Jordan McCall, Psychology and Biology

University: University of Missouri-Columbia
Year in School: Senior
Hometown: Tulsa, Oklahoma
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Alan Strathman, Psychological Sciences
Funding Source: MU Undergraduate Research Scholars Program

Development of hardiness III: Objective and subjective stress

Jordan G. McCall and Alan J. Strathman

Hardy individuals are able to sustain more psychological stress without becoming physiologically ill. Despite countless studies involving hardiness, very little is known of its development. Previous research has indicated the family, specifically parenting styles, as important in the development of hardiness. The role that childhood and adolescent stress plays, however, is still unclear and this project is aimed at clarifying these effects. Undergraduate students from the University of Missouri – Columbia (n = 240) completed an 8-page questionnaire composed of four self-report surveys measuring hardiness, perceived stress, stressful life events, and the predictability, controllability, and resolution (PCR) of those events. Correlation and regression analyses demonstrated that hardy individuals express lower levels of perceived stress throughout their development. In accordance with past literature, the number of stressful life events does not appear to have an effect on hardiness development. Certain stressors, such as domestic sexual abuse and the death of a close friend, do have effects on hardiness. Further research will be necessary to examine the differences between objective and subjective measures of stress, particularly stress caused by daily hassles.