

5-2013

# There was more out there than our street: Exploring a structured summer camp curriculum as an avenue to fostering civic engagement and social capital

Tracy Mainieri  
*Clemson University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/all\\_dissertations](https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/all_dissertations)

---

## Recommended Citation

Mainieri, Tracy, "There was more out there than our street: Exploring a structured summer camp curriculum as an avenue to fostering civic engagement and social capital" (2013). *All Dissertations*. 1469.  
[https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/all\\_dissertations/1469](https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/all_dissertations/1469)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Dissertations at TigerPrints. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Dissertations by an authorized administrator of TigerPrints. For more information, please contact [kokeefe@clemson.edu](mailto:kokeefe@clemson.edu).

THERE WAS MORE OUT THERE THAN OUR STREET: EXPLORING A  
STRUCTURED SUMMER CAMP CURRICULUM AS AN AVENUE TO  
FOSTERING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

---

A Dissertation  
Presented to  
the Graduate School of  
Clemson University

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy  
Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management

---

by  
Tracy Mainieri  
May 2013

---

Accepted by:  
Dr. Denise Anderson, Committee Chair  
Dr. Barry Garst  
Dr. Debra Jordan  
Dr. Sandra Linder  
Dr. Francis McGuire

## **ABSTRACT**

Americans are less connected to society and each other than in the recent past. This disconnection has a variety of repercussions for quality of life, including decreased capabilities for local problem solving, decreased capacity for community youth development, higher levels of crime, and decreased indicators of community health. Research has indicated that if we are to address this growing disconnect, we need to foster civic skills, civic values, and commitment to civic engagement in youth to encourage lifelong civic participation. Summer camps may offer an arena within which to address these civic issues; however, summer camp remains largely underrepresented in the social capital and civic engagement literature. As a result, there is a need for further research on the potential role summer camp may play in fostering civic and social capital outcomes in youth. The purpose of this study was to implement and evaluate the Teens Leading & Connecting (TLC) program, a structured camp curriculum intentionally designed to impact campers' civic skills, civic values, civic engagement and social capital, in order to provide insight into camp's potential role as an avenue to increased civic engagement and social capital in campers' home communities. The methods for this study consisted of an implementation evaluation, including direct observations and facilitator interviews, and an outcomes evaluation, including camper interviews, camper questionnaires, and parent interviews. Findings indicate that the TLC program was delivered with quality and high fidelity and resulted in a variety of skill related, community related, and social capital related outcomes in the short term. Many of these outcomes were sustained three months following camp; however, the social capital

outcomes were the least retained of the three groups of outcomes at follow-up. This study represented one attempt to leverage the combined power of the summer camp environment, of structured curriculum, and of program evaluation to explore summer camp as a possible arena to foster youth civic engagement and social capital. This study demonstrated that summer camp has promise to achieve civic engagement and social capital outcomes beyond camp but more research and program development on these crucial societal topics is needed.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to the campers, parents, and facilitator of the Teens Leading & Connecting program during summer 2013. They demonstrate that we should all have infinite hope for our future – just go to camp and watch our future grow.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I did not travel the road of inquiry alone. This dissertation emerges from four years of collaboration with a variety of outstanding individuals. First, many thanks to the campers, parents, and staff members of the hosting day camp for this project, with particular thanks to the camp director for giving me complete freedom to implement and evaluate the TLC program. The hosting day camp will always be my ‘camp home’.

Second, the humor, support, and collegiality that exist amongst the graduate students of Lehotsky 276 made my journey so much more enjoyable and inspired me to achieve a high level of scholarship. Brandi, Matt, Cindy, Kate, and Emily, I will miss our office conversations. In particular, I extend my thanks to Cindy Hartman for your support throughout my journey and being an excellent research assistant. I wish you a successful, moss-filled journey of your own.

Third, I have been fortunate to experience the guidance of the talented faculty members at Clemson University and beyond. Thank you to my committee members Deb Jordan, Barry Garst, and Sandy Linder. Your guidance and feedback have made me a stronger scholar and made this a stronger study. Fran McGuire, committee member and mentor, you were the first to tell me that I would make a good faculty member – I only hope I can live up to your example. It has been an honor to learn from you. Teresa Tucker, we’ve made a great team and I appreciate your unflagging enthusiasm and support – I will miss your fist bumps. Dan Anderson, your straightforward and honest approach to mentorship has taught me so much about management and about life. Thank you for making my journey more enriching and more amusing. Finally, it is difficult to

express how much of an impact my advisor, Denise Anderson, has made on my life. You have shown me what a strong female faculty member can do for her department, an example that will guide me as I step out on my own.

Finally, my professional accomplishments have been made possible by the support I received from my family and friends. Thank you to all of my family members (O'Briens and Mainieris alike) and friends who have stuck with me through this process and have offered your love and support. In particular, thank you Mom and Dad for guiding me to the woman I have become. We have been and will always be the O'Brien three – exploring, laughing, and learning together. Lastly, I cannot imagine travelling this journey without Patrick Mainieri by my side. Thank you for believing in the power of camp as much as I do – I cannot wait to see where our road leads.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
TITLE PAGE.....	i
ABSTRACT .....	ii
DEDICATION .....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	ix
LIST OF FIGURES .....	x
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background.....	1
Purpose of the Study.....	8
Research Questions .....	9
Definition of Terms .....	9
Delimitations .....	10
Dissertation Format .....	11
References .....	13
THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX BY BREAKING DOWN THE ‘BLACK BOX’: APPLYING IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION TO A STRUCTURED CAMP CURRICULUM .....	17
Introduction .....	17
Review of the Literature.....	18
Teens Leading & Connecting Program .....	22
Methods .....	25
Findings .....	30
Discussion.....	43
Limitations and Future Directions.....	51
Conclusion.....	52
References .....	54
I’D VOLUNTEER IF I HAD TO, BUT NOW I WANT TO: EXPLORING THE SHORT-TERM CIVIC OUTCOMES OF THE TEENS LEADING & CONNECTING PROGRAM .....	58
Introduction .....	58
Review of the Literature.....	60
Teens Leading & Connecting Program .....	66
Methods .....	70
Findings .....	75
Discussion.....	90



Table of Contents (Continued)

	Page
Limitations and Future Research Directions .....	99
References .....	102
<b>THERE WAS MORE OUT THERE THAN OUR STREET: EXPLORING SUMMER CAMP AS AN AVENUE TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND SOCIAL CAPITAL .....</b>	<b>107</b>
Introduction .....	107
Review of the Literature .....	110
Methods .....	120
Findings .....	128
Limitations and Future Directions .....	148
Conclusion .....	149
References .....	151
<b>IT WASN'T JUST A CAMP: EVALUATING THE TEENS LEADING AND CONNECTING STRUCTURED CAMP CURRICULUM .....</b>	<b>158</b>
Introduction .....	158
Study Purpose .....	160
The Teens Leading & Connecting Program .....	160
Methods .....	161
Findings .....	162
Discussion .....	164
How This Research Can Help You .....	167
Final Thoughts .....	168
References .....	177
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>181</b>
A: Summary of changes made to the TLC program between Weeks 1 & 2 .....	182
B: Teens Leading & Connecting Logic Model .....	183
C: Interview Questions .....	184
D: Camper Questionnaire .....	188
E: IRB Approval Letter .....	195

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. General daily schedule for TLC .....	24
2. Sample fidelity checklist for the "Identifying Needs" session of TLC .....	26
3. YPQA domain scores for TLC sessions in Week 1 .....	31
4. The number of curriculum changes made to each TLC session following Week 1 ..	31
5. YPQA domain scores for TLC session in Week 2 (Change between weeks).....	33
6. Fidelity percentages for TLC sessions in Weeks 1 & 2 .....	34
7. General daily schedule for TLC .....	68
8. Similarities and differences in programming between TLC and other similar programs .....	69
9. Characteristics of the study participants .....	76
10. Campers' memorable and essential experiences in TLC (number of mentions in parentheses) .....	77
11. General daily schedule for TLC .....	122
12. Characteristics of study participants.....	130
13. General schedule for TLC .....	161
14. Visual representation of methods timeline .....	162

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. A visual representation of the short-term outcomes of TLC with their accompanying TLC activities .....	78
2. Group mean changes in program-specific civic skills.....	131
3. Group mean changes in active and engaged citizenship. ....	132
4. A summary of short-term and follow-up outcomes of TLC.....	133
5. A participant generated logic model of the Teens Leading & Connecting program .....	165

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

**Civic problems.** On January 12, 2011, President Barack Obama addressed a mourning nation from Tucson, Arizona after the tragic shooting of 20 people, including Congresswoman Gabby Giffords and federal Judge John Roll. In his speech, he stated:

It should be because we want to live up to the example of public servants like John Roll and Gabby Giffords, who knew first and foremost that we are all Americans, and that we can question each other's [*sic*] ideas without questioning each other's [*sic*] love of country, and that our task, working together, is to constantly widen the circle of our concern so that we bequeath the American dream to future generations. (p. 4)

As they were intended, these words brought comfort and purpose to the nation in a time of confusion and tragedy. Many familiar with the social capital and related civic engagement literatures heard a call for Americans to re-connect to each other and broaden their scope beyond strictly personal concerns and gains. Mr. Obama's implicit reference to social capital should come as no surprise as he was a member of the Saguaro Seminar on civic engagement and social capital prior to becoming President of the United States (President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2007).

Mr. Obama's call for reconnection demonstrates that social capital has come to the forefront of not only academic discourse, but also popular concern. As defined by Jarvi and Wegner (2001), social capital consists of "...our associative networks that bind

members of a community together through trust, understanding and reciprocal practices, and result in change or improvement of our life circumstances” (p. 26). Though a topic of research for a decade prior, Putnam (1995; 2000) popularized the idea of the decline in social capital with his article and book, both variations on the title “Bowling Alone”.

The social capital and civic engagement literature indicate a similar concern: Americans today are less connected to their communities than in the recent past. Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton (2008) argued that Americans display a growing lack of connection between conceptions of the self and the larger societal context. The researchers also contend that even when Americans do seek community, such actions are increasingly motivated by self interest. Marshalling statistical data from innumerable sources, Putnam (2000) argued that key indicators of civic engagement, social capital, and interpersonal connection have, in some cases drastically, decreased over the past few decades. He found the most notable participation declines have been in activities that call people to actively serve, work, or attend. The activities most adept at forging connections are decreasing while participation in individual-oriented activities are increasing. For example, he found a notable decrease in the number of people who took active leadership roles, the number of meetings people attended, and the number of hours a day people devoted to community life. Concurrently, he found increases in the amount of participation in spectator sports and hours of TV watched. Putnam (2000) characterized these changes as decreases in ‘doing’ with increases in ‘watching’. Keeter, Kukin, Andolina, and Jenkins (2002) corroborated many of Putnam’s findings, discovering that the number of people who ‘always vote’ and the number of people

belonging to social groups have declined in recent generations. Further, though absolute numbers of volunteers increased in the youngest generation, their volunteering was more episodic and less active than generations of the past. Similarly, Lopez and his colleagues (2006) found that youth volunteering rates had decreased since 2002, 58% of young people in their sample were civically and/or politically disengaged, and 28% of young people reported participating in no civic or political activities of any kind. Putnam (2000) summarized his findings in this way:

For the first two-thirds of the twentieth century a powerful tide bore Americans into ever deeper engagement in the life of their communities, but a few decades ago – silently, without warning – that tide reversed and we were overthrown by a treacherous rip current. Without at first noticing, we have been pulled apart from one another and from our communities over the last third of the century. (p. 27)

**Societal repercussions.** If we accept this conclusion, should we care if such a tide of disconnection has entered society? Civic engagement and social capital scholars have not only documented these changes, they have also demonstrated the benefits of connection and the repercussions of disconnection on both an individual- and societal-level. Participation in civic and social capital building activities fosters social trust and collective problem solving, which are necessary in 21<sup>st</sup> century societies (Putnam, 2000; Smith & Sobel, 2010). Even in 19<sup>th</sup> century America, de Tocqueville (2003) recognized that Americans' participation in institutions not only connected them to each other, but also demonstrated the link between their personal interests and general societal interests.

If contemporary Americans are not participating in such pursuits, they develop few shared values or trust in others (Bellah et al., 2008; Brehm & Rahn, 1997).

Social capital, as a collective resource, greases the processes of collective problem solving and allows individuals to feel more capable to shape public life (de Sousa Briggs, 2004). As society becomes more complex with larger burdens on centralized government, such collective problem solving may become increasingly necessary to deal with contemporary issues, particularly at the local level. Smith and Sobel (2010) argued that 20<sup>th</sup> century societies have depended on large national and international institutions to solve important problems; however, the sluggish federal response to tragedies such as Hurricane Katrina point to the need for local citizens to be able to solve problems in their own local contexts. As Americans disconnect from each other and from the activities that can engender such skills, local problems may not be addressed adequately.

To statistically demonstrate the societal repercussions of declining civic engagement and social capital, Putnam (2000) created a social capital index to link communities' levels of social capital to other important indicators of quality of life. For example, states that scored high on the social capital index performed higher in indicators of child welfare (e.g. infant mortality rate, teen birth rate, high school drop out rates, and family health) and school performance (e.g. standardized test scores, graduation rates, student and parental school engagement). Similarly, Putnam (2000) found that states with higher levels of social capital reported lower levels of crime than states with lower levels of social capital. Further, those states with high levels of social capital displayed

overall better health among residents. Putnam (2000) went so far as to argue, “As a rough rule of thumb, if you belong to no groups but decide to join one, you cut your risk of dying over the next year *in half*. If you smoke and belong to no groups, it’s a toss-up statistically whether you should stop smoking or start joining” (p. 331). While this statement clearly exaggerates the statistical evidence, Putnam’s main thesis remains intact – being connected offers important individual- and community-level benefits that cannot be overlooked. Consequently, evidence of decreasing civic engagement and social capital could negatively impact several important sectors of society.

**Leisure contributions.** Given the possible negative repercussions of decreasing social capital and civic engagement, scholars have called for research to identify those places in society that support the development of social capital, civic engagement, and the skills necessary for both (Obradovic & Masten, 2007; Putnam, 1995; Putnam, 2000). Leisure and recreation organizations appear throughout the social capital and civic engagement literature as avenues that support such development.

Leisure scholars have long recognized the social, psychological, and economic potential of leisure activities and organizations. Beginning in classical Greece philosophy, leisure has been seen as intimately related to a successful society. Aristotle is perhaps the best-known commentator on the role of leisure in society. He viewed leisure as the foundation for all human action and as a key feature of community. Similarly, Pericles saw civil society, civic engagement, and leisure as inseparable concepts that reinforced each other. Leisure, in other words, was viewed as a commons for political and social engagement (Maynard & Kleiber, 2005). This essential classical



view of the relationship between leisure and citizenship persists into contemporary society. Referencing Aristotle's concept of leisure, Hemmingway (2006) argued, "Leisure is today, as it was then, among the resources necessary for sharing in governing and being governed" (p. 348). Leisure and recreation programs can act as catalysts to unite communities and increase their social capital. These programs possess the ability to connect a wide spectrum of participants, and are in a position to establish collaborative efforts with other entities in the community (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Jarvi & Wegner, 2001; Maynard & Kleiber, 2005). Such collaborative efforts can lead to a greater dialogue between agencies and constituents within communities, thereby increasing social capital.

In identifying places that can engender social capital and civic engagement, an emphasis has been placed on programs encountered during adolescence as a pivotal time for the development of civic identity (Youniss, McClellan, & Yates, 1997). Participation in certain types of programs during adolescence fosters a habit of community involvement that continues into adulthood. Participation in civic supporting activities as youth develops the inclination and skills necessary for civic involvement throughout the lifespan (Putnam, 2000; Smith & Smith, 2010). For example, researchers have demonstrated the utility of extracurricular activities, such as sports, youth organizations, and clubs, in fostering civic engagement in youth (Eley & Kirk, 2002; Parke, 2007; Jarrett, Sullivan, & Watkins, 2005; Smith, 1999). Additionally, research has demonstrated that the volunteer efforts of youth can act as a means of fostering a pattern of lifelong service (Janoski, Musick, & Wilson, 1998; Metz, McClellan, & Youniss,

2003; Niemi, Hepburn, & Chapman, 2000; Yates & Youniss, 1996). Mueller (2005) found that youth volunteerism encourages qualities such as self-confidence, empathy, social competence and civic awareness. Further, high school participation in educational or community programs seems to predict community and political involvement later in life (Niemi, Hepburn, & Chapman, 2000).

**Untapped solution.** Summer camps could offer a specific arena within which to address the aforementioned civic issues. Research on summer camp programming has demonstrated that camps can engender many of the same skills and competencies as other youth recreation programs represented in the civic engagement and social capital literature (American Camp Association, 2005; Bialeschki, Lyons, & Ewing, 2005; Hough & Browne, 2009; Thurber, Scanlin, Scheuler, & Henderson, 2007); however, summer camp remains largely underrepresented in the social capital and civic engagement literature. Those studies that have addressed social capital in summer camp have focused on building social capital within the camp environment (Devine & Parr, 2008; Yuen, Pedlar, & Mannell, 2005). Blackshaw and Long (2005) argued, “Community development through leisure initiatives has a responsibility to operate in the worlds in which people actually live...” (p. 254). As a result, there is a need for research to explore whether social capital and civic gains made at camp can be translated to campers’ home communities. Further, summer camp researchers who did address social capital did not examine camp programs that were intentionally designed to engender social capital and civic engagement (Devine & Parr, 2008; Yuen, Pedlar, & Mannell, 2005).

A recent upsurge in camp literature has focused on programs intentionally designed to foster specific outcomes such as leadership, environmental stewardship, camp connectedness, reading proficiency, friendship skills, teamwork, and affinity for exploration (Arend & Rogers, 2012; Browne & Sibthorp, 2012; Browne, Garst, & Bialeschki, 2011; Garst & White, 2012; Roark & Evans, 2010). Though several of these programs contain components that align well with social capital and civic engagement, there has been a lack of program development and evaluation of camp programs intentionally designed to increase campers' civic engagement and social capital in their home communities. The notable exception to this programming and literature gap is the Camp2Grow program aimed at engendering leadership and environmental stewardship (Browne, Garst, & Bialeschki, 2011). Though the Camp2Grow programming successfully targets civic skills and activity in campers, it does not intentionally address social capital building in campers.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The overarching purpose of this study was to explore summer camp as a possible avenue to fostering civic engagement and social capital in the camp environment and in the campers' home communities. To achieve this overarching purpose, this study had three sub-purposes. These sub-purposes were: 1) to implement an intentional camp program (Teens Leading & Connecting; TLC) aimed to increase campers' civic engagement and social capital in their home communities, 2) to understand the implementation of the TLC program when it is delivered to campers, and 3) to understand the experiences of the campers during and after the TLC program.

## **Research Questions**

To achieve these purposes, this study aimed to address the following questions:

1. How and at what quality was the TLC program delivered to campers?
2. What mechanisms and contexts impacted the implementation of TLC?
3. What were the short-term civic outcomes of TLC for campers?
4. What mechanisms and contexts impacted the short-term outcomes of TLC?
5. What was the impact of the TLC program on campers' civic skills, civic engagement and social capital in their home communities after camp?

## **Definition of Terms**

*Camp:* The American Camp Association (ACA; 1998) defined camp as “A sustained experience which provides a creative, recreational and educational opportunity in group living in the out-of-doors. It utilizes trained leadership and the resources of the natural surroundings to contribute to each camper’s mental, physical, social and spiritual growth” (p. 89).

*Camper:* A young person ages 13-16 years old who was registered for the TLC program at the hosting day camp and agreed to participate in the proposed study.

*Civic engagement:* The American Psychological Association (2011) defined civic engagement as “...individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern. Civic engagement can take many forms, from individual voluntarism to organizational involvement to electoral participation” (para. 1).

*Home community:* The neighborhood or area in which someone lives and to which one can contribute.

*Implementation evaluation:* Implementation, or process, evaluation aims to understand how well a program operates when delivered to participants (Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004).

*Social capital:* Social capital consists of the collective resources generated by individuals' membership in social networks and the shared norms and sanctions of those networks that have the potential to produce mutual benefit if put to positive ends (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; de Souza Briggs, 1997; Field, 2003; Halpern, 2005; Portes, 1998; Putnam, 2000).

*Teens Leading & Connecting (TLC):* A week-long day camp program for campers aged 13-16 years old that focused on the skills and identities that support civic engagement and social capital, such as leadership, problem solving, teamwork, and service opportunities.

### **Delimitations**

The focus of this study was the efficacy of the TLC program at a YMCA day camp in Georgia and its effects on its campers. As a result, the study population was delimited to the TLC program and the TLC participants at the hosting day camp who agreed to participate in this study. The intention of this study was not to generate conclusions generalizable to all camp environments, but to develop a rich understanding about the program and the program's effects on its participants. Despite these delimitations, the researcher intended the TLC program to function as a demonstration program for other camps interested in developing similar skill sets in their campers. As defined by Rossi, Lipsey, and Freeman (2004), a demonstration program is "...designed and implemented explicitly to test the value of an innovative program concept" (p. 21).

Consequently, though the results of the study cannot necessarily be generalized, the researcher's hope is that the results are useful for camp practitioners in the future.

### **Dissertation Format**

This dissertation report is structured following the 'article format'. The dissertation consists of three articles for publication as described below. Each article was composed with a particular peer-reviewed journal in mind and was written to align with each journal's purpose, audience, and style. The three articles are:

1. The first article focuses on the camp program itself and the implementation evaluation of the program (Research Questions #1 and #2). The purposes of this portion of the study were 1) to explore how and at what quality the program was implemented and 2) to understand the mechanisms and contexts that impacted implementation. Implementation evaluation was used to address these purposes, including a program quality observational checklist, a program-specific fidelity checklist, and facilitator interviews. This article was written with the *Journal of Experiential Education* in mind.
2. The second article focuses on the direct impact of the camp program on campers' civic skills as they leave the camp program, along with the mechanisms and contexts at work in those outcomes (Research Questions #3 and #4). The purpose of this portion of the study was to understand the short-term outcomes, and the supporting contexts and mechanisms, of the Teens Leading & Connecting program. To address its purposes, this portion of the study utilized post-camp, semi-structured interviews with campers. This article was written with the

‘Programs that Work’ section of the *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration* in mind.

3. The third article discusses summer camp as a possible avenue for building civic engagement and social capital in campers’ home communities (Research Question #5). This portion of the study employed camper interviews, parent interviews, and camper questionnaires. This article was written with the *Journal of Leisure Research* in mind.

The final chapter of this dissertation acts as a concluding chapter, bringing together the findings of all three articles to discuss the overall conclusions and implications of the study.

## References

- American Camp Association. (1998). *Accreditation standards for camp programs and services*. Martinsville, IN: American Camp Association.
- American Camp Association. (2005). *Directions: Youth development outcomes of the camp experience*. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.acacamps.org/research/enhance/directions>.
- American Psychological Association. (2011). *Civic engagement*. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.apa.org/education/undergrad/civic-engagement.aspx>.
- Arend, L., & Rogers, M. (2012, February). *A utilization-focused evaluation of a pilot reading program at Sherwood Forest Camp*, Presentation conducted at the American Camp Association National Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Bellah, R., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W., Swidler, A., & Tipton, S. (2008). *Habits of the heart: Individualism and commitment in American life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. (Original work published in 1985).
- Bialeschki, D., Lyons, K., & Ewing, D. (2005). Youths' perspectives on camp outcomes: Intentionality and positive youth development. *Twelfth Canadian Conference on Leisure Research*. Vancouver, Canada.
- Blackshaw, T., & Long, J. (2005). What's the big idea? A critical exploration of the concept of social capital and its incorporation into leisure policy discourse. *Leisure Studies*, 24, 239-258.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241-258). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Brehm, J., & Rahn, W. (1997). Individual-level evidence for the causes and consequences of social capital. *American Journal of Political Science*, 41, 999-1023.
- Browne, L., Garst, B., & Bialeschki, D. (2011). Engaging youth in environmental sustainability: Impact of the Camp 2 Grow program. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 29(3), 70-85.
- Browne, L., & Sibthorp, J. (2012, February). *Fostering camp connectedness through structured curricula at day camp*, Presentation conducted at the American Camp Association National Conference, Atlanta, GA.



- Coleman, J. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *The American Journal of Sociology*, 95-120.
- de Sousa Briggs, X. (2004). Social capital: Easy beauty or meaningful resource? *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 70, 151-158.
- de Tocqueville, A. (2003). *Democracy in America and two essays on America*. (G. Bevan, Trans.) London: Penguin Books. (Original work published in 1835).
- Devine, M. A., & Parr, M. G. (2008). "Come in, but not too far:" Social capital in an inclusive camp setting. *Leisure Sciences*, 30, 391-408.
- Eley, D., & Kirk, D. (2002). Developing citizenship through sport: The impact of a sport-based volunteer programme on young sport leaders. *Sport, Education, and Society*, 7(2), 151-166.
- Field, J. (2003). *Social capital*. London: Routledge.
- Garst, B. A., & White, C. P. (2012). *Leadership and environmental stewardship: A curriculum for camps and other youth programs*. Monterey, CA: Healthy Learning.
- Halpern, D. (2005). *Social capital*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.
- Hemmingway, J. (2006). Leisure, social capital and civic competence. *Leisure/Loisir*, 30, 341-355.
- Hough, M., & Browne, L. (2009). Connecting camp mechanisms to camper outcomes: A case for program theory. *American Camp Association National Conference*. Orlando, FL.
- Janoski, T., Musick, M., & Wilson, J. (1998). Being volunteered? The impact of social participation and pro-social attitude on volunteering. *Sociological Forum*, 13, 495-519.
- Jarrett, R., Sullivan, P., & Watkins, N. (2005). Developing social capital through participation in organized youth programs: Qualitative insights from three programs. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 33, 41-55.
- Jarvi, C., Wegner, D., & Estes, C. (2001). Parks and recreation professionals as community change agents. *Parks and Recreation*, 36(1), 22-32.
- Keeter, S., Zukin, C., Andolina, M., & Jenkins, K. (2002). *The civic and political health of the nation: A generational portrait*. Retrieved from: [http://www.civicyouth.org/research/products/Civic\\_Political\\_Health.pdf](http://www.civicyouth.org/research/products/Civic_Political_Health.pdf).

- Lopez, M. H., Levine, P., Both, D., Kiesa, A., Kirby, E., & Marcelo, K. (2006). *The civic and political health of the nation: A detailed look at how youth participate in politics and communities*. Retrieved from: <http://www.civicyouth.org/the-2006-civic-and-political-health-of-the-nation/>.
- Maynard, S., & Kleiber, D. (2005). Using leisure services to build social capital in later life: Classical traditions, contemporary realities, and emerging possibilities. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 37, 475-493.
- Metz, E., & Youniss, J. (2005). Longitudinal gains in civic development through school-based required service. *Political Psychology*, 26, 413-437.
- Niemi, R., Hepburn, M., & Chapman, C. (2000). Community service by high school students: A cure for civic ills? *Political Behavior*, 22(1), 45-69.
- Obama, B. (2011, January 12). Obama Speech Addresses Tragedy in Tucson [Transcript]. Retrieved from <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/obama-speech-transcript-president-addresses-shooting-tragedy-tucson/story?id=12597444#.T2d2ib-n1C0>.
- Obradovic, J., & Masten, A. S. (2007). Developmental antecedents of young adult civic engagement. *Applied Developmental Science*, 11(1), 2-19.
- Parke, T. (2007). Does sport foster social capital? The contribution of sport to a lifestyle of community participation. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 24, 378-401.
- Portes, A. (1998). Social capital: Its origins and applications in modern sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24, 1-24.
- President and Fellows of Harvard College. (2007). Saguaro Seminar – Civic engagement in America. Retrieved from: <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/saguaro/participants/obama.htm>.
- Putnam, R. (1995). Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. *Journal of Democracy*, 6, 65-78.
- Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Roark, M., & Evans, F. *Play it, measure it: Experiences designed to elicit specific youth outcomes*. Monterey, CA: Healthy Learning.
- Rossi, P. H., Lipsey, M. W., & Freeman, H. E. (2004). *Evaluation: A systematic approach* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Smith, G., & Sobel, D. (2010). *Place- and community-based education in schools*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Thurber, C., Scanlin, M., Scheuler, L., & Henderson, K. (2007). Youth development outcomes of the camp experience: Evidence for multidimensional growth. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 36, 241-254.
- Youniss J., McLellan, J., & Yates, M. (1997). What we know about engendering civic identity. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 40, 620-631.
- Yuen, F. C., Pedlar, A., & Mannell, R. C. (2005). Building community and social capital through children's leisure in the context of an international camp. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 37, 494-518.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX BY BREAKING DOWN THE ‘BLACK BOX’: APPLYING IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION TO A STRUCTURED CAMP CURRICULUM**

#### **Introduction**

As Bialeschki, Henderson, and James (2007) explained, “Camp is not inherently good without purposeful and directed efforts by camp professionals” (p. 770). To this end, several camp scholars have designed structured curricula to engender specific outcomes in organized camps (e.g., Garst & White, 2012; Roark & Evans, 2010). These programs intentionally aim to break down the ‘black box’ between programming and outcomes. To break down the black box of programming, however, intentional programming is only one step; programmers must understand how and at what quality such intentional programming is delivered. Thus, practitioners need to document the nature and delivery of their youth programs, including camp programs (Hattie, Marsh, Neill, & Richards, 1997).

Implementation evaluation is a form of program evaluation that aims to understand the ‘how’ of programs. Few studies address implementation evaluation (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). Of those that do employ implementation evaluation, few studies examine more than one dimension of implementation, despite recommendations to approach implementation evaluations in a multi-dimensional manner (Berkel, Mauricio, Schoenfelder, & Sandler, 2011; Durlak & DuPre, 2008). There exists a simultaneous need for intentional, structured programming and implementation evaluation to better

understand and document how youth programming operates and elicits outcomes in participants. Consequently, by implementing an intentional camp program aimed to increase participants' civic engagement and social capital in their home communities, the purposes of this study were 1) to explore how and at what quality the program was implemented and 2) to understand the mechanisms and contexts that impacted implementation.

### **Review of the Literature**

Research related to youth programming has been efficacious in identifying the outcomes of youth programming experiences. Indeed, there has been an explosion in youth outcomes research. For example, in reviewing the primary outcomes from summer camp participation, Bialeschki, Henderson, and James (2007) integrated research from 41 different publications that examined the outcomes of the summer camp experience. However, the preponderance of outcomes research makes it difficult for practitioners to sort through the research and make informed decisions (Gambone, Connell, Klem, Sipe, & Bridges, 2002). Further, a majority of outcomes research identifies the outcomes of a program without investigating what aspects of the program actually contribute to those outcomes. This approach has come to be known as black box programming "...where it seems that simple participation is assumed to lead to participant development without any ability to describe the specific mechanisms through which change may occur" (Sibthorp, Paisley, & Gookin, 2007, p. 1). As a result, there is a movement in youth development research to break down this black box by detecting the specific parts of a program that engender specific outcomes (Garst, 2010). This movement emphasizes the need to focus

on the ‘how’ of programs by connecting outcomes with program characteristics (Baldwin, Persing, & Magnuson, 2004; Ewert & McAvoy, 1999; Garst, 2010; Hattie, et al., 1997; Henderson, et al., 2007; Izzo, Connell, Gambone, & Bradshaw, 2004; McKenzie, 2000; Pawson & Tilley, 1997; Rogers, 2000; Sibthorp, Paisley, & Gookin, 2007). For example, when discussing adventure programming, Baldwin and colleagues (2004) explained that, “There are philosophical ideas, programming principles, and a ‘folk pedagogy’ of practitioner beliefs about how ‘adventure’ works, but few explicit theoretical models, testable hypotheses, and little empirical evidence of *specific adventure mechanisms* that affect processes of individual change” (*original emphasis*, p. 168). To aid in programming efforts, research must address this gap in the literature.

Pawson and Tilley (1997) offered a useful conceptualization to better understand and document the mechanisms at work in a given programmatic effort. They termed their concept ‘realistic evaluation’. Under the premise of realistic evaluation, programs do not simply ‘work or not work’. Certain ideas work for certain participants in certain situations. This evaluation model suggests an iterative circle that cycles through theory, hypotheses, observations, and program specification. Given that the first rule of realistic evaluation states that evaluations need to address why and how a program has potential to cause change, this model seems well suited to address the issues associated with black box programming. Pawson and Tilley (1997) simplified the program process to the following equation: mechanism + context = outcomes. They offered a simple example from physical science to explain this three-way relationship:

Our basic concern is still, of course, the *outcome* (the spark causing the explosion). But what does the explanatory work is first of all the *mechanism* (the chemical composition of the substance which allows the reaction), and secondly the *context* (the physical conditions which allow the mechanism to come into operation). (*original emphasis*, p. 58)

Pawson and Tilley's (1997) approach to evaluation called evaluators to document and test this three-part relationship. Realistic evaluation extends typical evaluation models by acknowledging that the environments and contexts of a program are constantly changing and, therefore, must be taken into account in the mechanism – outcome relationship.

To document the mechanisms and contexts at work in any given program, practitioners need to look beyond typical outcomes evaluation. Durlak and DuPre (2008) posited that "...accurate interpretation of outcomes depends on knowing what aspects of the intervention were delivered and how well they were conducted" (p. 328). In other words, practitioners need to document the nature, quality, and delivery of their youth programs (Hattie, et al., 1997; Izzo, et al., 2004). Hamilton (1980) argued that there exists a hierarchy of questions that must be asked of programs: "(1) Do participants say they have been affected? (2) Is there external evidence of effects? (3) Is there evidence that the program was responsible for the effects? (4) What about the program was responsible for the effects?" (p. 195). Further, he contended that most programs stop at or before the third question when examining their programs. Fully unpacking the 'black box' requires program designers and evaluators to address all four questions through systematic evaluation.

Implementation evaluation can help program evaluators address Hamilton's (1980) fourth question: What about a program is responsible for its effects? Implementation evaluation aims to understand how well a program operates when delivered to participants (Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004). In a variety of disciplines concerning mental and physical health, few studies address implementation evaluation in any way (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). This assertion seems particularly true for the field of leisure studies. Of the over 50 studies reviewed by Durlak and DuPre (2008), none appeared in a journal that contained leisure, parks, or recreation in its title. Further, a database search for the terms 'implementation evaluation' or 'process evaluation' anywhere in articles appearing in journals with leisure, recreation, or parks in the title returned zero results. Durlak and DuPre (2008) argued, "Evaluations that lack carefully collected information on implementation are flawed and incomplete" (p. 340). The implementation literature has identified four main dimensions of implementation: fidelity (adherence to curriculum), quality of delivery (facilitator skills), program adaptation (changes made to the program), and participant responsiveness (enthusiasm and participation) (Berkel et al., 2011). Few studies or evaluation efforts examine more than one of these implementation dimensions, despite multiple recommendations to do so (Berkel et al., 2011; Durlak & DuPre, 2008).

Practitioners can employ methods of intentional programming to enhance the success of implementation evaluation efforts. For example, a recent movement in the camp arena aims to increase intentionality in camp programming to better target desired outcomes. Bialeschki, Henderson, and James (2007) argued that intentionality in camp



enables desired camp outcomes. As documented in the American Camp Association's (ACA) Inspirations (2006a) and Innovations (2006b) reports, camp programs and research are becoming more focused on not only identifying the outcomes of a program, but also understanding what aspects of the program actually contribute to those outcomes. Several camp scholars have introduced structured curricula and programming strategies to engender specific outcomes. Examples of these efforts include: Camp2Grow for leadership and environmental stewardship (Browne, Garst, & Bialeschki, 2011; Garst & White, 2012); structured curricula for camp connectedness (Browne & Sibthorp, 2012); Explore 30 Camp Reading Program for increased reading enjoyment and improved vocabulary (Arend & Rogers, 2012; Garst, Morgan, & Bialeschki, 2012); and Play It, Measure It designed curricula for friendship skills, teamwork, and affinity for exploration (Roark & Evans, 2010). As Browne, Garst, and Bialeschki (2011) explained, structured curricula "...allow camps to target desired outcomes and document their efforts to stakeholders" (p. 81). Each of these programs intentionally aimed to break down the black box between camp programming and camp outcomes.

### **Teens Leading & Connecting Program**

This study examined a structured curriculum for summer camp intentionally aimed to increase participants' civic engagement and social capital in their home communities. The unit of analysis in this study was a week-long pilot camp program, Teens Leading & Connecting (TLC). The program was implemented twice during the summer of 2012 at a day camp in northeast Georgia. A total of 17 teen campers ages 13-16 participated in the program.

Civic engagement, social capital, and youth programming literature informed the structure and activities for TLC. The TLC weekly schedule is displayed in Table 1. Activity areas that included the term ‘Skills’ focused on skill development on topics related to civic skills. These skill sessions had intentional lesson plans with activities drawn from successful camp and youth development programs such as Camp2Grow (Garst & White, 2012) and Play It, Measure It (Roarke & Evans, 2010), as well as from various service learning curricula. ‘Camp Activities’ were periods during which the campers engaged in traditional camp activities such as kayaking, climbing, field games, and water sports. The community tour, camp service activity, meeting with community leaders, and off-camp service project were inspired by the Place- and Community-Based Education literature (Melaville, Berg, and Blank, 2006; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Umphrey, 2007) and aimed to connect campers’ civic learning to two communities of import to the campers: the camp community and the campers’ home community. For example, during the community tour, campers visited a local family and youth development collaborative, a local senior citizens’ center, and a local food bank, as well as learning about an area of extreme poverty in their community.

The TLC facilitator, a long-time staff member of the day camp where TLC was implemented, was the former campers-in-leadership-training coordinator and specializes in working with adolescents on leadership and teambuilding skills. The facilitator received a TLC manual that contained the week’s schedule, the TLC philosophy and purposes, detailed instructions for skill sessions, facilitation tips, and copies of the evaluation tools being employed for the program. Of note for this study, the majority of

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Morning	Introduction	Camp Activities	Camp Activities	Community Tour Debrief	Camp Activities	Off Camp Service Project
	Group Dynamic Skills	Leadership Skills	Problem Solving Skills	Camp Activities	Service Planning	
Afternoon	Camp Activities	Organizing Skills	Community Tour	Planning Skills	Meeting with Community Leaders	Lunch
	Cooperation Skills	Identifying Problems Skills		Service Planning		Week Debrief
Check Out		Leadership Observations		On-Camp Service Activity & Camp Out		
Evening						

the TLC manual focused on detailed instructions for the skill sessions during the week. Each skill session contained three to six required activities the facilitator was expected to cover during that session and a few optional activities the facilitator could choose to add to that session. Further, some of the required activities were labeled ‘Content’ which meant that the facilitator was expected to cover the content in that activity but could choose how best to communicate that content based on his own experience. The facilitator was asked to adhere to the activity format *and* content for the other required activities. The ‘Content’ activities were intended to give the facilitator more freedom throughout the curriculum, trying to balance the need for fidelity with the need for room for adaptation.

## **Methods**

### **Data Collection Procedures**

A combination of direct observations and facilitator interviews was used to assess the four dimensions of implementation (fidelity, quality, adaptation, and responsiveness). As Tucker and Rheingold (2010) argued, observation offers a direct means of assessing the various facets of program implementation. Observation of a program is preferable to self-report measures to avoid possible inflation of self-report results (Berkel et al., 2011; Cross & West, 2011; Durlak & DuPre, 2008). The researcher attended the entirety of the TLC program both weeks, acting primarily as an observer and occasionally assisting the TLC facilitator by completing administrative tasks. Upon observing TLC in operation, the researcher used observation checklists to assess the activities of TLC most related to expected program outcomes (Berkel et al., 2011; Durlak & DuPre, 2008). Post-camp interviews were conducted between the researcher and the facilitator. Tucker and Rheingold (2010) recommended this indirect method of collecting implementation data, particularly for fidelity and adaptation purposes. The interviews focused on the amount and quality of the program delivery, any adaptations that occurred, and the successes and challenges experienced while facilitating the program. Interviews lasted between one and a half and two hours and were recorded and transcribed verbatim.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

**Youth Program Quality Assessment.** The Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA; High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, 2005) aims to assess the quality of various types of youth serving programs at the point of delivery to participants. The

tool assesses the program in seven domains: Engagement, Interaction, Supportive Environment, Safe Environment, Youth-centered Policies and Practices, High Expectations, and Access. Due to lack of consistent psychometric data for the Safe Environment and Access domains, they were omitted from the current study (Yolahem & Winston-Ahlstrom, 2009). Further, three of the scales (Youth-centered Policies and Practices, High Expectations, and Access) focus on organization-level domains; since this research project focused on program-level quality, these three scales were omitted as well. For the remaining scales (Engagement, Interaction, and Supportive Environment), the researcher rated each indicator as follows: none of something (1), some of something (3) or all of something (5). Such a continuous rating scale allows more precise conclusions than dichotomous indicators of quality (Berkel et al., 2011; Durlak & DuPre, 2008). Each indicator is accompanied by detailed descriptors to aid in ranking.

Activity Name	Content Delivered			Activity Format Followed		
Binoculars	0	0.5	1	0	0.5	1
Map your camp	0	0.5	1	0	0.5	1
Newspaper investigation	0	0.5	1	0	0.5	1
Related material to campers' local community					0	1
Total points						
Possible points						7
Fidelity %						
<i>Note: 0=None, 0.5=Some, 1=All</i>						

**Program-specific fidelity checklist.** Based on the content of the TLC curriculum, the researcher generated a checklist of essential components that contributed to program

outcomes (Smith, Daunic, & Taylor, 2007). Tucker and Rheingold (2010) recommended this approach to assess program fidelity and adaptation. They suggested creating a detailed list of program components with definitions of behaviors for which to look. The checklist was structured to capture the fidelity to each session of the TLC curriculum. A sample of the checklist for one of TLC's sessions appears in Table 2.

**Facilitator interviews.** The researcher for the current study utilized semi-structured interviews with the facilitator of TLC following each week of TLC. Each interview was recorded with the consent of the participant. Immediately following each interview, the researcher recorded written notes regarding non-verbal aspects of the interviews including body language, facial expressions, and eye contact to better understand and describe responses.

### **Data Analysis**

First, data analysis for the YPQA followed the scoring recommendations of the instrument manual. The High/Scope Educational Research Foundation provides instrument users with detailed instructions to utilize, score, and interpret the results of observations using YPQA. The researcher followed the instructions to calculate weekly domain scores for each of the three domains (Supportive Environment, Interaction, and Engagement) for each TLC session and for TLC overall. These domain scores were then compared across weeks to document any changes between week one and week two of TLC. Second, the researcher calculated the percentage of fidelity for each of the relevant TLC sessions using an 80% compliance threshold as an indicator of success to align with the recommendations of the literature. Taylor and Rheingold (2010) suggest calculating

“...the percentage of each component that was present” as a simple method to report fidelity levels for a program (p. 266). Durlak and DuPre (2008) found that programs should aim for realistic fidelity levels between 60 and 80%. Similarly, Smith, Daunic, and Taylor (2007) recommended 80% fidelity. Such figures allow for an ideal mix of fidelity and adaptation. Third, the qualitative interview data were analyzed by the researcher following Hycner’s (1985) guidelines for the analysis of interview data. As recommended by Hycner (1985), after transcription and multiple readings of the interviews, the researcher identified meaning units within each interview, clustered meaning units in each interview, labeled themes within each interview, clustered composite meaning units across both interviews, then labeled relevant composite clusters into themes across both interviews.

### **Trustworthiness of the Data**

Trustworthiness of the data was established using four strategies. First, the YPQA observational instrument has gone through a variety of psychometric tests. The three domains utilized in this study have demonstrated internal consistency, scale validity, and concurrent validity (Yolahem & Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2009). Further, the domains have demonstrated adequate inter-rater reliability with 78% perfect agreement at the item level and an overall Kappa coefficient of 0.67 (Blazevski & Smith, 2007). Second, the researcher recruited and trained a research assistant to observe a selection of outcome-related activities with the YPQA to ensure the researcher’s accuracy and sound interpretation of the observations. On 180 rating items over five TLC sessions, inter-rater reliability between the researcher and the research assistant on the YPQA was 80.56%,

which was deemed acceptable (Creswell, 2007). Third, for the program-specific fidelity checklist, the researcher recruited two expert reviewers to review the checklist to assess the clarity of the checklist and descriptors. The researcher made modifications to the fidelity checklist based on the feedback received. Finally, the researcher utilized the facilitator interviews as an opportunity to discuss the observation findings with the facilitator as a way to validate the observation results from the facilitator's perspective. Further, the facilitator reviewed and confirmed the finalized themes from the interviews as an additional method of checking the accuracy of the themes.

Credibility of findings and the researcher as the data collection instrument was established in two ways. First, Glesne (1999) and Creswell (2007) suggested that prolonged engagement in the research site and with the research participants supports trustworthiness of findings in qualitative research. Glesne (1999) characterized such engagement as time at the site, time conducting interviews, and time spent with respondents. The researcher for this study was on-hand for the entire TLC program as an assistant to the facilitator in both weeks, conducted two in-depth interviews with the facilitator, and spent time building rapport with the facilitator throughout the program. Second, the researcher employed reflexive bracketing. Findlay (2002) described reflexive bracketing as "thoughtful, conscious self awareness" (p. 532). As the researcher has previous camp experience and participated in the research setting, the researcher identified both personal and larger world suppositions prior to commencing the research project (Gearing, 2004). To summarize the internal suppositions made transparent during this process, the researcher has worked in the camp setting for



approximately ten years, most of which have been spent working with adolescent campers like those participating in the TLC program. Also, the researcher has strong ties to the hosting day camp for the study, having worked at the camp intermittently for the entirety of her camp career. This experience demonstrated to the researcher, anecdotally, that the camp experience in general, and the hosting day camp in particular, could be a fruitful ground for adolescent development, motivating her interest to rigorously explore the camp experience. These internal suppositions were identified through the reflexive bracketing process to increase the transparency and trustworthiness of this study (Gearing, 2004).

### **Findings**

The first purpose of this study was to explore how and at what quality the TLC program was implemented. The findings of from all three data collection methods addressed this purpose. The second purpose of this study was to understand the mechanisms and contexts that impacted implementation; this purpose was addressed by the facilitator interviews.

#### **Findings from the YPQA**

**Week 1 findings.** Table 3 displays the domain scores for the TLC sessions on each of the three domains (Supportive Environment, Interaction, Engagement) of the YPQA for Week 1. Overall, TLC seemed to perform well in creating a supporting environment (4.409) for participants, but was weaker in creating interaction (3.298) and engagement (3.243). Further, several individual TLC sessions fell below the midway

domain score of 3 for either interaction or engagement. The Cooperation session fell below that midway score on both interaction *and* engagement.

		<b>Supportive Environment</b>	<b>Interaction</b>	<b>Engagement</b>
<b>TLC Session</b>	<b>Week Introduction</b>	4.32	2.75	3.50
	<b>Group Dynamics</b>	4.37	2.75	3.00
	<b>Cooperation</b>	3.84	2.50	2.83
	<b>Identifying Needs</b>	4.64	3.83	4.17
	<b>Problem Solving</b>	4.54	3.85	3.67
	<b>Leadership</b>	4.54	3.43	3.00
	<b>Organization</b>	4.40	4.00	4.17
	<b>Planning</b>	4.44	2.48	3.67
<b>Overall TLC</b>		4.41	3.30	3.24

*Note:* Highest possible scale score is 5, lowest possible scale score is 0.

**Changes to the curriculum.** Based on the findings of the YPQA in Week 1, the researcher made intentional changes to the curriculum to target areas and sessions that received lower scores. The most common changes were to diversify the number and type

		<b>Supportive Environment</b>	<b>Interaction</b>	<b>Engagement</b>
<b>TLC Session</b>	<b>Week Introduction</b>	0	3	2
	<b>Group Dynamics</b>	0	3	2
	<b>Cooperation</b>	0	4	1
	<b>Identifying Needs</b>	0	2	4
	<b>Problem Solving</b>	0	1	4
	<b>Leadership</b>	0	1	2
	<b>Organization</b>	0	0	1
	<b>Planning</b>	0	1	4

*Notes:* A change is either an addition to the curriculum or a reminder to include a previously missed component of the curriculum.

of small groups used in a particular session (Interaction), to increase the number of

opportunities for campers to act as group facilitators (Interaction), to enhance the quality of camper choice (Engagement), and to focus more on camper reflection (Engagement). These changes took the form of additions to the curriculum or highlights of existing features of the curriculum. For example, for the Cooperation session, one large group discussion was changed to a pair-share activity, one written reflection activity was added, and an activity was changed to allow the campers to create skits that taught the other campers a principle of cooperation. Additionally, the researcher highlighted two pair-share activities that had been missed by the facilitator in Week 1. Given that TLC performed relatively well on the Supportive Environment domain in Week 1, the curriculum changes were only targeted to the Interaction and Engagement domain items. Table 4 outlines the number of changes made to each session of TLC following Week 1. The number of changes made to each session were determined by that session's score on the YPQA in Week 1, the primary areas of deficiency for that session in Week 1, and the practicality of making changes when considering the actual curriculum for that session. For a complete list of changes made to each session, see Appendix A.

**Week 2 findings.** Table 5 displays the scores for the TLC sessions on each of the three domains (Supportive Environment, Interaction, Engagement) of the YPQA for Week 2. Table 4 also displays whether each session increased, decreased, or stayed the same in terms of its domain score in Week 2. The performance of TLC as a whole on all three domains increased in Week 2, with the program still strong in Supportive Environment (4.5506) and improving in Interaction (3.9913) and Engagement (3.65).

The changes made to the curriculum are reflected to an extent in the domain score changes for the individual sessions. With the exception of the Problem Solving session, all of the individual sessions improved in either Interaction or Engagement in Week 2.

		<b>Supportive Environment</b>	<b>Interaction</b>	<b>Engagement</b>
<b>TLC Session</b>	<b>Week Introduction</b>	4.43(+)	3.71(+)	2.50(-)
	<b>Group Dynamics</b>	4.50(+)	3.88(+)	3.33(+)
	<b>Cooperation</b>	4.63(+)	4.17(+)	4.17(+)
	<b>Identifying Needs</b>	4.53(-)	4.08(+)	4.17(0)
	<b>Problem Solving</b>	4.53(-)	3.63(-)	3.33(-)
	<b>Leadership</b>	4.43(-)	3.88(+)	4.17(+)
	<b>Organization</b>	4.63(+)	4.17(+)	3.67(-)
	<b>Planning</b>	4.53(+)	4.33(+)	4.33(+)
<b>Overall TLC</b>		4.55(+)	3.99(+)	3.65(+)

*Notes:* Highest possible scale score is 5. Lowest possible scale score is 0. Parentheses indicate the direction of absolute change in scale scores between weeks: (+) = Increased in Week 2, (-) = Decreased in Week 2, (0) = No change in Week 2.

The path for each session can be followed from its Week 1 YPQA scores to the changes made between weeks to its Week 2 YPQA scores.

### **Findings from the Program-Specific Fidelity Checklist**

**Week 1 findings.** Table 6 displays the fidelity percentages for TLC during Week 1. Overall, TLC was implemented with a high level of fidelity in Week 1 (87.153%), with all but two sessions (Week Introduction and Planning) displaying fidelity above the recommended 80%. Upon review of the fidelity checklists for Week 1, the Week Introduction session deviated most from the ‘Activity Format,’ but adhered closely to the content to be delivered. Upon review of the completed checklist, the lower fidelity of the

Planning session was primarily due to one activity during that session being omitted by the facilitator, which was due to simple oversight.

**Changes to the curriculum.** In conversations with the facilitator during Week 1 and in the first facilitator interview, the facilitator expressed some confusion with the

Table 6. Fidelity percentages for TLC sessions in Weeks 1 & 2			
		Week 1	Week 2
TLC Session	Week Introduction	77.78%	77.78% (0)
	Group Dynamics	94.44%	83.33% (-)
	Cooperation	87.50%	81.25% (-)
	Identifying Needs	85.71%	85.71% (0)
	Problem Solving	83.33%	83.33% (0)
	Leadership	81.25%	81.25% (0)
	Organization	94.44%	88.89% (-)
	Planning	68.75%	87.50% (+)
Overall TLC		87.15%	84.40% (-)
<i>Notes:</i> Parentheses indicate the direction of absolute change in fidelity percentages between weeks: (+) = Increased in Week 2, (-) = Decreased in Week 2, (0) = No change in Week 2.			

labels ‘Content’ and ‘Content and Activity’ in the TLC manual. Though the activities labeled ‘Content’ were intended to give the facilitator freedom to choose the best activity with which to deliver the specified content, the facilitator interpreted the label to mean that the content had to be delivered as it was printed in the facilitator handbook. As a result, the researcher explained the original intention of the ‘Content’ label and encouraged the facilitator to add his own activities that could cover the specified content in those portions of the sessions during Week 2. Additionally, the researcher pointed out the omitted activity during the Planning session to the facilitator prior to Week 2.

**Week 2 findings.** Table 6 displays the fidelity percentages for TLC during Week 2. Overall, TLC was implemented with a high level of fidelity (84.4%). With the exception of the Planning session, all of the TLC sessions were implemented with the same or a lower percentage of fidelity in Week 2. Upon review of the fidelity checklists for Week 2, the sessions that decreased in fidelity in Week 2 displayed deviations from both the activity format recommended and the content to be delivered. Upon review of the completed checklist, the Planning session increased in fidelity due to the inclusion of the activity omitted during Week 1.

### **Findings from the Facilitator Interviews.**

Analyses of the two interviews with the facilitator revealed seven themes that relate to the purpose of this study. These themes aligned with Pawson and Tilley's (1997) concepts of mechanisms and contexts.

### **Mechanisms**

Mechanisms of TLC that the facilitator felt contributed to the quality and success of the program were: the stacked and methodical curriculum, the adaptations made to the curriculum, camper engagement in the curriculum, and TLC as a process of exposure to ideas.

**The stacked and methodical TLC curriculum.** The facilitator felt that the curriculum for TLC was arranged in a logical order that stacked throughout the week, which aided campers' learning. In his Week 1 interview, the facilitator said:

The activities, like I said earlier, are obviously methodically placed in an order that allows for growth. It makes perfect sense to me as someone who's worked with kids as long as I have. It stacks upon each other. It stair steps.

The facilitator also felt that because of the methodical nature of TLC, the campers were able to better succeed at the challenges presented to them during the week. He commented:

...because of all those layers being methodically developed on top of each other and described and let them talk through it and get some facilitation along the way, the kids...you know, it wasn't scary to them. It was a challenge that they wanted to succeed at.

**The adaptations made to the curriculum.** The facilitator believed that he adapted the TLC curriculum both during each week of camp and between the two weeks. He felt that these adaptations brought his 'facilitator flavor' to the curriculum and allowed him to personalize the curriculum for the campers. He felt that the changes he made to the curriculum during the weeks were primarily modifications to the wording of the content and activities to avoid being long-winded and the addition of questions or activities that could provoke discussion. Between weeks, the facilitator felt that he was able to make adjustments to pacing and delivery of activities based on how the activities went in the first week and based on his more concrete knowledge of the overall scope of TLC. Regardless of the type of adaptations that took place, the facilitator seemed to think that such modifications were important to the success of the program. In his Week 1 interview, he explained, "I don't feel this or any program, no curriculum can you hand

to a teacher or a facilitator and say ‘Do everything that’s in this book exactly how it’s out laid and it’s gonna work.’ Um ‘cause it removes the human element. There’s such a human element in this.” In his second interview he argued that TLC “...needs to have the ability for the facilitator to make changes based on their strengths.”

**Camper engagement in the curriculum.** The facilitator described group engagement in TLC as ‘peaks and valleys,’ with many more peaks than valleys. He felt that the peaks were times when the group was entirely focused on and invested in the task at hand. The facilitator took pleasure in the peaks, saying “as a facilitator, you just kinda sit back and were like “These kids get it.” Like it’s a proud moment. And it’s a heart-warming moment to see them so into it without being prompted about it” (Week 2). The facilitator felt that certain activities in TLC particularly captured the attention and engagement of the campers in both weeks. These were activities that the facilitator felt “...hit home with the kids and it’s something that either they have an ‘aha’ moment or they have a connectivity to the activity” (Week 1). Beyond group-level engagement, the facilitator was careful to point out that individual campers fluctuated in engagement within the larger peaks and valleys. The facilitator seemed to link engagement with maturity level to some extent, particularly in Week 2. For example, he commented, “...some of the campers during week eight were very mature and totally got it and were completely appreciative of it and understood it completely the whole time. Others drifted in and out.” The facilitator seemed to take some responsibility for supporting engagement peaks and mitigating the valleys. In Week 1, the facilitator said, “as a



facilitator, it's my job to...notice when a valley is coming and adjust so the valley gets plateaued as quickly as possible. And that happened.”

**TLC as a process of exposure to ideas.** The facilitator seemed to believe that the success of TLC was tied to the way the program and its curriculum facilitated learning for the campers. He explained that the concepts presented in TLC built upon knowledge the campers possessed prior to the camp. He called this process ‘opening up,’ ‘cracking the walnut,’ or ‘enlightenment’ during which the campers were made aware of concepts they knew intuitively. In his Week 1 interview, the facilitator explained:

[The campers are like,] ‘Wow. I’m a part of something bigger than myself.’ And that’s when the first crack happens. And that’s when we first start to peel back the layer. And then the enlightenment just continues to happen and continues to happen to where they – it just becomes normal language to them. By the end of the week, it was normal language. It was – that was their topics of discussion. You know, community, community, community. And it was already in them.

Just the programming opened them up and made them and enlightened them to it.

Further, the facilitator felt the TLC activities allowed the campers to become the practitioners and gave them the space and trust to figure things out as a group. He said, “I feel like a lot of adults...tell kids what they need to know instead of letting them figure out what they can know. And this type of programming allows kids to figure out what they can know or what they can teach themselves or what they can learn from each other.” Finally, by exposing the campers to a number of community leaders within camp and in the larger community, the facilitator felt that TLC allowed campers to see that they

were indeed special to and valued by the community. In his Week 2 interview, the facilitator discussed this notion in relation to the off-camp experiences, saying “I think...it breaks the walls down where the campers feel welcome in that community outreach area.”

### **Contexts**

Contexts within which TLC operated and which supported the implementation of TLC were the facilitator, the environment, and the group dynamics present during Week 1 and Week 2 of TLC.

**The facilitator.** The facilitator believed that some of his own personal traits as a facilitator helped to support the mechanisms above and beyond the overall implementation of TLC. Specifically, the facilitator is an educator in a full-time job who has extensive previous experience working with adolescents both in and outside of a camp context. He felt he was able to draw on his knowledge of educational and instructional theory, as well as his previous success with teens to better implement the TLC curriculum. Further, he expressed that he felt that the facilitator of TLC impacts how well the program is implemented. He suggested that a facilitator for TLC should be considered carefully, saying:

I think that it does take a unique facilitator. I don't think that you could just hand this to anybody. I wouldn't hand this notebook to a 16 year old, first year counselor or even a 20 year old first year teen counselor... I think that having some facilitator experience. Knowing when to stay back and let the kids figure it

out. And knowing when to step in and help the kids is a huge, you know, advantage that I just have from working with kids for so long.

He felt that he was able to mediate a proper group dynamic and environment for TLC that allowed the campers room to try out ideas without judgment.

**The environment.** The facilitator identified three levels of the environmental context that he felt were important to the program's success. First, the facilitator discussed the trusting, non-judgmental environment that existed within the group during both weeks of TLC. He felt this trusting environment allowed campers to feel comfortable to try ideas out during the week. He explained, "You know, so building those relationships with the campers where it's a, you know, just a comfortable environment, a trusting environment where they can just be themselves."

Second, the facilitator believed that the physical space in which TLC took place was important. He stressed the need for a secluded space for campers to focus. Both weeks of TLC, the facilitator secured a cabin on the camp property that acted as a 'home-base' for the majority of the sessions. He felt that "...we wouldn't have been able to do [TLC] if there was not a place where they could focus on each other just because of the intensity of the topics of discussion and them having to work with each other."

Finally, the facilitator felt that TLC was a stronger program by being placed in the context of the camp environment. He explained that camp offered an atmosphere of freedom, comfort, and fun for the campers, which the facilitator felt allowed the campers to learn. In his first interview, the facilitator stated:

They're learners in the sense that they were in an environment of...comfort and what they have over the years attributed to a fun environment and so in that environment they can obviously break down a lot of walls and just go at it because of safety nets that are in place because of the camp environment.

The facilitator particularly contrasted the camp context to the school environment and expressed he doubted that a program like TLC could work as effectively in a school context. He explained, "...if [TLC] was sold to a school, it would be institutionalized and it would be set in stone and there would be standards and it would be put to accountability standards and...it would be institutionalized. [TLC] is something that cannot be institutionalized because of the way it's structured. It needs to have the ability to change and breathe and grow."

**The group dynamics.** The final contextual factor that the facilitator believed TLC operated within was the group dynamics of the campers. In his second interview, the facilitator contrasted the Week 1 group with the Week 2 group, noting what he felt were considerable differences between the groups. These differences stemmed from maturity differences in the campers as they entered the TLC program. The facilitator explained, "[The Week 2] group of kids didn't think as deeply at first as the first group of kids so we didn't get – I mean we were able to get into what we needed to get into and accomplish but it didn't take as long with them because there was a lot...more guidance and a lot more staying on track I think than the previous week." Though the facilitator admitted that facilitating Week 2 was more difficult due to the maturity issues, he also felt that such group differences are part of facilitating the program. He stated:

Just like this program, you're not gonna get the cream of the crop to just walk in and know everything that you're talking about and get it and it just happen. That was kinda the difference between week [one] and week [two] was week [one], we had a group of kids that kinda understood everything we're talking about.

Whereas with week [two] we had kids that had never really been ever exposed to it and by the end of the week it was like, 'Jesus Christ. What did we do with the kids who were idiots on day one and how did they come this far?' Whereas with week [one] it was like, 'Wow. These kids kinda already know what they're doing. By the time we get to the end, they're gonna be a highlight of the summer because they already kinda know so much of this stuff.'

Despite the large differences he saw between the groups, he felt both groups were successful in TLC. He said, "I think that the connections were definitely made for the age group that we were working with. Even with the maturity levels lacking for some of the campers during week [two]." The facilitator felt that a major reason both groups, though different, saw success in the program was the evolution of the group dynamics during both weeks of TLC. During his Week 1 interview, he explained, "these kids became very close with one another and...they trusted each other." Further, the facilitator stated, "I think because of their cohesiveness with each other the programming overall was a success." In Week 2, the facilitator described the evolution in this way, "So they started extremely disconnected and...became very close to each other. And helped each other through all of the experiences toward the end of the week which I think is very cool."

## **Discussion**

The purposes of the current study were to explore how and at what quality a structured camp curriculum was implemented and to understand the mechanisms and contexts that impacted implementation. The three methods employed in this study addressed both of these purposes. To unpack the ‘black box’ of camp programming, camp professionals must continue to consider intentional programming and structured curricula as viable options within the camp context; further, camp researchers must devote energy to evaluating how and at what quality such curricula are implemented. The current study sought to address both of these needs.

After the second implementation of TLC, the YPQA domain scores and the program-specific fidelity percentages for the overall TLC suggested that the program was implemented with quality while remaining true to the original outlined curriculum. Further, the interviews with the facilitator suggested that the program was implemented successfully from the facilitator perspective, with campers in both groups engaging in and working through the curriculum. Finally, interviews with the facilitator suggested that he felt he had adequate flexibility within the curriculum to make adaptations to the activities as he felt were necessary for the groups he worked with. Together, the methods employed in this study addressed all four dimensions of implementation suggested by the literature: fidelity, quality of delivery, program adaptation, and participant responsiveness (Berkel et al., 2011). Consequently, the implementation evaluation of TLC provided a holistic view of the program using relatively accessible and cost effective methods that could be employed for a variety of programs. The YPQA can be purchased by any

interested program for a modest fee. The program-specific fidelity checklist and interview protocol for the facilitator interviews could easily be adapted for other programs and require only the cost of photocopying and staff time to implement.

Beyond informing the evaluation of the TLC program, the evaluation tools were utilized to inform intentional programming decisions. In particular, the YPQA scores from the first week of TLC enabled targeted adaptations to the curriculum to enhance the quality of the program. Based on these intentional changes, all skill sessions but one (Problem Solving) experienced improvement on at least one of the three domains (Supportive Environment, Interaction, Engagement). The intentional changes to the curriculum focused on the Interaction and Engagement domains. Considering just those two domains, five of the nine skill sessions either stayed the same or improved on both of those domains in Week 2 and an additional three sessions improved on at least one of those domains. The overall TLC program improved on all three domains in Week 2.

The results from the YPQA suggest that using observation tools such as the YPQA to inform intentional programmatic changes can be a useful strategy to enhance the quality of a program. This finding reflects the work of the American Camp Association (ACA) in the creation of a Program Improvement Process (PIP) for camps. The ACA undertook the Innovations study (2006b) to understand how to improve supports and opportunities for campers across four domains (Supportive Relationships, Safety, Youth Involvement, and Skill Building), with particular emphasis on the Youth Involvement domain. Using an intentional Program Improvement Process, 82% of camps taking steps to improve Youth Involvement saw improvement in at least one dimension

of that domain. In all four domains, Innovations demonstrated that intentionality in summer camp structure, policies, and activities led to increases in camper supports and opportunities. The Program Improvement Process employed by ACA, though a process with documented success, required a one-year commitment from camps. The results of this study indicated that a similar process can be implemented on a shorter timeline, within the span of a summer, which means changes become more immediate and mobile for programmers.

Program specific fidelity checklists also allowed refinement of the TLC program between weeks. TLC was implemented with 87.15% fidelity in Week 1 and 84.40% fidelity in Week 2. Fidelity to the overall program during Week 1 was high, well above the highest recommendations of the literature, which suggested 60% to 80% fidelity (Durlak & DuPre, 2008; Smith, Daunic, Taylor, 2007). Given that fidelity was higher than expected for a first-time delivery, the researcher asked the facilitator specifically about fidelity in the Week 1 interview, which uncovered his confusion over the instructions found in the facilitator's manual. Consequently, instructions were clarified for the facilitator, leaving him more 'facilitator freedom' in the second week, a prospect to which he looked forward. Despite these changes, fidelity remained markedly high during the second week. Two related points could help to explain these high fidelity percentages. First, the curriculum built in inherent 'facilitator freedom' by specifying some activities as 'Content'. In these activities, the facilitator was free to choose the method through which he wished to deliver the content. Secondly, the fidelity checklist accounted for this freedom. For those activities labeled 'Content', the fidelity checklist



only accounted for the content being covered; the activity format was not included. In addition to flexibility being reflected in both the curriculum and the fidelity checklist, TLC was implemented by one highly skilled facilitator in one supportive camp setting. The researcher intends the TLC program to act as a demonstration program for other camps interested in developing similar skill sets in their campers. As defined by Rossi, Lipsey, and Freeman (2004), a demonstration program is "...designed and implemented explicitly to test the value of an innovative program concept" (p. 21). Therefore, it may be expected that a demonstration program implemented on a small scale in conducive conditions would display relatively high fidelity percentages (Morgan, 2012). Such high fidelity percentages, however, do offer promise that TLC could be implemented with more adaptations for other settings, yet still remain within the 60-80% recommended fidelity ranges found in the literature (Durlak & DuPre, 2008; Smith, Daunic, Taylor, 2007).

Cross and West (2011) would classify the content and activity format approach in this study as 'implementer behaviors' and pointed out that methods to document such behaviors are newly emerging. They urged researchers to share the methods they use to document fidelity so others can learn from their efforts. The fidelity checklist used in this study distinguished between 'Content Delivered' and 'Activity Format Followed' for each activity. This distinction allowed the checklist to reflect a more nuanced adherence than typical fidelity checklists. For example, Tucker and Rheingold (2010) suggested that a fidelity checklist should consist of a list of program components that are each rated for how much they appear during implementation. Such efforts tend to focus on the

content being delivered rather than how the content is delivered. With TLC, the activity formats typically carried important instructions that served the creation of supportive environment, interaction, and engagement as needed for program quality per the YPQA. Consequently, it was important to understand not just how much of the content was delivered, but also how much of the recommended activity format was delivered.

Though the two observational methods in this study provided insight into all four of Berkel and colleagues' (2011) dimensions of implementation (fidelity, quality, adaptation, and responsiveness), the observational methods focused strictly on the level or amount being demonstrated of each of those dimensions. The facilitator interviews expanded on the data provided in the observational methods by helping to explain what happened and why within those four implementation dimensions. The facilitator interviews focused on the supporting factors for successful implementation rather than outcomes of the program. The interviews suggested what mechanisms and contexts contributed, from the facilitator's standpoint, to the relatively high quality and delivery of TLC. Pawson and Tilley's (1997) original conceptualization of realistic evaluation focused on the mechanisms and contexts that combine to support program outcomes; however, their mechanism-context paradigm may be equally helpful when focusing on program implementation. Rather than their original 'mechanism + context = outcomes', with a focus on participant outcomes, the results of this study suggest it may be helpful to consider 'mechanism + context = quality implementation'. Consideration of mechanisms and contexts could be particularly important to the success of implementing structured curricula in a variety of camp contexts. When discussing the Camp 2 Grow program,

Browne, Garst, and Bialeschki (2011) admitted that some camps may struggle with applying such a curriculum within their existing structures. They argued, “Continued evaluation of structured curricula...could reveal effective strategies for integrating structured curricula into camp programs” (p. 81). In the case of TLC, the mechanisms and contexts revealed in the facilitator interviews may provided such strategies for other camps interested in implementing TLC or creating their own structured curricula.

The TLC facilitator identified the stacked and methodical curriculum, the adaptations made to the curriculum, camper engagement in the curriculum, and TLC as exposure to new ideas as features of the TLC program that he felt contributed to the quality and success of TLC. These mechanisms seemed to balance the benefits of a structured curriculum with the benefits of allowing modifications to curriculum. On one hand, the facilitator felt that TLC was organized to expose campers gradually to new ideas and skills by increasing the amount of challenge gradually through the week and building on campers’ previous knowledge and knowledge gained earlier in the week. Efforts such as Camp 2 Grow (Browne, Garst, & Bialeschki, 2011; Garst & White, 2010) and Explore 30 Camp Reading Program (Garst, Morgan, & Bialeschki, 2012) have demonstrated that implementing structured program strategies in a camp context is possible and can intentionally target and engender desired outcomes. On the other hand, the facilitator felt that the curriculum was dynamic with peaks and valleys of engagement and room for the facilitator to make adaptations based on the campers and his own experience. Previous research indicates that adaptation can positively impact outcomes if the program is flexible enough to allow facilitators room to adapt the program for the

local context of the program and participants (Berkel et al., 2011; Durlak & DuPre, 2008). Indeed, Shen, Yang, Cao, and Warfield (2008) suggested that fidelity and adaptation complement each other, rather than compete against each other, to enhance program success. The findings of the current study seem to suggest that the TLC curriculum struck a balance between structure and flexibility that the facilitator felt helped to enable the quality and success of the program.

Beyond the mechanisms at work during program implementation, the facilitator identified three contextual features of TLC implementation that supported the program: the facilitator, the environment, and group dynamics. These three contextual features were external to, but supportive of, the TLC curriculum. As Browne, Garst, and Bialeschki (2011) suggested, knowledge of such contexts could offer useful suggestions for camps wishing to transfer a structured curriculum from one camp environment to another. In the case of TLC, the findings from the facilitator interviews indicate that camps wanting to implement TLC should consider recruiting an experienced facilitator for the program, targeting campers aged 14-16, creating groups of 8-12 campers, and providing a separate physical space for TLC groups to use. Further, establishing a trusting, non-judgmental environment within the TLC group seemed important to support the intensity of the TLC curriculum. Such a contextual feature has emerged previously in youth programming and camp literature. Establishing emotional and physical safety and supportive relationships within youth groups have been identified as important by a variety of researchers (ACA, 2006a; Bialeschki, Henderson, & James, 2007; Gambone, et

al., 2002; Hamilton, Hamilton, & Pittman, 2004; McKenzie, 2000; Sibthorp, Paisley, & Gookin, 2007).

Beyond these within-camp features, the placement of TLC within the camp experience itself seemed important to the success of the program from the facilitator's standpoint. He felt that the freedom, comfort, and fun offered by the camp environment supported the learning that took place during TLC, particularly when contrasted with the more rigid school context. Camp as a particularly supportive environment for learning is not a new concept. As Eells (1986) explained, throughout the over 100-year history of summer camps, all camps have shared a common bond of fostering relationships among people. Further, Eells (1986) argued, "The ideal American camp provides an educational milieu that is one of the most favorable settings possible for helping young people to grow, develop, and achieve understanding of themselves and a sense of responsibility for others and for the environment" (p. v). Despite camp's historical legacy as a learning environment, learning in camp has typically been organic, an assumed part of traditional camp activities. Bialeschki, Henderson, and James (2007) called for more intentionality in this process and previous efforts at structured curricula demonstrate that such intentional efforts can be successful at camp (Browne, Garst, & Bialeschki, 2011; Garst, Morgan, & Bialeschki, 2012; Garst & White, 2010). The results of the current study suggest that the flexibility of the camp environment and the comfort of campers within the camp environment can, in fact, contribute to the success of such structured curricula, if the curricula, in turn, also allows for flexibility in implementation.

## **Limitations and Future Directions**

The focus of this study was the efficacy of the TLC program at a day camp in northeast Georgia. As a result, the study population was delimited to the TLC program itself as implemented twice at the hosting day camp during the summer of 2012. The intention of this study was not to generate sweeping generalizations appropriate for all camp environments but to develop a rich understanding of the program. Despite these delimitations, the researcher intended the TLC program to act as a demonstration program for other camps interested in developing similar skill sets in their campers. Consequently, though the results of the proposed study cannot necessarily be generalized, the researcher's hope is that they are useful for camp practitioners in the future who will be able to apply the instruments, methods, and program strategies identified through this study to their own programs.

A few limitations of the current study point to directions for future research. First, though the YPQA proved useful for this study in identifying the level of implementation dimensions present during TLC, some of the items were difficult to apply to a camp context. Further, wording of some of the item descriptions was confusing, making assessment more tedious than necessary. As a result, an updated version of the YPQA, particularly one unique to the camp context would be useful for future research. Fortunately, such a tool will be available shortly. The Camp Program Quality Assessment (C-PQA), based on the YPQA, improves on lessons learned from the YPQA and is specific to the camp context (American Camp Association, Inc., 2012). Future program implementation research in the camp setting should strive to utilize this new

tool. Second, the program-specific fidelity checklist needs further refinement as it was only employed twice in this study. Future research could explore the format for the fidelity checklist proposed in this study, as well as other formats that offer nuanced understanding of adherence in a given program setting. Finally, the current study only examined two iterations of the TLC program within one camp context and with one facilitator. For TLC to be considered a viable structured curriculum for a variety of camps, future research could investigate the implementation of the program in a variety of camp contexts and with a variety of facilitators.

### **Conclusion**

The current study aimed to implement an intentional camp program (TLC), explore how and at what quality the program was implemented, and understand the mechanisms and contexts that impacted implementation. The study revealed that a combination of observation and interview methods was effective for exploring all four dimensions of program implementation: fidelity, quality, adaptation, and responsiveness (Berkel et al., 2011); therefore, not only could TLC itself be a useful curriculum for camps looking to engender similar skills in their campers, but also the implementation evaluation techniques used to assess TLC could be useful to camps wanting to similarly document their own programs. As funding for programming becomes increasingly tight, funders are requesting that programmers demonstrate how their programs operate to foster particular outcomes. Unpacking the ‘black box of programming’ becomes crucial in such a funding climate. Implementation evaluation offers a viable, systematic method to unpack the black box and document the nature of youth programs. This study

demonstrates that implementation evaluation is not only feasible in the camp context, but also can be useful in enhancing programming and transferring programming to new contexts.



## References

- American Camp Association. (2006a). *Inspirations: Developmental supports and opportunities of youth's experiences at camp*. Retrieved June 9, 2008, from <http://www.acacamps.org/research/enhance/Inspirations.pdf>.
- American Camp Association. (2006b). *Innovation: Improving youth experiences in summer programs*. Retrieved June 9, 2008, from <http://www.acacamps.org/research/enhance/Innovations.pdf>.
- American Camp Association, Inc. (2012). Camp Program Quality Assessment (C-PQA). Retrieved from <http://www.acacamps.org/camp2grow/camp-quality-assessment>.
- Arend, L., & Rogers, M. (2012, February). *A utilization-focused evaluation of a pilot reading program at Sherwood Forest Camp*, Presentation conducted at the American Camp Association National Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Baldwin, C., Persing, J., & Magnuson, D. (2004). The role of theory, research, and evaluation in adventure education. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 26(3), 167-183.
- Berkel, C., Mauricio, A. M., Schoenfelder, E., & Sandler, I. N. (2011). Putting the pieces together: An integrated model of program implementation. *Prevention Science*, 12, 23-33.
- Bialeschki, M. D., Henderson, K. A., & James, P. A. (2007). Camp experiences and developmental outcomes for youth. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 16(4), 769-788.
- Blazevski, J., & Smith, C. (2007). *Inter-rater reliability on the Youth Program Quality Assessment*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cypg.org/content/inter-rater-reliability-youth-program-quality-assessment>.
- Browne, L., Garst, B., & Bialeschki, D. (2011). Engaging youth in environmental sustainability: Impact of the Camp 2 Grow program. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 29(3), 70-85.
- Browne, L., & Sibthorp, J. (2012, February). *Fostering camp connectedness through structured curricula at day camp*, Presentation conducted at the American Camp Association National Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Cross, W. F., & West, J. C. (2011). Examining implementer fidelity: Conceptualising and measuring adherence and competence. *Journal of Children's Services, 6*(1), 18-33.
- Durlak, J. A., & DuPre, E. P. (2008). Implementation matters: A review of research on the influence of implementation on program outcomes and the factors affecting implementation. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 41*, 327-350.
- Eells, E. (1986). *History of organized camping: The first 100 years*. Matinsville, IN: American Camping Association.
- Ewert, A., & McAvoy, L. (1999). The effects of wilderness settings on organized groups: A state-of-knowledge paper. In S. McCool, D. Cole, W. Borrie, & J. O'Loughlin (Eds.), *Wilderness Science in a Time of Change Conference Volume 3: Wilderness as a Place for Scientific Inquiry, 3*, pp. 13-26. Missoula, MT: USDA Forest Service Proceedings.
- Gambone, M., Connell, J., Klem, A., Sipe, C., & Bridges, L. (2002). *Finding out what matters for youth: Testing key links in a Community Action Framework for Youth Development*. Philadelphia, PA: Youth Development Strategies & the Institute for Research and Reform in Education.
- Garst, B. (2010). From what to how: Targeting specific factors that influence outcomes. *Journal of Extension, 48*(6), Retrieved from: [www.joe.org/joe/2010december/comm1.php](http://www.joe.org/joe/2010december/comm1.php).
- Garst, B., Morgan, C., & Bialeschki, D. (2012). 2011 Explore 30 Camp Reading Program Impact Report. Retrieved from <http://www.acacamps.org/sites/default/files/images/education/explore30/2012-Explore30-Impact-Report.pdf>
- Garst, B. A., & White, C. P. (2012). *Leadership and environmental stewardship: A curriculum for camps and other youth programs*. Monterey, CA: Healthy Learning.
- Glesne, C. (1999). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Longman.
- Hamilton, S. (1980). Experiential learning programs for youth. *American Journal of Education, 88*(2), 179-215.
- Hamilton, S., Hamilton, M. A., & Pittman, K. (2004). Principles for youth development. In S. Hamilton, & M. A. Hamilton (Eds.), *The youth development handbook: Coming of age in American communities* (pp. 3-22). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Hattie, J., Marsh, H., Neill, J., & Richards, G. (1997). Adventure education and Outward Bound: Out-of-class experiences that make a lasting difference. *Review of Educational Research*, 67(1), 43-87.
- High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. (2005). *Youth program quality assessment*. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.
- Hycner, R. (1985). Some guidelines for the phenomenological analysis of interview data. *Human Studies*, 8, 279-303.
- Izzo, C., Connell, J., Gambone, M., & Bradshaw, C. (2004). Understanding and improving youth development initiatives through evaluation. In S. Hamilton, & M. A. Hamilton (Eds.), *The youth development handbook: Coming of age in American communities* (pp. 301-326). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- McKenzie, M. (2000). How are adventure program outcomes achieved?: A review of the literature. *Australian Journal of Outdoor Education*, 5(1), 19-27.
- Melaville, A., Berg, A. C., & Blank, M. J. (2006). *Community-Based Learning: Engaging students for success and citizenship*. Retrieved from: <http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/CBLFinal.pdf>.
- Morgan, C. A. (2012). *Youth development in community recreation programs: Leveraging context to promote self-regulation*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT.
- Pawson, R., & Tilley, N. (1997). *Realistic evaluation*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Roark, M., & Evans, F. *Play it, measure it: Experiences designed to elicit specific youth outcomes*. Monterey, CA: Healthy Learning.
- Rogers, P. (2000). Program theory: Not whether programs work, but how they work. In D. Stufflebeam, G. Madaus, & T. Kelleghan (Eds.), *Evaluation models: Viewpoints on educational and human services evaluation* (5<sup>th</sup> ed., pp. 209-232). Boston, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Rossi, P. H., Lipsey, M. W., & Freeman, H. E. (2004). *Evaluation: A systematic approach* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Shen, J., Yang, H., Cao, H., & Warfield, C. (2008). The fidelity – adaptation relationship in non-evidence-based programs and its implication for program evaluation. *Evaluation*, 14(4), 467-481.

- Sibthorp, J., Paisley, K., & Gookin, J. (2007). Exploring participant development through adventure-based programming: A model from the National Outdoor Leadership School. *Leisure Sciences, 29*, 1-18.
- Smith, S., Daunic, A., & Taylor, G. (2007). Treatment fidelity in applied educational research: Expanding the adoption and application of measures to ensure evidence-based practice. *Education & Treatment of Children, 30*(4), 121-134.
- Smith, G., & Sobel, D. (2010). *Place- and community-based education in schools*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Tucker, A., & Rheingold, A. (2010). Enhancing fidelity in adventure education and adventure therapy. *Journal of Experiential Education, 33*(3), 258-273.
- Umphrey, M. (2007). *The power of community-centered education: Teaching as a craft of place*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education.
- Yolahem, N., & Wilson-Ahlstrom, A. (2009). *Measuring youth program quality: A guide to assessment tools* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: The Forum for Youth Investment.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

# **I'D VOLUNTEER IF I HAD TO, BUT NOW I WANT TO: EXPLORING THE SHORT-TERM CIVIC OUTCOMES OF THE TEENS LEADING & CONNECTING PROGRAM**

### **Introduction**

Americans today are less connected to their communities than in the recent past. Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton (2008) argued that Americans display a growing lack of connection between conceptions of the self and the larger societal context. These researchers also contended that even when Americans do seek community, such actions are increasingly motivated by self interest. Marshalling statistical data from innumerable sources, Putman (2000) argued that key indicators of civic engagement, social capital, and interpersonal connection have, in some cases drastically, decreased over the past few decades. He found the most notable participation declines have been in activities that call people to actively serve, work, or attend. The activities most adept at forging connections are decreasing while participation in individual-oriented activities are increasing. As society becomes more complex with larger burdens on centralized government, collective problem solving may become increasingly necessary to deal with contemporary issues, particularly at the local level. Smith and Sobel (2010) argued that 20<sup>th</sup> century societies have depended on large national and international institutions to solve important problems; however, the sluggish federal response to tragedies such as Hurricane Katrina point to the need for local citizens to be able to solve problems in their own local contexts. As Americans disconnect from

each other and from the activities that can engender such skills, local problems may not be addressed adequately.

Given the possible negative repercussions of decreasing civic engagement, scholars have called for research to identify those places in society that support the development of civic engagement and the skills and attitudes that support such engagement (Obradovic & Masten, 2007; Putnam, 1995; Putnam, 2000). Leisure and recreation organizations appear throughout the social capital and civic engagement literature as avenue that support such development. Classical Greek philosophers saw leisure as intimately related to a successful society. Leisure was viewed as a commons for political and social engagement (Maynard & Kleiber, 2005). This classical view of the relationship between leisure and citizenship persists into contemporary society. Referencing Aristotle's concept of leisure, Hemmingway (2006) argued, "Leisure is today, as it was then, among the resources necessary for sharing in governing and being governed" (p. 348). In identifying programs that can engender civic engagement in contemporary society, an emphasis has been placed on programs encountered during adolescence as a pivotal time for the development of civic identity (Youniss, McClellan, & Yates, 1997). Participation in certain types of programs during adolescence fosters a habit of community involvement that continues into adulthood. Participation in civic supporting activities as youth develops the inclination and skills necessary for civic involvement throughout the lifespan (Putnam, 2000; Smith & Sobel, 2010).

Summer camps could offer a specific arena within which to address the aforementioned civic issues. Research on summer camp programming has demonstrated

that camps can engender many of the same skills and competencies as other youth recreation programs represented in the civic engagement literature (American Camp Association, 2005; Bialeschki, Lyons, & Ewing, 2005; Hough & Browne, 2009; Thurber, Scanlin, Scheuler, & Henderson, 2007); however, summer camp remains largely underrepresented in the social capital and civic engagement literature. A recent upsurge in camp research has focused on programs intentionally designed to foster specific outcomes such as leadership, environmental stewardship, camp connectedness, reading proficiency, friendship skills, teamwork, and affinity for exploration (Arend & Rogers, 2012; Browne & Sibthorp, 2012; Browne, Garst, & Bialeschki, 2011; Garst & White, 2012; Roark & Evans, 2010). Though several of these programs contain components that align well with civic engagement, there has been a lack of program development and evaluation of camp programs intentionally designed to increase campers' civic engagement in their home communities. As a result, this article describes Teens Leading & Connecting (TLC), a camp program that was intentionally aimed to increase campers' civic skills and identity. The purpose of this study was to understand the short-term outcomes, and the supporting contexts and mechanisms, of the Teens Leading & Connecting program.

## **Review of the Literature**

### **Defining civic engagement**

The American Psychological Association (2011) defined civic engagement as "...individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern. Civic engagement can take many forms, from individual voluntarism to

organizational involvement to electoral participation” (para. 1). Camino and Zeldin (2002) took a more general view of civic engagement, defining it as one’s ability to influence the process of collective action. Similarly, Flanagan and Faison (2001) argued that being civically engaged means “a feeling that one matters, has a voice and a stake in public affairs, and thus wants to be a contributing member of the community” (p. 3). Youniss and colleagues (2002) and Obradovic and Masten (2007) described two main forms of civic engagement: political and civil. Political civic engagement focuses on those actions that definitively contribute to the polity such as voting and lobbying whereas the civil realm refers to social actions not necessarily tied to the polity such as advocating, collaborating, community building, and volunteering. When specifically considering civic engagement in youth, Sherrod, Flanagan, and Youniss (2002) argued that expecting youth to be politically engaged, particularly when most are not old enough to vote, is largely unrealistic. Rather, the authors advocate for a broader conceptualization of civic engagement in relationship to youth, one that means acting as a member of a group larger than themselves. Youth civic engagement plays a particularly important role in broader societal civic engagement rates because participation in civil activities during adolescence fosters a habit of community involvement that continues into adulthood.

### **Engendering civic engagement**

Lifelong civic engagement needs to be fostered, beginning in youth. Gruenewald and Smith (2008) argued that in order for youth to become civically engaged, they must develop a “readiness for social action” (p. xx). The question becomes then, how can such



readiness be engendered? To explore the tactics necessary to foster a readiness for social action, the following sections will explore the individual skills and individual values that engender civic engagement.

Newton (1975) described civic competencies as those skills and abilities that allow youth to impact public affairs. Similarly, Youniss and his colleagues (2002) argued that civic competence included skills that allow individuals to participate in government and collaborative efforts for collective interests. Finally, Melville, Berg, and Blank (2006) stated, “Civic skills build the intellectual capacity to understand and critique various points of view as well as the participatory skills necessary to take part in the civic process. (p. 40). In reviewing the civic engagement and related literature, four main skill sets emerge as being particularly important to successful civic engagement:

1. Collaboration skills – active listening, negotiation, perspective taking, conflict resolution, trust building, cooperation (Flanagan & Faison, 2001; Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Newton, 1975; Obradovic & Masten, 2007; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011)
2. Communication skills – effective deliberation, communicating with the public, argument construction (de Souza Briggs, 2004; Flanagan & Faison, 2001; Lappe & Du Bois, 1997; Newton, 1975; Smith & Sobel, 2010).
3. Critical thinking skills – decision making skills, problem solving skills, researching an issue (Camino & Zeldin, 2002; Christens & Kirshner, 2011; Obradovic & Masten, 2007; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011)

4. Leadership and management skills – youth involvement in action, confidence in own voice, ability to influence change, mediation skills, organizing a group, planning a course of action, organizing meetings (Arai & Pedler, 1997; Christens & Kirshner, 2011; de Souza Briggs, 2004; Flanagan & Faison, 2001; Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Kress, 2006; Lappe & Du Bois, 1997; Newton, 1975; Smith & Sobel, 2010)

Newton (1975) posited that the more civic skills an individual can master, the more his or her ability to exert influence. He also believed that putting all of one's civic skills together successfully was a skill in and of itself. A battery of successfully merged civic skills is more than the sum of its parts.

In addition to skills that enable individuals to be civically engaged, the literature suggests that individuals must have values that align them with such activity. These values have been termed civic dispositions or civic character values. Throughout the literature, these values include tolerance, social responsibility, sense of connection, open mindedness, reflection, and feelings of efficacy and mattering (Flanagan & Faison, 2001; Melaville et al., 2006; Sherrod et al., 2002; Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011). Youniss, McClellan, and Yates (1997) emphasized the need for individuals to construct a civic identity, particularly during adolescence. The authors proposed, "...civic engagement emanates from individuals whose developmental backgrounds make them more or less able and committed to partake in the renewal and continual reform of civil society" (para. 4). Those who are civically engaged as adults have developed to that state. This emphasis on the development of a civic identity led Youniss and colleagues (1997) to

believe that the youth and adolescent stage in an individual's life is a paramount time to shape one's civic identity through civic engagement for two main reasons:

First, on a practical level, it introduces youth to the basic roles and processes (i.e., organizational practices) required for adult civic engagement. Second, on a personal level, it helps youth incorporate civic involvement into their identity during an opportune moment in its formative stages. Participation promotes the inclusion of a civic character into the construction of identity that, in turn, persists and mediates civic engagement into adulthood. (para. 12)

As a result, the authors underlined the development of a generation of youth who would value collective resources as a method to produce civic-minded adults.

### **Place- and Community-Based Education**

Hamilton (1980) argued that in order for learning to be most useful, in some way abstract knowledge must be made concrete. Placing learning and growth within the contexts most familiar to participants is one method to make abstract knowledge more concrete. Similarly, Jarrett, Sullivan, and Watkins (2005) emphasized programs' physical proximity to community as a crucial asset in sustaining newly developed civic skills.

The place- and community-based education (PCBE) literature could provide a way to link the concepts of civic contexts discussed above. PCBE focuses on the local places familiar to participants to encourage participants to connect with topics explored in a traditional classroom (Smith & Sobel, 2010; Umphrey, 2007). Melaville and

colleagues (2006) argued, “In order to learn *how* to be citizens, students must *act* as citizens. Therefore, education must connect subject matter with the places where students live and the issues that affect us all” (*original emphasis*, p. 1). As a result, PCBE utilizes local phenomenon as a source of learning core subject material and citizenship (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Smith & Sobel, 2010). Though research on the effects of PCBE is still developing, PCBE scholars have demonstrated positive results of the movement, particularly on outcomes that relate directly to civic engagement. By engaging youth in the processes of real-world problem solving, PCBE prepares youth for problem solving in the local, community context (Smith & Sobel, 2010). Work on PCBE projects shows youth their capacity in the community and increases their conviction that they can tackle other community issues (Smith, 2002; Smith & Sobel, 2010). By rooting learning in real life, there is an increased chance that participants can transfer their learning to new situations (Melaville et al., 2006). Finally, on a community level, youth come to be seen by other community members, particularly adults, as intellectual resources for the community (Smith, 2002). PCBE has yet to extend much beyond its roots in formal education; however, its tenets seem to align with the civic skills and values discussed in the broader civic engagement literature. As Umphrey (2007) suggested, “Kids, like the rest of us, don’t need perfect communities. What they do need is invitations to join the work in progress of making places better” (p. xxi).

### **Civic benefits of summer camp**

Summer camps share many of the same goals and features of the leisure services organizations discussed in the civic engagement literature, but they remain

underrepresented in civic engagement research. Camp research, however, offers some compelling evidence to support the inclusion of camp in the civic engagement literature. For example, the American Camp Association Directions study (2005) surveyed over 5,000 families at over 80 camps across the United States to measure outcomes of the camp experience. Most notable for the current study, the Directions research found growth in some of the skills also found in civic development research. For example, campers and parents saw significant increases in leadership skills from pre-camp to post-camp and post-camp to follow-up questionnaires. Similarly, Yuen, Pedlar, and Mannell (2005) explored whether summer camp could create civic skills and outcomes. The researchers conducted focus groups and participant observation with 32 campers at a New Jersey residential camp. The authors found that the camp activities enhanced campers' cooperation abilities such as utilizing flexibility, understanding democratic procedures, developing group goals, and establishing shared meanings. Finally, the research surrounding the Camp2Grow program represents the camp research that most closely aligns with the civic engagement literature. The Camp2Grow program addresses environmental stewardship and leadership and focuses on many skills that are mentioned in the civic engagement literature. Browne, Garst, and Bialeschki (2011) found that the Camp2Grow program fosters independence, problem solving, affinity for nature, and empowerment. Such studies demonstrate that camp should be further, and more intentionally, explored as a place to foster civic skills and values in youth.

### **Teens Leading & Connecting Program**

To intentionally explore the potential of camp to contribute to campers' civic skills

and values, the researcher designed the Teens Leading & Connecting (TLC) program for campers ages 13-16. The goal for the TLC program was to develop campers' civic skills and introduce them to community needs and leaders in order to encourage greater civic engagement in their home community after the camp experience. A recent movement in the camp arena has been to increase the intentionality and curriculum in camp programming to better target desired outcomes. As Bialeschki and her colleagues (2007) explained, "Camp is not inherently good without purposeful and directed efforts by camp professionals" (p. 770). To increase intentionality in camp programming, several camp scholars have introduced structured programs to engender specific outcomes, such as the Camp2Grow for leadership and environmental stewardship (Browne, Garst, & Bialeschki, 2011; Garst & White, 2012), a Camp Reading Program for increased reading enjoyment and improved vocabulary (Arend & Rogers, 2012; Garst, Morgan, & Bialeschki, 2012), and the Play It, Measure It curricula for friendship skills, teamwork, and affinity for exploration (Roark & Evans, 2010). As Browne and colleagues (2011) explained, structured curricula "...allow camps to target desired outcomes and document their efforts to stakeholders" (p. 81). The TLC program described in this article follows this model of structured camp curricula.

The structure and activities for TLC were driven by the literature described above. The TLC weekly schedule is displayed in Table 7. Any activity area that includes the term 'Skills' focused on skill development on topics related to civic skills. These skill sessions had intentional lesson plans with activities drawn from successful camp and youth development programs such as Camp2Grow (Garst & White, 2012) and Play It,

Measure It (Roarke & Evans, 2010), as well as from various service learning curricula. ‘Camp Activities’ were periods during which the campers engaged in traditional camp activities such as kayaking, climbing, field games, and water sports. The community tour, camp service activity, meeting with community leaders, and off-camp service project were inspired by the Place- and Community-Based Education literature (Melaville, Berg, and Blank, 2006; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Umphrey, 2007) and aimed to connect campers’ civic learning to two communities of import to the campers: the camp community and the campers’ home community. For example, during the community tour, campers visited a local family and youth development collaborative, a local senior

Table 7. General daily schedule for TLC

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Morning	Introduction	Camp Activities	Camp Activities	Community Tour Debrief	Camp Activities	Off Camp Service Project
	Group Dynamics	Leadership Skills	Problem Solving Skills	Camp Activities	Service Planning	
Afternoon	Camp Activities	Organizing Skills	Community Tour	Planning Skills	Meeting with Community Leaders	Lunch
	Cooperation Skills	Identifying Problems Skills		Service Planning		Week Debrief
Check Out		Leadership Observations		On-Camp Service Activity & Camp Out		
Evening						

citizens’ center, and a local food bank, as well as learning about an area of extreme poverty in their community. As Winter (2003) argued, “...programs that effectively

increase *participatory skills*, and that help participants to develop *networks that facilitate and encourage participation* will be most effective in increasing long-term civic engagement and the outcomes associated with that engagement” (pp. 19-20).

TLC was not created without attention to previously established camp programs that address parallel purposes to TLC. Specifically, TLC overlaps with programs such as the Camp2Grow program (Garst & White, 2012), the Pangea program (Yuen et al., 2005), and the traditional Counselor in Training (CIT) or Leaders in Training (LIT) programs that appear in most summer camps. TLC built upon and extended these successful camp programs as demonstrated in Table 8.

Table 8. Similarities and differences in programming between TLC and other similar programs				
	TLC	Camp2Grow <sup>1</sup>	Pangea <sup>2</sup>	CIT/LIT
Developing civic skills	✓	✓	✓	✓
In-camp leadership/engagement opportunities	✓	✓	✓	✓
In-camp service opportunities	✓	✓		✓
Off-camp service opportunities	✓			
Contact with home community leaders/organizations	✓	✓		
Situated in campers’ home community	✓			
1. Garst & White, 2012 2. Yuen, Pedlar, & Mannell, 2005				

The TLC facilitator, a long-time staff member of the day camp where TLC was implemented, was the former campers-in-leadership-training coordinator and specializes



in working with adolescents on leadership and teambuilding skills. The facilitator received a TLC manual that contained the week's schedule, the TLC philosophy and purposes, detailed instructions for skill sessions, facilitation tips, and copies of the evaluation tools being employed for the program.

TLC was implemented at a YMCA day camp in Georgia, which serves an average of 1,500 campers ages 5-15 each summer. For its 13-15 year old campers, the day camp offers three programs: a traditional Campers in Leadership Training program, a horse barn training program, and a two-week outdoor excursion camp. At the time TLC was introduced, the camp was revamping its programs for 13-15 year olds to increase the impact camp can have on the teens' leadership and community contributions. As a result, the camp was open to and considering new programming for their 13-15 year old campers that align with these goals. Further, the camp director was willing to fully support new programs that achieve these goals.

## **Methods**

### **Realistic Evaluation**

The purpose of this study was to understand the short-term outcomes and the supporting contexts and mechanisms of the Teens Leading & Connecting program. To achieve this purpose, the foundation for this study was Pawson and Tilley's (1997) realistic evaluation. Under the premise of realistic evaluation, programs do not simply 'work or not work'. Certain ideas work for certain participants in certain situations. This evaluation model suggests an iterative circle that cycles through theory, hypotheses, observations, and program specification. Pawson and Tilley (1997) simplified the

program process to the following equation: mechanism + context = outcomes. Their approach to evaluation aims to document and test this three-part relationship. Realistic evaluation extends typical evaluation models by acknowledging that the environments and contexts of a program are constantly changing and, therefore, must be taken into account in the mechanism – outcome relationship.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

Each TLC camper participated in a series of three in-person semi-structured interviews with the researcher. The interview structure was based on Seidman’s (2005) “Three-Interview Series”. Seidman’s technique is to interview each participant in three sections with the first interview being a “Focused Life History,” the second interview aimed at collecting the “Details of the Experience,” and the third interview consisting of a “Reflection on the Meaning”. The interview structure in the current study mirrored this three-step approach. The researcher chose to employ Seidman’s approach because the three-interview sequence builds rapport between the researcher and participants over time, which allows participants to develop a comfort with both the researcher and the research process. This article focuses on the second, post-camp interview. The second round of interviews took place in the week following camp. These post-camp interviews explored the civic skills, civic attitudes, and lessons each youth gained through the camp experience, the TLC experiences that supported those lessons, and campers’ future intentions to be civically engaged in the camper’s home community.

## **Data Collection Instruments**

As Frankel and Devers (2000) note, the researcher acts as the data instrument in qualitative research. The researcher for the current study utilized semi-structured interviews as the qualitative data collection instruments. Each interview was recorded with the consent of the participant. Immediately following each interview, the researcher recorded written notes regarding non-verbal aspects of the interviews including body language, facial expressions, and eye contact to better understand and describe participant responses.

## **Data Analysis**

The qualitative interview data were analyzed by the researcher following Hycner's (1985) guidelines for the analysis of interview data. As recommended by Hycner (1985), after transcription and multiple readings of the interviews, the researcher identified meaning units within each interview, clustered meaning units in each interview, labeled themes within each interview, clustered composite meaning units across the interviews, then labeled relevant composite clusters into themes across the interviews.

## **Trustworthiness of the Data**

Trustworthiness of the outcomes data was established in a variety of ways. As Babbie (2008) emphasized, validity of qualitative field research lies in the fact that "the field researcher tap[s] a depth of meaning in concepts...that is generally unavailable to surveys and experiments" (p. 344). The researcher also employed member checks of emerging themes with the participants during the program. As the researcher

conceptualized categories and emerging ideas, the researcher informally questioned the campers and program facilitator regarding the accuracy of emerging ideas. Further, the researcher incorporated camper member checks into both the post-camp and follow-up interviews. Participants were asked about the researcher's interpretations of the data in both of those instances.

Dependability of the qualitative field research was established in two ways. First, the researcher aimed to identify and recognize the occurrence of any negative instances, disconfirming thoughts, or alternate explanations within the data. Upon discovery of such instances, the researcher modified emerging themes and conclusions to include negative instances in theme descriptions, theme discussions, and figures of findings so all voices and explanations became a part of the final conclusions (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Second, the researcher enlisted the assistance of a second data analyst. The researcher trained the second data analysis in thematic analysis then the assistant used thematic analysis to analyze a sample of the interview data. The assistant's resulting themes, subthemes, and theme descriptions were compared to the researcher's analysis. The themes were adjusted as necessary following these checks (Hycner, 1985).

Credibility of findings and the researcher as the data collection instrument was established in two ways. First, Glesne (1999) and Creswell (2007) suggested that prolonged engagement in the research site and with the research participants supports trustworthiness of findings in qualitative research. Glesne (1999) characterized such engagement as time at the site, time conducting interviews, and time spent with respondents. The researcher for this study was on-hand for the entire TLC program,

conducted three interviews with each participant, and spent time building rapport with the participants throughout the program. Second, the researcher employed reflexive bracketing. Findlay (2002) described reflexive bracketing as “thoughtful, conscious self awareness” (p. 532). As the researcher has previous camp experience and participated in the research setting, the researcher identified both personal and larger world suppositions prior to commencing the research project (Gearing, 2004). To summarize the internal suppositions made transparent during this process, the researcher has worked in the camp setting for approximately ten years, most of which have been spent working with adolescent campers like those participating in the TLC program. Also, the researcher has strong ties to the hosting day camp for the study, having worked at the camp intermittently for the entirety of her camp career. This experience demonstrated to the researcher, anecdotally, that the camp experience in general, and the hosting day camp in particular, could be a fruitful ground for adolescent development, motivating her interest to rigorously explore the camp experience. These internal suppositions were identified through the reflexive bracketing process to increase the transparency and trustworthiness of this study (Gearing, 2004). To ensure the researcher’s presuppositions did not overwhelm the voices of the participants, the researcher utilized methods such as journaling, employing a facilitator to deliver actual program content, reviewing continually the interview protocols, and enlisting the assistance of a second data analyst.

## Findings

### Participants

Upon registering for TLC, campers were mailed a letter of research intent, parent consent form, and camper assent form to invite them to participate in the research activities associated with participation in the program. A total of 10 campers, ages 13-16, participated in the program and this research study. Table 9 describes the campers, including their self-chosen research pseudonym, the number of years they had attended

Table 9. Characteristics of the study participants	
Amanda (9 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Female » 14 years old, Rising 9 <sup>th</sup> grader » Pre-camp leadership experience – Yes » Pre-camp contribution experience – Yes	Billy Boy (6 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Male » 13 years old, Rising 7 <sup>th</sup> grader » Pre-camp leadership experience – No » Pre-camp contribution experience – No
Camron (9 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Male » 13 years old, Rising 8 <sup>th</sup> grader » Pre-camp leadership experience – Yes » Pre-camp contribution experience – No	Dustin (8 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Male » 14 years old, Rising 9 <sup>th</sup> grader » Pre-camp leadership experience – No » Pre-camp contribution experience – Yes
Georgia <sup>a</sup> (8 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Female » 13 years old, Rising 9 <sup>th</sup> grader » Pre-camp leadership experience – Yes » Pre-camp contribution experience – Yes	Kage (8 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Male » 14 years old, Rising 9 <sup>th</sup> grader » Pre-camp leadership experience – No » Pre-camp contribution experience – Yes
Kat (4 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Female » 13 years old, Rising 8 <sup>th</sup> grader » Pre-camp leadership experience – Yes » Pre-camp contribution experience – Yes	Patrick (4 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Male » 14 years old, Rising 9 <sup>th</sup> grader » Pre-camp leadership experience – Yes » Pre-camp contribution experience – Yes
Shakur <sup>a</sup> (1 <sup>st</sup> Year Camper) » Female » 15 years old, Rising 10 <sup>th</sup> grade » Pre-camp leadership experience – No » Pre-camp contribution experience – No	Stevie (9 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Female » 14 years old, Rising 9 <sup>th</sup> grade » Pre-camp leadership experience – Yes » Pre-camp contribution experience – Yes
<sup>a</sup> These campers live primarily outside of the community where TLC was hosted.	

the hosting day camp, age and grade in school. The pre-camp leadership and community contribution experience noted in the table reflects the campers' perceptions of their experience prior to TLC. Those campers who felt they had previous leadership experience all talked about informal leadership opportunities like stepping up in a school group, rather than formal leadership positions like acting as president of a club. Those campers who felt they had previous community contribution experience described their experience as ranging from helping neighbors to mowing lawns to picking up trash to formal volunteer activities. With the exception of Shakur and Georgia, all of the campers lived in the community where the hosting day camp is situated. Both Shakur and Georgia were visiting relatives in the hosting community and live in different states during the majority of the year.

### **Campers' General Impressions of TLC**

All of the campers expressed positive overall reactions to TLC. Campers thought the program was fun and a good experience for them. Dustin said, "My week in TLC, in my opinion, was one of the best weeks I've had at camp because we – now that I can't be a camper anymore, I got to actually interact." Several of the campers described TLC as an experience that grew on them throughout the week. For example, Georgia explained, "[TLC] was better than I ever thought it would be. Like at first, when I first came in, I was like really skeptical. I didn't really know what we were going to do but then once we started going through it – it started to make a lot of sense." Similarly, Shakur commented, "...[TLC] went actually really well. Like towards the end. In the beginning I was like 'Ok. I'm probably not going to like this.' And then the second day I was like

‘Yup. Definitely like it.’ And rest of the week was great. I really liked it.” When asked what they would tell potential TLC campers about the program, the TLC campers had a variety of answers. They would tell potential TLC campers that TLC teaches campers about leadership, teamwork, communication, and being optimistic; that TLC is fun and motivating; and that in TLC you help your community, connect with other people, and go off camp into the community. Kat said, “I would show [potential TLC campers] how much better of a person it made me and how much the research – like I would carry all that research [about the camp and community needs] with me for life ‘cause it’s really good stuff. So I’d like show them my research and how we met such cool people and

Table 10. Campers' memorable and essential experiences in TLC (number of mentions in parentheses)	
Most Memorable	Most Essential
Service projects (6)	Community tour (7)
Skill sessions (5)	Service projects (6)
Group bonding (4)	Meeting (5)
Community tour (4)	Skill sessions (5)
Meeting (3)	Group bonding (2)
	Camp out (1)

how it made us – everyone like a better person...I’d show them like our journey.”

Campers were asked to identify their most memorable experiences in TLC and the most essential components of TLC. Table 10 displays the campers’ collected answers to those two questions.

### **Short-Term Outcomes of the TLC Program**

Analysis of camper interviews resulted in identifying six short-term outcomes campers thought they gained from the TLC program. Additionally, campers were asked



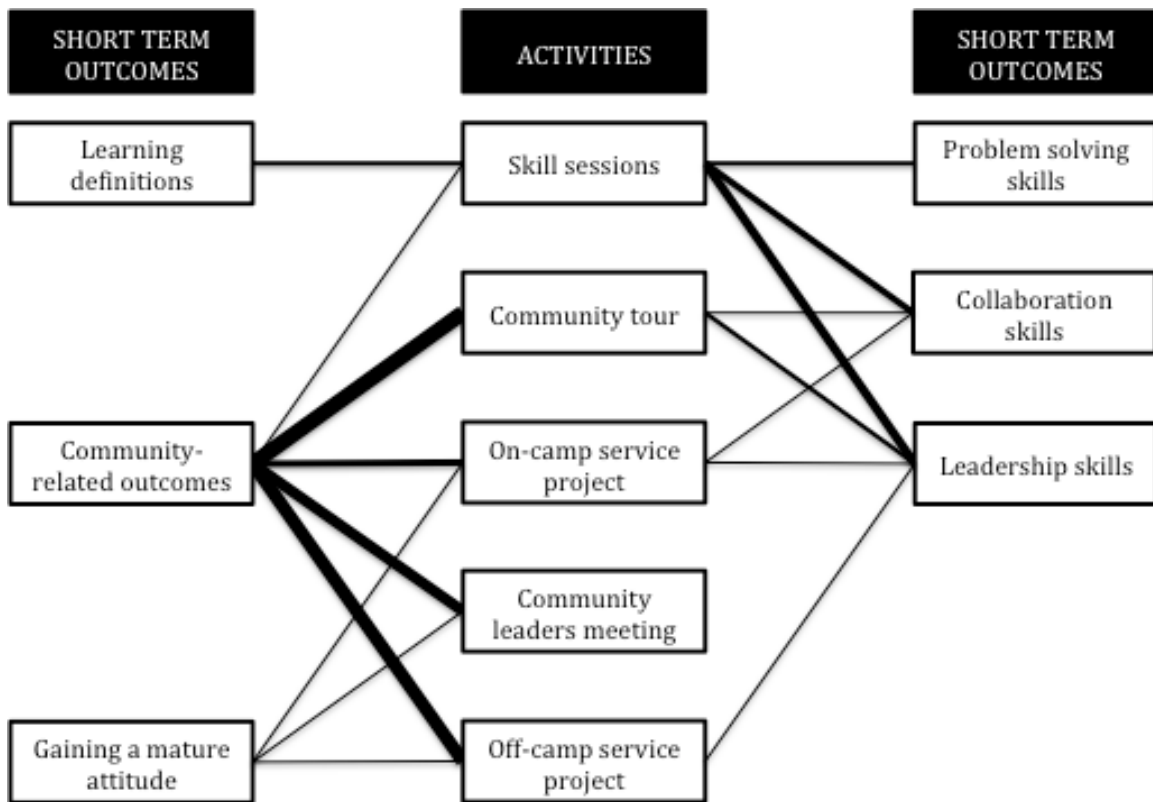


Figure 1. A visual representation of the short term outcomes of TLC with their accompanying TLC activities.

to describe the parts of TLC that they felt most contributed to the short-term outcomes.

These findings are displayed in Figure 1. This figure shows each type of short-term outcome connected to the activity or activities the campers identified as leading to that outcome. The width of each connecting line reflects the number of campers who spoke about that particular outcome-activity connection. The following paragraphs describe each short-term outcome in greater detail.

### **Community-related outcomes**

The most discussed type of short-term outcome of the TLC program was a group of seven themes related to community and community contribution.

**Discovering the ‘bottom of the iceberg’.** Campers connected with a lesson offered on the first day of TLC that compared their local community with an iceberg in that the majority of the community is hidden beneath the surface. Further, that many times the hidden aspects of a community are those areas and people that need the most help. Through TLC, campers felt that they learned about their community, particularly that they had discovered the ‘bottom of the iceberg’ in their community. Billy Boy explained, “[I learned] how other people need help. More – like I didn’t really understand that that much. Like how people need help. And how many people need help.”

**Learning about service.** Campers thought that TLC taught them lessons about service, in some cases debunking previously held beliefs regarding service. First, Shakur and Kage learned that service could be fun. Kage explained, “I didn’t really like doing service projects but I realize now [after TLC] that service doesn’t all have to be work. You can also have fun doing it.” Second, campers began to see the possible rewards of service, particularly the ‘awesome’ feeling service can give to those who serve. Finally, campers learned that service is accessible, that service opportunities are nearby and available anytime.

**Learning ‘where to start and what to do’.** Campers felt they learned about where and how to help through TLC. Patrick explained, “I learned about opportunities that I could go and help others than just...going to school and doing things. I can actually go to places and volunteer and stuff.” Campers felt that before TLC, they did not know where to start, even if they wanted to be involved in their community. Even

Georgia, who does not live in the community where TLC took place, expressed, “...because at first, I would’ve like – if I wanted to um volunteer in [my community], I would have never known where to start and what to do. But committing to this program and like that list and like talking to the um community leaders, even though they live up here, it really helps that there are places in [my community] that need it.”

**Meeting people who help in the community.** Campers believed that TLC allowed them to meet others who already help in the community. The community tour and the community leaders meeting seemed particularly important to this idea. First, campers felt that TLC allowed them to see what others do to help their community. Second, TLC taught campers with whom they needed to stay in contact to help in the community. Camron explained that “[the community tour] showed you what they did, how you could do it, how you could help out, and how you could get in contact with those type of people.” Finally, beyond meeting adults who already help in the community, Stevie felt that TLC allowed her to meet teenagers who wanted to help in the community. She explained, “And then meeting these people [other campers] like realizing how much they want to help too just is like – makes you feel like ‘I’m not the only one out there. I’m not the only weird person that wants to change the world.’”

**Rethinking opinions of community adults.** Campers felt that TLC allowed them to rethink what they previously believed about adults in the community. First, campers discovered that community adults and community organizations enjoy teenagers and want teenagers to help. For example, Kage learned this lesson at the community leaders meeting. He explained, “And then um the meeting as well. That uh again they

knew where we were coming from. They actually enjoy teenagers. They didn't think they were good for nothing spoiled brats like some old people might think. Like 'Get off my lawn.'" Second, TLC demonstrated to campers that community adults care about them and their success. Shakur enjoyed "Getting to hear what everybody had to say and their advice and they showed that [the community leaders] actually cared." Finally, campers believed that they had gained the respect and trust of adults through TLC. They felt that the visibility they gained from the community tour, the service projects, and the community leaders meeting meant that the community could trust them.

**'I'd volunteer if I had to. But now I want to': Increased motivation to contribute.** Campers felt that they left TLC feeling more motivated to contribute to their community. They left feeling that they now 'wanted' to contribute, a feeling with which many of them did not enter TLC. As Georgia expressed, "...if I didn't go through this, like, program, I would have never ever like – I'd volunteer if I had to. But now I want to. So it definitely made me more motivated." The campers pointed to nearly every portion of TLC as a source of their motivation including both service projects, the community tour, the skill sessions, and the community leaders meeting. Several of the campers derived their heightened motivation from seeing that others in the community do not have the resources they themselves have. For example, Stevie shared, "...and that's what TLC kinda taught me is that you should be grateful. You should take leadership. You should uh take that step into making a difference 'cause you have all this stuff. You have all these resources and you are just wasting them."

**‘I’m not just a child’: I can contribute.** All of the campers thought that they left TLC feeling more able to contribute. The community tour, both service projects, and the community leaders meeting supported this feeling of capability. Several of the campers felt that they were more capable to contribute, despite their previously held ideas of teenagers’ roles in the community. Georgia learned this lesson from the community tour saying, “...I guess like [the community tour] like it shows like teenagers that um...that they can help and that they don’t have to be like labeled and stuff.” Kage believed that the events at the end of the week led him to feel more capable. He expressed, “Especially after Thursday night, Friday and Saturday...But that’s really what got that into my head. I was like ‘Hey. I’m not really just a child in this community.’ I actually made a difference.”

### **Other Short-Term Outcomes**

Beyond the community-related outcomes of TLC, campers identified five other short-term outcomes of TLC: gaining collaboration skills, gaining leadership skills, having a mature attitude, learning new definitions, and gaining problem solving skills.

**‘Going from a group to a team’: Gaining collaboration skills.** Campers thought that TLC taught them about working as a team. First, one particular lesson that stuck with a few of the campers was the difference between a group of people and a team. As Dustin explained, “[TLC] showed me like...anybody can be a group. But what it takes to be like a team is what we learned. That’s what I didn’t know was like going from a group to a team.” Second, TLC campers believed the program taught them about effective communication, particularly about the utility of listening to others. Amanda

explained, “I learned to just sit back and listen to others’ opinions before like stating mine.” Campers seemed to connect these listening skills with maintaining an open-mind as they communicated. Kat expressed, “I had to listen to people. So um...like we had to listen to each other to keep an open mind.” Finally, campers thought that TLC improved their attitude toward others and toward working with others. Shakur explained that TLC impacted her attitude by “Just being around other people and like around my age that could get annoying and I might not like that much and still being as nice to them as possible and sharing and helping them.” Several campers felt similarly and further believed that being around others in TLC afforded them patience. In addition to patience, a few campers also felt that they learned to trust others more during TLC. Dustin said, “I gained positive attitudes about my teammates. And when I’m on a team, I can trust them more.”

**‘Step up and be like Spiderman’: Gaining leadership skills.** Campers felt they gained leadership skills through TLC. First, they thought that TLC taught them about the various traits of leadership. Campers identified a variety of traits important to leadership such as giving explanations, having a sense of humor, being responsible, opinion gathering, listening, and being friendly. For example, Patrick said, “Cause I now know that leadership does need humor and you gotta be smart, responsible, a lot of things.” In addition to the more traditional leadership traits, Camron and Stevie believed that they learned how to be a follower. Stevie expressed, “I realized that sometimes you have to be a follower. You can’t always be in control...Like sometimes you have to step out of the limelight so someone else can shine. And that’s how leadership is. You have to step

down sometimes and let someone else lead.“ Second, TLC helped campers see themselves as leaders and supported their confidence in their own leadership capability. Dustin explained, “. . .it made me be more optimistic about being a leader than before because I didn’t feel so comfortable just leading a group that I don’t know.” Stevie described her thinking about her own leadership abilities this way:

[TLC] was very inspiring like realizing that leadership was like in me but you just had to like spark it and like set it on fire. . . . But I also learned that, you know, you always have to speak up. You can’t just be quiet and just hide in the corner like a little cockroach in the dark. In the shadows. You always have to step up and be like Spiderman. And, you know, you can’t be Batman all the time who always lives in the shadows. You have to go out there. Step up. And, you know, fight crime in your colored outfit instead of black.

Finally, campers believed that the various TLC activities offered them an opportunity to practice their leadership skills. They saw these practice opportunities during the skill sessions, both service projects and the community tour. For example, Kat talked about the skill sessions saying, “. . .when we were like learning like when we were planning our meeting, we each had to be leaders and, you know, give ideas to people and try to come up with a basic plan.”

**Having a mature attitude.** A few of the TLC campers felt that they left the program feeling more mature. Part of this maturity came from having a better attitude. For example, Georgia explained:

I'm not as attitude-y as I was before to like my friends and parents. It changed me and I've like grown. Really a lot actually. 'Cause usually my attitude would be like hateful if I didn't get my way, but now it's just like 'whatever' and I walk away and just forget about it.

Kat tracked this maturity throughout the week saying, "And then some other people weren't goofing off so much so I think they – lots of people grew up...well like, you know, we used to joke around like the first few days and then when it got down to like the meeting and our service project and everything we were just like 'Ok. We need to be serious. This is like, you know, we've got to make a good impression.' So I had to be serious and everything so."

**Learning definitions.** Camron and Amanda identified the various definitions discussed during TLC as part of their learning. When asked what he gained through TLC, Camron stated, "Like understanding. Like understanding when others talk to you or understanding the words that were given. And kinda like when you got the full definition, you kinda put it in there [and] always know what it means now." Similarly, Amanda felt that explaining words she had never considered was important. She said that the words stood out "...because they were simple words. And like those...community, responsibility, accountability...like it has so much meaning to it..."

**Learning about problem solving.** Billy Boy and Georgia believed that TLC taught them about problem solving, particularly strategies for problem solving. Both agreed that using your resources was important to problem solving during the TLC skill sessions. Georgia said:



I learned about like about problem solving and like using your resources and like the problem solving like – the experiment thing. And if it doesn't work try again. Which usually I'll try like two or three times then I'll just give up but that like really motivated me to like keep trying um especially with like the marshmallow activity and all.

**'Put it to the test': The utility of the skill sessions.** Beyond the specific TLC activities that campers identified as leading to certain short-term outcomes (displayed in Figure 1), the campers discussed that they believed the structure of TLC itself supported their short-term gains in the TLC program. Though campers felt that the skill sessions sometimes seemed like schoolwork with notes, most still identified the skill sessions as memorable and essential aspects of their TLC experience. First, a few campers discussed the utility of the format of the skill sessions which typically would involve some type of content activity followed by an application of the content. Billy Boy thought that the skill sessions "...helped us understand more. Like when we were writing – um when we were learning about resources, after that we did an activity that requires you to use resources." Similarly, Kat expressed, "...[in the skill sessions] we learned about – we didn't know it yet – but we learned about pretty much what we're gonna do that day. Like we learned about how like resources are good and so like then later, we went to the dining hall and used our little marshmallows, which are plates, and those are our resources."

Several campers also believed that the skill sessions supported their success throughout the week. Kat said, "...the skill sessions um they...like were little lessons

and they helped us with our like actual activities. And it was like we used our lessons to help up like – it gave us like – like we remembered some of our tips. And there were tips in there that we used for our activities. So we used our lessons to help us in our activities.” Georgia expressed a similar sentiment saying, “…[the skills sessions] made it so that like when you do activities, if you didn’t have notes, it wouldn’t really make sense. The notes and the activities since they like were together, it like helped like bring it like better of what you’re teaching us.” The campers talked about the utility of the skill sessions for their success with the community tour, both service projects and the community leaders meeting. Amanda discussed the off-camp experiences commenting that the role of the skill sessions was “To kinda like…teaching lessons and like prepare us for when we went off camp.” Dustin focused on the service projects saying, “The service projects are so central because it says ‘You guys have learned all this, now let’s put it to the test and see what you can do.’”

### **Contextual Supports of TLC**

Campers identified two contextual features surrounding TLC that supported their experience in the program: becoming a family and TLC as camp.

#### **Becoming a family**

For most of the campers, the group bonding they experienced in TLC was important to their experience in the program. As Billy Boy described, “…we, our group, we became more of a family.” Similarly, Shakur felt the group bond saying, “I just felt that we were kind of our group and, I don’t know, I kinda felt a part of something in a good way.” Many of the campers were surprised that the group came together so

quickly. Dustin explained, "...going from one day of not knowing anybody and going to the next day of knowing everybody in a single group in just one day was surprising that we all got together." Amanda also recognized the speed of the group bonding describing, "I just...could like be myself around them and I was more comfortable with them. Like really quickly I was just comfortable with them."

Most of the campers pointed to the skill sessions as the primary source of the group bonding. A few of the campers felt that the bonding was further supported by the variety of personalities within the group. For example, Georgia said, "Like everyone in the group um...had their like own uniqueness and it just like made the group like come together and it was a really fun group." Dustin and Amanda felt that the group bonding was also assisted by the fact that the campers shared a common goal during TLC.

Amanda believed the group came together "...because we had that one thing in common about helping the community." A few of the campers believed that this group bonding helped them during TLC by allowing them to learn from each other and motivate each other. For example, Shakur thought that being a group was essential to TLC "Because you learn so much from each other and just doing it together and it like teaches you more I guess..."

### **TLC as Camp**

Campers had conflicting views about whether TLC was camp to them. Even campers who believed that TLC was camp felt that certain aspects of the program were less like camp to them. Campers believed that TLC was camp because it took place at camp and with camp people and because the program was fun. Campers thought that

TLC was not camp because of what they termed ‘school work’, because they had little interaction with people outside of TLC, and because many sessions took place indoors. For example, Amanda thought that TLC was not camp “Because we weren’t really interacting with all the others kids and we weren’t really seeing daylight that much.” Similarly, Patrick saw TLC as camp “Except when we were in the classroom. Like when we were in the cabin learning, writing, and stuff.” Campers associated active activities with camp and more passive sessions with school.

Despite the general feeling that TLC was not entirely camp, campers believed that the arrangement was acceptable and, in most cases, preferable. Dustin suggested, “In my opinion, it should be like that because you don’t want to make it too camp or too community. You want it to be just in the middle so that it would be good for kids.” Similarly, Kage said, “I think the balance was pretty much exactly what we needed. Because if we had too much camp time then we probably wouldn’t have gotten through everything.” Indeed Camron, did not see the need to label TLC as camp. He expressed, “I mean ‘cause TLC’s not meant to be like camp. It’s meant to help you build like leadership and stuff.”

Finally, five campers argued that TLC was ‘more than camp’. They thought that TLC possessed a purpose beyond a traditional camp. Amanda said, “I feel like camp you just have fun and eat and you don’t really learn anything. It’s just like play time. Fun. And in TLC, you feel like you actually got something done.” Similarly, Kat thought, “TLC definitely – it wasn’t just a camp. We were actually getting something back I guess.” Campers also felt that TLC offered activities beyond traditional camp. For

example, Shakur expressed, "...it's I guess was a little more than [camp] because we like left and we helped the community and stuff." Finally, in addition to being more than camp, Stevie also felt that the learning in TLC was more than school. She argued, "And then [TLC is] also like school 'cause you're learning and writing about all this stuff. But then you realize this is nothing like school because school is...boring. This like actually gives you time to do projects and like think about what you just learned. Unlike school 'cause they just rush you."

### **Discussion**

Americans are increasingly becoming disconnected from society, which means that civic engagement is changing at best or drastically decreasing at worst (Bellah et al., 2008; Putnam, 2000). Consequently, social researchers have been seeking to identify places in society that can foster not just civic engagement, but also the civic skills and attitudes that enable such engagement (Obradovic & Masten, 2007; Putnam, 1995; Putnam, 2000). Summer camp, particularly with the recent upsurge of structured camp curriculum, may be a potential avenue to engender these civic skills and attitudes, though summer camps remain underrepresented in the civic engagement literature. This article described a camp program, Teens Leading & Connecting (TLC), that was intentionally designed to develop campers' civic skills and identity. The purpose of this study was to understand the short-term outcomes, and the supporting contexts and mechanisms, of the Teens Leading & Connecting program.

Campers' general impressions of the TLC program were encouraging. Campers seemed to enjoy the program and described it as a fun experience. Though TLC was

designed to elicit specific developmental outcomes, the importance of the ‘fun factor’ in camp cannot be overlooked. Programs should be careful not to dismiss or sacrifice the fun factor of their activities. Fun, though frequently dismissed as relatively unimportant, continues to be a vital component that makes youth serving organizations unique, particularly in the camp setting. Henderson, Bialeschki, and James (2007) suggested “Because camp is enjoyable, it can facilitate life-long personal and social skills for young people that they can apply in their journey toward successful adulthood” (p. 763). In other words, programs need to balance intentionality with the freedom of the experience. Beyond liking the program and having fun, when asked to describe the purpose of TLC, campers’ responses aligned with the intended purposes of the program. Instructions for skill sessions included purposeful language that discussed the intended targeted skills of individual activities and larger skill sessions. Further, the facilitator was instructed to relate each skill session to the campers’ home community to continually remind campers of the ultimate purposes of TLC. Roark, Gillard, Evans, Wells, and Blauer (2012) discussed the importance of embedding the language of intended outcomes into intentional programming scripts to help facilitate intended outcomes. In this way, participants are aware of the intended purposes and outcomes of an intentional program. Similarly, Garst and White (2012) talked about the benefits of explicating labeling desired outcomes for participants to avoid what they term “the pitfalls of happenstance” (p. 159). The more purposefully and explicitly programs address desired outcomes, the higher probability those outcomes have of being consistently transmitted to participants.

One of the primary aims of TLC was to foster civic skills that the civic engagement researchers have identified as being important to being involved in the community. These skills fall into four categories: collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and leadership and management (e.g. Camino & Zeldin, 2002; Flanagan & Faison, 2001; Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Newton, 1975; Obradovic & Masten, 2007; Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011). The TLC campers described development in three of the four categories of civic skills through participation in the program. In particular, most campers discussed gaining several dimensions of the collaboration and leadership and management skills with fewer campers discussing critical thinking skills in relation to problem solving and no campers discussing communication skills. As a structured curriculum, TLC was designed with all four civic skill sets in mind, yet only three seemed to translate to the campers. Effective communication activities were intentionally incorporated into several of the skill sessions during the week, particularly in the group dynamics and cooperation skill sessions. As a result, the campers discussed communication, but only as a strategy for effective group work or as something they used in the service projects and the community leaders meeting. They did not discuss communication as it is discussed in the civic engagement literature, which focuses on skills such as effective deliberation, communicating with the public, and argument construction (de Souza Briggs, 2004; Flanagan & Faison, 2001; Lappe & Du Bois, 1997; Newton, 1975; Smith & Sobel, 2010). These findings suggest that, to better target communication outcomes that align with the civic engagement literature, TLC needs to better differentiate communication skills for campers in an explicit manner as opposed to

addressing it implicitly in several different skill sessions. Such a finding is similar to what Browne et al. (2010) found with the outcomes of the Camp2Grow program. Responsibility was not an explicit, stand-alone lesson in the Camp2Grown curriculum, though responsibility was a desired skill that was an implicit theme throughout the curriculum. While the authors found that responsibility did not increase over time, several of the outcomes that were specifically targeted in lessons in the Camp2Grow program did increase over time. They concluded, “It is possible that the very act of overtly targeting a specific outcome...may promote the development of that outcome more so than through implicit means” (p. 78).

In addition to civic skill gains, campers also reported gains in several dimensions of civic values as discussed in the civic engagement literature. Campers believed they had improved their attitudes toward working with others and became more open-minded in their interactions, reflecting the call for developing tolerance and open-mindedness (Flanagan & Faison, 2001; Melaville et al., 2006; Sherrod et al., 2002). TLC campers also felt that they gained new connections with others who were helping in the community and that they bonded with the other campers in a unique manner, paralleling the need to establish a sense of connection to enable motivation for civic engagement (Melaville et al., 2006). TLC campers further described a sense of social responsibility (Melaville et al., 2006; Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011) after TLC. More than a general sense of motivation to contribute to the community after the program, campers expressed an obligation to do so, feeling that they needed to help others because they had more than others. Further, they also recognized that people in the community wanted their



assistance and learned that they could help the organizations they visited during TLC. As Flanagan and Christens (2011) explained, "...young people's sense of social incorporation (solidarity with others, identification with community institutions, being respected and heard by adults) is a psychological factor that is positively related to youth assuming social responsibility for others in their communities and for taking civic actions (e.g., voting and volunteering) in young adulthood" (pp. 2-3). Finally, campers seemed to express feelings of efficacy and mattering (Sherrod et al., 2002) in their post-camp interviews. They realized that adults in the community wanted their help and that they were not 'just kids' in the community. They felt capable to contribute. Camino and Zeldin (2002), in exploring the societal barriers to contemporary youth civic engagement, discussed that adult views of youth as 'other', as just kids, or as problems narrowed opportunities for youth to get involved. TLC seemed to address these barriers, particularly as campers explained they had new opinions about community adults after the program.

The community-related outcomes of TLC aligned with the expectations of the Place- and Community-Based Education (PCBE) literature. PCBE aims to connect the subject and content with places where the participants live. Given that TLC was implemented in a day camp setting, all of the TLC campers, with the exception of Georgia and Shakur, live in the community in which the camp took place. Even though Georgia and Shakur lived the majority of the year in a different state, both campers had connections to the hosting community. Georgia's father lives in the hosting community, meaning that she visits the community several times a year. Shakur was visiting her aunt

who lives in the hosting community and with whom Shakur was considering living in the upcoming fall. TLC aimed to directly connect campers' learning with the surrounding camp and larger community through the tour of the local community, the service projects, the meeting with community leaders, and specific discussions about the assets and issues in their camp and local community during the skill sessions. The community-related outcomes of TLC reflected these efforts. Campers reported that they learned about their community's needs through the iceberg idea and about the specific places to go and the people to seek out to get involved in their community. Further, campers explained that they gained motivation and capability to contribute to their community, largely because they were introduced to their community, its organizations, and its leaders through TLC. Work on PCBE projects shows youth their capacity in the community and increases their conviction that they can tackle other community issues (Smith, 2002; Smith & Sobel, 2010). Smith and Sobel (2010) summarized the philosophy of PCBE by explaining that "...the assets and needs of their communities, and the importance of their willingness to become involved in the shaping of both individual and collective responses to the demands of the future" (p. 41). The findings of this study suggest that the PCBE literature could be useful to camp programs looking to connect campers with their larger communities. Further, since PCBE was useful in conceptualizing a program in the camp context, the findings suggest that the PCBE philosophy should be explored in a variety of other contexts, beyond the educational context from which it originated.

In regard to both skill related outcomes and community related outcomes, campers were able to identify the parts of TLC that most supported those outcomes.

Interestingly, campers thought that they gained the skill related outcomes from the skill sessions, whereas they believed the community related outcomes were most fostered through the community experiences such as the community tour, the service projects, and the community leaders meeting. As an intentionally designed, structured curriculum, TLC was designed to provide both skill sessions and community experiences given that the intent was to impact both civic skills and civic values. Consequently, campers' own distinction between skill sessions and community experiences suggests that the intentional design of the program was successful. There were, however, a few exceptions to this distinction. Campers felt that they learned about the concept of the iceberg (a community related outcome) from the first skill session, but learned about how the concept applied to their community from the community experiences. Campers believed that they gained a more mature attitude from the community experiences during which they had to be more serious and act as role models. Finally, though campers said that they learned the skill related outcomes in the skill sessions, they explained that they were able to practice their leadership and collaboration skills in the community experiences. Further, campers explained that the skill sessions supported their success in the community experiences later in the week. These findings align with the recommendations of others that individuals need realistic platforms within which to practice their civic skills and develop their civic values. Zaff, Malanchuk, and Eccles (2008) described these types of platforms as small versions of the public realm, such as civic and extracurricular activities, allowing participants to build and practice social skills, thereby contributing to their ability to contribute to their larger communities. Yuen

and colleagues (2005) called these types of small communities proto-communities. A proto-community possesses all of the features of a community (e.g., history, commitment from members) and operates on a short-term basis. As participants take part in these proto-communities, they gain an understanding for how to meaningfully contribute in their larger community. The findings of this study suggest that TLC may have acted as a proto-community for the participants, allowing the campers to practice their civic skills in a safe, supportive environment.

Pawson and Tilley (1997) emphasized the importance of understanding the contexts that may impact the mechanism-outcome relationship. In the case of TLC, three contexts seemed to be important to the program's outcomes. First, though the campers were unaware of the organizational readiness of the hosting day camp, such organizational readiness for a new, structured curriculum was important to having the support necessary for a novel program. The hosting day camp was already looking to revamp its teen programming and its director was excited to try new programming approaches. Durlak and DuPre (2008) argued that new programs experience the most successful implementation when a variety of factors are present such as organizational readiness for change and the existence of at least one program champion internal to the existing organization. The novelty of introducing traditional curriculum and lesson plans into the more organic camp environment may prevent some camps from considering structured camp curriculum. Consequently, the hosting camp's openness to this new approach was important to support TLC for campers.

Second, the campers felt that the group bonding they experienced during TLC was crucial to their success in the program so ‘becoming a family’ was an important context supporting TLC. This finding reflects the youth programming literature, which emphasizes the importance of supportive relationships when targeting certain outcomes. The literature has suggested that programmers and facilitators must attend to group dynamics so participants have an opportunity to feel a sense of belonging (American Camp Association, 2006a; Gambone, Connell, Klem, Sipe, & Bridges, 2002; Sibthorp, et al., 2007). As a result, in addition to the specific outcomes of an intentional program, camps wanting to target specific outcomes should train facilitators to foster group bonding and incorporate activities that would encourage such bonding.

The final context that the TLC campers grappled with was the camp environment itself. Campers had not encountered a structured curriculum in the camp context before which caused them to discuss a school-camp dichotomy in regard to the TLC program. A large portion of the skill sessions, which were the most structured aspects of TLC, seemed like school to the campers. For the campers, camp was associated only with active, camp-like activities, not with intense learning. Despite their hesitation about the structured nature of TLC, they accepted and, in many cases, preferred the structured learning. They seemed to value the type of learning they received during TLC beyond what they felt they typically received at camp. These findings seem to suggest that, similar to other structured curricula’s success in the camp setting (Browne & Sibthorpe, 2012; Browne et al., 2010; Garst et al., 2012), camp may be a powerful context for such programming. However, the findings also suggest that since curricula are still novel in

the camp setting, the novelty could confuse campers when initially introduced. Consequently, camps wanting to benefit from structured camp curricula may want to consider gradually introducing such an approach throughout the age groups at camp so campers are accustomed to such an approach. For example, younger campers could participate in one structured camp session during a one-week session and as they age they could progress toward a fully structured camp curriculum like TLC. Further, the TLC campers' struggle with associating traditional camp experiences with learning like they did in TLC suggests that the hosting camp could be more intentional in highlighting the campers' learning in all camp experiences, structured or not. Camp research has clearly demonstrated that, regardless of structure, campers learn a variety of important life skills at camp (ACA, 2005; Bialeschki et al., 2007; Bialeschki, Lyons, & Ewing, 2005; Hough & Browne, 2009; Marsh, 1999; Thurber, Scanlin, Scheuler, & Henderson, 2007). The fact that the TLC campers did not always associate 'camp' with 'learning' points to the need for increased intention and dialogue throughout the camp experience in the hosting day camp. Developmental outcomes and evaluation should not be an afterthought and must be integrated in all aspects of the program process from planning to implementation to evaluation to research (Baldwin, Persing, & Magnuson, 2004; Witt & Crompton, 2002).

### **Limitations and Future Research Directions**

The focus of this study was the short-term outcomes of the TLC program at a day camp in Georgia. As a result, the study population was delimited to the ten participants of the TLC program. The intention of this study was not to generate sweeping

generalizations appropriate for all camp environments but to develop a rich understanding about the short-term outcomes of the program. Despite these delimitations, the researcher intended the TLC program to act as a demonstration program for other camps interested in developing similar skill sets in their campers. Consequently, though the results of the proposed study cannot necessarily be generalized, the researcher's hope is that they are useful for camp practitioners in the future who are looking to engender similar outcomes in their campers or implement the TLC program itself.

A few limitations of the current study point to directions for future research. First, the current study only examined the short-term outcomes of one iteration of the TLC program within one camp context and under one facilitator. For TLC to be considered a viable structured curriculum for a variety of camps, future research could investigate the outcomes of the program in a variety of camp contexts and with a variety of facilitators. Second, given the interactive nature of the camp programs involved, the size of the study population and, subsequently, the sample, was relatively small. While small camp group sizes are ideal for an interactive and inclusive camp experience, this small sample size affects the degree to which the researcher can make definitive comments on the promise of the TLC program for a variety of campers. To maximize the contributions of duplication of the current study, future researchers could utilize aspects of the current study to inform their own work. Pawson and Tilley (1997) call this tactic of building upon previous studies the cumulation of data.

## **Conclusion**

Summer camp researchers and scholars have called for an increase in intentionality in camp programming. Campers in the TLC program reported gains that paralleled the intention of the program's designers: increases in civic skills and civic values. Campers were able to recognize that the structure of the program itself was designed to foster those skills. Further, the results of this study emphasized that camp programmers can continually look to enhance the power of the camp experience by leveraging the strengths of other learning environments such as curriculum approaches and Place- and Community-Based Education. As Wheeler and Edlebeck (2006) argued, "In order for youth to be successful, they need continued support in the form of consistent, structured activities that deepen knowledge, commitment, and opportunity for action" (p. 92). While such structure was important to the campers of TLC, they also reported that TLC was a fun learning experience, but in some ways was not camp to them. Consequently, this study points to a need to find balance between the developmental benefits of structured camp curricula and the freedom and fun so inherent to the camp experience.



## References

- American Camp Association. (2005). *Directions: Youth development outcomes of the camp experience*. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.acacamps.org/research/enhance/directions>.
- American Psychological Association. (2011). *Civic engagement*. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.apa.org/education/undergrad/civic-engagement.aspx>.
- Arai, S., & Pedlar, A. (1997). Building communities through leisure: Citizen participation in a Healthy Communities initiative. *Journal of Leisure Research, 29*, 167-182.
- Arend, L., & Rogers, M. (2012, February). *A utilization-focused evaluation of a pilot reading program at Sherwood Forest Camp*, Presentation conducted at the American Camp Association National Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Babbie, E. (2008). *The basics of social research* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Baldwin, C., Persing, J., & Magnuson, D. (2004). The role of theory, research, and evaluation in adventure education. *Journal of Experiential Education, 26*(3), 167-183.
- Bellah, R., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W., Swidler, A., & Tipton, S. (2008). *Habits of the heart: Individualism and commitment in American life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. (Original work published in 1985).
- Bialeschki, D., Henderson, K., & James, P. (2007). Camp experiences and developmental outcomes for youth. *Child & Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America, 16*, 769-788.
- Bialeschki, D., Lyons, K., & Ewing, D. (2005). Youths' perspectives on camp outcomes: intentionality and positive youth development. *Twelfth Canadian Conference on Leisure Research*. Vancouver, Canada.
- Browne, L., Garst, B., & Bialeschki, D. (2011). Engaging youth in environmental sustainability: Impact of the Camp 2 Grow program. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration, 29*(3), 70-85.
- Browne, L., & Sibthorp, J. (2012, February). *Fostering camp connectedness through structured curricula at day camp*, Presentation conducted at the American Camp Association National Conference, Atlanta, GA.

- Camino, L., & Zeldin, S. (2002). From periphery to center: Pathways for youth civic engagement in the day-to-day life of communities. *Applied Developmental Science, 6*(4), 213-220.
- Christens, B. D., & Kirshner, B. (2011). Taking stock of youth organizing: An interdisciplinary perspective. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development, 134*, 27-41.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- de Sousa Briggs, X. (2004). Social capital: Easy beauty or meaningful resource? *Journal of the American Planning Association, 70*, 151-158.
- Durlak, J. A., & DuPre, E. P. (2008). Implementation matters: A review of research on the influence of implementation on program outcomes and the factors affecting implementation. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 41*, 327-350.
- Finlay, L. (2002). "Outing" the researcher: The provenance, process, and practice of reflexivity. *Qualitative Health Research, 12*(4), 532-545.
- Flanagan, C. A., & Christens, B. D. (2011). Youth civic development: Historical context and emerging issues. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development, 134*, 1-9.
- Flanagan, C. A., & Faison, N. (2001). Youth civic development: Implications of research for social policy and programs. *Social Policy Report, 15*(1), 1-16.
- Frankel, R. M., & Devers, K. (2000). Qualitative research: A consumer's guide. *Education for Health, 13*(1), 113-123.
- Gambone, M., Connell, J., Klem, A., Sipe, C., & Bridges, L. (2002). *Finding out what matters for youth: Testing key links in a Community Action Framework for Youth Development*. Philadelphia, PA: Youth Development Strategies & the Institute for Research and Reform in Education.
- Garst, B., Morgan, C., & Bialeschki, D. (2012). *Explore 30 camp reading program impact report*. Martinsville, IN: American Camp Association.
- Garst, B. A., & White, C. P. (2012). *Leadership and environmental stewardship: A curriculum for camps and other youth programs*. Monterey, CA: Healthy Learning.
- Gearing, R. E. (2004). Bracketing in research: A typology. *Qualitative Health Research, 14*(10), 1429-1452.

- Glesne, C. (1999). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Longman.
- Gruenewald, D. A., & Smith, G. A. (2008). Introduction: Making room for the local. In D. A. Gruenewald, & G. A. Smith (Eds.), *Place-based education in the global age* (pp. xiii-xxiii). New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Hamilton, S. (1980). Experiential learning programs for youth. *American Journal of Education*, 88(2), 179-215.
- Hamilton, S., Hamilton, M. A., & Pittman, K. (2004). Principles for youth development. In S. Hamilton, & M. A. Hamilton (Eds.), *The youth development handbook: Coming of age in American communities* (pp. 3-22). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hemmingway, J. (2006). Leisure, social capital and civic competence. *Leisure/Loisir*, 30, 341-355.
- Hough, M., & Browne, L. (2009). Connecting camp mechanisms to camper outcomes: A case for program theory. *American Camp Association National Conference*. Orlando, FL.
- Henderson, K., Bialeschki, D., & James, P. (2007). Overview of camp research. *Child & Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 16, 755-767.
- Hycner, R. (1985). Some guidelines for the phenomenological analysis of interview data. *Human Studies*, 8, 279-303.
- Jarrett, R., Sullivan, P., & Watkins, N. (2005). Developing social capital through participation in organized youth programs: Qualitative insights from three programs. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 33, 41-55.
- Kress, C. (2006). Youth leadership and youth development: Connections and questions. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 109, 45-56.
- Lappe, F., & Du Bois, P. (1997). Building social capital without looking backward. *National Civic Review*, 86(2), 119-129.
- Marsh, P. (1999). Does camp enhance self-esteem? Good news for the future of camping. *Camping Magazine*, 72(6), Retrieved from <http://www.acacamps.org/campmag/9911>.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (1999). *Designing qualitative research* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Maynard, S., & Kleiber, D. (2005). Using leisure services to build social capital in later life: Classical traditions, contemporary realities, and emerging possibilities. *Journal of Leisure Research, 37*, 475-493.
- McKenzie, M. (2000). How are adventure program outcomes achieved?: A review of the literature. *Australian Journal of Outdoor Education, 5*(1), 19-27.
- Melaville, A., Berg, A. C., & Blank, M. J. (2006). *Community-Based Learning: Engaging students for success and citizenship*. Retrieved from: <http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/CBLFinal.pdf>.
- Newton, F. M. (1975). *Education for citizen action: Challenge for secondary curriculum*. Berkeley, CA: McCutchan Publishing.
- Obradovic, J., & Masten, A. S. (2007). Developmental antecedents of young adult civic engagement. *Applied Developmental Science, 11*(1), 2-19.
- Pawson, R., & Tilley, N. (1997). *Realistic evaluation*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Putnam, R. (1995). Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. *Journal of Democracy, 6*, 65-78.
- Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Roark, M., & Evans, F. *Play it, measure it: Experiences designed to elicit specific youth outcomes*. Monterey, CA: Healthy Learning.
- Roark, M. F., Gillard, A., Evans, F., Wells, M. S., & Blauer, M. M. (2012). Effect of intentional designed experiences on friendship skills of youth: An application of symbolic interaction theory. *Journal of Parks and Recreation Administration, 30*(3), 24-36.
- Seidman, I. (2005). *Interviewing as qualitative research* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Teachers College.
- Sherrod, L. R., Flanagan, C., & Youniss, J. (2002). Dimensions of citizenship and opportunities for youth development: The what, why, when, where, and who of citizenship development. *Applied Developmental Science, 6*(4), 264-272.
- Sibthorp, J., Paisley, K., & Gookin, J. (2007). Exploring participant development through adventure-based programming: A model from the National Outdoor Leadership School. *Leisure Sciences, 29*, 1-18.
- Smith, G. A. (2002). Place-based education: Learning to be where you are. *Phi Delta Kappan*, April, 584-594.

- Smith, G., & Sobel, D. (2010). *Place- and community-based education in schools*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Thurber, C., Scanlin, M., Scheuler, L., & Henderson, K. (2007). Youth development outcomes of the camp experience: Evidence for multidimensional growth. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *36*, 241-254.
- Umphrey, M. (2007). *The power of community-centered education: Teaching as a craft of place*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education.
- Wheeler, W., & Edlebeck, C. (2006). Leading, learning, and unleashing potential: Youth leadership and civic engagement. *New Directions for Youth Development*, *109*, 89-97.
- Winter, N. (2003). *Social capital, civic engagement and positive youth development outcomes*. Retrieved from <http://www.policystudies.com/studies/?id=57>.
- Witt, P., & Crompton, J. (2002). *Best practices in youth development in public park and recreation settings*. Ashburn, VA: National Park & Recreation Association.
- Wray-Lake, L., & Syvertsen, A. K. (2011). The developmental roots of social responsibility in childhood and adolescence. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, *134*, 11-25.
- Yuen, F. C., Pedlar, A., & Mannell, R. C. (2005). Building community and social capital through children's leisure in the context of an international camp. *Journal of Leisure Research*, *37*, 494-518.
- Youniss, J., Bales, S., Christmas-Best, V., Diversi, M., McLaughlin, M., & Silbereison, R. (2002). Youth civic engagement in the Twenty-First Century. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, *12*(1), 121-148.
- Youniss J., McLellan, J., & Yates, M. (1997). What we know about engendering civic identity. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *40*, 620-631.
- Zaff, J., Malanchuk, O., & Eccles, J. (2008). Predicting positive citizenship from adolescence to young adulthood: The effects of a civic context. *Applied Developmental Science*, *12*(1), 38-53.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THERE WAS MORE OUT THERE THAN OUR STREET: EXPLORING SUMMER CAMP AS AN AVENUE TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND SOCIAL CAPITAL**

#### **Introduction**

Social capital has come to the forefront of not only academic discourse, but also popular concern. Though a topic of research for a decade prior, Putnam (1995; 2000) popularized the idea of the decline in social capital with his article and book, both variations on the title “Bowling Alone”. The social capital and civic engagement literature indicate a similar concern: Americans today are less connected to their communities than in the recent past. Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton (2008) argued that Americans display a growing lack of connection between ideas of the self and the larger societal context. The researchers also contend that even when Americans do seek community, such actions are increasingly motivated by self interest. Marshalling statistical data from innumerable sources, Putnam (2000) argued that key indicators of civic engagement, social capital, and interpersonal connection have, in some cases drastically, decreased over the past few decades. He found the most notable participation declines have been in activities that call people to actively serve, work, or attend. The activities most adept at forging connections are decreasing while participation in individual-oriented activities are increasing.

Social capital, as a collective resource, greases the processes of collective problem solving and allows individuals to feel more capable to shape public life (de

Sousa Briggs, 2004). To statistically demonstrate the societal repercussions of declining civic engagement and social capital, Putnam (2000) created a social capital index linking communities' levels of social capital to other indicators of quality of life. For example, states that scored high on the social capital index performed higher in indicators of child welfare (e.g. infant mortality rate, teen birth rate, high school drop out rates, and family health) and school performance (e.g. standardized test scores, graduation rates, student and parental school engagement). Similarly, Putnam (2000) found that states with higher levels of social capital also reported lower levels of crime than states with lower levels of social capital. Further, those states with high levels of social capital displayed overall better health among residents.

Given the possible negative repercussions of decreasing social capital and civic engagement, scholars have called for research to identify places in society that support the development of social capital, civic engagement, and the skills necessary for both (Obradovic & Masten, 2007; Putnam, 1995; Putnam, 2000). Recreation-based organizations appear throughout the social capital and civic engagement literature. As an experience with recreation at its core, summer camps could offer an arena within which to address the aforementioned civic issues. The American Camp Association (ACA; 1998) defines camp as "A sustained experience which provides a creative, recreational and educational opportunity in group living in the out-of-doors. It utilizes trained leadership and the resources of the natural surroundings to contribute to each camper's mental, physical, social and spiritual growth" (p. 89). Research on summer camp programming has demonstrated that camps can engender many of the same skills and

competencies as other youth recreation programs represented in the civic engagement and social capital literature (American Camp Association, 2005; Bialeschki, Lyons, & Ewing, 2005; Hough & Browne, 2009; Thurber, Scanlin, Scheuler, & Henderson, 2007); however, summer camp remains largely underrepresented in the social capital and civic engagement literature. Those studies that have examined social capital in summer camp have focused on building social capital within the camp environment (Devine & Parr, 2008; Yuen, Pedlar, & Mannell, 2005). Blackshaw and Long (2005) argued, “Community development through leisure initiatives [e.g., sports, arts, socializing, leisure associations, and other leisure activities] has a responsibility to operate in the worlds in which people actually live...” (p. 254). As a result, there is a need for research to explore whether social capital and civic gains made at camp can be translated to campers’ home communities.

Further, the camp studies that did address social capital did not examine camp programs that were intentionally designed to engender social capital and civic engagement (Devine & Parr, 2008; Yuen et al., 2005). A recent upsurge in camp literature has focused on programs intentionally designed to foster specific outcomes such as leadership, environmental stewardship, camp connectedness, reading proficiency, friendship skills, teamwork, and affinity for exploration (Arend & Rogers, 2012; Browne, Garst, & Bialeschki, 2011; Browne & Sibthorp, 2012; Garst & White, 2012; Roark & Evans, 2010). Though several of these programs contain components that align well with social capital and civic engagement, there has been a lack of program development and evaluation of camp programs intentionally designed to increase campers’ civic



engagement and social capital in their home communities. The notable exception is the Camp2Grow program aimed at engendering leadership and environmental stewardship (Browne et al., 2011). Though the Camp2Grow programming successfully targets civic gains in campers, it does not intentionally address social capital building in campers. Consequently, the purpose of this study was to explore summer camp as a possible avenue to engendering civic engagement and social capital in campers' home communities. To address this purpose, this article focuses on the following research question: What was the impact of the Teens Leading & Connecting program on campers' civic skills, civic engagement and social capital in their home communities after camp?

## **Review of the Literature**

### **Defining Social Capital**

Several prominent scholars have defined the term social capital. Bourdieu (1986) defined social capital as "...the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital..." (p. 248). Putnam's (1995) definition of social capital states that social capital refers to "...features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (p. 67). Halpern (2005) defined social capital as the "Social networks and the norms and sanctions that govern their character. It is valued for its potential to facilitate individual and community action, especially through the solution of collection action problems" (p. 4). Portes (1998)

argued that a consensus definition from the literature would be: "...social capital stands for the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures" (p. 6).

As suggested by the variations in its definitions, the concept of social capital has developed over a long and complicated history. This history points to four components of social capital that continually surface in the literature. First, nearly all scholars who have tackled the concept of social capital agree that at its core are social relationships and networks. As Portes (1998) pointed out, social capital lives in relationships. Social capital postulates that the social networks we participate in on a daily basis, both formal and informal, afford us resources that are distinctly different from other types of capital we might possess. Hemmingway (2006) stated, "Social capital is about networks, resources in networks, and access to resources" (p. 350). Second, most scholars of social capital believe that the concept involves some reference to norms, sanctions, and reciprocity. As Halpern (2005) explained, norms are the rules and expectancies within a network while sanctions are formal and informal punishments and rewards that govern behavior within the network. Both norms and sanctions enable the successful functioning of individuals within social networks as well as maintain the networks themselves. Associated with the idea of norms and sanctions is the idea of reciprocity (Halpern, 2005; Portes, 1998; Putnam, 1995). Both Coleman (1988) and Portes (1998) saw the reciprocity formed within networks as a system of obligation that binds members together. Third, many social capital proponents see social capital as more of a collective, rather than an individual, resource (Coleman, 1988; Field, 2003; Edwards & Foley, 1998;

Hemmingway, 2006). As a result, community members can draw on the benefits of social capital regardless of their original involvement in the creation of that resource. In this way, social capital is both public and private. Social capital is private in that it consists of individuals forming connections and public in that it can reap benefits to bystanders (Putnam, 2000). Finally, though nearly all scholars agree that social capital can impart powerful benefits such as enhanced economic performance, improved health, reduced crime, and more effective governance, they also agree that social capital can possess a 'dark side'. The dark side consists of two features: enforcing already existing inequalities and using social capital for perverse ends. Social capital in itself is not good or bad. It becomes so when others judge the ends to which social capital is put (de Souza Briggs, 1997). Social bonds can be used for perverse ends such as seen in gangs, paramilitary groups, drug cartels, organized crime, and the Ku Klux Klan (Field, 2003; Putnam, 2000). All of these groups are examples of dense social networks that have strong norms, sanctions, and systems of reciprocity that may provide benefits for their members, but do not build overall goodwill in their communities.

The above four themes in the social capital literature could lead to the following definition of social capital: *Social capital consists of the collective resources generated by individuals' membership in social networks and the shared norms and sanctions of those networks that have the potential to produce mutual benefit if put to positive ends.* This constructed definition of social capital will inform the remainder of this paper.

## **Defining Civic Engagement**

The American Psychological Association (2011) defined civic engagement as “...individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern. Civic engagement can take many forms, from individual voluntarism to organizational involvement to electoral participation” (para. 1). Camino and Zeldin (2002) took a more general view of civic engagement, defining it as one’s ability to influence the process of collective action. Similarly, Flanagan and Faison (2001) argued that being civically engaged means “a feeling that one matters, has a voice and a stake in public affairs, and thus wants to be a contributing member of the community” (p. 3).

Traditionally, particularly in the political sciences, civic engagement has been interpreted as being equivalent to legal citizenship, encompassing basic political functions and actions. More recent scholarship has challenged this view, asserting that civic engagement extends beyond simply casting a vote. Looking beyond political involvement is particularly important when considering civic engagement in youth. Sherrod, Flanagan, and Youniss (2002) argued that expecting youth to be politically engaged, particularly when most are not old enough to vote, is largely unrealistic. Rather, the authors advocate for a broader conceptualization of civic engagement in relationship to youth, one that means acting as a member of a group larger than themselves. Youth civic engagement plays a particularly important role in more broad societal civic engagement because participation in civil activities during adolescence fosters a habit of community involvement that continues into adulthood. The civil activities most represented in the literature as contributors to lifelong civic engagement

are extracurricular activities (Eley & Kirk, 2002; Jarrett, Sullivan, & Watkins, 2005; Parke, 2007; Smith, 1999) and community service (Janoski, Musick, & Wilson, 1998; Metz, McClellan, & Youniss, 2003; Niemi, Hepburn, & Chapman, 2000; Yates & Youniss, 1996).

Youth face particular challenges to civic engagement in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. First, youth face a society marked by migration, globalization, and mobility which brings diverse groups of people together yet can decrease the attachment one feels to their local community or nation-state (Obradovic & Masten, 2007; Youniss et al., 2002). Second, youth face a pervasive societal image of themselves as potential problems rather than sources of potential. Third, age laws such as the voting restriction amplify youths' 'otherness' to adults, meaning that many adults view youth as 'just kids' who are incapable of contributing as constructive citizens. Finally, some efforts to advocate for positive youth development have swung the pendulum too far in attempting to create programs where youth can have an active voice in leadership, civil, and decision-making processes. In some settings adult facilitators deny age difference all together and neglect to give youth the guidance they need to develop successful civic engagement (Camino & Zeldin, 2002). These challenges suggest that more research is needed to understand how youth become attached to a larger group (e.g., organization, community, nation-state) so as to encourage positive civic engagement (Obradovic & Masten, 2007). As Youniss and his colleagues (2002) stated, "...according youth respect and affording them opportunities is, and always has been, a wise investment in preserving and improving the societies of the world" (p. 144).

## **Engendering Youth Civic Engagement**

Lifelong civic engagement needs to be fostered. The examples Putnam (2000) uses as social capital builders (e.g., PTA, voting, volunteering, campaigning) suggest that social capital building networks created through civic engagement require interpersonal contact. Other scholars have advocated a similar message. Individuals can only experience the benefits of social capital when they are recognized as a member of a social network meaning that members must be in contact with the network to benefit from it (Glover & Hemmingway, 2005; Hemmingway, 2006). Such networks do not necessarily occur spontaneously, however. In fact, Bourdieu argued that social capital does not occur naturally; it requires institutional effort to create and maintain. To engender lifelong civic engagement and connection to others, such institutional effort needs to begin with youth. Gruenewald and Smith (2008) argued that for youth to become civically engaged, they must develop a “readiness for social action” (p. xx). To explore the tactics necessary to foster a readiness for social action, one should consider the individual skills, individual values, and organizational contexts that engender civic engagement, thereby affecting social capital.

First, Newton (1975) described civic competencies as those skills and abilities that allow youth to impact public affairs. Similarly, Youniss and his colleagues (2002) argued that civic competence included skills that allow individuals to participate in government and collaborative efforts for collective interests. Finally, Melaville, Berg, and Blank (2006) stated, “Civic skills build the intellectual capacity to understand and critique various points of view as well as the participatory skills necessary to take part in

the civic process. (p. 40). In reviewing the civic engagement and related literature, four main skill sets emerge as being particularly important to successful civic engagement: collaboration skills, communication skills, critical thinking skills, and leadership and management skills (Camino & Zeldin, 2002; Christens & Kirshner, 2011; Flanagan & Faison, 2001; Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Obradovic & Masten, 2007; Newton, 1975; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011).

Second, in addition to skills that enable individuals to be civically engaged, individuals must have values that motivate toward and align them with such activity. To perform civic tasks and create social capital, individuals must see the value in collective resources. Halpern (2005) argued that, “Inasmuch as people can, and do, debate and adjust their values – both collectively and individually – values must be at least partly causally prior to the forms of social capital expressed in society” (p. 276). These values have been termed civic dispositions or civic character values. Throughout the literature, these values include tolerance, social responsibility, sense of connection, open mindedness, reflection, and feelings of efficacy and mattering (Flanagan & Faison, 2001; Melaville et al., 2006; Obradovic & Masten, 2007; Sherrod et al., 2002; Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011).

Finally, if developing civic skills, values, and identity enables youth civic engagement, youth must be exposed contexts in which they may gain and develop these attributes. As Arai and Pedlar (2003) stated, “...community is not so much the *building up* of something, but the removal of the structures that separate us and the *creation of space* for people to come together” (*original emphasis*, p. 194). The literature suggests

several aspects of contexts that successfully engender civic development in any setting. First, individuals need realistic platforms within which to practice their civic skills and develop their civic values. Civic and extracurricular activities can act as a microcosm of larger community so that youth can practice skills and participate in civic processes (Sherrod et al., 2002; Zaff, Malanchuk, & Eccles, 2008). Yuen and colleagues (2005) called these types of small communities proto-communities. A proto-community possesses all of the features of a community (e.g., history, commitment from members) but operates on a short-term basis. As participants take part in these proto-communities, they gain an understanding for how to meaningfully contribute in their larger community. Second, contexts that engender civic engagement and social capital connect youth to non-familial adults (Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 2003; Jarrett et al., 2005). Camino and Zeldin (2002) believed that a key quality of civic development contexts is partnerships between youth and adults. Finally, contexts that engender civic skills, values, and engagement provide opportunities for youth voice and decision-making (Camino & Zeldin, 2002; Wheeler & Edlebeck, 2006).

### **Place- and Community-Based Education**

The place- and community-based education (PCBE) literature could link the civic contexts discussed above. PCBE focuses on the local places familiar to participants to encourage participants to connect with topics explored in the traditional classroom (Smith & Sobel, 2010; Umphrey, 2007). PCBE utilizes local phenomenon as a source of learning core subject material and citizenship (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Smith & Sobel, 2010). Melaville, Berg, and Blank (2006) named the following concepts as core to PCBE:



meaningful content, youth voice and choice, personal and public purpose, assessment and feedback, and resources and relationships. By connecting learning to participants' local context, the outcomes of their efforts become meaningful for participants (Umphrey, 2007; Youniss et al., 2002). As Camino and Zeldin (2002) suggested, "Youth, like adults, will gravitate to those opportunities that seem most relevant to themselves and their communities" (p. 219). PCBE deals with real-world problems because youth are naturally drawn to the power of the real (Umphrey, 2007). Further, Smith (2002) recalled Dewey's notion that youth are engaged by actual phenomenon more than ideas about a phenomenon. Youth in PCBE are motivated by being included in the community and the world of the adults (Smith & Sobel, 2010). By rooting learning in real life, there is an increased chance that participants can transfer their learning to new situations (Melaville et al., 2006). Finally, on a community level, youth come to be seen by other community members, particularly adults, as intellectual resources for the community (Smith, 2002).

### **Role of Summer Camp in Civil Society**

Summer camps share many of the contextual features recommended in the social capital and civic engagement literature, but they remain underrepresented in the literature on this topic. Camp experiences may engender civic engagement and social capital. As Eells (1986) explained, throughout the over 100-year history of summer camps, all camps have shared a common bond of fostering relationships among people. Further, Eells (1986) argued, "The ideal American camp provides an educational milieu that is one of the most favorable settings possible for helping young people to grow, develop, and achieve understanding of themselves and a sense of responsibility for others and for the

environment” (p. v). The following paragraphs discuss the possible civic benefits of summer camp and the contribution camp can make to social capital.

**Civic benefits of summer camp.** Camp research offers compelling evidence to support the inclusion of camp in civic engagement research. For example, the American Camp Association Directions study (2005) surveyed over 5,000 families at over 80 camps across the United States to measure outcomes of the camp experience. Most notable for the current study, the Directions research found growth in some of the skills also found in civic development research. For example, campers and parents saw significant increases in leadership skills from pre-camp to post-camp and post-camp to follow-up questionnaires. Similarly, Yuen, Pedlar, and Mannell (2005) explored whether summer camp could create civic skills and outcomes. The researchers conducted focus groups and participant observation with 32 campers at a New Jersey residential camp. The authors found that the camp activities enhanced campers’ cooperation abilities such as utilizing flexibility, understanding democratic procedures, developing group goals, and establishing shared meanings. They predicted that these camp skills could help campers in their home communities; however, the study did not extend beyond the camp experience so they were unable to determine if campers carried the skills home. Finally, the research surrounding the Camp2Grow program most closely aligns with the civic engagement literature. This program addresses environmental stewardship and leadership and focuses on many skills that are mentioned in the civic engagement literature. Browne, Garst, and Bialeschki (2011) found that the Camp2Grow program fosters independence, problem solving, affinity for nature, and empowerment.

**Social capital in the summer camp context.** Only two studies known to this author have explicitly discussed camp in relationship to social capital. The first was conducted by Yuen, Pedlar, and Mannell (2005) to explore whether summer camp could create civic skills and outcomes. Their study focused on building bonding social capital within the camp community. The researchers identified four major contributors to social capital building among the campers: leisure as a context for relationship building, opportunity for participation, opportunity for social learning, and emergence of community. A second study explicitly exploring the link between social capital and summer camp was conducted by Devine and Parr (2008). Their study aimed to explore the development of relationships in an inclusive residential camp setting using the framework of social capital. They discovered three main themes: the concept of reciprocity and investment, the use of inclusion as camouflage to disguise inequalities in access to social capital, and the roles campers expected campers and staff to play in mediating the creation of social capital. As with the Yuen, Pedlar, and Mannell (2005) study, Devine and Parr (2008) focused solely on social capital building while at camp. They suggested that future research should examine how social capital is sustained outside of the camp setting.

## **Methods**

### **Setting**

The setting for this study was a weeklong pilot camp program, Teens Leading & Connecting (TLC), that was intentionally structured to increase participants' civic engagement and social capital in their home communities. The program was

implemented during the summer 2012 at a YMCA day camp in Georgia, serving a total of 10 teen campers ages 13-16. TLC was designed to align with the recent movement in the camp arena to increase the intentionality and structured curricula in camp programming to better target desired outcomes. Examples of these efforts include: Camp2Grow for leadership and environmental stewardship (Browne, Garst, & Bialeschki, 2011; Garst & White, 2012); Explore 30 Camp Reading Program for increased reading enjoyment and improved vocabulary (Arend & Rogers, 2012; Garst, Morgan, & Bialeschki, 2012); and Play It, Measure It designed curricula for friendship skills, teamwork, and affinity for exploration (Roark & Evans, 2010). As Browne, Garst, and Bialeschki (2011) explained, structured curricula "...allow camps to target desired outcomes and document their efforts to stakeholders" (p. 81). TLC aimed to impact campers' civic engagement and social capital in their home communities. To do so, the weekly schedule for the program, as displayed in Table 11, drew activities and lesson plans from literature focused on structured camp curricula, civic engagement, social capital, youth programming and Place- and Community-Based Education.

Finally, to assist campers in processing and transferring their learning from the camp environment (Bialeschki, et al., 2007; Gass, 1999; McKenzie, 2000), the participants wrote a letter to themselves about their learning and intentions to apply it in their home communities prior to leaving camp. This letter was mailed to participants one month following camp as a reminder of what they learned and as a motivator for participants as they attempt to apply camp learning outside the boundaries of camp.

Table 11. General daily schedule for TLC						
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Morning	Introduction	Camp Activities	Camp Activities	Community Tour Debrief	Camp Activities	Off Camp Service Project
	Group Dynamics	Leadership Skills	Problem Solving Skills	Camp Activities	Service Planning	
Afternoon	Camp Activities	Organizing Skills	Community Tour	Planning Skills	Meeting with Community Leaders	Lunch
	Cooperation Skills	Identifying Problems Skills		Service Planning		Week Debrief
Check Out		Leadership Observations		On-Camp Service Activity & Camp Out		
Evening						

### Data Collection Procedures

The research procedures were comprised of two main parts: interviews and questionnaires. First, each camper participated in a series of three in-person semi-structured interviews with the researcher. The interview structure was based on Seidman’s (2005) “Three-Interview Series”. Seidman’s technique is to interview each participant in three sections with the first interview being a “Focused Life History,” the second interview aimed at collecting the “Details of the Experience,” and the third interview consisting of a ‘Reflection on the Meaning’ (pp. 17-19). The interview structure in the current study mirrored this three-step approach. The researcher chose to employ Seidman’s approach because the three-interview sequence builds rapport between the researcher and participants over time, which allows participants to develop a comfort

with both the researcher and the research process. The first interviews took place in the week prior to camp. In these interviews, the researcher explored the youth's prior civic engagement, attitudes toward civic engagement, and expectations about the upcoming camp experience. The second round of interviews took place in the week following camp. These post-camp interviews explored the civic skills and attitudes each youth gained through the camp experience along with future intentions to be civically engaged in the camper's home community. The third and final round of interviews took place approximately three months following TLC. The follow-up interviews focused on determining whether the campers' levels of civic engagement in their home communities matched their intentions as expressed in the post-camp interviews and whether they retained the civic skills and attitudes fostered through the TLC program. In addition to camper interviews, TLC facilitator and parent interviews were also conducted. The TLC facilitator interviews took place in the week following TLC and the parent interviews took place approximately four months after TLC via telephone.

The second portion of the data collection procedures consisted of a civic skills and engagement questionnaire. Campers completed four iterations of the questionnaire. The first and second iterations aimed to establish a baseline of data on campers' skills and engagement prior to camp. The first took place approximately one month prior to camp. The second, third, and fourth iterations were administered concurrently with the campers' three interviews. Using this method of iteration, the questionnaire data were used to explore whether the campers' actual levels of civic attitudes, skills, and engagement in their home communities were affected by their camp experiences.

## **Data Collection Instruments**

**Qualitative.** The researcher utilized semi-structured interviews as the qualitative data collection instruments (Frankel & Devers, 2000). Each interview was recorded with the consent of the participant. After each interview, the researcher recorded written notes regarding non-verbal aspects of the interviews including body language, facial expressions, and eye contact to better understand and describe participant responses.

### **Quantitative.**

**Program-specific civic skills.** To assess proximal outcomes of the program, namely the acquisition of civic skills, four different scales were administered. Teamwork and problem solving were assessed using the corresponding scales from the American Camp Association's *Youth Outcomes Battery* (ACA YOB; American Camp Association, 2011). This instrument consists of scales for 11 outcomes and was developed specifically for the camp setting, though it can be applied to other youth settings. This research project utilized the Basic Youth Outcomes Scales for Teamwork (8 items) and Problem-Solving Confidence (8 items). As the original scales were designed for a post-test only design, the rating scale for these scales was modified to align with the pre-, post-design of the current study so participants rated each item on a 4-point scale from 'Almost Always' to 'Almost Never'.

Decision-making and planning skills were assessed using corresponding scales from the Leadership Skills Inventory, which assesses leadership skills in nine different categories (Karnes & Chauvin, 2000). For the purposes of this study, the 17 items related

to Decision Making Skills and the 10 items related to Planning Skills were included.

Participants rated each item on a 4-point scale from 'Almost Always' to 'Almost Never'.

**Active and Engaged Citizenship.** To assess civic engagement as an integrated, multi-faceted concept, the Active and Engaged Citizenship (AEC) construct was utilized (Zaff, Boyd, Li, Lerner, & Learner, 2010). The AEC views civic engagement as a behavioral, cognitive, and socio-emotional construct consisting of four first order factors: Civic Duty (12 items), Civic Skills (6 items), Neighborhood Social Connectedness (6 items), and Civic Participation (8 items). Participants rated items on a variety of 5-point or 6-point scales with indicators matching the needs of the item.

**Demographics.** Participants were asked about the following demographic information: gender, age, school grade level, parents' education level, parents' volunteering habits, ethnic background, home zip code, high school, and number of years living in the community hosting the camp. Demographic information was not included on the post-camp iteration of the questionnaire.

### **Data Analysis**

The qualitative interview data were analyzed by the researcher following Hycner's (1985) guidelines for the analysis of interview data. As recommended by Hycner (1985), after transcription and multiple readings of the interviews, the researcher identified meaning units within each interview, clustered meaning units in each interview, labeled themes within each interview, created individual textual descriptions of each participant, clustered composite meaning units across the interviews, then labeled relevant composite clusters into themes across the interviews. For the questionnaire data,



scale means were calculated for each person at each iteration. These means informed individual line graphs that demonstrated individual change over the four iterations.

Group scale means were also calculated.

### **Trustworthiness of the Data**

Trustworthiness of the outcomes data was established in a variety of ways. As Babbie (2008) emphasized, validity of qualitative field research lies in the fact that “the field researcher tap[s] a depth of meaning in concepts...that is generally unavailable to surveys and experiments” (p. 344). The researcher also employed member checks of emerging themes with the participants during the program. As the researcher conceptualized categories and emerging ideas, the researcher informally questioned the campers and program facilitator regarding the accuracy of emerging ideas. Further, the researcher incorporated camper member checks into both the post-camp and follow-up interviews. Participants were asked about the researcher’s emerging ideas in both of those instances.

Dependability of the qualitative field research was established in two ways. First, the researcher aimed to identify and recognize the occurrence of any negative instances, disconfirming thoughts, or alternate explanations within the data. Upon discovery of such instances, the researcher modified emerging themes and conclusions to include negative instances in theme descriptions, theme discussions, and figures of findings so all voices and explanations became a part of the final conclusions (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Second, the researcher enlisted the assistance of a second data analyst. The researcher trained the second data analysis in thematic analysis then the

assistant used thematic analysis to analyze a sample of the interview data. The assistant's resulting themes, subthemes, and theme descriptions were compared to the researcher's analysis. The themes were adjusted as necessary following these checks (Hycner, 1985).

Credibility of findings and the researcher as the data collection instrument was established in two ways. First, Glesne (1999) and Creswell (2007) suggested that prolonged engagement in the research site and with the research participants supports trustworthiness of findings in qualitative research. Glesne (1999) characterized such engagement as time at the site, time conducting interviews, and time spent with respondents. The researcher for this study was on-hand for the entire TLC program, conducted three interviews with each participant, and spent time building rapport with the participants throughout the program. Second, the researcher employed reflexive bracketing. Findlay (2002) described reflexive bracketing as "thoughtful, conscious self awareness" (p. 532). As the researcher has previous camp experience and participated in the research setting, the researcher identified both personal and larger world suppositions prior to commencing the research project (Gearing, 2004). To summarize the internal suppositions made transparent during this process, the researcher has worked in the camp setting for approximately ten years, most of which have been spent working with adolescent campers like those participating in the TLC program. Also, the researcher has strong ties to the hosting day camp for the study, having worked at the camp intermittently for the entirety of her camp career. This experience demonstrated to the researcher, anecdotally, that the camp experience in general, and the hosting day camp in particular, could be a fruitful ground for adolescent development, motivating her interest

to rigorously explore the camp experience. These internal suppositions were identified through the reflexive bracketing process to increase the transparency and trustworthiness of this study (Gearing, 2004). To ensure the researcher's presuppositions did not overwhelm the voices of the participants, the researcher utilized methods such as journaling, employing a facilitator to deliver actual program content, reviewing continually the interview protocols, and enlisting the assistance of a second data analyst.

All of the scales used in this research project have displayed adequate psychometric properties. The ACA YOBS scales each have reliability coefficients above 0.85 and item-to-total correlations above 0.50 (American Camp Association, 2011). A split half coefficient of greater than 0.80 indicated strong reliability for the Leadership Skills Inventory (Holmes, 2005). Further, construct, criterion, and concurrent validity of the Leadership Skills Inventory was assessed and confirmed by Edmunds (1998). The AEC constructs have all demonstrated adequate reliability, as signified by their Cronbach Alpha scores ranging from 0.76 to 0.92 at three time periods (Zaff et al., 2010).

### **Findings**

The purpose of this study was to explore summer camp as a possible avenue to engendering civic engagement and social capital in campers' home communities. The following sections will explore the questionnaire findings, the follow-up outcomes of TLC, and camp as a place to learn about community.

### **Participants**

Upon registering for TLC, each camper was mailed a letter of research intent, a parent consent form, and a camper assent form to invite them to participate in the

research activities associated with participation in the program. A total of 10 campers, ages 13-16, participated in the program, however this article will focus on the eight campers who completed all three camper interviews and all four questionnaires. Table 12 describes the campers, including their self-chosen research pseudonym, the number of years they attended the hosting day camp, their age and their grade in school. The pre-

Table 12. Characteristics of study participants	
Amanda (9 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Female » 14 years old, 9 <sup>th</sup> grader » Pre-camp leadership experience – Yes » Pre-camp volunteer experience – Yes » Post-camp community contribution – Same » Parent interview – No	Billy Boy (6 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Male » 13 years old, 7 <sup>th</sup> grader » Pre-camp leadership experience – No » Pre-camp volunteer experience – No » Post-camp community contribution – More » Parent interview – Mother
Dustin (8 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Male » 15 years old, 9 <sup>th</sup> grader » Pre-camp leadership experience – No » Pre-camp volunteer experience – Yes » Post-camp community contribution – More » Parent interview – Father	Georgia <sup>a</sup> (8 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Female » 14 years old, 9 <sup>th</sup> grader » Pre-camp leadership experience – Yes » Pre-camp volunteer experience – Yes » Post-camp community contribution – More » Parent interview – Mother
Kage (8 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Male » 15 years old, 9 <sup>th</sup> grader » Pre-camp leadership experience – No » Pre-camp volunteer experience – Yes » Post-camp community contribution – More » Parent interview – Mother	Kat (4 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Female » 13 years old, 8 <sup>th</sup> grader » Pre-camp leadership experience – Yes » Pre-camp volunteer experience – Yes » Post-camp community contribution – Same » Parent interview – Mother
Patrick (4 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Male » 14 years old, 9 <sup>th</sup> grader » Pre-camp leadership experience – Yes » Pre-camp volunteer experience – Yes » Post-camp community contribution – More » Parent interview – Mother	Stevie (9 <sup>th</sup> Year Camper) » Female » 15 years old, 9 <sup>th</sup> grade » Pre-camp leadership experience – Yes » Pre-camp volunteer experience – Yes » Post-camp community contribution – More » Parent interview – No
<sup>a</sup> This camper lives primarily outside of the community where TLC was hosted.	

camp leadership and community contribution experience noted in the table reflects the campers' perception of their experience prior to TLC. Those campers who felt they had

previous leadership experience all talked about informal leadership opportunities like stepping up in a school group, rather than formal leadership positions like acting as president of a club. Those campers that felt they had previous community contribution experience described their experience as ranging from helping neighbors to mowing lawns to picking up trash to formal volunteer activities. With the exception of Georgia, all of the campers lived in the community where the hosting day camp was situated. Georgia was visiting relatives in the hosting community and lives in a different state during the majority of the year. Also displayed are campers' perceptions during the follow-up interviews of their post-camp community contribution as more, less, or about the same as before TLC. Finally, the researcher was unable to arrange a parent interview with the parents of Amanda and Stevie, despite numerous attempts to do so. The remainder of the campers each had one parent participate in the parent interviews, as noted in Table 12.

The final participant in this study was the TLC facilitator. The facilitator was a long-time staff member of the day camp where TLC was implemented, was the former campers-in-leadership-training coordinator and specializes in working with adolescents on leadership and teambuilding skills.

### **Questionnaire Findings**

Figure 2 displays group mean changes for each scale representing the program-specific civic skills. Participants rated these items on a 4-point scale from 'Almost Never' to 'Almost Always'. Means from the two pre-camp iterations of the scales were averaged to create one pre-camp mean score. All four scale group means increased from

pre-camp to post-camp to follow-up, though the increases were minimal, between 3 ('Once and a While') and 4 ('Almost Always').

Figure 3 displays group mean changes for each scale representing the Active and Engaged Citizenship (AEC) construct. Participants rated items on a variety of 5-point or 6-point scales with indicators matching the needs of the item. Following the scoring instructions of the AEC, each item was rescaled so that its score ranged from 0 to 25. Means from the two pre-camp iterations of the scales were averaged to create one pre-camp mean score. The civic duty scale group means increased from pre-camp to post-camp then decreased to follow-up, though the changes were minimal, between 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree'. The neighborhood social connectedness scale group means

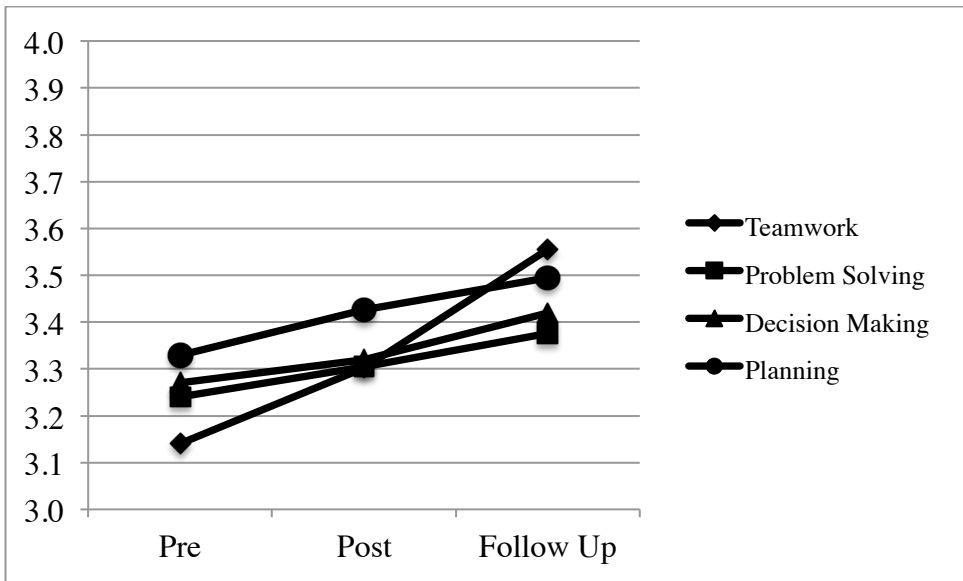


Figure 3. Group mean changes in program-specific civic skills.

increased from pre-camp to post-camp to follow-up, between 'Not Sure' and 'Agree'.

The civic participation scale was only administered at pre-camp and follow up. The civic

participation scale group means decreased from pre-camp to follow-up, though the changes were minimal, hovering around ‘Sometimes’ or ‘A couple times a month’.

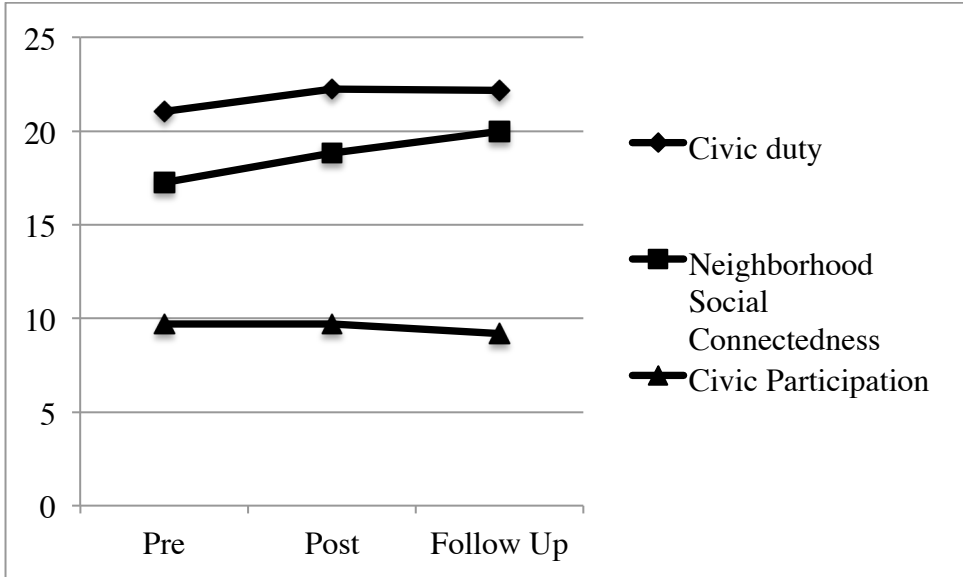


Figure 4. Group mean changes in active and engaged citizenship.

### Exploring the Follow-Up Outcomes of TLC

Figure 4 displays the summary of the short-term outcomes of TLC, the outcomes that persisted to the follow-up interview, and the barriers and supports that impacted the follow-up outcomes as reported in the qualitative interviews. This section will explore a few of the notable features displayed in Figure 4. First, a few things of particular note appeared in the skill related outcomes. Though not identified as a short-term outcome of TLC, campers thought that TLC impacted their planning skills. A few campers thought that since TLC they had used the planning skills and they had learned to think through decisions. For example, when trying to organize a clothing collection for victims of Hurricane Sandy, Stevie found she went through a planning process. She explained, “And then it was kinda like the order we learned how to do it in TLC, kinda like I kinda

realized while we were doing it that I was doing that order.” Kat’s mother also noticed that Kat thought

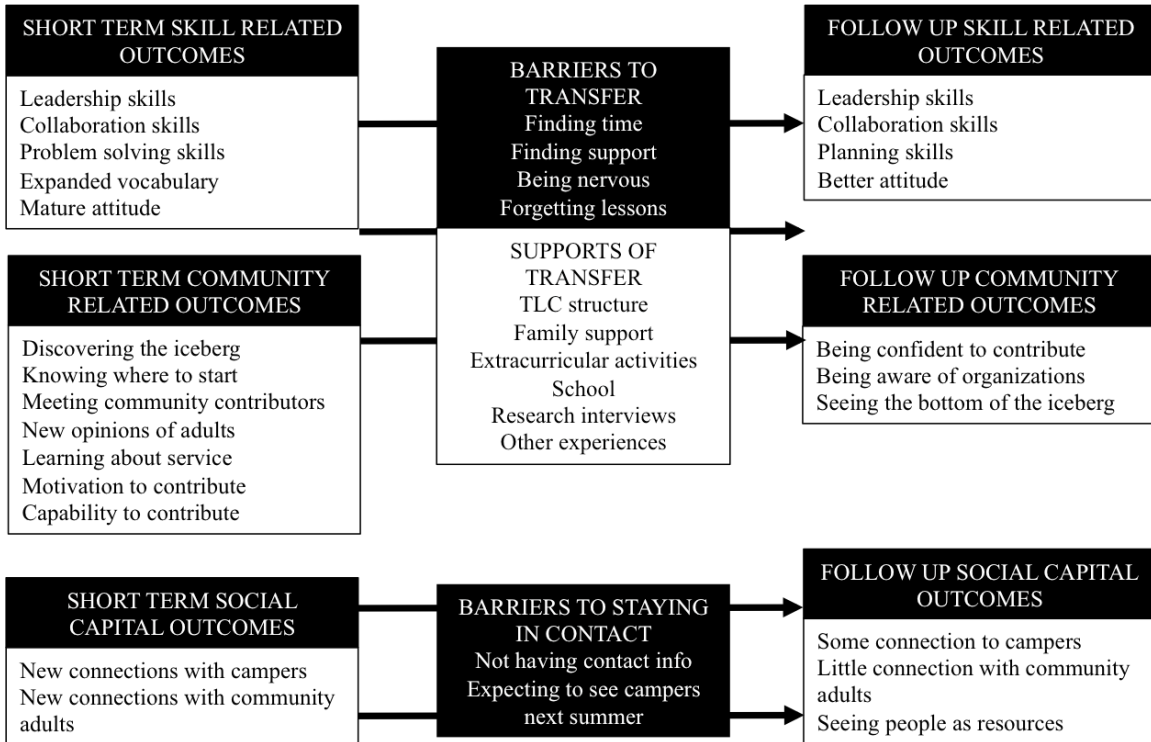


Figure 5. A summary of short-term and follow-up outcomes of TLC

through decisions since TLC. Next, in the post-camp interviews, campers discussed gaining a more mature attitude, which included having a better attitude and taking things more seriously. In the follow-up interview, campers believed that TLC afforded them a better attitude that has carried over since TLC ended. This better attitude meant that they were nicer, more positive, and more confident. With the exception of one comment each by Dustin’s father and Kage’s mother, campers’ parents did not seem able to identify any specific skills they thought campers gained from TLC. Similarly, Patrick did not feel that any of the TLC skills stood out as important since TLC.



Second, in the community related outcomes, campers felt they contributed to the community about the same, and usually more, than before TLC. TLC campers thought that the program helped them to become more confident and motivated to contribute to their community. Stevie discussed this transition saying, “Before [TLC] I thought I was that little kid that would send a little letter to Santa saying, ‘Santa, I want blah, blah, blah.’ Not really like – I’m not doing anything...Like I was a little child sending a letter to Santa and the elves doing all the work. And then I realized after TLC, I was an elf. I wasn’t a child anymore.” Campers believed that TLC helped them to learn about the different organizations in the community and remain aware of them even after TLC ended. The campers commented that they were unaware of many of the organizations involved in TLC prior to the program. Dustin’s father noticed this awareness in Dustin saying:

When [our family] did our donations this year, Dustin suggested we take them to MUST Ministries. And we did. So direct result of your program and being exposed to the organization...I don’t think he would have had the knowledge of any particular place. He had an input because he was aware.

Finally, one of the activities that campers particularly seemed to remember was the iceberg lesson. This lesson compared the community to an iceberg where only part is visible while a majority of the iceberg, and the community, is hidden beneath the surface. Campers believed that since TLC, they were more aware of the bottom of the iceberg in their community. Parents recognized this awareness in their campers since TLC. For example, Patrick’s mother thought that Patrick:

...became more aware of...the big picture with the community. And, you know, that there's people out there that are in need. And they are. They're all part of our community. Rather than it was just our little bubble down the street here with our friends and family. There was more out there than our street.

Third, campers were more likely to stay in contact with other campers than with the adults they met during TLC. Campers who stayed in contact did so via Facebook and seeing each other at school. Campers who did not stay in direct contact felt that they could reestablish connections if they were to see each other again. For example, Kage explained, "I know that whenever I would see them, it would be at um camp this year or if I see them at school or something like I'd know that I'd want to say hi." Stevie was the only camper who contacted any of the adults involved in TLC, outside of the researcher. She contacted the leaders of the organization where the campers did their off-camp service project after TLC to nominate them for a local award. Amanda, Kage, and Kat discussed the importance of the connections TLC made among the campers. Amanda saw these connections as one of the primary purposes of TLC saying, "I would say it gets teens together." Kage and Kat came to see the people they met during TLC as resources they could use. Kat talked about using others' knowledge instead of doing independent research saying, "You're not using the Internet, you're using the person as resources." She felt that she learned this in TLC because the campers had to rely on each other to be successful. Kage talked about using the other campers as resources. He said, "And then seeing him in this group, knowing how funny he is. How much – how we're friends and how he hangs out with everybody that if I hung out with Dustin, I'd be accepted." Kat

discussed using people as resources in relation to the community leaders she met. She explained, "...I think they could give me like information about...people they knew as good contacts and, you know, who was reliable and people they knew personally so they could say 'Oh yeah. I know this person.' And have that arranged I guess."

A few of the barriers to and supports of transfer require further exploration. Campers reported that time was the primary barrier for them to reach the community contribution goals they had set upon leaving TLC. They felt they did not have adequate time to devote to community contribution. School was the main focus of the campers' time. Georgia explained, "I've been so busy in school. To get good grades. And the stress. Oh my God, it's ridiculous." Other things that occupied campers' time, preventing them from contributing to their community were extracurricular activities and vacations. Interestingly, Patrick did not believe that carry over from camp should occur, though he was not able to fully express why he thought this. Throughout his interviews and during the program, Patrick seemed more concerned with 'having fun' during camp than learning. He was the camper who reported the most discomfort with taking notes and learning during the camp experience. This attitude may have affected his focus on transferring learning from camp to his everyday life.

Among the supports of transfer were features of TLC itself. Several campers and one parent thought that certain features of TLC helped them to carry over what they learned in TLC to their home lives. In particular, they felt that TLC gave them ample opportunities to practice what they learned which made them comfortable and confident to apply their lessons outside of TLC. Kat said, "...lots of the group team building stuff,

it gave me confidence...like even though – even if I’m in a group with people don’t necessarily know a lot, I could still be a leader.” Further, the self-letter was an intentional effort during TLC to remind campers of what they had learned during camp. Campers wrote the letters on the last day of TLC and were mailed their letters one month following the end of camp. Nearly all of the campers enjoyed the experience of receiving their letter and felt that it reminded them of their TLC experiences. Patrick was the only camper that did not find the letter useful to him because he wrote very little due to his dislike of writing. He did, however, believe the purpose of the letter was to help campers remember TLC. Finally, Amanda and Kage thought that the interviews carried out for the current research project helped to remind them of their TLC experience and learning. Amanda said that the interviewing “reminds you of what you have to get done.” Similarly, Kage said, “...this interview right here is really making me remember what we did. And I have to think. I remember what we did. I remember what I felt. And again it makes me want to help my community.”

### **Camp as a Place to Learn about Community**

All of the campers, parents, and the facilitator felt that camp was a good place, in some cases the best place, for teenagers to learn about contributing to the community. They all believed camp was a good place to learn such things because camp is fun, outside, friendly, flexible, at the YMCA, and in the summer. One of the leading reasons parents and campers felt that camp was a good place to learn about the community was because they saw camp as a fun, youth-oriented environment. Camp is a place to which youth look forward to going. As Amanda stated, “...it’s just like an environment that

kids want to be...it's all about the fun things and that would push you to go everyday to camp so you could learn these things about the community.” Campers and parents felt that campers wanted to go to camp because it is fun. Billy Boy’s mother explained, “Camp is more for fun, I believe. You know? So I think the kids feel more open to do it because it’s supposed to be fun.”

Campers believed that camp’s outdoor setting supported their learning. They recognized that the availability of the outdoor environment allowed TLC to go outside frequently throughout the program, allowing them to refresh themselves. Kat explained, “...it just makes you feel free I guess ‘cause you’re not confined to a building.” Campers also felt the outdoor setting allowed them to be natural, relaxed, and themselves.

Campers saw several benefits to this flexibility. For example, Amanda commented, “...being outside it seems like the community is near.” Further, Dustin said being outside “...probably helped because it says you can do it pretty much anywhere in the world. If you just start a little group, it could grow anywhere you are.”

Campers, parents, and the facilitator felt that camp was a place of social comfort for campers. From the parent perspective, camp counselors ensure that campers feel comfortable. For example, Kat’s mother said, “No matter what group they’re in, they seem to be very organized and they do try to make sure that everybody feels comfortable.” The facilitator explained that camp “...parallels the normal environment of the world but there’s a lot more comfort that goes on in camp. You can be a lot more uniquely independent and not be judged for it.” Campers felt that camp friendships were different from their typical friendships at school, which tended to be characterized by

cliques and stress. Stevie compared camp to school saying, “I think if we put it in the school, not everybody’s gonna be as open and friendly to each other...I kinda realized that it would be much harder in school because there’s so many cliques and people have so many ideas about someone.”

Campers and the facilitator believed that camp was an environment that afforded a lot of flexibility, enabling many of their favorite aspects of TLC. They had particular difficulty seeing the team building exercises taking place outside of camp. For example, Kage said:

I don’t know how you would do half those things because I remember two of the activities we did, the blind fold activity and then again the log activity, I don’t know how you would do those two at school. It wouldn’t only be difficult but a hassle for you guys to try and find ways to do the stuff at a school.

The facilitator commented, “[TLC] is something that cannot be institutionalized because of the way it’s structured. It needs to have the ability to change and breathe and grow.” He thought camp provided this freedom and flexibility.

Parents in particular thought that camp at the YMCA supported the goals of TLC. They felt that the YMCA values and position in the community aligned well with TLC. Dustin’s father explained, “I think the fact of the organization of the YMCA itself is a good environment because it’s based on community involvement and contribution.” Similarly, Patrick’s mother said, “YMCA is also about the community and helping others. TLC fits with the whole purpose of the YMCA.” Two campers, Patrick and Dustin, also felt that the YMCA setting was relevant to TLC. Dustin commented, “I

think camp is an excellent place [to learn about community] because like YMCA is definitely more of a community place.”

Parents and campers thought that the fact that camp takes place in the summer was important to the campers’ learning. Summer afforded campers’ considerably more free time than the school year. Kat explained, “I think in summer it’s just like, you know, you’re free completely. You have nothing to do except summer camp.” Similarly, Billy Boy’s mother said, “They’re not in the same restriction of when it’s school time and have to do homework at night.” Further, parents felt that summer allowed concentrated focus on a program like TLC. Camron’s mother called the campers a ‘captive audience’. Billy Boy’s mother said, “And you have no class [at camp] and your brain isn’t already full of something else. So your brain isn’t open to anything else [during the school year].”

Campers did see a few limitations of the camp setting as a place to learn about the community. Some felt that if transplanted to school, TLC could serve more teens than at camp due to the number of teens who attend school as compared to camp. Georgia also admitted that camp presented lots of distractions, particularly when doing sessions outside of the TLC cabin. Finally, two campers felt that camp took place over a short period of time so if TLC moved to school, the program could cover more information.

### **Discussion**

Social researchers have identified a civic concern in the United States: Americans are becoming more disconnected from each other and from society. Social capital and civic engagement have decreased over the past few decades, impacting communities’ local problem solving capacity and quality of life (Bellah et al., 2008; Putnam, 2000).

Consequently, scholars have sought to identify those features in society that could act as avenues to mitigate these trends. In identifying programs that can engender social capital and civic engagement, an emphasis has been placed on programs encountered during adolescence as a pivotal time for the development of civic identity (Youniss, McClellan, & Yates, 1997). Summer camp experiences have been documented as an impactful arena for multiple dimensions of youth development (ACA, 2005; Bialeschki et al., 2007; Bialeschki, Lyons, & Ewing, 2005; Hough & Browne, 2009; Marsh, 1999; Thurber, Scanlin, Scheuler, & Henderson, 2007). However, with a few notable exceptions (Browne et al., 2011; Devine & Parr, 2008; Yuen et al., 2005), summer camp remains largely underrepresented in the civic engagement and social capital discussions. The purpose of this study was to explore summer camp as a possible avenue to engender civic engagement and social capital in campers' home communities.

For youth to be civically engaged, they must possess the civic skills that enable such participation (Melaville et al., 2006; Newton, 1975; Youniss et al., 2002). Researchers have identified four categories of civic skills important to civic participation: collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and leadership and management (Camino & Zeldin, 2002; Christens & Kirshner, 2011; Flanagan & Faison, 2001; Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Newton, 1975; Obradovic & Masten, 2007; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011). The results from the camper questionnaires indicated minimal gains in civic skills. In reviewing the scales for civic skills in the questionnaire, one aligned with collaboration, one with leadership, and two with critical thinking, meaning that half of the scales dealt with a skill category that only a few campers discussed at



post-camp or follow-up during the interviews. Further, the planning and teamwork scales each reflect only one dimension of the leadership and teamwork categories, respectively, so perhaps do not capture the multi-dimensionality of these civic skill categories.

Though there were limitations to the questionnaire, camper interviews revealed that campers perceived more gains in civic skills than the questionnaire results reported.

During the post-camp and follow-up interviews, campers believed they had gained skills in three of the four categories through participation in TLC. Leadership and management skills and collaboration skills particularly stood out to campers during post-camp and remained important and relevant to most campers at follow-up.

The only category that the campers did not identify at post-camp or follow-up was communication. Though communication was addressed throughout the TLC curriculum, it was not a stand-alone session in the curriculum. This finding suggests that an explicit, stand-alone session about civic communication skills, such as effective deliberation, communicating with the public, and argument construction (de Souza Briggs, 2004; Flanagan & Faison, 2001; Lappe & Du Bois, 1997; Newton, 1975; Smith & Sobel, 2010), should be added to the TLC curriculum to address all four categories of civic skills.

Browne et al. (2011) came to a similar conclusion when they discovered that responsibility, an implicit theme of the Camp2Grow curriculum, did not increase over time. Responsibility was not an explicit, stand-alone lesson in the Camp2Grown curriculum, though responsibility was a desired skill that was an implicit theme throughout the curriculum. The authors surmised, “It is possible that the very act of

overtly targeting a specific outcome...may promote the development of that outcome more so than through implicit means” (p. 78).

In addition to skills that enable individuals to be civically engaged, individuals must have values that motivate toward and align them with such activity (Flanagan & Faison, 2001; Halpern, 2005; Melaville et al., 2006; Obradovic & Masten, 2007; Sherrod et al., 2002; Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011). For example, in the follow-up interviews, campers did discuss maintaining gains in open mindedness toward others (Flanagan & Faison, 2001; Melaville et al., 2006; Sherrod et al., 2002) and feelings of efficacy and mattering (Sherrod et al., 2002). In particular, campers felt that they had more confidence in their ability to contribute to their community following TLC, which in many cases supported increased civic engagement in their home community after camp. Youth face unique challenges to becoming involved in their community in contemporary society. Adults in the community can tend to view youth as ‘others’, as ‘just kids’, or as problems, an attitude that youth become aware of as they age (Camino & Zeldin, 2002). At post-camp, campers indicated that TLC gave them confidence and new opinions of community adults that could help them overcome the stereotypes they face in the community. Further, campers maintained that confidence in the months following TLC.

The campers maintained some of the civic skills and values after camp, but did TLC impact their actual civic engagement in their home communities? Similar to the findings about civic skills and values, the interview data and questionnaire data provided slightly different results. The questionnaire data showed that campers stayed about the same, decreasing minimally, in their civic participation while the interviews indicated

they stayed the same or increased their contribution to their community after camp. When comparing the questions campers were asked in both data collection methods, there are notable differences. On one hand, the civic participation scales focused solely on actions in the community (helping a neighbor, volunteering, mentoring) whereas the interview asked campers to describe their ‘community contribution’ since camp. Campers seemed not only to consider the civic activities they carried out in their description of their community contribution but they also included an engaged civic mindset in that description. Parents and campers saw campers’ increased confidence to contribute, their new knowledge of community organizations, and their heightened awareness of community needs as important parts of their idea of community contribution. Gruenewald and Smith (2008) argued that in order for youth to become civically engaged, they must develop a “readiness for social action” (p. xx). Campers and parents seemed to think that TLC afforded campers a readiness for civic engagement that they did not possess before TLC. The learning in TLC was intentionally linked to the local community, in which all but one camper lived. This tie to the campers’ home community made campers more aware of the organizations and needs in their own community. This process mirrors the Place- and Community-Based Education (PCBE) literature, which grounds learning in the local places that are most relevant to participants in order to increase the utility of their learning (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Melaville et al., 2006; Smith & Sobel, 2010). Further, TLC intentionally involved campers in what Metz and colleagues (2003) called social cause service that deals with community needs or issues during the various community activities and service projects. The authors

argued that social cause service, more than standard, functionary service, engenders sustained interest in civic activity.

The findings of this study also suggest some evidence of social capital building among campers and between campers and non-familial adults. At post-camp and follow-up, group bonding among the campers was a prominent feature of TLC for the campers. They felt that they had ‘become a family’ during the program, a network in line with Putnam’s (2000) bonding social capital that establishes networks of trust within established social divides. At follow-up, though campers were more likely to stay in contact with each other than with adults, the networks of trust among campers during TLC did not always translate to continuing contact once camp was over. If campers did not stay in contact with each other, they felt that they could reestablish connection easily if they were to see other campers outside of camp and especially when they see each other at camp the next summer. These findings align with the findings of Devine and Parr (2008) and Yuen and colleagues (2005) that camp fostered social capital building among campers at camp but did not necessarily transfer outside of camp. Campers maintained fewer contacts with adults at follow-up than with other campers. The community tour, meeting with community leaders, and off-camp service project during TLC aimed to expand campers’ connections to non-familial adults, expanding community social capital (Camino & Zeldin, 2002; Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 2003; Jarrett, Sullivan, and Watkins, 2005). At post-camp, campers felt that they had established connections with non-familial adults during TLC. Such connections would reflect Putnam’s (2000) idea of bridging social capital, reaching

across social divides, in this case age divides. Due to perceived lack of contact information, however, these bridging networks were not maintained beyond the bounds of camp. Only one camper had contacted one of the adults she had met in TLC. Three campers expressed sentiments that suggested that they recognized that the connections they made during TLC were a resource they could benefit from. By having a connection to particular campers or adults, campers thought they could leverage those connections as resources. One of the main tenets of social capital is that social capital, as the campers described, is a collective resource (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988, Portes, 1998; Putnam, 2000). Though connecting campers with community adults was a main aim of the various community experiences, TLC did not include a specific skill session that focused on viewing connections as resources or skills to maintain such connections. A few campers clearly expressed social capital sentiments in the follow-up interviews without intentional lessons dedicated to social capital. This finding suggests that an intentional, explicit lesson dedicated to social capital could have the potential to expand such sentiments to more program participants.

So the final question remains. Is camp a viable avenue to impact youths' civic engagement and social capital in their home communities? From the perspective of the social capital and civic engagement literature, the TLC camp program displayed some of the features recommended in the literature for contexts wishing to foster those outcomes. Campers discussed the opportunities they had to practice their new skills and ideas during TLC as a supporting factor of their ability to transfer learning from TLC. Several researchers have indicated that giving participants a place to practice is a key feature of

civic engagement and social capital building contexts (Sherrod et al., 2002; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Yuen et al., 2005; Zaff et al., 2008). Additionally, TLC provided connections to non-familial adults that campers recognized at post-camp. Even if those connections were not maintained at follow-up, such connections to non-familial adults were a further suggestion from the literature for creating a civic-supporting context (Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 2003; Jarrett et al., 2005). Camino and Zeldin (2002) and Wheeler and Edlebeck (2006) found that another key aspect of contexts that successfully engender civic development is youth voice and decision-making. Campers in TLC expressed at post-camp that they realized that they do have a voice in the community because there are adults who want to hear from youth. Finally, campers, parents, and the facilitator all agreed that the camp environment in general is a good place to learn about contributing to the community due to some of the inherent features of the camp context (e.g., campers' comfort at camp, the flexibility of the camp environment, and campers' available time in the summer to focus on civic lessons). The only drawbacks of the camp context felt by the campers and parents were the many distractions at camp and the relatively short time of camp programming. To combat these two drawbacks, programmers for camps like TLC should seek to have a space to focus, such as a cabin or secluded area of camp, and aim to incorporate post-camp follow up activities and evaluations to help remind campers of what they learned at camp.

## **Limitations and Future Directions**

This study focused on the follow-up outcomes of the TLC program at a day camp in Georgia. As a result, the study population was delimited to the eight TLC campers who participated in this study. The intention of this study was not to generate sweeping generalizations appropriate for all camp environments, but to develop a rich understanding about summer camp as an avenue to civic engagement and social capital building in campers' home communities. Despite these delimitations, the researcher intended the TLC program to act as a demonstration program for other camps interested in developing similar skill sets in their campers. Consequently, though the results of the proposed study cannot necessarily be generalized, the researcher's hope is that they are useful for camp practitioners in the future who are looking to engender similar outcomes in their campers or implement the TLC program itself.

A few limitations of the current study point to potential areas for future research. First, this study focuses on one iteration of the TLC program with eight study participants, with one facilitator, in one camp environment. Though this small sample was ideal for the success of the TLC program and allowed the use of methods that provided a rich understanding of the program, future research could duplicate the current study to better understand TLC as a program and camp as a context for civic engagement and social capital development. Pawson and Tilley (1997) argued, "...if a cardinal purpose of evaluations is to feed into improvements in policy and practice, they too need to be oriented to cumulation" (p. 115). Future research could examine the TLC program in different types of camps with different types of campers. Further, while the day camp

setting is particularly suited to lessons about civic engagement due to their typical proximity to campers' home community, development of similar skills and values should be considered in a residential camp setting. Second, the follow-up interviews and questionnaires were administered between three and four months after camp ended. While this time period did allow some understanding of the impact of TLC after camp, the time period limits the extent to which the researcher can observe longitudinal changes in attitudes and behaviors in the participants. Future research could consider following campers throughout the year following camp, until their next camp experience to have an expanded understand of the impact of the program over time. Third, while the current study documented other influences on camper outcomes beyond the TLC programming from the camper perspective, it did not include an independent contrast group of campers or comparable youth who did not go through the TLC program. A contrast group could help researchers understand if the amount of change in civic involvement was due to TLC programming or due to participants' maturation or other activity involvement. Further, future research could use several contrast groups to examine the efficacy of several different post-camp reminder activities aimed to remind campers of their learning, such as the self-letter, online discussion boards, post-camp reunions, or follow-up mini camps or service projects throughout the year.

### **Conclusion**

To combat the changing nature in which Americans are connecting with society and with each other, scholars and programmers need to collaborate to identify and design arenas where youth can learn their place in their communities and can learn the value of



connecting with others. Wheeler and Edlebeck (2006) argued, “Young people are not only key stakeholders of a community, but they also represent a huge and often untapped reservoir of human energy, talent, and vision. Youth civic engagement works to unleash this potential to create individual, local, and society-level change” (p. 89). This study represented one attempt to leverage the combined power of the summer camp environment, of structured curriculum, and of program evaluation to explore summer camp as a possible arena to help youth reach these goals. Campers in the Teens Leading and Connecting camp program experienced post-camp gains in civic skills, civic values, motivation for civic engagement, and forming bonding and bridging social networks; however, not all of these gains were sustained and applied by campers after the camp experience. Consequently, this study demonstrated that summer camp has promise to achieve civic engagement and social capital outcomes beyond camp but more research and program development on these crucial societal topics is needed.

## References

- American Camp Association. (1998). *Accreditation standards for camp programs and services*. Martinsville, IN: American Camp Association.
- American Camp Association. (2005). *Directions: Youth development outcomes of the camp experience*. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.acacamps.org/research/enhance/directions>.
- American Camp Association. (2006). *Innovation: Improving youth experiences in summer programs*. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.acacamps.org/research/enhance/Innovations.pdf>.
- American Camp Association. (2011). *Camp youth outcomes battery: Measuring developmental outcomes in youth programs* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Retrieved from  
<http://www.acacamps.org/research/youth-outcomes-battery>.
- American Psychological Association. (2011). *Civic engagement*. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.apa.org/education/undergrad/civic-engagement.aspx>.
- Arai, S., & Pedlar, A. (1997). Building communities through leisure: Citizen participation in a Healthy Communities initiative. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 29, 167-182.
- Arai, S., & Pedlar, A. (2003). Moving beyond individualism in leisure theory: A critical analysis of concepts of community and social engagement. *Leisure Studies*, 22, 185-202.
- Arend, L., & Rogers, M. (2012, February). *A utilization-focused evaluation of a pilot reading program at Sherwood Forest Camp*, Presentation conducted at the American Camp Association National Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Babbie, E. (2008). *The basics of social research* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Bellah, R., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W., Swidler, A., & Tipton, S. (2008). *Habits of the heart: Individualism and commitment in American life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. (Original work published in 1985).
- Bialeschki, M. D., Henderson, K. A., & James, P. A. (2007). Camp experiences and developmental outcomes for youth. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 16(4), 769-788.
- Bialeschki, D., Lyons, K., & Ewing, D. (2005). Youths' perspectives on camp outcomes: Intentionality and positive youth development. *Twelfth Canadian Conference on Leisure Research*. Vancouver, Canada.

- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (pp. 241-258). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Blackshaw, T., & Long, J. (2005). What's the big idea? A critical exploration of the concept of social capital and its incorporation into leisure policy discourse. *Leisure Studies, 24*, 239-258.
- Brehm, J., & Rahn, W. (1997). Individual-level evidence for the causes and consequences of social capital. *American Journal of Political Science, 41*, 999-1023.
- Browne, L., Garst, B., & Bialeschki, D. (2011). Engaging youth in environmental sustainability: Impact of the Camp 2 Grow program. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration, 29*(3), 70-85.
- Browne, L., & Sibthorp, J. (2012, February). *Fostering camp connectedness through structured curricula at day camp*, Presentation conducted at the American Camp Association National Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Camino, L., & Zeldin, S. (2002). From periphery to center: Pathways for youth civic engagement in the day-to-day life of communities. *Applied Developmental Science, 6*(4), 213-220.
- Christens, B. D., & Kirshner, B. (2011). Taking stock of youth organizing: An interdisciplinary perspective. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development, 134*, 27-41.
- Coleman, J. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *The American Journal of Sociology, 95*-S120.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Deschenes, S., McDonald, M., & McLaughlin, M. (2004). Youth organizations: From principles to practice. In S. Hamilton, & M. A. Hamilton (Eds.), *The youth development handbook: Coming of age in American communities* (pp. 25-50). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- de Souza Briggs, X. (1997). Social capital and the cities: Advice to change agents. *National Civic Review, 86*(2), 111-117.
- de Sousa Briggs, X. (2004). Social capital: Easy beauty or meaningful resource? *Journal of the American Planning Association, 70*, 151-158.

- Devine, M. A., & Parr, M. G. (2008). "Come in, but not too far:" Social capital in an inclusive camp setting. *Leisure Sciences*, 30, 391-408.
- Edmunds, A. (1998). Content, concurrent, and construct validity of the Leadership Skills Inventory. *Roeper Review*, 20, 281-284.
- Edwards, B., & Foley, M. W. (1998). Civil society and social capital beyond Putnam. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 42(1), 124.
- Eells, E. (1986). *History of organized camping: The first 100 years*. Martinsville, IN: American Camping Association.
- Eley, D., & Kirk, D. (2002). Developing citizenship through sport: The impact of a sport-based volunteer programme on young sport leaders. *Sport, Education, and Society*, 7(2), 151-166.
- Field, J. (2003). *Social capital*. London: Routledge.
- Finlay, L. (2002). "Outing" the researcher: The provenance, process, and practice of reflexivity. *Qualitative Health Research*, 12(4), 532-545.
- Flanagan, C. A., & Faison, N. (2001). Youth civic development: Implications of research for social policy and programs. *Social Policy Report*, 15(1), 1-16.
- Frankel, R. M., & Devers, K. (2000). Qualitative research: A consumer's guide. *Education for Health*, 13(1), 113-123.
- Garst, B., Morgan, C., & Bialeschki, D. (2012). *Explore 30 camp reading program impact report*. Martinsville, IN: American Camp Association.
- Garst, B. A., & White, C. P. (2012). *Leadership and environmental stewardship: A curriculum for camps and other youth programs*. Monterey, CA: Healthy Learning.
- Gass, M. (1999). Transfer of learning in adventure programming. In J. Miles, & S. Priest (Eds.), *Adventure programming* (pp. 227-234). State College, PA: Venture Publishing.
- Gearing, R. E. (2004). Bracketing in research: A typology. *Qualitative Health Research*, 14(10), 1429-1452.
- Glesne, C. (1999). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Longman.
- Glover, T., & Hemmingway, J. (2005). Locating leisure in the social capital literature. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 37, 387-401.

- Gruenewald, D. A., & Smith, G. A. (2008). Introduction: Making room for the local. In D. A. Gruenewald, & G. A. Smith (Eds.), *Place-based education in the global age* (pp. xiii-xxiii). New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Halpern, D. (2005). *Social capital*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.
- Hemmingway, J. (2006). Leisure, social capital and civic competence. *Leisure/Loisir*, 30, 341-355.
- Holmes, L. (2005). *The impact of service-learning on the leadership development of adolescent students in an advanced language arts class*. Unpublished master's thesis. Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL.
- Hough, M., & Browne, L. (2009). Connecting camp mechanisms to camper outcomes: A case for program theory. *American Camp Association National Conference*. Orlando, FL.
- Hyman, J. (2002). Exploring social capital and civic engagement to create a framework for community building. *Applied Developmental Science*, 6(4), 196-202.
- Hycner, R. (1985). Some guidelines for the phenomenological analysis of interview data. *Human Studies*, 8, 279-303.
- Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development. (2003). *Lessons in Leadership: How young people change their communities and themselves*. Retrieved from: [http://www.theinnovationcenter.org/i\\_youth\\_civic.shtml](http://www.theinnovationcenter.org/i_youth_civic.shtml).
- Janoski, T., Musick, M., & Wilson, J. (1998). Being volunteered? The impact of social participation and pro-social attitude on volunteering. *Sociological Forum*, 13, 495-519.
- Jarrett, R., Sullivan, P., & Watkins, N. (2005). Developing social capital through participation in organized youth programs: Qualitative insights from three programs. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 33, 41-55.
- Karnes, F., & Chauvin, J. (2000). *Leadership development programme*. Scottsdale, AZ: Gifted Psychology Press.
- Kress, C. (2006). Youth leadership and youth development: Connections and questions. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 109, 45-56.
- Lappe, F., & Du Bois, P. (1997). Building social capital without looking backward. *National Civic Review*, 86(2), 119-129.

- Marsh, P. (1999). Does camp enhance self-esteem? Good news for the future of camping. *Camping Magazine*, 72(6), Retrieved from <http://www.acacamps.org/campmag/9911>.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (1999). *Designing qualitative research* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- McKenzie, M. (2000). How are adventure program outcomes achieved?: A review of the literature. *Australian Journal of Outdoor Education*, 5(1), 19-27.
- Melaville, A., Berg, A. C., & Blank, M. J. (2006). *Community-Based Learning: Engaging students for success and citizenship*. Retrieved from: <http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/CBLFinal.pdf>.
- Metz, E., McLellan, J., & Youniss, J. (2003). Types of voluntary service and adolescents' civic development. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 18(2), 188-203.
- Newton, F. M. (1975). *Education for citizen action: Challenge for secondary curriculum*. Berkeley, CA: McCutchan Publishing.
- Niemi, R., Hepburn, M., & Chapman, C. (2000). Community service by high school students: A cure for civic ills? *Political Behavior*, 22(1), 45-69.
- Obradovic, J., & Masten, A. S. (2007). Developmental antecedents of young adult civic engagement. *Applied Developmental Science*, 11(1), 2-19.
- Parke, T. (2007). Does sport foster social capital? The contribution of sport to a lifestyle of community participation. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 24, 378-401.
- Pawson, R., & Tilley, N. (1997). *Realistic evaluation*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Portes, A. (1998). Social capital: Its origins and applications in modern sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24, 1-24.
- Putnam, R. (1995). Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. *Journal of Democracy*, 6, 65-78.
- Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Roark, M., & Evans, F. (2010). *Play it, measure it: Experiences designed to elicit specific youth outcomes*. Monterey, CA: Healthy Learning.
- Seidman, I. (2005). *Interviewing as qualitative research* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Teachers College.

- Sherrod, L. R., Flanagan, C., & Youniss, J. (2002). Dimensions of citizenship and opportunities for youth development: The what, why, when, where, and who of citizenship development. *Applied Developmental Science, 6*(4), 264-272.
- Smith, E. (1999). The effects of investments in the social capital of youth on political and civic behavior in young adulthood: A longitudinal analysis. *Political Psychology, 20*, 553-580.
- Smith, G. A. (2002). Place-based education: Learning to be where you are. *Phi Delta Kappan*, April, 584-594.
- Smith, G., & Sobel, D. (2010). *Place- and community-based education in schools*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Thurber, C., Scanlin, M., Scheuler, L., & Henderson, K. (2007). Youth development outcomes of the camp experience: Evidence for multidimensional growth. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 36*, 241-254.
- Umphrey, M. (2007). *The power of community-centered education: Teaching as a craft of place*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education.
- Wheeler, W., & Edlebeck, C. (2006). Leading, learning, and unleashing potential: Youth leadership and civic engagement. *New Directions for Youth Development, 109*, 89-97.
- Wray-Lake, L., & Syvertsen, A. K. (2011). The developmental roots of social responsibility in childhood and adolescence. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development, 134*, 11-25.
- Yates, M., & Youniss, J. (1996). Community service and political-moral identity in adolescents. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 6*, 271-284.
- Yates, M., & Youniss, J. (1998). Community service and political identity development in adolescence. *Journal of Social Issues, 54*(3), 495-512.
- Youniss, J., Bales, S., Christmas-Best, V., Diversi, M., McLaughlin, M., & Silbereison, R. (2002). Youth civic engagement in the Twenty-First Century. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 12*(1), 121-148.
- Youniss J., McLellan, J., & Yates, M. (1997). What we know about engendering civic identity. *American Behavioral Scientist, 40*, 620-631.
- Yuen, F. C., Pedlar, A., & Mannell, R. C. (2005). Building community and social capital through children's leisure in the context of an international camp. *Journal of Leisure Research, 37*, 494-518.

- Zaff, J., Boyd, M., Li, Y., Lerner, J. V., & Lerner, R. M. (2010). Active and engaged citizenship: Multi-group and longitudinal factorial analysis of an integrated construct of civic engagement. *Journal of Adolescence, 39*(7), 736-750.
- Zaff, J., Malanchuk, O., & Eccles, J. (2008). Predicting positive citizenship from adolescence to young adulthood: The effects of a civic context. *Applied Developmental Science, 12*(1), 38-53.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### IT WASN'T JUST A CAMP: EVALUATING THE TEENS LEADING AND CONNECTING STRUCTURED CAMP CURRICULUM

The final chapter of this dissertation synthesizes the findings from the three manuscripts for a final discussion regarding the Teens Leading & Connecting program, its operation, and its outcomes, with a particular emphasis on the implications for camp practitioners. This final chapter is presented in short article format intended for the research column of *Camping Magazine*. Following the short article will be a section of final thoughts about the research project represented in this dissertation.

#### Introduction

In January 2008, over 20 prominent camp researchers gathered for the American Camp Association (ACA) Research Collaborations Summit. During this one-day event, the researchers compiled a list of questions that called for areas of future research. On the list was this question: How do camps contribute to the development of caring and competent citizens, their communities, and the environment? (American Camp Association, 2008, p. 10). This question arose at a time where scholars from a variety of fields continued to raise the concern that Americans are less connected to society and each other than in the recent past (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 2008; Putnam, 2000). This disconnection has a variety of repercussions for quality of life, including decreased capabilities for local problem solving (de Sousa Briggs, 2004; Smith & Sobel, 2010), decreased capacity for community youth development, higher levels of crime, and decreased indicators of community health (Putnam, 2000). Putnam (2000)

continuously found that one of the major culprits of the downward trends he reported was generational change as more civically engaged generations were replaced by relatively less civically engaged generations. Research has indicated that if we are to address this growing disconnect, we need to foster civic skills, civic values, and commitment to civic engagement in youth to encourage lifelong civic participation (Halpern, 2005; Melaville, Berg, and Blank, 2006; Newton, 1975; Obradovic & Masten, 2007; Sherrod, Flanagan, and Youniss, 2002; Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011; Youniss et al, 2002.; Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1997).

Summer camps may offer an arena within which to address the aforementioned civic issues. Research on summer camp programming has demonstrated that camps can engender many of the same skills and competencies as other youth recreation programs represented in the civic engagement and social capital literature (American Camp Association, 2005; Bialeschki, Lyons, & Ewing, 2005; Garst, Browne, Bialeschki, 2011; Hough & Browne, 2009; Thurber, Scanlin, Scheuler, & Henderson, 2007). Despite these similarities, summer camp remains largely underrepresented in the social capital and civic engagement literature, with a few notable exceptions (Browne et al., 2011; Devine & Parr, 2008; Yuen, Pedlar, & Mannell, 2005). A recent upsurge in camp literature has focused on programs intentionally designed to foster specific outcomes such as leadership, environmental stewardship, camp connectedness, reading proficiency, friendship skills, teamwork, and affinity for exploration (Arend & Rogers, 2012; Browne & Sibthorp, 2012; Browne, Garst, & Bialeschki, 2011; Garst & White, 2012; Roark & Evans, 2010). As Garst and colleagues (2011) stated, “The camp community has a much

better appreciation for the fact that positive outcomes do not just occur because children attend camp; these desired outcomes must be planned, measured, and then incorporated into future program planning efforts” (p. 83). As a result, there is a need for further research on the potential role summer camp may play in fostering civic outcomes in youth and on the efficacy of structured curricula in the camp context.

### **Study Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to report an evaluation of the Teens Leading & Connecting (TLC) program, a structured camp curriculum intentionally designed to impact campers’ civic skills, civic values, civic engagement and social capital, in order to provide insight into camp’s potential role as an avenue to increased civic engagement and social capital in campers’ home communities. This column will focus on the qualitative findings from the larger evaluation of TLC.

### **The Teens Leading & Connecting Program**

The Teens Leading & Connecting (TLC) program was implemented at a day camp in the Southeast for one week in the summer of 2012 with 10 campers aged 13-16. The weekly schedule for TLC is displayed in Table 13. Any activity area that reads ‘Skills’ focused on skill development related to civic skills. These skill sessions had intentional lesson plans drawn from successful camp and youth development programs as well as from various service learning curricula. The community tour, camp service activity, meeting with community leaders, and off-camp service project are inspired by the Place- and Community-Based Education literature (Melaville et al., 2006; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Umphrey, 2007) and aim to connect campers’ civic learning to two communities of

import to the campers: the camp community and the campers' home community.

Table 13. General schedule for TLC						
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Morning	Introduction	Camp Activities	Camp Activities	Community Tour Debrief	Camp Activities	Off Camp Service Project
	Group Dynamic Skills	Leadership Skills	Problem Solving Skills	Camp Activities	Service Planning	
Afternoon	Camp Activities	Organizing Skills	Community Tour	Planning Skills	Meeting with Community Leaders	Lunch
	Cooperation Skills	Identifying Problems Skills		Service Planning		Week Debrief
Evening				Camp Service Activity Camp Out		

### Methods

A visual representation of the methods for this study is represented in Table 14.

The methods consisted of three parts: camper interviews, facilitator interviews, and parent interviews. First, each TLC camper took part in a series of three interviews before (pre-camp ideas about community and levels of engagement), one week after (civic skills, attitudes, and motivations gained in TLC), and three months after TLC (retention and application of civic skills, attitudes, and motivations). All 10 campers completed the pre- and post-camp interviews. Eight of the 10 campers completed the follow-up interview. Second, the researcher interviewed the TLC facilitator about his experience implementing the TLC program. Third, the researcher interviewed one parent of each TLC camper to understand parents' perceptions of campers' gains from TLC.

The qualitative interview data were analyzed by the researcher following Hycner’s (1985) guidelines for the analysis of interview data. As recommended by

Table 14. Visual representation of methods timeline				
Week prior to camp	During camp	Week after camp	3 months after camp	4 months after camp
		Facilitator interview		
Pre-camp participant interview		Post-camp participant interview	Follow-up participant interview	
				Parent interview

Hycner (1985), after transcription and multiple readings of the interviews, the researcher identified meaning units within each interview, clustered meaning units in each interview, labeled themes within each interview, clustered composite meaning units across the interviews, then labeled relevant composite clusters into themes across the interviews.

### Findings

To consider the TLC program as a whole, the themes from the camper, facilitator, and parent interviews were compiled to create a logic model of the TLC program from the perspective of the key participants in the program. This visual representation of findings is displayed in Figure 1. At the far left of the logic model are the mechanisms and contexts that the participants felt were important to the successful implementation of TLC. Moving to the right are the activities of TLC linked to the post-camp outcomes

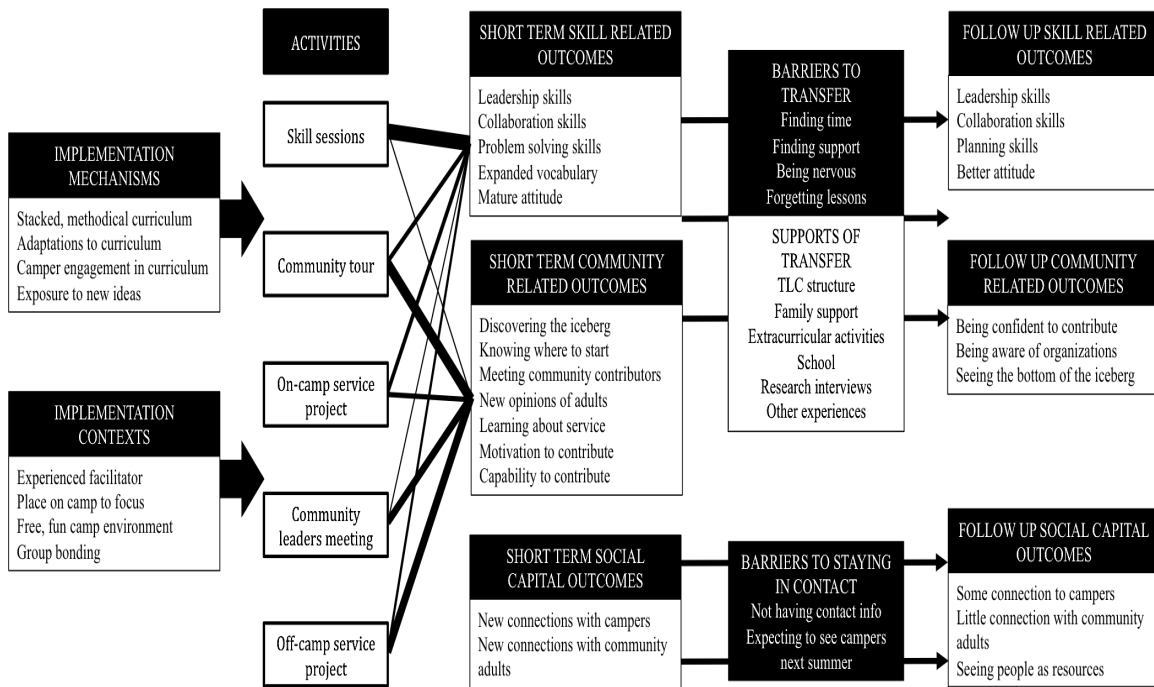


Figure 6. A participant generated logic model of the Teens Leading & Connecting Program

campers reported. The thickness of the lines connecting the TLC activities with the short-term outcomes represents the number of participants who made that particular connection. Note that the short-term social capital outcomes are not connected to any specific activities because campers felt that those gains came from the TLC program overall, rather than a specific activity. Finally, to complete the logic model are the follow-up outcomes campers and parents identified in the follow-up interviews, connected to the short-term outcomes by way of the various supports and barriers of transfer identified by the participants.

Beyond the logic model, one further theme should be noted to offer insight into the discussion and implications of this study. Five campers and one parent argued that

TLC was ‘more than camp’. They thought that TLC possessed a purpose beyond a traditional camp. Amanda said, “I feel like camp you just have fun and eat and you don’t really learn anything. It’s just like play time. Fun. And in TLC, you feel like you actually got something done.” Similarly, Kat thought, “TLC definitely – it wasn’t just a camp. We were actually getting something back I guess.” Further, Dustin’s father believed, “Dustin felt he was part of something special. It wasn’t just another week at camp. There was actually a purpose.” Campers also felt that TLC offered activities beyond traditional camp. For example, Shakur expressed, “...it’s I guess was a little more than [camp] because we like left and we helped the community and stuff.” Finally, in addition to being more than camp, Stevie also felt that the learning in TLC was more than school. She argued:

And then [TLC is] also like school ‘cause you’re learning and writing about all this stuff. But then you realize this is nothing like school because school is...boring. This like actually gives you time to do projects and like think about what you just learned. Unlike school ‘cause they just rush you.

### **Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the Teens Leading & Connecting program to provide insight into the potential role summer camp may play in fostering civic engagement and social capital in campers once they leave camp. The findings of this study indicate that TLC fostered a variety of civic skills, attitudes, and motivations in the TLC campers and several of these gains were retained three months after camp. TLC fostered in campers an awareness of the needs of their community (the ‘bottom of the

iceberg'), the organizations that act in their community, and their own ability to contribute to the community. Though these gains did not always result in increased active civic engagement after TLC due to campers' time and support barriers outside of camp, both campers and parents felt that the campers' new awareness and confidence to contribute was an important method through which they engaged with society. Gruenewald and Smith (2008) argued that in order for youth to become civically engaged, they must develop a "readiness for social action" (p. xx). TLC seemed to foster this readiness in the campers. Campers felt that factors like the structure of the program itself, family support, extracurricular and school activity involvement, and the research interviews supported them in retaining this readiness after camp ended.

Though campers were able to identify the specific parts of TLC that fostered their skill-related and community-related outcomes, they were less able to do so in regard to the social capital outcomes they experienced at post-camp. Further, the social capital outcomes were the least retained of the three groups of outcomes at follow-up according to the campers. Though building social capital among the campers and between campers and community adults was a main aim of the various community experiences in TLC, the program did not include a specific, stand alone skill session that focused on viewing connections as resources. Rather, the value of social capital was an implicit message throughout the program. Designed social capital lessons as an implicit message of the TLC program seemed to impact the campers' gains in that outcome. This finding suggests that an intentional, explicit lesson dedicated to social capital should be added to the TLC curriculum to better address the desired social capital outcomes of TLC.



Browne et al. (2011) came to a similar conclusion when they discovered that responsibility, an implicit theme of the Camp2Grow curriculum but not an explicit lesson, did not increase over time. The authors surmised, “It is possible that the very act of overtly targeting a specific outcome...may promote the development of that outcome more so than through implicit means” (p. 78).

To depict the TLC program, a logic model was constructed using the words and themes from the participant interviews. Participants were able to verbalize how the TLC program worked for them. Further, for the campers and parents, TLC became ‘more than camp’ because the program had a clear purpose that parents and campers were able to identify. As Browne, Garst, and Bialeschki (2011) explained, structured curricula “...allow camps to target desired outcomes and document their efforts to stakeholders” (p. 81). Beyond this benefit, the findings of this study suggest that the use of structured curriculum seems to make programming more transparent for campers, parents, and facilitators. Roark, Gillard, Evans, Wells, and Blauer (2012) discuss the importance of embedding the language of intended outcomes into intentional programming scripts to help facilitate intended outcomes. Garst and White (2012) talked about the benefits of explicating labeling desired outcomes for participants to avoid what they term “the pitfalls of happenstance” (p. 159). The more purposefully and explicitly programs address desired outcomes, the higher probability those outcomes have of being consistently transmitted to participants. For example, instructions for skill sessions in TLC included purposeful language that discussed the intended targeted skills of individual activities and larger skill sessions. Further, the TLC facilitator was instructed

to relate each skill session to the campers' home community to continually remind campers of the ultimate purposes of TLC. In this way, participants are aware of the intended purposes and outcomes of an intentional program (Roark et al., 2012). TLC aimed to achieve such embedding and the findings of this study suggest that these intentions transferred to the participants.

Finally, the findings of this study suggest that structured curriculum was not the 'norm' for the TLC campers. While most concluded that they preferred the TLC structure, by dubbing the program as 'more than camp', campers seemed not to fully associate the TLC experience with the typical camp experience. Campers did not always associate traditional camp with learning like they described with TLC. Many times, the learning that takes place at camp happens organically, through traditional programming and even unstructured time. Garst, Browne, and Bialeschki (2011) stated, "It is possible that unstructured time, particularly when it is used intentionally to foster positive outcomes, is a unique way camps effectively promote positive youth development" (p. 80). Consequently, it appears there is a need to find balance between the developmental benefits of structured camp curriculum and the freedom and fun so inherent to the camp experience.

### **How This Research Can Help You**

The question from the ACA Research Collaborations Summit that began this column was: How do camps contribute to the development of caring and competent citizens, their communities, and the environment? (American Camp Association, 2008, p.

10). From the insight offered through this study, here are some the research can help you answer that question within your own programs:

- Consider introducing programming for teen campers about being civically engaged, particularly for your adolescent campers
- Tap into the community resources surrounding your camp to introduce campers to community organizations and community leaders
- Employ intentional programming to target the desired outcomes of your camp programs
- Balance the desire to engender specific outcomes with the need to preserve the camp environment as a fun, free context to enhance campers' learning
- Learn about the perceived barriers and supports that may prevent or bolster campers' ability to transfer their gains to their home communities
- Offer post-camp reminders of campers' learning, such as self-letters, online discussion boards, or post-camp service opportunities, to combat the barriers they encounter after camp
- In addition to the topics covered during TLC, include explicit sessions discussing tactics for prioritizing time for civic engagement after camp, the value of social connections, and strategies for leveraging the value of social connections

### **Final Thoughts**

This final section will discuss the researcher's concluding thoughts about the Teens Leading & Connecting program and the research methods used in this dissertation that have not been addressed in the previous chapters.

## **Final thoughts about Teens Leading & Connecting**

All three manuscripts presented in this dissertation suggest that TLC should be further considered a viable curriculum for summer camps looking to engender civic and social capital outcomes in their campers. This study shows that, in the form TLC was implemented as a pilot program in summer 2012, it was implemented with acceptable quality and fidelity, the facilitator believed in the strength of the program, campers felt they left the program with a majority of the intended outcomes, campers maintained many of the attitudes they gained during camp, and campers enjoyed the program. Consequently, the researcher considers the pilot of the TLC program a success. Further, the implementation evaluation, short term outcomes evaluation, and follow up outcomes evaluation of the program provided rich data to inform intentional, data-driven improvement to the program. Many of these improvements have been discussed in the three manuscripts. A few more will be highlighted here.

First, lack of available time during the school year was the primary barrier campers reported that prevented them from applying their gained skills and values or meeting their civic engagement goals after camp. Given that a majority of the campers transitioned to high school right after leaving camp, they struggled with balancing the increased workload high school presented with their desire to be involved in their communities. During the Organizing Skills session, several of the activities focused on time management skills, but those skills were directed toward agenda planning for the community leaders meeting, rather than prioritizing time for civic engagement. Since campers struggled with prioritizing time after camp, perhaps an added activity about

strategies for fitting civic engagement into campers' busy schedules is warranted.

Second, some of the features of TLC seemed important to campers in supporting transfer from camp to their home community. They felt that TLC allowed them to practice skills and involved repetition. They also believed the written self-letters reminded them of their learning. These findings emphasize the importance of intentionally designing programs to aid participants in transferring learning beyond the experience (American Camp Association, 2006; Bialeschki, et al., 2007; Deschenes, McDonald, & McLaughlin, 2004; Marsh, 1999; Thurber et al., 2007). Further, programmers should consider post-camp experiences that will assist campers in processing and transferring their learning from the camp environment, like the self-letter used in TLC or other opportunities such as post-camp service projects or off-season meetings (Bialeschki, et al., 2007; Gass, 1999; McKenzie, 2000). As Gass (1999) envisioned, such methods could act as "...a device to excite students by showing them the future value of their current learning experiences. This motivation, provided by the opportunity to use their learning again, can furnish one of the strongest incentives for our students' continued learning and the field's success" (p. 233). Third, two campers thought the interviews used for this study helped them remember what they learned and reinvigorated their motivation to act on their learning. This finding suggests that regular program evaluation could not only provide practitioners with understanding of their programs' outcomes, but could also help to achieve the aims of the program itself by helping participants to maintain their learning beyond the program. Fourth, campers believed a variety of non-TLC elements, such as family, parallel extracurricular activities, and involvement opportunities at school,

supported their transfer of concepts from the program; this finding aligns with previous civic engagement literature (Yates & Youniss, 1998; Zaff, Malanchuk, & Eccles, 2008). Program facilitators need to understand the contexts in which their participants live. Such knowledge can allow them to better facilitate participants' retention of program gains beyond the program. Finally, parents seemed to struggle with recalling specific components of the TLC program, having not experienced the program directly. Though the research did arrange a pre-camp meeting with parents and campers during which the facilitator shared the goals and outline of the TLC program, not all parents attended the meeting nor did those that did seem to recall all of the information shared. Consequently, inclusion of parents in programming like TLC should be considered more explicitly.

The researcher will utilize the implications suggested by this study to improve the TLC program. Beyond the findings of this study, the hosting day camp was pleased with the program and the impact on their campers. As a result, the improved program will be implemented at the hosting day camp three times during summer 2013. Based on suggestions from the campers and parents and the needs of the hosting camp, the program will be implemented as a two-week program this coming summer. A new facilitator will implement TLC in summer 2013. The researcher and the 2012 facilitator will help to train the 2013 facilitator and will be involved in the evaluation of the 2013 TLC program.

### **Final thoughts about research methods**

This dissertation was grounded methodologically in the researcher's desire to go beyond just documenting the outcomes of TLC. The researcher aimed to tackle the black box of programming by employing not just intentional programming, but also intentional

evaluation. Hamilton (1980) argued that there exists a hierarchy of questions that must be asked of programs, which align well with the researcher's intent for this project: "(1) Do participants say they have been affected? (2) Is there external evidence of effects? (3) Is there evidence that the program was responsible for the effects? (4) What about the program was responsible for the effects?" (p. 195). The realistic evaluation (Pawson & Tilley, 1997) strategy employed in this study seemed to address all four of Hamilton's questions.

Do participants say they have been affected? Participant interviews addressed this question. The series of interviews seemed to give campers the opportunity to express what they perceived to be the impact of the TLC program. The camper questionnaire was also intended to address Hamilton's first question, though the questionnaire data and interview data did not always align. The diverging results between interview and questionnaire data point to some of the areas for improvement for the TLC program. Further, perhaps an even more multi-dimensional questionnaire should be considered for future evaluations of TLC to capture the multi-dimensional outcomes the participants described in interviews.

Is there external evidence of effects? Parent interviews, program observation, and facilitator interviews offered non-camper perspectives of the impacts of the TLC program. In most cases, this external evidence corroborated the perceptions of the campers themselves. Program observation and facilitator interviews seem to be particularly effective for capturing direct and indirect data of what happened within the program. Parents, however, could not seem to identify any skill sets associated with

TLC. In the interviews, parents frequently commented that the time in between TLC and the parent interviews caused them to forget most of the detailed parts of TLC. Unlike campers, who experienced the program directly, parents received reports of the program via their campers and had no personal connections with the program, which may have impacted the extent to which parents recalled the details of the program. In future evaluations, the researcher will consider conducting parent interviews at post-camp and follow-up. The post-camp interviews would be focused more on the process of the program: what campers have told them about the program. The follow-up interviews would remain similar to the current study, capturing the impacts the parents have seen since the program in the campers' lives.

Is there evidence that the program was responsible for the effects? What about the program was responsible for the effects? The researcher was encouraged by the parts of this study that offered data regarding 'how' TLC worked. The implementation evaluation was able to document the details of implementation, including program quality, fidelity, and camper engagement. The interviews were able to discern what mechanisms and contexts were important to leading to the reported outcomes of the program. One limitation of the small sample size of this study was that the researcher was unable to statistically link the implementation data with the outcomes data. The researcher's hope is that as TLC is implemented and evaluated over the next few summers, quantitative data will 'cumulate' (Pawson & Tilley, 1997) so as to allow such statistical analysis to occur.



Beyond desiring to understand the outcomes of TLC and the mechanisms and contexts that impacted those outcomes, the researcher also aimed to utilize evaluation techniques in this study that could be easily transferred to practitioners. The methods used in this study seem to give a rich evaluative picture of the TLC program, while remaining accessible and adjustable to practitioner evaluation efforts. For the implementation evaluation, the YPQA can be purchased by any interested program for a modest fee. The program-specific fidelity checklist and interview protocol for the facilitator interviews could easily be adapted for other programs and require only the cost of photocopying and staff time to implement. For the outcomes evaluation, the quantitative survey instrument can be obtained by any interested program. The ACA *Youth Outcomes Battery* (ACA, 2011) does require a small fee for use. The interviews with campers and parents can be employed by practitioners with minimal training and requires only staff time to implement. Consequently, the researcher's hope is that both the results of this study *and* the methods that produced them are informative for camp and youth programming practitioners wishing to document the mechanisms, contexts, and outcomes at work in their own programs.

Two contextual factors specific to the current study should be considered by those wishing to replicate this study or to implement the methods employed in this study. First, the researcher's relationship with the TLC participants needs to be considered given that the researcher was present for the entire program, observing and interacting with the participants. During transition times, meal times, and non-TLC camp activities, the researcher would interact freely with the campers; however, during the TLC activities,

the researcher would be on the sidelines observing the campers, taking notes and largely not interacting with others. As a result, the researcher's relationship with the campers was much different than the relationship campers typically expect to form with their camp counselors. To facilitate this new relationship, the researcher organized a pre-camp meeting a few weeks before TLC. During that meeting, the researcher was able to introduce her unusual role to the campers. Further, campers became comfortable with the researcher's role prior to TLC through the interviews, which acted as their first experience with the research process. Though the campers may have noticed the researcher 'taking notes in the corner' in the first TLC session, the researcher mainly became part of their camp landscape and, therefore, did not seem to affect their own performance or behavior during the program itself. Overall, the researcher felt that her dual role as assistant to the camp counselor and as researcher struck a balance that enabled the researcher to gain important program observations while still building rapport that facilitated the campers' candidness in later interviews.

The temporal context in which this study took place may also be significant. In the fall following the implementation of TLC, two important national events occurred: Superstorm Sandy and the 2012 United States Presidential election. Both of these events dominated national discourse, received heavy coverage in a variety of traditional and social media outlets, and carried with them messages of civic participation and civic duty. As a result, campers may have been more sensitive to such messages and may have received subliminal support for the lessons they learned in TLC. Indeed, one camper, Stevie, reported being more attuned to the news during the fall than she remembered

being previously. Further, she felt that Superstorm Sandy acted as a catalyst to use her TLC learning, as she organized a blanket drive for victims of the storm. In the current study, the researcher did not ask participants about the possible effects of prominent national or local issues that could support or hinder campers' transfer of TLC learning beyond camp, but would recommend the incorporation of such questions into follow-up interview protocols with campers and parents in the future.

## References

- American Camp Association. (2005). *Directions: Youth development outcomes of the camp experience*. Retrieved from: <http://www.acacamps.org/research/enhance/directions>.
- American Camp Association. (2006b). *Innovation: Improving youth experiences in summer programs*. Retrieved from: <http://www.acacamps.org/research/enhance/Innovations.pdf>.
- American Camp Association. (2008). *Camp research collaboration summit summary*. Retrieved from <http://www.acacamps.org/research/connect/collaborations-summit>.
- American Camp Association. (2011). *Camp youth outcomes battery: Measuring developmental outcomes in youth programs* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Retrieved from <http://www.acacamps.org/research/youth-outcomes-battery>.
- Arend, L., & Rogers, M. (2012, February). *A utilization-focused evaluation of a pilot reading program at Sherwood Forest Camp*, Presentation conducted at the American Camp Association National Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Bellah, R., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W., Swidler, A., & Tipton, S. (2008). *Habits of the heart: Individualism and commitment in American life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. (Original work published in 1985).
- Bialeschki, D., Lyons, K., & Ewing, D. (2005). Youths' perspectives on camp outcomes: Intentionality and positive youth development. *Twelfth Canadian Conference on Leisure Research*. Vancouver, Canada.
- Bialeschki, M. D., Henderson, K. A., & James, P. A. (2007). Camp experiences and developmental outcomes for youth. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 16(4), 769-788.
- Browne, L., & Sibthorp, J. (2012, February). *Fostering camp connectedness through structured curricula at day camp*, Presentation conducted at the American Camp Association National Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Deschenes, S., McDonald, M., & McLaughlin, M. (2004). Youth organizations: From principles to practice. In S. Hamilton, & M. A. Hamilton (Eds.), *The youth development handbook: Coming of age in American communities* (pp. 25-50). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- de Sousa Briggs, X. (2004). Social capital: Easy beauty or meaningful resource? *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 70, 151-158.

- Devine, M. A., & Parr, M. G. (2008). "Come in, but not too far:" Social capital in an inclusive camp setting. *Leisure Sciences*, 30, 391-408.
- Garst, B. A., Browne, L. P., & Bialeschki, M. D. (2011). Youth development and the camp experience. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 130, 73-87.
- Garst, B. A., & White, C. P. (2012). *Leadership and environmental stewardship: A curriculum for camps and other youth programs*. Monterey, CA: Healthy Learning.
- Gass, M. (1999). Transfer of learning in adventure programming. In J. Miles, & S. Priest (Eds.), *Adventure programming* (pp. 227-234). State College, PA: Venture Publishing.
- Gruenewald, D. A., & Smith, G. A. (2008). Introduction: Making room for the local. In D. A. Gruenewald, & G. A. Smith (Eds.), *Place-based education in the global age* (pp. xiii-xxiii). New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Halpern, D. (2005). *Social capital*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.
- Hamilton, S. (1980). Experiential learning programs for youth. *American Journal of Education*, 88(2), 179-215.
- Hough, M., & Browne, L. (2009). Connecting camp mechanisms to camper outcomes: A case for program theory. *American Camp Association National Conference*. Orlando, FL.
- Hycner, R. (1985). Some guidelines for the phenomenological analysis of interview data. *Human Studies*, 8, 279-303.
- Marsh, P. (1999). Does camp enhance self-esteem? Good news for the future of camping. *Camping Magazine*, 72(6), Retrieved from <http://www.acacamps.org/campmag/9911>.
- McKenzie, M. (2000). How are adventure program outcomes achieved?: A review of the literature. *Australian Journal of Outdoor Education*, 5(1), 19-27.
- Melaville, A., Berg, A. C., & Blank, M. J. (2006). *Community-Based Learning: Engaging students for success and citizenship*. Retrieved from: <http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/CBLFinal.pdf>.
- Newton, F. M. (1975). *Education for citizen action: Challenge for secondary curriculum*. Berkeley, CA: McCutchan Publishing.
- Obradovic, J., & Masten, A. S. (2007). Developmental antecedents of young adult civic engagement. *Applied Developmental Science*, 11(1), 2-19.

- Pawson, R., & Tilley, N. (1997). *Realistic evaluation*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Roark, M., & Evans, F. *Play it, measure it: Experiences designed to elicit specific youth outcomes*. Monterey, CA: Healthy Learning.
- Roark, M. F., Gillard, A., Evans, F., Wells, M. S., & Blauer, M. M. (2012). Effect of intentional designed experiences on friendship skills of youth: An application of symbolic interaction theory. *Journal of Parks and Recreation Administration*, 30(3), 24-36.
- Sherrod, L. R., Flanagan, C., & Youniss, J. (2002). Dimensions of citizenship and opportunities for youth development: The what, why, when, where, and who of citizenship development. *Applied Developmental Science*, 6(4), 264-272.
- Smith, G., & Sobel, D. (2010). *Place- and community-based education in schools*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Thurber, C., Scanlin, M., Scheuler, L., & Henderson, K. (2007). Youth development outcomes of the camp experience: Evidence for multidimensional growth. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 36, 241-254.
- Umphrey, M. (2007). *The power of community-centered education: Teaching as a craft of place*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education.
- Wray-Lake, L., & Syvertsen, A. K. (2011). The developmental roots of social responsibility in childhood and adolescence. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 134, 11-25.
- Yates, M., & Youniss, J. (1998). Community service and political identity development in adolescence. *Journal of Social Issues*, 54(3), 495-512.
- Youniss, J., Bales, S., Christmas-Best, V., Diversi, M., McLaughlin, M., & Silbereison, R. (2002). Youth civic engagement in the Twenty-First Century. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 12(1), 121-148.
- Youniss J., McLellan, J., & Yates, M. (1997). What we know about engendering civic identity. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 40, 620-631.
- Yuen, F. C., Pedlar, A., & Mannell, R. C. (2005). Building community and social capital through children's leisure in the context of an international camp. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 37, 494-518.

Zaff, J., Malanchuk, O., & Eccles, J. (2008). Predicting positive citizenship from adolescence to young adulthood: The effects of a civic context. *Applied Developmental Science, 12*(1), 38-53.

## **APPENDICES**



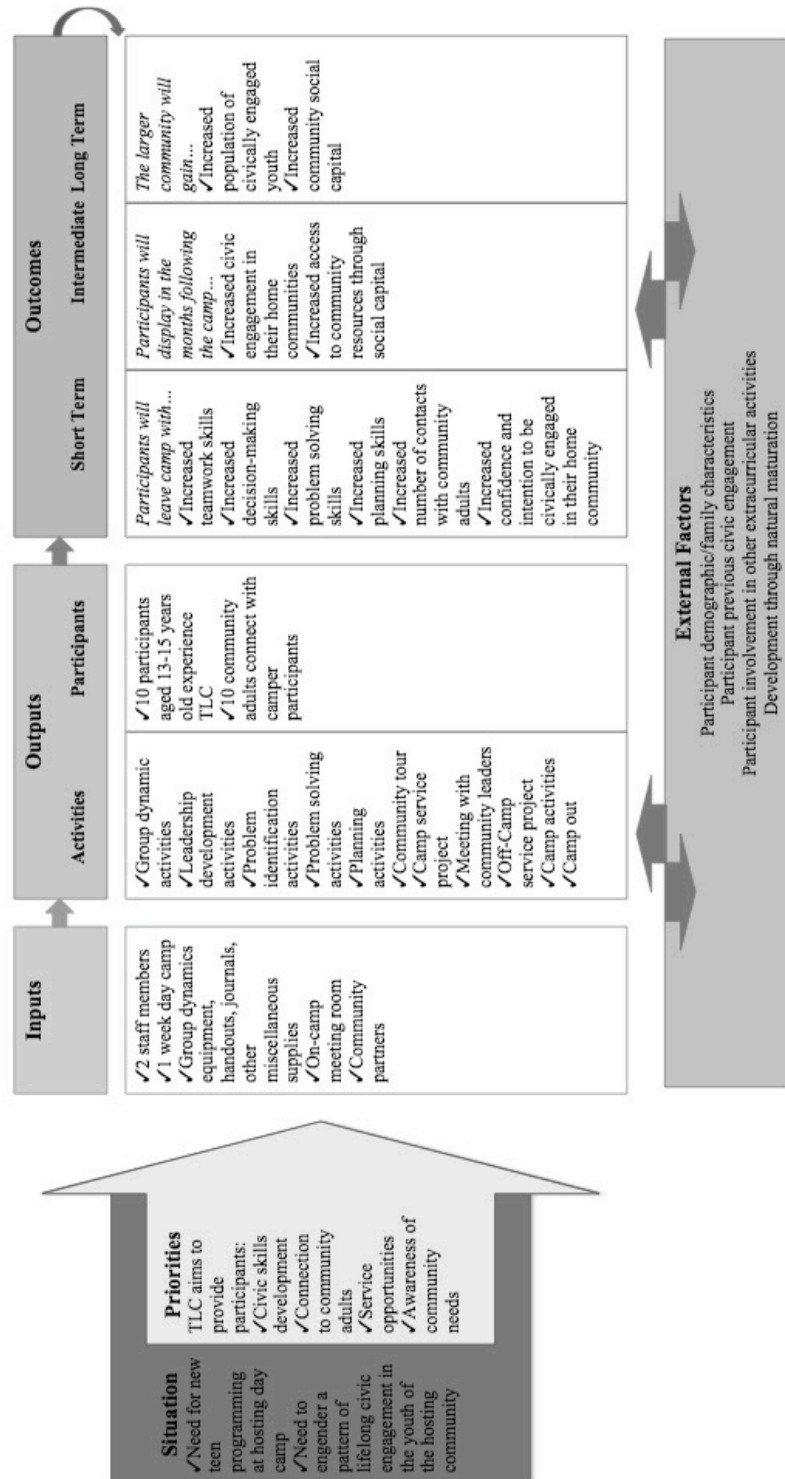
## Appendix A

### Summary of changes made to the TLC program between Weeks 1 & 2

<b>Session Name</b>	<b>Additions/Changes to the Curriculum</b>	<b>Highlights of Existing Features</b>
<b>Week Introduction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional reflection questions</li> <li>• Addition of group choice of activity</li> <li>• New reflection activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reminder of individual drawing activity</li> <li>• Reminder to use Socratic method rather than lecture</li> <li>• Reminder of small group configuration</li> </ul>
<b>Group Dynamics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing individual activity into pair activity</li> <li>• Addition of script to encourage camper choice</li> <li>• Additional reflection activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reminder of pair activity</li> <li>• Reminder of pair-share times</li> </ul>
<b>Cooperation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New cooperation game that requires campers to make a plan</li> <li>• Addition of written reflection activity</li> <li>• New activity where campers teach each other content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reminder of pair activity</li> <li>• Reminder of pair-share times</li> </ul>
<b>Identifying Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional instructions asked the facilitator to wander amongst campers and give feedback</li> <li>• Additional instructions requiring campers to fully plan before commencing an activity</li> <li>• Additional group reflection time</li> <li>• Added group choice on activity content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reminder of small group activity</li> <li>• Reminder of pair activity</li> </ul>
<b>Problem Solving</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change individual activity to small group activity</li> <li>• Additional instructions requiring camper planning and timeline</li> <li>• Additional group reflection times</li> <li>• Changing content delivery time to interactive activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reminder to follow activity scripts</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added camper choice in what size group they should be in for an activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reminder to follow activity scripts</li> </ul>
<b>Organization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added visual demonstration during group discussion</li> <li>• Additional group reflection time</li> </ul>	
<b>Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added pair-share activity</li> <li>• Added peer feedback activity</li> <li>• Change abstract planning activity to concrete activity to plan future service project</li> <li>• Additional group share time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reminder of missed reflection question</li> </ul>

## Appendix B

### Teens Leading & Connecting Logic Model



## Appendix C

### Interview Questions

#### Camp Facilitator Interview

- Tell me about how you feel the TLC program went this week. What went well? What didn't go well? What changes would you make next time?
- Tell me about how much you think the campers were engaged in the program.
- Tell me about the environment you tried to cultivate during the TLC program.
- Tell me about how you think the campers interacted with each other.
- Tell me about how you think the campers interacted with you.
- Tell me about the changes you made to the original program design.
- How did those changes come about?
- Tell me about the [specific activity]. How did it go? What went well? What would you change for future campers?
- Tell me about the skills you think campers took from camp. What activities most impacted those skills? How do you know?
- What impact do you think the TLC program has on campers' attitudes toward their community? What activities most impacted those attitudes? How do you know?

#### Pre-Camp Camper Interview

- Tell me about your previous leadership experiences.
- How did you come about serving in those leadership positions?
- What types of skills do you think you bring to leadership positions?
- Imagine someone you think is a great leader. What types of skills do they have that make them a great leader?
- Tell me about your past volunteer experiences.
- How did you come about choosing those particular activities?
- Why do you choose to volunteer?
- You said you're from \_\_\_\_\_. Do you think there are opportunities for you to contribute to your community? What types of opportunities?
- What types of experiences do you expect to have this week at camp?
- Do you expect to gain any skills while you're here? What types of skills?

#### Post-Camp Camper Interview

- How has your week been since the last time we talked?
- Tell me about your most **memorable experiences** you had this week. What made them memorable?
- How were those experiences impacted by the **counselor**?
- Tell me about the [specific activity]. How did it go? How does the [specific activity] impact your TLC experience?

- Skill learning sessions
- Wednesday's community tour
- Thursday's camp service project
- Process and participating in the community leaders meeting
- Saturday's off camp service project
- Tell me about your **community service project**. Do you see yourself completing that project? When do you expect to start?
- How would you describe what you **learned** in TLC? Which activities most helped you learn those things?
  - Tell me about how you think you might **use** the things you've learned in TLC after camp.
- Did you gain any **skills** this week? If so, in which activities? If not, what prevented you from gaining skills?
  - Tell me about how you think you might use these skills you gained in TLC after camp.
- Did your **attitudes** change this week? If so, in which activities? If not, what prevented you?
  - Tell me about how you think you might use these skills you gained in TLC after camp.
- Do you think TLC impacted the way you see yourself as a **leader**? If so, in which activities? If not, what prevented you?
- Do you think TLC impacted the way you see your **role in the your local community**? If so, in which activities? If not, what prevented you?
- Do you think camp has affected your **ability to contribute to your community**? If so, in which activities? If not, what prevented you?
- Do you think camp has affected your **motivation to contribute to your community**? If so, in which activities? If not, what prevented you?
- Did you **connect** with any new teens or adults this week? Who? In what ways? Do you see yourself keeping in touch with those people after camp? In what way?
- Given your experience with camp, **was TLC camp for you**? Why or why not?
- Given your experience in TLC, what **changes** would you recommend for future TLC campers? What parts have to stay? What would you tell **future campers** who are deciding whether or not to enroll in TLC?

#### **Follow-Up Camper Interview**

- Tell me about your time since you've left camp.

- Given what you've said about your experiences prior to camp and what you've said about your experiences during camp, what are the TLC experiences that stand out to you as important three months later?
- Given what you've said about your experiences prior to camp and what you've said about your experiences during camp, what did you learn from TLC that stands out to you as important three months later?
  - Barriers/supports
  - Have you been able to use these things since TLC? How?
- Given what you've said about your experiences prior to camp and what you've said about your experiences during camp, what are the skills you gained in TLC that stand out to you as important three months later?
  - Barriers/supports
  - Have you been able to use these things since TLC? How?
- Given what you said about your expectations to use some of the skills you gained at camp in your own community, what attitudes did you gain in TLC that stand out to you as important three months later?
  - Barriers/supports
  - Have you been able to use these things since TLC? How?
- What has TLC meant to you in terms of contributing to your community since you've left camp?
  - Barriers/supports
  - Have you been able to use these things since TLC? How?
  - Contribute more, less, about the same?
- Tell me what you see as your role in your community.
  - Did TLC impact this view?
- What has TLC meant to you in terms of how you see yourself as a leader since you've left camp?
  - New leadership positions?
  - Barriers/supports
  - Have you been able to use these things since TLC? How?
- Are there other experiences besides your camp experience that you think have influenced these changes?
- Tell me about any progress you've made on your personal service project since TLC?
  - Barriers/supports
  - What could we do to support your progress?
- Was transferring TLC lessons to your home life easy or hard?
- Tell me about what it was like to receive your self letter.
- Have you maintained any connections with teens from TLC? Adults?
  - Barriers/supports
- How would you describe the TLC philosophy to someone else?
- How do the skill building aspects of TLC work with the experience aspects of TLC?
- How would TLC be different in a school setting? Does camp support or hinder TLC?

- Given what we've talked about in our interviews, do you feel that camp is a good place to learn about contributing to your community? Why or why not?

### **Parent Interview**

- Tell me about yourself.
- What do you see as your role in your community?
- Tell me about your experience contributing to the community.
- Do you have any messages that you try to communicate to your camper about contributing to the community?
- Describe your camper to me.
- Describe your relationship with your camper.
- Tell me about how you and your camper decided to participate in TLC.
- Tell me about the things your child told you about his or her experiences in the TLC program.
- What parts of the TLC program do you think your child enjoyed most?
- What parts of the TLC program do you think your child enjoyed least?
- Tell me about the skills you think your child gained through the TLC program.
- Tell me about how you think your child has used those skills since the TLC program.
- Do you think the TLC program affected your child's motivation to contribute to his or her community? How do you know?
- Since your camper finished the TLC program, do you feel like your child has been able to contribute more, less, or about the same to his or her community? Why?
- Since your camper finished the TLC program, do you feel like your camper is motivated more, less or about the same to volunteer? Why?
- Are there other experiences besides the TLC program that you think have influenced these changes?
- Given what we've talked about in our interview, do you feel that camp is a good place to learn about giving back to your community? Why or why not?
- Would TLC be different if it was offered as a class in school? How?
- Is there anything unique about the camp environment that you think supports lessons about contributing to the community?

## Appendix D

### Camper Questionnaire

## Civic Skills & Engagement Camper Questionnaire

**Directions:** We are conducting a research study on the effect that summer camp activities have on campers' future involvement in their home communities. This is not a test-there are no right or wrong answers. Simply answer each question honestly. This questionnaire should take about 15 minutes to complete. Participation in this research study is voluntary and you will not be in any kind of trouble if you decide not to participate.

**We will make every effort to keep the information you provide confidential. Your individual answers will not be reported to anyone and will only be identified using the pseudonym (fake name) you've chosen for this study. Thank you for participating!**

Pseudonym: \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. For each statement, circle the one response that is most true for you when you are working in a group. (Circle one response for each statement)**

a. Placing group goals above the things I want.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
b. Working well with others.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
c. Helping others succeed.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
d. Cooperating with others.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
e. Being helpful in small groups of kids my age.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
f. Helping a group be successful.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
g. Supporting a group when they have selected an activity that I don't want to do.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
h. Appreciating opinions that are different from my own.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never

**2. For each statement, circle the one response that is most true for you when you are faced with a problem. (Circle one response for each statement)**

a. When I have a problem I know the source.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
b. When I have a problem I look for the things that might be causing it.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
c. When I have a problem I stop and think about options before making a decision.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
d. When I have a problem I think of different ideas and combine some to make the best decision.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
e. When I have a problem I choose a realistic plan.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
f. When I have a problem I make good choices about what to do.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
g. After dealing with a problem I check to see if the problem has gotten better.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
h. After dealing with a problem I consider how it worked out.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never

**3. For each statement, circle the one response that is most true for you. (Circle one response for each statement)**

a. I understand decision making skills.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
b. I can gather facts for decision making.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
c. I can accept advice from others.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
d. I can analyze facts before making a decision.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
e. I am aware of how my decisions will affect others.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
f. I know how to reach logical conclusions.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
g. I can reach decisions on my own.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
h. I can make decisions quickly and easily based on facts.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never



i. I can accept the fact that my decisions may not always be popular in my group.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
j. I can support group decisions even though I do not always agree with them.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never

**4. For each statement, circle the one response that is most true for you. (Circle one response for each statement)**

a. I have organizational skills.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
b. I set reachable goals for myself.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
c. I set reachable goals for groups.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
d. I can take the lead in group planning.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
e. I accept suggestions from other people.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
f. I can direct the efforts of the group.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
g. I seek advice when necessary.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
h. I can set objectives to help accomplish my goals.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
i. I can tell ahead of time the outcomes of certain actions.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
j. I can tell what is needed to accomplish goals.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
k. I can develop and keep to a timeline.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
l. I can meet deadlines.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
m. I can set up ways to measure if my goals are completed.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
n. I am not overwhelmed by details.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
o. I am flexible and can accept change.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
p. I can delegate authority.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never
q. I review my plans and revise them from time to time.	Almost Always	On Many Occasions	Once in a While	Almost Never

**5. How important is each of the following to you in your life? (Circle one response for each statement)**

a. Helping to reduce hunger and poverty in the world.	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Not Sure	Quite Important	Extremely Important
b. Helping to make sure all people are treated fairly.	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Not Sure	Quite Important	Extremely Important
c. Helping to make the world a better place to live in.	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Not Sure	Quite Important	Extremely Important
d. Helping other people.	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Not Sure	Quite Important	Extremely Important
e. Speaking up for equality (everyone should have the same rights and opportunities).	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Not Sure	Quite Important	Extremely Important

**6. How much do you agree or disagree with the following? (Circle one response for each statement)**

a. It's really not my problem if neighbors are in trouble and need help.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
b. I believe I can make a difference in my community.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
c. I often think about doing things so that people in the future can have things better.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
d. It is important to me to contribute to my community and society.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree

**7. How well does each of these statements describe you? (Circle one response for each statement)**

a. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I want to help them.	Not Well	2	3	4	Very Well
b. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I don't feel sorry for them.	Not Well	2	3	4	Very Well

c. I feel sorry for other people who don't have what I have.	Not Well	2	3	4	Very Well
--	----------	---	---	---	-----------

**8. How much do you agree or disagree with the following? (Circle one response for each statement)**

a. Adults in my town or city listen to what I have to say.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
b. Adults in my town or city make me feel important.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
c. In my town or city, I feel like I matter to people.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
d. In my neighborhood, there are lots of people who care about me.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
e. If one of my neighbors saw me do something wrong, he or she would tell one of my parents.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
f. My teachers really care about me.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree

**9. How often do you do the following? (Circle one response for each statement)**

a. Help make your city or town a better place for people to live.	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
b. Help out at your church, synagogue, or other place of worship.	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
c. Help a neighbor.	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
d. Help out at your school.	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

**10. How often do you do the following things? (Circle one response for each statement)**

a. Volunteering your time (at a hospital, day care center, food bank, youth program, community service agency)	Never	Once a month or less	A couple times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
--	-------	----------------------	------------------------	-------------	--------------------	-----------

b. Mentoring/peer advising	Never	Once a month or less	A couple times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
c. Tutoring	Never	Once a month or less	A couple times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

**11. During the last 3 months, how many times have you been a leader in a group or organization? (Circle one response)**

Never	Once	Twice	3-4 Times	5 or More Times
-------	------	-------	-----------	-----------------

**12. Not including your parents or teachers, how many adults do you look forward to spending time with? (Circle one response)**

0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
---	---	---	---	---	-----------

**13. Not including your parents or teachers, how many adults give you lots of encouragement whenever they see you? (Circle one response)**

0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
---	---	---	---	---	-----------

**14. Other than your parents, is there at least one other adult you would feel able to talk to if you were having problems in your life? (Circle one response)**

No	Yes, for at least some of my problems	Yes, for most or all problems
----	---------------------------------------	-------------------------------

**15. About how many hours have your parents/guardians spent as a volunteer or providing community service in the past 3 months?**

Hours mother/female guardian spent volunteering: \_\_\_\_\_

Hours father/male guardian spent volunteering: \_\_\_\_\_

**16. What is your gender? (Please check the appropriate box)**

- Male
- Female

**17. How old are you?**

Age in years: \_\_\_\_\_

**18. What is your grade level in school?**

Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_

**19. What is the highest level of education your mother/female guardian has completed? (Please check the appropriate box)**

- Some high school
- High school graduate
- Some college
- College graduate
- Post graduate
- I don't know

**20. What is the highest level of education your father/male guardian has completed? (Please check the appropriate box)**

- Some high school
- High school graduate
- Some college
- College graduate
- Post graduate
- I don't know

**21. How would you describe your ethnic background? (Check all that apply)**

- White
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Black/African American
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Hispanic/Latino
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**22. Where do you live?**

County that you live in: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years you've lived in that county: \_\_\_\_\_

High school you attend: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E

### IRB Approval Letter

---

Dear Denise,

The Clemson University Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed the protocol identified above using expedited review procedures and has recommended approval. The protocol has been approved for all research sites with a support letter on file. We will follow-up with a formal approval letter via interoffice mail. For your convenience, a copy of the stamped consent forms is attached for distribution. The originals will be sent with the approval letter.

Please remember that the IRB will have to review all changes to this research protocol before initiation. You are obligated to report any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects, complications, and/or any adverse events to the ORC immediately. All team members are required to review the "Responsibilities of Principal Investigators" and the "Responsibilities of Research Team Members" available at <http://www.clemson.edu/research/compliance/irb/regulations.html>.

We ask that you notify the ORC when your study is completed or terminated. Please let us know if you have any questions and use the IRB number and title in all communications regarding this study.

Good luck with your study.

All the best,  
Nalinee

***Nalinee D. Patin***

IRB Coordinator  
Clemson University  
Office of Research Compliance  
Institutional Review Board (IRB)  
Voice: (864) 656-0636  
Fax: (864) 656-4475  
E-mail: [npatin@clemson.edu](mailto:npatin@clemson.edu)  
Web site: <http://www.clemson.edu/research/compliance/irb/>  
IRB E-mail: [irb@clemson.edu](mailto:irb@clemson.edu)