HELLO FROM THE FAMILY RESEARCH LAB!

Thank you for helping us better understand parent-child interaction and children’s well-being.

Study Update: What’s new?

Many thanks to all the families who participated in the Daily Teen Life study, a look at mother-adolescent communication.

Most families in the study reported very positive and healthy relationships between mothers and adolescents – they typically reported being happy in their relationship and experiencing few conflicts with each other, and adolescents usually offered some information to mothers about their day. Interestingly, we found the amount of information adolescents share with their mothers about their lives changes from day to day. These fluctuations suggest that mother-adolescent communication is not always high or always low; it varies and is influenced by their daily experiences, such as how responsive they believe their mothers are to their emotions and needs that day. This highlights the importance of daily experiences on the relationship between mothers and adolescents.

For more information on this study, please email the principal investigator at Deyaun.Villarreal@utdallas.edu

Lab News

Our lab presented research at the Society for Research on Child Development meeting in Baltimore, MD this past March.

We presented findings on:

- Mothers’ and fathers’ daily feeding practices
- How the accumulation of parental conflict over time influences later adolescent depressive symptoms

Graduate students, Olivia Smith and Megan Adelson, published an exciting paper examining associations between marital conflict, parent-child conflict, and adolescent depressive symptoms over time.

Student Spotlight

Deyaun Villarreal will be graduating from the Family Research Lab at the University of Texas at Dallas with her PhD this summer! Deyaun has been working in the lab since 2014, and will defend her dissertation in the next month on the influences of daily mood on parent-adolescent communication from the Daily Teen Life Study. She has spent time at UTD examining how anxiety and depression influence family dynamics. Her goal is to continue building her research and analytic skills in a position to help her community.