Dr. R. Kenton Denny has focused most of his work in the area of Emotional Behavioral Disorders (EBD) in children. His research efforts address emotional and behavioral disorders, teacher-student instructional interaction, as well as behavioral interventions in school (Louisiana State, 2010). Dr. Denny teaches a variety of courses at the undergraduate and graduate level. These courses range from Introduction to Exceptionalities, to Beginning Applied Behavior Analysis. His teaching experiences have taught him about the many recent changes in the field (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010).

Background Information
Dr. Denny grew up on the Cumberland Plateau of middle Tennessee. He has two sisters who are in the education field as well. He enjoys football, fishing, and, in his own words, collecting power tools that he seldom uses. In terms of education, Dr. Denny graduated in 1977 from Tennessee Technological University with a B.S. in secondary education. He obtained a Special Education Certificate from there as well, in 1978. In 1987, he received his Ph.D. in Education and Human Development from Vanderbilt University (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010).

**Early Beginnings**

Dr. Denny, a second-generation special educator, started out working with students with severe disabilities. He worked with these students after school in a classroom where his mother taught. After completing his undergraduate degree in 1977, he worked with adults who exhibited intellectual disabilities while completing his certification in special education (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010). While completing his Ph.D. at Vanderbilt, Dr. Denny conducted research in a variety of areas. Specifically, he focused on the inclusion of students with autistic, cognitive, and physical disabilities into public school settings. He also studied the effects of physical conditioning on stereotypic and self-injurious behavior in adults who exhibited mental retardation. Lastly, he conducted research on the use of sensory stimulation in the treatment of stereotypic behavior in school settings (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010).
After obtaining his Ph.D., he worked in many settings, but his work at the
University of Kansas Bureau of Child Research at Parsons, Schiefelbusch Institute for
Life Span Studies, from 1992 to 1994, most notably influenced his career. It is here that
he, along with his colleagues, started investigating student-teacher instructional
interactions and the potential aversive affects on both students and teachers. He believes
their work in this area has had a profound effect on everything he has done throughout
his career (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010).

Influences

Dr. Denny considers the influence of his colleagues and friends invaluable
(personal communication, October, 15, 2010). Numerous individuals have impacted his
work, each having and contributed to different aspects of career. He considers Dr.
Richard E. Shores, a professor in his doctoral studies at Vanderbilt’s Peabody College of
Education and Human Development and also his graduate advisor, one of these major
influences. Dr. Shores’ work on the interactional nature of student social behavior as
well as the interactions between students and teachers, not only guides Dr. Denny’s
thoughts, but his activities as well. Dr. Shores has also taught him what it meant to be a
scientist in the truest sense. Dr. C. Robert Campbell has also impacted his work;
teaching him about funding for research, grant writing, and the challenges of working
with schools (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010).
Dr. Martin J. Kaufman, the former Dean at the University of Oregon and a Division Leader with OSEP, instructed Dr. Denny on a number of subjects such as the federal research system, and how to frame ideas and approaches in unique ways. Finally, the discussions and arguments between Dr. Denny and Philip Gunter, one of his oldest friends and colleagues, have been critical to his learning. He considers these discussions one of the most enjoyable aspects of their work together. (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010)

**Current Projects/Research**

Dr. Denny is currently working on a couple of projects. One project centers on the implementation of multi-tiered intervention models in the Professional Development Schools. He and his colleagues are investigating the impact of using beginning teachers to provide secondary level interventions for academic performance across years. He also continues to work on designing and providing better web based behavioral data systems. He believes this will help to support the implementation of Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support on a state level. With the help of his colleagues, data on schools and student variables, which will aid in designing and redesigning new systems that address challenging behavior in the classroom, have been collected over the last five years (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010).
Along with these projects, Dr. Denny is also involved in several grant projects. He is the principal investigator of Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support, which he has been facilitating since 1995. This program provides information and resources to help educators create a positive school environment for their students ("Positive Behavioral Interventions", 2010). Other grant programs include the Louisiana State Improvement Grant and two Professional Development School Grants. With these proposals, he hopes to address program needs within his department. These grants address critical needs within the state or schools and aid in improving the instructional program for beginning, as well, as graduate students. His grant work has changed his research focus to implementation, along with the challenges involved in changing instructional practice on a wide scale. One of the difficulties Dr. Denny and his colleagues have experienced is determining the degree of implementation, which will effect meaningful changes in student behavior (R.K. Denny, personal communication, October, 15, 2010).

**Publications**


Kevin S. Sutherland, R. Kenton Denny, & Gunter, P.L (2005), Teachers of Students With Emotional and Behavioral Disorders Reported Professional Development Needs: Differences Between Fully Licensed and Emergency-Licensed Teachers. *Preventing School Failure, 49*(2), 41-46.


References
