Chapter 3
Adolescent Leisure from a Developmental and Prevention Perspective

Linda L. Caldwell and Monique Faulk

Introduction

This chapter will examine adolescent leisure from a prevention perspective and will cover two main topics. First, we will address the paradox of how leisure may contribute to adolescent development, health, and well-being but how it also may be a context for risk behavior. Next, we will take a prevention perspective and address the need for leisure education as a means to promote development, health, and well-being and prevent risk behavior. In addressing these two broad topics, we will review current literature and suggest where gaps in knowledge currently exist.

Leisure as a Context for Adolescent Development

Leisure is a powerful context in which adolescent development may occur due to its unique elements as compared to other contexts in an adolescent's life (e.g., school or work). Larson and Verma (1999) observed that:

> Each activity context … is associated with a distinctive matrix of socialization experiences, positive and negative, and the amount of time a population of children spends in that activity provides a rough index of their degree of exposure to, engagement with, and absorption of those experiences. (p. 702)

L.L. Caldwell (✉)
Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Management,
Penn State University, University Park, PA, USA
e-mail: lindac@psu.edu

M. Faulk
USC Hybrid High School, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, USA

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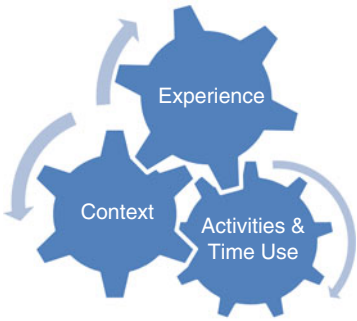

Fig. 3.1 Leisure activities-context-experience (LACE) model

At the same time, as a context of relative freedom, decreased direct parental control, and increased importance of and access to peers, leisure also affords opportunities to engage in risk behaviors such as vandalism, sexual risk, and substance misuse.

From a developmental perspective, positive leisure is likely to contribute to adolescent identity and autonomy development, academic achievement, and development of competence and initiative (Coatsworth, Palen, Sharp, & Ferrer-Wreder, 2006; Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003; Haggard & Williams, 1992; Jacobs, Vernon, & Eccles, 2005; Larson & Walker, 2005; Mahoney, Harris, & Eccles, 2006). It is also a context to promote physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual health and well-being.

One model to understand adolescent development through leisure is the leisure activity-context-experience (LACE) model (Caldwell, 2005), which helps unpack the distinct elements in the matrix of leisure. Elements in the model also help to explain why some leisure is risky. The LACE model (see Fig. 3.1) suggests that the combination of activity, context, and experiential quality interacts to produce positive or negative leisure experiences. Activities are things done in free time, such as swimming or hanging out with friends. Context refers to situational features surrounding the activity such as presence or absence of adults and opportunities for leadership. Experience represents the way that an adolescent responds to the activity and can include joy, happiness, excitement, boredom, stress, or fear (as examples).

Activity

In the LACE model, leisure activities are very important due to the inherent characteristics that contribute to adolescent development. Adolescents who participate in activities that are self-defining and expressive (e.g., related to goals, foster flow experiences) are more likely to experience well-being and greater internal assets (Coatsworth et al., 2006). Some researchers have suggested that individuals likely select activities based on their own sense of identity (Haggard & Williams, 1992). More work is needed to understand directionality and the extent to which identity

formation might be an outcome of or motivator to activity participation and leisure experiences.

It is somewhat difficult to form a consensus on outcomes associated with activity participation because it is very difficult to classify leisure activity engagement. Although it may appear that the issue is straightforward, classifying activities is extremely complex, and thus, it is one of the biggest challenges in research on adolescent leisure. Activities have been categorized differently within and across cultures, with most attempts to classify activities using one or more of the following elements to organize the classification schema: frequency, intensity, type of activity, characteristics of the activity, seasonality, location of activity, and personal meaning. Another group of research studies has focused more on the role of adults in structuring activities. These studies compare activities typed as structured, formal, or organized, with activities typed as unstructured, informal, and casual. Commercial leisure is sometimes another category. Other research compares active versus passive time use.

Activity classification is important because it allows one to ask the right research questions and make meaningful statements about outcomes associated with activities and time use. Yet, because there is no common language within or across cultures, comparisons are extremely difficult to make, and grand theory building is almost impossible to do. As we suggest in this chapter, taking into account aspects of the activity, context and experience should provide a platform for understanding the distinctive matrix of leisure referred to by Larson and Verma (1999).

The bulk of the literature on the developmental affordances of leisure has focused on the importance of organized, structured activity. Structured activities have been defined as those that (a) are organized and/or supervised by adults, (b) place limitations on adolescents' time use, and (c) focus on skill building (Mahoney et al., 2006; Osgood, Anderson, & Shaffer, 2005). Additionally, Mahoney and Stattin (2000) suggested that in order for an activity to be considered structured, the group must meet at least once a week and include same-age peers. Structured activities might take place in school and/or community settings (Bartko & Eccles, 2003; Eccles et al., 2003; Mahoney, 2000). Examples of structured activities include extracurricular activities that are school based (e.g., clubs/organizations and student council) or community based (e.g., organized activities like club sports teams).

Although leisure activities are typically termed structured or unstructured, these labels are limiting because they do not accurately capture all possible leisure activity component combinations. For example, just because an activity is supervised by adults does not necessarily mean that the activity also promotes skill building (Mahoney, Stattin, & Magnusson, 2001). Likewise, just because adults are not present during a leisure activity does not mean that adolescents are participating in activities that do not provide skill-building opportunities (Haggard & Williams, 1992). Nevertheless, these terms have been used extensively in the literature, which is reviewed next.

Research on Structured Activities

Eccles and colleagues (2003) found that the youth who participated in prosocial activities (e.g., church attendance and volunteering), team sports, performing arts, school-involvement activities (e.g., student government and pep club), and academic clubs exhibited better than expected educational outcomes (e.g., high GPA, college attendance, and college graduation). Similarly, high school students who participated in extracurricular activities reported higher grades, more positive attitudes toward school, and higher academic aspirations (Darling, 2005). Among a sample of low-income youths, those who participated in school-based programs in middle school reported higher grades in middle school and in their first year of high school (Pedersen & Seidman, 2005). Furthermore, continued participation in recreation activities through the high school years has been associated with attending college at age 20 (Mahoney, Cairnes, & Farmer, 2003).

Other findings reveal that participation among various structured activities may yield different outcomes based on the activity domain (Eccles et al., 2003; Fauth, Roth, & Brooks-Gunn, 2007). For example, Eccles and colleagues found that team sports were related to higher rates of drinking but better educational outcomes, performing arts was related to less risky behavior, and school-involvement activities was related to lower risky behavior and greater academic outcomes. Fauth and colleagues found that participation in sports was related to lower levels of anxiety/depression and higher levels of delinquency and substance use. Participation in arts and student government was negatively related to substance use, but the youth who participated in these activities exhibited increases in substance use with time.

Previous research shows that adolescents who participate in structured extracurricular activities are less likely to engage in antisocial behavior (Mahoney, 2000; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000; Sinha, Cnaan, & Gelles, 2007; Zaff, Moore, Papillo, & Williams, 2003) and more likely to have a higher level of academic achievement (Bartko & Eccles, 2003; Mahoney et al., 2003) and positive psychosocial functioning (Bartko & Eccles). Darling (2005) found that participation in extracurricular activities was related to lower levels of smoking, marijuana use, and the use of other drugs compared to the youth who did not participate. On the other hand, Mahoney and colleagues (2006) found that there was a decline in alcohol use for those spending less than 15 h in activities and an increase in alcohol use for those spending 15 h or more in activities. However, the youth who participated in 20 or more hours per week showed lower levels of alcohol use than those who did not participate at all.

Fauth et al. (2007) linked participation in nonsport activities such as arts and student government to lower rates of substance use; participation in sports was related to greater levels of substance use and delinquency. Likewise, Eccles and colleagues (2003) found that participation in sports was the only activity that was related to higher rates of substance use.

Research on Unstructured Activities

Unstructured activities have been defined as the opposite of structured activities (e.g., unsupervised, no focus on skill building). Examples of unstructured activities include "hanging out," chores, pick-up sports games, and after-school programs that do not guide youth's behavior (Mahoney et al., 2006; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000; Osgood et al., 2005; Persson, Kerr, & Stattin, 2007). When unsupervised activities are defined only by sedentary activities or by hanging out, unsupervised activity participation typically is linked to negative outcomes. For example, hanging out is positively related to alcohol initiation (Strycker, Duncan, & Pickering, 2003), and sedentary activities such as watching TV and playing video games are related to outcomes such as increases in overweight (Koezuka et al., 2006) and declines in physical activity (Motl, McAuley, Birnbaum, & Lytle, 2006) among adolescents. Likewise, Sharp, Coatsworth, Darling, Cumsille, and Ranieri (2007) collapsed passive behaviors (e.g., watching TV) with risky behavior (e.g., drinking alcohol) into a single passive/risk activity category and found that activities in this category were related to lower levels of goal-directed behavior compared to other categories.

Some researchers and theorists, however, have argued that unstructured time is important for healthy development and self-expression (e.g., Kleiber, 1999). Elkins (2003) posited a view that many contemporary children and adolescents are overscheduled, making them more likely to be stressed and less likely to engage in important childhood activities such as playing in a natural, creative way. Elkins' perspective is consistent with the literature outlining the need to promote multiple intelligences, including creative and socioemotional intelligence, among the youth.

Furthermore, when unstructured activities are defined more broadly, research findings are more positive. For example, participation in activities like backpacking and chess has value for expressing and affirming identity among college students (Haggard & Williams, 1992). One of the findings from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Digital Youth Project (Horst et al., 2008) was that the youth formed virtual groups to help each other with technology and taught themselves through peer-to-peer interaction. It is likewise logical to assume that learning to play the guitar, or being in a rock band, may contribute to the development of creativity, persistence, competence, social belonging, and identity. Thus, there is reason to believe that positive experiences and outcomes may result from adolescents' participation in unsupervised leisure activities, although much more research is needed in this area.

Finally, one must consider the balance in an adolescents' leisure. Adolescents need a balanced repertoire of activities in which they can engage that will give them a variety of benefits (e.g., social, physical, mental, spiritual, civic/community). An adolescent who primarily engages in massively multiplayer online gaming, for example, is less likely to reap a variety of benefits and experiences, although that is not to say that he or she is not gaining benefits from online gaming. The point is that an exclusive reliance on only one type of activity is probably not the most conducive to adolescent development. That is, however, a conjecture and an untested empirical question.

Context

Activities take place in contexts, meaning that there are elements embedded in the activity or in the environment that contribute to how adolescents experience the activity. Most, if not all, of the research on contextual factors has focused on elements of organized or structured activities that are important to producing outcomes (both positive and negative). The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (2002) presented eight context or program features of structure activities that are necessary to produce positive developmental outcomes. These include physical and psychological safety, appropriate structure, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, support for efficacy and mattering, opportunities for skill building, and integration of family, school, and community efforts.

Some of the best work with regard to aspects of the context that lead to the most positive outcomes has been conducted by Reed Larson and his colleagues and Jacquelynne Eccles and her colleagues. Their work has evolved over time from discovering a laundry list of contextual elements that are important to a more developmental perspective of why and how, and for whom, these elements are important. For the purposes of this chapter, those aspects of structured or organized activities that research has identified as most important include the following:

1. Leadership, guidance, and facilitation from competent and caring adults are critical. This means that adults should appropriately scaffold opportunities for the youth to learn, be challenged, and be supported through success and failure (e.g., Larson, 2006). In doing this, they must take into account the biological and neurological developmental levels of the youth, as well as the complexity of the activity, vis-à-vis how much experience the youth have had with the activity. For example, early adolescents or adolescents with limited experience with the task will need more guidance and supervision than older adolescents or those with previous experience with the task. Research suggests that "both too little and too much adult-imposed structure is related to poorer outcomes than moderate levels of adult-imposed structure" (Eccles & Gootman, 2002, p. 93). Research also suggests that adolescents thrive when clear rules and boundaries are mutually agreed upon.
2. Opportunity for youth voice and choice is critical. Adolescents should be given authentic opportunity to make decisions and work agentically. This point leads directly from the previous one because the appropriate amount of adult support and guidance will serve to catalyze adolescents' inherent motivation (e.g., Larson, 2006). Emanating from the positive youth developmental perspective, providing the youth with the supports and opportunities to make their own choices and decisions reflects the need and capabilities of the youth to the producers of their own development (Larson).
3. Ample opportunities should exist for the youth to belong, be recognized as being valued and important, and to engage in meaningful experiences that contribute to

community building. Experiencing efficacy and a sense of mattering is critical for growth and identity development (Eccles & Gootman, 2002, p. 106).

4. Opportunity for skill development is critical. This is best facilitated when adults provide specific feedback about one's performance (Larson, Walker, & Pearce, 2005). A major role of skill development is not only to help develop one's sense of competence but also to develop skills useful in adulthood. Thus, as adolescents mature, engaging them in real world experiences facilitates the transition to adulthood. This process has been described by Larson and Walker (2006) as one of experiencing dissonance, which activates the need to learn to adapt, overcome challenges, persist, and respond to environmental feedback (e.g., things do not always go as planned). As a result, self-efficacy, perceived competence, and intrinsic motivation are experienced. Youths learn to be active players in their own development and maximize control of their actions and emotions. This process is enhanced through opportunities for personal reflection and feedback.
5. A culture of positive social norms serves to promote appropriate behavior among all participants. Peers have the ability to act as excellent role models to each other through modeling social and emotional competence (Zaff & Moore, 2002). In these cases, peers promote positive social norms and feelings of belonging, which are important to positive youth development. For example, interacting with others may require the youth to learn how to lead and how to follow. They also learn basic social skills and the necessity of paying attention to other people's feelings and interests. In a study by Dworkin, Larson, and Hansen (2003), one of the benefits of interacting with peers in more structured activities was the ability to control anger and anxiety and stay focused on the activity at hand. In addition, Dworkin et al. found that adolescents reported that interacting with peers who would normally be outside their existing network was one of the most important benefits of participating in structured, formal, youth-based activities. Youths who participate in these types of activities tend to have broader types of friends than youths who do not (Dworkin et al.).

Experience

In understanding how leisure contributes to adolescent development, it is also important to consider how adolescents experience an activity, whether it be structured or unstructured. Personal experiences within leisure activities are important for a couple of reasons. First, positive and negative feelings within leisure activities are related to behavioral outcomes (Hunter & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; Iso-Ahola & Crowley, 1991). Additionally, adolescents' experiences will be unique according to each individual (Coatsworth et al., 2006; Dworkin et al., 2003). That is, what is exciting and engaging, or uninteresting and boring, to one adolescent might not be to another adolescent. Thus, it is not enough to link types of activities or activity contexts to outcomes. Researchers must also understand adolescents' personal

experiences within leisure to gain a comprehensive understanding about how and why all components of leisure activity participation relate to outcomes.

Regardless of the activity, feelings of engagement and interest have been linked with positive outcomes and disengagement and disinterest with negative outcomes (e.g., Hunter & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; Larson, 2000). Moreover, the reason or motivation behind doing the activity is likely more important than the activity itself and whether or not it is structured or unstructured.

Boredom is a common experience among adolescents. Bob Atchison from the Center for Youth Studies (Retrieved April 26, 2010, from http://roswellga.ourlittle.net/Boredom) reported that over 60% of the youth he surveyed talked about boredom as "having nothing to do, no options, or being stuck someplace they would rather not be." He found that boredom is tied to understimulation, repetition, and disconnection.

Related to the experience of boredom is the state of being amotivated (i.e., doing an activity without a purpose or reason), which is an opposite state to being motivated by either intrinsic or extrinsic goals.

A youth feeling bored during leisure is particularly troubling because leisure is "supposed" to be intrinsically motivating, self-directed, fun, and enjoyable. If an adolescent is bored during leisure, it should trigger the need to identify the sources of boredom and deal with that. For example, the youth could change aspects of participation (e.g., changing rules to make it more fun) or find something more interesting to do. Thus, boredom can be a staging area for youth's creativity to play out, particularly as adolescent's brains are wired for novelty and they seek to develop interests and passions. Unfortunately, many times youth boredom leads to risky or deviant behavior. The need for sensation seeking and the adolescent brain's inability to well control impulsivity may lead to risky decisions, particularly if a group of adolescents are hanging out together and they are experiencing boredom.

Youths who experience consistently high rates of boredom and disengagement during their leisure time or report just "hanging out" in their leisure are at greater risk for engaging in substance use and delinquency behaviors (Caldwell & Darling, 1999; Caldwell & Smith, 1995; Caldwell, Smith, & Weissinger, 1992; Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Larson & Richards, 1991; National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, 2003; Osgood, Wilson, O'Malley, Bachman, & Johnston, 1996; Shaw, Caldwell, & Kleiber, 1996). For example, the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University surveyed close to 2,000 12- to 17-year-olds in 2003 and found that high stress, boredom, and/or disposable income (creating the opportunity to purchase) were associated with higher risk of substance use.

Engaging in risk behaviors may be a result of an adolescent looking for excitement or just something to do (e.g., Osgood et al., 1996) or searching for meaning in life by trying to escape feelings of amotivation and anomie, which are both related to lack of meaning and self-control. From a sociological perspective, Durkheim (1951 [1897]) suggested that anomie causes a disruption in the social fabric that is related to normlessness. Another perspective comes from routine activity theory (e.g., Osgood et al.). Osgood et al. maintained that youths are differentially motivated

or tempted by situations and that youths who are involved in deviant activities do not necessarily reject conventional values but rather seek excitement, conspicuous consumption, and toughness. They further suggested that unstructured activities, unlike structured ones, typically lack social control from authority figures (Osgood et al.). Their research concluded that socializing with peers in unsupervised environments was closely related to deviant behavior, but if the unsupervised activity was associated with some type of structure (e.g., sports or dating), this relation was not present.

It is unclear whether or not a bored state in free time is actually leisure to the adolescent or not. If it is a fleeting state within what might be considered a leisure activity, and the adolescent can restructure the situation to become interested and engaged, the term leisure may still apply. If an adolescent's free time is typically characterized by chronic boredom, it is unlikely that the adolescent experiences leisure nor reaps the developmental benefits possible through leisure.

Some additional insight may be gained from findings presented by Caldwell and Smith (2006) who reported that in a sample of rural Appalachian middle-school youths, high levels of interest and low levels of leisure boredom positively predicted property damage. On the other hand, Caldwell and Smith found that lower levels of property damage were associated with youths who reported high levels of leisure-related initiative, goal-oriented motivation, and low amotivation; were aware of leisure opportunities in their communities; and whose parents were knowledgeable about what they did in their leisure time and who they were with.

Upon reflection, it is possible that the youth who engaged in property damage were experiencing leisure or a new form of adventure recreation (Galloway, 2006). If it is true that deviance or other risk behaviors are forms of leisure for some adolescents, it is not surprising that high interest and low boredom are associated with enacting property damage. This discussion, however, begs the question as to just what deviance, crime, and delinquency are in relation to leisure. Interested readers should consult the special issue on "Deviant Leisure" of *Leisure/Loisir* (Vol. 30, 2006) for further discussion on this matter.

These findings also implicate Stebbins' (2006) typology of serious, nonserious, and casual leisure. From this perspective, property damage could be considered casual leisure for some youths. Casual leisure is characterized by being hedonistic and pleasurable in the short run. Caldwell and Smith's (2006) findings suggest that those youths who experience amotivation in leisure are highly susceptible to peer influence and whose parents are not perceived to be knowledgeable are likely to be situationally motivated and engage in casual leisure. This finding seems consistent with differential association theory and routine activity theory, although in this case we are not sure if delinquency is due to positive norms to engage in property damage or due to being amotivated and disengaged with life. If the latter, the youth may have been looking for some excitement or just "something to do" (e.g., Osgood et al., 1996) or searching for meaning in life by trying to escape feelings of amotivation and anomie, which are both related to lack of meaning and self-control.

On the other hand, youths who reported lower levels of property damage may have been future oriented and purposeful in their actions so as to actively construct

their futures, at least in terms of their leisure pursuits. These youths reported that they were motivated in their leisure pursuits by being goal oriented and possessed initiative. They also knew of leisure activities to do in their communities and reported positive relations with their parents regarding leisure activities. It is possible that these youths were more likely to engage in more "serious" leisure pursuits, which Stebbins (2006) would characterize as providing deep meaning and shared social bonds with others who enjoy the same pursuit. This bond is forged over time and requires initiative and purposeful action. Thus, serious leisure as a context of shared personal meaning and commitment may be an important context for positive forms of social control to develop.

Related to this discussion, using data from the Swedish Youth Recreation Center (YRC), Mahoney and Stattin (2000) concluded that structured activity is linked to low antisocial behavior, while involvement at the unstructured YRC was associated with high antisocial behavior. They reasoned that:

> … the issue is not whether an individual is engaged in an activity—the issue appears to be *what* the individual is engaged in, and with *whom*. In terms of antisocial behavior, it may be better to be uninvolved than to participate in unstructured activity, particularly if it features a high number of deviant youth. (p. 123)

Much more research is needed to better understand the interaction between leisure activity, contextual elements, and experience within an activity. We know little about how these interact with each other to produce a positive leisure experience or lead to risky leisure behavior among adolescents. There is also little research done on the temporal experience within a single leisure experience or across time within one leisure activity (e.g., after-school club or sports team).

Leisure as Prevention

Despite some inconsistencies in the literature, particularly around outcomes associated with sports participation, and conceptual and methodological issues related to studying adolescent leisure, researchers have begun to uncover aspects of leisure that are linked with positive and negative outcomes. The leisure elements of activities, contexts, and experiences combine to create conditions that either serve to protect the youth from negative or risky behaviors or promote positive and healthy development. This conclusion leads to a discussion of how leisure may serve as an important preventive period in an adolescent's life.

Prevention science is a relatively young science; the journal *Prevention Science* celebrated its 10-year anniversary in 2010. Prevention focuses on both the promotion of health and well-being and the prevention of risk and thus naturally provides a framework in which to address the paradox of leisure. The concept of risk prevention and harm reduction has emerged over the past two decades as the preferred perspective for dealing with problem behaviors. *Prevention* is geared toward preventing or lessening the possibility that something negative will happen in an adolescent's life. Preventing something from occurring is preferable to fixing it after

it happens (e.g., addictions and suicide attempts). Prevention also can focus on mitigating further complications, if something has already happened (e.g., depression leading to attempted suicide). Equally important, however, is that prevention is also concerned with *promoting* things that will counteract risk factors and enhance an adolescent's development and living situation. Thus, the positive benefits of participating in leisure contribute to preventing risk behaviors (e.g., substance use) and promoting health and academic success.

A prevention perspective to adolescent leisure suggests that adolescents can be taught the importance of making healthy choices to reap the benefits of leisure and avoid potentially risky behaviors. Typically, prevention focuses on helping individuals, systems (e.g., school systems or community-based systems), and policies change in a direction that promotes health and well-being and prevents the initiative of or mitigates existing health risk behaviors (e.g., cigarette smoking or substance misuse). Thus, many prevention programs are based on some type of intervention.

One promising leisure-related intervention for adolescents is leisure education. Leisure education is the process of educating individuals about healthy use of leisure time and serves to promote self-awareness of the need to gain healthy benefits from leisure, understand the value of leisure and in particular intrinsically motivated leisure, develop interests, find leisure resources, understand how to plan for and make good decisions about leisure, and overcome constraints that may impede participation and positive experience.

Leisure Education as Prevention: TimeWise and HealthWise Examples

Two prevention-focused leisure education programs, TimeWise: Taking Charge of Leisure Time (Caldwell, 2004) and HealthWise South Africa: Life Skills for Young Adults (Caldwell, Smith, & Wegner, 2004), have shown promising evidence that universal prevention programs for middle- or high-school-aged youth can be effective in promoting health and preventing risk. These will be briefly described as examples of how leisure education can be a tool for prevention. The focus of both of these interventions was to help the youth learn how to take responsibility for increasing the benefits they get from leisure and avoiding risky behavior in leisure. When this goal is accomplished, it is likely that youth's leisure time will be maximized in terms of the types of activities in which they participate, the contexts in which they spend their time, and the experiences they have.

TimeWise: Taking Charge of Leisure Time Evaluation

The TimeWise curriculum was originally developed as a substance abuse prevention program to be implemented in middle-school classrooms and was funded by the National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Drug Abuse. The primary

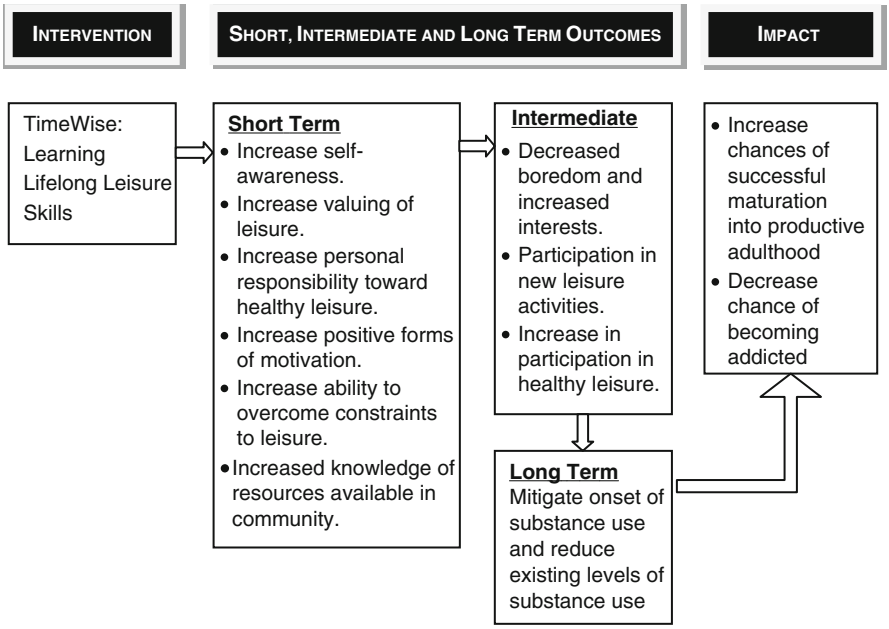

Fig. 3.2 TimeWise logic model

objective of this efficacy trial was to compare TW to a no-intervention control group in an attempt to decrease rates of substance use initiation or use. Our hypothesis was that leisure-related outcomes would mediate decreases in substance use/initiation. See Fig. 3.2 for a graphical depiction of the basic logic model associated with TimeWise.

Nine schools were recruited to participate: four were randomly assigned to the experimental group and five to the control group. All schools were in rural school districts in Pennsylvania (USA) and were chosen to represent relatively poor, small (i.e., less than 1,000 students) school districts. In each school, approximately 1/3 of the students received free or reduced price lunches. The TimeWise core curriculum was implemented in the four experimental-condition school districts in the spring of 2001 to 634 7th-grade students (315 or 49.7% were female and 95% were European American). In the springs of 2002 and 2003, three-period booster sessions were administered (students were then in the 8th and 9th grades). Students were from rural backgrounds; 30.4% of the students lived in a rural area, 25% lived in a neighborhood but not "in a town," 25.2% lived in a town, and 6.9% lived on a farm. They were also from low socioeconomic status areas; 56.7% bought their own lunch, 20.8% received free lunch, and 11.8% were eligible for reduced lunch.

A number of leisure-related theories were utilized in creating the TimeWise curriculum. Ecological systems theory (e.g., Bronfenbrenner, 1994) was the overarching

basis for the development of TimeWise. This theory suggests that in order to understand or influence an individual, several factors must be considered, including personal characteristics (e.g., personality, gender, age), social factors (e.g., parents, peers, teachers, and other important adults), community factors (e.g., quality of schools, presence of parks and trails), and larger cultural factors (e.g., community values and ethnic and/or racial issues). Within the context of ecological systems theory, leisure-related theories were used to help the curriculum developers understand personal, social, and community wide factors that were important to incorporate into the TimeWise curriculum. These theories included self-determination theory (e.g., Ryan & Deci, 2000), development as action in context (Silbereisen & Todt, 1994), constraints theory (Jackson, 2005), optimal arousal theory (Mannell & Kleiber, 1997), boredom and interest development (Hunter & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003), and flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

Based on these theories, TimeWise is comprised of six core and six additional lessons. In the manual, each lesson is broken into two core activities that take about 30–40 min to implement in a structured classroom setting. The six core lessons focus on teaching students to:

1. Determine personally satisfying and meaningful leisure activities and interests
2. Understand the benefits of participating in healthy leisure
3. Understand how one's motivation affects one's experience and participation in healthy behaviors
4. Alleviate boredom and increase optimal experience in leisure time
5. Learn how to take responsible action to participate in desired activities
6. Identify and overcome constraints that get in the way of participation in desired activities

The additional lessons include:

1. Educating others about leisure
2. Making decisions and taking risks
3. Achieving flow
4. Managing stress and becoming mindful
5. Friendships and leisure
6. Leisure and change

Results from the TimeWise intervention are promising (e.g., Caldwell, Baldwin, Walls, & Smith, 2004). Researchers found that those who received TimeWise had greater interest in activities and lower rates of boredom. They also reported lower levels of amotivation (i.e., doing things because there is nothing else to do and lack of self-regulation). TimeWise youths also reported greater levels of initiative (e.g., taking charge and pursuing an interest) and the ability to restructure activities. Youths who had the TimeWise program also were more aware of leisure opportunities in the community and reported being better able to make plans and decisions in their leisure time. Regarding substance use, the results were promising; however, given the very low rate of substance use among this rural sample, it was difficult to

detect differences between experimental and comparison groups. TimeWise youths did, however, report lower rates of use of marijuana and inhalants, particularly for males. This effect was more pronounced at the end of 9th grade.

HealthWise South Africa: Life Skills for Young Adults

HealthWise (Caldwell et al., 2004) was developed in response to a request from colleagues in South Africa who were interested in youth risk reduction and health promotion through leisure. HealthWise emanated from TimeWise but included a stronger focus on sexual risk reduction, substance use, and the comorbidity of the two. It also included a stronger emphasis on general life skills such as anger and anxiety management. HealthWise was also funded by the National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Drug Abuse. HealthWise was pilot tested in 2001–2002, modified, and then evaluated over 5 years, beginning in 2003.

Nine high schools in Mitchell's Plain, South Africa, were recruited to participate in the study; students in four schools received HealthWise, and five schools served as comparisons. Overall, 6,050 youths participated. We collected data every 6 months on three sequential 8th-grade cohorts through grade 10. Mitchell's Plain was established as a township for people of mixed-race backgrounds (i.e., colored) during the Apartheid era. People in this region are generally poor, unemployment is high, and most schools are in need of repair. Based on students' self-reports, 86% of the study population were mixed race, 9% Black, and the remainder either Indian or White.

The HealthWise curriculum included 17 lessons, with each requiring 2–3-lesson periods (see Table 3.1 for a listing of the lessons). Figure 3.3 depicts the risk and protective factors targeted along with the corresponding lessons. HealthWise was delivered in grades 8 and 9 to three successive eighth-grade cohorts beginning in 2003. The overall goals of the HealthWise curriculum were to (1) reduce the sexual risk, (2) reduce drug abuse, and (3) increase positive use and experience of free and leisure time. The program was designed to provide a sequential set of activities to teach the youth:

- How to use their free time in ways that will be beneficial to themselves, their families and friends, and their community
- Specific inter- and intrapersonal skills to make good decisions, control their emotions such as anger and anxiety, resolve conflicts, and overcome boredom in free time
- Specific facts about the causes and effects of drug use and sexual risk-taking behaviors
- Specific ways to avoid peer pressure and to take responsible action in their free time
- How to interact with and access community resources

Results from this study, as with the TimeWise study, indicated that both programs are promising prevention programs. Of particular interest was to understand the relation between leisure-related boredom and leisure motivation and substance use and sexual

Table 3.1 HealthWise lessons

Grade 8
Lesson 1: Self-awareness
Lesson 2: Managing anxiety
Lesson 3: Managing anger
Lesson 4: Exploring free time
Lesson 5: Free time in my community
Lesson 6: Beating boredom and developing interests
Lesson 7: Overcoming roadblocks
Lesson 8: Decision making
Lesson 9: Managing risk
Lesson 10: Avoiding risky sexual behavior
Lesson 11: Myths and realities of drug use
Lesson 12: Avoiding and reducing risk
Grade 9
Lesson 1: Review
Lesson 2: Leisure motivation
Lesson 3: Community connections
Lesson 4: Planning and managing leisure
Lesson 5: Relationships and sexual behavior
Lesson 6: Conflict resolution

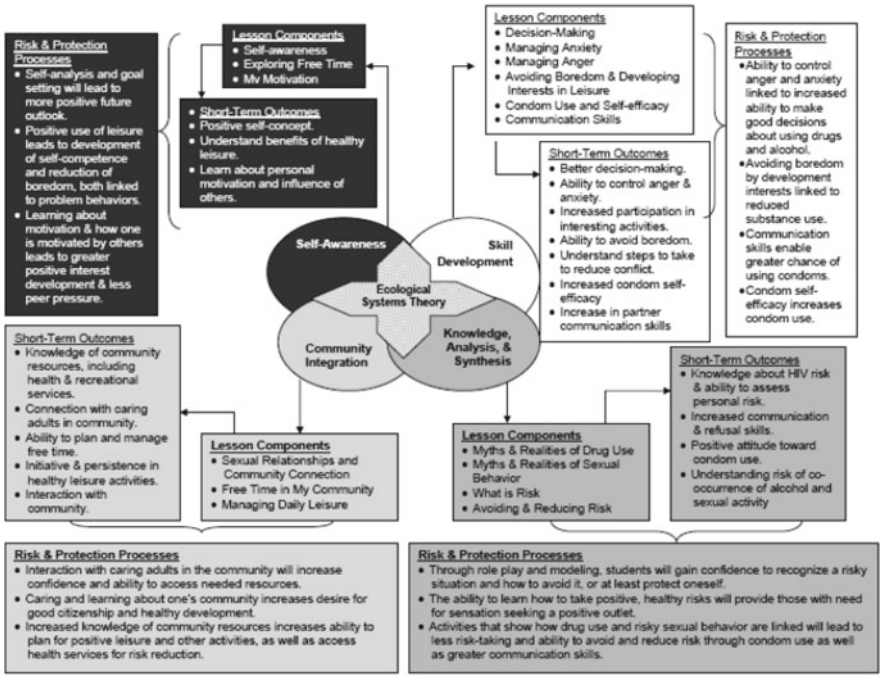

Fig. 3.3 HealthWise program model: selected components and outcomes

risk behaviors. In one set of analyses using seven waves of HW data, the strongest leisure-related predictors of using substances both between and within subjects were greater leisure boredom, too much perceived parental control, and poor, unhealthy leisure choices (Sharp, Caldwell, Graham, & Ridenour, 2006). Furthermore, youths who *became more bored* in their leisure between the 8th grade and 10th grade had the highest odds of smoking and use of alcohol and marijuana. A one-unit increase in leisure boredom from the beginning of 8th grade to the beginning of 10th grade was associated with increased odds of using alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana (14, 23, and 36%, respectively; Sharp et al., 2011). Researchers also found that those with high levels of leisure-related intrinsic motivation had the lowest odds of smoking and use of alcohol, marijuana, and inhalants (Caldwell, Patrick, Smith, Palen, & Wegner, 2010).

Emanating from the LACE model, researchers were also interested in youth's experiences within activities. Therefore, they asked the youth about specific activities in which they participated as well as levels of motivation and boredom for each specific activity. They found that compared to youths who participated in one or more leisure activities but were motivated and interested, youths who participated in several leisure activities but were amotivated and bored in all of them had the highest likelihood of alcohol and tobacco use (Tibbits, Caldwell, Smith, & Wegner, 2009). Furthermore, females who only spent leisure time in social activities and were amotivated and bored while doing so had a much higher likelihood of alcohol and tobacco use than females who only spent time in social activities but were interested and motivated. Additional analysis suggested that spending time with friends positively predicted lifetime alcohol use, while participating in hobbies and music and singing activities negatively predicted lifetime alcohol use. Spending time with friends (for everyone) and reporting high levels of boredom in leisure (for girls) also predicted lifetime marijuana use (Tibbits, Caldwell, Smith, & Flisher, 2009).

Finally, the researchers found that implementation quality mattered. That is, students had increases in leisure-related intrinsic motivation and stable identified motivation as well as decreases in introjected motivation and amotivation in the school where teachers had high levels of implementation quality (Caldwell & Patrick, et al., 2010; Caldwell & Younker, et al., 2008).

In summary, both interventions were geared toward increasing positive and decreasing negative outcomes associated with leisure. These interventions were derived from leisure, developmental, and prevention theories. Results show some indication that leisure education, coupled with a preventive orientation, may be effective in increasing positive leisure outcomes and decreasing negative ones.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has provided evidence that leisure is a critically important aspect of adolescents' lives. Leisure contributes very positively to adolescent health, well-being, and positive development. In order to understand leisure's contributions to positive adolescent outcomes, it is important to unpack the elements of leisure,

which include activities, context, and experiences. Most of the literature on adolescent leisure has focused on outcomes associated with structured or organized leisure activities; much more is needed to more fully understand the outcomes associated with unstructured or unsupervised leisure. Included in this chapter has also been a discussion on negative outcomes associated with leisure. Especially among adolescents, risky behaviors may occur in leisure, such as substance use and vandalism.

Given both the opportunity for risk and healthy development, one possible approach to adolescent leisure is through leisure education as a means to promote positive outcomes and prevent negative ones.

Despite this rather utilitarian perspective, however, the main thing to recognize is that leisure provides a rich and unique context for adolescents to develop into healthy adults by engaging in activities and behaviors that contribute to personal enjoyment, meaning, and identity and autonomy development. Skills learned and utilized in leisure can help then transition into healthy adults. At times, however, interventions are needed to assist adolescents in gaining the most from their leisure.

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