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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INVOLVEMENT IN UNSTRUCTURED UNSUPERVISED LEISURE AND SUBSTANCE USE IN A COHORT OF ADOLESCENT MALE SKATEBOARDERS (289 pp.)

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The purpose of this study was to analyze the relationship between skateboarding and substance use among a cohort of adolescent male skateboarders residing in two metropolitan regions in the Eastern United States. The tenets of the individual level routine activity theory (Osgood, Wilson, O'Malley, Bachman, & Johnston, 1996), provided the theoretical foundation for this study. The routine activity theory suggests activities that combine: (a) socializing with peers, (b) freedom from adult supervision, and (c) a lack of structure provide an environment uniquely conducive for problem behavior including substance use.

Using a location-based intercept protocol, a purposive sample of 124 male skateboarders in grades 9–12 was recruited from 14 skate parks and street skating spots. Skateboarding involvement and substance use data were collected using a self-administered, 45-item instrument. Objective measures of skateboarding included time spent skating, primary skating location, and skating with peers. Subjective measures assessed leisure identity and enduring involvement with skateboarding. Current (within the previous 30 days) alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use data were analyzed as dichotomous variables (has used/has not used) in chi square tests and Generalized Linear Modeling (SPSS).

Findings revealed no statistically significant relationship between involvement in skateboarding and current alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use among this sample of skateboarders. Spending more or less time skating was not found to significantly interact with the relationship between skateboarding involvement and substance use. These findings did not support the supposition that involvement in skateboarding was associated with substance use, as the theoretical and evidentiary literature suggests.