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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Jill T. Martz entitled "Tennessee 4-H Center Summer Residential Camping Programs: Settings for Positive Youth Development as Perceived by Youth Campers. I have examined the final paper copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Human Ecology.

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Tennessee 4-H Center
Summer Residential Camping Programs:
Settings for Positive Youth Development
as Perceived by Youth Campers

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Abstract

Adults involved in residential camping for children claim that the camp experience enhances children's development in a variety of ways but there is little empirical research to document their claims. The purpose of this research was to explore the nature of the impact of residential camping on youth campers. The relationship between attributes of life skills practiced and the contextual features of the camp environment was the primary area of examination. The demographic variables of grade and gender were also examined to determine if significant differences in program effects existed.

The study population included fourth through sixth grade youth attending Tennessee 4-H camps in the summer of 2004. The study sample included all eligible campers of the selected camp week at the four Tennessee 4-H Centers. Seventy-two percent of eligible campers participated, resulting in 720 campers as study participants. The project involved minors and was approved by the University of Tennessee Institutional Review Board and Human Subjects Committee.

Data for this study were collected through a self-report survey questionnaire. A series of statistical analyses, including Pearson *r* correlation and linear regression, were utilized to analyze data from the research question designed to examine how campers perceive the camp environment and life skill practiced, and how the perceived presence of the contextual components of camp predicts the broad range of life skills supported.

Analyses revealed that residential campers participating in Junior Camp at the four Tennessee 4-H Centers gave high ratings to four dimensions of the camp

environment, including emotional and moral support, physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult relationships. Campers also "agree" that life skills are enhanced at camp, including building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation.

The context of the camp environment is found to support life skill practice among residential youth campers at the four Tennessee 4-H Centers. When examining the relationships of the life skills to the broad range of contextual features, together with grade and gender, they account for an average 41.4% of the variance. Although there is a significant relationship between a majority of the life skills and grade or gender, the contribution of grade or gender is minimal compared to the relationship between the life skill and the camp context. This finding indicates that other unknown factors, aside from the contextual features, grade, or gender contribute the remaining 58.6%

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Youth Residential Camping

Each summer more than 10 million youth in the United States participate in summer residential camping programs at approximately 8,500 camps (American Camping Association, 2003). The popularity of residential camping is testament to the belief that the experience of camping is wholesome and beneficial to its young participants. If one were to ask camping professionals who operate these youth camps or camp counselors who work in them what it is that camps do for children, the most likely response would be that camps promote positive youth development by providing an environment for teaching life skills, building assets, or developing competencies in youth. According to the American Camping Association (ACA), "Camp does Kids a World of Good!" Ask children what they like about camp and they are likely to tell you that they have fun, get to swim, and make new friends. Ask parents why they send their children to camp and they are likely to reiterate the wonderful experiences they had as a child camper or describe the positive opportunities the camp environment provides. Ironically, there is precious little empirical support for these beliefs. The aim of this dissertation is to address this matter through empirical research focused on the experience of campers at 4-H youth residential camps in Tennessee.

Youth participation in state and county 4-H camping programs is one avenue through which youth can experience the camp environment. The 4-H program is the youth component of the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. Through this complex, collaborative effort, research-based information is incorporated into the organizational and philosophical structures of 4-H, as evidenced in positive youth development initiatives originating from the land-grant university of each state. Individual county faculty, representing the land-grant university, implement local level programming that is designed by and coordinated through direction from the State 4-H Office. Residential (overnight) camping is an integral delivery method for 4-H positive youth development programming in Tennessee and throughout the nation. In 2001-2002, more than 500,000 (USDA, 2001) youth participated nationwide in 4-H camping programs. In 2002, The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service summer camping program involved nearly 6,000 campers in grades four through six at Tennessee's four 4-H Centers.

The vision of the Tennessee 4-H camping program is to develop healthy, productive, and responsible citizens (Tennessee 4-H Design Team, 1994). The mission of the 4-H camping program is to enable youth to develop for themselves sound philosophies, attitudes, skills, and value judgments through an educational and recreational camping program that embodies these goals (Tennessee 4-H Design Team, 1994). These mission and vision statements clearly articulate a focus on positive youth development [hereafter "PYD"] through residential camping programs.

In Tennessee, 4-H camping programs have been in existence for more than five decades. Informal evaluations by Tennessee extension agents and youth development specialists suggest that the goals of the mission and vision are being met. However, little formal research has been conducted to determine if an environment for positive development is in place and whether PYD is occurring as a direct result of these efforts. Although researchers have identified the individual skills or assets that characterize PYD and the features of the settings that support it, the connection of these concepts to the summer residential camping environment is not well documented. The camp research that does exist is limited and lacking in empirical rigor. Moreover, very few of the existing studies explore the benefits or context of camping from a child's perspective.

Importance of Topic

Campers, camp staff, and parents clearly and robustly articulate the merits of participation in residential (overnight) camping programs. As stated previously, the problem is that empirical research connecting youth camping and PYD is limited. If indeed the relationships among PYD, competencies, life skills, assets, camping programs, and campers are positive ones, the proof is difficult to find. This study is important because it provides a research-based exploration of the benefits to campers who participate in residential camping programs, analyzes the linkages between camps as settings for positive youth development promoting the practice of life skills

or assets, and provides documentation of program impact.

An extensive search of professional research journal articles found a wealth of information on PYD dispersed among a wide variety of sources. However, there were very few articles addressing youth camping programs and their connection to PYD. Those research articles that were available were found primarily in professional journals devoted to camping. It is worth noting that although empirically based information on camping is sketchy, the limited research available in the youth camping area has been conducted by competent and respected scholars and practitioners, many of whom are university-based sociologists, psychologists, or professionals in related fields. The question meriting additional exploration is one that examines the connection between the benefits of participation in camping and the factors that comprise an environment conducive to PYD.

Critical issues related to youth development, positive youth outcomes, and the influence of contextual characteristics have been an area of emphasis among scholars and others interested in the study of youth for more than a decade. This focus has become a priority with many governmental agencies and national research groups. As a result of these efforts, several national research-based initiatives have recently resulted in large-scale studies and publications with conceptual and practical information for practitioners and scholars in the youth development field. These documents, including *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development* (Eccles & Gootman, 2002), *The Positive Youth Development Project* (U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1997), and *Risk and Opportunities - Synthesis of Studies*

on Adolescence (Kipke, 1999) have shed considerable light on the complex issue of PYD and offered recommendations for program direction and evaluation. Together, these recent research initiatives and mega-analyses address the relationships between the context of PYD and the skills, assets, or competencies necessary for children to become successful adults. Given the implications of these reports, spanning several decades of youth development research, it becomes imperative to investigate, through a research-based approach, whether the current camping environment provides a context promoting the assets, life skills, or competencies necessary to become successful adults.

The American Camping Association (ACA), representing the more than 12,000 accredited camps nationwide, is in the process of conducting a nationwide research study looking at the program and leadership factors related to accomplishing strong outcomes in camps ("ACA Receives Lily", 2001). Theirs is the first large-scale, nationwide study to examine and focus on the internal assets gained by campers through participation in camping programs. Powell & Scanlin (2002), representing the ACA, see research as a tool to help camping professionals improve practice, understand behaviors, and justify funding.

This research project expands the ACA research focus on examining internal assets gained by campers by examining linkages among assets, life skills, or competencies and the contextual settings of the camp environment. Results of the proposed research, which focuses on Tennessee 4-H Center summer residential

camping programs, and dissemination of the findings will be a valuable tool in sharing the camp story and making the camp setting more conducive to PYD.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine youth campers' perspectives on the contextual settings of the summer residential camping programs at the Tennessee 4-H Centers and their relationship to the life skills supported by participation. Four indicators of contextual settings - physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, emotional and moral support, and supportive adult relationships, and six indicators of life skills - building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation were examined. Of particular interest was whether the residential camp setting was perceived by campers to exemplify the characteristics of an environment conducive to positive development and to identify specific life skills or internal assets supported through participation.

Theoretical and Conceptual Perspectives

Many theoretical and conceptual perspectives could be referenced and used to frame the proposed research. One of the most basic concepts to consider is the potential for perceived differences in camper self-reports as they evaluate the camp environment and their life skill development. Child development textbooks classify the proposed participant group of ten to thirteen year olds, as early or pre-adolescents

who are often described as in a transitional phase from childhood to adulthood (Berk, 1997; Salkind, 1990). Significant variations in physical maturity, as well as variation in emotional and intellectual development (Salkind, 1990) can be observed within this age group. From a developmental perspective, one must consider this potential for variation in measuring the effect of the environment on the cognitive, emotional, social, and physical growth and the life skill enhancement that can be attributed to normal developmental differences among these pre and early adolescents during this period of rapid change. As youth approach adolescence, there are also pronounced gender differences in styles of interaction, aggression, types of relationships sought, and reactions to the environmental context (Berk, 1997, Salkind, 1997). To test these premises, variations in grade level and gender responses will be investigated for potential differences among participants. Based on the experiences of the researcher and reactions from focus groups used to determine the methodology for the study, these differences are not anticipated to be a factor, but they will be reviewed.

The most appropriate approaches for investigation and analysis appear to be those related to the effects of the contextual and social environments supporting the life skill development of the study group. Several concepts from child development theory provide insight into the relationship between the context of the camp environment and the life skills or internal assets supported through participation in summer residential camping programs. These perspectives include the youth development model proposed by the Family and Youth Services Bureau of the U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, the ecological theories of Bronfenbrenner, Small and Sample, the social bonding theory of Bowlby and Sampson, and the identity development theory of Erickson.

Youth Development Model

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau (1997) proposed a conceptual youth development model that identifies the processes enhancing the adolescent experience and promoting a successful transition from childhood to adulthood. The model is based on the proposition that "development occurs through the reciprocal and dynamic interactions that take place between the individual and various aspects of their environment" (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1997, p. 6). This youth development model discusses industry and competency, connectedness to others and society, control over one's fate, and a stable identity as influencing the pathways to successful adulthood. Neither person variables such as psychological, biological, intellectual, personality, and temperamental characteristics nor environmental or contextual variables such as society, community, family, and peers are seen as the primary basis or cause of an individual's functioning or development. Rather, the individual and the environment are seen to have a simultaneous influence on each other. From a residential camping perspective, and in harmony with this theory, one could then postulate that the context of the camp environment interacts with the individual child to influence life skill development.

Ecological Theory

The ecological theory of Urie Bronfenbrenner can be used to address the broad context of the camp environment as it influences the development of the early and pre-adolescent youth proposed for this study. Based on the scaffolding premises of this and many other developmental models, one might easily assume that the influences of the environment in early and pre-adolescence carry over into adolescence. This theory is relevant because the Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1995) perspective advocated that the psychological impact of the biological, cognitive and social changes of adolescence are shaped by the environment in which these changes take place. Bronfenbrenner (1995) also saw the critical tasks of adolescence as "played out" in an increasingly complex set of social, cultural, and historical settings with the role of families, schools, and communities critical in promoting positive youth development. According to Bronfenbrenner (1995), PYD approaches seek to promote healthy development in order to foster positive youth outcomes through a focus on interactions with the family, school, neighborhood, societal, and cultural contexts. In this particular study, the societal and cultural context of the camp community becomes the focus of the research as it relates to the enhanced development of the participants who are approaching or are in the early stages of adolescence.

In citing a need for measuring the child's perspective, Bronfenbrenner (1995) argued that the fundamental changes associated with adolescence are universal, but

there is wide variation in the way in which youth experience these changes. This variation is largely accounted for in the child's interpretation of these changes as well as the environment in which these changes occur (Bronfenbrenner, 1995). Youth development then becomes an interactive relationship between the child's perception and the objective nature of the environment. This statement can also be applied more specifically to the camp environment and clearly addresses the need for researching the camper's perspective of the camp setting rather than an adult's observation.

In related conceptualizing, Sampson (2002) proposed an updated version of the social disorganization perspective that has dominated the sociological study of the development of delinquent behavior. He meshed an integrated social capital and social networking theory with the ecological model of human development. Sampson argued that community level processes - - such as institutional-family connectedness, monitoring and supervision of youth, intergenerational closure among adult-child networks, control of street-corner peer groups, local organizational participation, mutual social support, extensiveness of social networks, perceived normative consensus on parenting and social trust among neighbors -- serve as mediators and affect the impact of community characteristics to influence the outcomes for children and youth. In related research, Sampson, Morenoff, & Gannon-Rowley (2002) reviewed 40 relevant studies related to neighborhood effects. They evaluated the salience of social-interactional and institutional mechanisms including neighborhood ties, social control, mutual trust, institutional resources, disorder, and routine activity patterns. These mechanisms were hypothesized to account for neighborhood-level

variations related to delinquency, violence, depression, and high-risk behavior. Sampson et al. found "solid evidence on the differentiation of American cities along socio-economic and racial lines, which in turn corresponds to the spatial differentiation of neighborhoods by multiple child, adolescent and adult behaviors" (p. 456). They found these conditions to be interrelated in systematic and theoretically meaningful ways with social mechanisms such as informal social control, trust, institutional resources and routines, and peer-group delinquency and perceived disorder (Sampson et al.). This theory is relevant to the proposed research because it illustrates the importance of social mechanisms such as those found in the camp setting in determining and influencing behavior that could support opportunities to practice life skills. The social bonding theory discusses the importance of these social mechanisms.

Social Bonding Theory

The residential camp environment, which camping professionals, fellow campers, and others refer to as a camp community, forms a camp family. Within the camp community and family, bonding is a frequently mentioned process that takes place. Bonding, as it relates to the social bonding theory, can be described as the emotional attachment and commitment a child makes to social relationships in the family, peer group, school, community, or culture ("Positive Youth Development," 1999). Social bonding begins with attachment to caregivers and continues throughout development. Positive bonding with an adult is crucial to the development of a

capacity for adaptive responses to change and growth into a functional and healthy adult ("Positive Youth Development," 1999). A child's trust in others and in self is established through positive bonding experiences. Poor bonding results in an emotional loneliness and a sense of mistrust in self and others. A child who has not bonded may try to fill this emotional void through drugs, impulsive acts, antisocial peer relations, or other problem behaviors such as withdrawal or isolation (Braucht, Kirby, & Berry, 1978; Brook, Lukoff, & Whiteman, 1980; Brook, Brook, Gordon, Whiteman & Cohen, 1990; Elliot, Huizinga, & Ageton, 1985; Kandel, Kessler, & Margulies, 1978; Sampson & Laub, 1990). Campers who form pre-camp bonds with their 4-H agents, through repeated in school and out-of-school contacts, have the opportunity to strengthen these bonds in the camp setting.

Identity Theory

The social psychology perspective of Erik Erikson (1968) directs attention to the effects of societal influences and cultural differences on adolescent development. Since the proposed study involves early and pre-adolescents, it stands to reason that events early in this critical period of growth and change have the potential for affecting later adolescent development. This perspective provides a framework to accommodate the ever-widening circle of social relationships on the child's increasing sense of an individual self. To Erickson, successful adolescent development results in an intact sense of "identity" versus "identity confusion" (p. 92). Erikson described identity formation, a critical developmental task of adolescence, as interplay between psychological and social, developmental and

historical forces.

Erickson (1968) also cited successful ego-identity as critical to adolescent identity formation. He defined ego-identity as including a conception of self as characterized by inner agency or control, a sense of belonging, a feeling that he/she is part of the whole and an expectation for predictability and continuity of life. In addition to identity, the *Community Programs to Promote Positive Youth Development* (Eccles & Gootman, 2002) report also listed Erickson's tasks of intimacy and mastery as being strongly influenced by the developmental context.

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model for this research draws on two separate strands of work. First, several sets of inventories classifying life skills, assets, or competencies that are considered to be attributes of PYD were examined. In comparing the inventories, a competency base provided the broadest conceptual framework while the life skill perspective provided a more definitive framework for translating these developmental attributes into concrete characteristics. For this research project, it seemed to be appropriate to frame the acquisition of these desirable traits though a life skills orientation. These attributes were further referenced and classified in terms of the national, state, and local 4-H life skill programmatic focus and recognized as critical components of PYD. Because the number of life skills was quite comprehensive, it was necessary to select specific ones for study in this research project. The life skills

used for the study were identified by 4-H campers, parents, and summer camp staff though focus group interviews conducted by the researcher. They were also identified by professional extension youth development staff, with residential camping experience, as most salient to the research being conducted. As can be seen in Tables 1 and 2, there are many commonalities among assets, life skills and competencies.

The contextual attributes present in environments promoting PYD and the potential for life skills / assets / competencies practiced by campers through interaction and association with these environments was the second area of emphasis. *Community Programs to Promote Positive Youth Development* (Eccles & Gootman, 2002) described 10 characteristics of settings that promote positive personal and social assets. These setting characteristics were common in much of the recent literature describing positive settings for youth development. The *Community Programs to Promote Positive Youth Development* model, which appeared to be the most comprehensive, served as the framework for inventorying the models proposed by others. A framework for mapping the many dimensions of effective positive youth development programs can be found in Table 3.

The top row of Table 3 contains the positive youth development initiatives, reports or recommendations discussed in this chapter. The first column contains the features of positive youth development programs with an "X" indicating inclusion in the recommendations of a particular program or initiative.

Table 1
Life Skill Attributes of Positive Youth Development

Model	Health/ Physical Attributes	Social/ Emotional Attributes	Cognitive/ Creative Attributes	Citizenship/ Ethical Attributes	Vocational Attributes
Four Fold Life Skills Head Heart Hands Health	Health lifestyle choices, stress manangement disease prevention, preventing injury,	Heart conflict resolution, interacting socially, cooperation, communication building relationships, empathy, caring for others, valuing diversity, valuing social justice, sharing Health self-esteem, being responsible, character/ integrity, managing yourself, positive view of future, resistence skills, resiliency, expressing emotions positively, sense of purpose	Head critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, learning to learn, using scientific method, processing information, understanding systems, creativity, visualizing information, reasoning, achieving goals, navigating environment, working with numbers	Hands community service, volunteering leadership, responsible citizenship, working in a team, completing a task, motivating yourself	Hands master technology, Head keeping records, managing resources, planning/ organizing

Table 2

Internal Asset Attributes of Positive Youth Development

Model	Health/ Physical Attributes	Social/ Emotional Attributes	Cognitive/ Creative Attributes	Citizenship Ethical Attributes	Vocational Attributes
Search Institute Internal Assets		Social Competencies interpersonal-competence, cultural competence, resistence skills, peaceful conflict resolution, Positive Identity personal power, self-esteem, sense of purpose, positive view of future Positive Values caring, equality/ social justice, integrity, honesty, responsibility, restraint	Commitment To Learning achievement/ motivation, school engagement, homework, bonding to school, reading for pleasure Social Competencies planning/ decision-making		

Table 3
Characteristics of Settings for Positive Youth Development

Source Feature	CPPYD	America's Promise	Child Trends	NYDIC	PYDP	Risks and Opportunity	Search Institute
Psychological safety, security	X	X		X			X
Appropriate structure, boundaries	X	X	X	X			X
Emotional, moral support	X			X	X		X
Supportive adult/teen relationships	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Positive peer relationships	X		X	X	X	X	X
Belonging, being valued	X			X	X		X
Positve social values, norms	X		X	X	X		X
Opportunities skill, mastery	X	X	X	X	X		X
Opportunities to master environment	X			X	X		X
Opportunities to contribute, mattering	X	X		X	X		X
Community Links	X						X

A conceptual model of the relationships explored, shows four large outer rings representing the camp context of physical safety and security, emotional and moral support, supportive adult relationships, and psychological safety and security. Inside the outer rings are six independent circles representing the six life skills of building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation as Figure One illustrates.

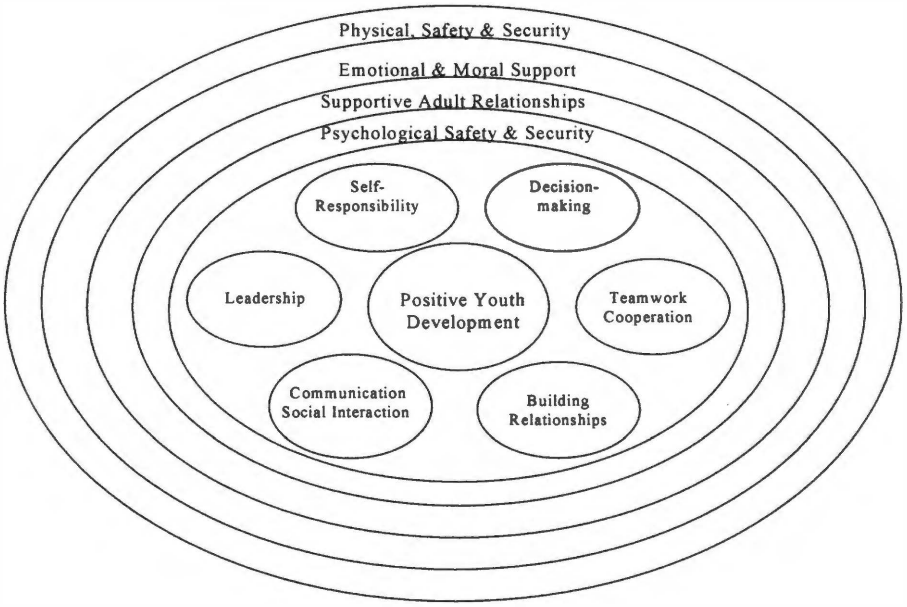


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Life Skills as Attributes of Positive Youth Development and Their Proposed Relationship to the Contextual Features of the Camping Environment

Conceptual Definitions

Describing the camp participants aids in understanding the specific roles the members of the camp community play. Defining the components of the camp environment assists in establishing the venue where the research will take place and the unique characteristics of the camp environment. Clarifying the potential life skills/assets /competencies establishes a benchmark for evaluating whether campers have enhanced these specific skills. These three categories and the definitions of these attributes are listed below.

Camp Participants

Camper refers to youth who have just completed the 4th, 5th, or 6th grade and are 4-H members in their local communities;

Leader refers to 4-H agents in local county offices who are professional youth development specialists and volunteer teen or adult leaders who conduct club meetings or accompany campers to camp; and

Staff refers to college-age paid summer staff who conduct the program and specific skill-based activity sessions, as well as limited year round staff who operate the 4-H Center.

The Camp Environment

Physical and psychological safety and security refers to whether a camper feels safe in both indoor and outdoor settings, senses no danger of physical or psychological injury due to participation in camp activities and is not bullied, intimidated, or coerced by other campers or camp leaders.

Emotional and moral support refers to the assistance and guidance given to campers by camp staff, adult volunteers, and teen leaders.

Opportunities to experience supportive adult relationships refers to the cabin and activity leader (camp staff, teen and adult leader) interactions and leader or camp staff /camper bonding experiences.

Assets / Life Skills / Competencies

Building relationships and accepting differences includes recognizing and welcoming factors that distinguish one person from another, valuing diversity, and forming friendships and positive relationships with others including peers and adults.

Self-responsibility includes taking care of oneself; being accountable for one's behavior and obligations, choosing between right and wrong, and managing resources (money, time, belongings)

Decision-making involves choosing among several alternatives and setting priorities.

Communication and social interaction is the exchange of thought, information, or messages between individuals using speech, writing, gestures, and artistic expression.

Teamwork/cooperation is contributing as a team member in camp activities including cabin clean-up and meal service, getting along with campers, leaders and camp staff, and supporting others

Leadership is to assist a group in meeting its goals by showing or directing along the way or using personal influence to guide a group in reaching its goal.

Hypotheses

In general, the camp environment is predicted to provide a setting that promotes the development of positive personal and social assets, or life skills. The more campers sense an environment of physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, emotional and moral support, and supportive adult and teen leader relationships, the more likely they are to perceive that they have the ability to perform and practice specific life skills. Thus, I predict that the greater the camper perception of the presence of these factors, the more likely the practice of specific life skills by these early and pre-adolescents, as described in the following hypotheses.

Hypothesis One - The camper's sense of physical safety and security is predicted to be positively related to supporting the practice of specific life skills including building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation.

Hypothesis Two - The camper's sense of psychological safety and security is predicted to be positively related to supporting the practice of specific life skills including building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation.

Hypothesis Three - The camper's perception of emotional and moral support is predicted to be positively related to supporting the practice of specific life skills including building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation.

Hypothesis Four - The camper's perception of opportunities to experience supportive adult / teen leader relationships is predicted to be positively related to supporting the practice of specific life skills including building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation.

It is evident from the hypotheses above that only four of a much larger set of contextual factors, as shown in Table 3, was chosen for scrutiny. Why were these four factors chosen and not others? These four factors were chosen because they describe the contextual features mentioned most often by the camping professionals who articulate the unique features of the camp environment for which there is little empirical support (Coleman, 1997; Grayson, 1997; Henderson & Bialeschki, 1999; Halliday, 1991; Miller, 1995). They also correlate with dimensions of the youth development model and the ecological, social bonding, and identity theories as discussed earlier. In addition, others have identified "connection with significant others, regulation of behavior, and the facilitation of psychological autonomy" as the three central dimensions of socialization for healthy child development (Barber, 1997; Fox, 1999; Herman, Dornbusch, Herron, & Herting, 1997). The importance of these dimensions as related to positive youth development and camp settings is illustrated in the findings by Eccles, Early, Frazier, Belansky, & McCarthy, 1997) that positive regulation and support for autonomy were predictive of lower involvement in problem behavior. In similar findings, regulation appeared to be the strongest socialization dimension for deviance when compared to connection and psychological autonomy

(Herman et al., 1997). These concepts are consistent with the proposed independent variables of physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, emotional and moral support, and supportive adult/teen leader relationships.

The second question, why not others? can be answered simply. Although all of the factors in Table Two are considered important, there are limits to the number that can be studied effectively through the camper self-report method used in this study. Children aged 10 through 13 simply cannot be expected to respond adequately to lengthy self-report instruments. Rather than studying all contextual factors, I have also chosen to focus on a subset of four that correspond most closely to conditions identified in the empirical literature as critical elements in the development of social competence among children. *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development* states that research in all settings in the lives of adolescents – families, schools, and communities – is yielding consistent evidence that there are specific features of settings that support positive youth development (Eccles & Gootman, 1999). Certain attributes of the camp environment are also thought to lead directly to meeting camper needs and supporting specific life skills. Kipke (1999) stated that settings have a profound influence on adolescent behavior and development. *The National Youth Development Information Center* (2002) also reported that developmental needs are met within a social context and influenced by the demands and supports provided by those contexts. It should be noted that a week as a residential camper in the 4-H Center summer camping program, although only a small segment of the total youth

development context, could be proposed to have an impact on supporting the development of life skills but is not totally responsible or the only contributing factor.

The research review will be addressed in the three following chapters. Each of them will focus on a separate aspect of the PYD literature including the relationships between residential camping and youth development, attributes of PYD focusing on the skills, assets, or competencies critical for adult success, and youth development program paradigms describing the approaches, concepts, issues, and trends in PYD.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Residential Camping and Positive Youth Development

One might wonder where it is that youth camping fits into the general picture of pre and early adolescent development, with a more direct focus on PYD and the environment in which that development takes place. The residential camp environment was thought by many involved with youth camping to provide a context or environment for youth development, and more specifically, PYD. For the most part, camping was seen as a prevention model, focusing on developing the assets, competencies, resiliency factors, and skills, identified as critical for PYD.

Many educated and respected experts and authors involved with the camping profession eloquently cited the benefits of camp in the *Journal of the American Camping Association* and other publications. O'Donnell (2002) described camps as embracing a new paradigm in accepting a greater role in year-round education and youth development, recognizing that the same activities and programs they have traditionally offered are highly effective alternative learning models. O'Brien and other camping professional colleagues saw camp as "beyond the basics: camp equips young people with the skills they need to become happy successful, contributing adults. At camp, children learn to get along with others, they succeed at some level, and they belong to and contribute to a community" (O'Brien, Pavliein, Lister, &

Schultz, 1995, p. 19). Chenery (1994) shared the American Camping Association's definition of organized camping as:

> a sustained experience which provides a creative, recreational, and educational opportunity in group living in the out-of-doors. It uses trained leadership and the resources of the natural surroundings to contribute to each camper's mental, physical, social and spiritual growth. (1994, p. 22)

Miller (1995), another camping professional, described the developmental needs of children and youth that participation in organized camping provides as: "positive social actions with peers; structure and clear limits, physical activity; creative expression; competence and achievement; meaningful participation in families schools and communities; and, self-definition" (p. 31). Ditter (1997), a licensed clinical social worker and camping advocate, described camp as developing competencies including:

> learning to wait, learning to work with others, developing better impulse control, learning to give and take, developing perspective, learning to tolerate a greater level of frustration, learning to persevere, asking for help, recovering quickly from setbacks, having a more reasonable sense of self, learning to recognize one's own feelings, recognizing the emotional reactions of others, developing acceptable and effective ways of expressing feelings, planning ahead, delaying gratification, balancing individual needs with the group's or community needs, and assessing risk. (p. 14)

The development of life skills was a common goal of many camping programs. Waltermire, a Maryland 4-H camping coordinator, was of the opinion that "children who attend camps develop seven skills that are essential to productive and happy lives: creative thinking, decision making, acquiring knowledge, responsibility, communication, understanding of self, and getting along with others" (1999, p. 28). Thomas, a camping professional and camp director, saw the development of youth

leadership skills such as "self-awareness, communication skills, interpersonal skills, and ethics and responsibilities" (1996, p. 25) through camp experiences.

Building positive self-esteem was also a generalized goal of most camps. According to Grayson, a camping professional, "well-established procedures, a structured camp environment, and effective programming are the most effective means of influencing self-esteem" (1997a, p. 27). Grayson further cited a "sense of self-efficacy, individual camper support, a noncompetitive atmosphere, positive behavior management, Socratic rule deduction, camper selection of daily activities, public commendations, and de-emphasis of physical attractiveness as contributing to positive self-esteem" (1997a, p. 28). Coleman, a camping professional, saw the importance of camps in "fostering the self-esteem and emotional intelligence of campers by creating an envelope of physical safety, building emotional security, and creating a sense of identity" (1997, p. 18).

Lishner and Myers are camp directors who offered a different perspective, feeling that "self-esteem develops slowly through childhood, and a single camp session or season would not create or demolish self-esteem but camp can offer a unique environment and experiences that let children participate in situations that promote feelings of competence and acceptance" (1997, p. 39). As illustrated in the previous comments, numerous camping professionals clearly cited the benefits of camp but offered little empirical evidence.

Henderson and Bialeschki (1999) added another benefit to positive youth development for youth who participated in camping programs by addressing broader social benefits. They implored readers to think about how communities are changing and "view camp as a place where social identities and a sense of reciprocity are created and sustained after the time camp is over" (Henderson & Bialeschki, p. 46). These authors said that camps enhanced social capital by "fostering a sense of community, teaching tolerance, expecting young people to develop a sense of responsibility, living together in a group, valuing simplicity, and offering a forum for developing leadership skills" (p. 47). Halliday also saw the social learning benefits of camps as related to "the continuity and variety of the camp experience; planned, goal-oriented experiences; qualified adult leadership; and the informal atmosphere" with "the role of small-group experiences as the most important aspect of social learning" (1991, p. 16).

Other authors took a more philosophical approach to articulating the benefits of participation in youth camping programs. Griffith (1999) stated that

> camp is one of the few effective institutions uniquely positioned to shape and guide the development of the adolescent soul. This journey begins with the separation from the home for a day, a week, or a season. With this independence comes empowerment, the individual becomes aware of choices and the responsibility for individual direction. With choices and power, the soul begins to emerge as it seeks its own path in setting goals, planning its day and choosing its associates. (1999, p. 33)

Mary Pipher, a well-known clinical psychologist, family therapist, and author summed up the perceived benefits of youth camping as a

> community created exclusively for children where they can cultivate their roots and find their wings. The camp experience builds values and skills in a

> socialized environment with controlled boundaries. Experiential education presupposes that all children succeed at their own level. And trained, caring counselors help share campers' experiences by modeling positive behavior. Camp is about relationships, getting along, belonging and feeling capable and significant. (as cited in Coleman, 1999, p. 18)

Gaps in Research

Youth participation in organized camping sounded enticing and beneficial in terms of positive youth development. While these testimonies sounded credible, they offered little empirical evidence related to the developmental outcomes for youth who participated in residential camping experiences. The previously mentioned American Camping Association philosophy, developmental needs met by camp, and testimonials to the benefits of camp seemed to be a tight fit with a context for proactive PYD as well as providing opportunities for developing the competencies, resiliency factors, self-esteem, developmental assets, and prosocial behaviors discussed in later sections of this review. The biggest challenge in demonstrating the effects of participation in camping is that PYD through residential camping programs was described from so many different perspectives. That made it very difficult to decide what to measure and how to design an effective instrument for measurement.

The research and evaluation issue became one of "supposedly outstanding" camping programs that historically had not been very good at evaluating their impact or sharing their results. Although many of the benefits of youth camping programs were clearly and richly articulated in text, there appeared to be a void of current research to empirically document the results. Numerous articles by credible

researchers and camping professionals went to great lengths to tell a reader what camp did in terms of PYD. These articles and papers correlated nicely the benefits of participating in camping programs to youth who gain life skills, competencies, assets, resiliency factors, self-esteem, or social capital. However, because of the nature of the publications, few carried detailed methodological discussions, and empirical studies of camping experiences published in academic journals were somewhat limited.

Methodological Issues

Research examining residential camping was clearly lacking in empirical strength and volume. One of the few available studies demonstrated marginal results in the measurement of whether campers showed an increase in long-term gains in self-esteem characteristics as the result of a camp experience. Grayson (1997a) measured the changes in a child's self esteem after participating in a three-week or six-week camp experience. Results showed that "summer camp appears to make a difference in the self-esteem of first-and second-year campers, but after two summers at camp, children did not show a significant rise in self-esteem" (p. 28). In a related study, Marsh (1999) in a meta-analysis of related camp studies involving a combined sample of 2,279 culturally diverse campers from all socio-economic brackets, ranging in age from 6to 22, and involved in day and residential camp sessions from one to six weeks, examined camp's effect on the self constructs of self-esteem, self-confidence, and other aspects of camp. He concluded that camp promotes "healthy youth

development and enhances self-constructs" (p. 39) but had difficulty identifying uniform specific measures.

Research conducted by Dustin (1989) examined the dynamics and outcomes of 18 different camps by conducting qualitative interviews with over 300 campers. The research study examined "how participation in an organized resident camp program contributes to the development of positive attitudes and skills and caring social behaviors in youth"(p. 31). Results from the study showed that campers and staff: "learned specific activity skills; learned about oneself; learned about group living and interpersonal skills; had fun; gained an appreciation of nature; and, perceived no change" (Dustin, p. 31). Chenery (1994), who referenced the study in a journal article, added to the explanation of the results from the Dustin study by stating that the "values that camps taught campers and staff included: responsibility, achievement, honesty, peace, loving, caring, cooperation, living in harmony with wilderness, and protecting the environment (p. 23).

Ross, (1988) documented the changes in campers' self-concepts. He used the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scales to evaluate the self-concepts of 119 randomly chosen campers on the first and last day of two, two-week sessions. The instrument included 80 yes/no questions focusing on conscious self-perceptions. The scale provided eight cluster scores including behavioral, intellectual, status, appearance, anxiety, personality, happiness and satisfaction. Results of the research, conducted in two consecutive years, averaged a 70% positive gain in self-concept.

In additional research, Smathers, Calzadilla& Arden, (1999) cited studies that show that "camping provides an environment in which teens feel safe, have a positive interaction with a caring adult, and learn life skills such as critical thinking, conflict resolution, team building, and communication" (p. 23). Their 1999 evaluation of a Clemson University, high-risk population residential camp, found the project to be a "successful program that improves self-esteem, teaches conflict resolution, and lowers recidivism rates" (p. 23). No records could be found to document how these results were obtained.

Moorman (1998) conducted a study of factors affecting the personal and social outcomes of organized camping. Questionnaires were distributed to 29 camp directors and 270 campers representing 33 residential camps. Moorman's results showed that

> girls had significantly higher personal and social outcomes than boys, experienced campers had higher personal outcomes than those who had never attended camp before, and campers surveyed at camp had higher social outcomes than those who were surveyed 6 months after returning home. (1998, p. 1)

The importance of empirical evaluation showing the benefits of youth participation in organized camping was demonstrated in a study conducted by the Camp Fire Boys and Girls in Des Moines, Iowa. They used a pre-test/post-test method to gather information at the beginning of camp and again at the end. Three scales of 5 to 13 items were used to measure personal behavior, interactions with peers, and interactions with adults. Staff members then evaluated the campers as: never, very infrequently, sometimes, frequently and very frequently exhibiting the

behavior. Sanders, Welch, & Gass (1997) found statistically significant positive changes in peer interaction and youth's knowledge of community resources. Personal behavior and camp enjoyment approached significance (Sanders, Welch, & Gass, 1997). Agency administrators used the data collected in the study to document program effectiveness, identify specific behavior problems, and design appropriate interventions. They found that "the evaluation proved very useful in documenting the effectiveness of the summer camp program to funders as well as providing a useful tool for staff to assess and monitor specific problem behaviors of campers" (Sanders Welch, & Gass, p. 20).

In light of the limited research-based evidence showing the impact of participation in camping programs relative to the 10 million youth who participate (Amercian Camping Association, 2002), the American Camping Association embarked on a nationwide survey to research the effects of youth participation in summer residential camping programs. Their research strategy included examining outcomes in four areas including commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity. They planned to analyze the strength of relationships between the provision of inputs by the camp and the manifestation of specific outcomes in campers including increased positive identity, increased positive value and spiritual growth, enhanced social skills, and learned new cognitive and psycho-motor skills. The study included campers who were between 9 and 14 and their parents. Both campers and parents completed a 35 item survey with a Likert-

type scale one month before camp, at the end of camp, and six months after camp. ACA cited the importance of this research as critical in understanding the role camps played at a time when the country was seeking the most effective means of "educating and assisting youth to take a productive place in the society of the future" (ACA, 2001, p.3). Although related to this dissertation research in terms of camper outcomes, the ACA research did not explore the relationship of the camp environment to the assets, competencies, or skills enhanced.

This chapter describes the contributing literature related to youth residential camping, gaps in research, and methodological issues related to the claims of camping professionals and others who proposed that camp provides a setting to enhance positive youth development. It provides the rationale for conducting an investigation among youth residential camping programs at the four Tennessee Centers to determine if this premise is true for the 4-H camping program in Tennessee. To better understand correlations between youth development outcomes and the factors associated with them, the broader picture of youth development as well as the context of development need to be considered.

Chapters III and IV further investigate the desired outcomes for youth and the environments associated with optimal positive development as they attempt to review and synthesize diverse approaches for conceptualizing youth development and then map them onto broad definitions of settings that promote PYD. Chapter III specifically focuses on the attributes of PYD while Chapter IV explores the relationship of youth development to the context of the environment in which it takes

place. Together the chapters seek to establish the rationale for an empirical examination of the relationships between the attributes of PYD and the characteristics of settings that provide an opportunity for optimal development with a more specific application to residential camping opportunities for pre and early adolescents. These domains, describing attributes of PYD and the settings that promote such development, have been alluded to in this section as contributing to the positive outcomes associated with youth participation in camping programs.

The relationships among Chapters III and IV to residential pre and early adolescent residential camping is clearly illustrated. One might then infer that a youth camping program can be seen as a specific example of the potential for youth life skill development that is influenced by the context of the camp environment. Current research clarifies this premise as focusing on the attributes describing PYD and the settings or pathways contributing to this development. Additional inquiry into the contributing literature and associations with the youth camping world will strengthen and clarify the claims of camping professionals and others associated with the camping profession who link the context of camp with the development that takes place there. The proposed research seeks to establish whether that claim is valid.

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The Importance of Positive Youth Development

The past decade saw an emphasis on examining youth development, positive youth outcomes, and contextual characteristics that influenced such development. A focus on researching and articulating the attributes and context of PYD became a priority with many governmental agencies and national research groups. According to several of the resulting national research reports, (Positive Youth Development Report 1999, Adolescent Development, 2001, Child Trends, 2001, Search Institute, 1997) the same individual, family, school, and community factors often predicted both positive and negative outcomes for youth. Simply put, risk factors were found to increase the likelihood of problem behaviors and decrease the likelihood of positive outcomes while protective factors decreased the likelihood of problem behaviors and increased the likelihood of positive outcomes (America's Promise, 1998; Child Trends 2001; Eccles & Gootman, 2002, National Youth Development Information Center, 2002; Positive Youth Development, 1999; Risks and Opportunities, 1999; Scales, 2000). As a result of this widely accepted premise, prevention scientists and PYD advocates are now focusing on the assets, competencies or skills critical for adult success in relationship to the social and environmental factors that influence specific youth outcomes.

In addition to the previously mentioned research reports, several scholarly writings- scattered among psychology, sociology, adolescent development, education, child development, marriage and family, and leisure recreation journals, also spoke to the broader context of adolescent development while focusing on positive attributes. These articles (Barnes-O'Conner, 1999; Edginton, 1997; Gambone & Arbreton, 1997; Hirsch, Roffman, Deutsch, & Flynn, 2000; Kivel, 1998; Mendler & Bickweat, 1998; Quinn, 1999) clearly identified a paradigm shift towards a more proactive approach to youth development. They generally focused on intentionally creating environments to promote the optimal development of critical skills, assets, or competencies essential for a successful transition to adulthood.

Chapter II has already set the stage for exploring the relationship between these desirable youth attributes and the context describing PYD in terms of residential camping programs. Discussed in this chapter are personal attributes of PYD including self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-identity, self-determination, resilience, and belief in the future, as well as life skills, assets, and competencies. Chapter IV then focuses on youth development program paradigms and the contextual features describing them. The contextual constructs of prosocial involvement and norms, creating environments conducive to positive youth development, and related issues are also discussed in Chapter IV. Together these chapters show the relevance of connecting residential youth camping with a focus on the attributes of PYD and the contextual settings in which that development takes place.

Defining Positive Youth Development

The 1990's saw a trend away from previous decades of reactive youth development programming, with a focus on fixing what was wrong, to addressing the attributes and contextual characteristics of optimal positive development. In light of this recent criticism to reactive programming and a negative approach to youth development, and a renewed interest in a more proactive approach, an important question to ask is "what constitutes positive youth development?"

Batavick (1997) defined PYD as recognizing "the inherent value of youth and seeks to draw on youths' strengths and build on youths' competencies (p. 639). Nixon (1997) simplified the definition as "the process in which all youth engage over time to meet their needs and build their competencies" (p. 571). Others proffered a more nuanced definition of youth development. Hudson (1997), who based her definition research examining settings to promote PYD, said that you "cannot view youth development outside its contextual environment" (p. 16). In a review of research from the 1980's, Pittman and Wright (1991) suggested "there is no universally accepted definition of youth development" and proposed a focus on "competencies that assist youth in their development."

Competencies seen as important by youth serving organizations included health/physical competence, personal/social competence, cognitive/creative competence, vocational competence, and citizenship competencies (Edginton & Edginton, 1994). In a similar posture, Wagner (1996) explored six domains of optimal adolescent development including biological, cognitive, emotional, social,

moral, and vocational areas. He further stated "any definition of optimal development must therefore reflect the multidimensional nature of the growth that occurs during adolescence" (p. 360).

Based on the complexity, diversity, and magnitude of related studies, exploring the potential realms of adolescent development could be seen as a daunting task for researchers and practitioners. For the purpose of this dissertation, the key components of adolescent development, included in this chapter, are organized into developmental attributes and frameworks for conceptualizing them. There are a multitude of critical tasks to be accomplished, and skills to be gained, in order for the process of adolescent development to be a positive one leading to later success. Those appearing most often in the scholarly literature will be addressed in the following sections.

Developmental Attributes

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem was frequently mentioned in the literature reviews discussing adolescent development. A recent literature search identified 1,463 articles addressing the early adolescent age group in which self-esteem or a closely related variant of the term was mentioned in the abstract (DuBois & Hirsch, 2000). The problem with the cumulated body of research was that self-esteem was the primary focus in fewer than one-third of the articles, indicating that researchers use a plethora of nominal and

operational definitions of self-esteem. DuBois & Hirschfelt felt that "self-esteem of early adolescents has been conceptualized and measured by the majority of the researchers in global and hence, undifferentiated terms" (p. 1), making replication among diverse audiences and in multiple settings difficult.

The development of self-esteem was defined by Erickson (1968) as " the coincidence of physical mastery and cultural meaning, of functional pleasure and social recognition" (p. 49). The setting in which early adolescent development took place and the developmental status of youth within the age group influenced levels and patterns of self-esteem. According to Hamilton and Oswalt (1998) "high self-esteem in youth typically occurs when they feel comfortable, confident, and supported in their learning environment"(p. 35). Further, they found high self-esteem to be "directly related to positive health choices and behaviors" (p. 35). Hirsch and DuBois (2000), in a study to measure self-esteem, found that inner city Boys and Girls Clubs can influence self-esteem, citing in particular the focus of "peer groups, activities, and relationships with staff within the context of a setting free from the threat of violence" (p. 125). Polyce-Lynch, Myers, Kilmartin, Forssmann-Falck, and Kliewer (1998) found that "experiences with others such as family and friends, and behaviors such as good schoolwork and sports, create positive self-regard and that relationships and activities are important in promoting positive feeling and enhancing self-esteem" (p. 1036).

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy was defined as the perception that one could achieve desired goals through one's own action (Positive Youth Development, 1999). According to Bandura (1989), strategies associated with self-efficacy beliefs included personal goal setting, which is influenced by self-appraisal of one's capabilities. They "function as an important set of proximal determinants of human motivation, affect and action" (Bandura, 1989, p. 1175). An individual's lack of self-efficacy may result in problem behaviors that are mediated by cognitive, emotional, attitudinal, personality, and social factors including poor coping skills, anxiety, and a need for social approval (Hawkins, Lishner, Catalano & Howard, 1986; Holden, Moncher, Schnike, & Barker, 1990). Opportunities for goal setting, coping, and mastery skills were some of the strategies used to foster the development of efficacy.

Self-Identity

Self-identity was defined as the internal organization of a coherent sense of self (Positive Youth Development, 1999). Erickson's (1968) identity development theory "emphasizes the dynamic, progressive, organization of the child's drives, abilities, beliefs and individual history" as leading to the development of the internal self-structure known as identity (PYD, 1999). He further defined identity formation as encompassing task identification, anticipation of roles, a will to be oneself, and mutual recognition. Promoting healthy identity formation, achievement, and positive identification with a social or cultural sub-group was thought to foster the development of this critical sense of self (PYD, 1999).

Self-determination

Self-determination was the ability to think for one's self and to take consistent action with that thought (PYD, 1999). Fetterman, Kaftatian, & Wanderson, (1996) defined self-determination as the ability to chart one's own course. Empowerment, autonomy, independent thinking, self-advocacy, or the ability to live and grow by self-determined internal standards and values was thought to promote self-determination (PYD, 1999).

Belief in the Future

Belief in the future was the internalization of hope and optimism about possible outcomes (Positive Youth Development, 1999). Positive future expectations predicted better social and emotional adjustment in school and a stronger internal sense that the future would present positive opportunities and surmountable obstacles. These attributes were found to act as a protective factor in counteracting the negative effects of high stress on self-rated competence (Wyman, Cowen, Work & Kerley, 1993). Programs that fostered belief in the future focused on optimism about a healthy and productive life ("Positive Youth Development," 1999).

Resiliency

Resiliency research was one area often emphasized in youth development literature (Bernard, 1997; Gilliam & Scott, 1998,). Resilience is defined as an individual's capacity for adapting to change and stressful events in healthy and flexible ways ("Positive Youth Development," 1999). Gilliam and Scott (1998) said "the most prominent feature in resilient individuals as their ability to maintain hope"

(p. 2). Protective factors that were present in resilient individuals included "a successful school experience, developing reading skills, associations with some adults outside the family, responsibility within the family that included purposeful work, and hobbies, and interests that led to positive involvement with adults" (Gilliam & Scott, p. 3). Other protective factors often cited included spiritual or religious beliefs, a sense of humor, and a sense of hope about the future. Bernard (1997) suggested that "resilient youth have social competence, problem solving skills, autonomy, and a sense of purpose and future" (p. 3). Programs that fostered resilience emphasized adaptive coping responses to change and stress, psychological flexibility, and capacity (Positive Youth Development, 1999).

The concepts mentioned in this section appear to be well represented in the research literature but their level of abstraction is a barrier to providing useful applications for practitioners. Concepts presented at a highly abstract or theoretical level pose difficulty in applying them to program design and impact evaluation. The 4-H program, Search Institute, and others have attempted to further define these broad concepts into specific skills, assets, or competencies so as to make them less abstract and more concrete.

Frameworks for Conceptualizing Developmental Attributes

Life Skills

A life skill is a learned ability to do something well. The acquisition and mastery of basic life skills were thought to be necessary for individuals to function competently in everyday life as they matured into adulthood. These skills were defined as the abilities individuals learned to help them to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life (Barkman, Horton, Hutchinson, Matchmes, & Myers, 1999; Hendricks, 1996). In the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service 4-H youth development programs, two basic conceptualizations, The Targeting Life Skills Model (1996) and the Four Fold Youth Development Model (2000) were adopted as frameworks for the classification of these life skills. These models provided the framework for evaluating extension youth programs comprising the largest youth development organization in the world. Both of them centered on the four H's (head, heart, hands, and health) and the 4-H pledge to "clearer thinking, greater loyalty, larger service, and better living."

Hendricks (1996) first presented the Targeting Life Skills Model in the early 1990's. Barkman & Matchmes (2000) presented a similar Four Fold Youth Development Model later in the decade. The concepts presented in both the Targeting Life Skills Model and Four Fold Youth Development Model drew on research-based information to establish specific and measurable skills that youth needed to develop into confident, capable, caring and responsible citizens (Barkman et al., 1999; Hendricks, 1996). In many ways they appeared to be extensions of the

previously discussed attributes of "self."

The Targeting Life Skills model (Hendricks, 1996) proposed 35 skills as subsets of relating, caring, giving, working, being, living, thinking, and managing. It was organized as follows:

> Relating - accepting differences, conflict resolution, social skills, cooperation, communication, and communication;
>
> Caring - concern for others, empathy, sharing, nurturing relationships;
>
> Giving - community service, volunteering, leadership, responsible citizen, contributions to group effort;
>
> Working - marketable skills, teamwork, self-motivation;
>
> Being - self-esteem, self-responsibility, character, managing feelings, self-discipline;
>
> Living - healthy lifestyle choices, stress management, disease prevention, personal safety;
>
> Thinking - learning to learn, decision making, problem solving, critical thinking, service learning; and,
>
> Managing - goal setting, planning/organizing, wise use of resources, keeping records, resiliency.

The Four Fold Youth Development Model (Barkman et al., 1999) encompassed 47 skills as subsets of head, heart, hands, and health. According to the Four Fold Model, these life skills were characterized in the following manner:

> Head skills include: Utilizing Scientific Method, Processing Information, Understanding, Systems, Managing Resources, Practicing Creativity, Making Decisions, Solving Problems, Visualizing Information, Learning to Learn, Reasoning, Thinking Critically, Keeping Records, Planning and Organizing, Achieving Goals, Navigating Your Environment, Working with Numbers.

Heart skills include: Communicating, Interacting Socially, Cooperating, Sharing, Resolving Conflicts, Valuing Social Justice, Valuing Diversity, Building Relationships, Caring for Others, Being Empathetic.

Hands skills include: Mastering Technology, Learning through Community Service, Volunteering, Being a Responsible Citizen, Working in a Team, Exercising Leadership, Completing a Project/Task, Motivating Yourself.

Health skills include: Being Responsible, Developing Self-Esteem, Managing Yourself, Practicing Integrity and Character, Developing a Positive View of the Future, Utilizing Resistance Skills, Being Resilient, Managing Stress, Making Healthy Lifestyle Choices, Preventing Personal Injury, Expressing Emotions Positively, Preventing Disease, Developing a Sense of Purpose (Barkman et al., 1999).

The measurement of life skills varied according to the developmental needs and age of the population (Bailey & Deen, 2002; Hendricks, 1969). Nollan, Wolf, Ansell, & Burns, 2000) divided life skills into tangible and intangible skills. Tangible skills were those needed for daily living such as self-maintenance, gainful employment, money management, household management, transportation, finding and using resources for leisure and recreation, and vocational interests and aptitudes. Intangible life skills were defined as those needed for "interpersonal relationships and for maintaining employment such as decision making, problem-solving, planning, communication, self-esteem, anger and grief management and social skills" (Nollan et al., p. 161).

While it is doubtful that any environment could provide a setting for a youths' exposure to an environment conducive to developing all of these skills, one can anticipate that the residential camping environment would be a setting predictive to acquiring or enhancing some or several of them. The specificity of the life skills

appeared to make them more realistic in terms of measurement but limited the ability to generalize the findings. Another method for conceptualizing these life skills was through a developmental assets approach as proposed by the Search Institute (Benson & Walker, 1998).

Developmental Assets

The Search Institute, a nonprofit research organization promoting the well being of children and adolescents (Scales, 2000) framed many of these same life skills and the settings that promoted the development of them as developmental assets. Research conducted by the Search Institute surveyed nearly 100,000 adolescent students in 213 U.S. communities in 1996-97 (Scales, 2000). Through this research the Search Institute (Benson & Walker, 1998) identified 40 essential building blocks of adolescent development that all youth needed to grow up healthy, competent, and caring. The Search Institute 40 developmental assets were divided into eight internal and external categories of positive building blocks critical for the optimal positive development of youth. The "internal" assets/building blocks are listed in Table 2 and included Commitment to Learning, Positive Values, Social Competencies, and Positive Identity with specific characteristics listed under each heading. These "internal" assets of youth are discussed in this section as attributes or characteristics of PYD. The "external" assets of Support, Empowerment, Boundaries and Expectations, and Constructive Use of Time were included in Table 4 as shared earlier. This "external" assets focus on the context of development, makes it more

appropriate for an in-depth discussion of them to be included in Chapter IV.

The Search Institutes' developmental assets, linking internal and external factors to aspects of adolescent development, was represented in numerous scholarly publications. Numerous articles could be found that discuss the state of youth development and the merits of an assets approach to PYD (Benson, 1993; Benson, Scales, Leffert & Roehlkepartain 1999; Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1992; Chaskin and Hawley (1994). In an applied research approach, Scales (1999, 2000); Drayer and Roehlkepartain (1995); Benson, Galbraith and Espeland (1995); and Price, Cioci, Penner, and Trautlin (1993) discussed the assets in reference to those most crucial for protecting youth from high-risk behaviors with recommendations for educators and other practitioners in building those critical assets. Scales, Benson, Leffert, and Blyth (2000) further discussed the relationship between developmental assets and the prediction of thriving indicators while Leffert, et al. (1998) examined measurement of the assets and the prediction of risk behaviors.

The attributes of commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity were identified as "internal assets or the values, skills, and competencies young people need to guide themselves to becoming self-regulating" (Scales, 1999, p. 114).

> Commitment to learning includes achievement motivation, school engagement, homework, bonding to school, and reading for pleasure.
>
> Positive values include caring, equality and social justice, integrity, honesty, responsibility, and restraint.
>
> Social competencies include planning and decision-making, interpersonal competence, cultural competence, resistance skills, and peaceful conflict

resolution

Positive identity includes personal power, self-esteem, sense of purpose, and positive view of personal future.

Weikert (1998) saw the strength of the Search Institute approach as "the choice of addressing youth's needs from a positive framework, rather than a deficit-based model" (p. 210). In another article, Scales (2000) further clarified the assets that protect youth most from high-risk behaviors as "positive peer influence, restraint, peaceful conflict resolution, time at home, school engagement, resistance skills", and those that promoted a range of thriving such as "time spent in youth programs, cultural competence, self-esteem, planning and decision-making skills, achievement motivation, school engagement, other adult relationships, reading for pleasure, resistance skills, time spent on homework, the values of integrity, responsibility, caring and equality" (p. 86).

It is worthy to note that a majority of the research exploring the "internal" and "external" developmental assets and the research journal articles espousing the models' integrity were from current or former researchers at the Search Institute. Price and Drake questioned the developmental assets model by pointing out the correlational assumption between the concept of assets and high-risk behaviors. It appeared that the original research was conducted in "small, isolated, primarily white, 'place' communities not within major metropolitan communities (Price & Drake, 1999). Additional research simply focused on thousands of additional survey instruments to aggregate more data. According to Price and Drake (1999), the major

problem with the Search Institute research was a lack of an experimental design to test their asset theory. Price and Drake (1999) further said that "no published study has shown that a major intervention to change assets in youth makes them less likely to be at risk" (p. 215).

Competencies

Competencies were defined as desired developmental outcomes or tools used in achieving a broader classification of outcomes. They were often classified as social, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and moral developmental outcomes ("Positive Youth Development," 1999). These competencies did not stand alone, but supported and built upon one another. Likewise, many competency efforts in recent years have been described as developing skills to "integrate feelings (emotional competence), with thinking (cognitive competence), and actions (behavioral competence) in order to achieve specific goals" (p. 12).

> Social competence was the range of interpersonal skills that help youth integrate feelings, thinking, and actions to achieve social and interpersonal goals (Caplan et al. 1992). Programs that promoted social competence fostered the development of interpersonal skills and provided venues for practicing these skills.
>
> Emotional competence was the ability to identify and respond to feelings and emotional reactions in oneself and others (Positive Youth Development, 1999). Opportunities to practice identifying feelings in self or others, managing impulses, self-management, empathy, self-soothing and building frustration tolerance fostered emotional competence.
>
> Cognitive competence was the ability for self-talk, reading and interpreting social cues, using steps for problem-solving and decision-making, understanding others' perspectives, understanding behavioral norms, a positive attitude toward life and self-awareness, logic, analytic thinking, and abstract reasoning (W.T.Grant Consortium, 1992). Positively influencing a child's cognitive abilities, processes, outcomes, problem solving and thinking

skills promoted cognitive competence.

> Behavioral competence referred to effective action through the use of nonverbal communication, verbal communication, and taking action ("Positive Youth Development," 1999). Teaching specific communication skills and providing reinforcement for effective behavior patterns and choices promoted behavioral competence.
>
> Moral competence was the ability to assess and respond to the ethical, affective, or social justice dimensions of a situation ("Positive Youth Development," 1999). Fostering empathy, respect for cultural diversity or societal rules and standards, a sense of right and wrong, and moral or social justice promoted moral competence.

This chapter highlights a multitude of frameworks for organizing and conceptualizing the attributes critical for optimal youth development. The common goal in all of the frameworks, in the alliterative 4-H description, was one of youth becoming "competent, caring, confident, connected, and contributing citizens of character" (4-H Youth Development Facts Brief, 2003). Despite their apparent diversity, the frameworks can readily be mapped into one another as was done in Table 1. In brief, they can be summarized as life skills that are attributes of youth development critical for maturation into healthy adulthood. Few could argue that any of the attributes presented in this chapter are not important for successful development. Few could further argue that participation in residential camping programs does not have the potential for enhancing these attributes. The challenge lies in identifying environmental characteristics of settings that provide opportunities for optimal development and designing programs that provide those key components. To address this challenge, Chapter IV further examines youth development paradigms

and the key factors contributing to successful youth development programs

CHAPTER IV

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Youth Development Program Paradigms

The importance and need for optimal opportunities and contextual settings in order for youth to develop critical skills, assets, or competencies as discussed in Chapter III are clearly established. This is especially critical when a child's familial context does not support or enhance the development of these skills. The context for development occurring outside the familial boundaries then becomes one of primary importance. The recent emphasis on PYD programs seeks to enhance the opportunities available to all youth but especially for high-risk youth. Consequently, the next question that must be addressed is "what is a youth development program?"

Historically, the traditional approach to working with young people, especially disadvantaged or "at-risk" has been to "label them, identify and attack what we thought were their deficits and so called pathologies, and then design reactive treatment interventions" (Baines & Selta, 1999, p. 25). Nixon (1997) saw this emphasis on youth problem behaviors as contributing

> to a pervasive negativity towards youth as a collective group, a paucity of research and information regarding what Hobbs [1992] called the psychology of well-being, and a failure to address the many developmental needs of youth that are not related to maladaptive behavior or other dysfunctions. (p. 571)

Pittman, in testimony given before the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families, summed up the need for a change in emphasis in stating that "problem free is not fully prepared" (Pittman & Fleming, 1991).

In response to the medical-model approach, with a focus on correcting problem behaviors and negative environments, Long and Brendtro (2000) called for a "need to shift the focus from why youth go wrong to why they go right" (p. 2). Quinn (1999) also advocated this paradigm shift in youth development programs from ameliorative approaches to those emphasizing and supporting the normal socialization and healthy development of young people. The Family and Youth Services Bureau suggested that "helping young people achieve their full potentials is the way to prevent their involvement in risky behavior" ("Reconnecting Youth and Community", 1996, p. 2). In addition, Witt (2002) felt that efforts needed to be made to create organizations and communities that enabled youth to progress along the pathways to adulthood by supplying the supports and opportunities to move beyond simple problem prevention.

Opportunities to engage in prosocial behaviors and norms beyond the familial context appeared to be critical as adolescents engaged in normative exploration beyond boundaries of the familial context. The early adolescence period was described as one of extreme changes for youth as they dealt with the biological changes of puberty, school transitions from elementary to middle or secondary schools, and the psychological shifts accompanying the emergence of sexuality (Eccles, 1999). The process of adolescent development was seen as one of changing

relations between the active, intentional individual and his/her complex soci
cultural, and historical context (Grovetnat, 2001). Eccles saw a "heightened
for both positive and negative outcomes, creating important opportunities for families, schools, and out-of-school programs to interact with adolescents in ways that foster growth and development" (p. 6).

Prosocial behaviors and opportunities to engage in meaningful positive activities appeared to be stepping stones in PYD with the diverse offerings of out-of-school programs capable of providing an important venue for this development to take place. Eccles (1999) described out-of-school programs as having the potential to provide a nonfamilial setting in which children and early adolescents could express their individuality, master new skills, and seek emotional support from adults. Kenny (1996) also pointed to a "tremendous amount of work that can be done in schools, community youth organizations, and churches, as well as in community mental health settings to enhance opportunities and reduce the risks of adolescence" (p. 478).

Further addressing the concept of community involvement, Scales (1999) stated the need for a total community ecology that responded to what young people needed developmentally and included successful schools, but also required effective families and particular kinds of community resources. He added that "one notable context that was likely to affect prosocial and moral development in adolescence was the growing opportunities to engage in youth organizations and extracurricular activities" (1999, p. 117). Wagner expanded on this approach with his statement that

"significant advances in the quality of life for young people will occur as the result of proactive, population-based interventions (i.e., educational/ developmental, preventive) not remedial approaches that are provided on an individual basis" (1996, p. 374).

The United States Department of Agriculture -- the governing agency for the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), of which 4-H is the youth development component--described youth development as the natural process of developing ones capacities and occurring from an intentional process. This process promoted positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, choices, relationships, and the support necessary for youth to fully participate in development that takes place in families, peer groups, schools, neighborhoods, and communities (4-H Youth Development Facts in Brief, 2002). Many other youth serving organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club, Scouts, and Campfire Girls had similar missions.

As stated previously, countless journal articles and research projects have clearly identified the need for PYD programs. Batavick (1997) discussed the need for a multi-faceted approach when she described the philosophy of PYD as a movement that "also integrates family supports, strengthens family functioning, and empowers its consumers to shape their own plans and the programming that affects them" (p. 639). Nixon (1997) felt that

> few teens in today's society, and particularly those served by child welfare and juvenile justice, have access to programs that promote development by building on strengths, creating opportunities to learn and practice real life skills, and facilitating mutually beneficial participation in programs and

communities. (p. 571)

Youth development programs presently focus on a variety of approaches with funding coming from a variety of not-for-profit, governmental, and local community sources. Federal money for youth programs is directed "towards intervention, prevention, and community service" (Batavick, 1997, p. 642). Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray & Foster (1992) reviewed youth development evaluation literature and also found three main program directions. They included "positive-behavior focused competency/asset enhancing programs, problem-behavior focused competency/asset enhancement programs, and resistance skills-based prevention programs" (p. 423).

The previous paragraphs clearly show a need for a national commitment to a multi-faceted, comprehensive approach to mobilizing broadly defined communities encompassing families, neighborhoods, schools, and churches with a focus on adolescent programs becoming environments for PYD. One might easily assume that residential camping programs for youth campers could be one such entity. The challenge lies in connecting pre and early adolescent residential camping programs with the developmental attributes described in Chapter III and the contexts for development as discussed further in this chapter. Understanding the relationships between youth residential camping, attributes enhanced, and the contextual features critical for development is strengthened through an exploration of the environment where optimal development is most likely to occur.

Key Positive Youth Development Concepts

Several recent reports contributed conceptualization to the role of the environmental context in positive adolescent development and fostering the life skills, assets or competencies necessary for a successful transition to young adulthood. Some of these reports offered very broad suggestions while others were much more specific in their findings (Eccles & Gutman, 2002; *National Youth Development Information Center,* 2002; *Child Trends,* 2002, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999; Kipke, 1999; *America's Promise* 1998; and *Search Institute,* Benson, Galbraith & Espeland, 1997. Each report will be reviewed briefly below.

In *Risk and Opportunities - Synthesis of Studies on Adolescence* Kipke (1999), noted a wide range of contextual, psychological, social, and environmental factors that interacted with biological changes associated with adolescent development to influence behavior. Kipke summarized the recent research findings related to PYD by stating that "adolescents are shaped by experiences with other individuals, and in a variety of settings, including families, schools, peers, neighborhoods, community-based organizations, health care organizations, the child and juvenile justice system and others" (p.1). Kipke further added that problem behaviors as well as health-enhancing ones cluster together and tend to reinforce one another.

The *Child Trends* (2002) reviewed the contributing influences and programs leading to positive behavior in the areas of mental health, emotional well-being, educational adjustment and achievement, physical health and safety, reproductive health, social competency, and citizenship. Their overall finding was that

"relationships are key" (p. 3). They cited parent-child interactions, peer relationships, and the support of siblings, teachers, and mentors as critical. Characteristics describing adolescents were seen by *Child Trends* (2002) as clustering in positive or problem behaviors. The document also promoted the need to view adolescents as "whole" people, the importance of engaging teens by teaching important social and life skills, targeting desired outcomes, and starting programs when adolescents are young.

The *National Youth Development Information Center* (NYDIC, 2002) emphasized that all young people had basic needs critical to survival and healthy development and encompassing the following: a sense of safety and structure; belonging and membership; self-worth and an ability to contribute; independence and control over one's life; closeness and several good relationships; and competency and mastery. The Center listed the components of settings meeting the developmental needs of adolescents as including: physical activity; competence and achievement; self-definition; creative expression; positive interaction with peers and adults; structure and clear limits; and meaningful participation. Additionally, they cited a caring adult, role model, or mentor; safe places to learn and grow during non-school hours; a healthy start; a marketable skill through effective education; and opportunities to "give back" through community service as fundamental resources (p. 6).

Eccles and Gootman (2002) in their *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development Report* (CPPYD) cited physical development, intellectual development, psychological and emotional development, and social development as personal social assets that promoted positive youth development. They also described the elements of settings that promote the development of these assets as including:

> Physical and psychological safety and security; structure that is developmentally appropriate, with clear expectations for behavior as well as increasing opportunities to make decisions, to participate in governance and rule-making, and to take on leadership rules as one matures and gains more expertise;
>
> Emotional and moral support;
>
> Opportunities for adolescents to experience supportive adult relationships;
>
> Opportunities to learn how to form close, durable human relationships with peers that support and reinforce healthy behaviors;
>
> Opportunities to feel a sense of belonging and being valued;
>
> Opportunities to develop positive social values and norms;
>
> Opportunities for skill building and mastery;
>
> Opportunities to develop confidence in one's abilities to master one's environment (a sense of personal efficacy);
>
> Opportunities to make a contribution to one's community and to develop a sense of mattering; and Strong links between families, schools, and broader community resources. (p. 7)

The Positive Youth Development Project (PYDP - Department of Health and Human Services, 1999), found that positive youth development programs shared many of the same characteristics. They included a commitment to:

Promote bonding
Foster resilience
Promote social, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, moral competence
Foster self-determination
Foster spirituality
Foster self-efficacy
Foster clear and positive identity
Foster belief in the future
Provide recognition for positive behavior,
Provide opportunities for prosocial involvement
Foster prosocial norms (healthy standards for behavior). (p. 10)

America's Promise (1998) listed five fundamental resources as critical for the success of children and adolescents. They included:

caring adults;
safe places and structured activities;
a healthy start for a healthy future;
marketable skills; and,
opportunities to give back through service to one's community. (p. 1)

America's Promise (1998) saw these five resources as accentuating a series of important research-based developmental consequences as reviewed in Chapter II. They emphasized a shifting power and responsibility to communities, residents, leaders, and systems within them rather than a government-based medical model approach of reactionism to problem behaviors. *America's Promise* also pointed out the additive power of these resources in decreasing problem behaviors and strengthening thriving though positive behaviors (p. 3).

The Search Institute identified support; empowerment; boundaries and expectations; and constructive use of time as key external dimensions of assets critical for adolescent development. Scales (1999) clarified them as "more succinctly the

relationships and opportunities adults provide young people" as follows:

> Support was further defined as family support, positive family communication, other adult relationships, caring neighborhood, caring school climate, and parent involvement in schooling.
>
> Empowerment was further defined as community values youth, youth as resources, service to others, and safety.
>
> Boundaries and expectations were further defined as family boundaries, school boundaries, neighborhood boundaries, adult role models, positive peer influence, and, high expectations.
> Constructive use of time was further defined as creative activities, youth programs, religious community, and limited unsupervised time at home. (p. 114).

The reports cited in this chapter shared different methods of articulating the need for and conceptualizing the characteristics of settings that fostered positive youth development. There are many commonalities across the reports with the research and reports clearly assuming that relationships existed between attributes of positive youth development and characteristics of settings that promoted optimal development. The issues, tasks, and challenges of that research remain highly visible in attempting to clarify the attributes of positive youth development and identifying the characteristics of settings that promote positive development. Work needs to be done in identifying the program applications of the conceptual frameworks as evidenced in the section that follows.

Issues and Trends in Youth Development Programs

The recent reports and research findings from *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development* (Eccles & Gootman, 2002), the *National Youth*

Development Information Center (2002), *Child Trends* (2002), The *Positive Youth Development Project* (Department of Health and Human Services, 1999), *Risk and Opportunities - Synthesis of Studies on Adolescence* (Kipke, 1999), *America's Promise* (1998), and *Search Institute* (1997) are conceptually beneficial as they articulated the current trends in positive youth development programs and the need for additional research. They clarified the paradigm shift away from a problem behavior and resistence skills approach to one of providing a positive environment for development that promoted the acquisition of assets, life skills, and competencies.

The *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development* report shared the merits of community programs as expanding the opportunities for youth to acquire personal and social assets and to experience the broad range of features of positive developmental settings (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). It also cited the need for additional research while describing the research base as just becoming comprehensive enough to allow for tentative conclusions about the individual assets that characterize positive development and the settings that support it (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). Despite the limitations, research in "all settings in the lives of adolescents –families, schools, and communities–is yielding consistent evidence that there are specific features of settings that support youth development and that these features can be incorporated into community programs" (Eccles & Gootman, p. 12).

The National Youth Development Information Center (2002) and others described youth development as the process through which adolescents seek, and are

assisted, to meet their basic personal and social needs, and build their individual assets or competencies (Barnes-O'Conner, 1999; Scanlin, 2001). The National Youth Development Center saw the contribution of community programs as one of conducting activities with a primarily nonacademic focus; employing active and experimental learning methods; and promoting competencies through group and one-to-one activities.

The Positive Youth Development Project (1999) found that effective positive youth development programs strengthen the likelihood for youth experiencing specific attributes. They included social, emotional, cognitive, and/or behavioral competencies; self-efficacy; family and community standards for healthy social and personal behavior; healthy bonds between youth and adults; increased opportunities for youth participation in positive social activities; and recognition and reinforcement for participation. They cited a low frequency of follow-up studies; lack of standardized, widely accepted measures; limited comprehensiveness of evaluation information supplied; and lack of proven evaluation methods as challenges.

Risk and Opportunities - Synthesis of Studies on Adolescence (Kipke, 1999) shared an opinion that research has emphasized the need to examine the "whole" youth - a concept that described the assets as well as the deficits of individual adolescents. He reported a greater recognition among researchers that neither puberty nor adolescence could be understood without considering the social, psychological, and cultural contexts in which young people grow and develop, including the familial and societal values, social and economic conditions, and institutions they experienced

He further added that research on social settings increasingly calls attention to the role of the unrelated adults who come in contact with the adolescent in the neighborhood and other social settings. In the area of adolescent research, Kipke saw a need to explore indicators of adolescent well-being, approaches to integrating frameworks for preventing risk behaviors, and promoting positive developmental outcomes among all youth.

America's Promise (1998) shared the opinion that relationships between positive developmental experiences and youth outcomes hold across many demographic variables including race/ethnicity, age, gender, geography, and community size. The authors stated that "what appears to be critical is a widely embraced commitment to positive child and adolescent development combined with careful planning and the meaningful engagement of all community sectors (p. 5).

Child Trends (2002) shared a more negative reaction to a review of youth development in describing extensive coverage in the media and trend data that focused on negative adolescent behaviors and poor child outcomes. *Child Trends* saw limited focus in the research literature, popular discussions, and policy-making on how to promote positive youth development. The authors cited a scarcity of information on positive child outcomes and a lack of consensus among experts regarding child outcomes which resulted in a lack of what goals should be taught in order to raise healthy, high-achieving children.

These previously mentioned, large-scale projects, aimed at reviewing and synthesizing thousands of research studies into summary reports and guides for practitioners, show the relationships between personal attributes and the characteristics of settings promoting optimal youth development. The majority of them also stated a need for additional research. Research on the camp setting as a context for positive development is one step towards examining those relationships. The results of empirical research in this one microcosm may offer valuable insight to a much broader context of youth development and the factors contributing to it. Thus, the case has been made for examining the context of the camp environment as it influences the enhancement of life skills among the early and pre adolescent participants as proposed in this research study.

CHAPTER V

RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Research Design

The design of this cross-sectional study was descriptive and correlational, with multiple independent and dependent variables derived from self-reported camper survey questionnaires. The dependent life skill variables examined in this investigation included scores derived from subscales denoting building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation. The independent contextual variables describing the camp environment included scores derived from subscales of psychological safety and security, physical safety and security, emotional and moral support, and supportive adult/teen leader relationships. The demographic variables of age and gender were also analyzed for differences attributable to either of these factors and included as independent variables in all statistical analyses.

Specific Procedures

The researcher submitted a request to the Institutional Review Board and Human Subjects Committee of the University of Tennessee for permission to conduct this study. Since the participants were minors, Form B was utilized and submitted for expedited review. Prior to submitting the proposal, tentative plans for conducting the

study, including identification of the sample and data collection, were submitted to the District Directors, 4-H Center Managers, and State 4-H Director of the University of Tennessee Agricultural Extensive Service. This notification and endorsement was deemed essential since the 4-H Agents and 4-H Center Managers, who were supervised by the District Directors, would be intimately involved with the entire process, including the collection of assent and consent forms and facilitation of the research procedure. The researcher is a State 4-H Youth Development Specialist employed by the University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service and working under the State 4-H Director. All three groups agreed to endorse the study and encourage county and 4-H Center participation if the appropriate permission was received and procedure approved. After authorization was received, the researcher continued with plans as outlined in the Form B proposal. The Form B proposal can be found in the appendix.

An important, but untested, assumption was that the four Tennessee 4-H Centers, from which campers would be drawn, provided a consistency in settings for positive youth development and opportunities for campers that support life skills or assets. The basis for this assumption of cross-center consistency was the use of common training procedures including individual county agents, volunteer leaders, and summer camp staff, uniform curriculum materials, and comparable facilities across the four camp settings.

Research Sample

Four Tennessee 4-H Centers, over the course of the summer months, annually conduct a five-day residential camping experience for more than 5,000 youth from across the state. The camping season for these junior campers begins at the end of May and concludes in mid-July with each of the 95 counties in Tennessee assigned a specific junior camp week. The target population for the study consisted of youth who had just completed the fourth through sixth grade and were 4-H members in their local communities. The study population was comprised of all youth attending 4-H camp during the summer.

The sampling frame for this study included all 4th through 6th grade campers participating in a five-day residential camping experience at the four Tennessee 4-H Centers during the third week of June, 2004. Campers from eligible counties were randomly assigned to this camp week by their district administrative office. This week was purposefully selected for the research because it was in the middle of the summer camping season and should have theoretically eliminated staff "newness" as a potential independent variable. Another consideration in utilizing a uniform statewide date was the decreased potential for large fluctuations in weather patterns as an independent variable that could be influential in an outdoor environment.

Four H'ers in the assigned counties were given the opportunity to participate in the residential camping experience through promotional efforts conducted by county 4-H agents in their local school and community clubs. Programs conducted by the

University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service are non-discriminatory so all eligible youth (4-H'ers in grades 4-6 from the assigned counties) had the opportunity to attend camp.

This age group of campers is the youngest age group eligible to attend 4-H camp and is primarily involved with the 4-H program through an Extension Agent or Program Assistant who meets with their community or school classroom club, conducts camp registration, and attends camp with them. Camper assent and parental consent forms were designed by the researcher, approved by the University of Tennessee Institutional Review Board, and distributed by the county 4-H agent in April and May as a part of camp sign-up. These forms were then returned to the county office along with the required medical and activity participation forms. Normally, any given week of the camping season includes a cross-section of rural and urban communities and a diverse camper population assuring some variability on a number of sociodemographic factors.

The sample for the research included all of the 4^{th} through 6^{th} grade campers with signed camper assent and parental consent forms camping the week of June 14-18, 2004, at the four Tennessee 4-H Centers. The sample size equaled 720 campers and represented 72% of the campers who were eligible for the research. A sample size of 361 would generate sample estimates of population parameters (N= 6,000) with confidence ranges of $\pm$ 3 at the $p \leq .05$ level of confidence (Krejcie, 1970). Thus, the sample size of 720 is of sufficient size for the analyses planned in this study

Instrumentation

A survey questionnaire was used to collect self-reported data for this study. Participants completed 62 questions written in a Likert- type response format reducible to a series of scales measuring the dependent and independent variables. Response options on the survey questionnaire included: strongly agree (1), agree (2), not sure (3), disagree (4), and strongly disagree (5). The instrument is included in the appendix.

Content validity describing the attributes and contextual settings was established by using focus groups of campers, camp staff, and parents who were asked to describe the residential camping experience. Key words in these narratives were then used to further identify common attributes of the life skills enhanced and contextual statements related to positive youth development in order to construct potential subscales of related statements. In order to further establish content validity, these statements were subsequently shared with professional colleagues having considerable residential camping experience at the National Camping Institute, Camping and Environmental Programs National Task Force Committee meeting of the National Association of Extension 4-H Workers, State 4-H Staff Southern States Biennial Conference, and with Program Coordinators at the four 4-H Centers. To evaluate face validity, 4-H agents with a history of successful camping programs and positive youth development work were also consulted for input on appropriateness of survey questions and ease in administering the instrument.

Many of the resultant scales for the dependent life skill variables were also previously pilot-tested by the American Camping Association for internal consistency and reliability (ACA personal communication, 2002) as part of their major research initiative. Statements were also taken from life skill evaluation instruments developed by other extension research faculty and used with similar audiences but not necessarily in the camp setting (Iowa State University Extension, 2002, Purdue University, 2002).

Measuring the context of positive youth development is relatively new. The researcher developed subscales reflective of the camp environment since a suitable instrument could not be located. The statements measuring these independent variables were also designed from the previously mentioned focus group narratives and adaptations of statements used in research measuring similar concepts as proposed for this study. The researcher also consulted peers in other states conducting similar residential camping programs (National Camping Institute, Camping and Environmental Program National Task Force Committee meeting of the National Association of Extension 4-H Workers, Southern States Biennial Conference), and Program Coordinators at the four Tennessee 4-H Centers to establish construct and content validity.

Individual statements were randomly arranged on the survey questionnaire and some were reverse-worded to discourage patterned responses. It was determined that campers would not have problems with marking or responding to the survey instrument because the survey completion process of coloring in "bubbles" was

similar to ones used regularly in their school classrooms for achievement testing. Reading level analysis showed that the instrument was rated at 3.5 or mid-way through the third grade using the Fog Index (Readability, 2004).

Pilot Testing

The survey questionnaire was pilot tested in 2003 with a residential group of campers in grades four through six at the Clyde Austin 4-H Center in Greeneville, Tennessee. One hundred and ninety-two campers completed the 59 item survey. Exploratory data analysis was conducted using the SPSS, a statistical software program. The original survey questionnaire participants included a group of campers (N = 192) in a similar sociodemographic profile to those in the proposed research. Statistical analyses of these pilot tests showed no significant differences in item scores based on grade or gender.

Following the pilot test, all statements were analyzed for completeness, and proposed subscales were assessed for internal consistency and modified accordingly before use in the final dissertation research. In order to combine variables into composite indexes, some statements were rescored to provide uniformity in response scales. Reliability of the items used to measure each of the constructs was then tested using a Cronbach's alpha of .6 or above to indicate sufficient internal consistency and reliability. Based on this criterion, individual items that did not contribute to the minimum standard were eliminated and composite measures of each independent and

dependent variable were formed.

The individual statements used to measure physical safety and security and responsibility did not meet the minimum criterion (Cronbach's .6) to form composite indexes. To address this issue, a group of campers were interviewed and asked to tell what they considered to be important in making camp a safe place or share statements that showed evidence of responsible behavior. Based on their responses, the scales were redesigned and retested using a group of 56 campers. Following the redesign, a Cronbach's alpha of .6 or above was achieved for both physical safety and responsibility. Identical items and composite variables describing the contextual features of the camp environment and the life skills enhanced were used to create the dissertation survey questionnaire used in the summer of 2004. This same procedure for determining reliability was used to validate their selection as composite variables for the 2004 dissertation research. A more lengthy discussion of the strategy used and results of this process are discussed in a later section of this chapter.

Data Collection

The instrument developed by the researcher was utilized to collect all data for the study. The researcher trained the outside facilitator, 4-H agents, and other Extension Staff involved with the study, in the approved IRB procedures prior to the camping session. The Program Assistant, a camp staff member at each site, who coordinated the on-site camping program and evaluation procedures prior to the designated date, was also trained in the procedures to be followed. Facilitators were

asked to complete a University of Tennessee web-based course on procedures for conducting research with human subjects prior to facilitating the research.

At each of the four 4-H Centers, questionnaires were distributed to eligible camper participants on the morning of the last day at camp (June 18, 2004) by an outside facilitator who did not know the campers or have any previous communication with them. On June 18, 2004, campers with signed assent and consent forms were instructed to meet in the dining hall while the other campers completed a routine summer camp evaluation taking approximately the same amount of time. The outside facilitator gave specific directions to campers as outlined in the Form B proposal approved by The University of Tennessee Institutional Review Board and Human Subjects Committee. Pencils were provided by the 4-H Center. The facilitator then read each statement as the participants penciled in their response. Upon completion, the participants returned the survey instruments to the facilitators who numbered each of them and immediately mailed the survey questionnaires to the researcher. The researcher has the assent forms, consent forms, and survey questionnaires stored in a secure location in her office in 204 Morgan Hall.

Measures of physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, emotional and moral support, and supportive adult/teen relationships were the independent variables in the study. The outcome or dependent variables included measures of six domains of life skills including self-responsibility, decision-making, communication and social interaction, teamwork and cooperation, building

relationships, and leadership. Grade and gender were also included as variables. Fifty-nine items comprised of individual statements were used to measure the independent and dependent variables with two additional items to record grade and gender. Once the data were collected, the next task was to determine composite variables measuring the life skills and contextual features.

Scale Development

In order to combine variables into composite scales, the following steps were taken. Where necessary, items were reverse scored. After rescoring, all items initially proposed as candidates for each scale were grouped into subscales describing contextual features or life skills. Each of the subscale constructs describing the context of the camp environment and the life skills enhanced was then tested. A Cronbach's alpha of .6 or above was used to assess the reliability of the composite scale. Based on this criterion, affected items were eliminated and composite measures of each independent and dependent variable were formed. The following statements were eliminated: "Leaders talked to upset or worried campers, Campers did things at camp that might not be safe, and I lost a lot of my belongings at camp." These composite measures are discussed in the next section.

Camp Context and Life Skill Reliability Measures

Proposed composite indexes describing the camp environment included the independent variables of psychological safety and security, physical safety and security, emotional and moral support, and supportive adult/teen leader relationships.

Dependent life skill variables of self-responsibility, decision-making, teamwork and cooperation, communication and social interaction, building relationships, and leadership were also tested for reliability. Camp context and life skill reliability measures can be found in Tables 4 and 5.

Histograms and results from the Shapiro-Wilkes test were used to assess normality and homogeneity of the data used to create the composite variables. Based on these tests, with all composite variables showing a Shapiro-Wilkes of greater than .9, the data for variables describing the camp context and life skills enhanced were determined to meet the criteria for normal distribution and homogeneity.

Data Analysis

The statistical software program used for the data analysis was SPSS, Version 11.5. The researcher and a paid graduate student completed the data entry. Individual surveys were randomly checked at each 25th instrument increment for accuracy. The entire data set was also reviewed for potential errors in entry and any suspect entries were verified from the original survey questionnaires.

Descriptive statistical analyses were performed on all variables, including means and standard deviations. Analysis also included graphical displays of the data to interpret more accurately the distribution of the responses for each item, and scale. A p of .05 was used to determine significance for all statistical tests.

Table 4

Camp Context Subcales and Reliability Measures (N=720.

Subscale Item	Cronbach's Alpha
Psychological safety and security	.6154
Campers felt good about themselves at camp	
Leaders cared about what happened to campers	
Campers were not allowed to pick on other campers	
Leaders knew what was going on in the cabins	
Leaders tried to make homesick campers feel better	
Physical Safety	.6631
Camp buildings and equipment were in good condition	
Strangers could easily come into camp (rescored)	
Leaders stopped campers from doing dangerous things	
Camp rules were explained to campers	
Campers were told where they could and couldn't go	
Camp staff and other adults could be easily found	
Campers were told where things were at camp	
Campers were told who they could ask for help at camp	
Emotional and Moral Support	.7333
Campers were encouraged to follow the rules	
Campers felt good when talking to leaders	
Campers were expected to respect each other	
Campers were praised when they did well	
Campers were expected to be honest and fair	
Camp leaders understood camper problems	
Supportive Adult/Teen Leader Relationships	.7752
I would go to a leader if I had a problem	
Leaders set a good example for the campers	
Camp leaders were people you could trust	
Camp leaders were good role models	
Leaders helped campers and did things with them	
Leaders liked being around the campers	

Table 5

Life Skill Subscales and Reliability Measures (N=720).

Subscale Item	Cronbach's Alpha
Self-responsibility	.7104
I knew the camp schedule and where I should be	
I was usually where I was supposed to be at camp	
At camp, I tried to do what was expected of me	
At camp, I felt responsible for my own behavior	
I cleaned up after myself at camp	
At camp, I asked for help when I needed it	
Decision-making	.7507
I knew how to make good decisions at camp	
Before I made decisions, I considered all choices	
I tried new activities at camp because I wanted to	
I didn't follow the camp rules (reverse scored)	
I thought about it before making my choices	
Teamwork and Cooperation	.6190
I compromised with my camp friends if we disagreed	
While at camp, I didn't always have to be the leader	
My camp friends and I worked together on projects	
I worked out camp problems with other campers	
I helped with cabin clean up and meal service	
Communication and Social Interaction	.6732
I liked introducing myself and talking to other campers	
I think other campers liked being around me	
At camp, others usually understood what I tried to say	
I could make new friends at camp	
I might call, write or email new friends after camp	
Building Relationships	.8087
I was honest and trustworthy at camp	
I respected other campers and their belongings	
If someone needed something, I tried to help	
I was fair in how I treated others at camp	
I was a good listener at camp	
Leadership	.6548
I am good at leading camp activities	
If kids were choosing a leader, it would be me	
I got other kids together for games or camp activities	
I volunteered for flag, vespers, or campfire activities	
I liked to be a leader at camp	

The researcher used regression analyses to measure the strength of any associations that existed between variables and to address the research question guiding this study. These regression analyses were utilized to identify relationships between the contextual components of: physical safety and security; psychological safety and security; emotional and moral support; or supportive adult relationships and the life skill scales of self-responsibility, decision-making, communication and social interaction, teamwork and cooperation, building relationships, and leadership. Camper age and gender were included in the statistical analysis as additional variables. Standardized camp curriculum and schedules, date and length of camping session, selection and training of camp staff, uniform statewide policies and procedures, comparable facilities, and cross-center leader expectations and training did not enter into the model.

Summary

One question was central to this research project: Did campers themselves perceive that the 4-H Center residential summer camping programs provided an environment conducive to positive youth development and practicing life skills by the pre and early adolescent participants? The question was addressed by investigating two main areas of emphasis: examining how campers perceived the context of the camp environment and the life skills practiced, and whether the perceived presence of each of the contextual components of physical safety and security; psychological safety and security; emotional and moral support; or supportive adult relationships

supported the life skills practiced?

To investigate the first area of emphasis, descriptive statistics provided the means and standard deviations for each of the contextual and life skill constructs. Additionally, differences by age (grade in school) and gender were examined for each of the composite indicators of camp context and camper life skill.

To address the second area of emphasis, measures of association using Pearson's *r* correlation were used to examine whether there were significant relationhips between contextual and life skill variables. A linear regression model with each life skill variable regressed onto all 4 of the contextual variables simultaneously, was then used to examine the relationships between them. Grade and gender were included as additional variables. This process was used to determine the relationship of all contextual features simultaneously to each life skill variable and show which factors were most salient to supporting each of the life skills.

CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine youth campers' perspectives on the contextual settings of the summer residential camping programs at the Tennessee 4-H Centers and their relationship to the life skills supported by participation. Four indicators of contextual settings -- physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, emotional and moral support, and supportive adult relationships -- and six indicators of life skills -- building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation -- were examined. Of particular interest was whether the residential camp setting was perceived by campers to exemplify the characteristics of an environment conducive to positive development and to identify specific life skills or internal assets supported through participation.

This chapter presents the study results in five sections: (a) descriptive statistics, (b) tests for grade level and gender differences, (c) measures of association, (d) regression analyses, and (e) hypotheses. A summary of the findings concludes the chapter.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated for demographic variables, including grade and gender, as well as for responses to the survey questionnaires utilized to

collect information on the contextual and life skill variables as self-reported by the camper participants. Means and standard deviations for each set of variables are also summarized in this section.

Demographic variables

Frequencies were obtained for all camper demographic questionnaire responses. Participants in the final sample (N= 720) included 286 males (39.7%) and 434 females (60.3%) and was comprised of 301- fourth graders (41.8%), 279 – fifth graders (38.8%), and 140 sixth graders (19.4%) from all four 4-H Centers who participated in the camping program the week of June 14 with survey questionnaires completed on Friday, June 18, 2004. The final sample represented 72% of the total campers. Data for 100% of the total eligible participants were available for every measure. Table 6 presents the variables of grade and gender.

Table 6
Demographic Profile of Camper Participants (N=720).

Demographic		Number	Frequency
Gender	Male	286	39.7%
	Female	434	60.3%
Grade	Fourth	301	41.8%
	Fifth	279	38.8%
	Sixth	140	19.4%

Summary of Questionnaire Responses

The following section addresses how campers perceived the context of the camp environment and the life skills practiced. Measures of the camp environment as related to the contextual features of physical safety and security; psychological safety and security; emotional and moral support; supportive adult relationships; and the life skills of self-responsibility; decision-making; communication and social interaction; teamwork and cooperation; building relationships; and leadership were utilized in this study to collect self-reported information from residential campers. A summary of responses for each of the camp context and life skill items, including means and standard deviations, is included. A mean value of 1 suggests strong agreement, a mean closer to 2 suggests agreement, a value of 3 suggests the camper was not sure, while 4 suggests disagreement, and 5 suggests strong disagreement.

Camp Context and Life Skill Scales

The camp context survey consisted of 27 statements that described psychological safety and security, physical safety and security, emotional and moral support, and supportive adult relationships. Results show that campers agreed most strongly with the following 10 contextual items: "Campers were told who they could ask for help at camp" ($\underline{M}$ = 1.02, $\underline{SD}$ = 1.04), "Leaders cared about what happened to campers" ($\underline{M}$ = 1.59, $\underline{SD}$ = .87), "Camp rules were explained to campers" ($\underline{M}$ = 1.60, $\underline{SD}$ =.83), "Camp leaders were people you could trust" ($\underline{M}$ = 1.70, $\underline{SD}$ = .90), "Campers were told where things were at camp"($\underline{M}$ = 1.74, $\underline{SD}$ = .91), "Campers were told where they could and couldn't go" ($\underline{M}$ = 1.76, $\underline{SD}$ = .87), "Leaders tried to make

homesick campers feel better" (M = 1.77, SD = 1.09), "I would go to a leader if I had a problem" (M = 1.81, SD = 1.00), "Campers were expected to respect each other" (M = 1.85, SD = .91), and "Campers were expected to be honest and fair" (M = 1.86, SD = .93). After rescoring, campers agreed least with "Campers did things at camp that might not be safe" (M = 3.23, SD = 1.22), and "Strangers could easily come into camp" (M = 2.95, SD = 1.45). Campers also agreed less with the following eight statements: "Leaders knew what was going on in the cabins" (M = 2.46, SD = 1.23), "Camp buildings and equipment were in good condition" (M = 2.49, SD = 1.18), "Camp staff and other adults could be easily found" (M = 2.39, SD = .1.25), "Leaders talked to upset or worried campers" (M = 2.35, SD = 1.44), "Campers were not allowed to pick on other campers" (M = 2.33, SD = 1.25), "Camp leaders understood camper problems" (M = 2.28, SD = 1.14), "Campers were praised when they did well" (M = 2.26, SD = 1.08), and "Leaders liked being around the campers" (M = 2.15, SD = 1.06). Mean scores and standard deviations for the items in the order they appeared on the survey and in ascending order can be found in the appendix. Mean scores and standard deviations for the items as they were grouped into subscales can be found in Table 7.

The life skill survey consisted of 32 statements that described self-responsibility; decision-making; communication and social interaction; teamwork and cooperation; building relationships; and leadership. Items the campers most strongly agreed with included the following: "I cleaned up after myself at camp" (M = 1.60, SD = .83), "I could make new friends at camp" (M = 1.63, SD = .87), "I helped with

Table 7
Camp Context Subcales, Means, and Standard Deviations (N=720).

Subscale Item	Mean	SD
Psychological safety and security	2.06	.67
Campers felt good about themselves at camp	2.15	.86
Leaders cared about what happened to campers	1.59	.87
Campers were not allowed to pick on other campers	2.33	1.25
Leaders knew what was going on in the cabins	2.46	1.23
Leaders tried to make homesick campers feel better	1.77	1.09
Physical Safety	2.10	.61
Camp buildings and equipment were in good condition	2.49	1.18
Strangers could easily come into camp (rescored)	2.95	1.45
Leaders stopped campers from doing dangerous things	1.96	1.11
Camp rules were explained to campers	1.60	.83
Campers were told where they could and couldn't go	1.76	.87
Camp staff and other adults could be easily found	2.39	1.25
Campers were told where things were at camp	1.74	.91
Campers were told who they could ask for help at camp	1.02	1.04
Emotional and Moral Support	2.71	.78
Campers were encouraged to follow the rules	1.97	.99
Campers felt good when talking to leaders	2.13	1.00
Campers were expected to respect each other	1.85	.91
Campers were praised when they did well	2.26	1.08
Campers were expected to be honest and fair	1.86	.93
Camp leaders understood camper problems	2.28	1.14
Supportive Adult/Teen Leader Relationships	1.96	.72
I would go to a leader if I had a problem	1.81	1.00
Leaders set a good example for the campers	2.00	1.05
Camp leaders were people you could trust	1.70	.90
Camp leaders were good role models	2.13	1.21
Leaders helped campers and did things with them	1.96	1.06
Leaders liked being around the campers	2.15	1.06

cabin clean up and meal service" (M = 1.65, SD = .90), "I didn't follow the camp rules" (rescored for analysis) (M = 1.68, SD = 1.03), "I respected other campers and their belongings" (M = 1.71, SD = .89), "At camp, I felt responsible for my own behavior" (M = 1.72, SD = .87), "I was honest and trustworthy at camp" (M = 1.80, SD = .92), "If someone needed something, I tried to help" (M = 1.88, SD = .91), "I knew how to make good decisions at camp" (M = 1.88, SD = .89), and "At camp, I tried to do what was expected of me" (M =1.91, SD = .93). Campers agreed least with the following 10 statements: "If kids were choosing a leader, it would be me" (M = 3.04, SD = 1.08), "I volunteered for flag, vespers or camp activities" (M = 2.84, SD = 1.39), "I am good at leading camp activities" (M = 2.68, SD = 1.21), "I liked to be a leader at camp" (M = 2.55, SD = 1.26), "I got other kids together for games or activities" (M = 2.46, SD = 1.16), "My camp friends and I worked together on projects" (M = 2.45, SD = 1.25), "I compromised with my camp friends if we disagreed" (M = 2.42, SD = 1.11), "Before I made decisions, I considered all choices" (M = 2.39, SD = 1.12), "I might call, write or email new friends after camp" (M = 2.33, SD = 1.30), and "I liked introducing myself and talking to other campers" (M = 2.28, SD = 1.19). Mean scores and standard deviations for camper responses as they appeared in the survey and in ascending order are presented in the appendix. Mean scores and standard deviations for the items as they were grouped into subscales can be found in Table 8.

Table 8
Life Skill Subscales, Means, and Standard Deviations *(N = 720).*

Subscale Item	Mean	SD
Self-responsibility	1.87	.65
I knew the camp schedule and where I should be	2.10	1.05
I was usually where I was supposed to be at camp	1.98	1.06
At camp, I tried to do what was expected of me	1.91	.93
At camp, I felt responsible for my own behavior	1.72	.87
I cleaned up after myself at camp	1.60	.83
At camp, I asked for help when I needed it	1.90	.95
Decision-making	1.95	.70
I knew how to make good decisions at camp	1.88	.89
Before I made decisions, I considered all choices	2.39	1.12
I tried new activities at camp because I wanted to	1.80	1.01
I didn't follow the camp rules (rescored)	1.68	1.03
I thought about it before making my choices	2.00	1.07
Teamwork and Cooperation	2.15	.68
I compromised with my camp friends if we disagreed	2.42	1.11
While at camp, I didn't always have to be the leader	1.96	1.05
My camp friends and I worked together on projects	2.45	1.25
I worked out camp problems with other campers	2.25	1.09
I helped with cabin clean up and meal service	1.65	.90
Communication and Social Interaction	2.14	.73
I liked introducing myself and talking to other campers	2.28	1.19
I think other campers liked being around me	1.71	.89
At camp, others usually understood what I tried to say	2.24	1.11
I could make new friends at camp	1.63	.87
I might call, write or email new friends after camp	2.33	1.30
Building Relationships	1.85	.70
I was honest and trustworthy at camp	1.80	.92
I respected other campers and their belongings	1.71	.89
If someone needed something, I tried to help	1.88	.91
I was fair in how I treated others at camp	1.94	.94
I was a good listener at camp	1.93	1.00
Leadership	2.71	.78
I am good at leading camp activities	2.68	1.21
If kids were choosing a leader, it would be me	3.04	1.08
I got other kids together for games or camp activities	2.46	1.16
I volunteered for flag, vespers, or campfire activities	2.84	1.39
I liked to be a leader at camp	2.55	1.26

Tests for Grade Level and Gender Differences

Independent t-tests for gender and ANOVAs for grade levels were run to determine if differences in any of the 10 subscales existed by grade or gender. Results of these tests for statistical significance show that a significant effect was more often present for grade than gender but neither was a major contributor to the explanation of the life skill or the contextual feature.

Grade was significantly related to psychological safety and support $F(2, 717) = 7.220$, $p = .001$, supportive adult leaders $F(2, 717) = 5.633$, $p = .004$, self-responsibility $F(2, 717) = 4.667$, $p = .010$, decision-making $F(2, 717) = 9.554$, $p = <.001$, and building relationships $F(2, 717) = 4.133$, $p = .016$ but the magnitude of the relationship was minimal.

Gender was significantly related to building relationships $t(1,718) = 3.239$, $p = .001$, communication and social interaction $t(1, 718) = 2.731$, $p = .006$, decision-making $t(1,718) = 2.847$, $p = .005$, self-responsibility $t(1,718) = 2.355$, $p = .019$, and teamwork and cooperation $t(1, 718) = 3.021$, $p = .003$ in a similar manner as the contextual features. Although significant relationships existed between grade or gender and the camper perception of several of the life skills or the contextual features, the influence was not of the magnitude to warrant in-depth discussion. However, gender and grade were included as additional variables in all models and it was noted whether grade or gender was significant to the later findings. Tables 9 and 10 show the mean, standard deviation, statistical significance, and F or t statistic for the composite variables by grade and gender.

Table 9

Contextual Features and Life Skill Subscales by Grade Including Means, Standard Deviation, Statistical Significance, and F Statistic (N =301-4th, 279-5th, 140-6th).

Subscale	Grade	Mean	SD	Sig.	F
Psychological safety and security	4	1.95	.60	.001	7.220
	5	2.14	.69		
	6	2.13	.75		
Emotional and Moral support	4	2.74	.73	.380	.968
	5	2.73	.83		
	6	2.63	.80		
Physical Safety and Security	4	2.08	.59	.343	1.073
	5	2.14	.63		
	6	2.07	.61		
Supportive Adult Leaders	4	1.90	.68	.004	5.633
	5	2.04	.75		
	6	1.88	.74		
Self-Responsibility	4	1.78	.60	.010	4.667
	5	1.94	.68		
	6	1.91	.68		
Decision-making	4	1.82	.64	<.001	9.554
	5	2.03	.72		
	6	2.08	.75		
Teamwork and Cooperation	4	2.09	.67	.097	2.343
	5	2.21	.68		
	6	2.13	.72		
Communication, Social Interaction	4	2.15	.72	.358	1.030
	5	2.17	.74		
	6	2.07	.75		
Building Relationships	4	1.76	.64	.016	4.133
	5	1.92	.76		
	6	1.92	.70		
Leadership	4	2.74	.73	.380	.968
	5	2.73	.83		
	6	2.63	.80		

Table 10

Contextual Features and Life Skill Subscales by Gender Including Means, Standard Deviation, Statistical Significance and t Statistic (N = 286 males, 434 females).

Subscale	Gender	Mean	SD	Sig.	t
Psychological Safety and Security	M	2.08	.67	.400	.843
	F	2.04	.68		
Emotional and Moral Support	M	2.66	.80	.136	-1.493
	F	2.75	.77		
Physical Safety and Security	M	2.12	.64	.383	.873
	F	2.08	.59		
Supportive Adult Leaders	M	2.00	.77	.307	1.023
	F	1.94	.69		
Self Responsibility	M	1.93	.70	.019	2.355
	F	1.82	.62		
Building Relationships	M	1.96	.75	.001	3.239
	F	1.78	.66		
Communication, Social Interaction	M	2.23	.80	.006	2.731
	F	2.08	.68		
Decision-making	M	2.04	.76	.005	2.847
	F	1.89	.65		
Leadership	M	2.66	.80	.136	-1.493
	F	2.75	.77		
Teamwork	M	2.24	.74	.003	3.021
	F	2.08	.64		

Measures of Association

The question of whether campers perceive the practice of life skills to be supported by the camp environment was first tested by examining the measures of association between the independent and dependent variables. To determine whether significant and positive associations were present between contextual features of the camp environment and life skills practiced by the youth residential campers, results of the Pearson's *r* correlation were analyzed. The results of these analyses reveal positive significant relationships between all life skill and contextual variables but in differing strengths.

The strongest positive significant relationships were found between building relationships and physical safety and security ($r = .526$, $p < .01$), supportive adult relationships ($r = .521$, $p < .01$), psychological safety and security ($r = .520$, $p < .01$), and to a lesser degree emotional and moral support ($r = .349$, $p < .01$).

With communication and social interaction, strong positive significant relationships were again present for emotional and moral support ($r = .464$, $p < .01$) physical safety and security ($r = .500$, $p < .01$), supportive adult relationships ($r = .447$, $p < .01$), and psychological safety and security ($r = .440$, $p < .01$).

For decision-making, the strongest positive significant relationships were revealed for physical safety and security ($r = .559$, $p < .01$), psychological safety and security ($r = .542$, $p < .01$), and supportive adult relationships ($r = .536$, $p < .01$), and to a lesser degree emotional and moral support ($r = .323$, $p < .01$).

Self-responsibility showed the strongest positive significant relationships between the life skill and contextual features for physical safety and security (r = .575, p< .01), supportive adult relationships (r = .563, p< .01), psychological safety and security (r = .560, p< .01), and once again to a lesser degree, emotional and moral support (r = .357, p< .01).

Teamwork exhibited the strongest positive significant relationship with psychological safety and security (r = .546, p< .01), followed by physical safety and security (r = .539, p< .01), supportive adult relationships (r = .511, p< .01), and emotional and moral support (r = .432, p< .01).

In leadership, the relationship with emotional and moral support was (r = 1.000). With this anomalous finding, the data set was reviewed for errors in data entry or unusually patterned responses but no plausible explanations could be found. Subsequently, leadership showed a much lower correlation to psychological safety and security (r = .327, p< .01), supportive adult relationships (r = .304, p< .01), and physical safety and security (r = .291, p< .01).

Measures of association between grade or gender and the life skills were also examined. Grade was found to have the strongest positive significant relationships with building relationships (r = .093, p< .05), decision-making (r = .152, p< .01), and self-responsibility (r = .091, p< .05) although these associations were considerably weaker than the relationships between the contextual features and life skills.

Gender was found to have weak negative significant relationships with building relationships (r = -.120, p< .01), communication and social interaction (r = -.101, p< .01), decision-making (r = -.106, p< .01), self-responsibility (r = -.088, p< .05), and teamwork (r = -.112, p< .01). Table 10 also summarizes these measures of association.

The variables describing the life skill constructs were also examined for relationships among them. Building relationships showed a very strong relationship with self-responsibility (r = .801, p< .01), followed by decision-making (r = .711, p< .01), teamwork and cooperation (r = .666, p< .01), communication and social interaction (r = .525, p< .01), and to a much lesser degree leadership (r = .349, p< .01).

Communication and social interaction also showed consistent positive relationships with the other life skills including, teamwork and cooperation (r = .565, p< .01), self-responsibility (r = .532, p< .01), building relationships (r = .525, p< .01), decision-making (r = .486, p< .01), and leadership (r = .464, p< .01).

Decision making showed a wide range of positive significant relationships with building relationships (r = .711, p< .01) and self-responsibility (r = .705, p< .01), considerably higher than teamwork and cooperation (r = .593, p< .01), communication and social interaction (r = .486, p< .01), or leadership (r = .323, p< .01).

Leadership showed consistent positive relationships, though not as strong as some of the other life skills, with communication and social interaction (r = .464, p<

.01), teamwork and cooperation (r = .432, p< .01), self-responsibility (r = .357, p< .01), building relationships (r = .349, p< .01), and decision-making (r = .323, p< .01).

Self-responsibility showed very strong relationships with building relationships (r = .801, p< .01), decision-making (r = .705, p< .01), and teamwork and cooperation (r = .652, p< .01), less strength in the relationship with communication and social interaction (r = .532, p< .01) and considerably less with leadership (r = .357, p< .01).

Teamwork and cooperation was fairly consistent in the strength of its relationship with building relationships (r = .666, p< .01), self-responsibility (r = .652, p< .01), decision-making (r = .593, p< .01), communication and social interaction (r = .565, p< .01), and to a lesser degree leadership (r = .432, p< .01).

The contextual features were also examined for relationship among variables. Psychological safety and security showed a strong positive relationship with supportive adult relationships (r = .663, p< .01), and physical safety and security (r = .655, p< .01), but a much weaker one with emotional and moral support (r = .327, p< .01). Emotional and moral support did not show a strong relationship to psychological safety and security (r = .327, p< .01), supportive adult relationships (r = .304, p< .01), or physical safety and security (r = .291, p< .01). Physical safety and security showed a strong relationship to psychological safety and security (r = .655, p< .01), and supportive adult relationships (r = .654, p< .01), and a considerably weaker one to emotional and moral support (r = .291, p< .01). Supportive adult

relationships was also highly correlated with psychological safety and security (r = .663, p< .01), physical safety and security (r = .654, p< .01), and to a much lesser degree, emotional and moral support (r = .304, p< .01). These measures of association for life skill and contextual variables and grade or gender can be found in Tables 11, 12 and 13. An interrcorrelation matrix for all variables can be found in the appendix.

Regression Analyses

The composite variables of psychological safety and security, physical safety and security, emotional and moral support, and supportive adult relationships were used as the independent variables in addressing the effects of the contextual features on the life skill variables. Composite variables of self-responsibility, decision-making, teamwork and cooperation, communication and social interaction, building relationships, and leadership were the dependent variables. The demographic characteristics of camper age and gender were additional independent variables. Standardized camp curriculum and schedules, date and length of camping session, selection and training of camp staff, uniform statewide policies and procedures, comparable facilities, and cross-center leader expectations and training were not treated as variables or enter into the model chosen for the analyses. A presentation of the statistical analyses and findings are addressed in the next section of the findings and results chapter.

Table 11
Bivariate Relationships Between Contextual Features of Camp and Life Skills (N=720).

Feature / Life Skill	Psych. Safe.	Emot. Moral	Phys. Safe.	Supp. Adults	Grade	Gender
Building Relationships	.520**	.349**	.526**	.521**	.093*	-.120**
Communication/ Social Interaction	.440**	.464**	.500**	.477**	-.034	-.101**
Decision-making	.542**	.323**	.559**	.536**	.152**	-.106**
Teamwork/ Cooperation	.546**	.432**	.539**	.511**	.040	-.112**
Leadership	.327**	1.000**	.291**	.304**	-.046	.056
Self-Responsibility	.560**	.357**	.575**	.563**	.091*	-.088*
Grade	.119**	-.046	.011	.023		
Gender	-.031	.056	-.033	-.03		

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed)
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

Table 12
Bivariate Relationships Between Life Skills, (N=720).

Life Skill	Building Relations.	Commun. Interaction	Decision-Making	Teamwork Cooperation	Self-Responsib.	Leadership
Building Relations.		.525**	.711**	.666**	.801**	.349**
Commun. Interaction	.525**		.486**	.565**	.532**	.464**
Decision-making	.711**	.486**		.593**	.705**	.323**
Teamwork Cooperation	.666**	.565**	.593**		.652**	.432**
Self-Responsib.	.801**	.532**	.705**	.652**		.357**
Leadership	.349**	.464**	.323**	.432**	.357**	

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

Table 13
Bivariate Relationships Between Contextual Features of Camp (N=720).

Feature	Psychological Safety and Security	Emotional and Moral Support	Physical Safety and Security	Supportive Adult Relationships
Psychological Safety and Security		.327**	.655**	.663** .
Emotional and Moral Support	.327**		.291**	.304**
Physical Safety and Security	.655**	.291**		.654**
Supportive Adult Relationships	.663**	.304**	.654**	

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

Effects of the Contextual Features on Life Skills

The hypotheses sought to explore whether a campers' perception of the contextual components of emotional and moral support, psychological safety and security, physical safety and security, and supportive adult relationships predicted the life skills practiced. Examinations of the relationships between the effects of the contextual components describing the camp environment and the life skills practiced were used to test the hypotheses. A series of linear regression models were run, with each life skill regressed simultaneously onto all four contextual features. Tests for multicollinearity did not show that any of these independent variables were explained

by other independent variables as indicated by the tolerance levels.

For clarity in presenting the findings, each of the life skills will be discussed in relationship to the contextual variables. The potential for differences by the variables of grade and gender will also be discussed. It is important to note that a higher score in each of the contextual features and life skills corresponds to a statement leaning more towards disagreement rather than agreement with the scale used for scoring as follows: strongly agree (1), agree (2), not sure (3), disagree (4), and strongly disagree (5). Grade was scored as (4) fourth, (5) fifth, or (6) sixth, and gender was scored as (1) male, and (2) female. A summary of findings will conclude this chapter.

Building Relationships

Grade and gender each have a significant main effect and together account for 2% of the variance in building relationships $\underline{F}$ (2, 717) = 8.423, p = <.001. Sixth grade campers perceived themselves as higher (less in agreement) in the ability to build relationships and girls saw themselves as more skilled in building relationships. Due to the small, but significant, main effect, it was determined to not be necessary to further investigate these relationships.

In the analyses regressing building relationships on the four contextual features simultaneously, with grade and gender as additional variables, the contextual variables alone accounted for an additional 37% of the variance in building relationships with a total amount of variance explained by the context, grade and gender of 39.4% $\underline{F}$ (6, 713) = 77.117, p = <.001. A comparison of the significance levels of the individual Betas in Table 14 suggests that each predictor makes a

Table 14
Regression of Building Relationships on Contextual Features Including Statistical Significance, Standardized Beta, R^2 Change and F Statistic with Grade and Gender (N=720)

	Beta	Sig.	R^2Chg.	F	Sig.
Model 1					
Grade	.093	.012			
Gender	-.119	.001			
			.023	8.423	<.001
Model 2					
Grade	.074	.013			
Gender	-.109	.001			
Psyche	.167	<.001			
Emomor	.176	<.001			
Safety	.230	<.001			
Leadsupp	.201	<.001			
			.371	77.117	<.001

substantial contribution to the explanation of building relationships, net of the other predictors.

Communication and Social Interaction

The simultaneous entry of grade and gender in the regression of communication and social interaction on the contextual features showed that gender exhibited a significant main effect and explained 1% of the variance F (2, 717) = 4.175, p = .016. As with building relationships, girls again perceived themselves to be more competent in communication and social interaction. There was not a significant relationship between grade and communication and social interaction as shown on Table 15. Although a significant main effect, the contribution of gender to the explanation of the relationship was again minimal. The findings of the analyses regressing

Table 15

Regression of Communication and Social Interaction on Contextual Features Including Statistical Significance, Standardized Beta, R^2 Change and F Statistic with Grade and Gender (N=720)

	Beta	Sig.	R^2Chg.	F	Sig.
Model 1					
Grade	-.035	.346			
Gender	-.102	.006			
			.012	4.175	.016
Model 2					
Grade	-.033	.263			
Gender	-.103	<.001			
Psyche	.053	.224			
Emomor	.325	<.001			
Safety	.254	<.001			
Leadsupp	.174	<.001			
			.384	77.773	<.001

communication and social interaction on the four contextual features simultaneously can be found in Table 15, Model 2. When including grade and gender, the contextual variables together accounted for an additional 38.4% of the variance in communication and social interaction. The total amount of variance explained, when considered with grade and gender, of 39.6% $\underline{F}$ (6, 713) = 77.773, p = <.001, was slightly higher than with building relationships.

Decision-making

Analyses of the regression model for decision-making and the contextual features, again with the simultaneous entry of grade and gender, also showed the higher the grade, the higher the camper perception of decision-making. This indicates

Table 16

Regression of Decision-making on Contextual Features Including Statistical Significance, Standardized Beta, R^2 Change and F Statistic with Grade and Gender (N=720)

	Beta	Sig.	R^2Chg.	F	Sig
Model 1					
Grade	.152	<.001			
Gender	-.105	.005			
			.023	12.683	<.001
Model 2					
Grade	.131	<.001			
Gender	-.091	.002			
Psyche	.167	<.001			
Emomor	.139	<.001			
Safety	.277	<.001			
Leadsupp	.196	<.001			
			.391	87.731	<.001

less agreement of perceived skill among sixth graders. Girls, once again, considered themselves to be more skilled in decision-making. As Table 16 shows, the contribution of grade and gender explained 2% of the relationship F (2, 717) = 12.683, p = <.001. Although a significant main effect, the contribution of grade and gender to the relationship was again minimal as seen in Model 1 of Table 16.

In the analyses regressing decision-making simultaneously on emotional and moral support, physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult relationships (including grade and gender) these features accounted for an additional 39.1% F (6, 713) = 87.731, p = <.001 of the variance in decision-making. A total variance, explained by the contextual features (including grade and gender) of 41.4%, was one of the strongest found. It appears that the predictors each contribute significantly, independent of the other predictors in the model.

Leadership

Neither grade nor gender showed a significant relationship with leadership and together these variables did not show a main effect F (2, 717) = 1.861, p = .156. Contrary to other contextual features, when leadership was regressed on emotional and moral support, the mean and standard deviation for leadership and emotional and moral support were identical (M = 2.7131, SD = .78295) with a Beta of 1.000 indicating that the relationship between the remaining contextual variables of physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult relationships would have little effect on leadership. This finding is problematic and further analysis should be interpreted with caution, based on the potential for data problems. When regressing leadership on emotional and moral support, physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult relationships (controlling for grade and gender), emotional and moral support accounted for 100% of the variance in leadership F (6, 713) = 77.117, p = <.001 as shown in Table 17.

Self-responsibility

In the regression analyses with self-responsibility regressed independently onto the contextual features, the relationships of grade and gender to self-responsibility were investigated first. Grade and gender showed a significant main effect and accounted for 2% of the variance in self-responsibility F (2, 717) = 5.792, p = <.001. Sixth graders again perceived themselves as less in agreement with items indicating self-responsibility and girls were found to perceive themselves as more skilled.

Table 17

Regression of Leadership on Contextual Features Including Statistical Significance, Standardized Beta, R^2Change and F Statistic with Grade and Gender (N=720)

	Beta	Sig.	R^2Chg.	F	Sig.
Model 1					
Grade	-.046	.222			
Gender	.055	.138			
			.005	1.861	.156
Model 2					
Grade	.000				
Gender	.000				
Psyche	.000				
Emomor	1 .000				
Safety	.000				
Leadsupp	.000				
			.995	77.117	<.000

The contribution of grade and gender to the explanation of the relationship was again minimal as shown in Table 18, Model 1. In the analyses regressing self-responsibility on the four contextual features of emotional and moral support, physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult relationships (with grade and gender), the contextual features accounted for an additional 43% of the variance in self-responsibility $\underline{F}$ (6, 713) = 95.621, $\underline{p}$ = <.001. Together, with grade and gender, these variables explained 44.6% of the variance in self-responsibility and offered the highest level of explanation for the life skills examined. A comparison of the standardized Beta's suggests that each predictor again contributes significantly to the explanation of the variance in the dependent variable, net of the other variables in the model. Table 18, Model 2 shows these results.

Table 18
Regression of Self-responsibility on Contextual Features Including Statistical Significance, Standardized Beta, R^2 Change *and F Statistic with Grade and Gender (N=720)*

	Beta	Sig.	R^2Chg.	F	Sig.
Model 1					
Grade	.091	.015			
Gender	-.087	.019			
			.016	5.792	<.001
Model 2					
Grade	.069	.014			
Gender	-.074	.009			
Psyche	.178	<.001			
Emomor	.163	<.001			
Safety	.267	<.001			
Leadsupp	.216	<.001			
			.430	95.621	<.001

Teamwork

The analyses regressing teamwork on the contextual features suggests that grade does not have a significant relationship to teamwork, while girls perceive themselves as more skilled in teamwork. Gender shows a main effect and accounts for 1% of the variance in teamwork F (2, 717) = 5.111, p = <.001. As with the other analyses, the contribution of gender to the explanation of the relationship was minimal as can be seen in Table 19, Model 1. In the model regressing teamwork on the four contextual features of emotional and moral support, physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult relationships (including grade and gender), they accounted for an additional 42% of the variance in teamwork F (6, 713) = 91.866, p = <.001. Together, with grade and gender, they

Table 19

Regression of Teamwork on Contextual Features Including Statistical Significance, Standardized Beta, R^2 Change and F Statistic with Grade and Gender (N=720

	Beta	Sig.	R^2Chg.	F	Sig.
Model 1					
Grade	.039	.296			
Gender	-.112	.003			
			.014	5.111	<.001
Model 2					
Grade	.020	.491			
Gender	-.107	<.001			
Psyche	.216	<.001			
Emomor	.261	<.001			
Safety	.231	<.001			
Leadsupp	.132	.001			
			.42	91.866	<.001

explain 43.4% of the variance in teamwork. As with the previous contextual features, each predictor contributes significantly, net of the other predictors in the model. Table 19, Model 2 shows the results of these findings on the relationship between teamwork and the contextual features when considered as a group.

Hypotheses

Four hypotheses were designed to investigate how each aspect of the residential camp context influenced the support of life skill practice for the youth participants.

Hypothesis One

The camper's sense of physical safety and security is predicted to be positively related to supporting the practice of specific life skills including building

relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation.

Results show that physical safety and security supports the life skills of building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation.

Hypothesis Two

The camper's sense of psychological safety and security is predicted to be positively related to supporting the practice of specific life skills including building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation.

Results show that psychological safety and security supports the life skills of building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation.

Hypothesis Three

The camper's perception of emotional and moral support is predicted to be positively related to supporting the practice of the specific life skills including building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation.

Results show that emotional and moral support supports the life skills of building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation.

Hypothesis Four

The camper's perception of opportunities to experience supportive adult relationships is predicted to be positively related to supporting the practice of specific life skills including building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation.

Results show that supportive adult relationships support the life skills of building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation.

Summary of Findings and Results

Four hypotheses were designed to investigate the perceptions of youth campers on the context of the residential summer camp environment at the four Tennessee 4-H Centers and the life skills supported through participation in a five-day camping experience. Contextual features included emotional and moral support, physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult relationships. Life skills included building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation.

Statistical analyses revealed significant and positive relationships between contextual features of the camp environment and the life skills enhanced. Although all analyses included grade and gender, the contextual features were much more

influential on the individual life skills than either of these variables. Ignoring the leadership variable because of its anomalous association with emotional and moral support, grade and gender predicted an average of 1.6% of the variance in the relationships between the other life skills and the contextual features. The average additional variance explained by the camp context was 39.8% across all variables except leadership, and the contextual features overwhelmingly accounted for predicting the most additional variance in the life skills of building relationships, communications and social interaction, decision-making, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation. The contextual features, when including grade and gender in the model, predicted an average variance of 41.4%. A summary of these analyses is shown in Table 20.

Self-responsibility had the highest level of additional variance explained at 43%, while teamwork had 42%, decision-making 39%, communication and social interaction 38%, and building relationships had 37%. As stated earlier, with leadership excluded, the average variance explained by contextual features, including grade and gender, as shown in the bottom row of the right-hand column in Table 20, is 41.4%.

Analyses showed grade significantly associated with building relationships, decision-making, and self-responsibility across all contextual features while analyses by gender showed it to be significantly associated with building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation. Leadership showed no significant relationships with grade

Table 20

Summary of Additional Variance Explained by the Regression of Life Skills on Contextual Features and Significance of Grade or Gender (N=720).

Life Skill Significance Grade, Gender	Grade, Gender Only	Addition of Context Variables (R^2Change)	Grade Gender Context for Total Variance Explained
Building Relationships	2%	37%	39%
Grade	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gender	Yes	Yes	Yes
Communication Social Interaction	1%	38%	39%
Grade	No	No	No
Gender	Yes	Yes	Yes
Decision-Making	2%	39%	41%
Grade	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gender	Yes	Yes	Yes
Leadership	----	100%	----
Grade	No	No	No
Gender	No	No	No
Self-Responsibility	2%	43%	45%
Grade	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gender	Yes	Yes	Yes
Teamwork/ Cooperation	1%	42%	43%
Grade	No	No	No
Gender	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean(excluding leadership)	1.6%	39.8%	41.4%

Yes for grade or gender shows there was a significant relationship.

or gender. As stated earlier, these relationships averaging 1.6% of the variance explained across five of the six life skill constructs, while significant, are minimal as compared to the influences of the contextual features on the life skills investigated. A summary of the relationships of grade and gender to life skills and contextual features can be found on Table 20 in the row beneath each life skill.

In summary, the research findings supported the hypotheses tested in this investigation. The context of the camp environment including emotional and moral support, physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult relationships does influence camper self-perceptions of the life skills supported in building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork. With leadership excluded, the contextual features (including grade and gender) most affect the life skills (from most to least affected) of self-responsibility, teamwork and cooperation, decision-making, communication and social interaction, and building relationships.

CHAPTER VII

MAJOR FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Chapter VII presents a summary of the study and results from the statistical analyses. They are followed by a list of major findings with discussion following each finding. The researcher's conclusions follow and were formulated based on the results of the investigation. Recommendations for policy, education and research, evolving from the results of the study and grounded in the experiences of the researcher, are also included. The chapter concludes with implications focusing on the camp context and life skill enhancement for youth residential campers with applications to the broader picture of positive youth development.

Summary

The main objective of this study was to determine the extent to which a relationship existed between the context of the four Tennessee 4-H Centers offering summer camping programs and their support for the practicing of life skills by youth residential campers. Contextual features identified in the review of literature as influencing positive youth development and life skills deemed essential for adult success were examined to determine their contributions to the life skill – camp context relationship. The contextual features of emotional and moral support, physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult

relationships were utilized to determine if significant differences existed in the practice of the life skills of building relationships communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork and cooperation. Grade and gender were also included as independent variables.

The population for the research consisted of youth who had just completed the fourth through sixth grade and were 4-H members in their local communities. The study population was comprised of all youth attending 4-H camp the week of the research study. The sampling frame for the study included all fourth through sixth grade campers participating in a five-day residential camping experience at the four Tennessee 4-H Centers during the third week of June, 2004 with signed assent and consent forms. A response rate of 72% resulted in a total of 720 participants representing the four 4-H Centers. The final sample included 286 males and 434 females and was comprised of 301 fourth graders, 279 fifth graders and 140 sixth graders.

Focus groups with campers, and interviews with parents of campers, camp staff, and professionals in the field of youth development were utilized to provide the conceptual framework for the investigation into the camp context and life skills enhanced through the camping experience. Instruments used to collect the data were developed by the researcher and pilot tested in 2003. Data for the pilot study and 2004 research study were collected through a camper self-reported survey questionnaire.

A series of descriptive statistics, and statistical analyses, including Pearson *r* correlations and linear regressions were used to respond to the research question designed to examine the relationships between the context of the camp environment and the life skills supported through youth participation in the residential camping experience. These analyses revealed significant and positive relationships between the contextual features of emotional and moral support, physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult relationships and the life skills of building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork. Grade and gender influenced life skills but to a much smaller degree than the context itself. A series of linear regression analyses were utilized to test the four hypotheses. These hypotheses were all supported by the findings, resulting in the ability to reject null hypotheses of no relationships.

Regression Analyses

The statistical analyses indicated that significant relationships existed within the 4-H camp environment between the contextual features and the life skills practiced. Each life skill was regressed onto all contextual features simultaneously to determine the contribution of the combined model. All models included grade and gender as additional independent variables. Analyses showed that grade was significantly related to building relationships, decision-making, and self-responsibility

but to a much lesser degree than the contextual features. Analyses also showed that gender was significantly related to all life skills but again in a much lesser degree than the contextual features.

Major Findings and Discussion

Based on the results of statistical analyses outlined in Chapter VI and summarized in the preceding section, several major findings of statistical and practical significance emerged. These findings, and a discussion of each one as it is presented, are outlined in this section. Perspectives from research and the previous experiences of the researcher relevant to the camp context and life skills are also included in the discussion, where appropriate.

Finding One

Campers responded most positively to statements related to the contextual areas of supportive adult relationships, followed by psychological safety and security and physical safety, but they were not sure about emotional and moral support.

Camper self-reports of their perceptions of the camp environment and life skills enhanced showed they more strongly agreed with some statements than others and were not sure in several areas. In terms of the camp context, campers most agreed (value of 1 denotes strong agreement, 2 agreement, 3 not sure, 4 disagreement and 5 strong disagreement) with items measuring supportive adult relationships ($\underline{M}$ = 1.96, $\underline{SD}$ = .72). Psychological safety and security (($\underline{M}$ = 2.06, $\underline{SD}$ = .67) was next, followed closely by physical safety ($\underline{M}$ = 2.10 $\underline{SD}$ = .61). In evaluating emotional and

moral support, campers weren't sure ((M = 2.71, SD = .78).

In looking at the statements used to measure supportive adult relationships, and psychological safety and security, and physical safety and security, they address leader involvement with clearly communicated boundaries and camper expectations. These items cover the camp rules and guidelines for behavior that are routinely shared with campers shortly after arrival. For the most part, they are factual statements and fairly simple to evaluate.

The emotional and moral support scale, with a mean very close to the "not sure" response category, makes it more difficult to assess the items from a camper perspective. The emotional and moral support items address social interaction, norms, and more abstract concepts. Responses to the emotional and moral support statements could be based on previous camper experiences or reinforcement for behaviors that may differ from one child, family, or school, to another. Respect, honesty, fairness, feeling good, understanding, and encouragement might also have diverse meanings for children and may be too abstract for them to evaluate. A better approach for future research might be to reword the questions to be less abstract or combine the emotional and moral support items with psychological safety and security since the items addressed by the scales are very interrelated.

In general, the responses to the contextual items indicate that campers find the camp environment at the Tennessee 4-H Centers to be a physically and psychologically safe place that is supportive and nurturing with caring adults who

attend to the welfare of the campers. This finding supports the premise of camps providing an environment that is conducive to positive youth development.

The researcher could find no scales used in previous research to measure the context of the camp environment. While a strength of this study is the attempt to investigate an area where little empirical research could be found, a limitation is the lack of replication and established validity of the scales developed by the researcher. The uniqueness of the camp environment requires questions that are specific to the contextual setting while challenging the researcher to adequately address the concept. Although camping professionals and several other instruments used for related research were consulted, this was clearly a first attempt at measuring often elusive and difficult to define areas. The lack of research on contextual setting of positive youth development in general shows there is much more work to be done in refining scales used to evaluate the context of development.

Finding Two

Campers responded most positively to statements about the life skill of building relationships, followed closely by self-responsibility, decision-making, communication and social interaction, and teamwork and cooperation. They were not sure about leadership.

In the life skill areas, campers agreed with items measuring building relationships ($\underline{M}$ = 1.85, $\underline{SD}$ = .72) followed closely by self-responsibility ($\underline{M}$ = 1.87, $\underline{SD}$ = .65), and decision-making ($\underline{M}$ = 1.96, $\underline{SD}$ = .72). They also agreed with communication and social interaction ($\underline{M}$ = 2.14, $\underline{SD}$ = .73), and teamwork and

cooperation (M = 2.15, SD = .68) but weren't sure about leadership (M = 2.71, SD = .78).

With the exception of leadership, the items in the building relationships, self-responsibility, and decision-making scales refer to socially accepted norms for behaviors in a group setting or developmentally appropriate competencies. By the time campers participate in the 4-H camping program, many of them have been in school and other social settings for five or more years. It stands to reason that campers would respond positively to the statements because they have been socialized into knowing and acting appropriately.

The "not sure" response to leadership suggests that campers have little opportunity to exhibit leadership skills or are not yet developmentally comfortable in knowing or assuming leadership roles. The age of the campers in relationship to the life skill of leadership and reluctance to assume leadership positions or practice leadership roles is supported by child development research. The field of child development suggests that the age group involved with the research is just beginning to assert themselves and initiate leadership roles as opposed to group tasks and involvement. The structure of the program and the adults leading it may be such that leadership opportunities are not provided. It would be interesting to make adjustments in curriculum and conduct additional research.

A question of interest is whether campers responded as they did because they thought "good campers" should respond that way. It is a challenge to ask questions

that solicit unbiased responses while maintaining an appropriate reading and comprehension level. The lack of a pattern in responses suggests that campers shared their honest perceptions but it would be worthwhile in future research to investigate whether they felt compelled to do so because of pressure to be "good campers."

These scales clearly indicate that campers take advantage of the opportunity to practice life skill development in the residential 4-H camp setting. With five of the six scales very close to "agree," the premise of camping professionals and others that camp provides an opportunity for growth and development is supported; and one could assume the mission of the Tennessee 4-H camping program is met.

As discussed earlier in relationship to the camp environment, the researcher attempted to evaluate an area with limited empirical research as it relates to the camp environment. The life skill scales appear to elicit more positive responses than the contextual scales and offered less challenge in design and conception but could certainly use refinement and replication to establish their validity and reliability.

Finding Three

Statistical analyses revealed significant and positive associations and relationships between contextual features of the camp environment and the life skills supported.

Pearson's *r* correlation revealed significant and positive associations between contextual features of the camp environment and support for life skills practiced by the youth residential campers. In building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, self-responsibility, and teamwork, correlations were revealed for all contextual features with some correlations higher than others.

Physical safety and security had a higher correlation with four of the life skills including building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, and self-responsibility than any of the other contextual features. The lowest correlations between life skills and contextual features were distributed among emotional and moral support, physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult relationships but there was no definitive pattern.

In leadership, the correlation with emotional and moral support was quite different than the fairly consistent pattern of influence across features as established with the other life skills and contextual features. Leadership showed a much lower correlation to physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult relationships and was extremely highly correlated to emotional and moral support.

When the contextual features were considered together in the model regressing each life skill on the contextual features while controlling for grade and gender, the average variance explained by the contextual features over the range of life skills was 39.8%. Self-responsibility, with an additional variance of 43% explained by contextual features, was highest but followed closely by teamwork (42%), decision-making (39%), communication and social interaction (38%), and building relationships (37%). While the contextual features explain a large portion of the variance in the life skills, it is important to note that an average of 60.2% is explained by other variables not in the model (other than grade or gender.)

Finding Four

The contextual features were much more influential on the life skills than either grade or gender although grade was significantly associated with the relationship of decision-making, building relationships, and self-responsibility to all contextual features, and gender was significantly associated with the relationship of communication and social interaction, decision-making, building relationships, self-responsibility, and teamwork to all contextual features.

In general, sixth graders were consistently higher in ratings (indicating less agreement) than fourth graders, and females exhibited more perceived skill or competence in the life skill areas than males. The age differential could be attributed to an increase in cognitive and critical thinking abilities among older campers and the skill to more critically assess these areas and offer a less-biased perspective.

In terms of gender, basic child development concepts suggest that females in this age range are more likely to exhibit emotional and social maturity through stronger social skills, emotional sensitivity, and group compliance while males are more likely to be verbally and physically aggressive and risk-taking. When considering the life skills addressed by this research, one could expect that females would perceive themselves as exhibiting more competence.

Because of the potential for variability among girls and boys or between grade levels at this particular stage of development, the researcher conducted the research with this concept in mind and looked for significant relationships among the variables in relationship to grade or gender. The minor contributions of these findings to the

total variance explained did not warrant additional further in-depth investigation by grade or gender.

Finding Five

The life skill of leadership was not significantly related to grade or gender and was very highly associated and significantly related to emotional and moral support.

The life skill of leadership was somewhat problematic in that standardized Beta for leadership regressed on emotional and moral support was 1.000, a highly unusual finding. The researcher reviewed the data but could find no evidence of problems with data entry or corrupt files. It is prudent that these findings be interpreted with caution as the finding is unlikely and suggests a problem with the data. If the results are accurate, the leadership scale and its direct relationship to emotional and moral support is a challenge that will have to be addressed in future research. If the findings are valid, many of the leadership statements were related to campers being given the opportunity to take or serve in a leadership role. From that perspective, the relationship of leadership to emotional and moral support makes sense. If no leadership opportunities are provided, it would be difficult to rate them positively. It appears the items used to measure this construct could warrant more study and development with re-entry of all data as a means to determine if the findings could be attributed to the data files.

Finding Six

The life skills themselves were highly correlated as were the contextual features.

Of additional interest are the high correlations between the contextual features

and also the high correlations between the life skills. In relationship to the contextual features, the highest correlations were between psychological safety and security and supportive adult leaders; psychological safety and security and physical safety and security; and physical safety and security with supportive adult leaders. In the life skills, the highest correlations were between building relationships and self-responsibility; building relationships, and decision-making; decision-making and self-responsibility; building relationships and teamwork; and teamwork and self-responsibility. These results suggest that the contextual features and the life skills themselves are highly inter-correlated and need refinement if they are designed to address single dimensions of the life skill or contextual feature scales.

Finding Seven

The camp environment provides a context for positive youth development and supports the practice of life skills.

These findings are consistent with the recommendations of several research studies addressing the role of the environmental context in positive youth development and fostering the life skills, assets, or competencies necessary for a successful transition to young adulthood. While it would be nice to tie the current research in with others exploring the camp context and positive youth development, the lack of empirical documentation forces one to look at the broader scope of positive youth development to substantiate these findings.

The *National Youth Development Information Center* (2002) emphasized that all young people have basic needs critical to survival and healthy development and

encompassing the following: a sense of safety and structure; belonging and membership; self-worth and an ability to contribute; independence and control over one's life; closeness and several good relationships; and competency and mastery.

Eccles and Gootman (2002) in their *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development Report* described the elements of settings that promote developmental assets as including physical and psychological safety and security; emotional and moral support; opportunities for adolescents to experience supportive adult relationships; opportunities to learn how to form close, durable human relationships with peers that support and reinforce healthy behaviors; opportunities to feel a sense of belonging and being valued; opportunities to develop positive social values and norms; opportunities for skill building and mastery; opportunities to develop confidence in one's abilities to master one's environment; opportunities to make a contribution to one's community and to develop a sense of mattering; and strong links between families, schools, and broader community resources (p. 7)

The Positive Youth Development Project (1999) found that positive youth development programs share many of the same characteristics. They include a commitment to promote bonding, foster resilience, promote social, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, moral competence, foster self-determination, foster spirituality, foster self-efficacy, foster clear and positive identity, foster belief in the future, provide recognition for positive behavior, provide opportunities for prosocial involvement, foster prosocial norms.

This research was intentionally designed with these concepts in mind. The actual survey questions attempted to address the intent of many of these conceptual frameworks. While it mapped many of the above recommendations onto the four constructs of emotional and moral support, physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult relationships, it has clear connections and implications to the multiple dimensions mentioned earlier. The need for bonding with significant adults and peers, physical safety and security, and opportunities to gain competence are evident in all of these recommendations. Clearly in the minds of the early and pre-adolescent campers, the construct of physical safety and security is paramount as evidenced by the measures of association in four of the six life skills. Ironically, it is one of the easier contextual features to address. However, it is important to note that the other features of emotional and moral support, supportive adult relationships, and psychological safety and support also contribute.

Conclusions

Although no causal effects can be determined from this descriptive, correlational investigation, general conclusions are drawn based on the statistical analyses utilized to address the areas of emphasis and to test the hypotheses that guided the study. The researcher concluded the following:

1. Residential campers participating in Junior Camp at the four Tennessee 4-H Centers "agree" in a positive manner with statements investigating the context of the camp environment including emotional and moral support, physical

safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult relationships.

2. Campers "agree" in a positive manner with statements investigating the life skills enhanced at camp including building relationships, communication and social interaction, decision-making, leadership, self-responsibility, and teamwork.
3. The context of the camp environment influences the practice of life skills among residential youth campers at the four Tennessee 4-H Centers and provides an environment conducive for positive youth development.
4. When examining the relationship of each life skill to the broad range of contextual features, and including grade and gender, together these features account for an average 41.4% of the variance in all life skills, except leadership. This indicates that other unknown factors contribute the remaining 58.6%.
5. When considered together, the features of the camp context alone accounted for an average of 39.8% of the variance in the life skills measures.
6. Although there is a significant relationship between a majority of the life skills and grade or gender, the contribution of grade or gender is minimal when compared to the relationship between the life skill and the camp context.

Recommendations

Policy

The Tennesssee 4-H Centers operate under the policies of the University of Tennesssee and are ACA (American Camping Association) accredited camps. The policies and procedures of these two groups provide a firm foundation for facilities operation and management and programmatic expectations. While the groundwork and expectations are in place for providing a location for positive youth development, the research proves that the context is more than the cabins, dining hall, and swimming pool. The contextual features investigated in this research study are more related to human and physical boundaries, expectations, relationships, and personal experiences than facilities or fences. Research findings show that the context of the camp environment in relationship to emotional and moral support, physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult relationships is critical if life skills are to be enhanced.

The 4-H camping program currently has clear expectations for leader training, behavior management, understanding youth development, working with parents, conducting camp activities, recognition and other areas related to the total camp program. The expectations for conducting camping programs were evident in the camper responses to items related to "leaders cared about what happened to campers, camp rules were explained to campers, campers were told where things were at camp, campers were told who they could ask for help at camp, and campers were expected to respect each other." It was also evident in the life skill areas that the expectations

for campers are clear, and especially so, in building relationships with campers who agreed that they were "honest and trustworthy, respected other campers and their belongings, and were fair in how they treated others." These and other context and life skill related items are all part of the intensive training program, recommendations and guidelines for camp staff, field staff, and volunteer leaders at camp. In tight budget times, and with limited personnel resources, one common request is to cut back on the training of field staff with lowered standards for volunteer leader preparation and training. The research shows that understanding the roles of emotional and moral support, physical safety and security, psychological safety and security, and supportive adult relationships in providing a quality youth development opportunity should not be underestimated. These areas should continue to be part of a comprehensive camp preparation and training curriculum. In the opinion of the researcher, limiting the emphasis placed on them to streamline training would compromise the quality of the camping program.

Education

The camp curriculum, training materials and expectations for preparing agents, summer camp staff and volunteer leaders to participate in the camping program need to be evaluated and revised. They should be critically examined to determine if they are providing the background and education to equip these agents and others to provide an optimal context for positive youth development.

To address contextual items where campers' responses were more towards "not sure," emphasis should be placed on providing a more favorable environment or making sure campers know things such as the security measures taken and where to go for assistance. Two items that have caused considerable media attention in other states are whether leaders know what is going on in the cabins and if campers can pick on other campers. These items did not score as highly as others in this research, although campers did score them favorably. People in camp leadership positions and roles for supervising campers need to know and follow the established guidelines in these areas.

The life skill of leadership was somewhat problematic in that the campers were "not sure" of their competence in this area. More leadership opportunities need to be provided and leaders taught how to facilitate leadership development. On a similar note, where other life skill items clustered around "not sure," adaptations should be made to the camp curriculum to strengthen camper responses in the areas.

From a more positive perspective, the 4-H Centers also need to look at items where campers more "strongly agree," compare what they do to emphasize development in that life skill area, and then share these ideas at annual summer camp planning days. A strength of Extension is its ability to disseminate information. Annual national and regional meetings of Extension employees and opportunities to submit findings to juried publications give ample opportunities to share the findings, as well as training and educational materials, and solicit comment. The American Camping Association also has networks in place for sharing research and

programmatic impact through journals, conferences and personal contacts.

Research

The scales used in this research were developed by the researcher because established scales unique to the camp environment could not be located. Additional research would be valuable in refining and revising the life skill and contextual scales to further establish their validity and reliability. The measures would be strengthened through assessment designed to examine for predictive, criterion, convergent, and divergent validity. The "newness" of the survey questionnaire, lack of comparable instruments measuring similar concepts in a residential camp setting, and limited research measuring the context of the camp environment or contextual features of positive youth development suggest that these issues will be addressed through additional use of the survey questionnaire and critical examination of the instrument and subscales. Two of the items not used in the subscales because of their low "Cronbach's" alpha score were also those with the most "disagreement" and were worded so that a negative response would be a positive answer. Although directly applicable to the camp environment, they could not be included in the subscales. With the age and reading level of the participant, the researcher questions whether comprehension of this type of question for the age group surveyed is problematic in the design of the instrument. The researcher suggests the items be included in future research and designed with two statements and wording is in both a positive and negative direction to test for inconsistencies.

The researcher attempted to align the subscales with the life skills or contextual features mentioned in the review of literature but that may not prove to be the best strategy. A confirmatory factor analysis could strengthen the premise that the items used to define the subscales were valid measures for each of the 10 dimensions. As a follow-up to the study, the researcher conducted an exploratory factor analysis that suggests it might be better to group the items into two subscales of contextual features of emotional and moral support, and physical safety and security. Likewise, the exploratory factor analysis suggested the life skills be grouped into communication and social interaction, self-responsibility, and leadership. Following this line of reason for the current research would create scales with items that do not appear to mesh in conceptual meaning as they apply to the camp environment or with the knowledge gained from the review of literature but is plausible for future analysis.

The correlations among the contextual features and life skills themselves suggest that more research could be conducted to determine if there are moderating or interacting effects. Another factor to consider is the lack of a significant relationship when communication and social interaction is regressed on psychological safety and support. This is puzzling since the measure of association showed a significant positive relationship. Psychological safety and security may be so closely correlated with the other independent variables that it should not be used as a single measure as discussed in the preceding paragraph.

Variances not accounted for by the independent variables suggest that other factors are influencing the development of life skills. Perhaps these are not the most

salient contextual features or life skills to research. When looking at the life skill items, one could wonder if the campers responded favorably because they knew the items were common expectations in social settings. Less obvious items measuring the same concept might yield different results.

This research was based on camper perceptions. It would be strengthened if additional research were conducted to verify that the perceptions of the life skills practiced by campers were also evident to adults or camp staff. Focus groups conducted with parents and camp staff to identify the skills practiced by campers prior to designing the survey questionnaire items and scales suggest that these findings would be evident in camper behaviors.

Although the 4-H Centers use the same curriculum, all summer camp staff, agents, and leaders receive the same training, and the physical settings are very similar, the dynamics of each location may or may not influence the relationships between the contextual features and the life skills. The data could be further analyzed by 4-H Center location to determine if relationships varied by sites. A hierarchical lineal model would allow for the analysis by camp settings. If so, additional research into the specifics of each location as it relates to the camp context and approach to life skill enhancement could be used to influence changes in the daily operations and curriculum implementation.

The average amount of variance not explained by the contextual setting, grade or gender is 58.6%, as defined by this research, and warrants additional investigation.

Future research could also include the curriculum, summer staff, agents, leaders, staff and leader training, components of the physical settings, and individual camper factors as additional variables. Entering these variables into the model might explain additional variance not contributed to age, gender, or contextual features.

The benchmark data provided by the research project will offer insight into additional research but leaves much to be explored in future projects. Ideally, additional research would include a control group with no changes to the curriculum and an experimental group with changes implemented as suggested previously.

A look at related research could also involve the American Camp Association which is conducing a nationwide study focusing on life skills and include a comparison of findings. On a national level, other 4-H camping programs are conducting limited research in 4-H camping. It would be beneficial to compare the results of this research to the findings of these other groups. Comparison of the findings could offer insight, identify commonalities, and shape the future of residential camping in Tennessee.

Implications

The 4-H residential camping program, as part of the University of Tennessee Extension, is an integral delivery mode providing positive youth development opportunities to nearly 6,000 campers annually. Ironically, little research has been conducted in comparison to the staff resources and facilities dedicated to conduct such programs. Investigating the benefits to the youth campers in relationship to the

camp environment is an area that has been seldom researched, in Tennessee or any other state. However, current research in positive youth development clearly establishes that the context of development is critical. This study provides strong evidence that the camp environment does make a difference in the life skills supported and provides a benchmark for additional research. It also shows that campers are aware of the camp environment and can evaluate their ability in life skill areas. The knowledge gained from this research will be beneficial to improving the camp curriculum and 4-H Center environment and guiding changes and revisions to the camping program. Nationally, many other state 4-H programs offer comparable camping opportunities and should find the research helpful as they evaluate their own programs.

A major implication of this study is its application to the general 4-H program and other positive youth development opportunities offered by youth serving agencies and organizations. In 4-H and many other youth development programs, a multitude of opportunities are offered to youth with the objective of supporting life skills or building competencies. Many of them involved extended time away from home and even overnight excursions. If one looks at the items included in the subscales, they address boundaries, structure, expectations, interactions, and relationships that would be applicable to almost any setting. The magnitude of prediction the contextual features had on five of the six life skills suggests that they are critical in any environment, not just the camp setting. These areas are often overlooked in the quest

to offer a program according to the prescribed curriculum. This research suggests that time spent reinforcing the boundaries, structure, and social expectations is time well spent if the environment is intended to be one conducive to positive youth development.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Mean and Standard Deviation of Camp Context Index Scale Index Items as They Appeared on the Survey (N=720).

Item	Mean	SD
Campers felt good about themselves at camp	2.15	.86
Camp buildings and equipment were in good condition	2.49	1.18
Campers were encouraged to follow the rules	1.97	.99
Campers were told who they could ask for help at camp	1.02	1.04
I would go to a leader if I had a problem	1.81	1.00
Leaders cared about what happened to campers	1.59	.87
Campers did things at camp that might not be safe (rescored)	3.23	1.22
Campers felt good when talking to leaders	2.13	1.00
Leaders set a good example for the campers	2.00	1.05
Leaders talked to upset or worried campers	2.35	1.44
Strangers could easily come into camp (rescored)	2.95	1.45
Campers were praised when they did well	2.26	1.08
Camp leaders were people you could trust	1.70	.90
Campers were not allowed to pick on other campers	2.33	1.25
Leaders stopped campers from doing dangerous things	1.96	1.11
Campers were expected to respect each other	1.85	.91
Camp teen leaders were good role models	2.13	1.21
Leaders knew what was going on in the cabins	2.46	1.23
Camp rules were explained to campers	1.60	.83
Campers were expected to be honest and fair	1.86	.93
Leaders helped campers and did things with them	1.96	1.06
Leaders tried to make homesick campers feel better	1.77	1.09
Campers were told where they could and couldn't go	1.76	.87
Camp leaders understood camper problems	2.28	1.14
Camp staff and other adults could be easily found	2.39	1.25
Leaders liked being around the campers	2.15	1.06
Campers were told where things were at camp	1.74	.91

Scale –
Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Not Sure (3), Disagree (4), Strongly Disagree (5).

Mean and Standard Deviation of Life Skills Index Scale Index Items as They Appeared on the Survey (N=720).

Item	Mean	SD
I knew the camp schedule and where I should be	2.10	1.05
At camp, I asked for help when I needed it	1.90	.95
I knew how to make good decisions at camp	1.88	.89
I compromised with my camp friends if we disagreed	2.42	1.11
I liked introducing myself and talking to other campers	2.28	1.19
I was honest and trustworthy at camp	1.80	.92
I am good at leading camp activities	2.68	1.21
I lost a lot of my belongings at camp (rescored)	2.14	1.39
Before I made decisions, I considered all choices	2.39	1.12
While at camp, I didn't always have to be the leader	1.96	1.05
I cleaned up after myself at camp	1.60	.83
I helped with cabin clean up and meal service	1.65	.90
I was a good listener at camp	1.93	1.00
I liked to be a leader at camp	2.55	1.26
I might call, write or email new friends after camp	2.33	1.30
I think other campers liked being around me	2.24	1.06
I respected other campers and their belongings	1.71	.89
If kids were choosing a leader, it would be me	3.04	1.08
I was usually where I was supposed to be at camp	1.98	1.06
I tried new activities at camp because I wanted to	1.80	1.01
My camp friends and I worked together on projects	2.45	1.25
At camp, others usually understood what I tried to say	2.24	1.11
If someone needed something, I tried to help	1.88	.91
I got other kids together for games or camp activities	2.46	1.16
At camp, I tried to do what was expected of me	1.91	.93
I didn't follow the camp rules (rescored)	1.68	1.03
I worked out problems with other campers	2.25	1.09
I could make new friends at camp	1.63	.87
I was fair in how I treated others at camp	1.94	.94
I volunteered for flag, vespers or camp activities	2.84	1.39
At camp, I felt responsible for my own behavior	1.72	.87
I thought about it before making my choices	2.00	1.07

Scale –
Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Not Sure (3), Disagree (4), Strongly Disagree (5).

Mean and Standard Deviations of Camp Context Index Scale Index Items From Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree (N=720).

Item	Mean	SD
Campers were told who they could ask for help at camp	1.02	1.04
Leaders cared about what happened to campers	1.59	.87
Camp rules were explained to campers	1.60	.83
Camp leaders were people you could trust	1.70	.90
Campers were told where things were at camp	1.74	.91
Campers were told where they could and couldn't go	1.76	.87
Leaders tried to make homesick campers feel better	1.77	1.09
I would go to a leader if I had a problem	1.81	1.00
Campers were expected to respect each other	1.85	.91
Campers were expected to be honest and fair	1.86	.93
Leaders stopped campers from doing dangerous things	1.96	1.11
Leaders helped campers and did things with them	1.96	1.06
Campers were encouraged to follow the rules	1.97	.99
Leaders set a good example for the campers	2.00	1.05
Campers felt good when talking to leaders	2.13	1.00
Camp teen leaders were good role models	2.13	1.21
Campers felt good about themselves at camp	2.15	.86
Leaders liked being around the campers	2.15	1.06
Campers were praised when they did well	2.26	1.08
Camp leaders understood camper problems	2.28	1.14
Campers were not allowed to pick on other campers	2.33	1.25
Leaders talked to upset or worried campers	2.35	1.44
Camp staff and other adults could be easily found	2.39	1.25
Camp buildings and equipment were in good condition	2.49	1.18
Leaders knew what was going on in the cabins	2.46	1.23
Strangers could easily come into camp (rescored)	2.95	1.45
Campers did things at camp that might not be safe (rescored)	3.23	1.22

Scale –
Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Not Sure (3), Disagree (4), Strongly Disagree (5).

Mean and Standard Deviations of Life Skills Index Scale Index Items From Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree (N=720).

Item	Mean	SD
I cleaned up after myself at camp	1.60	.83
I could make new friends at camp	1.63	.87
I helped with cabin clean up and meal service	1.65	.90
I didn't follow the camp rules (rescored)	1.68	1.03
I respected other campers and their belongings	1.71	.89
At camp, I felt responsible for my own behavior	1.72	.87
I was honest and trustworthy at camp	1.80	.92
I tried new activities at camp because I wanted to	1.80	1.01
If someone needed something, I tried to help	1.88	.91
I knew how to make good decisions at camp	1.88	.89
At camp, I asked for help when I needed it	1.90	.95
At camp, I tried to do what was expected of me	1.91	.93
I was a good listener at camp	1.93	1.00
I was fair in how I treated others at camp	1.94	.94
While at camp, I didn't always have to be the leader	1.96	1.05
I was usually where I was supposed to be at camp	1.98	1.06
I thought about it before making my choices	2.00	1.07
I knew the camp schedule and where I should be	2.10	1.05
I lost a lot of my belongings at camp (rescored)	2.14	1.39
I think other campers liked being around me	2.24	1.06
At camp, others usually understood what I tried to say	2.24	1.11
I worked out problems with other campers	2.25	1.09
I liked introducing myself and talking to other campers	2.28	1.19
I might call, write or email new friends after camp	2.33	1.30
Before I made decisions, I considered all choices	2.39	1.12
I compromised with my camp friends if we disagreed	2.42	1.11
My camp friends and I worked together on projects	2.45	1.25
I got other kids together for games or camp activities	2.46	1.16
I liked to be a leader at camp	2.55	1.26
I am good at leading camp activities	2.68	1.21
I volunteered for flag, vespers or camp activities	2.84	1.39
If kids were choosing a leader, it would be me	3.04	1.08

Scale: Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Not Sure (3), Disagree (4), Strongly Disagree (5).

APPENDIX B

Intercorrelations Between Variables (N=720).

	Psychological Safety	Emotional Moral	Physical Safety	Supportive Adults	Building Relations.
Psychological Safety		.327**	.655**	.663**	.520**
Emotional Moral	.327**		.291**	.304**	.349**
Physical Safety	.655**	.291**		.654**	.526**
Supportive Adults	.663**	.304**	.654**		.521**
Building Relationships	.520**	.349**	.526**	.521**	
Commun. Interaction	.440**	.464**	.500**	.477**	.525**
Decision-Making	.542**	.323**	.559**	.536**	.711**
Leadership.	.327**	1.000**	.291**	.304**	.349**
Self-Responsibility	.560**	.357**	.575**	.563**	.801**
Teamwork Cooperation	.546**	.432**	.539**	.511**	.666**
Grade	.119**	-.046	.011	.023	.093*
Gender	-.031	.056	-.033	-.038	-.120**

Intercorrelations cont.

Commun. Interaction	Decision Making	Leadership.	Self-Responsib.	Teamwork Cooperation	Grade	Gender
.440**	.542**	.327**	.560**	.546**	.119**	-.031
.464**	.323**	1.000**	.357**	.432**	-.046	.056
.500**	.559**	.291**	.575**	.539**	.011	-.033
.477**	.536**	.304**	.563**	.511**	.023	-.038
.525**	.711**	.349**	.801**	.666**	.093**	-.120**
	.486**	.464**	.532**	.565**	-.034**	-.101**
.486**		.323**	.705**	.593**	.152**	-.106**
.464**	.323**		.357**	.432**	-.046**	.056**
.532**	.705**	.357**		.652**	.091**	-.088**
.565**	.593**	.432**	.652**		.040**	-.112**
-.034**	.152**	-.046**	.091*	.040		-.007
-.101**	-.106**	.056**	-.088**	-.112**	-.007	

APPENDIX C

Procedures for Conducting Camp Research – June 18

Thank you for agreeing to facilitate the 4-H Center youth camping research project. It is very important that you follow the procedures as outlined below. Failure to do so will compromise the validity and reliability of the research. This project will determine how the context of camp affects the life skills enhanced at camp.

Prior to completion of the research survey:
Early in the camp week, check with each county agent for a list of 4-H'ers with signed consent and assent forms. Collect these forms with along with the list of campers who are and are not participating in the research project. Only those youth who have both signed forms will be able to complete the research survey. Others campers will complete the traditional camp evaluation at the same time.

Determine the time (9:00 am, Friday morning?) for the survey to be completed and share it with agents and leaders early in the camp week.
Have on-hand a sharpened pencil for each camper completing the survey.
Locate facilities (dining hall) for all campers to be seated comfortably.
Set up a microphone system so that all campers can hear the statements.
Enlist several camp staff members, leaders or agents to monitor the room and answer questions.

To administer the survey:
Announce for each named camper (collected from agents early in the camp week) to report to a different location than the site where the research will take place - this number should be much smaller than those participating in the research. All other campers should report to the site for the research (dining hall).

Give each camper a pencil and survey. Ask them to refrain from beginning until all directions are given.

Begin by reading the following statement

"How you feel about your week at camp is important to the people who plan the activities and work at the 4-H Center. Your answers will help us make camp even better next year. There is little risk for participating in this study. Questions will not be embarrassing or ask for personal information. You have the choice of not responding to any or all questions. You can also stop responding at any time without any penalty and can ask questions at any time before, during or after the survey is given. Please follow along with me as I read the statements and respond by circling whether you strongly agree, agree, are not sure, disagree or strongly disagree. Make a dark mark in the circles, much like you would do for school tests. Are there any questions?"

Read the statements slowly, allowing time for responding.
Watch that the group is staying with you.
Collect surveys and pencils when campers are finished.
Number surveys in the top right-hand corner.
Immediately send surveys, assent and consent forms to:

Jill Martz, 4-H Youth Development Specialist
205 Morgan Hall
Knoxville, TN 37996-4510

Thank you!

APPENDIX D

FORM B
APPLICATION

All applicants are encouraged to read the Form B guidelines. If you have any questions as you develop your Form B, contact your Departmental Review Committee (DRC) or Research Compliance Services of the Office of Research. For PDF version of this form, click here.

FORM B

IRB # _____

Date Received in OR _____

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

Application for Review of Research Involving Human Subjects

I. IDENTIFICATION OF PROJECT

Principal Investigator Co-Principal Investigator:
Complete name and address including telephone number and e-mail address

Jill T. Martz, Ph.D. Student
3508 Christenberry Drive
Maryville, TN 37801
jmartz@utk.edu

Faculty Advisor:
Complete name and address including telephone number and e-mail address

Greer Litton Fox
College of Human Ecology
Child and Family Studies
Jessie Harris Building
Knoxville, TN 37996
glfox@utk.edu

Department:

Child and Family Studies

1. **Project Classification:** *Enter one of the following terms as appropriate:* **Dissertation, Thesis, Class Project, Research Project,** or **Other** (Please specify)

   Dissertation

2. **Title of Project:**

   Tennessee 4-H Center Summer Residential Camping Programs: Settings for Positive Youth Development and Enhancing Life Skills as Perceived by Youth Campers

3. **Starting Date:** *Specify the intended starting date or insert*

   "Upon IRB Approval"

4. **Estimated Completion Date:**

   December 2004

5. **External Funding** *(if any): NA*

   1. **Grant/Contract Submission Deadline:**
   2. **Funding Agency:**
   3. **Sponsor ID Number *(if known)*:**
   4. **UT Proposal Number *(if known):***

II. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this project is to add to the body of knowledge of the effects of participation in short-term residential summer camping programs for pre-and early-adolescent youth. Although millions of youth participate in residential camping programs annually, there is limited empirical research in this area. Objectives are to identify whether the perceptions of the context of the camp environment are predictors of the enhancement and development of internal assets, life skills, or competencies as identified by youth participants through self-report survey questionnaires. Self-report survey questionnaires will given to campers at the Buford Ellington, W.P. Ridley, Clyde York and Clyde Austin 4-H Centers in the summer of 2004

III. DESCRIPTION AND SOURCE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Participants involved in the project include youth in grades 4-6 who take part in a weeklong summer camping program at one of the four University of Tennessee 4-H Centers (camps) located in Greeneville (Clyde Austin), Crossville (Clyde York), Columbia (W.P. Ridley), or Milan (Buford Ellington). The research, representing a group of approximately 5,000 comparative campers, will take place in June of 2004, during the second week of the summer camping season. The total number of youth involved in the 2004 project is expected to number approximately 1,000.

IV. METHODS AND PROCEDURE

Overview

All campers will be invited to describe their camping experience through self-report survey questionnaires (see Section VII for additional information regarding informed consent). All campers who receive permission will be eligible to participate. Participation will be voluntary. The principal investigator will train the Program Director at each 4-H Center or a graduate student, who is also a University of Tennessee Extension employee, in conducting the 2004 statewide administration of the survey questionnaire. This will allow for the survey questionnaires to be completed simultaneously at each location. The principal investigator conducted a pilot-test of the survey questionnaire in the summer of 2003 at the Greeneville 4-H Center and did not experience any challenges or difficulties in administering the survey.

Recruitment

All campers and their parents will be notified at camp sign-up of the opportunity to participate. Camper assent and parental consent forms will be presented and explained to campers and parents respectively. Only those campers who receive parental consent and sign an assent form will be eligible to participate. Duplicate copies will be available so that campers and parents can keep one for themselves. Every effort will be made to encourage all campers to participate so that they represent the diversity of the camp population from a gender, age, and racial perspective. Once at camp, camping program directors and county agents will make eligible campers aware of the time and location for completion of the survey questionnaire.

Data Collection

The camp program director or a graduate student, in cooperation with district extension staff and 4-H Center management, will conduct the completion of the camper survey questionnaire on Friday morning, the last day of the camp week. The survey administrator will remind the participants of the provisions for confidentiality in wording the campers will understand. Specifically, campers will be asked to respect the privacy of other campers by not looking at responses to fellow camper survey questionnaires. They also will be assured that their responses will not be linked to them in any way. The survey administrator (camp program director or trained graduate student) also will answer any questions the respondents may have concerning the process before it is begun. Information will be aggregated with individual responses not linked to specific campers. After a short introduction designed to put the participants at ease, campers will be asked to complete survey questions similar to the following:

	Very Important	Important	Not Sure	Kind of Important	Not Important
"Camp is a safe place"	O	O	O	O	O
"Leaders are easy to talk to "	O	O	O	O	O
"Campers help clean the cabin"	O	O	O	O	O
"The adults care about campers"	O	O	O	O	O

V. SPECIFIC RISKS AND PROTECTION MEASURES

CAMPERS are of normal developmental level without known physical, emotional, or mental disabilities.

There are minimal anticipated risks to campers as a result of participation in the completion of the survey. Participants who elect not to participate will be given the option of participating in a camp activity while the survey questionnaires are being completed.

Survey topics will be objective and general in nature. Although all participants will be encouraged to complete the survey questionnaire, each retains the choice of whether to respond to any or all questions. The administrator will offer to answer any questions before, during, and after the session. Survey topics are designed not to be intrusive or embarrass the campers. Participants will not be asked to respond to questions that could cause harm or distress to the campers. The administrator of the survey will be alert for signs of upset, will offer to stop the survey process, and will take the child to a camp staff member who can handle the situation and obtain additional counseling help if necessary. In the unlikely event that a participant becomes distressed, the survey administrator will give him/her the option of withdrawing from participation.

Participants will be asked to respect the privacy of other campers and not look at their responses. Upon completion of the survey, the administrator will collect questionnaires, place them in a secure location, and mail them to the Principal Investigator. Administering the survey at the end of the camp week, sending completed questionnaires directly to the Principal Investigator, and avoiding asking questions dealing with sensitive issues addresses potential concern over respondents' confidentially and comfort in responding.

Information gathered from the survey will be kept strictly confidential. Participant names will not be included on the survey questionnaires.

Survey questionnaires will be stored in a locked file cabinet in 204 Morgan Hall for 3 years. After that time, they will be destroyed. The master list of names and consent forms will be kept in a separate locked file and also destroyed after 3 years. Quantitative data will be reported in aggregate form. Raw data will be made available only to persons conducting the study unless participants give permission in writing to do otherwise.

Any participant will be able to withdraw from completing the survey or the study at any time without penalty. The parents of minors also have the right to withdraw their child from the project at any time without penalty.

VI. BENEFITS

The risks involved with this project are minimal. Though it is not expected that participants will gain personal benefit from participating in the project, it is possible that they will enjoy and gain some insight into the benefits and rewards of participation in the camping program.

The primary benefits of the proposed study are the potential contributions to understanding child outcomes associated with youth residential camping and their relationship to the context of the camp environment. Empirical research citing the effects of youth participating in residential camping programs is limited. Youth development professionals can clearly articulate the perceived benefits, but there is little formal research. This study will enable the investigator to conduct formal research to examine the effects of participation in a residential camping program. Hopefully, this research will result in program support, accountability, and increased funding opportunities if the benefits are deemed to be positive ones.

VII. METHODS FOR OBTAINING "INFORMED CONSENT" FROM PARTICIPANTS

All campers and parents will receive notification of the study from the county 4-H agents at camp sign-up day. These county 4-H agents register the campers and accompany them to camp. To be eligible for the study, campers must sign and return an assent form and their parents must sign a consent form. Two copies of each form (assent and camper-parental consent) will be available so that campers and parents have a copy of each form for themselves. County 4-H agents, who are University of Tennessee faculty, will meet with the PI (principal investigator) and Camp Program Director (survey administrator)or graduate student, who also is a University employee, to review purposes and objectives for the research, methods to be used, and procedures to follow. These agents and staff members will cooperate in communicating with the parents, collecting informed assent and consent forms, and facilitating the research process. Only those participants with appropriate assent (campers) and consent (parents) forms will be eligible to participate.

VIII. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE INVESTIGATOR(S) TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

The principal investigator is a Youth Development Specialist with the University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service and is completing her doctoral research towards a Ph.D. in Child and Family Studies. She has an undergraduate degree in Vocational Home Economics Education from Bowling Green State University. She has a Master's of Science degree from Middle Tennessee State University in Vocational/ Technical Education with a minor in Child and Family Studies. She has served as a public school teacher for 10 years, an Extension 4-H Agent for 5 years, a 4-H Center program coordinator for 3 years and in her current position as an Extension Youth Development Specialist for 7 years. Her expertise in the areas of education, youth development, and camping programs makes her qualified to conduct this research. Greer Litton Fox is a professor in the Department of Child and Family Studies at the University of Tennessee where she has taught and conducted research for more than 2 decades and is a UT Distinguished Service Professor.

IX. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT TO BE USED IN THE RESEARCH

No special facilities will be required to conduct this research. Pencils will be provided. Meeting rooms or cabins at the 4-H Centers will be used as locations to complete the survey questionnaires. No special equipment is needed.

X. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRINCIPAL/CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S)

The following information must be entered verbatim into this section:

By compliance with the policies established by the Institutional Review Board of The University of Tennessee the principal investigator(s) subscribe to the principles stated in "The Belmont Report" and standards of professional ethics in all research, development, and related activities involving human subjects under the auspices of The University of Tennessee. The principal investigator(s) further agree that:

1. **Approval will be obtained from the Institutional Review Board prior to instituting any change in this research project.**
2. **Development of any unexpected risks will be immediately reported to Research Compliance Services.**
3. **An annual review and progress report (Form R) will be completed and submitted when requested by the Institutional Review Board.**
4. **Signed informed consent documents will be kept for the duration of the project and for at least three years thereafter at a location approved by the Institutional Review Board.**

XI. SIGNATURES

ALL SIGNATURES MUST BE ORIGINAL. The Principal Investigator should keep the original copy of the Form B and submit a copy with original signatures for review. Type the name of each individual above the appropriate signature line. Add signature lines for all Co-Principal Investigators, collaborating and student investigators, faculty advisor(s), department head of the Principal Investigator, and the Chair of the Departmental Review Committee. The following information should be typed verbatim, with added categories where needed:

Principal Investigator Jill Martz

Signature Jill Martz **Date** 3/01/04

~~**Co-Principal Investigator**~~ _____

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Student Advisor (if any) Greer Litton Fox

Signature Greer Litton Fox **Date** 3/01/04

XII. DEPARTMENT REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The application described above has been reviewed by the IRB departmental review committee and has been approved. The DRC further recommends that this application be reviewed as:

☑ **Expedited Review -- Category(s):** _____

OR

☐ **Full IRB Review**

Chair, DRC Priscilla Blanton

Signature Priscilla Blanton **Date** 3/4/03

Department Head Vicki Nordquist Vicki M. Nordquist

Signature Vicki Nordquist **Date** 03/05/04

Protocol sent to Research Compliance Services for final approval on (Date)

_____

Approved:
Research Compliance Services
Office of Research
404 Andy Holt Tower

Signature_____ **Date** _____

For additional information on Form B, contact Brenda Lawson by e-mail at blawson@tennessee.edu or by phone at (865) 974-7697.

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The University of Tennessee

Office of Research
Research Compliance Services

PARENTAL INFORMED CONSENT FORM for CHILD CAMPERS

"Tennessee 4-H Center Summer Residential Camping Programs: Settings for Positive Youth Development and Enhancing Life Skills as Perceived by Youth Campers"

Your child is invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to explore the effects of participation in a summer residential camping program on children.

INFORMATION

Your child will be involved in a survey that will be conducted by the researcher and camp program director or extension staff member.

Your child will be asked to complete a survey questionnaire that will take approximately one-half hour.

Survey topics will focus on questions such as:

	Very Important	Important	Not Sure	Kind of Important	Not Important
"Camp is a safe place"	O	O	O	O	O
"Leaders are easy to talk to"	O	O	O	O	O
"Campers help clean the cabin"	O	O	O	O	O
"The adults care about campers"	O	O	O	O	O

Completion of the survey will take place during the camp week, on Friday morning, before departure to come home.

All campers who return the required assent (camper) and consent (parent) forms will be able to participate.

RISKS

There are minimal anticipated risks that your child could incur through participation in this research project. Survey topics are not designed to be intrusive or embarrassing, and the choice to respond to any or all questions is optional. However, in the unlikely event that your child becomes distressed during the session, he/she will be given the option to withdraw from this research project without any penalty.

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BENEFITS

There are probably no direct benefits of the research to the children who participate. We hope your child will enjoy participating and sharing his/her camp experience. The results of this study will be included in my doctoral dissertation research and may be published in a professional book or journal, or presented at a conference. Your child's responses will not be linked to her/him personally in any way. We hope that what we learn from this study will help us improve the camping experience and our ability to share the benefits.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The information in the study records will be kept confidential. The questionnaires will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office and will be made available only to persons conducting the study unless you specifically give permission in writing to do otherwise. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you or your child to the study. Children's identities and responses to the questions will be kept confidential. All data are confidential and will be used for research purposes only. Data will be summarized and prepared in manuscript format for publication in books and journals. The results also may be presented at professional meetings. Again, no reference will be made in oral presentations or written reports that in any way can link your child to this study.

CONTACT

If you have any questions at any time about the study or the procedures (or in the unlikely event that your child experiences adverse effects as a result of participating in this study), you may contact the researcher, Jill Martz, at 204 Morgan Hall (865) 974-7435 or at jmartz@utk.edu. You also may contact the faculty advisor Dr. Greer Litton Fox, 427 Jessie Harris Building at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN, 37996-1900 or by calling (865) 974-0748. If you have questions about your rights as a participant's parent, contact the Research Compliance Services section of the office of research at (865) 974- 3466.

PARTICIPATION

Your child's participation in this study is voluntary; he/she may decline to participate without penalty. If your child decides to participate, he/she may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which he/she is otherwise entitled. If he/she withdraws from the study before data collection is completed, your child's data will be returned to him/her or destroyed.

CONSENT

I have read the above information and agree to allow my child to participate in the study. I have received a copy of the form.

Participants name (print) _____

Parent's / Legal Guardian's name (Please print) _____

Parent's / Legal Guardian's signature _____

Date_____ 9

The University of Tennessee

Office of Research
Research Compliance Services

PARTICIPANT ASSENT FORM

"Tennessee 4-H Center Summer Residential Camping Programs: Settings for Positive Youth Development and Enhancing Life Skills as Perceived by Youth Campers"

You are invited to participate in a study. The purpose of this project is to find out about your summer camping experience.

INFORMATION

You will be involved in a camp survey.

Survey topics will focus on questions such as:

	Very Important	Important	Not Sure	Kind of Important	Not Important
"Camp is a safe place"	O	O	O	O	O
"Leaders are easy to talk to"	O	O	O	O	O
"Campers help clean the cabin"	O	O	O	O	O
"The adults care about campers"	O	O	O	O	O

Completion of the survey will take place on Friday morning, during the camp week, before you leave to return home.

If you and your parents sign the forms, you will be able to participate.

RISKS

There is little risk for participating in the study. Questions will not be embarrassing or ask for personal information. You have the choice of not responding to any or all questions. You also can stop participating at any time without any penalty.

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BENEFITS

We hope you will enjoy participating in this study and sharing your camp experience.

What we learn from this study will be written in a paper that might get published in a professional journal. It will also be used as part of a larger project that will be made into a book. What we will learn in this study should help describe the camp experience to other campers, parents, and camp staff.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Camp Program Director(s), my professor, and I are the only people who will see your completed survey questionnaire. Your name will not be put on paper or used in anything written about the research project.

CONTACT

I will be glad to answer any questions you have about the interview. You can also ask questions any time before, during, or after the group session. If you have any questions, please contact me, Jill Martz, at 204 Morgan Hall, Knoxville, TN (865-974-7435) or jmartz@utk.edu. or my professor, Dr. Greer Litton Fox, 427 Jessie Harris Building at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996-1900 or by calling (865-974-0748.)

PARTICIPATION

If you have trouble understanding what taking part in this project will be like, you might want to ask your parent or guardian to explain it. Your participation is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate in the study. Nothing will happen to you if you decide not to finish the survey questionnaire. If you start the project and then decide that you want to quit, you may quit, and nothing will happen to you. If you withdraw before the study is completed, your survey questionnaire will be destroyed or you may keep it if you wish.

CONSENT

I have read this paper and had this project explained to me. I have had my questions answered. I agree to be in this study.

_____
Name (Please print)

_____
Signature

_____
Date

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AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE

State 4-H Office
205 Morgan Hall
2621 Morgan Circle
Knoxville, TN 37996-4510
Phone: 865-974-7434
Fax: 865-974-1628
www.utextension.utk.edu/4h

May 1, 2004

Dear Campers and Parents,

It's exciting to have the opportunity to attend 4-H Camp at one of Tennessee's four 4-H Centers. I hope you're looking forward to your week at camp. I am a Youth Development Specialist on the State 4-H Staff and working on my doctoral research in Child and Family Studies. I would like to learn about the camp experience and what campers experience at camp. Completing a summer camp survey questionnaire will help us find out the good things about camp and how camp can be an even better experience.

You will receive two forms (one for the camper and one for the parent/guardian to sign) giving me permission to survey campers. Participation is strictly voluntary. Campers will complete the survey questionnaire on Friday morning of their camp week. Please read the forms carefully, consider signing them, and turn them in with your completed sign-up forms. Keep one of each for your later reference. Thank you in advance for your consideration of taking part in this project. If you have any questions or concerns, please call me at 865-974-7435 or email me at jmartz@utk.edu.

Sincerely,

Jill Martz, Extension Specialist

State 4-H Staff

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A State Partner in the Cooperative Extension System
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AND COUNTY GOVERNMENTS COOPERATING
The Agricultural Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color national origin, sex or disability and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE

State 4-H Office
205 Morgan Hall
2621 Morgan Circle
Knoxville, TN 37996-4510
Phone: 865-974-7434
Fax: 865-974-1628
www.urextension.utk.edu/4h

March 5, 2003

To whom it may concern.

The four Tennessee 4-H Centers will be happy to support the camping research that Jill Martz, Extension 4-H Youth Development Specialist, proposes. They will do everything on their behalf to facilitate the process. Youth residential camping is an integral part of the Tennessee 4-H program and this research will be valuable to the total program. The 4-H Centers appreciate the opportunity to participate in this project.

Sincerely,

Alice Ann Moore
Assistant Director,
4-H Youth Development

A State Partner in the Cooperative Extension System
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AND COUNTY GOVERNMENTS COOPERATING
The Agricultural Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color
national origin, sex or disability and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Sample Survey Questions (*scan forms will be used with "bubbles" to indicate responses*)

Summer 4-H Camp Survey

Grade just completed o o o o — 4 5 6 — Gender o o — M F — District o o o o — W CE CU SM

How you experienced camp is important. Your comments will help to make camping at the 4-H Center even better for future campers. Color the bubble which shows how strongly you agree with each statement in describing your camp experience.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Campers felt good about themselves at camp	o	o	o	o	o
Leaders cared about what happened to campers	o	o	o	o	o
Leaders talked to upset or worried campers	o	o	o	o	o
Campers are not allowed to pick on other campers	o	o	o	o	o
Leaders knew what was going on in the cabins	o	o	o	o	o
Leaders tried to make homesick campers feel better	o	o	o	o	o
Camp buildings and equipment were in good condition	o	o	o	o	o
Campers did things at camp that might not be safe	o	o	o	o	o
Strangers could easily come into camp	o	o	o	o	o
Leaders stopped campers from doing dangerous things	o	o	o	o	o
Camp rules were explained to campers	o	o	o	o	o
Campers were told where they could and couldn't go	o	o	o	o	o
Camp staff and others could be easily found	o	o	o	o	o
Campers were told where things were at camp	o	o	o	o	o
Campers were told who they could ask for help at camp	o	o	o	o	o
Leaders encouraged campers to follow the rules	o	o	o	o	o
Campers felt good when talking to leaders	o	o	o	o	o
Leaders expected the campers to respect each other	o	o	o	o	o
Leaders praised the campers when they did well.	o	o	o	o	o
Leaders expected campers to be honest and fair	o	o	o	o	o
Camp leaders understood camper problems	o	o	o	o	o
I would go to a leader if I had a problem	o	o	o	o	o
Leaders set a good example for the campers	o	o	o	o	o
Camp leaders were people you could trust	o	o	o	o	o
Camp teen leaders were good role models	o	o	o	o	o
Leaders helped campers and did things with them	o	o	o	o	o
Leaders liked being around the campers	o	o	o	o	o

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I knew the camp schedule and where I should be	o	o	o	o	o
I lost a lot of my belongings at camp	o	o	o	o	o
I was usually where I was supposed to be at camp	o	o	o	o	o
At camp, I tried to do what was expected of me	o	o	o	o	o
At camp, I felt responsible for my own behavior	o	o	o	o	o
I cleaned up after myself at camp	o	o	o	o	o
At camp, I asked for help when I needed it	o	o	o	o	o
I knew how to make good decisions at camp	o	o	o	o	o
Before I made decisions, I considered all choices	o	o	o	o	o
I tried new activities at camp because I want to	o	o	o	o	o
I didn't follow the camp rules	o	o	o	o	o
I think before making my choices	o	o	o	o	o
I compromised with my camp friends if we disagreed	o	o	o	o	o
While at camp, I didn't always have to be the leader	o	o	o	o	o
My camp friends and I worked together on projects	o	o	o	o	o
I worked out problems with other campers	o	o	o	o	o
I help with cabin clean-up and meal service	o	o	o	o	o
I like to introduce myself and talk to new campers	o	o	o	o	o
I think other campers liked being around me	o	o	o	o	o
At camp, others usually understood what I tried to say	o	o	o	o	o
I could make new friends at camp	o	o	o	o	o
I might call, write or email new friends after camp	o	o	o	o	o
I was honest and trustworthy at camp	o	o	o	o	o
I respected other campers and their belongings	o	o	o	o	o
If someone needed something, I tried to help	o	o	o	o	o
I was fair in how I treated others at camp	o	o	o	o	o
I was a good listener at camp	o	o	o	o	o
I am good at leading activities at camp	o	o	o	o	o
If kids were choosing a leader, it would be me	o	o	o	o	o
I got other kids together for games or activities at camp	o	o	o	o	o
I volunteered for flag, vespers, or campfire activities	o	o	o	o	o
I liked to be a leader at camp	o	o	o	o	o

VITA

Jill T. Martz was born in Bluffton, Indiana and graduated from Bluffton High School in Bluffton, Ohio. She earned a BS in Education: Vocational Home Economics and graduated from Bowling Green State University.

She began her professional career as a seventh and eighth grade teacher of Family Living in Elida, Ohio. After ten years of teaching, she moved to Nashville, Tennessee and began her career with the University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service as a 4-H Agent in Rutherford County. She served as an Agent for six years before moving to the 4-H Center in Columbia, Tennessee to design and implement an Environmental Education program for teachers and students. Ms. Martz completed the requirements for her Masters of Vocational-Technical Education: College of Basic and Applied Sciences with a concentration in Human Sciences at Middle Tennessee State University.

In 1996, she accepted a position as a Specialist on the Tennessee State 4-H Staff where she is currently employed. As a State 4-H Staff member, she serves as Life Skills Evaluation System Committee Chair and Camping Program Specialist. She will receive her PhD in – Human Ecology in December of 2004.

Ms. Martz has received the George S. Foster Outstanding Agent Award, NAE4-HA Distinguished Service Award, Epsilon Sigma Phi Early and Mid-Career Awards, NAE4-HA National Communicator Award, and is a member of Phi Kappa Phi and Phi Gamma Delta.

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