trends demonstrates a significant rise among adolescents in mental illness and behavioral issues. Interviews with school officials have yielded that the available time for counseling treatment in public schools is not enough. Rural community mental healthcare facilities are overwhelmed with the need to service clients. Currently, in more urban areas, many health care providers and facilities are using technology to meet the ever growing needs of their clients. Using the knowledge gained while a student at Eastern Illinois University, this research will suggest new ways of connecting families with health care providers utilizing technological resources.
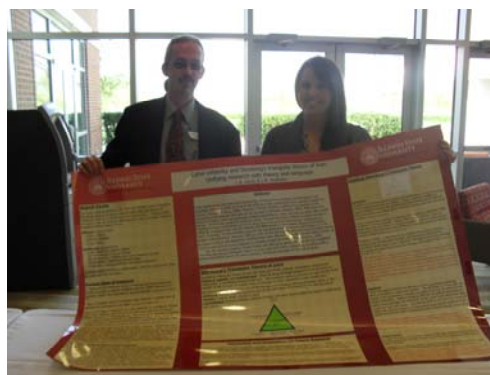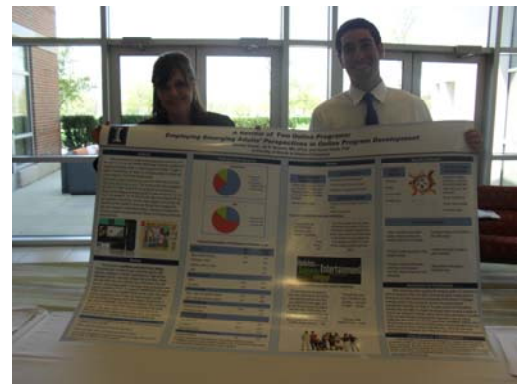
Preventing Identity Theft
Eastern Illinois University
Laura Lucas
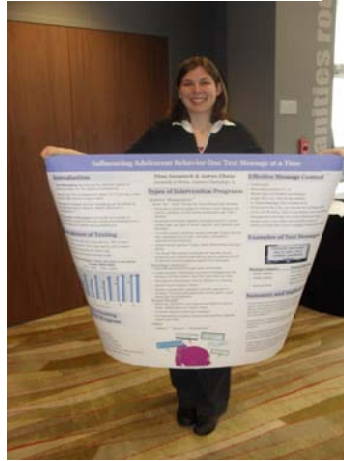
Influencing Adolescent Behavior One
Text Message at a Time
University of Illinois
Dina Izenstark

A Review of Two Online Programs:
Employing Youths' Perspectives in
Program Development
University of Illinois
Jeremy Kanter and Jill Bowers

Cyber Cheating and Its Effects on
Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love
Illinois State University
Lauren Hardy and Bill Anderson

Older Adults and Technology
Margaret Borah and Mikki Meadows, PhD., Eastern Illinois University

The focus on older adults and technology is a new area of exploration for society. At times, older adults can be a difficult population to "win over" in terms of introducing technology. When companies are implementing marketing strategies for technology, older adults are the most difficult to target and adapt. Technological devices need to make special considerations to target eye sight, hearing, and sitting for long periods of time. Also, lack of experience and common feelings of victimization need to be taken into consideration as most older adults have experienced one or both at some point in their lives. However, the common use of technology in older adults is typically for assistive technology devices, money management, travel and lifelong learning, and communication. Technology can also unite generations, offer pen pale groups, chat rooms and discussion groups, virtual tours and travel, and offer opportunity to retrieve medical information. Some questions asked are: (1) What are some barriers to older adults using technology? and (2) How can society assist older adults to overcome barriers? AARP and seniornet.com are

Developing Online Programs that Promote Positive Youth Development
Jill Bowers, University of Illinois

Many researchers and program developers do not contest the need for reaching and teaching youth through the Internet, specifically older adolescents who are more difficult to reach through traditional, face to face programming. Most of the online programs for youth that have been formally evaluated focus on problem behaviors (e.g., smoking, drug/alcohol abuse, or eating disorders), and program compliance and retention is an issue in these programs. There is a need for a comprehensive framework for engaging youth through online programs that foster positive youth development content. To begin to address this limitation in the existing literature, this research employed a qualitative, grounded theory design to gather data which explains the processes that link individual characteristics and youths' preferences for online program content and instructional design to online program implementation (e.g., recruitment and retention). Specifically, the purpose of this study was to (1) explore relationships between and among older adolescents' individual characteristics and their preferences for different program characteristics, (2) describe the various ways in which older adolescents' define their online experiences (e.g., the language they use or the emphasis they put on certain topics covered or instructional strategies used) and relate these experiences to their decisions to participate in a given online program, and (3) provide an explanation for the various ways that adolescents' individual characteristics, attitudes, experiences, and preferences are related to their program participation. The overall aim of this study was to gain a true understanding for the underlying processes that lead to program success or failure in online programs for older adolescents (18, 19, and 20 year olds), specifically those that promote positive youth development. This presentation focused on the preliminary results of this research, and implications for future research and programming were

Using Brofenbrenner's Bioecological Theory to Understand Adult/Child Identity Theft Victim's Recovery Experiences
Axton Betz, Eastern Illinois University

Financial theft is the most common form of theft. However, identify theft is increasingly more likely to occur. Examples of identify theft include retrieving a person's health benefits by falsifying information and giving   authorities personal information of another individual at the time of an arrest. Betz experienced child identity theft while she was under 18 years of age. Interestingly, parents are the main perpetrators in child identity theft. Luckily, this was not the case in her situation. Betz's parents' identities were also stolen. There are several people, agencies and organizations a victim interacts with during a time of victimization such as parents, creditors, credit bureaus, utility companies, collection agencies, police departments, and court personnel. Recovering from identify theft is a complicated process. Betz also discussed Bronfenbrenner's Biological Theory and the relation between that theory,   identify theft, and the process an individual goes through after their identity has been stolen.

ICFR Awards Ceremony

Dr. Brian Ogolsky	Dr. Mikki Meadows	Dr. Aaron Ebata
Faculty Mentor Award	Distinguished Member Award	Outstanding Service Award

Passing of the Gavel

Jill Bowers passing the gavel to
2012-2013 president of ILCFR
Mikki Meadows

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- Stimulate and encourage study and research in the field of family relations
- Learn of others' work, exchange ideas, and discuss matters of mutual concern
- Evaluate and articulate positions on family related issues and move toward responsible social action
- Further wholesome family relationships through these and such other means as are deemed to be appropriate
- Facilitate the exchange of research and ideas

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If you are interested in joining the IL-NCFR, or would like more information about this state wide organization, please contact Linda Derscheid (lederscheid@niu.edu), Membership Chair.

Also please visit our website @ http://il.ncfr.org/