

Addictions Research



The **Health Addiction and Behavioral Intervention Team (HABIT)** is housed in the Department of Psychology and directed by Professor James G. Murphy. The HABIT lab works to understand how substance abuse patterns develop, change, and remit during young adulthood. Dr. Murphy has received funding support for fourteen randomized controlled trials that have evaluated brief motivational interventions (BMIs) for young adults with alcohol or drug use disorders. The interventions are designed to enhance problem recognition and motivation to make positive changes and include objective feedback on drinking/drug use patterns, blood alcohol content, and substance-related risks along with advice to moderate use. A related program of research uses behavioral economic theory and laboratory research to guide applied research on substance abuse etiology, assessment, and prevention.

-Key Research Contributions-

Dr. Murphy's research on BMIs has helped to establish their relative efficacy with a variety of young adult populations, expanded their reach by developing novel computerized, group and mobile technology-delivered adaptations, and identified the particular components that are most efficacious. This research has contributed to the evidence base that has facilitated the widespread dissemination of BMIs in educational and health care settings. Results from related research using behavioral economic theory suggest that (1) increasing substance-free sources of reinforcement will reduce substance use, (2) proportional reinforcement from substance use relative to substance-free activities (i.e., relative reinforcing efficacy) is an important index of strength of preference for drugs, and (3) strong preference for immediate versus delayed reinforcement (i.e., delayed reward discounting) may be an important risk factor for addiction and intervention target.



-Recent Publications-

Soltis, K. E., McDevitt-Murphy, M. E., & Murphy, J. G. (2017). Alcohol demand, future orientation, and craving mediate the relation between depressive and stress symptoms and alcohol problems.

Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research, 41, 1191-1200.

Voss, A. T., Soltis, K. E., Dennhardt, A. A., Martens, M. P., & Murphy, J. G. (2018). Protective Behavioral Strategies Mediate the Relationship between Behavioral Economic Risk Factors and Alcohol-Related Problems. *Experimental and Clinical Psychopharmacology*, 26 (1), 58-64

Meshesha, L. Z., Utzelmann, B., Dennhardt, A. A., & Murphy, J. G. (in press). A Behavioral Economic Analysis of Marijuana and Other Drug Use Among Heavy Drinking Young Adults *Translational Issues in Psychological Science*.

Acuff, S. F., Luciano, M.T.; Soltis, K. E., Joyner, K. J., McDevitt-Murphy, M. E., & Murphy, J. G. Access to Environmental Reward Mediates the Association between Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms and Alcohol Problems and Craving. *Experimental and Clinical Psychopharmacology*

Derefinko KJ, Linde B, Klesges RC, Puentes L, Boothe T, Leroy K, Little MA, Colvin L, Pasker C, Murphy JG, McDevitt-Murphy ME, Bursac Z, Ebbert JO, Waters T, Brooks I, & Talcott GW. (in press). Dissemination of the Brief Alcohol Intervention in the United States Air Force: Study Rationale, Design and Methods. *Military Behavioral Health*.

For more information please visit:
<http://www.memphis.edu/psychology/research-habit/index.php>

James G. Murphy, Ph.D.
jgmurphy@memphis.edu
(901) 678-2630