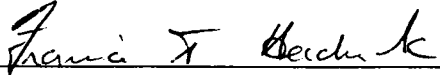


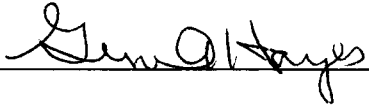
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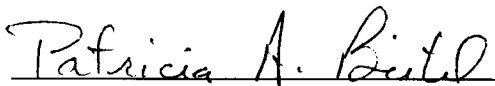
I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Sharon Cunningham entitled "The Effects of a Therapeutic Recreation Program On Community Transition: A Case Study." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Recreation and Leisure Studies.



Dr. F. Hendrick, Major Professor

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:





Accepted for the Council:



Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of The Graduate School

**The Effects of a Therapeutic Recreation Program On Community
Transition: A Case Study**

**A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Science
Degree
The University of Tennessee**

**Sharon Cunningham
August 1997**

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ABSTRACT

The inclusion of people with disabilities into our community is integral in improving these individual's quality of life. The purpose of this study was to determine if an inclusive program, which uses therapeutic recreation can positively facilitate the transition of a young adult with disabilities from being dependent on after school programs to independent community leisure involvement.

The study was a qualitative single subject case study regarding a male who was 22 years old. The subject was selected to participate in the program designed to promoted inclusion in the community and to acquire skills for independent community leisure involvement.

The study investigated the positive and negative subjective comments made by the program staff. A content analysis of these comments produced 4 main content areas: social skills, conversational skills, initiative, and responsibility. The study also identified that prior to participating in the program, the subject was primarily involved in the passive activity of watching television. During the program the subject became more socially involved and participated in a variety of community activities. The ratio of positive to negative comments increased from 2.08 in the first quarter to 4.50 in the fourth quarter of the study. Furthermore, the negative comments made towards the subject by the program staff decreased from 22 in the Fall to 3 in the Spring.

The research was useful in that it identified that inclusive therapeutic community recreation programs can assist individuals with disabilities in acquiring social and recreational skills. Finally, a longitudinal study would further benefit the researchers in determining if independent leisure functioning does continue after the program has ended.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The inclusion of people with disabilities into our community is integral in improving these individual's quality of life. Not only does integration allow individuals with disabilities to become a part of a community, but it also allows them the opportunity to transition into society and become a part of a community. Including individuals with disabilities into a community does not merely imply educating this particular group of people. Integration also implies educating those individuals without disabilities and assisting them to change their outlook so that a more positive environment prevails. Individuals without disabilities need to change their attitudes towards individuals with disabilities.

Many of the research papers indicated that individuals with disabilities have faced restrictions as a result of these attitudes. Lutfiyya (1988) found that people with disabilities were often segregated from other individuals in society. It appears that people with disabilities are not given the same opportunities as those people without disabilities as stated by Lutfiyya (1988). Furthermore, governing bodies have tried to develop programs that will assist with the inclusion and transition of people with disabilities into the community (Taylor, 1988). However, the special programs that are developed for individuals in the Least Restrictive Environment often cause segregation to occur (Taylor, 1988). In addition to attitudes and special programs not assisting entirely with inclusion,

problems even occur when community recreation programs attempt to include the people with disabilities into the community.

There has been much discussion about the need for including people with disabilities into the community (Walker & Edinger, 1988; Shoulz, 1988; and Bedini, Bullock and Driscoll, 1993). Walker & Edinger (1988) further discussed some of the benefits which occurred for those people with and without disabilities who participated in integrated programs. Individuals without disabilities can assist individuals with disabilities in becoming a part of a community through leisure and social activities as discussed by Shoultz (1988). She identified that attitudes of people without disabilities are one of the largest barriers. This concept of attitudes towards people with disabilities was fully supported by Bedini, Bullock and Driscoll (1993). They identified the need to address caregiver attitudes so children are not made to feel inferior.

Individuals with disabilities need to be given a chance to be included into society. This opportunity will assist with their transition of becoming an independent self-supporting member of society. Many individuals with disabilities are probably not aware of their potential because of the outdated attitudes of their caregivers and policies which perpetuate the notion that they are dependent individuals. However, if these persons were provided with opportunities to be a part of their society, people within a community would probably be amazed as to how capable individuals with disabilities are of being an integral part of a community.

One of the concepts that was missing in the articles was the process on how to develop a program that would work in assisting individuals with transition into the community. Furthermore, the programs that did exist were studied over a brief period of time. A longitudinal study was not conducted. A longitudinal study would provide information as to how inclusive recreation programs assist a young adult to transition into the community. This is especially important as they grow older and are interested in moving out of the home or institutional environment. Another weakness of prior research was that it often studied only one type of disability rather than multiple disabilities. In a community setting it would be rare to find only one type of disability, but rather there are many different types.

The implications of this study are two fold. First, individuals with disabilities are not entirely accepted in a community. Second, people without disabilities need to be educated about the potential of individuals with disabilities. However, through inclusive programs, individuals with special needs can be educated on how to become a part of a community. The inclusion process will assist in elevating stereotypes or at least reducing the outdated attitudes towards people with disabilities.

Inclusion into a community through recreation programs, will further assist a young adult to transition into independent community leisure involvement. Participation in inclusive recreation programs permits the opportunity for transition into the community to be less complicated than it might have been had

the client not engaged in the programs. The transition of individuals with disabilities into the community and out of the institution will not only be beneficial to society, but to the individuals as well. The individuals with disabilities will have the opportunity to acquire social skills, increase a more positive self image of themselves, and develop appropriate communication and language skills which are a necessity when working with other people. Society will benefit because the individuals will be more independent and will not have to rely on as much support from society. The individuals will become more self sufficient with less need for assistance from health care providers. This will reduce costs that would otherwise be incurred. People with disabilities need to be provided with the same opportunities that individuals without disabilities experience on a daily basis.

Everyone has a right to enjoy life to its fullest potential. It is imperative that individuals with special needs are given the quality of life to which they are entitled. One way of improving the life of people with disabilities, is to allow them to become a part of a community. As the literature review supports this concept, transition into the community can be less complicated through inclusive recreation programs which help foster an increase in the quality of life and assist in changing people's attitudes without disabilities to realize the capabilities of individuals with special needs.

The question which arises through this literature review is how there is a growing need to study programs which incorporate young adults into the

community who have various levels of abilities. Many of the studies investigated children with only one type of disability and how they were integrated into a community setting. More research needs to be undertaken regarding young adults who may be visually limited, cognitively challenged, or with multiple disabilities and are included into a community setting together. This type of research would provide a better understanding of how programs would function with such a diverse population. In addition, this study would be more realistic because more people with different types of disabilities are entering society. Everyone has the right to a fulfilling and meaningful life. This can begin by integrating all people into the community regardless of their ability or disability.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if an inclusive program, which uses therapeutic recreation, can positively facilitate the transition of a young adult with disabilities from being dependent on after school programs to independent community leisure involvement.

Research Questions

Based on the subjective reports provided by the TRACT staff and case manager, the following questions were answered:

1. Will a young adult develop the appropriate social interaction skills in order to engage themselves as a community member?

2. Does the young adult's disposition become more positive through participating in such a program and will inappropriate behavior decrease in the TRACT program?
3. Does the TRACT program foster community involvement?

Assumptions

For the purpose of this study, the following assumptions were made:

1. That the attitudes of people without disabilities hinder the acceptance and integration of people with disabilities into the community.
2. That recreation enhances the quality of life of individuals with disabilities.
3. That people with disabilities will experience personal growth and development through integrated recreation programs.
4. That the evaluations are accurate and reliable.
5. That the evaluator documented assessments and observations accurately and without biases.
6. That the subject willfully participated in the after school recreation programs.
7. That the Therapeutic Recreation and Community Transition (TRACT) program does provide integrated recreation programs.

Delimitations

The study was delimited in the following ways:

1. The subject in this study was selected from the Fort Sanders school.

2. The subject participated in the TRACT grant study.
3. The subject participated in the study for six months (October 1994 - March 1995).
4. The study was further delimited through there being enough evaluation reports in his file to make analysis possible.

Limitations

The following limitations were determined for this study:

1. The research paper was a single subject case study.
2. Based on subjective evaluations of another party.
3. The study prevents generalizability, because conclusions can only be related to the individual in the study and not applied to other individuals.
4. There is no documentation of prior integrated community involvement of the subject.
5. The subject was only observed for six months. Therefore, long term impact cannot be determined.

Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of this study the following terms were defined as follows:

Aortic Sentosis - "Narrowing of aorta or its orifice due to lesions of the wall with scar formation. It is due to infection as rheumatic fever, or embryonic anomalies. Hypertrophy of the heart is a common result" (Thomas C. L. ,1993, p. 130)

Case Manager - A person who initially assesses and monitors the individual in the study. Works with at least 2 to 3 other staff who are also involved in the clients treatment.

Community Transition - a process of people with disabilities who have been institutionalized and are now becoming involved in their community.

Disabilities - "A physical or mental condition which interferes with an individual's achieving his full human potential" (Schoel, Prouty, & Radcliffe, 1988, p. 33).

Grant Staff - Students who work on the Federal Grant TRACT at the University of Tennessee for the department of Health, Leisure and Safety Sciences.

Integration- Being supported to participate in typical, everyday education, recreation, work and family settings with peers without disabilities in the community (Leisure 2127, 1994).

Least Restrictive Environment - "An educational setting or program that provides a student with disabilities with the chance to work and learn to the best of his or her ability; it also provides the student as much contact as possible with children without disabilities, while meeting all of the child's learning needs and physical requirements"(US Department of Education).

Therapeutic Recreation - "The specialized application of recreation activities and experiences or processes designed to maintain or improve the health status, functional capacities, and/or quality of life of persons with special needs" (Carter, Van Andel, & Robb, 1995, p. 570).

TRACT - The name of the federal grant for the Recreation and Leisure Studies Program. Therapeutic Recreation and Community Transition.

Quality of Life - "A subjective assessment of psychological well-being that is characterized by feelings of satisfaction, contentment, joy and self determination" (Carter, Van Andel & Robb, 1995, p.568).

Significance of Study

This study allows individuals with and without disabilities to understand the importance of inclusive programs which use therapeutic recreation to assist with their transition into the community. Therapeutic Recreation does assist these individuals with developing a strong personal identity and realizing their capabilities and potentials. The study further assists in educating the community about the benefits of including people with disabilities into their programs. Furthermore, the therapeutic recreation profession can be recognized as a viable means of including and transitioning the person into the community.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Introduction

The purpose for this study was to determine if an inclusive program, which uses therapeutic recreation, can positively facilitate the transition of a young adult with disabilities from being dependent on after school programs to independent community leisure involvement.

This review focused on the benefits that are to be gained if a young adult is provided with the opportunity to participate in an inclusive program. Information present in this chapter are drawn from research papers and opinion articles gathered from journals and periodicals in the university library. The papers have been summarized and are arranged in the following categories: (a) attitudes of people without disabilities, towards people with special needs; (b) least restricted environment; (c) integration into the community through recreation; and (d) transition into the community. The materials and information cover a time frame from 1987 to 1995.

Attitudes of People without Disabilities, Towards People with Special Needs

Lutfiyya (1988) who is associated with the Center on Human Policy, suggests that all people need relationships with other human beings regardless of abilities. People with disabilities are often segregated by other individuals in society Lutfiyya (1988). The author's basic premise is that relationships that

often occur with people with disabilities, tend to be focused on those individuals who are caring for the person with disabilities. Rarely, are there best friends in people's lives with disabilities as stated by Lutfiyya (1988). A main problem that is in existence as stated by Lutfiyya (1988) is how non disabled people view people with disabilities. Attitudes towards people with disabilities can create an environment in which a persons abilities are never recognized. In addition, if people without disabilities do not give a person with disabilities a chance at participating in recreational programs, those who are non disabled will never realize how capable many individuals with disabilities are of being an active part of a recreation and community environment.

Some of the other problems that have occurred in society that Lutfiyya (1988) discusses in addition to restriction of attitudes is the problem of people with disabilities being separated rather than integrated into a community. "The enforced segregation of people with disabilities from the daily life of their communities reinforces the belief that some people are so different that they cannot fit in or successfully contribute to their society" (Lutfiyya, 1988, p. 2). Another restriction that occurs for people with disabilities is that they are not regarded as an individual, but rather a client (Lutfiyya, 1988). Caregivers therefore are not allowing a relationship to be fostered. The only relationship that is being created is that of therapist and client. Individuals with disabilities need more in a relationship with people. They have a need for friendship and companionship just as typical people require these characteristics.

These are needs that both people with disabilities and those without disabilities require in addition to friendship. Lutfiyya (1988) states that both sets of individuals have a common requirement for intimacy, opportunity, support, diversity, continuity and freely chosen and given relationships. If one contemplates the needs of both sets of individuals, it becomes apparent that there should not be any reason that individuals with disabilities would not seek these relationships. Any group of individuals should be granted opportunities to attempt new and diverse experiences. Also, one should be able to experience spontaneity and choose relationships and be able to share with other people in an intimate manner. All of us are human, and all of us have great potential to succeed in life and make a difference. People with disabilities have exactly the same potential. One can often learn an immense amount from a person with special needs. Thus, it is important that people with special needs be able to interact with other individuals in society. Individuals without special needs should give those with disabilities a chance to be a part of their lives and community rather than continuing the segregation that has occurred for so many years. A mark of real acceptance of individuals with disabilities will be evident through the relationships that will occur with people without disabilities (Lutfiyya, 1988).

Another study that investigated relationships between disabled and non disabled peers was presented by Woodard (1995). The purpose of her study was to determine the effects of type of disability and gender on the attitudes of kindergarten, first, second, and third grade elementary school children towards

their same-age peers with physical disabilities. The subjects in this study were children without visible physical disabilities, with ages five through eight years. All the children were either in kindergarten, first, second, or third grade classrooms in a medium sized, midwestern university community. There were 33 subjects in the study. The group included 18 females and 15 males who volunteered for this study.

The research instrument used in Woodard's (1995) study was a five item questionnaire created by the researcher. The five items described various recreational activities in the school, home, and community. The subjects in the study were presented with the questions in which there were three drawings (conditions) and then indicated their feelings towards interacting using a three part Likert scale which consisted of smiling faces and sad faces. These faces represented: (a) really happy; (b) do not care; and (c) really sad. The results for the study indicated that children without disabilities did not have negative attitudes towards their peers with disabilities. In addition, Woodard (1995) found that males tended to have more positive attitudes than females. It should be noted that during the questionnaire, some females had stated that they felt individuals with disabilities did not have the capabilities to do such activities as camping (Woodard, 1995).

The results of the study may indicate that there is a shift occurring in people's attitudes towards their peers with disabilities. However, it should be recognized that the children in the study came from a university town where, as

stated by Woodard (1995) that these individuals may have been raised in a more liberal environment where people may tolerate differences in general. The study is useful in determining: (a) that attitudes may be shifting, and (b) that children with disabilities should continue to be integrated rather than segregated. There are still many areas for improvement within the community setting. Many people in society believe that individuals with disabilities are indeed integrated within the community, especially with such programs as the Least Restrictive Environment. However, as will be determined, some of the programs that were implemented years ago need to be revised and become more liberated towards people with disabilities in order to create more opportunities for this population in present day society.

Least Restrictive Environment

Taylor (1988) discussed through a critical analysis the concept of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). In the article, the author proceeds to discuss the "flaws or pitfalls of LRE" (Taylor, 1988). He states that "LRE emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s when federal courts began to address the rights of children and adults with disabilities in schools and institutions" (Taylor, 1988, p.42). Congress, as stated by Taylor (1988)

finally endorsed the principle of least restrictive environment in P.L. 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 and in the Developmentally Disabled Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 1975, or DD Act. The act contained language expressing a preference for the education of students with handicapping conditions in the regular education environment (p.42).

Thus, LRE was to provide individuals the opportunity to be integrated into a normalized setting. However, through various LRE environments, such as residential settings, special education and day or vocational services, what is often regarded as integrated programs are still perpetuating segregation. Taylor (1988) now sees the challenge of creating “total integration for people with developmental disabilities” (p. 51). Taylor (1988) indicates that this view is further shared by Bilken and others (Bilken, Bogdan, Ferguson, Searl, and Taylor, 1985; Taylor, Bilken, and Knoll, 1987). Total integration of individuals would mean:

the elimination of social, cultural, economic and administrative barriers to community integration and the design of services and supports to encourage, rather than discourage, involvement in community life and to cultivate, rather than impede, relationships between people with developmental disabilities and non disabled people (Taylor, 1988, p. 51).

In order for individuals with disabilities to be integrated there must be a change in people’s attitudes and also a change of focus so that individuals are being fully integrated into society and will no longer be segregated.

Similar to the point that Taylor (1988) was attempting to enforce in his article, Pam Walker and Betsy Edinger (1988) discuss the importance of a child experiencing the community fully. Walker and Edinger (1988) discuss the experiences of a young camper Chauncey and how it was beneficial for him to become part of the community. Bogdan and Taylor (1986, p.210) as cited in Walker and Edinger (1988) state that “being in the community is not the same as being a part of the community”. Chauncey, in Walker and Edinger’s (1988)

article was able to become a part of a camping community. However, as Chauncey was growing and developing into the community of camp, the other campers and counselors without disabilities were growing and learning from Chauncey that he was just like any other child with dreams, desires, likes and dislikes.

In addition to the children and counselors learning about Chauncey and in what activities he was capable of participating, there were other lessons being learned. Walker and Edinger (1988) state five lessons that were learned while Chauncey was at camp. They are as follows:

1. A sense of belonging is important to all individuals whether they have disabilities or not.
2. It is important for the staff and campers to be able to see how someone with disabilities, even as disabled as Chauncey, can participate in camp activities.
3. The experiences of Chauncey and other campers with disabilities at camp provide valuable lessons about the support counselors and administrative staff need when children with disabilities come to camp.
4. An important factor in the acceptance and integration of children with disabilities at camp is doing so on a small scale individualized basis.
5. Chauncey, just as any other child, needs unstructured time to just hang out with other children. (Walker & Edinger p. 20)

Thus, as is understood through a comparison of both Taylor's (1988) and Walker and Edinger (1988) if one provides children with disabilities to be fully integrated into a program, as opposed to participating in a LRE environment, there are more benefits to those individuals with disabilities to participate in a integrated community. The LRE no longer provides as many benefits that a fully integrated program can contribute to a person's quality of life.

Integration Into the Community Through Recreation

Shoultz (1987) presents a theoretical article describing the ways individuals with disabilities have become involved in community recreation and leisure activity programs. These opportunities allow individuals to feel a sense of belonging. The article provides information regarding the challenges, the barriers to integration, and alternatives which are available in existing structures. Shoultz (1987) reinforces her information with examples of people with disabilities and the benefits of their leisure and recreation activities in providing them with a sense of belonging.

Shoultz (1987) states, "for people with developmental disabilities, integrated leisure and social activities can be a key to community" (p. 3). However, as she has discovered, often "organized recreational and leisure and social activities are segregated services or are provided for groups of people who enter community settings, but who as individuals never become integrated into these settings" (Shoultz, 1987, p. 3). If these individuals with disabilities were given the opportunity to be integrated, they would benefit from these programs.

Shoultz (1987) identifies many social benefits that occur as a result of an integrated community setting. The primary advantage of integrated recreation is the social opportunities which occur. Not only are individuals with disabilities given the chance to recreate with other people with or without disabilities and make new friends, these people with disabilities can enhance their social skills as well. Thus, friendships which are fostered through integrated recreation are

vital in improving the quality of life for individuals with disabilities and creating a sense of belonging and self worth. However, there are barriers to providing integrated recreation.

One of the largest barriers to integrated recreation for people with disabilities is people's attitudes (Shoultz, 1987). It is imperative that these attitudes which are held by either service providers, parents, or the general public are adjusted so that individuals with disabilities are allowed the chance to become full member of our communities (Shoultz, 1987). In addition to attitudes requiring adjustment, "the goals of recreation and leisure services need to reflect the requirement for physical and social integration of individuals with disabilities" (Shoultz, 1987, p. 3). Given the encouragement and opportunity to integrate within a community setting, individuals with disabilities will be able to participate in various integral roles within community organizations. For example, Shoultz (1987) discusses Tom who experiences Down syndrome. He was given the opportunity to join the Knights of Columbus and eventually became co-chairperson of the youth committee and received an award from the Knights for his work with them (Shoultz, 1987). Allowing individuals with disabilities to become integrated into a community is essential in providing these individuals with an identity, a sense of belonging, improving their self worth and overall improving their quality of life. One way to improve the lifestyles of people with disabilities is through assisting and encouraging them to establish leisure identities. McGill (1987), who is a leisure consultant for the G. Allen Roeher

Institute has recognized that when individuals are establishing their leisure identities, they are also given the opportunity to make friends. McGill (1987, p. 25) states, "it is our leisure experiences that give richness to our lives, that break the monotony of habit and routine". Often persons with disabilities are not given the same opportunities to participate in leisure experiences as those individuals with disabilities. Leisure activities allow a person to develop and identify away from that of family or work (McGill, 1987). In addition, during leisure experiences, our identity is enriched by those individuals who are also participating in the leisure experiences.

There are two main obstacles that people with disabilities need to overcome. One is that they need to be educated about what types of activities are available to themselves so that they are not limited in their repertoire of leisure activities. Secondly, individuals with disabilities need to be allowed and given the choice and decide which activities they would like to participate as well as the chance to experience spontaneity (McGill, 1987).

Becoming a member of a group assists an individual with establishing a leisure identity. These individuals become associated with a particular group and create friends. Furthermore, these individuals with disabilities become identified for their association with the group rather than having an association with their disability (McGill, 1987). It is important to note as stated by McGill (1987) that one does not need to belong to a formal group in order to have this identity. One can have many interests and can be identified by many issues.

Recreation Therapists and other service providers need to recognize the importance of leisure interests for individuals especially with promoting the integration of a person with disabilities into the community. Each individual is unique with their personal interests. Not only is it important for service providers to recognize the individuality of each person by their personal interests.

Assisting people in creating a leisure identity will assist them in integrating themselves into the community and improving their quality of life. A leisure identity will assist people with disabilities in improving holistically in all four domains of social, mental, emotional and physical health. There is much to be gained by assisting people with disabilities in establishing their leisure identity.

- Integrating children with disabilities into a community recreation program can assist them in learning appropriate social behavior. In addition, integration into programs with children without disabilities can also assist in developing positive attitudes towards people with disabilities. Schleien, Krotee, Mustonen, Kelterborn and Schermer (1987) conducted an exploratory study to examine the effects of participation in planned physical activity and recreational programs on the social recreation and adaptive behavior skills of autistic children. The researchers were further interested in investigating the attitudes of non-handicapped peers as a result of integrated experiences towards the children with disabilities involved in the program (Schleien et al., 1987).

The subjects under study consisted of 2 autistic children as well as non-disabled children. One autistic child was a female, 8 years and 5 months old

and a male 11 years and 2 months old. There was 67 children without disabilities between the ages of 7 to 12 years of age (Schleien et al., 1987). The children were enrolled in the University of Minnesota's Children's Sport Fitness School (CSFS). All participants were enrolled in a 3 week summer program conducted through the school of physical education and recreation at the University (Schleien et al., 1987). The program incorporated many activities such as gymnastics, sports, and swimming. The staff was comprised of graduate students who were either at a master's level or doctoral level in the School of Physical Education and Recreation.

The research instruments used in Schleien et al. (1987) study were: (a) an attitude acceptance scale which was administered pre and post test, and (b) behavioral observation of participants' behavior between the handicapped children, "special friends" through the social interaction observation system (SIOS), (Schleien et al., 1987). The SIOS system measures behavior in four areas: (i) appropriate play, (ii) inappropriate play, (iii) orientation to play objects and peers, and (iv) individual target behavior (Schleien et al., 1987). The results of the pre-test and the post test indicated an increase in appropriate behavior and decreases in inappropriate behavior. In addition, there was an insignificant improvement in the attitudes towards subjects with disabilities by their peers without disabilities (Schleien et al., 1987).

Schleien et al. (1987) study suggests through the positive behavioral and attitudinal changes that occurred in this study, "that the integration of children

with severe handicaps and nonhandicapp peers into a physical activity and recreation setting appears warranted” (p. 61). Integration was beneficial to both of the groups in the study. Integrated recreation programs assist in creating many possibilities to those individuals with disabilities. The integrated recreation programs help persons with disability improve their life socially, mentally, physically and emotionally. Thus, the person is in an environment which allows an opportunity for the individual to grow and assists with improving their quality of life.

Walker, Edinger, Willis and Kenny (1988) conducted a study through funding from the Center on Human Policy at Syracuse University and the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research on involving students with disabilities in extracurricular activities at Levy Middle School. There was interest in involving students with disabilities in school activities with non disabled students outside of the classroom and discovering what impact it had would have on both groups (Walker et al., 1988). The authors essentially believed that all people regardless of their disabilities should be able to participate in extracurricular activities with other children even if they required a support person to attend the activities with them. In addition, Walker et al. (1988) believed that the individuals with disabilities should be involved in currently age appropriate school activities and that new “special” programs do not need to be created as they perpetuate segregation.

The study included 6 students with disabilities who became involved in after school programs. The students were all autistic with moderate to severe cognitive impairments and some self abusive behaviors (Walker et al., 1988). The intent of the study was to have the student with disabilities participate in programs of their choice instead of heading home after school to a less stimulating environment. The programs the students participate in range from computer clubs and Spanish clubs to cross country skiing and volleyball (Walker et al., 1988). Some of the students were able to participate in after school programs at two neighborhood centers.

The study found that it was beneficial to the student with disabilities to become a team member. In addition, students without disabilities were educated about the capabilities of students with disabilities. The students with disabilities also increased their repertoire of friends and learned where they could go in order to continue their new recreation interest. Through this program the student further developed a leisure identity.

Both parents and peers who were on the teams noticed growth in the students with disabilities. One parent stated that their child looked forward to going to their activities and was excited on the day they were attending the recreation activities (Walker et al., 1988). It was also commented in Walker et al. (1988) that perhaps these activities released some of the energy these children had, which in turn contributed to better behaviors.

Through this program, new friends were created and positive attitudes towards students with disabilities emerged. Furthermore, the students with disabilities realized that they were capable of participating in certain programs and activities that they never imagined. Thus, a sense of accomplishment was fostered through the program. The program took the meaning of school beyond academics for the students with disabilities (Walker et al., 1988). It allowed school to include developing new friends and interests as well as a sense of school and team spirit.

Integrated recreation programs may require organization and effort to implement into a school. However, as this particular study indicated, as well as many other studies that have been conducted, there are many benefits to such a program. People with disabilities have the right to participate in recreation programs. It is apparent that these programs are worthwhile to implement in order to improve the quality of life for individuals with disabilities and have them be a part of a community.

Walker (July 1990) article, she discusses the importance of recreation and leisure activities as being a critical dimension in the quality of life including those with disabilities. Walker's (1990) findings are further supported by authors such as Ford and others (Ford, A., Brown, L., Pumpian, I., Baumgart, D., Nisbet, J., Schroder, J., and Lomis, R., 1986; and Hutchinson & Lord, 1979). As cited in Walker's (1990) article, Hutchinson & Lord, 1979; Voeltz, Wuerch, and Wilcox, 1982; "have found that traditionally recreation and leisure is given low priority in

the lives of children and teenagers with developmental disabilities” (p. 1).

However, it is becoming recognized that individuals will benefit from integrated recreation and leisure programs.

In order to assist people with disabilities to be integrated into a society efficiently, Walker (1990) discusses the three support components that are necessary. The supports include, “(a) supports based on a value or belief in integration for all, including those children and youth with severe and multiple impairments; (b) supports that are both individualized and flexible; and (c) supports that promote social interactions and friendships” (Walker, 1990, p. 1). All children regardless of their disability deserve a chance to become a part of society (Walker, 1990). The support people who work with these children need to be human and realize that these children have special requirements that need to be met, just as people without disabilities have particular needs. For instance, one does not want to become over supportive of this child. A support person should know when to stand back and let other people interact and become involved with the child, as Walker (1990) had mentioned in her article. The promotion of individuals into social interactions is critical in improving a child’s social well being. A child with disabilities can learn a lot through interacting with peers their own age.

“Integration is a process; it takes time” as cited by Walker (1990) by Hutchinson & Lord, 1984; Lord, 1981; Gold, 1986). If these children are given both the time and support, they can become integrated into the community.

Their integration into the community could further support their transition into the community should they choose to become actively involved in society. Children with disabilities need to be given a chance to become a part of society and to be able to identify themselves as a member of a community.

Transition Into The Community

The Montgomery County Department of Recreation Policy Statement on Mainstreaming (1990) discussed the importance of "recreation for all individuals" (p. 119). The policy statement provides a philosophical rationale for integration. Included in the policy statement is a description of accommodations that can be made for inclusion for all people as well as strategies for implementation.

The Montgomery county department (1990) identifies the importance of recreation and leisure activities for individuals. "Recreation and leisure time are essential to maximize the growth and development as well as the happiness and contentment of all children and adults" (Montgomery county department, 1990, p.119). The basic premise if the Montgomery policy statement is that recreation and leisure assist in improving one's quality of life and provides opportunities for individuals to interact with each other. The interaction which occurs, increases a person's with disabilities growth and development in various areas. The growth which occurs will eventually be beneficial to the individual as they transition into the community.

allows the individual to feel accepted and build positive relationships. Hopefully, those individuals who were not initially accepting the individuals with disabilities will learn that these individuals are special people and can be an important part of a group.

The second method of intervention which can contribute to the integration of individuals with disabilities is the circle of friends technique. The circle of friends includes volunteer group members, friends and significant people who are involved in the life of the person with special needs (Schleien, 1990). The circle of friends group assists the person with disabilities in decreasing barriers which may prevent them from becoming included in integrated community programs.

Finally, cooperative learning is another strategy suggest by Schleien et al. (1990) to assist with the transition of individuals into the community. Cooperative learning

emphasis is upon actively promoting child to child interactions through three interrelated processes: (1) preparation of non disabled participants to interact as friends of a participant with disabilities; (2) structuring of group directions and dynamics to promote cooperative outcomes; (3) preparation of adult leaders to promote and sustain positive child to child interactions (Schleien, 1990, p.46).

Various skills can be learned during this type of interaction, such as learning to share, taking turns, appropriate conversational skills and much more. In this technique, everyone is learning and benefiting from the program.

Social networks and friendship can become an important aspect of an individual's life. Integrated recreation programs can contribute to including an

individual with disabilities into the community. As Schleien et al. (1990, p.51) states, "the community belongs to everyone and everyone belongs to the community. Integrated recreation can be an ideal vehicle for promoting this attitude". Therefore, not only do the integrated programs assist with enhancing the quality of life for a person with disabilities, but it also assist with changing negative attitudes of people without disabilities towards individuals with disabilities.

Individuals with disabilities need to be given opportunities to be involved in their community. Lutfiyya (1991) who works at the Center for Human Policy in Syracuse discusses how Tony who is cognitively challenged managed to create a life in for himself without assistance from the usual community based assistance groups. Tony had spent a great deal of his life in institutions. However, when given the opportunity he was able to make a life for himself. The relationships that Tony has developed are different than what most individuals with disabilities usually have for friends. Friendships for people with disabilities usually include those people who care for them or those individuals who get paid to be with them. Tony's friends are genuine people who wanted to be with Tony and who Tony wanted to share time with as well.

Tony not only fostered friendships, but found a meaningful occupation. His occupation opened up many possibilities for himself. He had a social network in which he could take a stand for himself and the interests of himself and groups he belonged to. For instance Tony took a stand for peace and the

social justice movement (Lutfiyya, 1991). Tony was not only able to enhance his life, but also those individuals he came in contact with through his job.

The community integration which Tony was able to experience added to his quality of life. In addition, he was able to make people without disabilities aware that he had the abilities to live independently and self sufficiently and contribute to the community and society. Tony is an example of the type of contribution a person with disabilities can make when they are given the opportunity to transition into the community. Tony made many of the opportunities with minimal assistance from anyone else. There are people who unlike Tony, who do require some assistance with their transition into the community.

Krebs & Block (1992) discuss in their article the importance of the adapted physical educator in preparing students with disabilities for their transition into community recreation. The authors viewpoint on this topic is back up by Snell (1988) as cited in Krebs & Block (1992) who also regarded one of the purposes of education is to prepare all students with and without disabilities for adult life in the community. The article reviews how curriculums have changed from a traditional approach to a more functional chronologically age appropriate, community based approach (Krebs & Block, 1992).

The main purpose of the functional approach model for teaching children is to provide children with skills which will allow them to be independent as possible in four distinct areas (Krebs & Block, 1992). The life skills domains

which are considered essentially for a person to function as discussed in Krebs & Block (1992) article are: (a) vocational; (b) domestic; (c) community; and (d) recreation.

As stated in Krebs & Block (1992, p. 306) research, "the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) required services for students with disabilities to begin as early as age 14". Furthermore Public Law 101-476, 1990, the transition services should promote movement from school to post school activities (Krebs & Block, 1992). The post school activities include services such as post secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment, continuing education, adult services, independent living and community participation (Krebs & Block, 1992).

Most students gain skill in the first three domains of vocational, domestic, and community training. However, recreation services are often dropped (Krebs & Block, 1992). The main purpose of Krebs & Block (1992) article was to provide some suggestions on how a recreation educator can provide functional, community based, life skills that will promote successful transition of a person with disabilities in the community. There are two methods proposed, the life skills model and the role of the adapted physical educator in leisure education.

The life skills approach incorporates chronological age appropriate skills, functional skills, which include skills that assist with survival, physical the physical well being of an individual (Krebs & Block, 1992). It is important that children learn skills that can be applied to many physical areas and not just one game.

Through learning skills that can be applied to more than one activity, the child will learn rules and about the equipment that can be used. It is also important to teach children these skills through community based instruction in natural environments (Krebs & Block, 1992). This contributes to the students learning where they can go for recreation.

The adapted physical educator has some vital roles in the leisure education of students with disabilities. Some of the roles as identified by Kreb & Block (1992) are: (a) Identifying community based sport and fitness facilities; (b) work with community based facility staff; (c) conduct ecological inventories and discrepancy analyses; (d) determine the amount of support needed by each student; (e) determine who will provide the support; educate support personnel; (f) help write individual transitions programs; (g) Implement the community based leisure sport and fitness program; and (h) conduct ongoing summative evaluations. All of these roles the adaptive facilitator does will contribute to the transition of students in community based recreation.

Both of the models will assist in preparing students with disabilities for adult life. The life skills approach ensures that individuals with disabilities will acquire useful skills that will assist them to live an independent and meaningful life (Krebs & Block, 1992). Adaptive recreation is one means of assisting with the inclusion of students with disabilities.

There are many benefits to be gained through the transition of an individual into the community. Bedini, Bullock, and Driscoll (1993) conducted a

study to determine whether or not leisure education, when taught in public schools, contributed to an individual's transition into the community. Bedini et al. (1993) used both quantitative and qualitative methods of research. The subjects under study were selected from a small county in North Carolina. These subjects came from various racial, socio-economic, and geographic groups. Some subjects were from rural areas, while others were from urban surroundings. The students were in their last year of high school and were further classified as being trainable and educable mentally handicap (Bedini et al., 1993). Initially the study included 45 people and ended with 38.

The research instruments used in Bedini et al. (1993) study were the following: (a) a student survey, administered by project implementer (one - on - one interview); (b) a teacher questionnaire (sent); (c) parent questionnaire (mailed); and (d) a leisure inventory update which was administered by leisure education implementer via a one-on - one interview. The results for the experimental group indicated that the subjects developed an increased understanding of the benefits of leisure. The results from the pre-test compared to the post test indicate an increase in leisure awareness, perceived control and communication skills.

The results of both the quantitative and qualitative research in Bedini et al. (1993) study indicate that leisure education can contribute to the transition of the students from school to adult life. This finding is further supported by other research of the benefits of transition of people into the community by Cheseldine

and Seffree, 1981; Kregel, Wehman, Seyfarth and Marshall, 1986, as cited in Bedini et al. (1993).

Bedini et al. (1993) study suggests “leisure education curriculum applied in the public school system for students with mental retardation, has potential for increasing leisure wellness and thus contributing to successful transition from school to adult life” (p. 80). In addition to increasing the leisure education in classrooms, parents and teacher attitudes need to be addressed so that the children feel a sense of belonging and do not sense animosity towards themselves. Leisure education benefits children in becoming integrated into the community. Leisure education and recreation assist children in their transition into the community. It is essential that people with disabilities experience a sense of belonging within their community.

Hayden, Soulen, Schleien and Tabourne (1996) conducted a comparative study on the recreation integration of adults with mental retardation who moved from institutions to community residences with their counterparts who remained at the institution. There were 56 movers that moved into the community compared to 134 stayers that remained in institutions. The numbers of men and women in the study was even. The ages ranged from 20 years of age to 80 years. Furthermore, the population was comprised mostly of Caucasian individuals. The study found that both movers and stayers engaged in sedentary activities and that their recreational friends usually were other individuals with disabilities or staff members (Hayden et al., 1996). It is important for people with

disabilities to increase their repertoire of leisure activities as well as the groups of people they interact with during recreation.

Many studies have indicated, as cited in Hayden et al. (1996) that persons with disabilities can become personally independent and a part of a the community life in leisure area, (Hayden et al. 1992; Schleien, Meyer, Heyne, and Brandt, 1995;) and recreation adventures and use community resources (Lakin, Burwell, Hayden and Jackson, 1992; McAvoy, Schatz, Stutz, Schleien, and Lais, 1992) The subjects in this study both lived within 5 miles of the recreation centers (Hayden et al. 1996). The community recreation centers where both groups of individuals could recreate were churches, community education facilities and libraries. Usually, the subjects relied on the institution for transportation.

The subjects who were selected lived in state operated facilities for the mentally retarded (Hayden et al. 1996). Most of the movers lived in non state dwellings, while others moved into state operated homes. There was approximately the same number of males to females in the study, whose ages ranged from 20 to 80 years of age (Hayden et al., 1996). The subjects primary diagnosis as stated by Hayden et al. (1996) was brain or neurological damage, while the secondary diagnosis was Mental Retardation.

The instruments used in Hayden et al. (1996) study were: (a) inventory for client and agency planning; (b) residential services and support survey (interview); and (c) data coding and entry code books. The instruments were

administered by trained staff. Reliability was ensured by interviewing staff members who were familiar with the patients for the last 3 months (Hayden, et al., 1996).

The results of the study indicate those individuals who remained in institutions relied on staff who provided recreation opportunities, more than those individuals who moved out into the community (Hayden et al., 1996). Regardless of their level of Mental retardation, as stated by Hayden et al. (1996), the movers became more involved in community recreation. The movers became more independent and self sufficient and learned not to rely on staff members from the institution.

In order for deinstitutionalization to continue and promote the transition of persons into the community, one should consider some plans that would continue this progression forward as cited by Hayden et al. (1996, p. 61) by Mangan et al. (1994):

(a) significant advances in access to and application of behavior management technology, (b) the removal of barriers that hinder full community participation, (c) the implementation of new strategies and curriculum to develop a repertoire of functional social skills, and (d) the development of strategies and assurances that enable the system to become more responsive to the needs of people with more severe intellectual disabilities.

In addition, Schleien & Ray (1988) as cited in Hayden et al. (1996) have indicated that it would be an asset to employ as Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) to work with both recreation agencies and staff in the community. This would ensure that individuals were indeed being provided with

the opportunity to transition into their community and improve their quality of life as well as increase their independence.

Summary

As is evident through the literature review, people without disabilities need to change their attitudes towards individuals with disabilities. Many of the research papers reviewed, indicated that individuals with disabilities have faced restrictions as a result of these attitudes. Lutfiyya (1988) found that people with disabilities were often segregated from other individuals in society. Governing bodies have tried to develop programs that will assist with the inclusion and transition of people with disabilities into the community (Taylor, 1988).

Shoultz (1988) identifies that attitudes of people without disabilities is one of the largest barriers and that individuals without disabilities can assist individuals with disabilities in becoming a part of a community through leisure and social activities. Attitudes as one of the main barriers affecting people with disabilities was the most consistent finding across much of the research.

One of the concepts that was missing in the articles was the process on how to develop a program that would work in assisting individuals with transition into the community. Furthermore, the programs that did exist were studied over a brief period of time and would benefit from a longitudinal study. Another finding was the research which was done often studied only one type of disability

rather than multiple disabilities. In a community setting it would be rare to find only one type of disability but rather multiple types.

The implications of this study are two fold. First, individuals with disabilities are not entirely accepted in a community. Second, people without disabilities need to be educated about the potential of individuals with disabilities. However, through inclusive programs, individuals with special needs can be educated on how to become a part of a community. While these individuals are being included in programs, they will be enhancing the public's knowledge of how capable they are in performing particular tasks. The inclusion process will assist in elevating stereotypes or at least reducing the outdated attitudes towards people with disabilities.

Inclusion into a community through recreation programs, will further assist a young adult with transition into the community. The transition should be less complicated than it might have been had the young adult not participated in inclusive recreation programs. It is imperative that individuals with special needs are given the quality of life to which they are entitled. As the literature review supports this concept, transition into the community can be less complicated through inclusive recreation programs which help foster an increase in the quality of life and assist in changing people's attitudes without disabilities to realize individuals with special needs capabilities. This can begin by including all people into the community regardless of their ability or disability.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine if an inclusive program, which uses therapeutic recreation, can positively facilitate the transition of a young adult with disabilities from being dependent on after school programs to independent community leisure involvement. This chapter describes the selection of the subject, rationale for the study, the procedures, and data analysis.

Selection of Subjects

The subject was selected from the Fort Sanders school. The subject participated in the Therapeutic Recreation and Community Transition (TRACT), grant study. The participant was involved in the study from October 1994 to March 1995 (6 months), in which the subject participated in weekly activities with the grant staff. The subject was given consent from his parents to participate in the program (Appendix A). The documentation states the procedures for community based instruction and participation in recreation and leisure activities.

Rationale

This study was a qualitative single subject case study. The qualitative design was best suited for this particular study as it permitted an analysis of

subjective information that was gathered about the individual. Furthermore, the single subject design was employed as it allowed the investigator to document changes over a six month time period. The evaluative information on the subject was subjective.

Procedures

The data for this study were collected from October 1994 through March 1995 by the three grant staff members who worked with the subject in the TRACT program. Initially, interviews and assessments were conducted in order to obtain background information on the subject. The two assessments used were: (a) The Open Doors Recreation Project Leisure Interest Inventory, and (b) The State Technical Institute's Leisure Assessment Process. Further information on the subject was obtained using 6 other methods. The other instruments used were: (a) TRACT Grant Individualized Transition Plan (Appendix B); which described the student's strength's, areas of need, best options and desired outcomes, the action plan, leisure and recreation goals, community independence goals and domestic goals; (b) Recreation Program Analysis form (Appendix C); which described the goals and objectives for the program or activity, what happened when the staff worked with the individual, the staff's visions for the inclusion of the individual and the routines for programs and activities; (c) Parent Contact Form (Appendix D), which described the discussion with the parents and how long the parents and staff member talked, the action

plans for upcoming outings and which staff will be attending; (d) Observation Notes (Appendix E) which explained the observed behaviors and interpretations; (e) Progress Report Notes (Appendix F) listed the program, the goals for the program and observation notes made about the client during the activity; and (f) Report on Individual Participation (Appendix G) which permitted an evaluation on how much the client enjoyed the activity and the methods used to adapt the activity or equipment. These 6 instruments were used in the data analysis.

Data Analysis

For the purpose of this study the following data analyzes were used to answer the study's research questions:

Research Question #1- Will a young adult develop the appropriate social interaction skills in order to engage themselves as a community member?

A content analysis of the forms assisted in determining the answers to this question. The TRACT Individualized Transition Plan, Recreation Program Analysis, Observation Notes, Progress Notes and the Report on Individual Participation were used to gather the necessary data.

Research Question # 2- Does the young adult's disposition become more positive through participating in such a program and will inappropriate behavior decrease in the TRACT program?

An analysis of information gathered from all of the forms was conducted. A tally of both positive and negative comments about the young adults's

disposition was determined in order to assess whether the disposition had become more positive over the course of 6 months. In addition, a tally of both the amount of negative comments and positive comments made by the grant staff over the course of the six months assisted in determining if inappropriate behavior did diminish. This is visually documented on a bar graph showing the results from the beginning of the term to the end of the term. All of the forms were used to determine this answer with the exception of Parent Consent.

Research Question #3- Does the TRACT program provide community involvement?

A content analysis on the information gathered on all of the forms was made except the Parent Consent form. The investigator was made aware of all the community activities the subject was involved in through the TRACT program. A comparison of the subject's initial community involvement versus their present community participation was undertaken.

The qualitative and quantitative data developed by these methods constitute the results of the study.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine if an inclusive program, which uses therapeutic recreation, can positively facilitate the transition of a young adult with disabilities from being dependent on after school programs to independent community leisure involvement. The methodology allowed the

selection of the subject, the rational, procedure and data analysis to be determined in order to answer the research questions. The research questions were answered based on the various procedures which were used to collect the relevant data. Each research question was analyzed through either content analysis or a tally method. Through the methodology one was able to determine whether the programs did prepare a young adult for independent community leisure involvement.

Chapter 4

Analysis of Data

Introduction

The overall purpose of this study was to determine if an inclusive program, which uses therapeutic recreation, can positively facilitate the transition of a young adult with disabilities from being dependent on after school programs to independent community leisure involvement. The subjective information for this study was collected from October 1994 through March 1995. A comparison of subjective positive and negative comments was calculated for the 6 month period that the subject participated in the TRACT (Therapeutic Recreation and Community Transition) program. The data were collected by the three grant staff members who worked with the subject in the TRACT program.

Initially, interviews and assessments were conducted in order to obtain background information on the subject. The two initial assessments used were: (a) The Open Doors Recreation Project Leisure Interest Inventory, and (b) The State Technical Institute's Leisure Assessment Process. Further information on the subject was obtained using 6 other forms. These were: (a) TRACT Grant Individualized Transition Plan; (b) Recreation Program Analysis Form; (c) Parent Contact Form; (d) Observation Notes; (e) Progress Report Notes; and (f) Report on Individual Participation.

These 6 instruments were useful in the data analysis. The quantitative information was analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentages and ratios. A content analysis was used on all qualitative information.

Selection of Subject

The subject was a male selected from the Fort Sander's school. He was 22 years of age when he participated in the program. He had spent most of his life, from the time of birth to the time of the study in and out of the hospital. The subject was born with Aortic Sentosis and required many different operations in order to correct the disability. Since, the subject had spent little time with peers of his own age, and his schooling had been interrupted because of operations, he was placed in the Fort Sanders school. The subject was selected to participate in the TRACT program in order to experience inclusion in the community and to acquire skills for independent community leisure involvement.

Results

Based on the results of this investigation by the TRACT staff and case manager, the following questions were answered:

Research Question #1- Will a young adult develop the appropriate interaction skills in order to engage themselves as a community member?

A content analysis was done in order to determine the answers to this question. The TRACT Individualized Transition Plan, Recreation Program

Analysis, Observation Notes, Progress Notes and the Report on Individual Participation were used to gather the necessary data. Once the data were gathered, the information was analyzed and organized into a positive and negative comments sections. Based on the content analysis, 4 main content areas were determined for both the positive and negative comments. The tally of both positive and negative comments within each of the content areas was determined in order to assess any improvements or lack of improvements over the 6 months (Table 1).

Table 1: Positive and Negative Comments

	Content Areas	Fall 1994	Spring 1995
Positive Comments	Social Skills	4	1
	Conversational Skills	22	4
	Initiative	16	15
	Responsibility	1	0
Negative Comments	Social Skills	4	1
	Conversational Skills	14	1
	Initiative	2	1
	Responsibility	2	0

The four main content areas identified to organize the data for analysis were: (a) Social Skills; (b) Conversational skills; (c) Initiative; and (d) Responsibility. Within the social skills data, comments made about the client, such as, "Client thanked facilitators for the evening", and "showed enthusiasm"

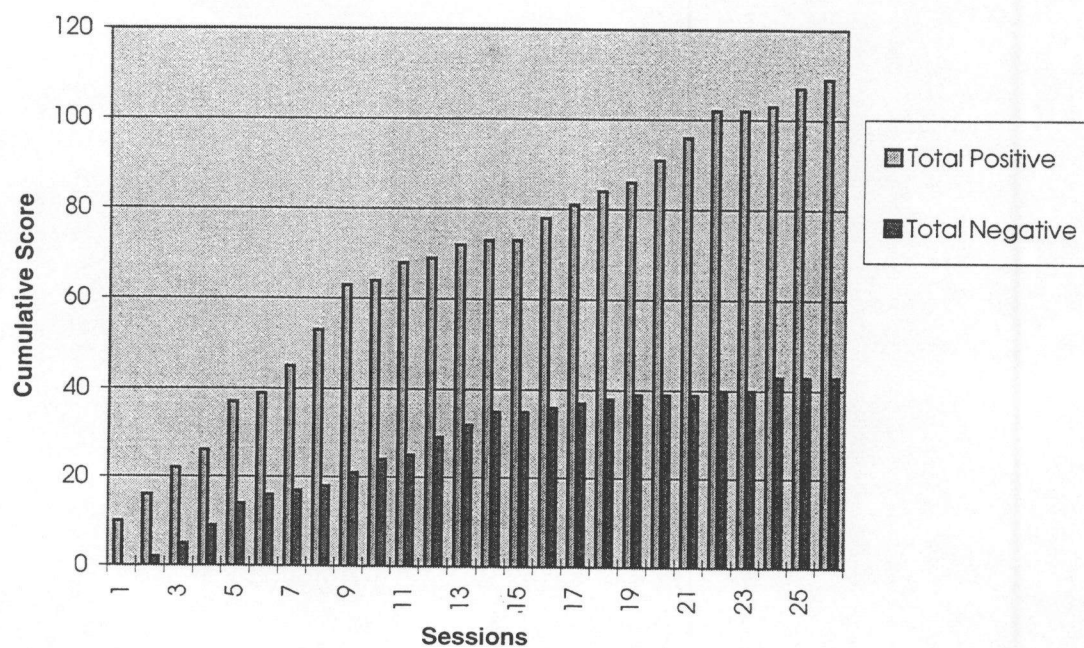
were used to determine the data for this section. Conversational skills comments included statements such as, “controlled volume of voice”, “initiated conversation” and “nodded when listening to the conversation.” Initiative skills were determined by comments in which the client expressed their needs and desires. Finally, responsibility was demonstrated through the comment, “client took appropriate actions/responsibility for leaving school or finding out information.”

The results of the research indicate that the subject had more positive comments made towards them over the entire six months compared to negative comments. In the social skills area the subject had the same number of positive and negative comments made towards them in the Fall. Conversational skills had more positive comments than negative comments during both semesters. Demonstrating initiative was a task that was noted highly in the positive domain for the subject in both the Fall and Spring. The ratio for the Fall was 16 positive comments to 2 negative and in the Spring it was 15 to 1 negative. Finally, the subject had 2 negative to 1 positive comments made towards them during the Fall regarding responsibility. In the Spring, no positive or negative comments about the subject’s responsibility were noted.

Research Question #2- Does the young adult’s disposition become more positive through participating in such a program and inappropriate behavior decrease in the TRACT program?

An analysis of information gathered from all of the forms was conducted. A tally of both positive and negative comments about the young adult's disposition was determined in order to assess whether the disposition had become more positive over the course of 6 months. In addition, a tally of both the amount of negative comments and positive comments made by the grant staff over the course of the six months did assist in determining if inappropriate behavior diminished. This is visually documented on the bar graph showing the results from the beginning of the term to the end of the term (Table 2). All of the forms were used to determine the results with the exception of the Parent Consent Form.

Table 2: Cumulative Positive and Negative Comments



The results of the research indicate that from the onset of the study, there were more positive comments documented than negative comments. The subject participated in 24 sessions with TRACT. During only 4 sessions were there more negative than positive comments made about the subject. There were also 4 sessions where no negative comments were recorded. Over the 6 months of research, the total number of subjective comments decreased during each quarter of the study. The highest number of comments were obtained in the first quarter of the study (N=52). The lowest occurred in the fourth quarter (N=22). The cumulative number of negative comments leveled off in the fourth quarter while the positive comments continued to increase.

A ratio of positive to negative comments was calculated for each of the four quarters of the study. The data, in Table 3, identified a ratio of 2 positive comments to 1 negative comment in the first quarter (N=2.06). By the end of the fourth quarter, this positive to negative ratio had increased to 4.5 to 1 (Table 3).

Table 3: Ratio of Positive to Negative Subjective Comments

Quarters	Positive Comments	Negative Comments	Ratio
First	35	17	2.06
Second	27	15	1.80
Third	24	7	3.43
Fourth	18	4	4.50

Research Question #3- Does the TRACT program provide community involvement?

A content analysis of community involvement prior to the TRACT program and during the program was done in order to determine the answers to this

question. A comparison was made of the clients initial community involvement before the TRACT program versus their community participation during the TRACT program. The Leisure Assessment Summary was used to determine the types of activities the client had been involved prior to the program.

Table 4: Leisure Involvement

Activities	Pre TRACT Involvement	During TRACT Program
Passive	*	*
Community		*
Social		*

The community involvement of the subject before the TRACT program was minimal. It was noted that the subject had usually engaged in leisure alone. The evenings were the primary time the subject engaged in leisure. The subject usually spent a great deal of time watching television. Other leisure interests were bowling, singing, cards, day trips to historical and cultural sites and going to church, however only television viewing was identified as being engaged in on a regular basis.

During the TRACT program which lasted for 6 months, the subject participated in such activities as a Halloween Party at the church, a Concert at the local arena, attending church and the dinner afterwards, volunteering at the Knoxville Museum of Art, searching for items at the library, attending a conference, shopping, going out for dinner/coffee, and attending plays to name a few items.

The subject expressed interest in eventually taking art classes and attending a college or university for computer graphics. However, the subject had stated that there were some barriers to participating in such activities, such as, transportation, no one else with whom to participate in the activities, and lack of knowledge about activities that were available to persons with disabilities.

In summary this study found that the client made improvements in improving their leisure repertoire. It is unclear if the improvements were maintained after the program. Therefore, a follow up study would have been beneficial in determining how much the client benefited from the program.

Chapter 5

Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to determine if an inclusive program, which uses therapeutic recreation, can positively facilitate the transition of a young adult with disabilities from being dependent on after school programs to independent community leisure involvement. To achieve this purpose, subjective information for this study was collected from October 1994 through March 1995. A comparison of subjective positive and negative comments was collected for the 6 month period that the client participated in the TRACT (Therapeutic Recreation and Community Transition) program.

To gather data, the client, from Fort Sanders School, participated in the TRACT program from October 1994 to March 1995. The data received were collected by the three grant staff members who worked with the subject in the TRACT program. Initially, interviews and assessments were conducted in order to obtain background information. To accomplish the purpose of this study, research questions were formulated. Together the research questions determined if therapeutic recreation positively facilitated transition.

Summary and Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study are reported in separate sections which coincide with the research in Chapter IV.

Research Question #1- Will a young adult develop the appropriate interaction skills in order to engage themselves as a community member?

The results of the study indicate that a person with disabilities who participates in an inclusive therapeutic recreation program can develop the appropriate interaction skills in order to engage themselves as a community member. During both the Fall and Spring sessions that the subject was involved in the TRACT program, there was a decrease in the total number of comments made towards the subject. In addition, there was also a profound decrease in the total number of negative comments made towards the subject. Specifically, 22 negative comments were made about the client in the Fall and in the Spring session 3 negative comments were made about the subject. This finding would indicate that the subject had indeed acquired appropriate interaction skills in order to become a community member.

While the total number of negative comments decreased. The total number of positive comments made towards the subject had also decreased almost in half. One possible reason that both the positive and negative comments could of decreased was as a result of the subject participating in role playing session with the TRACT grant staff during the last three months. Furthermore, the expectations of the grant staff may have diminished. The initial numbers may have been higher in order to develop an understanding of the subject. Therefore, fewer comments were being made about the subject.

Research Question #2- Does the young adult's disposition become more positive through participating in such a program and inappropriate behavior decrease in the TRACT program?

The results of the study indicate that an individual with a disability who participates in an inclusive therapeutic recreation programs can indeed learn to develop a more positive disposition and decrease inappropriate behavior. While the total number of subjective comments decreased over the course of the study, the ratio of positive to negative comments increased. This indicated that the individual exhibited a more appropriate disposition and demonstrated more appropriate behavioral skills. These skills will assist in fostering an environment in which the individual will be exposed to new people and recreational opportunities, thus enhancing inclusion.

Research Question #3- Does the TRACT program provide community involvement?

There was a significant difference in the Pre-TRACT activities in which the client participated as compared to the activities during the TRACT program. The client still maintained passive activities in their home, such as watching television. Through participating in the TRACT program the subject acquired more social skills which allowed him to increase his opportunities for community involvement. Before the TRACT program, the subject participated only in passive activities of which the primary activity was watching television.

However, during the TRACT program, the client was provided with the opportunities to become involved in the community and to interact with other people. In addition, the subject in the last half of the study practiced role playing. Role playing allowed the opportunity for the subject to acquire the appropriate skills to communicate some of his needs to people and to become more at ease in communicating requests to people. Therefore the results would indicate that one can become an active participant within a community through participating in therapeutic recreation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to determine if an inclusive program, which uses therapeutic recreation, can positively facilitate the transition of a young adult with disabilities from being dependent on after school programs to independent community leisure involvement. Based on the results of this study, therapeutic recreation does facilitate the positive transition of a young adult with disabilities from being dependent on after school programs to independent community leisure involvement. The research indicated that through participation in the TRACT program, the subject was able to develop appropriate interaction skills in order to engage themselves into the community. It was further indicated that the subject's disposition became more positive through participating in such a program and inappropriate behaviors decreased during the TRACT program. Finally, the TRACT program provided the opportunity for

community involvement and exposed the subject to many different opportunities and possibilities for future involvement. Without participating in the TRACT program, the subject may not have been exposed to all these experiences and would have limited his learning.

One of the limitations of the study, is that the data were gathered from subjective comments of the grant staff who were trying to identify positive behaviors in an individual. Another limitation was that the total number of comments decreased over the four quarters. This could be a result of the case manager and grant staff working with the subject had less knowledge of the individual at the beginning of the study. However, by the end of the program the case managers had more expectations of the student and still made fewer negative comments. A final limitation in the research, is the subject only participated in the program for 6 months and there was no follow up study to further indicate that the subject knew how to pursue independent leisure while functioning independently in the community.

The research was useful in that it identified that inclusive therapeutic community recreation programs can assist individuals with disabilities in acquiring social and recreational skills. These skills enhance their independent community leisure involvement. However, more research needs to be conducted in order to determine how beneficial this type of program can be to a multitude of disabilities. A follow up study would have been beneficial in determining if the subject continued their community leisure programs. Finally, a longitudinal study

would further benefit the researchers in determining if independent leisure functioning does continue after the program has ended.

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Appendices

Appendix A

**UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
TRACT GRANT**

**PROCEDURE FOR COMMUNITY - BASED
INSTRUCTION AND PARTICIPATION
IN RECREATION/LEISURE ACTIVITIES**

The University of Tennessee's TRACT Grant Staff recognizes the need for community-based instruction and participation for individuals with moderate and severe disabilities. These individuals learn better in natural environments where natural cues provide natural consequences. This commitment to community based instruction requires a different approach to teaching and certain assurances are listed below.

The TRACT Grant staff will:

1. Have a plan for emergencies that may occur during community instruction or participation. The plan will be carried with the staff person during community instruction and will be followed.
2. Use community based instruction as a means of teaching specific activities that are identified as goals between that parent/guardian and the TRACT Grant Case Manager.
3. Document community-based instruction using appropriate data collection procedures.
4. Have on file a current Permission for Community-Based Instruction and Participation in Recreation/Leisure Activities for each individual.
5. Follow a specifically designed schedule for community-based instruction which is agreed upon between the parent/guardian and Case Manager and documented.

Appendix B

STUDENT: _____

Family Planning Date: _____ Action Plan Completion Date: _____

I. Student's **strengths, gifts and abilities** as they pertain to independent living, recreation and leisure:

II. Student's **needs/targeted areas for remediation**:

III. Student's **best options and desired outcomes** for independent living and recreation/leisure involvement at home and in the community:

STUDENT: _____

IV. ACTION PLAN

- A. **Strategies for successful inclusion** into recreation/leisure programs/activities at home and in the community (Domestic and community independence should be addressed):

- B. Summary of **goals for independent living and recreation/leisure involvement** at home and in the community:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

STUDENT: _____

LEISURE/RECREATION

1. **GOAL:** _____

Objectives:

A. _____

Person Responsible: _____ Planned Completion Date _____

B. _____

Person Responsible: _____ Planned Completion Date _____

C. _____

Person Responsible: _____ Planned Completion Date _____

2. **GOAL:** _____

Objectives:

A. _____

Person Responsible: _____ Planned Completion Date _____

B. _____

Person Responsible: _____ Planned Completion Date _____

STUDENT: _____

C. _____

Person Responsible: _____ Planned Completion Date _____

3. **GOAL:** _____

Objectives:

A. _____

Person Responsible: _____ Planned Completion Date _____

B. _____

Person Responsible: _____ Planned Completion Date _____

C. _____

Person Responsible: _____ Planned Completion Date _____

4. **GOAL:** _____

Objectives:

A. _____

Person Responsible: _____ Planned Completion Date _____

B. _____

Person Responsible: _____ Planned Completion Date _____

STUDENT: _____

C. _____

Person Responsible: _____ Planned Completion Date _____

5. **GOAL:** _____

Objectives:

A. _____

Person Responsible: _____ Planned Completion Date _____

B. _____

Person Responsible: _____ Planned Completion Date _____

C. _____

Person Responsible: _____ Planned Completion Date _____

Community Independence

1. **GOAL:** _____

2. **GOAL:** _____

Domestic Independence

1. **GOAL:** _____

2. **GOAL:** _____

Appendix C

RECREATION PROGRAM ANALYSIS

TRACT Personnel_____ Date_____

Recreation Program_____

Recreation Personnel_____

This form is to be completed by the Case Manager and the Recreation Program Supervisor to provide an overall understanding of the program/activity and the staff involved in providing the opportunity.

What are the goals and objectives of the program/activity?

What experience has the staff had working with individuals with disabilities?

What is the staff's vision for the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in the program/activity?

Describe the routines of the program and/or activities:

Appendix D

PARENT CONTACT FORM

Student: _____ Date _____
Case Manager _____

Contact occurred by: phone meeting

Length of contact

Discussion Notes

Action Plans:	Person(s) responsible

Appendix E

OBSERVATION NOTES

WHAT DID YOU SEE?

Student _____

Date_____

Case Manager_____

TRACT Personnel_____

Recreation Program_____

[illegible]

Appendix F

PROGRESS REPORT NOTES

Student _____ Date _____

Case Manager _____

Program/Activity _____

Daily Goals:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Observation Notes

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Appendix G

REPORT ON INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION

Participant Name _____ Date _____

Case Manager _____ Activity/Program _____

TRACT Personnel _____

This form is to be completed by the recreation leader or TRACT Staff for the individual at the completion of the activity or program. It will be discussed with the program supervisor and placed in the participants folder as an aid to future programming.

1. The individual enjoyed the activity:

Very Much 5 4 3 2 1 Very Little

2. The activity contributed to the growth and development of the individual:

Very Much 5 4 3 2 1 Very Little

3. The activity was beneficial in accomplishing the objectives specifically determined for this individual:

Very Much 5 4 3 2 1 Very Little

4. The skill level of the activity was:

Too Advanced Appropriate Too Easy

5. Some of the methods used to adapt the activity or equipment were: _____

6. Some of the experiences within the activity the individual particularly liked were:

VITA

Sharon Cunningham was born in Scarborough, Ontario, Canada on July 3, 1969. She attended schools in the Town of Markham public school system, where she graduated from Markham District High School in June 1988. She then entered Queen's University at Kingston, Ontario, Canada during September 1988 where in May, 1992 she received a Bachelor of Arts, Honors with a concentration in Communications. After working several years in Toronto she went to Dalhousie University at Halifax, Nova Scotia to begin her education in Therapeutic Recreation. In January, 1996 she entered a Master's Program in Recreation and Leisure studies with a concentration in Therapeutic Recreation at The University of Tennessee. She completed her degree in August, 1997 after an internship at Vanderbilt Stallworth Rehabilitation Hospital in Nashville, Tennessee.