Being Relational With Underserved Youth: A Reflective Process

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Abstract

When working with underserved youth, possibly the most important, yet often times the most difficult, thing for practitioners to do is to build positive, trusting, open relationships. This study aims to address this challenge. Two groups of underserved youth were examined, one being teens deemed "at-risk" and one being youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This study was novel in its approach as all efforts were made to ensure the youth's opinions on how to be relational with them were heard. Two youths with ASD were nonverbal and a special picture interview procedure was developed to allow their participation. Three thematic statements emerged from the data collected:

1. Youth need low anxiety relationships.

2. Youth need novel forms of engagement.

3. Youth need us to understand that their actions reflect their histories.

The analyses that lead to these statements are described as well as the reasoning and implications of these statements.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

"Show me a good curriculum with a mediocre teacher, and I'll show you a mediocre program" (Don Hellison, 2011).

We have all heard someone describe someone else by saying "Oh, he/she is great with kids." What does this mean? Is this an innate inner ability or can one learn this skill? It is easy to argue that both positive relationships with educators and physical activity can benefit youth. This is especially true for underserved youth. Underserved youth need supportive people around them that they respect. This support should be authentically invested in their development. This study aims to increase the literature on ways to improve being relational with kids, so that meaningful relationships can be better achieved. It may add support to the benefits of physical activity programming for underserved youth. My findings may better help professionals working in this field to understand what it means to be relational with kids, and, hopefully, help to create more meaningful activity programming for underserved youth. The question I am looking at in this study is: What does it mean to be relational with underserved youth in a physical activity context? In this introduction, I will include the rationale for the proposed study, my research goals, and the specific topics addressed in the project.

For the purpose of this study, underserved youth is used as an umbrella term to describe youth whose basic needs are not fully being met; one subgroup being youth with cognitive and behavioural issues who have not been able to succeed in a typical high school environment and who have been placed in an alternative education setting. This population is commonly refereed to as "at-risk" youth, the term implying these youth are at-risk for (a) dropping out of or not finishing school, (b) substance abuse, and (c)

criminal activity. The term also implies that the risk is inherent, residing in the youth. Collingwood (1997) defines at-risk as "youth who live in a negative environment and/or lack the skills and values that help them to become responsible members of society." A great deal of research has shown that effective program planning (Danish, 2002; Danish, Pettipas, & Hale, 1995; Danish, S., Taylor, T., and Fazio, R., 2005; Hellison, 2011; Martinek & Shilling, 2003; Petitpas, Cornelius, & Van Raalte, 2008; Shields & Bredemeier, 2002; Walsh, 2008) can improve levels of responsibility and increase acquisition of life skills through physical activity. Little research has been conducted on how program leaders should conduct themselves in theses programs and how to create positive relationships with the youth. This study looks at ways to develop these relationships.

The other context of underserved youth looked at in this study is youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Many efforts have been made to enrich the lives of youth with ASD in both the school and community; however, I feel these youths' needs are not being met especially in the areas of physical activity and relationships with others. In different ways these two groups of youth are both underserved. In this study the term underserved youth will be used when discussing youth typically defined as at-risk, and when talking about youth with ASD as both are underserved. The informants of the study who are at-risk will be referred to as CHARM participants. CHARM stands for Confident Healthy Active Role Models, it is a physical activity based program run at Brock University with at-risk youth that is based on the TPSR model created by Don Hellison (2011). The Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility model (TPSR) is a different approach to interacting with the underserved youth population. It will be examined as a

foundation for facilitation strategies; its emphasis on the notion of being relational. I will also investigate the importance of reflection in teaching and learning. The remaining sections of this introduction will provide background, context and rationale, as well as some elaboration on the purpose and design features of the study.

Background

Brief History of CHARM

When I began my graduate studies I knew I wanted to study physical activity and ASD. My supervisor then told me of an opportunity to work with a group of at risk youth. I had always wanted to get more involved with this population; therefore, I jumped at the chance. My supervisor had another Master's student who was also interested in working with this population and together we worked to create a program. We asked the kids to name the program and after a few weeks CHARM was born. We developed our program based on the TPSR model by Don Hellison (2011). CHARM focused on creating positive movement experiences for its participants while also encouraging the development of life and leadership skills. Participants were paired one to one with 4th year undergraduate students. Many group and individual movement opportunities were presented to the youth in an encouraging supportive environment. Each week was rotation based where we would start the day with relational time, then have an awareness talk (brings focus to the day's goals and objectives). We would then start our large group activity for the day which was always different activities (e.g., soccer, high ropes course, Tae Bo, and archery). After our group time, we had access to the rowing centre, a weight room on campus where youth would work on goal setting, and strength and endurance training. Next, the youth were given the opportunity to volunteer working with children with

mental and physical disabilities in a movement program called SNAP that also runs at Brock University at the same time as the CHARM program. Following this, group discussion time occurred where various topics were discussed from things as simple as thoughts on the day to things like bullying or communication skills. Each day would end with the youth answering specific journal questions with the help of their partner. CHARM was well received by the students and teachers and has been a major highlight of my academic career.

History of APA/ASD

In the summer before 4th year university, I participated in a two week summer movement camp for youth with ASD. I was paired with a boy, who for this study will be named Taylor. At this time, Taylor was 13 years old, was overweight, and had been attending this camp for 8 years. Historically, he had been very inactive during his previous camp experiences. Taylor displayed a high level of self-injurious behaviour and would repeatedly punch himself in the head or hit his head off a wall. This behaviour was typical when there was a change in routine or when he was upset or confused. Taylor is also deaf and at the time knew only a few basic signs. At the time, I did not know any sign either, making communication mostly demonstrative. Attitude, emotion, and facial expressions I believe were key to us forming a bond at camp. Taylor is now 17, has an expansive sign vocabulary, and his self-injurious behaviour has subsided a great deal and is rarely seen. I also have been taking sign classes and our communication has expanded a great deal. During my first summer camp, I planned and implemented a daily physical activity program for 2 consecutive weeks working with Taylor. During this time, I saw dramatic improvements in his motor skills as well as an increase in his focus, decrease in

off-task behaviour, and a substantial decrease in body mass. I noticed his mannerism to be much more relaxed and he seemed happier. I developed a very strong bond with this youth and was very inspired by the success of my lesson planning. I left the country for a year and came back and did the camp with him again before starting my Master's. Once I started my Master's degree, I began weekly visits to his high school where I and another camp worker would continue implementing our Applied Physical Activity (APA) lessons with him. Joe, another youth from Taylor's class, joined us in our program. Joe is 16 and is also nonverbal. Joe is an average weight for his height and age, but is lacking in motor skills, struggles with any sort of sustained movement, and can be very spastic in his actions. He typically has a calm demeanour but can get upset easily. These two youths also became participants in this study.

History of Me

I have not had the background of a typical Master's student. I have always struggled mightily, with writing consistently being in the lowest percentile in most of my classes. This study is novel in its design to better suit my learning style. As a youth, I was forced to deal with some personal traumatic events that no one should have to go through. These events manifested in a lot of negative behaviour in high school. I was very close to dropping out or getting kicked out. I was into drugs and had some issues with the police. I say this as important background information to this study as I was very much one of these underserved youth I work with now. My past experiences and my working through negative situations have fueled my work. Given my past, I feel I may have an advantage in being relational as I have always thought it to be a strength of mine and have seen others who just seem to excel in this area, but have witnessed many leaders with good

intentions who struggle at making meaningful connections with youth. I have never been able to describe why or what the difference is. I aim to try to explore this issue.

Rationale of Proposed Study

"Show me a good curriculum with a mediocre teacher, and I'll show you a mediocre program" Hellison (2011, p. 103). If we want to improve programming for underserved youth, we must start with the instructors. One can have all the funding in the world but the program will only be as good as the relational qualities of the ones implementing the program. Underserved youth need movement programs. Over the past 10 years, I have been involved in a multitude of physical activity programs for diverse underserved youth populations. I have been witness to many facilitators who really connected with the youth involved and engaged them in what I viewed to be meaningful positive movement experiences. I have also seen the opposite, educators with the best of intentions who appear to fail to establish any positive interaction. I feel strongly that underserved youth can benefit substantially through relationships with facilitators who can create an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement. This study will examine factors that contribute to more effective applications of Hellison's notion of "being relational." Through my experiences with two populations of underserved youth, I want to examine ways facilitators can be relational and create more meaningful relationships with underserved youth in a physical activity context.

Research Goals

The literature shows that underserved youth benefit from physical activity (Bess et al., 2006; Collingwood, 1997). Programs designed to improve personal and social responsibility can also be advantageous for this group. Implementation of these programs

is the tough part. I want to look at ways to help people who work with youth to become more than mediocre and to try to find ways to become more relational. I wanted to hear first hand from youth what is important to them in an educational/physical activity program professional. I also relied on my own documented experiences with two diverse underserved youth populations. Through analysis I developed strategies and suggestions for becoming more relational with underserved youth in a physical activity context. This, hopefully, will lead to more engaged and motivated students and more facilitators who can better relate to the students. As well, I demonstrated ways to use novel forms of engagement to involve youth in my research study. This study focused on student/teacher interaction (i.e., relationality) in underserved youth in physical activity contexts. This study included my experience as a leader of an adaptive physical education class in a local high school with two teenage boys with ASD. It included an activity based program for teens that have not been able to succeed in a typical high school setting due to various cognitive and behavioural challenges. I documented my experience within these two programs and interviewed the youth participants and their facilitators.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review will focus on five main components. The first section will describe the importance of APA programming for youth with ASD. The second section will look at interviewing youth with ASD. Next, physical activity and at-risk youth will be discussed. The fourth section will look at the TPSR model for organizing and facilitating activity based programming for underserved populations. The final section will examine the importance of reflection to the process of learning.

Physical Activity and Youth with ASD

For children with ASD, physical activity participation can be challenging. The nature of the disability renders challenges to leading an active lifestyle. ASD is characterized by impairments in social interaction, communication, selective and limited interests, and repetitive stereotypic behaviour (i.e., arm flapping, clapping, noise making; Filipek et al., 1999). Due to these characteristics children with ASD are less likely to be as active as same-age peers (Pan & Frey, 2006; Pan, Tsai, & Chu, 2009). The literature surrounding ASD and physical activity is vast; therefore, to gain a better understanding of the literature, I have decided to organize it into three subcategories. The literature surrounding Applied Physical Activity (APA) meaning physical activity programming specifically focused for those with disabilities has seen an influx of attention in recent research. The three categories I recognized in the literature all speak to the benefits of physical activity for those with ASD. One major area of focus is co-relative APA work. This is those who believe physical activity is important because it can cause a measurable improvement in a specific area. Some studies have shown decreases in stereotypical movement and off task behaviours (Levinston & Reid, 1993; Petrus et al., 2008; Todd,

Reid, & Butler-Kiser, 2010). Studies have also linked physical activity (e.g., jogging and swimming) to improvements of heart rate and muscle strength and attentiveness and focus (Fragala-Pinkham, Haley, & O'Neil, 2008; Todd & Reid, 2006; Yilmaz, Yanargag, Birkan, & Bumin, 2004).

The next area of literature focuses on APA as a form of inclusion. Physical activity has benefits for all (Warburton, Nicol, & Berdin, 2006) and children with disabilities deserve the same opportunities as nondisabled children. Adapting the physical activity environment and instructional strategies for children with disabilities can lead to more success in physical activity (Blubaugh & Kohlmann, 2006; Schukthesis, Boswell, & Decker, 2000; Winnick, 2005). Exclusion leads to feelings of isolation, embarrassment, and low self-worth. The practice of inclusion in PE or PA programs must be done with sensitivity and care (Sherrill & Tripp, 2004). Inclusion can be practiced in different ways. Instructional inclusion is when students with disabilities are in the same environment as peers but are working with an EA on separate activities with little interaction. Social inclusion is when all students are involved in the same activities and interactions occur. These interactions can be positive or negative (Sherrill &Tripp, 2004). Unidirectional relations are when nondisabled students do most of the initiating and view themselves as helpers. Equal status relations involve both parties engaging to include each other to achieve shared initiatives. These relationships are the aim of inclusion. Sherrill and Tripp (2004) suggest that a pedagogical approach with self-esteem at the forefront will help foster these types of relationships. Some models that have shown effective inclusion practices are: reverse mainstreaming and the PEOPEL Model (Physical Education Opportunity Program for Exceptional Learners) where high school students receive

training then work one-to-one in a PE class with peers with disabilities. This has been shown to increase fitness levels and positive attitudes towards PE for students with disabilities (Sherrill & Tripp, 2004). Switching a curriculum from a highly competitive one to more co-operative and movement education based learning also help with inclusion.

The final group of literature I am examining is that of physical activity in a critical embodiment perspective. These authors believe that having a better understanding of the lived experience of those with disabilities in a physical activity context will lead to better programming. This is a change from the traditional medical model of disability that is characterized by those who see disability as something that needs to be fixed and the focus is about doing research "on" participants. These authors instead do research "with" participants gaining their knowledge and insight (Fitzgerald 2006, 2005; Fitzgerald, Jobling, & Kirk, 2003; Wendell, 1996). Through her interviews with youth with disabilities, Fitzgerald (2005) suggests that a normative culture exist in physical education where ideals of masculinity and motor competence are valued, and things that do not fit these ideals are not valued. One of the youth interviewed stated how he was allowed to do things like bocce ball but felt worthless not being able to do things like rugby or basketball. The youth being interviewed goes on to talk of one of the PE teachers:

I think Mr. Clarke doesn't see me.

[after being prompted to expand on what this meant]

Well yeh, yeh and it's like I feel like he's looking down on me and he doesn't care and he sees my chair and all things I can't do.

Some people see my chair and not me and he's [one of the PE teachers] like that (p.758).

It is rich powerful information like this that can be obtained through critical embodiment research. Youth have a powerful voice and need to be heard. I feel when we start to listen to this voice we can see how our actions as facilitators are viewed by the youth and this can lead to better interactions. Fitzgerald (2005) stresses the need to reexamine the culture of physical education and what it means to have a sporting body. Modifying games and activities is good but it is more of a band-aid approach to solving the bigger problem of the dominance of normative performance based masculine ideals in physical education. A shift towards inclusion in physical education is happening. It is vital to get the youths' thoughts and opinions of how they view PE and physical activity in order to achieve the best results for all. Goodwin (2001) looks at the notion of "helping." Through her interviews with youth, she writes that it is important to look at how youth view the help they receive in an inclusive PE setting. Many youth point to help as unwanted and a loss of dignity and autonomy in movement. Goodwin suggests that others should ask if help is wanted before giving it and that too much help can lead to a state of dependency in youth which is counter productive to the goals of inclusion. It is important to listen to the youth about how they feel towards help from peers. For the participants involved in this type of research it can be very liberating to have one's views heard and valued. When studying youth, work that involves the youth themselves has potential to yield rich informative results. I chose to base my study in this literature making this my theoretical framework.

Interviewing Youth with ASD

Much of past research surrounding ASD has been done through a medical model paradigm viewing people with ASD as individuals that need to be fixed and the best way to do this was to have people with ASD studied by professionals from a distance. Recently, more of an effort has been made to include people with ASD in research about ASD. Interviewing youth with ASD poses many challenges but also offers substantial benefits. There are challenges to interviewing youth with ASD as by nature of the disability social interaction, expressing feelings, and being able to stay focused are all things that people with ASD may struggle with. For many of these reasons, those with ASD are viewed by some as not worth trying to interview. An emerging body of research on ASD involving those with ASD is developing. This research is showing that these individuals need to be listened to and can offer us a great deal of information (Beresford, Tozer, Rabiee, & Sloper, 2004; Brewster, 2004; Murphy & Cameron, 2008; Preece & Jordan, 2009; Taylor, 2007; Ware, 2004; Whitehurst, 2006). This can only improve our knowledge and understanding, and allow more positive interactions with those with ASD. One tool that has shown success in facilitating enhanced interaction is Talking Mats. This is a picture communication system. Picture communication is common with individuals with ASD but this is mostly done to show schedule or concrete information. (Murphy & Cameron, 2008). For example, in our camp a worker might show the child a board with velcro pictures of the day's schedule; game activities, then gymnastics, then snack, then hike, then fine motor skills. During each transition, the student would look at the velcro board and take off what activity was just finished and could see what was next. Talking Mats is a similar system where the child is interacting

by taking pictures on and off a board, but Talking Mats focuses more on expression and feelings and has been shown to make it easier for students to express emotion. Students are able to communicate using pictures, usually caricatures of different emotions (Brewster, 2004; Murphy & Cameron, 2008). The success of the Talking Mats made me want to include picture communication as my main means of interaction with the youth with ASD in my study. The idea of the collage (which will be explained in Chapter 3) came from Beresford et al. (2004), who found that making the interview more fun and activity based rather than a formal traditional interview seemed to allow the youth to be more relaxed and expressive. They also found more success focusing on youth's strengths to improve communication; often times, youth with ASD will excel at and enjoy art. This also supported my decision to include movie characters that they enjoy and are familiar with.

Interviewing youth with ASD is uncommon and, thus, not much research has been done in this area. These articles were trial and error based. It was important for my study not only to look at what these authors did that worked but also things that did not. Some of the main lessons learned from my research was that it would be advised to conduct a second interview, not only for authenticity but also, in the second interview, the participant may be more familiar with the protocol, be less anxious, and, thus, be able to express more and stay focused (Beresford et al., 2004). Lowering anxiety seems to be important for communication with this population. Preece and Jordan (2009) suggested that the school environment would be better than the home to conduct the interviews. At school, students are more accustomed to various staff coming in and out whereas home is more personal and having others come in can be more upsetting; thus, my interviews

were done in the classroom. The authors also stressed the importance of student interviewer familiarity. I feel my relationship with these youth made me ideal to interview these students. I have been working with the participants in this study on and off for over 5 years. Though there is no set protocol or gold standard to follow when interviewing youth with ASD, my examination of the literature looking both at the successes and failures of other studies has shaped my study design to try to help lower anxiety and increase communication with my participants.

Physical Activity and At-Risk Youth

The physiological and psychological health benefits of physical activity for all ages are well understood. Physical activity has been shown to be especially important for underserved youth. Increased self-esteem and well-being, increased acquisition of life skills like goal-setting, planning and lowered levels of depression and anxiety have all been linked to consistent physical activity programs (Bess et al., 2006; Collingwood, 1997). It has also been shown that structured physical activity programing can lead to a decrease in criminal activity and substance abuse (Bess et al., 2006; Collingwood, 1997). Increased physical activity programing for at-risk youth can individually improve the youth's development and chances for future success but it also positively affects the community as a whole. Sport and physical activity can also be a catalyst for moral development. A growing body of literature is devoted to looking at ways sport can foster skills such as communication, decision making, goal setting, and perseverance (Danish, Petitpas, & Hale, 1995). Some programs that are using the Sport for Development approach are the Play it Smart Program (Petitpas et al., 2008) and the Sports United to Promote Physical Education and Recreation (SUPER; Danish, 2002). These programs

have reported success in building positive character traits in youth.

Sport does not always lead to positive development. (Camire & Trudel 2010; Shields & Bredemeier, 2001). Camrie and Trudel (2010) state that sport has the potential to develop negative traits (e.g., gamesmanship and unhealthy competition) if not implemented

effectively. (P. 201). In large part, the literature says that sport has the potential to lead to improvement in life skills and moral character. In summary then physical fitness programs can meet many needs of at-risk youth. The application of structured physical training programs has been shown to positively affect some behaviours of at-risk youth, such as increased self-esteem, increased well-being, increased acquisition of life skills, like goal-setting and planning, increased values development, and lowered depression and anxiety (Petitpas et al., 2008, Danish, 2002, Danish, Taylor, & Fazio, 2005). In turn, fitness programs have positively affected at-risk youth problem behaviours such as lowered substance abuse and criminal behaviour (Collingwood, 1997).

Youths' best environment for learning is an environment they choose (Danish et al., 2005). Physical activity programs that create a safe enjoyable environment where youth feel respected and valued are an ideal place to learn life skills. What is it about a program that makes it an attractive choice for youth? If relational elements are a factor, then these types of skills are important for practitioners. The Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility Mode (TPSR) proposes relationality as an important factor for effective programing. The relational qualities of the instructors are vital to creating this atmosphere.

Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility

Many programs have been created for youth deemed at-risk with the youth getting the service. The Personal and Social Responsibility Model (TPSR) created by Don Hellison (2011) states that programs that allow youth opportunities to give service have greater potential for development of personal and social responsibility. Choice and reflection as well as gradual empowerment through taking ownership of own learning is also stressed in this model. Hellison outlines a structure of programing with embedded relational time and an awareness talk at the beginning of each session as well as group discussion and reflection to conclude the day. In between is the responsibility based programing aimed to strengthen his five levels of responsibility; (a) respecting rights of others, (b) effort and cooperation, (c) self-direction, (d) helping others and leadership, and (e) transfer outside of gym. Theses levels are not sequential but provide specific goals to help planning lessons. Many practitioners have had success adopting Hellison's TPSR Model in physical education classes and physical activity programs for at-risk youth (Escarti, Gutierrez, Pascual, & Suelves, 2010; Martinek & Schilling, 2003; Walsh, 2008). TPSR has also been shown to be effective in an APA setting, participants claiming increased sense of ability, positive feelings about the program, and improved social interaction (Wright, White, & Gaebler-Spira, 2004). The principles of TPSR have also been used in the classroom setting. Martinek, Schilling, and Johnson (2001) reported increased levels of effort shown towards school work after a 16-week TPSR based intervention.

TPSR is only as effective as the practitioners who employ it. Hellison (2011)

believes that having a sense of purpose, genuineness, and vulnerability, listening and caring, intuition (sizing thing up from cues), and a sense of humour are critical to having good relational qualities. I will explore these notions through my data collection and analysis. He goes on to suggest four qualities facilitators should believe in and bring to their teaching; 1) Each student has strengths built in them. Kids have positive qualities; celebrating these qualities is an encouraging way to promote growth in other areas that may need some work. 2) Each student is an individual and wants to be recognized as such; feeling valued and appreciated for being who you are helps create a climate of empowerment. 3) Each student knows things the facilitator does not. Each student has a voice and opinion that should be recognized and acknowledged. This can build up confidence and encourage taking more responsibility. 4) Each student has the capacity to make good decisions, they just need practice. Everyone makes poor decisions at times; it is needed for growth. Providing reflection time to accompany decision-making allows students to be more reflective in their decision making (Hellison, 2011). These statements are fine to make and many can read these and agree; this does not automatically make you relational with kids. In fact, one can agree with all these beliefs and still struggle at building any kind of rapport with youth at all. There is more to this concept of being relational than these statements. That is the question of this study: What does it mean to be relational with kids and how might this capacity be recognized and developed? Hellison's (2011) writing on being relational will serve as the catalyst for my data collection and analysis.

Reflection

Hellison (2011) says each student has the capacity to make good decisions; they

just need practice, and reflection is a key part of practice. Donald Schon (1987) believes that becoming more reflective will help one make better decisions. For Schon there are two types of reflection: "in" action and "on" action. Reflection is not seen as abstract, but rather as an everyday response to being in the world. Reflection is enacted in both novel and familiar situations where one might think of what one knows and how it can relate to this situation. One might reflect on action, whether done immediately or post experience; however, it does not change one's reaction to the situation. Reflection in action is done at a time when your response can change the tenor of the situation. Our reflection in action changes the way we react to the experience. Schon proposes that ongoing critical reflection on how one reacts and adjusts as a practitioner can lead to reflection in action; that is, a thoughtful consolidation of insights into a blending of reflection and purposeful action in the moment. Schon also believes that learning develops when a person is involved in experiences and is forced to figure things out for himself rather than being told what to do. He suggests that the coaching model may be the best way to learn. He believes that creating an environment where one is free to learn by experiencing in a low-risk situation, while having a coach to initiate and guide is an optimal learning context.

TPSR is related to Schon's (19887) views on reflection and learning. TPSR is about giving students opportunities to make decisions in a low-risk environment where they can make decisions and have a coach or guide facilitate them. A major component of TPSR is having reflection time for participants. During each session, students are put in situations where they have to reflect in action; they must make a choice of how to react in a situation that is unfamiliar to them. This is followed by reflection time (Hellison, 2011) or reflection on action (Schon, 1987). Students are given the opportunity to reflect on

their reflection in action: How did they react? What were the outcomes? How could one have acted differently? Elements of Schon's theory of reflection and learning are embedded throughout Hellison's TPSR model.

I used Schon's (1987) work to guide my own practice in TPSR during the process of this research. I kept reflective journals each week and made notes on how my reflection in action during the program was influenced by my reflection on action, my post program journal. Reflection is a critical aspect of working with underserved youth. No two situations encountered are the same but many similarities can be drawn. Many times during the day one is required to make quick on-the-spot decisions. The more one can draw from previous reflections one's chances for improved reflection in action occur. Hellison (2011) talks about building a "solution bank" or "fattening your bag of tricks" so you can better respond in the indeterminant zones. This is what Schon means by reflection on action.

This concept of fattening one's bag of tricks through reflection on action is closely tied to my research question, what does it mean to be relational with under-served youth? Through reflection and self-assessment I can ask myself what worked today, what did not, and what could I have done differently. This will lead to improved reflection in action when dealing with a particular situation.

Understanding the literature and history of critical reflection is important to developing skills in reflective practice. Stephen Brookfield (1995) in his book *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher* describes how understanding this literature can make us more aware of the process in place when we critically reflect, how we can guard against some of the pitfalls and challenges of critical reflection, as well as how to best create an

environment that can encourage others to critically reflect. He breaks the literature down into three overarching themes: Critical Pedagogy, Critical Reflection, and Adult Education. Understanding critical theory gives practitioners a better understanding of youth's actions and the up hill battle faced by teachers. Students' hostility may be because they have learned that to show enthusiasm to learning is committing cultural suicide. It can help us to not get demoralized when faced with adversarial students.

The literature on reflective practice allows readers to learn from those trying to incorporate reflection in their lives; reading about their success and failures can encourage us to experiment and to deepen our commitment to reflective practice. Reading about adult education promotes the notion that people learn from experience and, in order to promote reflection in others, must start with peoples' experiences, not an educator's predefined agenda. Brookfield (1995) sums up critical reflection in a way that synchronizes well to TPSR as he writes, "education if properly conducted is a dialogue amongst equals, students are helped to name and understand their own experiences."

Working with underserved youth is not a literal activity. There is no one right answer or a specific protocol to follow. Reflection abilities would seem to be key factors for being relational. However, more examination is obviously called for.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH ORIENTATION AND DESIGN

This research project is based in qualitative design principles. I intend to describe my own experience and the experiences of those directly involved in the movement programs (the participants). It is their words and experiences I am most interested in. As stated earlier, I am approaching this study from a framework of critical embodiment. This stresses the importance of the participant's voice. This perspective believes that gaining a better understanding of the lived experience of underserved youth in a physical activity context can yield great insight into physical activity programming. My study is a descriptive and expressive account of the experience that the participants and I have. Through analysis of interviews, photo analysis, field-notes, and student journals I have developed three thematic statements which I feel accurately connects the views of my participants to my research question: What does it mean to be relational with youth? I hope that through a robust set of descriptions that other readers might choose to use the findings that are most transferable to their own programs.

Recruitment and Participation Selection Criteria

Seven participants in my study come from the C.H.A.R.M (Confident Healthy Active Role Models) service-learning based program run at Brock University. These are high school-aged youth, who have been placed in an alternative education program due to learning disabilities and/or behavioural issues. There are five children and their two classroom teachers. The children that come to CHARM are from a section 23 classroom in the Niagara region. All school boards in Ontario have Section 23 classes. The District School Board of Niagara (DSBN; 2008) explains section 23 classes are for students who have been unable to succeed in a typical high school environment. They provide

individualized programming often in hospitals, group homes, custody facilities, or self-contained classrooms in community schools. The emphasis is on behavioural skills and learning strategies. Youth workers are present and work together with teachers in these classrooms. Two boys with ASD from an adapted physical activity program (APA) at a local high school also are participants in this study, as well as their two teachers. These two boys are in a Special Education class for youth with mental disabilities, primarily ASD.

Consent and Ethical Issues

Consent to conduct this study has been procured through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University (see Appendix A). Participants had the study explained to them and were asked to sign a letter of informed consent once they agreed to participate. Most of the potential participants are minors; therefore, parents were also given a letter of informed consent to sign once they agreed to allow their child to participate (see Appendix B). Participants were given a full explanation of the social and psychological risks associated with participating in this study and then asked for consent. For the participants in the CHARM program, consent was obtained through a third party and I was not aware of who accepted or declined until the completion of the CHARM program. As I was one of the program leaders, I did not want the participants to feel obligated to participate or that their standing in the program would be compromised if they decided to decline; therefore, I was not aware of who accepted or declined participation in the study till after the last day of the program. Participants are not obligated to take part in this study as future participation in the CHARM program or the APA program was not influenced in any way by their decision to participate or not. Participation in this study

was voluntary. If they wished, they could decline to answer any questions or participate in any component of the study. Further, participants were made aware that they could decide to withdraw from this study at any time and could do so without any penalty. The participants were immediately given a pseudonym with me being the only one with access to the coded name list. When discussing results with my supervisor, the pseudonyms were used. During my analysis, if a situation arose and I felt for whatever reason there was information that could have been seen as identifiable by others present in the program, that information was not included in my study.

It is my intention to allow only my final report to be viewed by other colleagues and researchers, which was coded to protect confidentiality. All data pertaining to my study; written notes and audio tapes were stored in my apartment. My typed information was saved on the hard-drive of my password protected laptop, and backed up on a secondary flash drive. All data will be deleted and shredded upon completion of the study. Access to this data was restricted to my supervisor, Dr. Maureen Connolly, and I.

Procedures for Data Collection

Table 1

Interviews

Interviews	Interviews	Interviews	Journals	Field Notes
CHARM Students	APA Students	APA Teachers CHARM Teachers	CHARM Kids	Mine (written after each CHARM and APA session)
Methods used in interviews	Methods used in interviews	Methods used in interviews	Used in data analysis Level 3	Used in data analysis Level 3
Movie characters' Questions	Movie characters' photo ranking	Semi standard interview questions		
Standard interview questions	Collages			
Relationality photo ranking	Relationality photo ranking			

Interviews: CHARM Students (five students)

Upon completion of the program, I conducted interviews with the program participants asking questions guided by Michael Quinn Patton's (2002) six types of interview questions; background and demographic questions, sensory questions, experience and behaviour questions, opinion and values questions, feeling questions, and knowledge questions. Each interview was done in three steps.

First, to start each interview I asked the participants about their favourite movies and TV shows. I then asked them about their favourite characters in the shows and why

they like these characters. I felt this was effective as an ice breaker to allow students to ease into the interview process. I felt it would be easier for them to answer questions about their views of fictitious characters than talking about their personal experiences and feelings. This was proven to be correct as most students provided more detail and elaboration to these questions as opposed to more personal questions. I felt this was a good way to get more information out of the youth allowing them to talk about fictional characters as many have trouble expressing personal feelings. I was interested in seeing patterns of what type of personality traits they admire in others and why. I felt using fictional characters would provide interesting data to what the youth actually value in others, and what qualities they may like or want to have themselves. This information has helped further my understanding of being relational with this population of youth.

Next, I asked the participants about (a) their experience in the program; (b) their feelings towards the program; (c) what they learned, if anything, from the experience; and (d) what are important qualities program leaders should have. These questions lead to many insights into the youth's experiences and helped to develop answers to the question; what does it means to be relational with underserved youth?

To end the interview, the youth ranked five photos chosen by me. These five photos where of university students interacting with young children in a movement program run at Brock University for youth with disabilities. The photos were carefully chosen by me and show what I believe to be a continuum of various levels of student-child engagement. The photos range in emotions from what I view to be (a) happy and fun (worker and young child crawling on the floor together both with big smiles); (b) loving and caring (a youth lying in the lap of a worker as they are both smiling at each

other); (c) active and engaged (both youth and worker do an abdominal medicine ball twist exercise together); (d) child angry at worker (youth looking angry and has worker in a headlock), and (e) complete disinterest from the worker towards the child he is supposed to be working with (youth on ground with his hands covering his face looking upset, and worker staring the other direction talking to someone else). Limitations of using photos selected by me include the fact that it is my interpretation that guided the selection of the photos. It is possible that the youth view and interpret the photos in a way different from my own. However I do feel that I was able to convey to the participants the idea of ranking on a continuum from best to worst and youth demonstrated that they were aware of the implications of the ranking they were doing when they rearranged their rankings following my explanation. When dealing with photos there is always room for differing interpretations. Brewster (2004) suggests that these differences must be acknowledged, but it is more important that we do not exclude all together the opinions of those with limited verbal ability.

I asked each child to rank these photos asking who was working the best with the youth. I wanted to see if any patterns emerged to provide insight into what the CHARM participants most value and what they value the least in movement program leaders. I felt that how youth ranked these photos could say a lot about what they look for in leaders. I used this technique because I thought it may be easier for youth to rank photos than talk directly about what qualities they look for in youth workers or leaders. Interviews with the participants were no more than 20 minutes in length to try to ensure maximal focus and attention as many of the participants have concentration issues.

Interviews: APA students (two students)

For the kids in the APA program the interviewing process was much different. These youth have severe ASD and are nonverbal. The nature of ASD poses many challenges to interviewing as by nature those with ASD tend to have difficulty with social interaction, expressing themselves, and staying focused on a task. I feel that despite these challenges trying to come up with ways that allow the youth to be able to communicate is extremely important. Critical embodiment literature suggests a lot can be gained from trying to assist in communicating their thoughts and feelings and finding ways that allow them to get this information out. With this in mind, I developed a protocol to try to accomplish these goals. Through conversations with teachers I found out some of the kids' favourite movies. Toy Story and Finding Nemo were ones that the youth have watched repeatedly and, thus, would be familiar with the characters. I decided to use the same approach as with the youth from the CHARM program. I felt that if I could get a sense of what characters the youth liked in these movies, it may say something about what they value in real life interactions with people. They may respond better to those who display some of the traits of the characters they like in movies. I placed three characters from the movie Toy Story in front of the youth and asked them to rank them in order of who they liked the best. The characters were Woody (a leader, plain but well-respected), Buzz (macho, confident, flashy, admired by other toys for being cool), and Slink (Woody's dog and best friend extremely loyal, sacrifices himself to help others). In Finding Nemo the characters were Nemo (a confident, brave, adventurous little fish who disobeys his overprotective father, which gets him in trouble), Marlin (the overprotective father who embarks on a heroic quest to find his son), Dory (a caring happy optimistic

fish who has amnesia; she is the main source of comedy in the movie), Crush (a carefree hippie surfer dude/adrenaline junkie), and Bruce (menacing looking Shark that tries to be friendly and not eat fish, but then turns evil trying to eat Marlin and Dory) The results of the character rankings were compared to the verbal answers given from participants in the CHARM program. I was looking to see patterns of similarities between the characteristics of the characters that were chosen by each population. I wanted to see if the characters the APA kids ranked the highest had any similarities to the characters the youth in CHARM talked about during their interviews.

To continue the interview process with the APA students, I created a collage activity for the youth to participate in. I put their name and a picture of them in the centre of a piece of paper I drew four photo boxes on the paper, and had seven photos of them to choose from. These photos have been taken over the past 3 years from various movement based programs the youth have attended. I carefully selected the photos to try to include a wide spectrum of student and movement leader interaction. All photos have the youth interacting with student workers. I tried to find photos which I believed to portray emotions such as active and engaged, happy fun times, photos of a caring worker, a neutral photo, a photo of the child upset, a photo of a seemingly disinterested worker, and one where the youth is being forced to do something against his will. The students' then chose four of the seven photos to be added to their collage poster of themselves with the instructions being that the students picked the photos that they liked the best. I thought that seeing what youth choose as their favourite pictures of themselves would give insight into what kind of relationships they like. This information can provide insights into how to better be relational with this population. This can potentially show what these youth

may value most in interaction with others. This technique was cited by Beresford et al., (2004) to be one of the more effective activities used to communicate with this population of youth. For nonverbal youth this has the potential to be powerful information to better understand what the youth value in interactions.

I then asked the youth to rank the exact same five photos used in the previous interviews with the youth participants in the CHARM program. I asked them who was working the best. This was done as another method to try to understand what these youth value in relationships with others. I then did a cross-case comparison between the two separate populations of youth in my study to see if there were any similarities between the two groups.

Interviews: Teachers (four) (two CHARM teachers two APA teachers)

I also interviewed the teachers of the participants as they are around the participants all day, every day and would be able to provide valuable insight into the program and what they feel are important qualities to have as a physical activity program leader, what they felt the kids valued in relationships, and how to best develop relational qualities.

Field-notes and Journals

I was an overt participant-observer through the duration of the CHARM program, during which time I reflectively summarized field-notes from an emic perspective. This means I was directly involved in the culture I was studying. I was not an outside observer, but rather I was going through the experience with my participants. I documented my experiences with youth regarding relationality, documenting key instances where I was trying to build relationality with the youth in the two programs and how I felt my

attempts were being perceived by the youth.

    Permission to use the students' weekly reflective journals as part of my data set was requested and used as per participant consent. These two forms of data were added to my third level of analysis and were used to support patterns found in my interview analysis.

    Upon completion of the 5 months of data collection, I carried out a comprehensive analysis of all data collected. I then created a summary of the experience of the participants looking for patterns and insights related to my research question: What does it mean to be relational with underserved youth?

Table 2

Data Analysis

Type	Participants	Looking for
1A) Interviews Within case analysis coded interviews looking for; revelatory phrases, keywords, idiomatic expressions Summarized each respondent's answer to each question	1. CHARM kids (5) 2. CHARM teachers (2) APA teachers (2)	Patterns (Findings 1A)
1B) Interviews Within case analysis looking at; collages, movie character rankings, relationality photos	APA kids (2)	Patterns (Findings 1B)
2A) Interviews Cross-case analysis by revelatory phrases, keywords, idiomatic expressions and question summaries.	1. CHARM kids (5) 2. Teachers (4) (2 APA+2 CHARM)	Patterns (Findings 2A)
2B) Interviews Cross-case analysis focusing on movie characters and relationality photo rankings.	(8) (5 CHARM kids+2 ASD kids)	Patterns (Findings 2B)
3) Patterns were then discerned from; Journals (CHARM kids)+field-notes (mine)+Findings 1A&B+Findings 2 A&B	All participants	Patterns (Findings 3)
4) Patterns from Findings 3 were summarized in Thematic statements (Findings 4)	All participants	Findings 4 (Thematic statements)

Within Case Analysis

I did two different sets of within case analysis. The CHARM participants, CHARM teachers, and APA teachers were all analyzed the same way; for the APA students I took a different approach to the within case analysis as their interviews were conducted differently. For the CHARM participants and the two teacher groups, the first step to my interview analysis was to read over all my interviews looking for revelatory phrases (meaning phrases that are salient when reading things that may mean more then the respondent realizes when saying it, statements that really touch on my research question of: What does it mean to be relational with underserved youth?). I then read the interviews looking for keywords meaning things that were repeatedly mentioned by my participants during their interview, also words or sayings that are related to my research questions. Lastly, I coded the interviews looking for idiomatic expressions meaning the participants using their own language on how they express themselves as individuals, slang or every day expressions that they use. I chose these three areas of focus as I felt they were at the core of the interviews and would reveal important information that would help address my research question. The last step of my within case analysis for CHARM participants and the two teacher groups was to consolidate the answers given to each question providing a brief summary of the general message given by each participant to each question. This was done to see patterns that existed in each interview but also proved to be extremely valuable in my cross-case analysis which will be discussed later. I looked at all these levels of within case analysis for patterns (Findings 1.A).

The within case analysis for the two APA participants was done in three steps.

First, I examined the collage activity done by both students. As stated earlier, I provided a fun art activity where the students were given seven photos of themselves and asked to choose which ones that they like best to add to the collage. I had stickers and markers the students could use to decorate the collage. The seven photos were all of them interacting with a worker; each photo represented a continuum of different levels of relationality. Looking at what photos were chosen offered insight into what they value in interactions with others. I then had photos of movie characters from movies I knew both the kids enjoyed. I asked them to rank their favourite characters again with the rationale that the characteristics of the characters they pick might represent characteristics they admire or value in others. The last form of within case analysis for this group was looking at the five photos of relationality discussed earlier where I asked each student to rank the five photos based on who was working the best, again with the assumption that it may give some insight into what they value in interactions with others. For the two youth I examined the responses given to these three activities looking for patterns (Findings 1. B).

Cross-case Analysis

The cross-case analysis was done in three groups. The first group was just the CHARM participants. The next group was the two sets of teachers. The final group was the CHARM participants and the APA participants. I will explain how I conducted the cross-case analysis for each of these groups. The first cross-case analysis conducted compared the interviews conducted with the CHARM participants. For these interviews, I first examined the revelatory phrases, keywords, and idiomatic expressions given in the interviews. I was looking for patterns and congruencies between the respondents that related to my research question. I then looked at the interview question summaries given

by the CHARM participants. I was looking to see the similarities in responses to each interview question. As mentioned before, the summaries were very helpful in consolidating the views of my participants regarding each interview question. This allowed for patterns that related to my research question. (Findings 2.A)

The cross-case analysis for the teachers was done the same way. I wanted to see if the CHARM teachers were saying the same things as the APA teachers. First, I compared the revelatory phrases, keywords, and idiomatic expressions from each of the four interviews. I then looked at the summaries made for each question. I was looking for common patterns that ran throughout the two teacher groups interviewed. I found that these were two different groups of underserved populations; the teachers were saying a lot of the same things. This was interesting as it may suggest that these two groups may be more similar than they appear, and may look for similar qualities in program leaders (Findings 2. B).

The final cross-case analysis was done between the two youth from the APA program and the five youth from the CHARM program. I looked at the CHARM participants' verbal responses when asking about movie characters they like compared to the movie character rankings given by the APA participants. I wanted to see if the traits of the characters mentioned by the CHARM participants had any similarities to the characters that the APA students ranked the highest. I then compared the rankings of the five photos of relationality, as I had both groups of youth rank the same five photos. I wanted to see if they valued the same things in interactions with workers. I looked at both sets of data for patterns and similarities between the two groups of youth. I looked at the patterns to help me answer the question: What does it mean to be relational with

underserved youth? (Findings 2. C)

The third step to my data analysis consisted of culminating all the data I had collected. I examined all similarities I found in my within-case (Findings 1A&1B) and my cross-case analysis (2 A, B, &C) to try to find common patterns from my data analysis in response to: What does it mean to be relational with underserved youth? I used my field-notes and the CHARM participants' reflective journals as supplementary support to the patterns that had emerged from the interview analysis. Deciphering these patterns became my third level of analysis (Findings 3).

I now had developed a list of patterns that had emerged through all levels of my data analysis. I then started to group these patterns within similar themes. The themes I found were that most of my patterns seemed to focus around interacting with youth, creating an appropriate environment, and practitioners' assumptions and beliefs. I made a list of these three themes and I took all the patterns I had listed from my previous analysis and began placing the patterns under the themes they related to, the patterns of respect and empowerment fit under all three themes, (see table #8). I wanted to then encapsulate all the patterns under each of the three themes into simple concrete sentences that consolidated all the information from each list. After careful consideration, I developed three overarching thematic statements which consolidated the information from the informants and also remained loyal to the patterns and themes generated in the various levels of analysis. To get to my thematic statements I thoroughly examined all levels of my data analysis. The patterns I discerned relating to my research question guided the creation of my thematic statements. All efforts were put in place throughout my data analysis to allow what my participants said to guide me to answer the question; what does

it mean to be relational with under-served youth? The three thematic statements are my answer to my research question.

       After my inductive analysis was complete, three thematic statements emerged from my data set about what it means to be relational with underserved youth. I then took a deductive approach comparing these three thematic statements that came from my study to the literature surrounding this area of research. I wanted to see what the literature says compared to my findings in my analysis. How does what Hellison (2011) says about underserved youth relate to my three thematic statements? How does what Schon (1987) says about reflection relate to my three thematic statements? How does the sport for development literature relate to my three thematic statements? How does the ASD literature relate to my three thematic statements? I wanted to examine the congruencies, if any, from the findings that emerged from my study to the literature in the field, and what can this analysis tell us about being relational with underserved youth? This analysis will make up my discussion section.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCOVERIES

Table 3

Findings

TYPE	PARTICIPANTS	LOOKING FOR
1A) Interviews Within case analysis coded interviews looking for; revelatory phrases, keywords, idiomatic expressions Summarized each respondents answer to each question	1. CHARM kids (6) 2. CHARM teachers (2) APA teachers (2)	Patterns (Findings 1A)
1B) Interviews Within case analysis looking at; colleagues, movie character rankings, relationality photos	APA kids (2)	Patterns (Findings 1B)
2A) Interviews Cross-case analysis by revelatory phrases, keywords, idiomatic expressions and question summaries.	1. Charm kids (6) 2. Teachers (4) (2 APA+2 CHARM)	Patterns (Findings 2A)
2B) Interviews Cross-case focusing on movie characters and relationality photo rankings.	(8) (6 CHARM kids+2 ASD kids)	Patterns (Findings 2B)
3) Patterns were then discerned from; Journals (CHARM kids)+field-notes (mine)+Findings 1A&B+Findings 2 A&B	All participants	Patterns (Findings 3)
4) Patterns from Findings 3 were summarized in Thematic statements (Findings 4)	All participants	Findings 4 (Thematic statements)

I have organized this chapter into four sections based on the data collection strategies of my study. Section One will be a within-case analysis of my interviews. Within-case 1A) will consist of the verbal interviews conducted with the CHARM students, and the teachers of both the CHARM students and the APA students. As stated previously, I have coded these interviews looking for revelatory phrases, keywords, and idiomatic expressions. I will explain what this data analysis says about how to be relational with underserved youth. The second within-case analysis will be 1B); this will look at the interviews conducted with the APA students. This within-case analysis will be comprised of the collage making activity, the movie character photo rankings, and the five relationality photo rankings, and what these results tell us about what it means to be relational with underserved youth. Section Two of my findings will be a cross-case comparison. As stated previously, I compiled a summary of each participant's response to each question asked. In section 2A) of my cross-case comparison I grouped the interview questions into three categories, then summarized what each group said about these categories, and what these responses tell us about how to be relational with underserved youth. I will look first at the interviews with the CHARM participants and, second, the interviews with the CHARM and APA teachers. Cross-case analysis 2B) will be focusing on both groups of youth. I will look at the verbal interview responses given by the CHARM participants and compare those answers to the results found in the movie character photo rankings conducted by the APA youth. I will then look at the results of the five photos of relationality rankings; this ranking was done by both the CHARM and APA students. I will examine both these sets of data analysis and look for congruencies between the groups of youth. I will explain what these results say about being relational

with underserved youth. Section Three of my findings section will focus on the patterns that emerged throughout the within-case and cross-case analysis. The relevance of these patterns as per their relation to my research question will be explained. In Section Four of my findings chapter I have consolidated the patterns that emerged throughout sections 1-3 into three thematic statements which I feel encapsulate what the participants in this study said about what it means to be relational with underserved youth.

Section 1A) Within-case Analysis CHARM Students

Jerry

During the interview with Jerry, several thoughts on relationality emerged. When talking about high school teachers he said "Like the first day every teacher knew me, the first day of grade 9 every teacher knew who I was...it's a bad thing." He may have felt he was being prejudged by these teachers. "It's a bad thing" implies he was not given a fair shot by teachers who had preconceived notions that he was a lost cause before actually meeting him. He reported not having a good relationship with many high school teachers, feeling like he was prejudged by teachers could have played a part in these unsuccessful relationships. This suggests being open-minded and not harbouring judgmental thoughts can increase relationality. When talking of the teachers he liked, Jerry said "She was a lot better 'cause she accepted me and explained it and actually sits down with me and does it." I feel accepting is a big word here, it means recognizing individual differences and moving forward, also taking the time to help and work one-on-one with the youth. This teacher has treated Jerry as an individual and made him feel accepted by her. He also talked of a male teacher who he liked because of his "attitude, he was actually good, like fun." Being accepting, recognizing individuality, taking time to work one-on-one, and

being fun seem to be good relational qualities. Though he expressed negative feelings towards most of his previous teachers, his views on the CHARM leaders were very high. When asked to think of his favourite, he responded "oh god this is going to be hard." Qualities he liked about the CHARM leaders were that they "understood what I was doing, they understooded (sic) me I guess" and that "they're always there to help you basically." When he talks about the CHARM leaders understanding him, it is in direct contrast to the previous statement about it being a bad thing that every teacher knew who he was. His statement about CHARM leaders being there to help you coincidences with the statement made previous about his high school teacher who would sit down and do the work with him. He also states about some of the CHARM leaders that he likes "the type of people that are good, like to work as teams with other kids and give them fun stuff to do, and ask what they (the kids) want to do instead of what the leaders want to do." The word fun emerges again and liking to work with the kids. This goes back to having the right attitude which he stated regarding one of the high school teachers he liked. Asking what the kids want to do suggests he likes to be treated as an individual and likes to be able to contribute not just be told what to do.

Patterns that emerged regarding relationality out of this interview were that he did not like being prejudged, he valued those who accepted/understood him, took time to get to know him and work with him as an individual, having a good attitude (wanting to be there), and making things fun.

George

During this interview, George mentions his favourite TV character House; "He is cool 'cause he's a doctor... I like House 'cause he gots [sic] my personality does what I

kinda do, makes jokes a lot and tries to be funny all day." This suggests that he likes others to have the same qualities as his; this can be important to building relationality as a better understanding of the youth's unique qualities can help in developing relationships. When talking of former teachers, he told a story of getting suspended for leaving class without permission as he had to go to the washroom, "I had to go I wasn't staying." He also talked about having to write 100 lines for chewing gum in class. If these stories are accurate or not does not really matter, the fact that he said them to me is significant as it shows that he wants autonomy and to be treated with respect to make his own choices. Hellison (2011) suggests that giving youth responsibility to make their own choices can lead to better relationships as it decreases the adversarial climate of traditional student teacher relationships. When describing the teachers he did like, George states; "I didn't have to do much work in his room, he helps me with work, almost does it for me almost." This suggests being treated as an individual and having someone invested in his success are things he values in teachers. It seems like this teacher recognized George's uniqueness and made a specific plan for him, which seemed to be appreciated by George. In regards to the CHARM leaders he liked "that they were all energetic and nice." One way to improve relationality is to be enthusiastic, which I think can best be described as wanting to be there. From my field-notes looking at the CHARM leaders over the past 2 years, to me it seemed clear who wanted to be there and who was there just to get a credit. The youth seemed to interact less with the CHARM leaders who, to me, seemed like being there was not their first priority. George also gave advice to new CHARM leaders "listen to what the kids gotta say, they will get along better if you do, and don't yell talk in a calmer voice than a meaner one." His stressing listening to the kids is evidence that he

has felt ignored in previous teacher-student interactions and he wants to feel valued. To me not yelling means being treated with respect; yelling is not helping or doing anything to understand the problem.

Insights gained regarding relationality from this interview are that youth like people who show similar traits to theirs; better understanding the traits and qualities of the youth can help build better relationships. Allowing youth autonomy to make choices can decrease the adversarial climate of the student-teacher relationship. It can also show that you respect the youth. Being invested and taking time to work one-on-one with youth shows that you value youth as individuals, and being energetic, listening, and not yelling can all increase relationality with youth.

Michael

This interview was the shortest of those conducted as Michael has high anxiety when trying to communicate, thus, speaks very little; however, this interview did yield some insights into the issue of relationality. He said his relationships with teachers were "not really that good...cause they always kept yelling." He went on to say "they didn't really ah, like me." He, like George, stressed that teachers yelled at him. This seems to be an ineffective technique as it demeans the students and does not address the root of the problem. It can give the student the impression they are worthless and you do not respect them. No one likes to feel like this and often times rebel against it. Michael felt like he was not liked. If teachers spend more time trying to understand Michael and where he was coming from, he might not have held this view. As educators, how well will our message be received or how effective will our teaching be if the student thinks we do not like them? Michael did not say the teachers did not like his actions, he said they did not

like him as a person. This is alarming; there should be a distance between actions and person. When talking of a teacher Michael liked, he said "he was really nice and he basically let me do anything;" therefore, he liked the teacher that didn't yell and was "nice" or the one who treated him with respect. When Michael says "let me do anything" it could be viewed in two contexts. It could signify lazy, disinterested teaching, or it could be that he allowed Michael to learn in a way that was better suited to him, not forcing him to fit in the mold of everyone else, recognizing individual differences and adjusting teaching methods giving Michael more freedom. When talking about CHARM leaders, Michael said they were all "nice" and "fun" and treated him "good." When asked what he learned about interacting with people being at CHARM, he said "aaaya um me not to um get like, ah anxious with what I am saying." This response was profound as it would have been extremely difficult for Michael to say this; it showed he had come a long way as I feel if I had done this interview at the start of the year there would have been no way he would have come up with that response. Michael's CHARM partner had been working with his confidence in his speaking throughout the term and it was great to hear that message stuck with him. I feel it was because he felt like the CHARM leader cared about him. It is interesting to see this response when he was in an environment where people were "nice" and treated him "good" as opposed to his unsuccessful experiences in high school where he said "teachers did not really ah, like me." In the CHARM program there was a concentrated effort to focus on building relationality with the youth in the program. For Michael it seemed this set up an environment where he was able to learn more effectively. This is evidence these youth need to feel supported, encouraged, and, in this case, "liked" by those trying to interact with them.

Kyle

The next interview was interesting as more insights emerged concerning being relational. When asked about teachers from other schools, Kyle instantly made a disgusted noise "enhh" but he does mention one he liked

> umm I liked, well everyone used to pick on Mr. Kurin cause he drank too much cola and one day I brang (sic) in a cola and he already had one and so I said here Mr. Kurin have one and he always drank it.

It is of interest he mentions this teacher as it shows that having things in common (both liking Cola) may help build relationality. It also seems like this teacher had a sense of humour or what Hellison (2011) calls a "playful spirit" where, in this case, Kyle feels comfortable where he can "tease" or joke around with this teacher. The fact that he made a disgusted noise when asked about his previous teachers but talked fondly of Mr. Kurin may show that having things in common and a sense of humour can increase relationality. He also talked of Miss Alymer who "was good I thought she was awesome...every Easter and Christmas and everything she would come in with stuff baked goodies." From Kyle's comments about Miss Alymer it seems like showing the youth that you care about them can increase relationality.

> Kyle then went on to talk about a teacher he did not like.
>
> Um hm I hated Miss Blue her name was Miss Blue, oh my God everyone hated her, she used to give us trouble, this girl Kendra in our class oh my God, she went to go get a pencil or something or go to the bathroom or something and Miss Blue just frigging flipped her off she said NOT RIGHT NOW.

From Kyle's perspective, Miss Blue was not well liked by the students. In this story, it

does not seem like she is understanding of the students and may not respect students' autonomy. From these two dramatically different examples, it seems this student relates better to someone who cultivates a more friend-like student-teacher relationship as opposed to a corrective (disciplinary) one.

Kyle then started talking about CHARM leaders and what type of personality he would like them to have. He said; "Like not like macho man, but cool enough to be like friends and everything" and "Um, that they like the stuff that I like." It appears from these comments relationality is not about impressing the youth but showing genuine interest in them. In my field-notes, I observed some of the more athletic males trying to show athletic superiority around the youth. This was met with a lot of disinterest from the youth. Kyle does not want to be around the "macho man" as I assume it would just make him feel inferior, whereas someone who is "cool enough to be friends" would take the time to get to know him and make him feel empowered and, thus, build relationality.

When asked if he remembered a time when he felt happy when talking with a CHARM leader he responded;

umm the number #1 thing that I liked that someone said that you can fall off a

cliff when we were doing that hike and everything to the campground or whatever

OH MY GOD she made me so happy that telling me not to fall down the cliff.

This shows that maybe the most important thing we can do to build relationality is to let the kids know that we care about them; like Miss Alymer and this CHARM leader. Some of these youth do not have many caring figures in their lives; therefore, showing you care seems to go a long way to increase relationality with this population.

Robbie

This interview also yielded some information to the question what it means to be relational with underserved youth. Robbie was a very positive person and could not think of any negative experiences he had with teachers and said "they were all really nice... and I liked them all," he also went on to say "well when I started high school I had up and down behaviour but I turned it around and teachers helped me really well." This is significant as teachers showed interest in him and "helped" him through his up and down behaviour as opposed to Michael who stated he did not really like his teachers "because they always kept yelling." For Robbie reporting liking all his teachers, it seemed they took the time to get to know him as a person, understand his difficulties, and work with him to resolve some issues. These are the types of relationships these youth need and teachers who enlist some of these characteristics will improve their relational skills. Robbie was with the CHARM program for 2 years. In my field-notes, I documented how much of a change I had seen in Robbie and how he was so much happier and confident, almost a new person from the one I saw the first few weeks 2 years ago. Having these relational teachers who cared about him and took the time to help him seems to have made a big difference in his life.

When talking about the CHARM leaders, Robbie again reported liking them all saying, "They had feelings for you, they always care about you, and they always want to be around you." This statement suggests Robbie liked the authenticity of the CHARM leaders, he liked that he felt valued in the relationship he had with the leaders, that they wanted to be there and showed a genuine interest in him. These qualities seem important to building relationality. He then went on to say, "Well, I think it really, all the kids that

they can, that they're an angel with broken wings." This statement was very profound for me as it suggests a few things. One is that he may view himself in this way referring to his up and down behaviour in high school and that the teachers who also viewed him like that made a big difference for him. Two, it suggests an approach we all should take with these youth, that they are all "angels with broken wings" and people working with these youth should look at the kids as such. If one wants to become more relational, this would be a good way to start. Instead of noticing the deficiencies these youth may have, notice the angel, and highlight that part of the youth and, more importantly, get the youth to recognize the angel within, then you can start to work together to repair the "broken wings."

Section 1A) Within-case Analysis CHARM Teachers

Justine

The teacher interviews were very informative as these informants are around the youth every day and their data provided excellent insight on the subject of relationality. I am going to touch on some of the key findings from each interview. One of the things Justine mentions is the importance of getting to know each youth and "To treat them as individuals rather than this... this... this... pack of familiar animals because they are not, they are very unique." This is important as each youth (like everyone you meet) has his/her own story. They all have their own issues they are dealing with and some approaches that work on some youth will not be effective with others. Something as simple as knowing their likes and dislikes will dramatically improve your ability to break down the barrier of having an initial conversation. To improve relationality, the more you know about the uniqueness of the youth will help you specifically interact with that

person. Treating youth as individuals can also show that you respect and value them as a unique person, that who they are matters, and to be proud of and embrace their individuality. This can increase the confidence levels of the youth. Increasing confidence can also play an important role in developing relationality. When Justine was asked about ideal traits of a CHARM leader she replied:

> someone that believes in the students that is encouraging, that isn't phony; someone who is really genuinely showing that caring side cause the kids can see phony too right. But if its felt like it is authentic it can have a lot better results with the kids.

Therefore, believing in and encouraging the students is a way to increase confidence which, as she states, can have better results. Confidence can be a major issue with this population. As Justine sadly points out, the reality of the situation a lot of these youth face:

> There are kids that come from family situations and backgrounds that may not be encouraging, and there is lots of put downs, "you are no good" and you're this that and the other thing and you hear it everyday, everyday, everyday.

When one has lived in these conditions all one's life, it is amazing what some encouragement and positive feedback can do especially if it is unique and specific to the individual. Pointing out the youth's successes and positive traits can build confidence in youth. All people like to get recognized for things they do well; youth with backgrounds described above crave it. If you can make the youth feel good about themselves, they are going to like interacting with you which will make you more relational. She also mentions being genuine and authentic. These words are easy to say but often times harder

to display. Working on developing relationality can foster more of these authentic interactions, but as Justine says, it has to be real as the kids can tell. In my journals, I recorded times when the CHARM leaders would be talking before the kids arrived about how tired they were and about the midterms they had in the afternoon and wishing they could be studying. Those CHARM leaders tended to have very little interaction with the youth. As Sydney said, the youth can tell phony. If you want the youth to want to be there, you have to want to be there.

Sydney

Being relational with underserved youth is an in-depth topic to discuss and Sydney provided a new perspective in her interview. In the previous interview, Justine talked of treating all the youth as individuals. Sydney adds another level to this concept in her response to a question about the ideal traits of a CHARM leader by saying; "creative..the best people have been able to look at the situation and see the kids, see that they are all different and come up with ideas on the fly about how to deal with them." Therefore, the better you know the individual uniqueness of a student, the better you are able to assess the situation and the needs of that youth in that particular situation. Responding on the fly is in part due to creativity, as Sydney says, but I feel more of it is knowing the youth and their individual needs which goes back to reflection. As Schon (1987) suggested, the more you reflect-on-action the better you become reflecting-in-action. Reflect-on-action is kind of like reviewing your notes every night after class, those that do will be able to handle a pop quiz. The more you reflect-on-action, the more creative you will be when a situation arises that requires you to adjust on the fly; you will be more prepared to take the pop quiz. The more creative or reflective you are, the better

able you are to deal with whatever situations arise when working with youth. Better responses and, in turn, relationality can be built if you can respond in a way that has the specific youth in mind. When asked what advice you would give to someone about to start doing your job, Sydney instantaneously and firmly said "listen to them, listen to what they say and what they don't say, most of the behaviour and most of the things that are happening in their lives because no one is listening" This advice reinforces the need of genuineness and taking the time to listen to the youth. It is what a lot of these youth have lacked in their upbringing and supplying that authentic caring is really important for these youth. If their problems are because no one is listening, being that relational, attentive, positive person in their lives can potentially solve some of these problems.

Section 1A) Within-case Analysis APA Teachers

Victoria

The interviews with the APA teachers offered a new perspective into this topic but many of the same patterns emerged. A key insight from this interview was providing the right environment for the youth to develop and grow. Victoria talks about one of the students who transferred into her class who was at another school and was really regressing and was very unhappy. I can personally attest to the positive change I have seen in this youth in the past 2 years since the transfer.

> He was in a situation where he was being unsuccessful and the more unsuccessful he was the more restricted he was and the more restricted he was the more unsuccessful he was, so (at his new school) we were going the other way.

It is important to put the youth in positions where they can feel success. If you can get the youth to feel comfortable and confident, there is more opportunity to work on new things

and expand boundaries than if the youth is working from a framework of anxiety and failure, "I think that it is like for anyone, once you're successful it makes you feel good the more you feel good the more you want to be successful." Creating relationships that allow youth to feel successful and comfortable is beneficial to improving relationality with this population:

> All my guys have a history of being volatile they all have a high high level of anxiety they all are extremely anxious they get too anxious it kinda boils over and then they strike out and for them is the first thing they need is to be in a relationship that cause them not to be anxious, and then when they are not anxious you have so much more flexibility.

Victoria really stresses the need to create low anxiety relationships with these youth. Some ways she suggests this can be done is creating a structure and routine with the youth and being understanding and respectful of the stresses the youth have. Another way is to be positive and upbeat yourself "you know and ah he likes he likes to have fun, so if you're friendly and smiling (*he*) is friendly and smiling." This is so simple but often times overlooked and forgotten. Some teachers feel they need to be stern and keep a stoic persona around youth. This approach can be counter productive in many cases as Victoria states:

> I think if you are trying to be too authoritative with these guys it's not successful because they are not bringing anything to the table, they need to bring some ownership to the table for them to be successful and comfortable."

She seems to be saying the more the youth feels part of the process and respected, the more you will be able to get out of the youth; therefore, building one's relational qualities

to facilitate these types of relationships with youth can be of great benefit to the youth.

Melissa

The final teacher interviewed was Melissa. Through her responses some interesting patterns regarding relationality emerged. When talking about the APA program run at the school with her two students she says:

> You are always happy, you guys always have a smiling face, and you give them what they need to do even though they don't necessarily want to do it. *We* know both boys do not like exercise but they seem to like exercising with you, you make it such an environment that it's fun.

I found this to be very revealing to my study. First, it shows the benefits that positivity (being happy and having a smiling face) can have when interacting with underserved youth. Second, it really shows the benefits of relationality. She highlights the importance of the people over the activity. Melissa says; "*We* know both boys do not like exercise but they seem to like exercising with you." This may show that youth may not be disinterested in the activity so much as the person. If these boys enjoy participating in a program based on an activity they do not like (exercise) with a person they do like, it shows that the person trumps the activity. This may be true for academics as well. It may not be that the student is disinterested in doing the work; it may be that they just do not have a comfortable enough relationship with that teacher to truly want to apply themselves. The quote also says, "you give them what they need to do" and "you make it an environment that is fun." For these youth, knowing the expectations can relieve a lot of their anxieties, thus, making the youth feel more comfortable. The more relaxed they feel usually the more likely they will be able to find enjoyment in the activity.

Another critical aspect to being relational that surfaced in this interview was being passionate. Melissa cares deeply about her students and sums these feelings up nicely when she says; "I am one that believes that they can all achieve. Not one student I have ever met cannot achieve. I think that's important always have the child's best interests at heart." Approaching teaching and relationality this way is important as it does two things. One, it lets the students know someone believes in them and in their capacity to succeed and that someone cares about their well-being and is invested in seeing them reach their full potential. As stated earlier, youth can be very receptive to people's feelings towards them negatively or positively, and these feelings can make a huge difference in how the youth view themselves. The second thing having this approach acts as a mission statement of sorts, having these deep inner beliefs can help galvanize someone through the ups and downs of working with this population. Hellison (2011) would call this having a sense of purpose, guiding beliefs that govern and inspire your actions. It can often be the difference between teachers who more or less just go through the motions and those relational teachers who are catalyst to positive transformation in the youth they work with.

<div align="center">**Section 1B) Within-case Analysis APA Students**</div>

Joe

My first attempt at the interview process was with Joe and was unsuccessful. He was not very engaged in the interview process and would get up and leave his seat or push the photos away, both common behavioural patterns displayed by this student when anxious. Though steps were taken to try to lower the anxiety, such as using characters he was familiar with (favourite movie characters, and himself) and trying to make a fun art

activity, Joe was still having a difficult time. It was a new experience for him and he did not adjust well to the process. Joe's time with me is always in the weight room and never in the classroom. I think my being in the classroom asking him to do more academic activities as opposed to physical activities may have thrown him off, as I was out of context for him. A second interview attempt might have helped or having a teacher he was more familiar with to aid in the process might have improved the effectiveness of the interview. It could also have been the mood he was in at the time of the interview that played a part in his unwillingness to participate. It was disappointing not to have a successful interview with one of the participants. I do not have as strong or as consistent a relationship with Joe as compared to Taylor and I believe that played a significant role in the difference of the interviews as well. When ranking these photos, Joe was not really responsive and it took about 15 minutes for him to pick two photos. However, the two photos that he did choose were in every participants' top three with five out of the seven sharing the same top two as Joe. Of the three positive photos, one signifying active engagement (medicine ball ab twist passing), one happy and fun (both crawling side by side and smiling), and loving and caring (lying in lap), Joe chose the two that were active photos. This may suggest that he enjoys being active and likes the movement opportunities he has. It also suggests that he is not looking for someone to baby him but someone to work with him. I think this message is important to consider when working with this population. Many times in my field-notes I wrote about observing those working with teens with ASD and talking to them and treating them like babies and coddling the youth. Joe's rankings suggest that as I had written in my notes, "he is not looking for someone to treat him as a puppy dog but as a real person." In both photos he

chose, the youth and the worker were working together and in one the worker even gets down to the youth's level to crawl with him. This shows relationships where the youth can feel respected and at the same level as the worker can be more important to the youth than having someone who showers them with affection the way one would treat an infant. In order to be more relational, it seems one should try to view the youth as someone to work with and learn things together, as opposed to being treated like a baby, as I have often seen.

Taylor

The interview with Taylor was a complete success as he very happily answered all questions right away. When ranking the five relationality photos, I asked him to pick the photo he liked the best, and then after that photo was gone, I asked which he liked best out of the four remaining. He began to pick some photos that were not consistent with the order of the youth from the CHARM program. I then brought all the photos back, mixed them around, and asked him who is working the best and he then completely changed the order of the photos picked to the order you see on the chart (Figure 4.1). This helps validate the data as he made a conscious change in his order after I clarified for him that the ranking was who worked the best as opposed to which one he liked the best. It is a good indication that he was cognitively aware of the process and of the question he was answering. Taylor's rankings place a high priority on relationships and bonding with the first two pictures chosen being the ones where the youth and worker are the happiest with each other. This can be due to the fact that he is very isolated and has little to no peers he interacts with. His stressing these photos suggests he is looking for friendship and those working with him should understand the importance of trying to cultivate a friendship

type relationship as a way of improving relationality. When ranking the movie characters, Taylor's rankings show similar tendencies. The first three characters picked were the characters with the most friends or admiration from others. The next three were the most loyal characters. This may suggest an appreciation for longer term relationships with people who truly care about him, as these are the type of relationships that these three characters have in the movies. The last character picked was the only villain on the list. Here is a list of his results:

1. Nemo (big group of friends in the reef, and also when he gets moved to the fish tank)
2. Buzz (new toy that quickly gains the admiration of the other toys)
3. Woody (well-liked and leader of the toys)
4. Slink (dog and best pal to Woody)
5. Marlin (father of Nemo who goes on great dangerous adventure to try rescue his beloved son)
6. Dora (loyal friend of Marlin who sticks with him on his dangerous journey)
7. Crush (helps Marlin to find Nemo but only a short-term relationship)
8. Bruce (Shark who starts out as friend to fish, but then tries to eat Marlin and Dora)

The final part of Taylor's interview was the collage. Taylor was very keen to complete this activity. Of the seven photos, two photos were of him actively doing movement; they were chosen 1st and 3rd. This may be an indication that he appreciates the movement experiences he has. The first four he chose were all of very engaging interaction with who was working with him, and the last three he had significantly less

interaction with the other person in the photo. The photo he chose last had two workers looking at the map with him in the background with no one paying attention to him. This is congruent with the findings from the five photos of relationality rankings, in which the photo picked last by the majority of participants was the photo of indifference. The collage activity supported the early findings of the importance of being present. Taylor was extremely co-operative and seemed to enjoy the process. After using the stickers and markers, he immediately went to put it up on the wall without even asking if it was okay. It was a very rewarding experience for me as I have known this boy for 5 years and this was the most personally we have talked. It was great to see him so happy and proud that he was able to contribute and communicate his feelings to me in a way that worked for him. I left this interview in a great mood and eager to try similar types of interaction in the future.

Section 2A) Cross-case Analysis CHARM Students

For the interviews with the CHARM participants, I have broken down my findings into dominant patterns which I discovered during the analysis process. Most responses were based on the youth's experience and thoughts regarding movie and TV characters, their previous teachers, and the CHARM leaders. I have made a chart which outlines each participant and the information given on each of the three previously mentioned subjects.

Table 4

Interviews with CHARM students

Participant	TV/Movie characters	Teachers	CHARM Leaders
Jerry	Skate movies, I barely watch TV anymore.	Attitude he was actually good like fun she was a lot better cause she accepted me and explained it and actually sits down with me and does it	I guessing cause they understand, understand what I was doing, understand, understand-ed [sic] me, I guess like good like good personality for the kids to get to know and play sports and everything that they do They're always there to help you, basically
Kyle	Batman, GI Joe and the teenage mutant ninja turtles (2) something about them something when I think of them its just pops out at me I just feel like I am one of them like I have	Enh (disgusted noise) I loved Mr. Kurin but like, enh Miss Alymer she was good I thought she was awesome, now here (3) nice she always brought us in stuff, goodies, like so many goodies (3) umhm I hated miss blue oh my god everyone hated her, she	but I loved that they let us do archery I was pretty psyched about that I even got my own equipment the number #1 thing that I liked that someone said that you *caaan* fall off a cliff when we were doing that hike and everything to the campground or whatever OH MY GOD she made me so happy that telling me not to fall

	my own staff like Donatello	used to give trouble, this girl Kendra in our class oh my God, she went to go get a pencil or something or go to the bathroom or something and miss blue just friggin' flipped her off, she said NOT RIGHT NOW and then Kendra put up her hand and she says what now!! And Kendra says she needs to go to the bathroom, she's like not right now, wait a minute, and Kendra puts up her hand again and Mrs. Blue is like what's the matter nowww! And I just found out, I was sick that day and I just found out, but oh my god Kendra said she just wanted to get up and hit her	down the cliff Ya you and Stephanie do it the best
George	Home Alone he likes to set traps like I do, Dennis the Menace he gets in trouble like me, all we do, I do the exact same as	I didn't have to do much work in his room, he helps me with work, almost does it for me almost She would not let me go to the bathroom I just walked out, I had to go I wasn't staying, One time I got caught chewing	I was respected all the time Fun to chill with Get along good together

	both of them (2)

cool 'cause doctors... I like House 'cause he gots [sic] my personality does what I kinda do, makes jokes a lot and tries to be funny all day | gum I had to write 100 lines. | chill

Cause we were both communicating

they were all energetic

Um use a calmer voice than a meaner |
| Reggie | oh I like Spencer cause he's just very he acts like he's smart but he is smart cause he is a doctor so I like him too (2)

Morgan is very loveable he is very protective he is brave um JJ is just pretty (ha ha) | well when I started HS I had up and down behaviour but I turned it around and teachers helped me really well

really nice, we used to do all kinds of good stuff | they have feelings for you they always care about you they always want to be around you

we talked about cars, we talked about soccer, my favourite sport is soccer so we talked a lot about soccer |
| Michael | Rob Dietrich Fantasy | They didn't really ah...like me. | Ya, nice, nice to everyone |

	Factory	Um he was really nice and he basically let me do anything	Nice, and fun
	Cause he's a skateboarder		

Summary

I asked the youth about TV and movie characters as I thought it might give information as to what these youth value in others and what qualities they like people to have, or want to have themselves. An observation of these characters might suggest these youth like characters that have what they may feel they lack in themselves. Two of the older boys (both 17) like characters who are intelligent, confident, and respected though can still be a bit standoffish. Robbie mentions he likes the character House. House is a hot headed doctor who is viewed as extremely intelligent and fights for patients' lives, but at the same time can be rude and abrasive. He is looked up to and respected as he has a big heart but rarely shows it and is a bad boy rebel type as well. George mentions Morgan who is an FBI detective and also very smart. He is noble, brave, strong, protective, caring, and well-respected for his intelligence, bravery, and compassion for co-workers; he is also well-liked by females. George also mentions a character named Spencer; he is a man of extreme intelligence, multiple PhD's, and an IQ in the 180s. He is well-respected for his intellect and caring nature. Though he has superior cognitive ability, he lacks social skills; it is hinted he has Aspergers. This is interesting as George is the youth who made the comment that the youth are "angels with broken wings." This character seems to fit that description as well. These youth seemed to value characters that are highly respected and intelligent. This could be because this is how they want others to see them. Therefore, this could mean it is important for those working with these youth to treat them like this. Show them they are respected and have them start to believe in their own intelligence, as it seems this is what they desire. This same pattern can be seen in the other youth. Kyle, the youngest weakest one (who has a history of

being bullied), went on to talk in great length about all the superheroes he liked (e.g., Batman, Ninja Turtles, GI Joe, etc.). He may feel others view him as having a lack of strength and do not respect him; these are the things he values in other characters as he may wish he saw them in himself. The last two talked about skateboarding video clips. These youth are very passionate about skateboarding and watch movies hoping one day to be able to do some of the tricks they do in the movies. This shows again they watch in others what they wish to see in themselves. Knowing what these youth are watching on TV could give insight into what they feel they lack in themselves. Knowing this can improve relationality and programing. One can start to implement ways to try and develop these values in programs. It also shows that these youth may be focusing on what they are not and what they wish they could be. Trying to foster feelings of pride in who they are and what they do bring to the table as individuals could be a key way to improve relationality with these youth as well as helping develop confidence and self-worth in these youth.

When looking at previous relationships with teachers, most had one or two teachers that they really liked, but also reported negative experiences with previous teachers. The most common response describing teachers these youth liked was that the teacher actually took the time to help the youth one on one. George talked about one teacher he liked and said; "I did not have to do much work in his room, he helps me with work, almost does it for me almost." Jerry echoes this statement when he says; "she was a lot better cause she accepted me and explained it, and actually sits down with me and does it." These two teachers seemed to recognize these youth may learn differently than others. They took the time to treat these youth as individuals and were vested in the

success of the youth. Another common response was that the teachers were nice and fun. This allows for a more comfortable environment to learn. From my interviews, these youth value teachers who take the time to work with them as individuals, care about their success, and are fun and nice. Knowing what these youth value in relationships with previous teachers and trying to model some of these behaviours yourself is an excellent way to improve relationality.

The negative experiences reported seem to stem from teachers not listening to students' needs or requests, Kyle talks about one such teacher:

Oh my God everyone hated her, she used to give trouble (Kendra) went to go get a pencil or something and Miss Blue just frigging' flipped her off, she said "NOT RIGHT NOW" and then Kendra put up her hand and she says "WHAT NOW!!"

Other youth described similar accounts of teachers not giving students any respect or autonomy and creating an adversarial environment where the students really have no say. In an environment like this, often times students are going to look for a way to be heard and that usually takes the form of disobedience. As George described "she wouldn't let me go to the bathroom. I just walked out. I had to go I was not staying." From these interviews, it seems like the youth want a fun caring environment and do not respond well to an authoritative one. This negative reaction to an adversarial climate ties into another complaint brought forth by most of the youth regarding previous teachers which is they do not like getting yelled at. Michael described his relationships with most teachers as; "not good, cause they always kept yelling," Robbie's advice to people working with youth is' "don't yell talk in a normal voice and be calm," and Kyle asks for "no one who is too aggressive." Therefore, it is clear these youth do not like to be yelled

at. In the teacher interviews it is revealed that a lot of this population comes from negative home experiences. Therefore, for other youth who may have had more of a loving environment at home, yelling may be an effective way for teachers to get their message heard. For this group, it is not. If they constantly get yelled at in the home environment and they have low self-worth, the last thing they need is more yelling from their teachers. If you are going to try to improve relational qualities your should listen to these youth and they are clearly saying the best approach is to not immediately get mad but, as Robbie says, "be good to the kids and be nice and talk to them if they are okay, let's say during a meltdown talk to them."

When looking at what the youth said about the CHARM leaders, it was very different from previous teachers. All the participants talked very highly of their interactions with the CHARM leaders. One thing that came up in most interviews is that the youth found the CHARM leaders to be caring and interested in them. Jerry says; "they're always there to help you basically," and Robbie adds to this by saying, "they have feelings for you, they always care about you, they always want to be around you." These statements show the youth felt the CHARM leaders to be authentically invested in them as individuals. These youth seemed to place great value in their relationships with the CHARM leaders and the personalities of the leaders seemed to be important to build these relationships. Most reported about the friendliness of the leaders. Michael said, "Ya nice to everyone, nice and fun." George echoes these thoughts, "fun to chill with (we) get along good together," and Jerry states, "like good, good personality for the kids to get to know." These quotes all attest to the friendliness and positivity of the CHARM leaders. This seems to be really important to these youth as it may be novel for them to be around

these types of people. As said before, some family dynamics may not be positive ones for these youth, and often times their peer groups are not necessarily that friendly or positive either. Being friendly and positive can improve relationality as often times they lack these types of relationships. It also has the potential to demonstrate to these youth how others interact and realize that maybe their peer group is not giving them the support they need and they may try to seek other more positive relationships, and distance themselves from some of the negative influences in their lives. Another interesting pattern that ties into seeking more positive relationships emerged. I asked the youth without naming names to think of their favourite CHARM leader and tell me what they liked about that person. Of the five youth interviewed, three mentioned me, and two of those also mentioned Stephanie (the other MA student who started the program with me). When I asked Kyle to think of a time he felt respected or valued, he said; "yes you and Stephanie do it the best." This says two things: one is that we were the two most vested in the literature and had the most experience in the program, therefore, due to enhanced understanding of TPSR and other related literature plus our reflective experience (we each wrote separate journals at the end of each session), we were able to be more relational than others with less understanding of the literature and less experience with this population. The more important thing this shows is that these youth value longer term relationships. We have both worked with two of the participants for 2 years and the other three for a full year, whereas the other undergraduate CHARM leaders only worked with the youth for one semester. This shows that relationality is something that does not happen instantaneously; it is something that has to be worked on and developed through time. If teachers want to make the most impact on these youth, it is important that they invest the time and try to

nurture longer term relationships. Many of these youth come from family situations that may not be that supportive and lack that consistent positive role model in their lives; therefore, having someone long term that shows they care can be extremely important.

The last and most important discovery was that all youth when asked to think of a time when they felt they were not respected or valued in CHARM, all have similar answers to George who said, "I was respected all the time." Theses youth seemed to really value the relationships developed with the CHARM leaders and all had nothing but positive things to say, as all reported to have felt respected all the time. This is in contrast to the conversations about previous teachers where many talked of times they were not being respected, by not having any autonomy in the classroom or by teachers yelling at them. The relationships with the CHARM leaders were much more positive for these youth and even though there were disagreements and behavioural incidents in the program, all youth still felt respected in those encounters. This may be evidence that showing respect may be the biggest factor in being relational.

Section 2A) Cross-case Analysis CHARM and APA teachers

I am now going to explore the patterns and findings that emerged from my interviews with the teachers of both programs. I am going to explain the similarities found in the interviews of the CHARM teachers and the APA teachers. This summary will be broken down into three parts: part one looking at what the teachers said about the youth, part two looking at what the teachers said about the program leaders, and part three looking at what the teachers said about teaching.

Table 5

Interviews with CHARM and APA Teachers

Name	Youth	Program Leaders	Teachers
Sydney	they get surprised when I apologize or I own up to something how do I say it, a lot of them have, did not have positive role models in there life.. They been ordered around they have had to follow the rules blindly.I have to be real.I won't lie to them.Ya I have to be who I am and I think they see through when you are not. I don't think anyone should ever lie to them because they have been lied to enough are the kids that don't get any of that attention, that is why we have them cause they have slipped through the cracks so WOW I am going to go and someone is going to be all about me for three hours that's super cool	you always had students that have really been kinda interested or engaged ..interactive and that's really cool um charm leader, positive, enthusiastic um (long pause) caring I don't know caring is not the word although caring I guess, maybe nurturing I don't know, supportive ya that's a much better word. Ya and creative..the best people have been able to look at the situation and see the kids, see that they are all different and come up with ideas on the fly about how to deal with them ya that intuitive, and passionate	someone that's 100% interested in knowing them and encouraging them and helping them listen to them..listen to what they say..listen to there lies..they need to be herd..most of the things that are happening in their lives is because no one is listening I think but finding those kinda common grounds and finding a place where you can connect so I don't think I wouldn't say everyone to be like that I think everyone need to find who they are..and be themselves not getting angry cause this kid is lying or trying not to get frustrated cause everything

	every student is different every situation is different	positivity, supportive and challenging...open, open is really important	he says is a story its more about okay what's the story what's he really trying to communicate here
Justine	That they are happy to see that person and engaging...you know its a very genuine relationship that has been built...so its really I think they do connect really easily to people that do show they care um just more confidence in themselves and the beliefs in there abilities to be able to do something and getting along with other people I think it's very self driven now that they don't have to be embarrassed to try, to take that risk and that risk goes hand in hand with having confidence	that they are looking towards the CHARM leaders as believable authentic individuals who truly care about them and they look up to them and you can see that its a genuine commitment to them while they are there and they can feel it. feeling comfortable enough to with the CHARM leader to be able to take risks and not be laughed at and encouraged all the way someone who is approachable, someone who is friendly, someone that puts that time	you have to be very very careful and know the students very very well... and don't compartmentalize that they are all exactly the same because they are not and each day is different, each year is different each profile is different and to treat them as individuals rather then this, this, this, pack of familiar animals because they are not, they are very unique. And uh over time you gain there trust by believe in them, by encouraging them, and um being patient with them that is really important because certain times things are going to work not everything is going to work, trail and error is a lot of it too

	come from family situations and backgrounds that may not be encouraging, and there is lots of put downs, "you are no good" and your this that and the other thing so when you hear it everyday, everyday, everyday and we are countering in on the other end with our school saying no your not no your not, you got this going for you and that going for you, and then all of a sudden you are going to a place called Brock and they're saying the same things saying that I am able to do this, its gotta have a positive impact on these kids it has to.	that they are with these students, on a priority level and not feeling that they are an inconvenience to the day, someone that believes in the students that is encouraging that isn't phony, someone who is really genuinely showing that caring side cause the kids can see phony too right, but if its felt like it is authentic it can have a lot better results with the kids	
Victoria	Ah I think that it is like for anyone, once your successful it makes you feel good the more you feel good the more you want to be successful I think they value exactly the same things as we do...for them is the first thing they need is to be	For *Taylor* and *Joe*, *Taylor* just loves you and Veronica so much I wouldn't say that he likes working out, but he likes working out with you guys and that he likes to come and he likes to have	Um Ah reflection you know its one of those, reflection is a big teacher-speak term and it can mean a lot of different things people are very, like we have to be very reflective with the kids especially when things don't work, and um it tends to be when things do we you

in a relationship that cause them to be less anxious, and then when they are not anxious you have so much more flexibility and after that it is just being accepting and forgiving.

so as long as there kinda open and accepting *Joe* is very receptive....so as long as your respectful of his stresses and problem solve with him... *Joe* and ah you know and ah he likes he likes to have fun, so if your friendly and smiling *Joe* is friendly and smiling if you've got you know your going to try work with him and he understands that then I think you could put almost any personality with him..he just really looks for someone who is ah trying to work with him and then *Joe* will try and work with them like he is very open

Taylor will have to put you through your paces

that routine and he likes just to see you and its just like "oh my gosh" and its more his friends came and his friends do something special with him was the way it was, and with *Joe* it was interesting too because *Joe* was just like oh okay I will go along with this

you look at *Joe* I mean he also got injured doing the routine and for him to be um that distressed and that hurt and still be successful says a lot about how much he trust you because past *Joe* would not have been able to navigate through all that cause just being in that level of distress and that level of pain would have caused *Joe* to lash out or hurt himself or hurt someone else him being able to manage his stress was

don't reflect as much as maybe you ought to

Stress builds throughout the day so you may not have seen the antecedent so you could have an issue at 1 o' clock that was from a stressful issue at 9 o'clock
But what makes it work is the communication you have to be able to communicate very well you got to be able to ah pick up on the ques that the kids are sending and you gotta be very open and accepting.

you need to look at what is working and ah have it work for you first and then while your doing the system that's where you can learn the kids and then add your creativity later so if you have a structure in place that is successful use the structure first build your

first and see if your and see you he will test you and if your good your good and you know for him he really looks for someone who loves him, like he and you know he is looking for someone who likes to do what he likes to do and is accepting.

are they going to freak out if I hit my face and do I have a sucker here who is going to be sad and try and mother me do I have someone who is offended and you know I can I can scare them or is it someone who is just going to accept that that is just what I do and move on he will test you and if your good your good. I would say you definitely need that foundation person does his mom like them, oh they are okay, does Andrew like them oh they are okay

phenomenal and part of it comes from the trusting relationship he has with you

it would have been different had we come in and done the same routine like we would have nevvver gotten, we were laughing when you and Veronica first came, cause Taylor was doing stuff for you that he really wouldn't have the motivation to do for us and its that relationship he has with you guys and he knows and it was pretty funny cause he would, you would get more activity out of him than he would normally do and he got to a point where he was starting to looking forward to you guys and so on the odd Wednesday when you were not here he was looking well where are they and you know where A (does my name

rapport then use your creativity

Joe and Taylor move at there own pace.... Taylor needs to work at his own pace he needs to have some ability to have some ownership over what he is doing and the same for Joe they need to have ownership they need to have an idea of what your expectations are and for us we set them out visually but they need to know what's going to happen so that they can adjust accordingly, so I think if you are trying to be too authoritative with theses guys its not successful because they are not bringing anything to the table they need to bring some ownership to the table for them to be successful and comfortable so um wither its that they get to choose between two activities... if they get some ownership and

		sign)	they know these are my expectations this is what I can bring to the table you can be a lot more successful, but if you try and take too much control its as bad as taking no control
Melissa	as more is expected of them and I think, I attribute a lot to also independence the more independence you try and give them I think you see them grow much faster and stronger when they can sit and do a task on there own

Um a lot of it is communication, a lot of it is if you're relaxed if he is very good at reading people, he is very good at picking up if something is wrong, and he that feeds into him, so if you're upset he will get upset so he tends to you know just if your mellow and happy, he will stick with you | just emotionally they look forward to it, they get moving they seem to be happy each time where um both kind of if they did not want to go you would know that they did not want to go haha, and they do enjoy that, that time so I think its balance between both emotionally you know you are always happy you guys always have a smiling face you give them what they need to do even though they don't necessarily want to do it we know both boys do not like exercise but they seem to like exercising with you, you make it such an environment that its fun and its not a punishment right | I am one that believes that they can all achieve not one student I have ever met cannot achieve

you have to listen, they may not tell you verbally that something is wrong, but if you watch their body movements, you know, you watch their eyes their face, you listen to the noises they tell you

if you can look back and reflect and accept the things that you not necessarily did wrong but you could have done different now that you understand the student better..but reflection is |

| | I think they accept that because I really do believe that they feel a lot more then people give them credit for when they hurt, they all ask for mom.

and you can see when they can just get up and do something on there own I think that is empowering and I think in that aspect you know, and not just academic but in every aspect in there life

you know they always say that these kids don't feel or you never know what they are feeling, but you can tell when they are sad its easy to tell and I think that's where you take your cues on who is good like what kind of relationship...um longer term relationships are good | the trust I find if students don't have trust which ours both do with you and Veronica um they won't do it because they won't feel comfortable if they have trust in you, you can get anything or do anything with them | huge

I think with patience kindness openness and understanding I think you can help

I think for someone coming in as long as your patient and willing to take that time to give them a chance and ah treat them like people then I think they have got a good chance

I was with Taylor earlier and I could look back and reflect on it and say there are a lot of things we did wrong that I now that you know him better you kinda though OH that's why he did this when we did that and I think that only betters you

but that has to be a safe environment

I think that if you are hands on with the |

bring in something that may be a little more difficult for the student that was very hard for him but once it was done he was very proud of it and he got through it and I think its just pushing that student just that little bit not totally out of there comfort zone and having fun with an activity instead of being that type of EA that would come in and say there is your work and do your work and that's it		students spend that extra time with them sit with them do activity with them I think it's vital I think you have to have a good spirit about you. I think if you are too strict and too just a book type person that you don't get the same relationship and bond that you would get if you were more of a free spirit and kinda like a "hey how you doing type person"

SUMMARY

During the interviews, the teachers talked about the youth. Some key patterns emerged. The first was that these youth are looking for people to work with them. Though they may not outwardly show it, they seem to value relationships with others. As Sydney says:

> (these) are the kids that don't get any of that attention, that is why we have them cause they have slipped through the cracks so WOW I am going to go and someone is going to be all about me for three hours that's super cool.

Victoria also talks about this, "he just really looks for someone who is ah, trying to work with him." These youth seem to be looking to build relationships though they may not express or take the effort to initiate. Knowing this, one may understand better that even though the youth may not show it, they value relationships. It is important not to give up to what may seem as indifference by the youth. It also suggests that to be more relational, you will have to take the first step. In my notes I was very impressed that on the first day, one of the CHARM leaders went up and introduced himself and shook the hands of each youth when the other leaders did not take the first step. By the end of the year, this leader had built very strong relationships with many of the youth. These youth like to learn and succeed. They like to be able to learn new skills and accomplish new tasks. Many of the CHARM participants talked about learning how to do archery or learning the new game of Tjouckball; new skills they had not previously developed. The teachers talked of the youth's improved confidence that has come from succeeding. Melissa talks about the importance of learning setting up successful opportunities to learn new skills:

> Bring in something that was hard for him but once it was done he was very proud

of it and he got through it and I think it's just pushing that student just that little

bit not totally out of there comfort zone.

Justine, when asked about the things the youth have gained from participating in the

CHARM program, said, "just more confidence in themselves and beliefs in their abilities

to do something." This confidence has come from being successful in previous

experiences. As Victoria explains, "I think that it is like for anyone, once you're

successful it makes you feel good the more you feel good the more you want to be

successful." Therefore, it is important in interactions with these youth to make them feel

successful. It will improve their confidence which can have many lasting positive effects.

To improve relationality, it is important to do what you can in your interactions with the

youth to make them feel confident in themselves. This can be done by having a strengths

based approach to the youth, highlighting their good qualities as opposed to dwelling on

their weaknesses and giving youth positive encouragement. Justine gives a powerful

statement on the value of positive feedback:

> A lot of these come from family situations and backgrounds that may not be
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> encouraging, and there is lots of put downs, "you are no good" and you're this
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> that and the other thing so when you hear it everyday, everyday, everyday and we
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> are countering it on the other end with our school saying no you're not, no you're
>
> not, you got this going for you and that going for you, and then all of a sudden
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> you are going to a place called Brock and they are saying the same things saying
>
> that I am able to do this, its gotta have a positive impact on these kids it has to.

A common pattern mentioned in all four teacher interviews was importance of a

safe comfortable environment. Other things that were mentioned by all teachers were the

importance of listening and respecting the individuality of the youth. This will be examined further in my discussion section.

During the interviews of these four teachers, I asked the two teachers of the CHARM students about the CHARM leaders and I asked the two APA teachers about Veronica and me, as we ran an APA program for their students. Trust was one thing that was repeatedly mentioned by these teachers. Justine, when mentioning the CHARM leaders, says,

> The students are willing want to engage in whatever activity cause they are comfortable with you guys cause there is so many times that you see the connect that happens with the leaders and the students have that level of trust.

Melissa also shares the importance of trust "the trust I find if students don't have trust, which ours both do with you and Veronica um they won't do it because they won't feel comfortable if they have trust in you, you can get anything or do anything with them". An important aspect to being relational with these youth is creating an environment that the students feel safe in and free to learn. Trust seems to be a major contributor to creating such an environment. Victoria emphasizes this point when she talks about an incident where Joe had an injury to his knee while doing step-ups:

> You look at Joe I mean he also got injured doing the routine and for him to be um that distressed and that hurt and still be successful says a lot about how much he trusts you. For one thing, and ah how much he trusts us to be able to care for him because in the past Joe would not have been able to navigate through all that...and him being able to manage his stress was phenomenal and part of it comes from the trusting relationship he has with you.

She goes on to talk about the week after the incident and Joe having no hesitations to want to go back and participate after being so distressed the week before. Had Joe not been comfortable and trusting of us, he would have not wanted to go back the following week. Having the trust of the youth you work with goes hand in hand with relationality, as one increases, so does the other. Being friendly, enthusiastic, positive, encouraging, and authentic were repeatedly mentioned by teachers as qualities they have seen from successful program leaders. I am going to outline a few quotes that touch on these qualities. Justine, when asked about an ideal CHARM leader she said:

Someone who is approachable, someone who is friendly, someone that puts that time that they are with these students, on a priority level and not feeling that they are an inconvenience to the day, someone that believes in the students that's is encouraging that isn't phony, someone who is really genuinely showing that caring side.

Melissa brings up some of these same qualities when asked how her students have benefited from the APA program:

Just emotionally they look forward to it, they seem to be happy each time where if they did not want to go you would know so I think its balance between both emotionally you know you are always happy you guys always have a smiling face you give them what they need to.

Sydney said "you have always had students that have been really interested, engaged and interactive, and that's really cool." Justine also says that her students "look towards the charm leaders as believable authentic individuals who truly care about them and they look up to them and you can see that it's a genuine commitment to them while they are

there and they can feel it." These quotes highlight many qualities that can build

relationality. Being friendly, enthusiastic, positive, encouraging, and authentic can help

create meaningful positive relationships with the youth one works with. Using relational

skills to form these types of relationships can help youth reach more of their potential.

Veronica and I had spent the last 2 weeks of the summer working with Taylor at a

movement camp and, during our interview, Victoria brought up the first day we came to

his school:

> I think it would have been different had we come in and done the same routine
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> like we would have nevvvver{sic} gotten, we were laughing when you and
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> Veronica first came, cause Taylor was doing stuff for you that he really wouldn't
>
> have the motivation do for us and it's that relationship he has with you guys.

This shows how using relational qualities to build stronger connections with youth can

improve their ability to achieve.

The last area of focus that came up in my interviews was teaching and other

teachers. The patterns that came forth from asking these experienced teachers their

thoughts on effective strategies for teaching underserved youth will be examined. One of

the important patterns that emerged was to really listen to the youth. When asking Sydney

what advice she would give to incoming teachers, she without hesitation responded,

"Listen to them, listen to what they say and listen to what they don't say." When asked to

elaborate, she said:

> When they are talking how are they sitting, how do they relate to you um when
>
> they talk about certain things what do they do where do they look, ya um what
>
> don't they want what do they avoid talking about what do they talk about all the

time.

Body language and avoidance can also tell you many things about youth and what they are feeling. Melissa also talks about the importance of active listening:

> You know they always say that these kids don't feel or you never know what they are feeling, but you can tell when they are sad it's easy to tell and I think that's where you take your cues on who is good like what kind of relationship is good for them.

With underserved youth, many have issues expressing feelings or emotions to others verbally. Therefore, these teachers talk about listening in the normal use of the term but also in more of a reflective way. Often times body language and facial expressions tell more than words can. Picking up on these cues and understanding them can be beneficial to working with this population. An example from my field-notes would be working with Taylor. His ASD would often manifest in self-injurious behaviour. In my observations, this behaviour would be triggered either by frustration and confusion or used as an avoidance strategy. Being able to recognize the difference would change my approach to dealing with the incident. Knowing where the behaviour was coming from made me better able to react to the situation. This has made me more relational with this youth. This understanding of specific behavioural patterns has come from my own personal reflection when working with this youth. The teachers also talked about the importance of reflection while working with this population. All four teachers talked about reflection. Melissa talks about the importance of reflection in learning, "I won't react the same, I guess it's prepared me in knowing in understanding trying to figure out where peoples' limits are, trying to stay calm so ya it's really important the past experience." Knowing

limits can be an important skill and one that is developed through reflection. Hellison (2011) talks about figuring out what you can get away with each day. Depending on the mood of the youth, it can be different from day to day. Knowing when to push and knowing when to ease up is important to developing relationality and this skill comes through reflection. Melissa nicely sums up the importance of reflection by saying:

> I could look back and reflect on it and say there are a lot of things we did wrong that I know that you know him better you kinda thought OH that's why he did this when we did that and I think that only betters you.

> The final pattern noticed was that all teachers talked about empowering the youth.

The two APA teachers talked about empowerment more so in the sense of allowing choice and autonomy in learning whether it is freedom to move around the school or in the classroom. As Victoria talks of how the youth best learn:

> If they get some ownership and they know these are my expectations this is what I can bring to the table you can be a lot more successful, but if you try and take too much control its as bad as taking no control.

Therefore, allowing these youth choice allows the youth to feel you respect their capacity to make decisions and that they have a voice. Working from an environment of empowerment seems to be more relational and beneficial than working from an authoritative environment. The CHARM teachers also talked about creating an empowering environment but they both mentioned the youth changing the approach they have to learning a skill. Victoria talks about the benefits of the CHARM environment and how the kids now have

> more confidence in themselves and the beliefs in their abilities to be able to do

something I think it's very self driven now that they don't have to be embarrassed

to try, to take that risk and that risk goes hand in hand with having confidence so

if kids are willing to try something more than they already have that's showing

they have that confidence.

This quote shows the importance of creating empowering relationships as it can

be transformative in how the youth view themselves and their abilities. It seems that

building confidence and empowering youth can be important to building more relational

interactions.

Section 2B) Cross-case Analysis CHARM and APA Students

Movie Characters and Relationality Photos Rankings

I decided to ask the youth about what characters they like in movies and TV to get

a better understand of what type of traits they admire in others. I will preface this section

by explaining how this idea came about. After one of my APA sessions, one of the youth

started to watch the Lion King. I realized there were many distinct characters that had

very unique personalities. I had also read in Beresford et al. (2004) that it may be best to

make the interview suited more to the likes of the child. I thought I may be able to get

some insight into what these youth value in others by what characters in movies they like

and which ones they do not. I thought this would be transferable to the CHARM students

as well since many of the youth have problems expressing personal opinions and feelings.

Therefore, instead of asking them a very direct, anxiety inducing question (e.g., What

qualities do you admire in others?), I could ask them which movie and TV characters

they like and use these answers as possible indications of the types of qualities they look

for in others or traits they want to have themselves. There is concern that it may not be an

accurate reflection of what they truly value in others as the world of the television and cinema is drastically different than real life, but some interesting patterns did emerge with the participants. As stated previously, most mentioned characters that were educated, respected but had a chip on their shoulder "angels with broken wings" type characters. Examples previously used was the character House, a doctor with a good heart who saves lives but can be very blunt, cold, and standoffish, and Morgan an FBI agent from the show Criminal Minds who is brave, strong, smart, caring but also can be quick tempered with a troubled past. Another youth mentioned Casey Jones and Raphael from the Ninja Turtles. Casey is a big tough guy who grew up on the streets but now delivers vigilante justice in dangerous neighbourhoods. Raphael, out of the four ninja turtles, is the one that is quick to get angry and keeps buts keeps his emotions to himself. It is significant that the youth who was the youngest and weakest and has had a history of being bullied picked all the strong superheroes. All these characters help people and all are well-respected. The two oldest boys liked characters who saved people and had intelligence, confidence, and respect. When looking at the APA students' rankings, similarities emerged. Taylor's favourite character was Nemo. He was a brave, confident young fish that deliberately disobeys his father to leave the reef; he then becomes a hero risking his life to free the fish in the tank. Buzz is a powerful confident space ranger on a mission to save the galaxy who is adored by the other toys. These characters show a lot of similar qualities to the characters mentioned by the CHARM student. They all are well-respected, help people, and are strong confident individuals. These traits are consistent with what a lot of these youth lack; this is how these youth want to be viewed. Enhancing these feeling in your relationships with these youth can help build relationality.

I am now going to examine the results from my relationality photo rankings that I conducted with all the youth participants in my study. I asked each set of youth participants in my study to rank five photos that I had selected. Each photo was taken with consent from a movement camp for youth with disabilities. During this camp, youth are paired one to one with Brock students. All photos were selected as they all were one student and one worker. I picked photos that to me represent various stages of relationality. The photos showed different types of positive interaction (active engagement/working together, the next photo was more happy/fun interaction, the last positive photo was depicting loving and caring where a worker was looking fondly at a student in her lap) and in the negative interaction photos one showed complete indifference where a worker is looking away as a student is crying beside him, another one the student is angry at his worker and trying to choke him. (see appendix E) I thought it would be a novel visual (i.e., not always dependent on language proficiency) and a comfortable way for the youth in my study to express what they value in interaction with others. This chart shows the rankings of each youth participant in my study.

CHARM PARTICIPANTS

Table 6

Rankings of CHARM Participants

ranking best to worst	Robbie	George	Gerry	Kyle	Michael
1	working with ball (engaged)	Crawling (happy/fun)	working with ball (engaged)	Crawling (happy/fun)	working with ball (engaged)
2	Crawling (happy/fun)	working with ball (engaged)	Crawling (happy/fun)	Lying in lap (loving/caring)	Lying in lap (loving/caring)
3	Lying in lap (loving/caring)	Lying in lap (loving/caring)	Lying in lap (loving/caring)	working with ball (engaged)	Crawling (happy/fun)
4	looking away (indifferent/ don't care)	Fighting (angry)	Fighting (angry)	looking away (indifferent/ don't care)	Fighting (angry)
5	Fighting (angry)	looking away (indifferent/ don't care)	looking away (indifferent/ don't care)	Fighting (angry)	looking away (indifferent/ don't care)

APA/ASD Participants

Table 7

Rankings of APA/ASD Participants

ranking best to worst	Taylor	Joe
1	Crawling (happy/fun)	working with ball (engaged)
2	Lying in lap (loving/caring)	Crawling (happy/fun)
3	working with ball (engaged)	n/a
4	Fighting (angry)	n/a
5	looking away (indifferent/don't care)	n/a

Though each student's results were different, some interesting common patterns can be seen. The three positive photos were all chosen 1st, 2nd, or 3rd by each student though the order varied. However, the photo that represented loving and caring was not chosen first by any participants; this suggested these youth are not looking for someone to admire them or look fondly on them as much as they are looking for someone who is actively invested in working with them to help them learn. Both photos that were chosen as number 1 by all youth were photos with active movement where both parties are working together in a positive way. Of the three positive photos, the one most chosen as number one was the most active co-operative photo where the youth and the worker are

working together to complete a task (ab twist with a medicine ball) as opposed to the other active photo where it is two people doing a mirroring action (both crawling side by side). Another note of interest is that of the two photos chosen number 1 by all participants and the one chosen first by most was someone who was in the same age group as the CHARM and APA/ASD participants and the other one is a child who appears to be 6-9 years old.

Of the negative photos, I was surprised to find that most participants found the photo where the youth was trying to choke his worker was ranked higher than the photo of the worker who was indifferent and looking away while the child he is supposed to be working with is crying. Even though the worker made the youth mad enough that he was trying to choke him, it was better than not caring or not paying any attention at all. This shows that possibly the worst thing you can do with these youth is to be indifferent or not be present. It seems these youth would rather you make them mad and still engage in interaction with them than to be indifferent to them. They do not want to be ignored. I found these photo rankings to be very disclosive.

Section 3) Patterns

After thorough analysis of all my data, I noticed how several patterns "clustered" together around thematic areas. The patterns that became clear to me where that: Kids do not want to be prejudged, no yelling, listen, respect, fun, get to know them, empowerment, acceptance, individuality, trust, strength based approach, authentic/genuine, caring, looking beyond first impressions, aspirational (wanting/hoping to succeed), indifference is the worst, longer term relationships, safe environment, flexibility, calm/mellow, hands-on, and encouraging. These patterns will now be organized within three thematic clusters.

Table 8

Patterns

Interacting with youth	Creating an appropriate atmosphere for optimal learning	Practitioners' reflections, assumptions, and beliefs
kids do not want to be prejudged no yelling listen respect fun getting to know them empowerment individuality trust authentic/genuine caring indifference is the worst longer term relationships flexibility calm/mellow hands on encouraging environment	Respect fun getting to know them empowerment strength based approach safe environment	Kids do not want to be prejudged respect empowerment acceptance looking beyond first impressions aspirational (wanting to succeed) reflection authentic/genuine

The two strongest patterns that were located in all three thematic clusters were treating the youth with respect and empowering the youth.

Section 4) Thematic Statements

 After completing my findings and thoroughly examining all data collected, I have been

able to discern three thematic statements that encapsulate what it means to be relational

with youth. These statements are specific to this study and have developed from the

analysis of the information given to me from my informants. The thematic statements are:

  1. Kids need low anxiety relationships.

  2. Kids need novel forms of engagement for participation and consultation.

  3. Kids need us to understand that their behaviours reflect their his/stories.

  I will now give a brief description of each statement and why I believe it to be an

accurate representation of the data given to me from my study participants.

<div align="center">Kids Need Low Anxiety Relationships</div>

  Many of the participants in my study suffer from high anxiety. Often times this

issue can lead to debilitating consequences in social interaction. Youth need to operate

from a base of low anxiety for optimal learning and growth. It is on practitioners to try to

lower the anxiety faced in interactions. Through my research, I have come across some

ways that may aid practitioners in lowering anxiety when working with youth. A term I

like to use is "being present," to me it encapsulates a lot of the patterns revealed in my

study to try lower anxiety. This term means that when interacting with youth you are kid

focused. Listening to the kids may be the most emphasized message delivered by both the

youth and the teachers. This is important as the youth need to feel you care and you are

authentically invested in their well-being. Many of the teachers talked of trusting

relationships being extremely important; once trust is established anxiety will lower and

the youth will be more comfortable to open up and take risks. The teachers also talked

about not being phony. If the youth gets the feeling you are not truly listening or caring, anxiety will rise. Also by being attentive to what the youth is saying allows for flexibility intuitiveness and creativity to be incorporated into your actions. These skills can aid in developing relationality. Other qualities that may help lower anxiety are treating the youth as individuals. When Jerry was asked of his favourite CHARM leader, he said it was because "he understood what I was doing, he understooded (sic) me." Jerry's anxiety was lowered due to the fact he felt this CHARM leader understood him; thus, he was Jerry's favourite. One of the more dominant patterns from the youths' interviews was that they did not like to be yelled at and this often led to rebellion from the youth. This is congruent with the teachers who stressed being calm and mellow. The APA teachers talked about how the kids are very intuitive to your emotions and, if you are high strung and not relaxed, the kids will not be either and, thus, increasing their anxiety and limiting their ability to be successful. Being hands-on can also lower anxiety and improve relationality. In all the youths' interviews a common pattern when talking about the teachers they had positive experiences with was that they took the time and worked one-on-one with them. In all the photo ranking activities, the least hands-on photos were ranked last. These youth need more than here is a ball, go play or here is your work, do it. Often times they lack consistent supportive attentive relationships in their lives which are needed for personal growth. Sydney talks about the lack of attention they received at their previous schools:

> These are the kids that don't get any of that attention, that is why we have them cause they have slipped through the cracks so WOW I am going to go (to CHARM) and someone is going to be all about me for three hours that's super

cool.

One of the youth when speaking about what he liked about the CHARM leaders was that "they are always there to help you out." The need for one to one hands on interactions is imperative to lowering anxiety. Often times when anxiety is high these youth shut down. An example seen in CHARM being the youth is too scared to show weakness in a sport in front of peers, therefore, will refuse to participate, or in the APA program a student could have a "meltdown" leading to self-injurious behaviour. When these are common coping strategies youth have for dealing with anxiety, it becomes clear that youth cannot optimally function in high anxiety relationships. Lowering anxiety seems to be the first step to improving relationality. Chapter Five will elaborate on this theme and show how it relates to the literature surrounding my study.

Kids Need Novel Forms of Engagement for Participation and Consultation

There are some key patterns that lead to the emergence of this theme. All the teachers talked about creating an environment that allowed students to feel success. These youth are not your typical high school students. When forced to fit the mold of a typical student often times failure occurs; this failure decreases confidence and leads to more failure. Once the youth begin to feel success, they want to become more successful and gain confidence which allows them to keep experiencing success. To avoid these feelings of failure, it is vital to create novel forms of engagement for these youth. Many youth recalled negative experiences in traditional school settings. The positive experiences the youth had in previous schools all revolve around teachers who actually took the time to explain things and sit one on one with them; teachers who allowed them to do things differently. The teachers stressed the importance of empowering and engaging the youth

in the process. The kids are saying that they want to be respected and, in the case of the

ASD youth, have flourished with added ownership in their learning. The CHARM

program stresses gradually shifting power of the program over to the youth allowing them

more say in what goes on during the day. Justine explains the significance of the program

to the youth:

> In any given week we do have a lot of activities we do in the classroom beyond
>
> pen paper book and the one thing they look forward to and sculpt their lives
>
> around is when do we go to Brock.

This novel approach of empowering the youth is one of the reasons the kids respond so

well to the program. The youth and the teachers both seem to be advocating for novel

forms of engagement. I feel this study itself is evidence of the benefits of novel forms of

engagement as many measures were taken to try to organize the study in ways that would

best allow my participants to express themselves. The focus on movie and TV characters

instead of anxiety producing questions about personal feelings allowed for more

revelatory data. I noted that during interviews when I did ask personal follow-up

questions, they were usually met with one word answers or switching topics of the

conversation, but the youth were happy to freely talk about fictional characters. The

photo rankings and collage activities allowed for the two youth with ASD to express their

views in a way that worked from them, which I feel contributed to the richness of the data

gathered. The teachers said working with these youth requires reflection and creativity.

These are important for producing novel forms of engagement that can benefit youth.

Using reflection is about seeing what has been successful with the youth you are working

with. Creativity is about trying to apply principles that have been successful to other areas

of interactions with youth to enhance success. Reflection and creativity are the formula for success to using novel forms of engagement. Another pattern that was noticed across all interviews was the importance of building a safe supportive encouraging environment for youth to try to learn new skills. Using literature to see what novel forms of engagement are being used by others can foster ideas and the courage to employ new techniques into your interactions with underserved youth. This is a novel population to work with, therefore, using novel forms of engagement is vital. A big part of the success of the CHARM program can be attributed to reading about Don Hellison's (2011) Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility model. He lays out a novel way to interact with underserved youth. Great insight into working with underserved was gained from reading Hellison's book and it became the foundation for the CHARM program. In the next chapter, I will expand on this theme and compare how novel engagement relates to the literature surrounding my study.

Kids Need Us to Understand That Their Behaviours Reflect Their His/Stories

I believe that people generally act in the way they feel is appropriate in every situation. What people deem appropriate behaviour is based on previous experiences. Our view of appropriate may be different from others but we have not lived others' lives and, therefore, need to respect others' actions. Through my research, it has become clear that this attitude should be adopted by practitioners working with youth. One of the patterns that emerged was that the youth do not like to be prejudged. This really stood out to me when Jerry said, "Like the first day of grade 9 every teacher knew who I was, it's a bad thing." He felt like these teachers were not giving him a chance and were expecting him to fail. This is echoed by teachers when Justine says, "treat them as individuals rather

than this… this…. this….. pack of familiar animals because they are not, they are very unique." Every youth is different with a unique past that defines their present actions. Understanding this is about respecting the youth's individuality. It is accepting and allowing them to be who they are without trying to change them. This allows the youth to feel that who they are presently is a worthwhile person deserving of respect and praise. Victoria, when talking about Taylor meeting new workers, says she notices Taylor tests them, "are they going to freak out if I hit my face, or are they just going to accept that is what I do and move on." He is looking for someone who accepts him for who he is. These youth need to feel you want to work "with" them instead of trying to "fix" them. To adopt this theme into your practice means to be patient and understanding; it means accepting the differences of the youth as many of these youths' strengths lie in their differences. Melissa states, "I believe all students can achieve not one student I met cannot achieve." This understanding will help aid practitioners in working with youth.

After completing the relationality photo rankings with both groups of youth participants and Taylor's collage, most chose photos depicting indifference last, even over the photo of the youth trying to choke his worker. This shows that these kids do not want to be ignored. Being indifferent or being half there and not really caring is the worst thing one can do when working with these youth. They have gotten this indifference most of their lives either at home, previous school environments, or from their peers. They want to be heard; they want to feel they matter. As Victoria said about working with Taylor, "he is just looking for someone who loves him," and Sydney in talking about why her students value the relationships with the CHARM leaders says "just having someone that's 100% interested in knowing them and encouraging them, it's hard to just put, to

attach a word to that I don't know it's really important." Therefore, being relational is about accepting, being patient and compassionate towards the youth. If they act out, accept that this action is coming from somewhere and understand that their past plays a role in who they are and how they act in the present. Not immediately getting angry but showing that compassion to try to work through the issue with calmness is what these youth want.

In our first year of the CHARM program, after the first 3 weeks the program was okay but there was a lack of connection between the youth and the CHARM leaders. Some of the leaders were saying things in conversations after the program about how "bad" the kids were. We then went to their school, got a tour of the tiny classroom the kids cram into, and had a talk with the teachers, and they gave us a lot of background information about the youth and their past histories. The CHARM leaders had a better understanding of where these youth were coming from and how their past is reflected in their present actions. I recall the look on the CHARM leaders faces hearing about some of what these kids had gone through. The next session was like night and day in the interaction between leaders and kids. The leaders were more understanding and compassionate after realizing the youths' past. Since that day, the program had a huge turnaround and strong relationships began to develop. Since then we have done a tour with every new group of CHARM leaders before our first session with the kids. Justine brought up the importance of our visits:

> Coming through doing a tour and getting that visual with where these students are
> coming from, that understanding who these students are that they are going to be
> interacting with, way before they interact with them, I think is important. Doing a

little background homework on who these kids really are will help a lot.

To be relational you have to understand that each youth has a past different from your own so they will respond to situations differently from you. These youth do not need to be yelled at then put in detention; they need to be talked to with someone who is understanding, supportive, and willing to work with them to try to resolve whatever issue arises. In my discussion section, I will expand on this theme as it relates to the literature surrounding my study.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout this study I have made a significant commitment to inductive analysis which has allowed the voice of my participants to be transparent. Emphasis on inductive analysis does not diminish the TPSR framework or other literature; it does, however, allow informants more visibility and presence in the thematic findings, with informants telling you what it means to be relational with kids. The three thematic statements that emerged are a strong expression of inductive analysis. Hellison (2011) first introduces the notion of relationality; he stresses the importance of being relational with youth. He suggests some core beliefs and qualities that can help one be more relational. Hellison's writing is grounded in experiential, observational, and anecdotal evidence from his vast amount of experience working with this population of youth, and TPSR continues to be applied and investigated by numerous researchers. I am in no way proposing to discredit this work; in fact, I am celebrating it in the conduct of a rigorous qualitative study solely focused on broadening the understanding of what it means to be relational. In addition to what Hellison and others say, I wanted to see these insiders' perspectives. I wanted to talk to youth that few want to work with. I felt they had value to contribute to this idea of relationality. The three thematic statements are a consolidation of the collective views of this particular group.

In this final chapter, I will compare the literature and my findings. I will look at the five areas of literature reviewed in Chapter Two of this document (ASD and physical activity, novel forms of interviewing, physical activity and at-risk youth, TPSR, and reflection) and how these bodies of literature relate to my three thematic statements. I will do this via comments that briefly relate my findings to the literature in a general way,

and then I will provide more elaborated comments in which I also incorporate the language and insights of my informants in dialogue with the research literature. I will conclude this document by writing about the recommendations and key insights I have gained through doing this study. I will then write about what I might do differently if conducting this research again and offer suggestions about where I feel further research on this topic should lead.

Thematic Statement #1: Kids Need Low Anxiety Relationships

Co-relative APA. This literature connects as relationality, or the ability to create low anxiety relationships, may affect the success of the work being done. Most research studies are potentially anxiety producing. Becoming more effective at creating lower anxiety in these relationships has potential to increase the success of the research being conducted.

Inclusion and APA. Inclusion can lead to high anxiety situations for those involved. For inclusion to be more successful, a better understanding of ways to create lower anxiety relationships can greatly improve the possibilities of success for a program's participants.

Critical embodiment. Those conducting critical embodiment research typically approach the youth with lower anxiety at the forefront of their research. If kids have high anxiety, it is less likely they will give rich data to the researcher. Critical embodiment research is "kid first" and stresses gaining an understanding of the lived experience of the youth evolved. Critical embodiment research can be a great tool to find what these youth feel is anxiety producing. This, in turn, can better facilitate novel forms of engagement to create low anxiety environments. This particular body of literature is quite resonant with all of my thematic statements.

Interviewing. A main focus of this literature is how to lower anxiety in the interview process. It was also a focus of my study. Some techniques that were used were to encourage a strong relationship and rapport with the youth, such as having the study take place in a familiar context and with familiar people. I do not feel the interview would have been as effective if I had gone to the students' homes as they were used to seeing me at the school, not in the home setting. It also helped having the teachers present during the interview as the kids were used to doing classroom activities with the teachers; I usually only do physical activity with the youth. I feel it was also advantageous to use photos as both youths had been used to working with photographs. Gearing activities to suit interests can also lower anxiety in youth. This was done by using photos of movie characters they know and enjoy trying to make it a fun experience. I tried to pose the questions in language that would be relevant to both groups of students. I did not rush the process. Also, talking about characters in TV and movies to start the interview was an attempt to lower anxiety by easing into the interview process. Many techniques were used to be as unobtrusive as possible, thus lowering anxiety, which seems to be important to conducting successful interviews with youth in these, and likely other, circumstances.

Sport for development. There are many programing decisions that can lead to decreased anxiety. Many sport for development models have lowering anxiety embedded in their programming. Decreased competition, being achievement focused, working on goal setting, promoting a culture of respect, choosing appropriate activities that will allow participants to succeed and having a consistent structure are all examples of how sport for development programming can be designed to lower anxiety in its participants. Sport for development suggests youth learn best in an environment they choose. Given the choice,

I feel most youth would choose a low anxiety environment.

TPSR. TPSR seems to be created with the goal of lowering anxiety at the forefront.
Starting each session with "relational time," a casual time to mingle and throw a ball
around before actually starting the day can ease students into the day while lowering
anxiety. The emphasis on creating a respectful environment is in place to lower the
anxiety of its participants. Hellison's (2011) work on TPSR includes a chapter on
relationality which was the inspiration of this study. This chapter outlines seven traits of
relationality: genuineness and caring, listening, sense of humour/playful spirit,
intuitiveness, vulnerability, and having a sense of purpose. All theses traits were
mentioned by the youth and teachers in my study; these traits all contribute to low anxiety
relationships. He also outlines four core beliefs of relationality: Each student has
strengths, build on them. Kids have positive qualities. Celebrating these qualities is an
encouraging way to promote growth in other areas that may need some work. 2) Each
student is an individual and wants to be recognized as such feeling valued and
appreciated for being who you are helps create a climate of empowerment. 3) Each
student knows things the facilitator does not. Each student has a voice and opinion that
should be recognized and acknowledged. This can build up confidence and encourage
taking more responsibility. 4) Each student has the capacity to make good decisions, they
just need practice. These beliefs were also reinforced throughout my findings and can
contribute to lowered anxiety in participants. Hellison's work on relationality seems to be
congruent with the findings in my study. It appears that lowered anxiety is vital to
relationality.

Reflection. Fostering habits of reflection in these youth will allow them to anticipate,

forecast, and adapt. Building one's reflective thinking skills potentially helps to lower anxiety in all situations. For teachers, becoming more reflective means being more aware of the child's needs and how they may be met. Having reflective teachers will lead to lower anxiety relationships. Schon (1987) talks of the coaching model as an ideal way to learn. This is where the student is free to try and explore in a safe environment, not being told what to do but allowed to figure out on one's own, with some thoughtful insights and guidance. This form of learning, though stressful at first, may in the long run lead to lower anxiety when one is faced with a new task. Brookfield (1995) talks of how gaining a better meta-cognitive awareness, meaning a better understanding of yourself and your strengths and weaknesses, will improve your ability to deal with new situations. Gaining an enhanced awareness of oneself will help to lower anxiety when placed in a new situation.

Thematic Statement #2: Kids Need Novel Forms of Engagement for Meaningful Participation and Consultation

ASD and physical activity. Earlier in this document, I took the literature surrounding ASD/APA and organized it into three main themes. I will now look at how TS#2 relates to those three groupings of literature.

Co-relative APA work. As stated earlier, this group of authors believes physical activity is important because it can lead to a direct behavioural change (i.e., decrease in stereotypic behaviour; Levinston & Reid, 1993; Petrus et al., 2008; Todd et al., 2010). If we are going to test these relationships, we should do it in more novel ways that will allow the participant to succeed more and have a better experience in the testing. If the child enjoys trees, test the youth on a walk on the trails as opposed to a treadmill. This is suited more

to the youth's personal interest; it may be more fun for the youth as well as more relevant. I might suggest more of a shift from what is more convenient for the research to how can this study be best suited to meet the individual youth's needs.

APA and inclusion. Inclusion can have many benefits for all involved. I feel for inclusion to be most effective it must be done in novel ways. Tailoring to the individuality of the youth is helpful for inclusion. Finding ways to modify activities to allow all to be successful is one of the benefits of novel engagement and inclusion. There is strong synergy between these two ideas. Novel forms of engagement can reduce barriers to participation and have the potential to have a broader range of youth participate in a broader range of activity. If inclusion is combined with novel forms of engagement, it will allow youth to participate in activities that are more relevant and meaningful to them and, in turn, hopefully be more successful.

Critical embodiment. This area of research seems to be in full support of this notion of novel forms of engagement. This literature deals with working "with" the youth instead of "on" the youth to gain a better understanding of the youths' needs and wants. Seeking to engage youth in novel forms of engagement is supported by this literature, since gaining a better understanding of youth's wants and needs by engaging youth in the process will help in developing novel forms of engagement that will best serve the youth evolved. It is a reciprocal process.

Interviewing youth with ASD. Novel forms of engagement are vital according to this category of literature. Being novel is often the only way to gather valuable information from this population of youth. This literature directly leads to the success of my study as many forms of novel engagement that were used were taken from this literature. In my

interviews, talking about TV/movie characters, the collage, the photo rankings, and the use of ASL were all novel forms of engagement that further enhanced my data set. This literature directly supports the idea of novel forms of engagement, and, in fact, provided me with options I might not have considered.

Sport for development. The sport for development literature offers pedagogical models like the SUPER model, which use novel forms of engagement to develop skills, like goal setting and leadership, which have been shown to be effective programs for youth. Most of these youth struggle with regular physical activity programs; sport for development provides an approach that is success based, and novel forms of activity, such as journaling, and opportunities for leadership and reflection, are also in sport for development, though not as explicitly as in TPSR.

TPSR. The Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility model is a novel approach to physical activity programming that has been proven to be successful for engaging youth. This is a discovery based approach to learning as opposed to a "telling" based approach. It stresses empowering the youth and allowing them to feel successful. It is also novel in the sense in that it encourages youth to be a part of the process and agents in their own learning. The structure of TPSR is a unique approach to programming with things like relational time, awareness talks, and reflection time. It is a whole new approach to working with youth. TPSR uses novel forms of engagement to better serve its participants.

Reflection. Practitioners who adopt a commitment to novel approaches demonstrate a shift from reflection-on-action to reflection-in-action. Taking what you have learned and trying to apply it in new and creative ways leads to novel forms of engagement; reflection is important in this process. The sport for development literature and TPSR are both

novel as they allow kids to practice reflection skills in a supportive environment.
Reflection appears to be a vital component and is resonant with the notion of novel forms
of engagement.

Thematic Statement #3: Kids Need Us to Understand That Their Actions are Based on Their His/Stories

Co-relative APA. If youth's past physical activity experiences have been awful or
meaningless, their behaviours may reflect that. Youth with ASD often display stereotypic
behaviours which may include arm flapping, noise making/yelling, and self-injurious
behaviour. Co-relative APA work has shown that these types of behaviours can be
reduced through physical activity. Understanding that theses behaviours are based on the
youth's his/story may suggest that these behaviours may be purposeful, or a way to cope.
They may be therapeutic and helpful to the youth and not just useless socially
inappropriate behaviours.

Inclusion. Many youth with ASD may exhibit traits of lack of social awareness (e.g.,
sitting in corners during activities not making eye contact, etc.). With more of an
understanding of youth's his/story it may be that youth are not disinterested; it may mean
you have not found the activity or environment that suits their individual needs. In both
photo ranking exercises, Taylor (youth with ASD) picked the photo depicting
indifference last. This is an indication that this boy, and possibly others, value engaged
workers even though they may not be eager to try new activities, and that the new
activities must best be suited to meet their needs.

Critical embodiment. This literature is in total support of my third thematic statement as a
better understanding of youth's his/stories will lead to better programming and better

interactions with the youth. Critical embodiment literature seeks to gain this understanding. The resonances between my study and this literature are strong.

Interviewing youth with ASD. Youth with ASD often struggle with a change in routine. Knowing this, it is best to approach the interview process gradually. Knowing the youth and building a long-term relationship can make the process easier as the students' anxiety is lowered due to the comfort of familiarity factor. The more you understand the student and know their his/story or how they may act in certain situations will only aid the planning and implementation of the interview. The established history of the interviewer can be paramount. This idea may be behind the drastically different interview results from Taylor and Joe in my study. My relationship with Taylor has been built over a longer period of time and I would say that I understand Taylor and his his/story much more so than with Joe. I think this greater understanding contributed to vastly different interview experiences.

Sport for development. Understanding that kids' responses to structure and fitness/activities reflects their personal experiences allows for expectations of more patience and diversity in programing. Focusing on life skills is important as some youth may be underdeveloped in this area. An explicit focus on life skills while planning allows for transference to their life. As Sydney, one of my informants, states:

> It's built a lot of their self esteem and their sense of being able to achieve goals
> and their understanding what that takes...they have had this experience in goal
> setting; oh I just have to practice, oh I just have to do it over and over again it
> seems so basic but its hard to understand if you are always failing or haven't had
> the support to teach you that.

This is how understanding the youths' history can benefit sport for development programing. Gaining an understanding of what has not been learned can help you better focus your programing to serve the youth in programing. Danish et al, (2005) state that youth learn better in an environment they choose, which would be an environment they feel safe in. Better understanding the youths' history may allow for more knowledge about what makes a program safe.

TPSR. The TPSR model tries to teach leadership and empowerment. Many of these youth do not have any history or experience with these qualities. It is, therefore, imperative to understand this when trying to build new experiences in these areas. A slow supportive approach should be taken. Many youth have consistently been placed in situations where they have not been successful; thus, there is a long standing history of failure. This leads to an attitude and expectation that failure is inevitable. TPSR tries to break these long held ideas. It is important to realize the youth's negative attitude toward not participating may be a defense mechanism to avoid the expected result of failure. Creating a safe, supportive environment and carefully choosing activities that will allow for success are important given the history of these youth. Relationships can also be similar as many youth have been consistently let down and hurt by people who should be the most supportive. This is the importance TPSR plays as it focuses on building mature genuine nurturing relationships. Understanding youths' his/stories will help these relationships succeed. The structure of TPSR takes personal history into account, starting with "relational time" and ending with reflection time. Having these two elements present in the structure of the program takes into account the needs of most under-served youth and are put in place to help youth enhance skills they may not have developed throughout

their personal history.

Reflection

Through features like group time and reflection time in the TPSR model, the youth's personal history is often brought to their awareness. This is done in a more of a revelatory way as opposed to a shame-based awareness. Through this awareness, students may gain a deeper appreciation for who they are and be more comfortable with their idiosyncrasies. An understanding of one's history can better equip one to deal with the present. Reflection can also make kids aware of their history and how certain decisions and behaviours have affected their life to this point. This understanding can make them better prepared to handle a new situation. If the youth can compare the types of relationships developed with the program leaders to their own family/peer group, the youth may start to examine what is familiar (often times negative peer group interactions) to the positive support relationships with the program leaders. Youth can gain an understanding that what has been does not have to continue. There are also many levels of proximal learning that can take place during a physical activity program. Youth can see how the staff interacts with each other in a positive way. For our CHARM group specifically, having role models interacting with girls is "a big thing." These boys come from a class of seven, all males. Their history has allowed for minimal interaction with female peers. Reflecting on how program leaders interact across genders can fill a gap in their history and proximal learning may take place. The structure and goal setting can be beneficial as well. Students can compare where they are today compared to when they started; they can see improvements. Actually seeing tangible success may allow youth to start applying themselves more in other areas.

PA and ASD

Supports

Novel Forms of Engagement

It is important to consider novel approaches when working with underserved youth. Pan and Frey (2006) suggest youth with ASD are more likely to be obese and will get less physical activity per week than same age peers, claiming elementary students with disabilities were half as likely to participate in extracurricular activities (p. 603). One of the reasons they give is that "Youth with ASD are disadvantaged because of societal treatment, rather than characteristics of the actual impairment, and lack of societal acceptance and support" (p. 604). Justine describes societal views and how they should be changed, "most people look at these teenagers being in that horrible age and they're just bad without trying to understand what is going on with them." Instead of just punishing bad behaviour and looking at these youth as "hopeless, bad seeds" we need to take a novel approach and realize the potential for good these youth possess and develop ways to foster that potential. If it is more common to look at the negatives of these youth, what they cannot do, they will never reach their potential. Taking a novel, more relational approach and showing the youth you respect them and recognize that they do have strengths, can better serve this population. Victoria talks about her approach to teaching:

> I am one that believes that they can all achieve, not one student I have ever met cannot achieve. I think it's important to always have the child's best interest at heart. I know that the job can be frustrating at times, trying at times, but I think with patience kindness openness and understanding I think you can help that student success rate, you know, just fly.

This seems like a stance all teachers should have but when working with underserved populations. These youth all reported negative experiences with teachers in traditional education settings. When Michael described his previous relationships with teachers as "not good...cause they really didn't ah, like me" and Kyle, when asked about previous teachers, responded immediately by making a disgusted noise "ergh!!" It is clear that they have encountered teachers who had seen their negative potential first. These youth need novel supportive relationships with teachers who believe they can achieve.

Low anxiety

Fitzgerald (2006) suggests that youth with ASD often times experience more anxiety than enjoyment out of traditional team games. The fast paced, multisensory, communicative nature of team games may pose some challenges for those with ASD. Lower anxiety individual and dual activities may be better received by this population (p. 760). Team sport is often viewed as a socializing agent but Fitzgerald (2006) believes that youth with ASD might develop a greater appreciation for physical activity if allowed to choose activities based on preference, rather than being forced into participation in team games which can often be anxiety producing. A focus on lower anxiety activities may increase enjoyment towards physical activity (p. 761). Sydney explains "I think everyone enjoys being active I don't believe people are not active, some just have not found what they like..... they have not experienced positivity around movement." It seems that lowering anxiety is important to developing positive experiences.

Physical activity can be extremely anxiety producing for a lot of people, especially if it is performed in front of peers. Teens typically place a lot of their self-worth in how they are viewed by others. These youth can feel a great deal of anxiety

towards physical activity as they do not want to look foolish or incompetent in front of other students. Youth's anxiety towards participation can lead them not to try at all. It is important to build an environment that allows the youth to be less anxious. As Justine explains the difference between regular PE and CHARM:

> You see it happen so often when you see them willingly go out and participate, they lack confidence most of the time...their gross motor skills may be a little bit funny or whatever and kids pick and tease in a normal high school, where as with CHARM they're in a smaller setting where it is all encouraging and there is not an opportunity for anyone to be picking and teasing and you start gaining that confidence because everything is encouraged and put in an encouraging way for their own level of growth.

Justine expresses the importance lowering the anxiety level can have for this population. If it is an environment where there is encouragement and youth feel safe to try new things, it can lead to positive development. If the youth are extremely anxious, it is not an environment conducive to growth. Encouraging relationships that lower anxiety can have the potential to make a positive impact on these youth.

Histories

It is important to understand the background and be accepting of the youth you are working with. One way to gain a better perspective of youth and where they are coming from is to ask them. If we are to make environments more inclusive to those with disabilities, Fitzgerald (2006) suggests that listening to youth talk about their past history with physical activity will yield better insights into effective inclusion strategies:

I would suggest there is also a real need to consider the views and perspectives of

young people experiencing different disabilities...In order to effectively engage

with these young people it may be that as researchers that we need to question, or

at least rethink our approaches to data generation. (p. 762)

It is important to consider young peoples' histories in a physical activity context.

The better we understand how they view sport and physical activity, the better we can

develop programs that will be suited to optimal engagement and can help build more

positive relationships. If we do not understand that a youth hates team sports and we are

constantly forcing him/her to participate in such activities, the chances of building

relationality with that youth are slim. All youth in my study mentioned in some way that

they want to be listened to. Jerry suggests "for the leader to ask the kids what they want

to do instead of what the leader wants to do" and Robbie adds ""listen to the kids, they

will get along better if you do." The relationality photo ranking yielded similar results as

both the youth in CHARM and the youth with ASD, when asked to rank the photo from

best to worst, ranked the one of the indifferent worker last even over the photo where the

child was trying to choke the worker. This shows that these youth place high value on

being listened to, which is exactly what Fitzgerald (2006) suggests we do to improve

inclusion practices. Justine describes "a lot of these kids come from group homes or their

parents are not fully there, they just do not get that much attention." Knowing this

history reinforces the need for us to listen.

Contradicts

My results are contradictory to the literature surrounding co-relative APA in the

sense that my findings place a priority on how youth need to feel comfortable and

appreciated. My findings suggest doing work to try "fix" a problem such as stereotypic behaviour may not best serve the youth (Levinson & Reid, 1993; Petrus et al., 2008; Todd et al., 2010). If the movement is purposeful, stereotypic movement can be calming and a way for youth to self-regulate their own anxiety levels. My three thematic statements suggest these youth value a supportive approach more than a corrective one and we should do what we can to create this type of environment. Victoria talked about Taylor and how he often tests a new worker working with him "are they just going to freak out if I hit my face or are they just going to accept that is what I do and move on...he is looking for someone who understands him." Taylor is looking for someone who is accepting of who he is and is not trying to change him. Melissa mentions supply EAs who come in and try to change things that do not make sense:

> You may not understand why they're doing what they are doing in a particular order, right, and they will try and fix it to make sense and we have to say no no you're right it doesn't make sense that, ah, Joe may put on his shoes and take off his shoes three times before he actually puts them on for good but you got to respect the fact that is Joe's process, it gives him comfort.

It is important to respect the autonomy of the individual. Allowing youth to do things in a way that makes sense to them (putting shoes on three times), or stereotypic movements to lower anxiety is being understanding of the youth's histories for these types of behaviours and accepting them without trying to change it. This can go a long way to building relationality with youth.

The work of researchers like Reid and others is admirable, necessary, and positive in trying to get youth with ASD more active and showing the benefits of physical activity.

However, typical corrective approaches to stereotypic behaviour are not supported by my findings that youth need lower anxiety, and need to feel respected and supported for who they are, and not have people trying to "change" them.

<div align="center">**Interviewing and Youth with ASD**</div>

Novel Forms of Engagement

There are many similarities between my three thematic statements and the literature surrounding interviewing youth with ASD. My findings that youth need novel forms of engagement is the backbone on which this section of literature is based. Whitehurst (2006) explains the goals of her study as being "for participation by children to be an enjoyable, non-threatening experience, involving methods that can work with the child's interests and strengths and are flexible in terms of different abilities" (p. 58). My interview process was novel in a way that allowed for youth to enjoy the process. Upon completion of Taylor's collage, he immediately went to post it on the wall without even asking his teacher's permission. This shows he took pride in the experience and it was meaningful to him. The next point made by Whitehurst is that "essential to the process of eliciting responses and in order to communicate a researcher must understand the child's communication capabilities and provide mechanisms in which the communicative exchange can take place" (p. 58). This statement completely supports my findings of youth needing novel forms of engagement and extends to my interviews with the CHARM participants. Starting interviews by talking about movie characters instead of actual traits in people was helpful as the youth seemed more willing to talk about fictitious characters than real life ones. Also, the rankings of the photos for the CHARM participants revealed a key insight that most youth ranked a photo where a youth was

upset with his worker and trying to choke him higher than a photo where the worker was completely indifferent to the youth. This showed that one of the most important things to consider is to be fully present. These youth do not want to be excluded. This insight would not have been revealed if I did not use the photo ranking system. Novel forms of engagement will help include youth in interview processes.

The last goal of her study was "to learn from the experiences of seeking to facilitate the inclusion of children with autistic spectrum disorders in the project" (Whitehurst, 2006, p. 60). Reading this literature prior to my study inspired some of the ideas behind my methodology. I have also gained valuable knowledge from this experience. Later on, I talk about some of the lessons I learned in the hope that some of what I did can inspire ideas in others to pursue trying novel forms of engagement to access the views of underserved populations.

Low Anxiety

Lower anxiety was also a key feature of this literature and one of the thematic statements that came forward in my research. Beresford et al. (2004) mentions alleviating social anxiety was a key component to their research (p. 181). This supports my findings that youth value low anxiety relationships. They outline some strategies to lowering the anxiety levels of those being interviewed. They suggest doing a familiar craft activity, making sure questions were meaningful to youth, and using photographs (p. 182). This is where the ideas of using characters from the youth's favorite movies, making a collage, and the relationality photo rankings for my interviews came from. A focus of my interviews was to minimize potential anxiety. The success of my interviews reaffirms the notion of youth wanting low anxiety relationships. Beresford et al. (2004) also point to

the people and environment as important variables to lowering anxiety (p. 183). Victoria, in her interview, talked about the importance of lowering anxiety:

> All my guys have a history of being volatile, they have a high high [*sic*] level of anxiety. They all are extremely anxious and their anxiety causes them to be maladaptive. They get too anxious, it kind of boils over and then they strike out and for them the first thing they need is to be in a relationship that causes them to be less anxious, and when they are not anxious you have so much more flexibility.

The literature surrounding interviewing youth with ASD supports developing low anxiety relationships and applies to other anxiety prone populations as well.

Understanding Histories

The idea that understanding youth's history is important is supported throughout the literature surrounding interviewing youth with ASD. Preece and Jordan (2010) suggest understanding that due to their personal histories, these youth often do not posses good communication skills and that it is important to "understand the difficulties with interaction youth face and be sensitive to emotional challenges of the interview process" (p. 15). They suggest using pictures even with those with verbal skills often as an easier more effective form of expression. (p. 15). The photo rankings were very effective in my interviews with both verbal and nonverbal students. It allowed the youth to express opinions and give valuable information without having to deal with the stress of communicating responses to direct questions. These youth can offer invaluable information. They have not been given much chance to express themselves in an environment that is conducive for them.

Their history has dictated that often times they have not been valued. Justine explained in her interview; "a lot of these kids come from family situations and backgrounds that may not be encouraging and there are a lot of put downs, ("you're no good!") And you hear it every day, every day, every day." A lot of these youth do not feel others value their voice and often times have difficulties expressing themselves. Knowing this allows one to better approach the interview process. It is fitting that when I asked Sydney about advice she would give to someone about her job, her immediate response was "to listen to the kids, listen to what they say and what they don't say...a lot of the problems these kids are having are because no one is listening to them."

One way in which the interviewing youth with ASD literature was not well applied in my study is that the research calls for consistency in engaging youth. "It is proposed that many of the difficulties of research involving people with limited communication, can be ameliorated by viewing the process of accessing their views not as a one of event, but as an ongoing process" (Ware, 2004, p. 177). I did not do this in the interviews, even though it supports my findings in building relationality. Knowing the importance of building relationality and lowering anxiety, more consistent communication seems like it would have benefited my interviews. However, I suspect that the weeks and months of engagement prior to the interviews may have minimized the negative impact of the consistency concerns in the interview setting.

Physical Activity and At-risk Youth (sport for development)

Novel Forms of Engagement

The sport for development literature is in support of my three thematic statements. Novel forms of approaching programming can be beneficial for youth. Shields,

Brindemer, and Power (2002) talk about switching from a performance climate to mastery climate (p. 552). They suggest a mastery or achievement climate is the best way to increase motivation through a careful structuring of the environment (p. 552). Mastery climates are associated with students using learning strategies more catered to their needs, and carefully planned optimally challenging tasks allowing youth to feel achievement. Mastery climates can lead to positive attitudes in youth and the belief that effort leads to success (p. 552). On the other hand, performance environments can lead to higher anxiety and performance worries, and poorer performance and overemphasis on self-worth being tied to the ability to perform a task, which usually causes anxiety that leads to poor performance or refusal to participate.

Danish and Nellen (1997) highlight this same idea but describe it as switching from a win-lose perspective to a win-win perspective. This would mean not competing against one another but more about competing against oneself and one's own potential (p. 109). Typical PE settings can often be taught within a performance climate. Listening to the youth and teachers in my study, it is clear for these two groups that switching to a novel, less competitive, and anxiety lowering mastery climate will be of great benefit to the youth. When asked how CHARM has been beneficial for her students, Sydney says;

> There is a maturity in their ability to approach being able to learn a skill, like in
>
> soccer or whatever as in before they would just get frustrated and wouldn't try.
>
> Now they have been encouraged to do so and they keep going.

This shows the positive impact novel forms of engagement can have on youth. Encouraging a mastery climate has allowed the youth in our program to not just give up right away when faced with new task, but to have the confidence to keep going and be

able to learn new skills. Shields et al. (2002) say the right climate is important to yield positive development through physical activity (p. 555). Sydney's quote is an example of how youth in my study have grown through the novel forms of activity delivered during the CHARM program.

Low Anxiety

An important claim is made by Danish, Forneris, Hodge, & Heke (2004) when they say that "Despite the claims that participation in sport facilitates positive youth development, there is nothing about sport itself that is magical. Being on the field or the court does not by itself contribute to positive youth development" (p. 39). The effects of participation in sport and leisure activities have found both positive and negative results concluding that it was the individual's experience of sport that determined whether participation was viewed as positive or negative" (Danish et al., 2004, p. 39). Anxiety can play a huge role in this perception. The youth in my study valued the relationships with the program leaders. As Jerry says "they are fun and are always there to help us out" and Kyle liked the leaders because they were "not macho but cool to chill with." These youth want low anxiety relationships. They do not want hyper competitive people or environments. Melissa talks about the importance of structure:

> For Taylor he just loves you and Veronica so much so this year it was more like you guys are back again and it was the familiarity of the routine and he really likes. I wouldn't say he likes working out, but he likes working out with you guys he likes to come and he likes to have that routine, and he likes just to see you.

Structure is a big part of reducing anxiety; therefore, when both teachers make comments about Taylor and Joe not liking exercise but them liking working out with us (Veronica

and I) because of the routine we provided, it reinforces Hodge and Danish (1999) that it is not participation in activity but the individual's experience in the activity that determines whether it is positive or negative. Having low anxiety relationships can make the individual's perceptions of participation more positive.

The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (2001) identified eight features of a setting that can lead to positive developmental. This research suggests careful planning and implementation are needed for positive development. All factors that lead to this environment seem to be focused on lowering anxiety. The youth in my study seem to be advocating for all eight of these features:

> Physical and psychological safety: "I don't want anyone who is too aggressive...you don't want bullies coming in here and smoking people." Kyle
>
> Clear and consistent structure: "I like every day at the beginning we do whatever and play catch and I just ask people and there is always someone like to play." Jerry
>
> Appropriate adult supervision: "He understood what I was doing, he understood-ed [sic] me." Jerry
>
> Supportive relationships: "They have feelings for you, they care about you, and they always want to be around you." Robbie
>
> Opportunities to belong: when asked to describe a time when he felt valued "everywhere, like everywhere...I was respected all the time." George
>
> Positive social norms: "You let us play volleyball like real games tournament games of volleyball like a real sport game." Robbie
>
> Support for efficacy and mattering "they make me feel ah, good." Michael

Opportunities for skill building: "you guys taught us archery, I was pretty psyched about that!" Kyle

Integration of family, school and community efforts: "at SNAP you get to help out with the kids." Robbie

The youth in my study want low anxiety relationships. This is congruent with the recommendations given by the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (2001) for a positive developmental setting. It is interesting to note that all eight recommendations made are matching what the youth in my study are advocating for. This shows that these youth are forward seeking individuals. They have a strong desire for conditions that can lead to their positive personal development. "It seems clear that if such settings and characteristics are necessary, planning is necessary and the activity must be purposefully structured and taught" (Danish et al., 2004, p. 40). They know what they need and the conditions to achieve it; they just need the support. This support must come from us. The more we can plan and simulate a low anxiety environment, the more opportunities for personal growth emerge.

Looking through this literature it seemed that there was complete synchronicity with my findings.

Understanding Histories

One of the main goals of any program should be transferability, which is having the youth use skills they learn in the program and apply it to everyday life. Hellison (2011) refers to this as his fifth level of responsibility. For transferability to take place, participants must believe they have skills and qualities that are of value in other settings. Most underserved youth do not recognize that many of the skills that they have acquired

to play sports, or for that matter being able to cope with the events that have confronted

them throughout their histories, are transferable to other areas of life (Danish & Nellen, p.

109). It is important to understand histories and to let youth know they do have many

useful skills. Often times youth have been told or treated as though they are not as good

as their peers, or due to low self-esteem, they view themselves that way. This makes it

hard to recognize competencies in themselves. Sydney explains "How do I say it, a lot of

our students did not have positive role models in their life." Justine explains how

knowing histories can help teach youth life lessons:

> There is not one student that has come back that hasn't talked about in some way
>
> improving some skills in a health related area, knowing that they can, even just
>
> improve skateboarding because they have had this experience in goal setting oh I
>
> just have to practice, oh I just have to do it over and over again it seems so basic
>
> but it's hard to understand if you are always failing or haven't had the support to
>
> teach you that.

Understanding history of these youth allows us to help them recognize their strengths in a

new way and, in turn, be more relational.

The GOAL and SUPER program developed by Danish and Nellen (1997) stress

that one of the main goals of the leaders is to help their younger peers understand that

they posses valuable transferable skills. A key to their work in teaching life skills is the

ability to assist adolescences in setting and attaining goals, helping them indentify and

transfer physical and mental skills from one domain to another, an understanding of

adolescence and the physical, cognitive, affective, and social/interpersonal changes they

deal with (p. 110). Listening to and understanding the youth is the first step (p. 111). The

youth in my study support Danish and Nellen (1997), as George says, "listen to the kids they will get along better if you do" and Jerry describing his favorite CHARM leader "he understands me, understood what I was doing." Knowing the youth's history is about understanding the importance of support and encouragement in helping youth realize skills that they do have and may not see. Sydney describes how CHARM has allowed youth to develop transferability in skill development:

> There is a maturity in their ability to approach um being able to learn a skill, like in soccer or whatever as in before they would just get frustrated and wouldn't try now they've been encourage to do so...there are also changes in ways that they interact with each other, like they might be more encouraging to each other than they used to be, those kinds of things.

Knowing histories gives us a better understand of what these youth need and how we can help them developed life skills through physical activity.

Reflection

Novel Forms of Engagement

According to Schon (1987), there are two types of reflection: reflection-on-action which is looking back at a situation and examining your actions, and the outcome and thinking of how it turned out and other possible alternatives (p. 26). There is also reflection-in-action which is reflecting in the middle of a situation and having your thinking reshape your current state of actions (p. 26). The more reflections on-action one does, the more competent one becomes at decision making in the moment or reflecting-in-action (p. 26). When one thinks of novel forms of engagement, it seems as though both the skills of reflection-on and in-action become important. Practicing novel forms of

engagement is practicing using reflection skills. It involves looking at what has not been working with these youth and why, and blending that reflective information with what has worked and creating new approaches that may better serve the youth one is working with. Victoria talks about the importance of reflection when working with underserved youth:

> I was with Taylor earlier and I could look back and reflect on it and say there are a lot of things we did wrong that I now that you know him better you kinda though OH that's why he did this when we did that and I think that only betters you if you can look back and reflect and accept the things that you not necessarily did wrong but you could have done different now that you understand the student better.

Once practitioners begin to develop a habit of reflection, then it can lead to more successful implementation of novel forms of engagement and the youth will benefit. As Melissa explains:

> Bring in something that may be a little more difficult for the student, for instance we have one that is not tactile and I brought in clay.... put your hand in the clay and that was very hard for him but once it was done he was very proud of it and he got through it, and I think it's just pushing that student just that little bit not totally out of their comfort zone and having fun with an activity instead of being that type of EA that would come in and say there is your work and do your work and that's it.

Reflecting-on-action allows one to plan novel approaches. Melissa provided a comfortable environment to allow a student to succeed and feel pride in himself for

completing the task. This task was carefully chosen as something she felt the youth would be able to achieve based on past experiences. She did not choose something that would have been too overwhelming for the student and this novel approach allowed the student to feel success in completing a new activity.

Reflection-in-action is also important for being relational with youth. Justine mentions that a great quality of a CHARM leader is to be "intuitive." Sydney elaborates on being an effective CHARM leader by saying:

> and creative, the best people have been able to look at the situation and see the kids, and see that they are all different and be able to come up with ideas on the fly (i.e., in the moment) about how to deal with them.

She is talking about someone with a high competency in reflecting-in-action, which Schon (1987) would argue can be developed through consistent reflecting-on-action (p. 26). Working with this population of youth is unpredictable. Being relational can be developed by being able to adjust and in the moment to meet the needs of individual youth.

Low Anxiety

The literature relating to reflection supports my finding that youth need low anxiety relationships. Schon (1987) suggest the coaching model as an ideal way to learn:

> Perhaps then, learning depends...on freedom to learn by doing in a setting that is relatively low in risk, with access to coaches...who help them, by "the right kind of telling," to see on their own behalf and in their own way what they need most to see. (p. 17)

Youth need practice making decisions in a supportive low anxiety environment with relational workers to guide the youth through self-discovery. In CHARM there was one youth who had very high anxiety. He would not participate in most activities and rarely communicated with anyone. Throughout the term, he was encouraged to communicate and develop a strong one-on-one relationship with his worker where he was able to work on communicating in a low anxiety situation. In my culminating interview when asked what, if anything, he had learned from participating in the CHARM program, he responded, "aaa ya a um, me not to um get like ah anxious with what I am saying." This shows the usefulness of Schon's (1987) coaching model as the youth was able to develop his communication skills due to a low anxiety relationship with a positive mentor. Melissa supports this idea of letting youth experience things and making their own discoveries instead of telling them what to do, "they need to bring some ownership to the table for them to be successful and comfortable...but if you try to take too much control it is as bad as taking no control." Schon (and Melissa) suggest allowing opportunities for youth to discover things on their own as opposed to "taking too much control."

The relationality photo ranking also suggests that the youth value these types of coaching relationships. The photo that was chosen first most by both groups of youth was the photo that depicted active engagement with the youth and worker. More youth valued the active/engaged photo over both the happy/fun and loving/caring photo. This is interesting as the youth seem to want to learn and grow as they recognized the importance of the coaching model Schon (1987) talks about as the ideal way to learn. The youth want and value relationships that can help them grow.

Understanding Histories

There is a long held adage that knowledge is power. Stephan Brookfield (1995) believes this to be true and that a greater understanding of the literature surrounding critical reflection can help one deepen their skills as a reflective practitioner (p. 207). He states that a better understanding of the literature helps in three ways. Interestingly enough, parallels can be drawn to the three thematic statements that I developed from my data analysis. The first benefit he mentions is that the literature will "help us understand what is happening to us as we start to question assumptions and start to challenge taken for granted ways of thinking and working" (p. 207). The youth said they need novel forms of engagement which for us would be challenging the status-quo as Brookfield mentions. Understanding the literature surrounding novel forms of engagement will help practitioners be reflective and come up with new ideas and approaches to try with the youth they serve.

The next point Brookfield (1995) mentions as a positive of understanding the literature of critical reflection is that it "alerts us to some of the pitfalls this involves and suggest ways in which we can keep the risks of critical reflection to a minimum" (p. 207). The theme of lowering the anxiety of the youth meshes with this point, the higher the risk the higher the anxiety. Understanding the literature allows us to find ways to keep the risks down. Working with this population of youth can be stressful to the most seasoned professionals. If we are aware of some of the pitfalls, we can be more prepared which may, in turn, allow both practitioners and youth to have decreased levels of anxiety.

The final point mentioned is that studying the literature "more practically, offers a wealth of insights, approaches and methods for anyone seeking to become more critical"

(Brookfield, 1995, p. 208). This supports the notion that the youth need us to understand their histories. The more insights and information we know about the youth, the better we will be able to apply the knowledge we have and deal with situations in a more understanding and meaningful way.

Brookfield (1995) conveys the importance of understanding the literature of critical reflection. His reasoning is congruent with my three thematic statements, and this leads to two important insights. The first is that for us as practitioners, we might look at the three thematic statements not only as the needs of the youth but as needs for ourselves. Brookfield endorses understanding the literature of critical reflection as it can help us in three ways which were in sync with the youth's three thematic statements. Brookfield and the youth both agree with each other on the benefits one can gain from novel engagement, lower anxiety, and respect for personal history.

As I have begun to look at these statements reflectively, I am noticing that they may be a blueprint for me, personally, to function optimally when working with this population. I feel I am at my best when I am inspired. Trying new things and new approaches brings out more passion. Trying novel approaches allows me to stay fresh. These types of experiences reaffirm my commitment to teaching. Low anxiety is also very important to me as well. In my journal, there were times when I felt disappointed in my actions. These events seemed to be on days when multiple things were dysfunctional. As a program leader, I take on responsibility for everything that goes on in a given session. There have been times when I can say I have let this anxiety get to me and it has resulted in my not handling situations correctly. I can say that, as a practitioner, I function best in a low anxiety environment. When examining what the final statement means to

my personal practice, its importance is obvious. Understanding your own personal history is extremely important. Like most people, I can get caught in phases where I feel like I am on autopilot going through the motions. It is these times when I have reflected on my own personal history, where I have come from, and examined why I am here running these programs, asking myself important questions, like, Why am I here? What do I want to accomplish? And, am I on the right path to do so? These instances can serve as great motivation and have refocused me on my goals and, thus, improved my ability to be fully present when working with youth. The three thematic statements emerged from my study as what these two groups of youth need, but it has become clear that they do not just apply to the youth. They are also important for practitioners to reflect on when thinking about their own teaching and learning.

The second point I discovered was that the youth in my study seem to have a good understanding of what they need. What they deem important and the advice they are trying to give us is the same advice Brookfield (1995) is trying to give us. These youth are experts in their own right; they know what they need from us to better themselves, and they need us to provide it. The youth are saying the same things as the professionals. If this study has taught me anything, it is that we should listen!

Insights and Recommendations

The biggest insight I gained through this experience was the impact of what we can do. Hearing the youth and the teachers' talk of how important the two programs were to the students really opened my eyes. I felt I did a good job in running both programs but, retrospectively, knowing now how much value the youth placed in the programs, I know I could have done better. I could have tried harder, devoted more time to planning and

programing, been more engaged, and not missed an opportunity to have a teachable moment. I could have spent more time working on relationality and being present with the youth. Relationality is very complex and has to be at the forefront of a practitioner's attention at all times. No matter how effective the structure of the program is, it will not be effective unless it is being delivered by people who know how to be relational with youth. Relationality is more than words. It is "being fully present" in all aspects of my interactions with youth, and understanding the impact of the thematic statements that emerged from the analysis of the data given to me by my informants. Teachable moments are always there. Developing a consistent habit of reflection can lead to an enhanced awareness of these instances.

Interviews are very powerful tools. I would suggest to program leaders to conduct formative interviews mid-way through the program. As stated above, if I had the knowledge I had gained throughout the interview process, I feel I could have been more effective at programing and facilitating the program. An added benefit to interviewing is that it empowers the youth in your program. All but one of the youth interviewed were eager and excited to be interviewed. It is an excellent way to show you value and respect each individual and it can give the youth more confidence and increase their sense of importance. The information you receive can be invaluable to the future success of your program. I stress this because I, as a novice interviewer, went into the experience with an indifferent attitude. I was amazed to see how much I enjoyed the process. It was an informative and energizing experience which I did not expect.

Program leaders have to aware of the "bigger picture" when it comes to "bad behaviour;" whether it is Taylor with ASD hitting himself or throwing something or

George running away. These behaviours are not just to be bad; they are trying to tell us something or are a way of dealing with an issue that they may not know of a better way to deal with. Importance should be on understanding behaviour instead of punishing.

Language of models like TPSR and Sport for Development are excellent foundations, but they have to be seen by youth as being enacted in the actual programing. Initially, we talked about leadership and empowering the youth and there was little transference. We then switched to a Sport-Ed model of programing allowing youth to be coaches and run mini practices. It was then we started to see more leadership being transferred to other areas of the program. In the APA program, I made a switch to planning the day in advance to asking the youth what they wanted to do, and their attitudes towards the lessons began to change and it appeared to me the youth began to feel more confident. It is easy to talk about but harder to give up control.

Honesty and authenticity cannot be overestimated; they are the basis of trust and respect and contribute to low anxiety relationships. Over the 2 years of the program and working with close to 40 university age mentors, it became clear to me who was honestly and authentically invested in the youth and who was physically there but not always "present." The youth always seemed to gravitate towards the ones who are most invested in them. Though on the surface some may be "more cool" to the students at first, little meaningful engagement between the youth occurred; whereas, the leaders who may not have been the funniest or the best athletes often seem to have the youth engaged in more meaningful conversations. This is true in the APA program as well. There are eight EAs and it is very obvious who the youth's favourites are and it is the ones that are the most authentic. In my interactions with youth, I have found that when I have been honest (e.g.,

in one-on-one conversations, when relevant, I have brought up my past with some of the youth, where I was honest with the youth about who I was at their age. These conversations seemed to be the most meaningful to the youth. There was one youth I had a talk with after he had a verbal confrontation with a peer. This youth had trouble remembering names of not only the CHARM leaders but his fellow students. He got into a similar situation approximately 9 months later and he quoted the advice I had given him 9 months ago. Had I not been honest and genuine with this student, I do not feel the advice I gave him would have been as impactful. To be open, honest, and vulnerable may be the ultimate sign of respect. I think the students gravitate towards theses types of "real" interactions. Many in their his\stories may not have had people that treat them with the same respect. Recognizing these moments and what will be seen as "real" and genuine to each student requires "being present" and I think developing habits of reflection helps one gain this understanding.

For me, now writing this recommendation section, it consistently brings me back to Schon (1987) and reflection. It is never too late to reflect-on-action and have it translate into teachable moments. I know the next opportunity I have to work with youth, I will take the lessons I have learned through this experience and it will only better me as a practitioner. I am being taught lessons now by reflecting on experiences I have had over the past 2 years. It is never too late to turn reflection-on-action into teachable moments. I feel the more you develop habits of reflection, the more these teachable moments come to your awareness; the more synchronicity there is between your experiences and your learning.

If I Were to Conduct This Study Again

A limitation to this study and point of disappointment for me was the interview process with Joe. In the literature, it suggested going through the interview process twice, and I had fully intended to. I ran into a few complications with scheduling and picture organization that prohibited me from conducting a second interview. With better planning, this could have been avoided. I feel Joe had all the potential to be successful and had I gone again, I feel he would have been more comfortable with the process and his data could have enhanced my study. I also would have given more exploration and development of the process of using the movie characters especially with the youth with ASD. Having the youth watch the movie before I come in or developing a list of traits and have the students match with the pictures of the characters are some possible modifications.

During the coding process, I feel that most of my salient information came from my revelatory phrases. Next time I would be more selective with my coding and not focus as much on keywords or idiom. I felt the interviewing yielded my best data and that the revelatory phrases were the most helpful in noticing and organizing patterns, and further developing these into themes and thematic statements.

What Next

Relationality is a thick concept in itself and is worthy of rich in-depth study. When reading Hellison's (2011) book on TPSR, this concept really jumped out to me as an area of interest. There are other elements to the TPSR model that are equally as thick that have similar potential to be dissected and looked at as an entity worthy of study. The idea of a safe environment was brought up numerous times by the youth and the teachers:

What constitutes a safe environment? How is it best created? What role does relationality play? Are all questions worthy of inquiry?

Respect is a major component of the TPSR model and I feel its importance warrants further investigation. Another area of TPSR that can be expanded and studied as a singular concept is the notion of embeddedness and what are keys to successful implementation of this concept.

The last thing I would like to see done is to take the three thematic statements that emerged from this study and actually implement them as part of leadership training of new program leaders and evaluate the thematic statements in practice. This study has shown that these youth do not want someone to simply tell them what to do, or shower them with affection; but neither do they want to be ignored. Indeed, they crave meaningful relationships with people who are supportive and invested in their growth and well-being. This can be encapsulated by the familiar phrase: Don't walk behind me: I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me: I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend. Far from being cliché, this phrase underscores the complexity and nuance of relationality. Being "a friend in relation" is not reducing a practitioner to the status of a same-aged peer. Rather, it asks the practitioner to consider, in a deeply attentive fashion, what does it mean to be relational with kids?

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Appendix: A

Brock

Social Science Research Ethics Board

Certificate of Ethics Clearance for Human Participant Research

DATE:	12/13/2011
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:	CONNOLLY, Maureen - Centre For Teaching, Learning And Education
FILE:	11-088 - CONNOLLY
TYPE:	Masters Thesis/Project STUDENT: Andrew Fortnum
	SUPERVISOR: Maureen Connolly

TITLE: Examining the role a diversity-based activity program has on the development of personal and social responsibility in an under-served youth population

ETHICS CLEARANCE GRANTED

Type of Clearance: NEW   Expiry Date: 12/31/2012

The Brock University Social Sciences Research Ethics Board has reviewed the above named research proposal and considers the procedures, as described by the applicant, to conform to the University's ethical standards and the Tri-Council Policy Statement. Clearance granted from 12/13/2011 to 12/31/2012.

The Tri-Council Policy Statement requires that ongoing research be monitored by, at a minimum, an annual report. Should your project extend beyond the expiry date, you are required to submit a Renewal form before 12/31/2012. Continued clearance is contingent on timely submission of reports.

To comply with the Tri-Council Policy Statement, you must also submit a final report upon completion of your project. All report forms can be found on the Research Ethics web page at http://www.brocku.ca/research/policies-and-forms/research-forms.

In addition, throughout your research, you must report promptly to the REB:
   a) Changes increasing the risk to the participant(s) and/or affecting significantly the conduct of the study;
   b) All adverse and/or unanticipated experiences or events that may have real or potential unfavourable implications for participants;
   c) New information that may adversely affect the safety of the participants or the conduct of the study;
   d) Any changes in your source of funding or new funding to a previously unfunded project.

We wish you success with your research.

Approved:

Jan Frijters, Chair
Social Sciences Research Ethics Board

Note: Brock University is accountable for the research carried out in its own jurisdiction or under its auspices and may refuse certain research even though the REB has found it ethically acceptable.

If research participants are in the care of a health facility, at a school, or other institution or community organization, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the ethical guidelines and clearance of those facilities or institutions are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of research at that site.

Appendix: B

Informed Consent

STUDENT (CHARM)

Date: March, 21, 2012

Title of Study: Being Relational With Under-served Youth: A Reflective Process
Principal Investigator: Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, Faculty of Applied Health
Science, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Maureen Connolly, Professor, Faculty of Applied Health Science,
Brock University, Brock University

INVITATION

I, Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, from the Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock
University, Brock University, invite you to participate in a research project whose
purpose is to examine what does it means to be relational with under-served youth. What
individual qualities are important, and how can individuals improve on their relationality.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

To take part in this study you will be invited to attend the CHARM program on a weekly
basis. As part of your regular participation in CHARM come certain expectations. You
are expected to complete a reflective journal each week, and try your best in all activities
planned. If you consent to participate in this study you will not only complete the weekly
expectations of the CHARM program you will also be asked to participate in a 20 minute
interview after the program is complete, in which you will be asked about your
experiences at CHARM. In addition to the interview to be a part of my study I am also
requesting your permission to be allowed access to your reflective writing done at the
beginning and end of the program and your journal entries done weekly in the CHARM
program, I may anonymously (you will be asked to provide a pseudonym that will be
used in all written documents) use some of your writing as data for my study. The final
data I will be collecting is from my own field-notes, these will be written by me after
each CHARM session. These notes will not be taken "on" students but will be reflective
summaries in general terms only. In order to be a study participant, you must have
attended at least 8 weeks of CHARM. The NTEC section 23 classroom teachers will be
invited to participate in an interview and asked about their views on the CHARM
program, but will not be asked about any specific students.

The expected duration of this study will be 2 months long.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS

This study will potentially serve to increase the literature on ways to improve being

relational with kids, so that meaningful relationships can be better achieved. It may add support to the benefits of physical activity programming for under-served youth. My findings may better help professionals working in this field to understand what it means to be relational with kids, and hopefully help to create more meaningful activity programming for under-served youth.

 This study may challenge you to step out of your comfort zones and may bring on emotional stress. I will be asking personal questions and participants will be expressing these answers openly in an interview setting which may cause some anxiety. To manage this risk teachers from the section 23 classroom have agreed to be available at each CHARM session and will be accessible post interview, should you wish to discuss your emotional responses.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidential survey/questionnaire:

All information you provide is considered confidential; your name will not be included or, in any other way, associated with the data collected in the study. Participants will be given pseudonyms for all interview and observational data included in my study. Furthermore, because our interest is in the average responses of the entire group of participants, you will not be identified individually in any way in written reports of this research.

Interview with Member Check:

The information you provide will be kept confidential. Your name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study; however, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Within one month of the interview being completed, I will come to your NTEC classroom and show you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or clarify any points that you wish.

The research data will not be used for any secondary purposes.

It is my intention to allow only my final report to be viewed by other colleagues and researchers, which will be coded to protect confidentiality.

All data pertaining to my study; written notes and audio tapes will be stored in my apartment. My typed information will be saved on the hard-drive of my password protected laptop, and backed up on a secondary flash drive.
 All data will be deleted and shredded upon completion of the study. Access to this data will be restricted to me and my supervisor, Maureen Connolly.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION
You will continue to participate in all aspects of the CHARM program. My research

project only focuses on your journals, your reflections, and your interview. The journals and reflections are part of the regular CHARM programming, but can only be used in my research if consent is given. The interview is not part of the CHARM programming and will only take place if you consent to participate. While the program is running I will not be aware if you have given consent or declined to participate in the study to avoid participant coercion. You are not obligated to take part in this study as future participation in the CHARM program will not be influenced in any way by your decision to participate or not. Participation in this study is voluntary. If you wish, you may decline to answer any questions or participate in any component of the study. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time and may do so without any penalty, your ongoing participation in CHARM will not be effected by any of your choices about participating in the research project. To withdrawal simply come talk to me or your teacher whoever you feel more comfortable talking to, and say you do not want to participate anymore.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS
Results of this study may be published in professional journals and presented at conferences. Feedback about this study will be available. Upon completion of my results I will produce a simplified summary report and give a presentation at NTEC for all those interested, also my full document will be available if any participants wish to view the whole report. For more information on this matter you may contact me personally af05dq@brocku.ca

CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE
If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact Principal investigator Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Maureen Connolly, Professor, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University, Brock University using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University [insert file #]. If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca.

Thank you for your assistance in this project. Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

CONSENT FORM
I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information-Consent Letter. I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time.

Name: _____

Signature: _____
Date: _____

TEACHERS

Date: March, 21, 2012

Title of Study: Being Relational With Under-served Youth: A Reflective Process
Principal Investigator: Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, Faculty of Applied Health
Science, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Maureen Connolly, Professor, Faculty of Applied Health Science,
Brock University, Brock University

INVITATION

I, Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, from the Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock
University, Brock University, invite you to participate in a research project whose
purpose is to examine what does it means to be relational with under-served youth. What
individual qualities are important, and how can practitioners improve on their
relationality.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

To take part in this study you will be asked to participate in an interview after the
CHARM program is complete, in which you will be asked about your views concerning
the program. Participation will consist of a 30-60 minute interview.

The expected duration of this study will be 2 months long.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS

This study will potentially serve to increase the literature on ways to improve being
relational with kids, so that meaningful relationships can be better achieved. It may add
support to the benefits of physical activity programming for under-served youth. My
findings may better help professionals working in this field to understand what it means
to be relational with kids, and hopefully help to create more meaningful activity
programming for under-served youth.

 There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Interview with member check:

All information you provide is considered confidential; your name will not be included or,
in any other way, associated with the data collected in the study. Participants will be
given pseudonyms for all interview and observational data included in my study.
Furthermore, because our interest is in the average responses of the entire group of
participants, you will not be identified individually in any way in written reports of this

research.

It is my intention to allow only my final report to be viewed by other colleagues and researchers, which will be coded to protect confidentiality.

All data pertaining to my study; written notes and audio tapes will be stored in my apartment. My typed information will be saved on the hard-drive of my laptop, and backed up on a secondary flash drive.
 All data will be deleted and shredded upon completion of the study. Access to this data will be restricted to me and Maureen Connolly.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION
Participation in this study is voluntary. If you wish, you may decline to answer any questions or participate in any component of the study. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time and may do so without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. You are not obligated to take part in this study as future participation in the CHARM program will not be influenced in any way by your decision to participate or not.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS
Results of this study may be published in professional journals and presented at conferences. Feedback about this study will be available. For more information on this matter you may contact me personally af05dq@brocku.ca

CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE
If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact Principal investigator Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Maureen Connolly, Professor, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University, Brock University using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University [insert file #]. If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca.

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CONSENT FORM
I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information-Consent Letter. I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

PARENT OR GAURDIAN (CHARM)

Date: March, 21, 2012

Title of Study: Being Relational With Under-served Youth: A Reflective Process
Principal Investigator: Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, Faculty of Applied Health
Science, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Maureen Connolly, Professor, Faculty of Applied Health Science,
Brock University, Brock University

INVITATION

I, Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, from the Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock
University, Brock University, invite you to participate in a research project whose
purpose is to examine what does it means to be relational with under-served youth. What
individual qualities are important, and how can practitioners improve on their
relationality.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

To take part in this study your child will be invited to attend the CHARM program on a
weekly basis. As part of their regular participation in CHARM come certain expectations.
They are expected to complete a reflective journal each week, and to try their best in all
activities planned. If you consent for your child to participate in this study they will not
only complete the weekly expectations of the CHARM program they will also be asked
to participate in a 20 minute interview after the program is complete, in which they will
be asked about their experiences at CHARM. In addition to the interview to be a part of
my study I am also requesting your permission to be allowed access to their reflective
writing done at the beginning and end of the program and their journal entries done
weekly in the CHARM program, I may anonymously (your child will be asked to provide
a pseudonym that will be used in all written documents) use some of their writing as data
for my study. The final data I will be collecting is from my own field-notes, these will be
written by me after each CHARM session. These notes will not be taken "on" students but
will be reflective summaries in general terms only. In order to be a study participant, your
child must have attended at least 8 weeks of CHARM. The NTEC section 23 classroom
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CHARM program as a whole, but will not be asked about any specific students.

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POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS

This study will potentially serve to increase the literature on ways to improve being relational with kids, so that meaningful relationships can be better achieved. It may add support to the benefits of physical activity programming for under-served youth. My findings may better help professionals working in this field to understand what it means to be relational with kids, and hopefully help to create more meaningful activity programming for under-served youth.

This study may challenge the participant to step out of their comfort zones and may bring on emotional stress. I will be asking personal questions and participants will be expressing these answers openly in an interview setting which may cause some stress. To manage this risk teachers from the section 23 classroom have agreed to be available at each CHARM session and will be accessible post interview, should they wish to discuss your emotional responses.

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The information provided will be kept confidential. Your child's name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study; however, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Within one month of the interview being completed, I will come to NTEC and show your child a copy of the transcript to give an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of the conversation and to add or clarify any points that you wish.

The research data will not be used for any secondary purposes.

It is my intention to allow only my final report to be viewed by other colleagues and researchers, which will be coded to protect confidentiality.

All data pertaining to my study; written notes and audio tapes will be stored in my apartment. My typed information will be saved on the hard-drive of my laptop, and backed up on a secondary flash drive.
All data will be deleted and shredded upon completion of the study. Access to this data

will be restricted to me and my supervisor, Maureen Connolly.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participants will continue to participate in all aspects of the CHARM program. My research project only focuses on participant's journals, reflections, and interviews. The journals and reflections are part of the regular CHARM programming, but can only be used in my research if consent is given. The interview is not part of the CHARM programming and will only take place if you consent to participate. While the program is running I will not be aware if you have given consent or declined to participate in the study to avoid participant coercion. Participation in this study is voluntary. Your child is not obligated to take part in this study, as future participation in the CHARM program will not be influenced in any way by his/her decision to participate or not. If your child wishes, he/she may decline to answer any questions or participate in any component of the study. Further, your child may decide to withdraw from this study at any time and may do so without any penalty, your child's ongoing participation in CHARM will not be effected by any choices about participating in the research project. To withdrawal simply have your child come talk to me or their teacher whoever they feel more comfortable talking to, and say they do not want to participate anymore.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS
Results of this study may be published in professional journals and presented at conferences. Feedback about this study will be available. Upon completion of my results I will produce a simplified summary report and give a presentation at NTEC for all those interested, also my full document will be available if any participants wish to view the whole report. For more information on this matter you may contact me personally af05dq@brocku.ca

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Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Maureen Connolly, Professor, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University, Brock University using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University [insert file #]. If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca.

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receive any additional details I wanted about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

PARENT OR GAURDIAN (Adapted Physical Activity students (APA))

Date: March, 21, 2012

Title of Study: Being Relational With Under-served Youth: A Reflective Process
Principal Investigator: Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Maureen Connolly, Professor, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University, Brock University

INVITATION

I, Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, from the Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University, Brock University, invite you to participate in a research project whose purpose is to examine what does it means to be relational with under-served youth. What individual qualities are important, and how can practitioners improve on their relationality.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

To take part in this study your child will be invited to attend an Adapted Physical Activity (APA) program on a weekly basis. If you consent for your child to participate in this study they will not only participate in the weekly APA program they will also be asked to participate in a 20 minute interview after the program is complete, facilitated through ASL and picture communication in which they will be asked about their experiences in the APA program. I may anonymously (your child will be asked to provide a pseudonym that will be used in all written documents) use some of their interview as data for my study. The final data I will be collecting is from my own field-notes, these will be written by me after each APA session. These notes will not be taken "on" students but will be reflective summaries in general terms only. In order to be a study participant, your child must have attended at least 8 weeks of APA programming.

The expected duration of this study will be 2 months long.
POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS

This study will potentially serve to increase the literature on ways to improve being relational with kids, so that meaningful relationships can be better achieved. It may add support to the benefits of physical activity programming for under-served youth. My findings may better help professionals working in this field to understand what it means to be relational with kids, and hopefully help to create more meaningful activity programming for under-served youth.

This study may challenge the participant to step out of their comfort zones and may bring on emotional stress. I will be asking personal questions and participants will be expressing these answers openly in an interview setting which may cause some stress. To manage this risk teachers classroom teachers have agreed to be available at each APA session and will be accessible post interview, should they wish to express emotional responses from the interview.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidential survey/questionnaire:

All information you provide is considered confidential; your child's name will not be included or, in any other way, associated with the data collected in the study. Participants will be given pseudonyms for all interview and observational data included in my study. Furthermore, because our interest is in the average responses of the entire group of participants, your child will not be identified individually in any way in written reports of this research.

Interview with Member Check:

The information provided will be kept confidential. Your child's name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study; however, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Within one month of the interview being completed, I will come to West Park high school and show your child a copy of the transcript to give an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of the conversation.

The research data will not be used for any secondary purposes.

It is my intention to allow only my final report to be viewed by other colleagues and researchers, which will be coded to protect confidentiality.

All data pertaining to my study; written notes and audio tapes will be stored in my apartment. My typed information will be saved on the hard-drive of my laptop, and backed up on a secondary flash drive.
All data will be deleted and shredded upon completion of the study. Access to this data will be restricted to me and my supervisor, Maureen Connolly
VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION
Participants will continue to participate in all aspects of the APA program. My research project only focuses on my reflections, and interviews. The interview is not part of the

programming and will only take place if you consent to participate. While the program is running I will not be aware if you have given consent or declined to participate in the study to avoid participant coercion. Participation in this study is voluntary. Your child is not obligated to take part in this study, as future participation in the APA program will not be influenced in any way by his/her decision to participate or not. If your child wishes, he/she may decline to answer any questions or participate in any component of the study. Further, your child may decide to withdraw from this study at any time and may do so without any penalty, your child's ongoing participation in the APA program will not be effected by any choices about participating in the research project. To withdrawal simply have your child come talk to me or their teacher whoever they feel more comfortable talking to, and say they do not want to participate anymore.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS
Results of this study may be published in professional journals and presented at conferences. Feedback about this study will be available. Upon completion of my results I will produce a simplified summary report and give a copy for all those interested, also my full document will be available if any participants wish to view the whole report. For more information on this matter you may contact me personally af05dq@brocku.ca

CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE
If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact Principal investigator Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Maureen Connolly, Professor, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University, Brock University using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University [insert file #]. If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca.

Thank you for your assistance in this project. Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

CONSENT FORM
I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information-Consent Letter. I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix: C

Letter of Invitation: CHARM students

March, 21st, 2012

Title of Study: Being Relational With Under-served Youth: A Reflective Process
Principal Investigator: Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Maureen Connolly, Professor, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University

I, Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, from the Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University, Brock University, invite you to participate in a research project entitled Being Relational With Under-served Youth: A Reflective Process.

The purpose of this research project is to examine what it means to be relational with under-served youth. What individual qualities are important, and how can teachers improve on their relationality.
Should you choose to participate, you will be asked to complete the weekly activities of the CHARM program. You will also be asked to participate in 20 minute interview after the program is complete, in which you will be asked about your experience in the CHARM program.

The expected duration of this study will be 2 months long.

This study will potentially serve to increase the literature on ways to improve being relational with kids, so that meaningful relationships can be better achieved. It may add support to the benefits of physical activity programming for under-served youth. My findings may better help professionals working in this field to understand what it means to be relational with kids, and hopefully help to create more meaningful activity programming for under-served youth.

If you have any pertinent questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Brock University Research Ethics Officer (905 688-5550 ext 3035, reb@brocku.ca)

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (see below for contact information).

Thank you,

Andrew Fortnum
MA Candidate
905-246-8767
af05dq@brocku.ca

Dr. Maureen Connolly
Professor, Faculty Applied Heath Science
905-688-5550 ext 3381
mconnolly@brocku.ca

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through Brock University's Research Ethics Board **[11-088 - CONNOLLY]**

Letter of Invitation: Teachers

February, 3rd, 2012

Title of Study: Being Relational With Under-served Youth: A Reflective Process
Principal Investigator: Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Maureen Connolly, Professor, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University

I, Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, from the Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University, Brock University, invite you to participate in a research project entitled Being Relational With Under-served Youth: A Reflective Process.

The purpose of this research project is to examine what it means to be relational with under-served youth. What individual qualities are important, and how can practitioners improve on their relationality.
Should you choose to participate, you will be asked to participate in an interview at the culmination of the program, in which you will be asked about your student's experiences in the CHARM program.

The expected duration of this study will be 2 months long.

This study will potentially serve to increase the literature on ways to improve being relational with kids, so that meaningful relationships can be better achieved. It may add support to the benefits of physical activity programming for under-served youth. My findings may better help professionals working in this field to understand what it means to be relational with kids, and hopefully help to create more meaningful activity programming for under-served youth.

If you have any pertinent questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Brock University Research Ethics Officer (905 688-5550 ext 3035, reb@brocku.ca)

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (see below for contact information).

Thank you,

Andrew Fortnum
MA Candidate
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Dr. Maureen Connolly
Professor, Faculty Applied Heath Science
905-688-5550 ext 3381
mconnolly@brocku.ca

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through Brock University's Research Ethics Board **[11-088 - CONNOLLY]**
Letter of Invitation: APA Parents

February, 3rd, 2012

Title of Study: Being Relational With Under-served Youth: A Reflective Process
Principal Investigator: Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Maureen Connolly, Professor, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University

I, Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, from the Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University, Brock University, invite you to participate in a research project entitled Being Relational With Under-served Youth: A Reflective Process.

The purpose of this research project is to examine what it means to be relational with under-served youth. What individual qualities are important, and how can professionals improve on their relationality. Your child will be asked to participate in 20 minute interview after the term is complete, in which he will be asked about his experience in the APA program. Through photo matching and basic ASL this interview will be tailored to the unique communication skills of your child.

The expected duration of this study will be 2 months long.

This study will potentially serve to increase the literature on ways to improve being relational with kids, so that meaningful relationships can be better achieved. It may add support to the benefits of physical activity programming for under-served youth. My findings may better help professionals working in this field to understand what it means to be relational with kids, and hopefully help to create more meaningful activity programming for under-served youth.

If you have any pertinent questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Brock University Research Ethics Officer (905 688-5550 ext 3035, reb@brocku.ca)

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (see below for contact information).

Thank you,

Andrew Fortnum
MA Candidate
905-246-8767
af05dq@brocku.ca

Dr. Maureen Connolly
Professor, Faculty Applied Heath Science
905-688-5550 ext 3381
mconnolly@brocku.ca

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through Brock University's Research Ethics Board **[11-088 - CONNOLLY].**

Letter of Invitation: CHARM Parents

February, 3rd, 2012

Title of Study: Being Relational With Under-served Youth: A Reflective Process
Principal Investigator: Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Maureen Connolly, Professor, Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University

I, Andrew Fortnum, MA Candidate, from the Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University, Brock University, invite you to participate in a research project entitled Being Relational With Under-served Youth: A Reflective Process.

The purpose of this research project is to examine what it means to be relational with under-served youth. What individual qualities are important, and how can professionals improve on their relationality. Your child will be asked to participate in 20 minute interview after the term is complete, in which he will be asked about his experience in the CHARM program.

The expected duration of this study will be 2 months long.

This study will potentially serve to increase the literature on ways to improve being relational with kids, so that meaningful relationships can be better achieved. It may add support to the benefits of physical activity programming for under-served youth. My findings may better help professionals working in this field to understand what it means to be relational with kids, and hopefully help to create more meaningful activity programming for under-served youth.

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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (see below for contact information).

Thank you,

Andrew Fortnum
MA Candidate
905-246-8767
af05dq@brocku.ca

Dr. Maureen Connolly
Professor, Faculty Applied Heath Science
905-688-5550 ext 3381
mconnolly@brocku.ca

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through Brock University's Research Ethics Board **[11-088 - CONNOLLY].**

Appendix: D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR CHARM STUDENTS

Background and demographic:

How old are you?

What are some of your favourite movies or TV shows? What are some of your favourite characters in those movies/shows?

Experience and behaviour:

What were your experiences like with teachers from schools other then NTEC? (positive and negative).

What were you experiences like with the leaders from CHARM? (positive and negative)

Describe a time during CHARM when you felt you were respected and valued? How did you feel?

Describe a time in CHARM when you felt you were not being respected and valued? How did you feel?

Opinion and Value:

Think of your favourite CHARM leader, without naming names why did you pick that person?

What qualities do you like program leaders to have? (probably take out if get enough info from previous question)

Feeling question:

Describe a conversation where one of the leaders (do not use names) that made you happy or pleased or proud?

Describe an experience where one of the leaders (do not use names) made you annoyed or disappointed?

Knowledge question:

What have you learned about interacting with people since being in CHARM?

Is there anything else you wish to add?

INTRVIEW QUESTIONS FOR CHARM TEACHERS

Background and demographic:

How long have you been working at NTEC? With "at-risk" youth?
What got you interested and what keeps you interested?

Experience and behaviour:

Describe a time without using names where you were impressed with a CHARM leader's interaction with one of your students?

What are some of the differences you have seen (if any) over the course of the program regarding the student's level of relationality or interaction with each other?

Opinion and Value:

What do you think your students value in relationships with CHARM leaders?

How do you feel the CHARM program has been helpful to the students?

If a novice teacher about to start the same job as you, asked for advice on how to be relational with this population what would you say?

What role if any does reflection play in your interactions with your students?

Feeling question:

What do you think the ideal traits of a CHARM leader would be?

Knowledge question:

What do kind of relationships would best serve your students?

Is there anything else you wish to add?

INTRVIEW QUESTIONS FOR APPLIED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TEACHERS

Background and demographic:

How long have you been working at with children with disabilities?

What got you interested and what keeps you interested?

Experience and behaviour:

Describe a time without using names where you were impressed with how another staff member or student has interacted with one of your students?

What are some of the differences you have seen (if any) over the past two years with how James and Carter interact with you or the other staff?

What do you attribute the changes too?

Opinion and Value:

What do you think your students value in relationships?

How do you feel the APA program has been helpful to the students?

If a novice teacher about to start the same job as you, asked for advice on how to be relational with this population what would you say?

What role if any does reflection play in your interactions with your students/how often do you apply knowledge from previous experience to present situations with your students?

Feeling question:

What do you think the ideal traits of an EA would be?
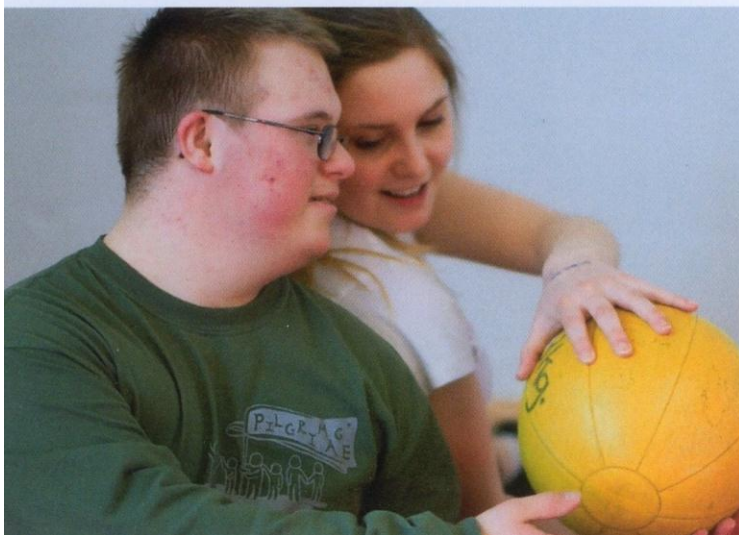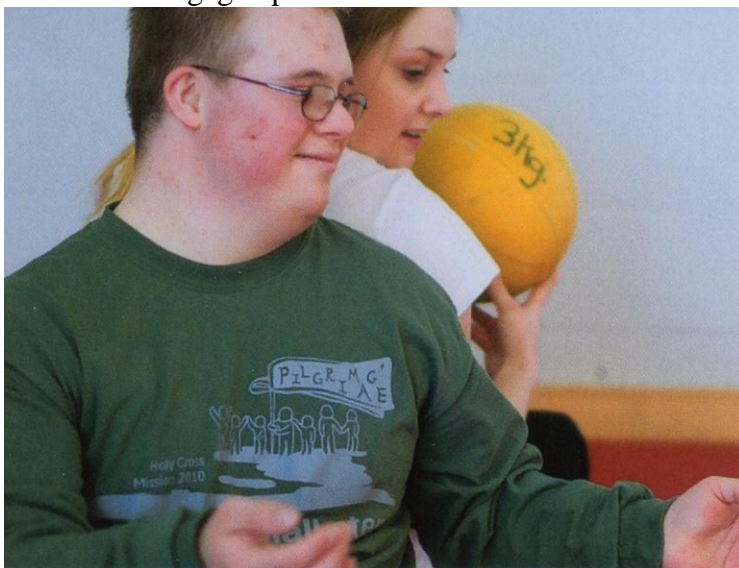
Knowledge question:

What do kind of relationships would best serve your students?

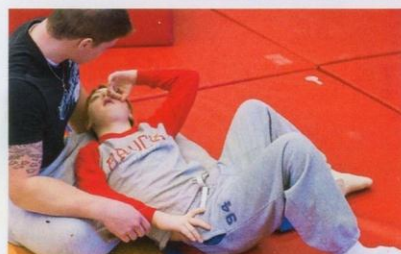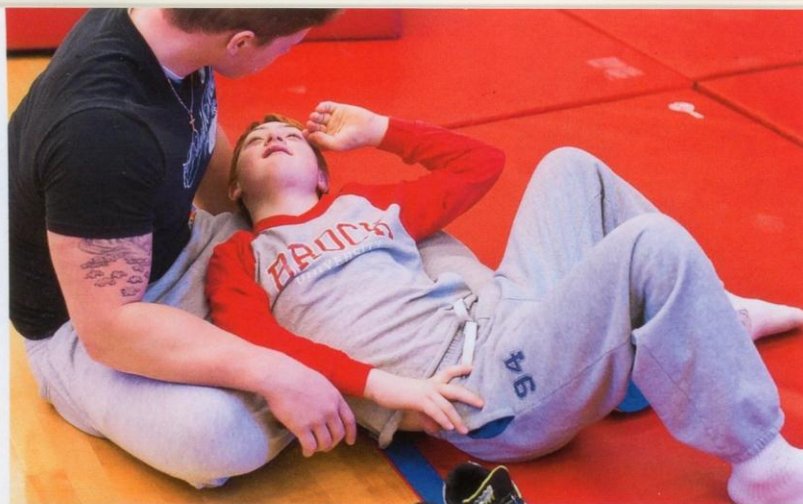Is there anything else you wish to add?

Appendix: E

Relationality Photos

Active and Engaged photo

Happy and Fun Photo and Loving and Caring Photo

Anger Photo and Indifference Photo

Appendix: F

Interview Responses: CHARM Students

QUESTIONS	Michael	Jerry	Robbie	George	Kyle
Age	13	17	18	17	13
Favorite movies/characters	Skateboarding videos/Rob Dietrich, hunger games	Skateboarding videos doesn't watch TV horror movies	Criminal minds Spencer- smart doctor Morgan-loveable and protective Erin-captain that does not smile horror(Resident Evil), good fighting skills action(Mission Impossible) Good fighting skills comedies (Hangover)	Sponge bob, littlest hobo, House: my personality does what I kinda do be funny all day. Greys anatomy, CSI Dennis the Menace home alone: set traps like I do, get in trouble like me I do exact same as both of them. Harold (favorite) and Kumar, Charlie Sheen.	Batman, GI Joe, TMNT, something about them something when I think of them it's just pops out at me I just feel like I am one of them like Didn't really want to talk about what personalities he liked
Teachers like	like: really nice let me do anything	Attitude, good and made things fun accepted me, sat down and explained to me	Up and down behaviour in HS but teachers helped me really well, were nice	Let me go on computer, helps me with work, didn't have to do much work liked them all they were all nice to me	Loved Mr. Kurin, joked with kids, drank cola (relatable) let go on computer Mrs. Alymer was really good to me, brought in baked good often
Teachers not like	Not like: Not good, kept yelling didn't like me	1st day of grade 9 every teacher new me, it's a bad thing.	No I liked everybody	Not to nice wouldn't let me go to the toilet just left got suspended, had to write lines for chewing gum	Enh (disgusted noise) Miss Blue, always yelled at the students. Did not listen/value students
Respected	Positive: um I don't know, swimming	Every time I go there	Snap kids; angel with broken wings volleyball let us play really games, we worked together (roles)	Everywhere all the time, soccer game every one was communicating	You and Sarah do it the best Tjouckball archery, capture the flag (lists activities he liked the best, new activities)
Not respected	never	Jokes about not being able to play B-ball	None, never	Respected all the time	When all the guys were picking on me (immediately changes subject)
Favorite charm leader	Nice to everyone and fun	Going to be hard. I am the only one he remembers from last semester, and Joey was my leader	Don't have favorite, pretty much everybody Sarah 3yrs me 2yrs we work as team to help them	Fun to chill with, get along good together	Like you or anyone. He was good she was good it was two (Sarah and I) they let us do archery
\Qualities/personality charm leaders	Good	Understood me. Good work as team	Strict but not mean, good to the kids be nice talk to them during a meltdown	Chill, good at sports	Some guys some gals, have to like games Like you and Sarah

		with other kids, fun stuff to do, ask what kids wanna do good for the kids to get to know, play sports things the kids do			For the guys love skateboarding Not macho man but cool enough to be friends with Super funny...no tall people and no one like a mouse No one like Joker (Batman), you don't want bullies coming in here smoking people
Conversation feel good	No	Don't remember	We talked about cars, a lot about soccer my favorite sport same interests be active	Talking about hockey both communicating talking like friends	Don't fall off cliff, made him happy someone was looking out for him and wanted him to be safe
Conversation feel negative	No	Not really	Lost (broken tape)	The day me and Michael took off. Kyle was barking like dog it annoyed me my brother always does it. Should have asked him to stop.	I have no idea No piggy backs Tell me to stop joking around, acting like a dog
What have you learned about interacting with people	Not to get anxious about what I am saying	Work as a team, as the year went on we all started working together	Lost (broken tape)	No its all the same	A little bit but not much
Advice for new charm leaders	Nice, talk in a nice way	Have fun, easy course (felt success)	Lost (broken tape)	Listen to what kids gotta say, don' yell talk in normal voice be calm, if run don't chase us, run to get away from everybody for a bit, frustrated sometimes with myself, and after wants the leader to talk to him in a calm voice not a mean one. Try understand me not just think I am being bad	Like Skateboarding, action hero's know how to dance, wants competition they like stuff that I like
Anything else want to add	Be nice like similar stuff	Liked relational time, there always there to help you basically (CHARM leaders)	Lost (broken tape)	Everyone was energetic and treated me nice.	No

Interview Responses: CHARM Teachers

QUESTION	Sydney	Justine
How long NTEC/"at-risk youth"	6 years at NTEC 6 years with this population	6 years at NTEC 20 years in field 12 years teaching and rest of time at group homes
What got you interested/keeps you	Working in ESL wanted to do more consoling married the two The kids; fun, enjoy get to know them learn from them...hard sometimes	Originally wanted to get into commerce for the money hated it. Though what can I do that I can enjoy every day, desire to help people, many youths are struggling fulfilment if you can help, understanding what's going on with them Don't want to teach regular Ed, kid that already has an A Ultimate goal not to have kids on social assistance, if I can teach to have faith in themselves their gifts and talents Kids lack confidence to go to school getting them to come I have succeeded
Impressed with charm leaders interacting with your students	Students always interested, engaged, interactive, approach me for suggestions Nice to have people open to them in that way these guys don't often get that Older peer role models fill very important role can relate to and aspire to be like	Our students are so willing to engage in whatever activity because of comfort factor, level of trust looking at CHARM leaders as believable authentic people who truly care about them they can feel it Happy to see people engaging in genuine relationship that has been built a lot of time people in background don't really care they connect easily to people that do Normal HS can be very intimidating especially if you already lack confidence or learn slower or move funny but the charm program there in a smaller setting where it's all encouraging and it's not an opportunity for anyone to be picking and teasing and you start gaining that confidence because everything is encouraged and put in an encouraging way for their own level of growth
Changes in how students interact with each other over course of program	The guy thing, they look up to you guys, then there's the hot girls which is a big pull for them great opportunity to experience that kinda interaction they do not often get. Maturity through interacting with us and watching us interact with each other Maturity in how approach CHARM, more interest in working out, having more confidence in themselves and their abilities healthier diets, more team orientated. Maturity in approach to learning a skill not just get frustrated and give up, more encouraging to each other Different dynamic in our classroom a lot of it because of CHARM. CHARM has become very major part of our program.	Encouraging in the weight room, sometimes you see it in classroom helping each other, teacher model positive leadership highest level of learning is teaching thrilled to see that.
What do students value in relationships with charm leaders	Attention at home are students do not get much someone that is 100% interested in knowing encouraging and helping them explore themselves outside of own peer group who can be very (-) even for most resistant kids something that they look forward too	That they think that they are cool, give impression to students they think they are the greatest thing that walked through the door. Someone believes in me, trust me encourages me. Comfortable enough to take risks and not be laughed at but encouraged
How has Charm been helpful	In every possible way! Having PE program but much more. One on one relationship huge component of who they are Self-esteem, know they can achieve goals and what it takes	Oh huge! One thing they look forward to most and sculpt there life around is when do we go to Brock end of year "now what do we do" Shower and clean up for CHARM days kids love program very much, very grateful you have had this with our kids for as long as you have.

	Journals don't get that at other schools that push Not one student that hasn't come back and talked about improving some skill in a health related area goal setting realizing if I just practice I can learn get that experience here feel success, not failing all the time seem simple but have not had support to teach them that.	
Novice teacher ask for advice to start your job	Listen to them they need to be herd most things happening in lives is because no one is listening Body language (where looking) what they talk about all the time what they do not talk about We can have more real conversations with them about drugs/drinking personal despair incidents can relate to us better then teachers Be genuine everyone makes mistakes be honest and vulnerable with kids apologize admit when you make mistake Don't lie to them, be real they can see through when you're not, find who you are (Justine mother figure me Sister) Don't need to be lectured to or order around, they have had enough of that already	Good how we come through at beginning of semester, do background on kids where they come from. You have to be very very careful and know students very very well. Treat them as originals not this pack of familiar animals Over time gain trust by believing in them encouraging them and being patient with them Not everything is going to work trial and error is a big part of it too
Role of reflection in your work	What do you mean Everyone situation is different, try figure out where peoples limits are, trying to stay calm Always though you would get to a point where it would be easy and you could go on autopilot but you can't with these kids Once you get called enough names it doesn't bother you, always things you learn when kids lie listen for patterns not get angry he is lying but what is he trying to say	Give me an example what do you mean Each day is a new day we are all going to have our good days and bad Our number #1 goal is to teach the kids be ready for real world. Not being able to express yourself is not going to help you or receiving person on other end. We tell kids we are having a bad day we all do, let kids know it's okay to express how they feel
Ideal traits of Charm leader	Positive, enthusiastic, caring ya but more nurturing or supportive, Creative best leaders have been able to see all situation and kids different and come up with ideas on fly how to deal with them Intuitive and passionate	Approachable, someone who is friendly, someone that puts that time that they are with these students, on a priority level and not feeling that they are an inconvenience to the day, someone that believes in the students that's is encouraging that isn't phony, someone who is really genuinely showing that caring side cause the kids can see phony too right, but if its felt like it is authentic it can have a lot better results with the kids
Best kind of relationships for your students	Positive supportive, and challenging open is really important too	Trust; they have often been let down people have lied to them and they do not believe in themselves lack of commitment. Commitment very important in CHARM. If show up and leader not their kids feel let down Good individual and blending, working with everyone like in real world Team-building co-operation getting along with people can be deal breaker for a job
Favorite TV shows/ characters	Mad Men, New Girl Mad men: two woman struggling with roles what they want what they have been told to want strong and weak at same time pushing against, just pushing	Don't watch much TV but like Sons of Anarchy, Spartacus No characters just an addictive show

| Anything else to add | It's just an awesome program you guys are amazing, really really cool, like we did not expect it to go where it did and ya its just hue. Program more solid this year (TPSR structure)

Encompassing that whole, putting them in the leadership role for SNAP, and all of those things its awesome its great | Kids have gained confidence in ability to be able to do something get along with others, very self driven, not embarrassed to try take risk, more confidence

High ropes was good to increase confidence, encouragement on ground positive reinforcement huge

I just want it to continue

kids that come from family situations and backgrounds that may not be encouraging, and there is lots of put downs, "you are no good" and your this that and the other thing so when you hear it every day, every day, every day and we are countering in on the other end with our school saying no you're not no you're not, you got this going for you and that going for you, and then all of a sudden you are going to a place called Brock and there saying the same things saying that I am able to do this, its gotta have a positive impact on these kids it has to so I want it to continue (in little girl voice) |

Interview Responses: APA Teachers

Question	Victoria	Melissa
How long in field	West park 9 years, disabilities 15	West park 2 years, disabilities 12-14 years
Got interested/kept interested	Fluke summer job/ challenges and successes. Complex stays fresh lifetime connections with kids	Always been interested in working with kids, people person not paper pusher/The kids like the challenge, everyday/every hour can be different
Impressed with staff interaction	Many moments everyday you have something that's very successful and everyday there is something that is not successful. When kid has been struggling with something then all of a sudden it works	If they do not have a communication mode watching how other people handle different situations. even thou my teaching method may be different from another EA's they both work and I find that fascinating to see how many different modes of communication and how many different approaches are accepted by each of the students
Differences in youth and how they interact with staff	Taylor: coming out of crisis so looks like huge gains, but he just matured as he was going to mature. Big improvements in signing and communication. Saw him at home realized he interacted with environment a great deal, allowed him to do so at school has become a lot more successful Joe: took a lot of structure from Grapeview, has lots of abilities not always motivated to use them rather watch YouTube. Trying to get him to initiate/be self motivated. In PE class interacting with peers more.	Taylor: If people are willing to try talk with him he will talk. He will test you. Picks and chooses who he interacts with. Joe: I think that Joe he will sit now longer and do work, he is not focused on just one person he will work for just about anybody. You know he doesn't like it but he is learning that he has too and that he will sit and eventually kick in
What do you attribute changes to	they needed to have a system that they understood and that they can use they can manipulate and be successful Taylor: he needed to understand the signs that he was using was relevant and that we were responding to them so once Taylor understood that we would all respond to his sign he started using his signs more. It was being allowed to manipulate his environment again cause he in a situation where he was being unsuccessful and the more unsuccessful he was the more restricted he was and the more restricted he was the more unsuccessful he was Joe: getting used to similar system in a new environment our big thing was getting him to initiate the stuff that makes him feel better for anyone, once your successful it makes you feel good the more you feel good the more you want to be successful for anyone, once your successful it makes you feel good the more you feel good the more you want to be successful	Patience I think they are growing and maturing as well I mean they are young men now and I think that's the big difference from elementary to once they go through that hormonal change and they start to get on that schedule and as more is expected of them and I think, I attribute a lot to also independence the more independence you try and give them I think you see them grow much faster and stronger when they can sit and do a task on their own
What do students value in relationships	Exact same things as we do. Very anxious being in relationships that lower anxiety, people who are accepting and forgiving all students like physical affection, uncommon in Autism	Joe shows who he likes by who he hangs around he does not like to be by himself, likes the busyness of the room. Very easy going as long as you say hi to him he will do just about anything Taylor: getting more huggy/more finger touches, will get up and move if he does not want to be around you right now. Communication is big, very good at reading people if your stress or if your happy and mellow he will stick by you
How APA program helpful	Jenny: Very empowering being able to say no thanks and not having to do it, and me still like her. Taylor: just loves you and Shannon so much. he really likes I wouldn't say that he likes working	I think it's Great. Physically got them fitter, socially having different people come in. emotionally they look forward to it, they get moving they seem to be happy each time where um both kind of if they did not want to go you would know that they did not want to go haha, and they do enjoy that, that time so I think its balance between both emotionally you know

	out, but he likes working out with you guys and that he likes to come and he likes to have that routine and he likes just to see you and it's just like "oh my gosh" and its more his friends came and his friends do something special with him. Has reputation of throwing heavy things in weight room he is fine with us cause of routine it would have been different had had we come in and done the same routine like we would have nevvver gotten, we were laughing when you and Shannon first came, cause Taylor was doing stuff for you that he really wouldn't have the motivational do for us and it's that relationship he has with you guys and he knows "oh they are going to ask me again oh okay I will do the sit-ups" and it was pretty funny cause he would he would, you would get more activity out of him then he would normally do and he got to a point where he was starting to looking forward to you guys and so on the odd Wednesday when you were not here he was looking well where are they and you know where's A (does my name sign) Joe: Very cool with coming along, nice to have him interact with Taylor. Got really injured and distressed and trust us so much did not faze him and came right back next week.	you are always happy you guys always have a smiling face you give them what they need to do even though they don't necessarily want to do it we know both boys do not like exercise but they seem to, you make it such an environment that its fun and it's not a punishment right
Novice teacher relational advice	You kinda got see how they do their routine and you gotta try fit yourself into the routine and structure they have put in, and then once you have gotten yourself into the routine and structure they you can start, fiddling with it... weight room isn't available you can move it to the movement room which doesn't cause any of the kids stress cause the time they associate with you rather then the activity	Come in slowly, have a plan. What works now may not work 10mins from now. Be flexible listen and watch body language they will tell you. I think for someone coming in as long as your patient and willing to take that time to give them a chance and ah treat them like people then I think they have got a good chance
What roles does reflection play	One of those big teacher-speak terms. We have to be very reflective with the kids especially when things don't work, and um it tends to be when things do we we you don't reflect as much as maybe you ought to. Sometimes you do not see antecedent could have happened at home group reflection with other teachers and parents	Reflection? Oh lots, haha I think after you know and at the end of each day you can sit back and say well that just didn't work or I could have tried this. You have to look at the positives not focusing on what didn't work, just accept it and move on. now that you know him better you kinda though OH that's why he did this when we did that and I think that only betters you if you can look back and reflect and accept the things that you not necessarily did wrong but you could have done different now that you understand the student better, but reflection is huge.
Ideal traits of EA	What makes it work is the communication you have to be able to communicate very well you got to be able to ah pick up on the ques that the kids are sending and you gotta be very open and accepting. Having respect for kids and other staff's opinion. Accept kids are quirky do not try and change all habits.	Patience open-minded I think um not necessarily a by the book, open to all methods to all students. I am one that believes that they can all achieve not one student I have ever met cannot achieve I think that's important always have the child's best interests at heart I know that the job can be frustrating at times, trying at times but I think with patience kindness openness and understanding I think you can help. Success huge for student development, empowerment
Relationships that best serve your students	Joe: Open and accepting work with him, problem solve with him. Joe you know and ah he likes he likes to have fun, so if your friendly and smiling Joe is friendly and smiling if you've got you know you're going to try work with him and he understands that then I think you could put almost any personality he just he just really looks for someone who is ah trying to work with him and then Joe will try and work with them like he is very open Taylor: Needs foundation person oh Andrew likes him I like Andrew so they must be a good	Trusting and comfortable relationships otherwise they won't do things it's nice to have different peers to you know just give'em a high five in the hallway here its great cause the teachers will wave and say hello and I think all of that um to make the school community as important, to know the librarian to know the principal to know the secretaries I think it is very important for the students cause they have the right to move around the school as well as anybody else Easy going and open Have a mellowness about them and not stressful people.

	person. People who try communicate with him. he will try and see what can I get away with, are they going to freak out if I hit my face and he will go through the whole thing, like what are they looking at do I have a sucker here who is going to be sad and try and mother me do I have someone who is offended and you know I can I can scare them or is it someone who is just going to accept that that is just what I do and move on and you know Taylor will have to put you through your paces first and see if your and see you he will test you and if your good your good and you know for him he really looks for someone who loves him, like he and you know he is looking for someone who likes to do what he likes to do and is accepted	
Relationships that do not	Taylor needs to work at his own pace he needs to have some ability to have some ownership over what he is doing and the same for Joe they need to have ownership they need to have an idea of what your expectations are and for us we set them out visually but they need to know what's going to happen so that they can adjust accordingly, so I think if you are trying to be too authoritative with these guys it's not successful because they are not bringing anything to the table they need to bring some ownership to the table for them to be successful and comfortable. But if you try take too much control it is as bad as taking no control	They need a safe environment away from anyone who is not open-minded and kind. Longer term relationships are better. People say these kids do not feel or express emotions but they do.
Any final comments	you don't need to create a whole new relationship or a whole new communication style you need to look at what is working and ah have it work for you first and then while you're doing the system that's where you can learn the kids and then add your creativity	Work hands on with them, challenge them, safely out of comfort zone and have them experience success and pride. Have fun and play around while teaching Open accepting mellow happy don't let emotions override you. Playful spirit vital I think if you are too strict and too just a book type person that you don't get the same relationship and bond that you would get if you were more of a free spirit and kinda like a "hey how you doing type person" as oppose to everything by the book. Don't dwell on negative incident forgive and let go try have a successful afternoon