

American Camp Association
Camp Research
Forum Book of
Abstracts

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Dear Colleagues:

This book includes 33 abstracts that will be presented at the 2020 American Camp Association (ACA) Research Forum to be held during the ACA annual conference in San Diego, CA from February 11-14, 2020. Twenty-six of these abstracts have been grouped into logical areas and will be verbally presented in four sessions. All abstracts will be on display as posters.

The Research Forum has grown in quantity and quality over the past decade. ACA's Committee for the Advancement of Research and Evaluation (CARE) has been instrumental in pushing this forum forward. Staff at ACA have been enthusiastically supportive including Amy Katzenberger and Melany Irvin. Melissa D'Eloia and Benjamin Hickerson provided peer-reviewed external evaluations for the selection of these abstracts.

We look forward to presenting these papers at the 2020 Research Forum, but also recognize that many people cannot attend the annual meeting. We hope these short abstracts will provide information for those not able to attend. Please contact the authors if you have further questions.

Best wishes,



Ann Gillard, Ph.D.
2020 ACA Research Forum Coordinator

The proper way to cite these abstracts using APA 7th edition is:

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SUPPORTING THE EMOTION WORK OF CAMP COUNSELLORS

Mandi Baker, Torrens University Australia

Contact: Mandi Baker, 1 Chambers Road, Leura, NSW 2780. [mandi.baker\(at\)laureate.edu.au](mailto:mandi.baker(at)laureate.edu.au)

Camp counsellors' employment experiences are full of emotional highs and lows; the thrill of connecting with campers to the fatigue of long hours and physical activity. Camp counsellors must navigate relationships with camps, peers, managers and, even, parents who are not on site. Their navigation of these relationships is complex. While there have been many studies that explore the benefits of camper experiences and, to a lesser degree, of camp counsellors, very few have explored the complexities of camp counsellor experiences in regard to the emotional demands that are placed on them. This abstract considers the emotional components of their work and offers insights to how, by understanding their experiences differently, camp managers may be able to support their staff better.

Literature Review

A number of studies explore the benefits of camp counsellor experiences (see 2018 special issue of *Journal of Youth Development* on camp research vol 13, no 1-2). Discourses of character building (Bird & Subramaniam, 2018), entrepreneurial selves (Duerden, Garst & Bialeschki, 2014; Johnson, Goldman, Garey, Britner & Waever, 2011) and citizenship (DeGraaf & Glover, 2003) thread through camp counsellor research. For example, Bialeschki, Henderson and Dahowski (1998) found that positive outcomes of camp employment included making friends, learning about diversity, teamwork skills, and personal growth. However, participants raised concerns about the lack of pay and personal time (Bialeschki et al., 1998). They felt that they deserved higher wages and more privacy in light of the level of responsibility and intensity of effort that was demanded of their roles (Bialeschki et al., 1998). Bialeschki et al. commented, "part of the concern also related to being acknowledged for the hard work done" (1998, p. 29). This study suggests that the efforts required in delivering promised camper experiences can be invisible or go unrecognised. While the benefits are clear, there is a need to better understand the experiences and the effects on the wellbeing of camp counsellors.

Emotion work, previously known as emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983), has been widely recognised as central to professions where personal interactions and/or care is delivered. Emotion work relies on the management of one's own and others' feelings in order to publicly display particular emotions in the service of promised or expected participant experiences. This exchange is commodified and holds economic value (Hochschild, 1983). Unfortunately, emotion work is often invisible and therefore is often taken for granted by workplaces and employers (Hillman, 2006). Poor management of employee emotion work can have serious consequences for business. This can include difficulty recruiting capable employees, retention, and mental and physical health effects on employees (Van Dijk & Brown, 2006). There is a small collection of literature that considers the effects of emotion work on employees in the outdoor education field. These have largely considered causes of burnout (Edwards & Gray, 1998), workplace stress (Thomas, 2002) and additional demands of particular population groups (Ko, Lunsky, Hensel & Dewa, 2012). There is very little research that explores the experiences of camp counsellors in navigating the complex relations of their roles and the effects this has on their emotional wellbeing. This research aims to improve understanding of camp counsellors' emotion work.

Methods

This abstract draws on a qualitative study of 38 in-depth interviews with camp counsellors from Ontario, Canada. Purposive sampling was employed to choose participants that

represented diversity in demographic characteristics such as gender, age, and level of education. Dimensional sampling was used to choose a variety of interview participants on two dimensions; the amount of time a participant had spent at camp (0-10+ summers as a camper and 1-10+ summers/years as a staff) and how proximal participants were in time to their last camp employment experiences (current to 10+ years since involvement). Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured guide, transcribed and coded to identify emerging themes: initially manually then using NVivo software. Thematic analysis was conducted (Charmaz, 2006) and four themes were identified in relation to camp counsellors' emotion work.

Results

The four themes that emerged in regard to camp counsellors' experiences of emotion work are; 1) the embodiment and performance of happiness, 2) the lack of time and space to process and recover from emotion work, 3) the tension of authentic and obligated camper care and 4) the emotional demands of living in community.

“It’s not all sunshine and lollipops” (David): The happiness bubble

Happiness appears to be a requisite for camp counsellor embodiment; however, the work expectations of camp employment means that camp counsellors do not experience it at all times. In fact, one participant suggested that the “happy bubble” that “people” talk about is, in “reality,” “a fragile bubble, and it can burst so easily.” David’s statement (above) reinforces the fact that working at camp isn’t what it is expected to be; camp employment is NOT going to be 24-hour fun. This theme explores the expectations of ‘happiness’ for camp counsellors’ performance. It explores the pressures this creates and the challenges of maintaining a ‘happiness’ culture in the face of limited rest and privacy.

“Personal time is overrated” (Sophie): No time for emotional recovery or processing

There is very little time for camp counsellors to get personal and/or private time at camp. Typical rest times include an hour each day and a day each week to attend to rest, laundry, and social commitments outside of camp. Often these times were interrupted, consumed by alternative camp tasks and covering for other staff. Sophie’s statement (above) suggests that, rather than being provided adequate time for rest, recovery and self-care, camp counsellors are expected to subsume their own needs to the needs of campers and the delivery of camp outcomes.

“You are going to care about these kids” (Zoey)

Zoey’s comment demonstrates the priority for camp counsellors to care for campers and that this is assumed to come naturally, or automatically, from *being* a camp counsellor. Camp counsellor care is also assumed to be fun, kind and beneficial for moral development. Hence, Zoey suggested that camper care will “just happen.” Zoey’s statement can also be interpreted that there is a sense of obligation to care for the campers. Zoey’s comment demonstrates the priority of a camp counsellors’ emotion work as well as the tension that care creates for young employees who are expected to feel an emotional connection with and for all children in their “care.”

“Everything is more intense” (Beth): The social pressure of camp community

This theme explores the intensity and challenges of social relationships among camp staff. Much like the expectations of camp counsellors to display and embody happiness and kindness with their campers at all times, camp counsellors feel a sense of pressure in maintaining relationships with other staff. With limited opportunities to rest or break from expected emotional displays, camp community can become a “social pressure cooker” (Beth). In camp communities, this means that grievances and gossip can be reinforced rather than relieved.

Implications

By recognising the unique demands of camp counsellor employment, employers and industry leaders are obliged to reconsider employment practices. For example, how can camp counsellors be rostered to ensure they gain sufficient mental and emotional rest? Or, how can staff manuals be written in ways that help emotional processing? Practical solutions can be small, inexpensive and creative or can take on a whole new way of thinking. In this presentation strategies will be discussed about how to develop context specific solutions that recognise and support the emotion work of camp counsellors.

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Supporting the emotion work of camp counsellors

Mandi Baker, PhD, Torrens University Australia

Camp counsellors' employment experiences are full of emotional highs and lows; the thrill of connecting with campers to the fatigue of long hours and physical activity. Camp counsellors must navigate complex relationships in the fulfilment

of their roles and this places emotional demands on them. This study considers the emotion work that camp counsellors do and the effect this has on their well-being. It offers insights to how camp managers can support their staff better.

**Thematic analysis
of 38
In-Depth Interviews
with camp counsellors**

Four themes emerged in regard to camp counsellors' experiences of emotion work:



The Happiness Bubble

"It's not all sunshine and lollipops" (David)

There is an expectation that camp counsellors will embody and/or perform "happiness" in all interactions with campers. This is seen to be essential in ensuring that camp culture remains positive. This is not always possible and creates atenuous pressures for staff. One participant suggested that the "happy bubble" that "people" talk about is, in "reality," "a fragile bubble, and it can burst so easily."

No time for emotional recovery or processing

"Personal time is overrated" (Sophie)

There is very little private time at camp. Consequently, camp counsellors have very little time to process, rest and recover from the emotional demands of their roles. Camp counsellors often downgrade personal needs and self-care in order to manage the expectations for and limitations created by the role.



The social pressure of camp community

"Everything is more intense" (Beth)

This theme explores the intensity and challenges of social relationships among camp staff. With limited opportunities to rest or break from expected emotional displays, camp community can become a "social pressure cooker" (Beth). In camp communities, this means that grievances and gossip can be reinforced rather than relieved.

Expectations of genuine (but obligated) care

"You are going to care about these kids" (Zoey)

There is an assumption that camp counsellors are going to automatically care for campers; that it will "just happen." This isn't always the case. Camp counsellors are faced with the challenges of obligated but, also, genuine care for campers.



By recognising the unique demands of camp counsellor employment, employers and industry leaders are obliged to reconsider employment practices. For example, how can camp counsellors be rostered to ensure they gain sufficient mental and emotional rest? Or, how can staff manuals be written in

ways that help emotional processing? Practical solutions can be small, inexpensive and creative or can take on a whole new way of thinking. Regardless of approach, strategies should be context specific and responsive to the uniqueness of their service, resources and staff.

Mandi Baker, PhD
Torrens University Australia
Town Hall Campus, Sydney
mandi.baker@torrens.edu.au

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THE ROLE OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE CAMPS: A LOOK INTO THE SEVEN GENERATIONS AFRICAN HERITAGE CAMP

Aishia A. Brown, PhD, University of Louisville; Alice Story, MPH, University of Louisville;
Stacy Bailey-Ndiaye & Jerald Smith, Bridge Kids International
Contact: Aishia A. Brown, University of Louisville, 485 East Gray Street, Louisville, KY 40202.
aishia.brown(at)louisville.edu

The current social and political climate in the US is impacting researchers and practitioners of youth development in a multitude of ways. This is due to the fact that we are now living in a time where youth are placing their voices at the center of social and political issues like police brutality, gun control, climate change, and immigration (A Vision for Black Lives, n.d.; A Peace Plan for a Safer America, n.d.; Sunrise Movement, n.d.; United We Dream, n.d.) With our current education system having to focus heavily on standardized test achievement, out-of-school time (OST) providers, such as youth summer camps, have the potential to play a vital role in the development of their social and political awareness (Brown, Outley, & Pinckney, 2018). Camps have an important opportunity to work with youth and their families to address the oppressive forces that make it difficult to have a positive transition into adulthood. With this being said, it is important that youth-serving organizations, like camps, work diligently to address the developmental needs of youth existing at the margins of our country. The purpose of this study was to explore the programmatic impacts a culturally responsive three-week summer day camp had on camp participants and their parents/guardians. The objective of this study was to understand how summer camp program activities influenced the cultural identity development, civic engagement development, and sense of belonging of camp participants.

Theoretical Foundations

A number of youth summer camps all over the globe are making attempts to provide OST experiences focused on meeting developmental outcomes related to positive youth development (PYD). While PYD is the most popular approach in youth development settings, it is important to recognize that certain youth populations may need different models and possibly different frameworks altogether to have a positive development into adulthood. According to Ginwright and Cammarota (2002), current youth development models "...obscure our understanding of urban youth of color more than they explain, because they assume that youth themselves should be changed, rather than the oppressive environments in which they live" (p. 85). The social justice youth development (SJYD) framework moves away from the PYD approach to youth development by focusing on cultivating programs and changing policies that address the oppressive conditions youth of color and their communities experience. SJYD requires exploring youth development at both the micro and macro level by examining the role the social environment plays in the lives of youth experiencing marginalization. SJYD also places a focus on addressing systemic issues (e.g., racism, sexism, xenophobia, etc.) that effect the development of all youth (Outley, Brown, Gabriel, & Sullins, 2018). Through this framework, healing from oppression is promoted through racial and cultural identity development, civic engagement education opportunities, and building a strong sense of community for youth experiencing marginalization. This presentation will provide results from a study conducted on an African heritage centered summer camp that integrated SJYD approaches into their program activities. The Seven Generations African Heritage (SGAHC) camp is a 3-week summer day camp program developed by Bridge Kids International to promote positive sense of self, with a focus on African heritage identity, and a deep sense of connection to Africa and the African Diaspora

among African heritage children, youth, and their families in Louisville, KY. The goal of the program is to engage children, youth, and their families in activities to build intercultural relationships by cultivating a space that promotes civic engagement, storytelling, art, and STEM.

Methods

An empirical study was conducted to assess the programmatic impacts of the SGAHC. Non-probability convenience sampling was employed for this study and the inclusion criteria consisted of anyone who identified as a SGAHC parent/guardian or youth participant. Participation in the study was voluntary and anyone who did not participate in the study did not lose any benefits to participating in the SGAHC. Researchers worked closely with camp staff leaders to design a survey that assessed program outcomes and key components of the SJYD framework. The survey also included open-ended questions to describe the impacts of the camp on its participants. Surveys were designed for camp parents/guardians and youth participants. The youth participant survey assessed the impact the program had on cultural identity development (Phinney, 1992) and civic engagement (Furco, Muller, & Ammon, 1998). The parents/guardians survey assessed for sense of belonging toward the camp (Anderson-Butcher & Conroy, 2002). Surveys were administered during the final week of the program in summer 2019 by research staff. This study was approved by the University of Louisville Institutional Review Board. Quantitative survey data was entered into SPSS. Frequencies and descriptive statistics were used to assess the impacts the program had on African heritage identity development, civic engagement development, and sense of belonging toward the camp. In vivo coding was used to analyze the qualitative data and themes were generated from the in vivo codes.

Results

Thirty-eight study participants ($N = 38$), including camp participants ($n = 25$) and parents/guardians ($n = 13$) completed the survey. Camp participants were all between the age of 6 and 13 years old. This study assessed cultural identity development by exploring camp participant's motivations to seek out new information about and feel a strong attachment toward their African heritage identity. On average, majority of camp participants (88.2%, $M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.68$) reported that they had spent time trying to find out more about their African heritage identity, such as its history, traditions, and customs as a result of participating in the SGAHC. In addition, the majority of camp participants (87.5%, $M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.10$) reported that they felt a strong attachment toward their African heritage identity as a result of participating in the SGAHC. This study explored civic engagement by assessing camp participants' attention to events that affect their community and efficacy toward making a difference in their community. On average, a little more than half (76.5%, $M = 2.87$, $SD = 0.96$) of camp participants reported paying attention to events that affect their community as a result of participating in the SGAHC. The majority of camp participants (94.1%, $M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.81$) felt they could make a difference in their community as a result of participating in the SGAHC. This study assessed if camp parents/guardians felt a sense of belonging toward the camp based on their report of comfortability with the camp and feelings of support and acceptance. Results showed that the majority of parents/guardians (92.3%, $M = 3.75$, $SD = 0.62$) felt comfortable with their child or children attending the camp and nearly every parent/guardian that completed the survey reported feeling supported (92.3%, $M = 3.67$, $SD = 0.65$) and accepted (100%, $M = 3.75$, $SD = 0.45$) at camp.

Themes that emerged from the qualitative open-ended responses from camp participants showed that they gained new knowledge about African history, culture, music, and languages. Parents/guardians reported on the community engagement that took place during the camp.

Parents also reported on the changes they had seen in their child since they participated in the camp. One parent wrote, “My daughter's confidence has grown from attending 7 Generations. She is proud of her heritage and understands and values what it means to be black and Ethiopian.”

In conclusion, the results of this study shed light on the influence culturally responsive camps for youth from Africa and the African Diaspora have on their African heritage identity development, civic engagement, and parental/guardianship sense of belonging toward the camp. While many youth reported a positive attitude toward their African heritage identity as a result of participation, some youth were not paying attention to events that affected their community. However, majority of youth felt they could make a difference in their community. This may indicate that culturally responsive camps that adopt SJYD approaches could be lacking in their ability to encourage civic engagement by building awareness about current events as oppose to solely focusing on historical events.

Implications

Culture, community, and sense of belonging are considered important components of culturally responsive youth development programs (Outley, et al., 2018). Based on the results of this study, camp practitioners should begin to find innovative ways to incorporate components of SJYD into their day-to-day camp activities. This includes activities surrounding racial/ethnic and cultural identity development, civic engagement, with a focus on both current and historical events, and building a sense of belonging toward the camp. Camp practitioners should also use SJYD as a tool to promote dialogue with youth participants about issues surrounding social injustice happening in the U.S. and globally.

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The Role of Culturally-Responsive Camps: A Look into the Seven Generations African Heritage Camp

Aishia A. Brown, Ph.D.¹, Alice Story, MPH¹, Tanisha Howard, MPH¹, Stacy Bailey-Ndiaye, M.Ed.², Jerald Smith²
University of Louisville, Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences¹; Bridge Kids International²

Social Justice Youth Development

Requires exploring youth development at both the micro and macro level by examining the role the social environment plays in the lives of youth experiencing marginalization

Research Question

To what extent does a culturally-responsive summer camp influence the African heritage identity and civic responsibility development of African heritage youth attendees?

Key Findings

- 100% of youth felt good about their African heritage
- 87.5% of youth felt a strong attachment and had a lot of pride in their African heritage as a result of participating in the camp
- 62.5% of youth reported participating in African heritage cultural practices
- 88% of youth knew what they could do to make their community a better
- 100% of parents/guardians noticed a positive change in their child
- 83% of parents/guardians felt more comfortable talking to their child about their African heritage

Action Steps for Camp Professionals

- Utilize SJYD as a tool to promote dialogue with youth participants about issues surrounding social injustice happening in the U.S. and globally
 - Embed critical thinking and social action activities into camp activities/discussion
 - Train camp staff to practice cultural humility

TAKING RISKS TOWARDS CONNECTION: THE IMPACT OF FACILITATING POSITIVE EMOTIONAL AND CREATIVE RISKS FOR YOUNG WOMEN AND GENDER EXPANSIVE YOUTH

Anna Cechony & Michael Scanlon, foundry10

Contact: Anna Cechony, foundry10, 100 NE Northlake Way, Suite 100, Seattle, WA 98105.
anna@foundry10.org

Traditional summer camps often employ physical risk-taking like participating in sports, challenge course activities, or outdoor education to build community and individual empowerment. These kinds of risks are easily mapped onto Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle as a way of making meaning from these experiences (Kolb, 1984; Priest & Glass, 2018). For youth from marginalized communities, it can be risky to show up as their full selves in oppressive institutions like school. Camp can provide a unique opportunity for marginalized youth to be in a space that centers their experiences. In these spaces, the Experiential Learning Cycle can also be applied to taking creative and emotional risks, such as presenting or performing original artwork about personal experiences, towards authentic connections with themselves and each other. The invitation to take positive risks towards connection with a community is important for psychological well-being in adolescence (Duell & Steinberg, 2019). For youth who often feel forced to change parts of themselves to assimilate to dominant culture, participating in a community as their authentic selves can be a catalyst for change in their lives. We offer a model for facilitating space for marginalized youth to take emotional and creative risks in a supportive community that integrates physical experience, but centers emotional experiences.

Y-WE Create

Y-WE Create is a week-long residential camp primarily for low income young women of color, which uses an intergenerational community mentoring system. Using the Creative Empowerment Model (CEM), which integrates experiential learning, arts-based practice and leading-edge facilitation, young people are guided through an arc of emotional risk. Beginning with very low risk activities like name games and small creative shares, building up to a peak of emotional and creative risk in the middle of the week with invitations for deeper personal and artistic sharing, and engaging with a safe transition out of camp that acknowledges not all spaces youth occupy are as safe as camp, facilitators use the Creative Empowerment Model to offer space for youth to take emotional risks (Taylor, 2018). Having a space for emotional risk taking that is validated and supported in an intergenerational environment can be transformational. Y-WE Create is uniquely structured to intentionally build an authentic community of belonging and we can see the impact of these structures on youth creative and emotional risks. Y-WE Create uses intergenerational community mentoring, a many-to-many mentoring model that purposefully employs mentors of different generations who share social identities with young people in the program. Rather than having a one-on-one mentoring relationship, this model offers youth multiple points of connection with many different adults, allowing them agency to choose to invest in relationships. These adults all play different roles including facilitator, mentor, camp logistics, nurse and social worker, but they all participate alongside the youth in as many activities as possible, with the ability to pull out with youth who need individual support. This allows all youth to build trusting relationships with the nurse and the social workers, making it easier to approach them when they need something. When asked how her day was one participant responded with, "I went to see the nurse and that was really cool." Getting the support

you need should feel really cool but rarely does. This strong web of support empowered youth to take creative and emotional risks.

Methods

Youth ages 12-18 ($n = 35$) and adults ages 21-75 ($n = 19$) completed surveys naming people they were close to before and at the end of camp, who encouraged them, made them feel like they belonged, made space for them to take risks and helped them through difficult moments. Social network analyses were conducted using these survey responses, illustrating how the intergenerational community mentoring model and the arc of graduated risk-taking supported youth.

Additionally, two of our researchers participated as mentors and ethnographers, observing the impact of this program firsthand and in depth. As mentor-researchers, they interviewed five people- two adults and three youth- every day of camp in order to track their experience of the arc of facilitation. These interviews were framed as a check in space for the participants and asked how they were doing, personal goals, their role in creating camp community and how they upheld camp goals. Qualitative examination of the interviews describes identity challenges youth face and demonstrates what transforming their stories looks like in practice.

Results

Creating space for young people to take risks was a crucial factor in the strength of developing connections. Using social network analysis, we measured individual behaviors that create a community of care. We found that on average, youth named 27.5 people who made them feel like they belonged, 27.3 people who encouraged them and 19.5 people who made space for them to take risks. Making space for risks was strongly correlated with campers' sense of belonging from peers (*adjusted RV coefficient* = 0.865) and feelings of closeness to peers (*adjusted RV coefficient* = 0.793). In a statistical (Exponential Random Graph) model examining the effects of various camper features and support behaviors on campers' sense of belonging, campers who reported that someone made space for them to take risks were significantly more likely (82% more likely, $p < .001$) to report that that person helped them feel that they belonged, and were more likely to report that they felt close to that person (72% more likely, $p = 0.01$). Meaning, within this camp, making space for risks seems to be an important factor contributing to campers' sense of belonging.

This pattern was also represented in interview responses. One of the youth we interviewed shared on the first day that she was “nervous I might get some anxiety to where I will kind of shut myself down”. Throughout the week a major theme became that she wanted to play a song on her clarinet at the camp open mic night. Halfway through the week she told me “I’m going to rehearse music on my clarinet so then I want to play a song for everybody but I’m scared to do it.” On the last night of camp, she worked with two other young people to perform at and MC the open mic night. Taking smaller risks throughout the week made it easier for her to take this large risk by the end of camp. On the last day, this camper shared with me “Yeah I’m happy because this is really gonna change me. I feel a lot better being in front of people a tiny bit, and I think I’ll teach people other ways of art”, and “hey, I can actually be myself here”. The opportunity to be loved and supported through taking this big risk was deeply impactful for her.

Implications

Y-WE Create, which is largely created and held by the intergenerational group of diverse adults, offers space for young people to take creative and emotional risks through intentional design and facilitation. For young people, having space to take these risks leads to feelings of

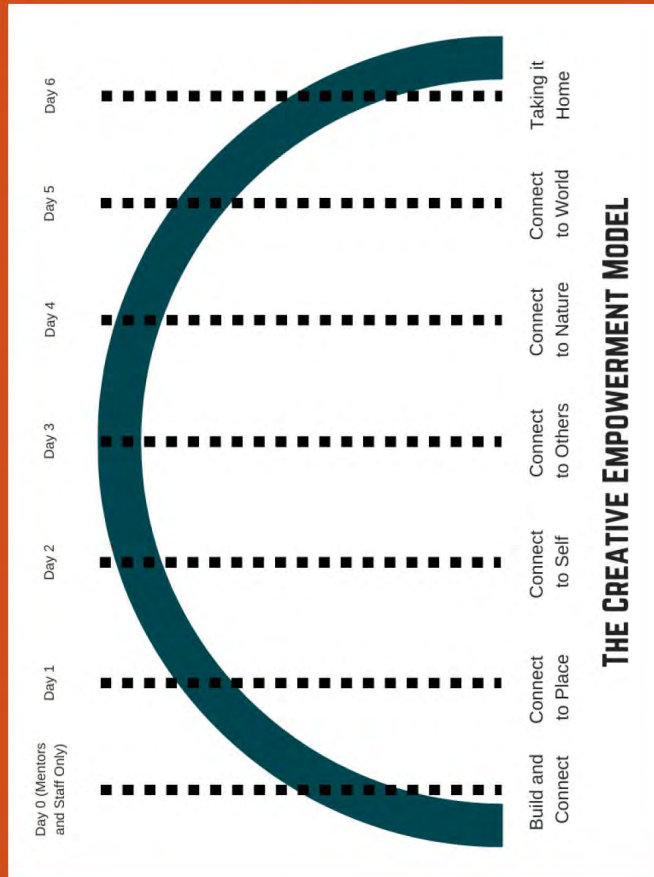
closeness and belonging. Taking positive creative and emotional risks are valuable skills and space can be successfully created to further this skill-building without needing to take physical risks. This kind of facilitation model can be deeply impactful in camp settings for any group of youth, but particularly for marginalized communities including camps for disabled folks who may not be able to take physical risks.

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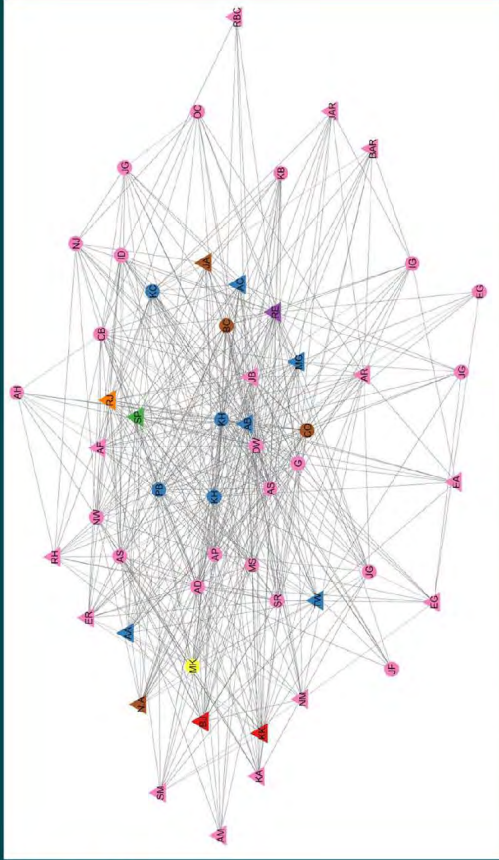
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Taking Risks Towards Connection: The Impact of Facilitating Positive Emotional and Creative Risks

Anna Cechony



foundry10



THROUGH THE EYES OF BURN-INJURED YOUTH – THE WAYS BURN CAMP HELPS THEM THRIVE

Daniel Walter Chacon, BA, Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation & Ruth Brubaker Rimmer, PhD,
Life Care Plans

Contact: Daniel W. Chacon, Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation, 708 El Cerrito CA94530.
Dchacon(at)aarbf.org

Improvement in acute burn care allows severely burned children to survive at an all-time high. Survival often results in ongoing disfigurement and physical and emotional pain. Recreational camps aimed at helping youth deal with their burn injuries have been in existence for several decades. Burn camp is reputed to provide an ideal setting to help them manage and cope with disfigurement and the physical/emotional challenges of burn survival. Few studies have delineated the actual benefits of camp from participants' point of view. This study asked attendees to rank and specify the reasons they would recommend camp attendance as beneficial to a burn-injured peer.

The Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation started Champ Camp, a seven-day residential camp for burn injured youth in 1985; the camp was one of the first of its kind. However, when the camp was conceived, the organization had no idea the impact the program would have on the lives of the attendees, nor did they create any desired outcomes or measurables. The creators of Champ Camp only wanted burn injured children to just have a place where they could "just be kids;" we now define this as normalization and shared common experience. According to the American Burn Association from data collected from the National Burn Repository, in 2016, 30,000 individuals sustained a burn injury and were treated in a United State Burn Center (American Burn Association, 2017). However, in the same year the American Cancer Society estimated that there would be 1,685,210 new cancer cases diagnosed (American Cancer Society 2019). Therefore, because of the frequency of occurrence, most of us can say we have been impacted some way or another by cancer and have awareness of the disease. Although burn injuries are occurring, there is still a lack of exposure to most individuals knowing a burn victim or as we call them, burn survivors. With the lack of knowledge and less frequency of injuries, most burn survivors have expressed feeling alone and have stated that they have never met another burn survivor. We believe that camp helps combat this, and why so many survivors are drawn to attending, and why the retention at camp is so high.

However, are we correct in our assumption that normalization and shared common experiences are what campers find importance in? What are additional benefits or importance for burn survivors at Burn Camp? And how would burn survivors rank what is the most important for them about camp and why they attend?

Methods

Burn-injured youth attending four regional burn camps completed a survey asking "If you were going to invite a burn survivor to come to burn camp how would you rate the following 10 items which were recently identified by your burn peers as benefits of attendance? Items included 1) Increased Confidence, 2) Making Friends, 3) Help with Scarring, 4) No Judgement Zone, 5) Supportive Counselors, 6) Trying New Things, 7) Being Part of a Community, 8) Getting Away from Home, 9) Being Outside, 10) Helping me accept my scars. We selected a few terms of importance that were related to only burn camp, as well as terms that are universal at any camp, as well as outcomes we had heard from campers; and survivors' past program evaluations.

Participants rated each item on a scale of one (Not Important), two (Not Very Important), three (Important), and four (Very Important) and then asked to choose the top three as what they personally felt was the most important benefits, they receive by attending burn camp.

Results

Participants included burn survivors ($n = 164$), mean age of 13.7 years, female ($n = 88$), male ($n = 74$). Causation of injury was Fire/flame (40%) and Scald (42%), average age at burn of 6.1 years., average years attending camp 4.6 and visible scars (76%). All ten categories received a score of 3 or better, indicating that it was important to the burn survivors. The most highly scored item was *Increasing My Confidence* (3.6). It was significantly higher than the lowest item *Time Away from Home* (3.1) ($p < 001$).

When asked out of the ten categories, which is the most important to them from burn camp, the campers stated it was *Increasing My Confidence* (46%), *Making Friends-Building Connections* (45%), and *Helping Me Accept My Scars* (44%).

Extraordinarily, two of the three rankings fall in alignment with a similar nation-wide study the American Camp Association did in 1998 with parents. The study asked parents what they felt was the most important benefit to camp. In that study, increased confidence and making friends were ranked in the top three (American Camp Association, 2016).

Implications

Burn medical care professionals should be proactive in encouraging pediatric burn patients to attend burn camp as it provides multiple benefits to participants. Coordination between health care providers, survivors and parents in promoting attendance at burn camp is highly recommended by the very youth who espouse the many benefits of attending.

Camps have been stated to have increased confidence and helped kids make friends, and this study validates past research findings from the American Camp Association, and shows that even at a medical specialty camp, these two outcomes are of high importance and speak to the success and importance of camp overall. However, clarification on what the camper defines as confidence would be beneficial for understanding if and how much the burn injury is tied to the increase. In addition, was the confidence impacted as a result of the burn injury or was there a precondition of low confidence prior?

What this study highlights, which was not mentioned in the 1998 research, is the importance of the burn survivor's recovery and the acceptance of their burn scars and how we should use the format of a camp to achieve this outcome. This shows that as you work with a specialized population, the level or type of importance can change. In the ACA 1998 research the additional important benefit was camp offering new activities and providing a safe place. However, for our burn survivors we need to focus on the emotional and psychological recovery. So, whether it is normalization, or burn survivors' bonding based on shared common experiences, or the amazing psycho-social programs that burn camps offer, we need to figure out a way to meet the result of survivors accepting their scars.

An additional study finding how camps help burn survivors accept their scars would be interesting as a follow up to this research; especially in order for other camps to replicate the outcome. Is it through conversations, or through acceptance from non-burn survivor camp counselors and staff, or music and art therapy?

Now that we know what is important to our burn survivor campers, we need to now put in the work and evaluate to ensure the desired outcome. "Today's camp curriculums," Ditter said, "are designed to teach socialization skills that help a child better cope in the real world." (American Camp Association, 2016 March 8).

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Introduction

Burn camp is reputed to provide an ideal setting to help survivors manage and cope with physical & emotional challenges of burn survival. This study asked attendees to rank and specify the reasons they would recommend camp attendance as beneficial to their burn-injured peers.



Results

All ten categories received a score of 3 or better, indicating that they all were important to burn survivors. The most highly scored item was "Increasing My Confidence". It was significantly higher than the lowest item "Time Away from Home".



Methods

Burn survivors from 4 regional Burn Camps were asked to rank ten potential benefits of camp; apart of a four point scale of importance. Then they were asked to choose the top three for what they personally felt was the most important benefits they receive by attending burn camp.

BURN CAMP BENEFITS!



Implications

Camps have been stated to have increased confidence and helped kids make friends, and this study validates past research findings from the American Camp Association, and shows that even as a medical specialty camp, these two outcomes are of high importance and speak to the success and importance of camp overall.



DANIEL CHACON
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
ALISA ANN RUCH BURN FOUNDATION

(415) 495 7223X18
DCHACON@AARBF.ORG
WWW.AARBF.ORG



IT TAKES MORE THAN MEDICINE: BUILDING SELF- EFFICACY IN FAMILIES OF PATIENTS WITH HEMOPHILIA AND OTHER INHERITED BLEEDING DISORDERS.

Deniece Chevannes, MPH, MCHES®; Hemophilia of Georgia, Inc.; Kim Williams, MA, Emory University; Katie Kleeberger, CHES & Community Evaluation Solutions
Contact: Deniece Chevannes, dichevannes(at)hog.org

This poster presents findings from a weekend residential camp for families and patients with hemophilia or other inherited bleeding disorders. Participants completed pre and post-test surveys. We present evidence that Hemophilia of Georgia's Family Camp Program (FCP) provides substantial benefits for families of patients with hemophilia or other inherited bleeding disorders.

Background

Bleeding disorders are rare, usually genetic, and a chronic condition. The diagnosis impacts the entire family system. Using the perspective of the family as a system highlights the idea that the family is a "complex, integrated whole" (Minuchin, 1988), wherein individual family members are necessarily interdependent, exerting a continuous and reciprocal influence on one another (Cox & Paley, 1997). The family system is an integral part of how a child copes with the diagnosis, treatment, and develops into a thriving adult.

Agate and Covey (2007) found that families who participated in family camp reported a greater sense of community and comradeship as they interacted with families who were in similar situations and found that families were also more likely to interact with these individuals outside of the camp environment. This same study also found that the relationships between individuals in a family unit were also strengthened by attending family camp (Agate & Covey, 2007). Some of these outcomes were only noted at the end of the camp experience, but others were also found months later, indicating lasting improvements.

Therapeutic and recreational camp programs are an established means of providing rest, respite, and enjoyment for children and families living with chronic illnesses. Additionally, there is a great deal of evidence that the social support, education, and skills training these camps provide are beneficial to both the psychological and physical well-being of individuals facing chronic illnesses. The evidence suggests that specialized camp programs can effectively increase the self-efficacy of camp attendees and promote positive psychological and physical outcomes.

This evaluation uses Bandura's (1977) model of self-efficacy as a means of evaluating patients' self-rated self-efficacy and parent's rating of their child's self-efficacy in managing their bleeding disorder. This poster will present finding from three waves of data collected at a Family Camp for patients with hemophilia and their parents or guardians.

Environment

FCP is hosted at Camp Twin Lakes (CTL), a facility designed specifically for people with special needs. CTL provides an ideal environment that removes families from everyday environmental stresses and allows its natural beauty to help families relax. Additionally, the communal spaces and meals help foster a sense of community that combats feelings of isolation that many families affected by bleeding disorders experience.

Educational Sessions

FCP provides educational sessions in English and Spanish for adults and teens. The educational sessions were implemented by HoG staff and other providers who engaged participants in a manner that promoted critical thinking and discussion.

Physical Activity

FCP provided an assortment of activities that integrate a physical component in social interactions. Families were offered different activities to account for their diverse physical abilities. Activities were presented in a perspective of what can be done, rather than what a participant cannot do. These activities foster a sense of accomplishment and normalcy for families and people affected by a bleeding disorder.

Methods

Data were collected from 6 family camp sessions over a 3-year period from parents (101 pre-tests, 85 post-tests) and 3 camp sessions for patients (21 pre-tests, 10 post-tests) with hemophilia, vWD and other bleeding disorders. Aggregate pre-test and post-test data were compared for the parents' self-efficacy rating of their child, and the patients' self-efficacy rating. Two-sample unequal variance t-tests were used to compare parents' pre- and post-test, patients' pre- and post-test. Data for comparing parents' pre- and post-test to patients' pre- and post-test was limited only to the sessions where both parent and patient data were collected.

Qualitative Data

The post-surveys also included a short answer section. There were a variety of important themes and codes that emerged from the post-camp surveys. These short answer portions were aimed at participant perceptions of the various educational and social activities that are provided at the FCP. There were five main themes that emerged from the data: sharing experiences, community building, relaxation, education, and personal development.

Figure 1

Themes

Theme	Definition & Quotes	Mentions
Sharing Experiences	Refers to any description of opportunities for participants to discuss their experiences or knowledge about bleeding disorder care, bleeding disorder management, and/or living with bleeding disorders. <i>It was just plain fun to get together with others in a noncompetitive manner, learn together, create more friendships, open more eyes to the realities of living with a bleeding disorder. (Family Camp Participant)</i>	9
Community Building	Refers to any description of opportunities or experiences at the camp for participants to establish relationships or foster communication between other family members and/or other participants within the camp. <i>It lets me be a part of the group where everyone is like me. (Family Camp Participant)</i>	22
Relax	Refers to any description of opportunities provided by FCP to relax over the weekend. <i>Time to stop and relax and spend time together. (Family Camp Participant)</i>	5
Education	Refers to any description of opportunities provided by FCP to engage in educational activities relating to bleeding disorder	37

	care, management, knowledge, and other topics as noted in the agenda of the program. <i>This (educational) activity helped to simplify the bleeding disorder in a way easy to understand.</i> <i>(Family Camp Participant)</i>	
Personal Development	Refers to any description of opportunities provided by FCP to engage in activities that are reported as building personal capacity (self-efficacy) regarding bleeding disorder care and/or management. Can include both individual personal development instances, and instances in which personal development was experienced by the child or another family member. <i>I hope that the family camp will [continue] because my daughter has grown and matured because of this program.</i> <i>(Family Camp Participant)</i>	3

Quantitative Results

Parent-reported self-efficacy scores consistently rose from pre-test to post-test, but was not statistically significant for any of the camp sessions (Session 1 $p = 0.56, t = -0.59$; Session 2 $p = 0.58, t = -0.55$; Session 3 $p = 0.08, t = -1.78$; Session 4 $p = .11, t = -1.65$). When comparing patients’ self-efficacy ratings to parents/caretaker’s self-efficacy ratings in the two camps where data were collected from both, patients tended to rate their self-efficacy higher than the parents/caretakers at both pre- and post-test.

Discussion

The primary goal of FCP is to increase self-efficacy by providing families with a weekend of education, relaxation, and connection with other families who share their experiences. The evaluation conducted found that participation in the FCP resulted in increased self-efficacy.

Our data are limited by small sample sizes, and lack of unique identifiers to be able to use paired t-tests for comparing pre- and post-test self-efficacy scores. These findings suggest the need for increased quantitative data collection in camp programs to be able to more effectively measure outcomes in camp participants. Inherited bleeding disorders are rare, so qualitative methods would be useful in studying the effects of camp on the self-efficacy of patients and their families.

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It Takes More than Medicine: Building Self-Efficacy in Families of Patients with Hemophilia and Other Inherited Bleeding Disorders.

Deniece Chevannes, MPH, MCHES[®]; Kim Williams, MS; Katie Kleeberger, CHES & Community Evaluation Solutions. Contact: dchevannes@hog.org

Introduction

Hemophilia of Georgia's Family Camp (FCP) is designed to bring families affected by an inherited bleeding disorder diagnosis together for a fun weekend of education, family time and opportunities to build community.

Family Camp Goals:

- Facilitate educational sessions in English and Spanish that promote critical thinking and discussion to build self-efficacy
- Provide social opportunities for the families to meet one another in an environment that fosters community building
- Encourage the families to spend time together to enjoy nature
- Offer a weekend away from the pressures of everyday life



FCP provides an assortment of activities that integrate a physical component in social interactions. Families are offered different activities to account for their diverse physical abilities. Activities are presented in a perspective of what can be done, rather than what a participant cannot do. These activities foster a sense of accomplishment and normalcy for families and patients affected by an inherited bleeding disorder.

Methods & Findings

Data was collected from 6 family camp sessions over a 3-year period from parents & patients. Aggregate pre-test and post-test data were compared for the patients' self-efficacy rating of their child, and the patients' self-efficacy rating. Two-sample unequal variance t-tests were used to compare patients' pre- and post-test, patients' pre- and post-test.

We present evidence that Parent-reported self-efficacy scores consistently rose from pre-test to post-test, but was not statistically significant for any of the camp sessions

Session 1 $p = 0.56, t = -0.59$

Session 2 $p = 0.58, t = -0.55$

Session 3 $p = 0.08, t = -1.78$

Session 4 $p = .11, t = -1.65$

Qualitative Evaluation

The post-test also included a short answer section. These short answer portions were aimed at participant perceptions of the various educational and social activities that are provided at the FCP. Five main themes emerged from the data.



Qualitative Evaluation Themes & Definitions

Sharing Experiences: Refers to any description of opportunities for participants to discuss their experiences or knowledge about bleeding disorder care, bleeding disorder management, and/or living with bleeding disorders.

Community Building: Refers to any description of opportunities or experiences at the camp for participants to establish relationships or foster communication between other family members and/or other participants within the camp

Relax: Refers to any description of opportunities provided by FCP to relax over the weekend.

Education: Refers to any description of opportunities provided by FCP to engage in educational activities relating to bleeding disorder care, management, knowledge, and other topics as noted in the agenda of the program.

Personal Development: Refers to any description of opportunities provided by FCP to engage in activities that are reported as building personal capacity (self-efficacy) regarding bleeding disorder care and/or management. Can include both individual personal development instances, and instances in which personal development was experienced by the child or another family member.

Participant Quotes

It was just plain fun to get together with others in a noncompetitive manner, learn together, create more friendships, open more eyes to the realities of living with a bleeding disorder. (Family Camp Participant)

It (Family Camp) lets me be a part of the group where everyone is like me.

Time to stop and relax and spend time together.

This (educational) activity helped to simplify the bleeding disorder in a way easy to understand.

I hope that the family camp will (continue) because my daughter has grown and matured because of this program.

Lessons Learned

Family Centered

Family Camp promotes self-efficacy and encourages the development of positive psychological and physical outcomes in families.



Community Building

The communal spaces and meals at FCP help foster a sense of community that combats feelings of isolation that many families affected by inherited bleeding disorders experience.

Naturally Soothing



FCP is hosted at Camp Twin Lakes (CTL), a facility designed

specifically for people with special needs. CTL provides an ideal environment that removes families from everyday environmental stresses and allows its natural beauty to help families relax.

HEALTH OUTCOMES OF CAMP PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH WITH CANCER: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW USING THE ICF

Melissa H. D'Eloia & Kaylee Martig, Western Washington University

Contact: Melissa D'Eloia, Western Washington University, 516 High St., Bellingham, WA 98225. melissa.delioia(at)wwu.edu

Childhood cancer, and its treatment, can negatively affect a child's physical, cognitive, and psychosocial development. Due to significant declines in these areas, children with cancer are less likely to participate in developmental activities such as school, work, and socializing with friends. Decreased participation in these important life activities can result in increased isolation, lower self-esteem, depression, and lower quality of life (Abrams, Hazen, & Penson, 2007). Oncology camps provide a unique setting where traditional camp staff collaborate with healthcare professionals (e.g., recreational therapist, child-life specialists, and nurses) to provide a normalized experience while also counteracting the negative effects of cancer. Research on oncology camps indicates that participation in summer camp can result in a variety of developmental and psychosocial outcomes (e.g., Bluebond-Langner, Perkel, Dawson, Knapp, & Farmer, 2012; Gillard & Watts, 2013; Goertzel, Nelson, & McGeary, 1990; Martiniuk, Silva, Amylon & Barr, 2014). Additionally, some researchers are suggesting that oncology camps could be a therapeutic modality and are urging professionals and scholars to examine camp as a therapeutic intervention (Dawson, Knapp, & Foster, 2012; Martiniuk, et al., 2014).

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) may present a promising framework that oncology camp professionals can use to improve communication about the therapeutic benefits of camp. The ICF (World Health Organization, 2001) is a global model that provides a scientific basis for understanding and studying health, functioning, and disability (Porter, 2016). The ICF framework views disability as a complex interaction between a person's health condition (e.g., cancer), activity involvement (e.g., socializing with friends), environmental factors (e.g., family and community systems), and personal factors (e.g., age, gender, race, education, etc.). At its core, the ICF is a communication tool that provides a common language across all facets of healthcare including service providers (e.g., doctors, nurses, recreational therapists, camp professionals), granting agencies, and policy makers. In clinical settings, recreational therapists can use the ICF language to guide assessment practices, goal setting, treatment planning, and clinical outcome evaluation. At camp, recreational therapists can use the ICF language to set camper goals, develop a camper care plan, select beneficial camp activities, and evaluate health outcomes.

The ICF may be of particular benefit to oncology camp professionals that want to increase their visibility as a viable, community-based, therapeutic modality, and receive the support of external health providers, policy makers, and grant funders. However, research connecting oncology camps to clinical health outcomes as identified in the ICF is in its infancy. Therefore, the aim of this systematic review was to identify the health-specific outcomes of oncology camp programs and link them to the outcome language used in the ICF.

Methods

This systematic review was conducted in April 2019 using the PRISMA framework (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-analysis: Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, Altman, & The PRISMA Group, 2009). The literature was searched using PubMed, PsychINFO, and EBSCO complete using the following search terms: oncology summer camp, cancer summer camp, and oncology camp. In addition, hand searches of reference lists of relevant papers and

reviews were conducted. Following the PRISMA framework, individual articles were initially screened. Full-text articles were then assessed for eligibility, based on pre-established criteria. Inclusion criteria included all peer-reviewed papers published between 1989-2019 that evaluated outcomes of residential camping programs for youth with cancer (less than 19 years old). Studies that used either quantitative or qualitative methods were included. Studies were excluded if they were a dissertation, not in English, the camp program was exclusively for siblings or adults, the study did not include original research, or the study was not on outcomes of camp programs. Studies using populations with multiple diagnoses were excluded, but studies which included siblings were included if the program was not exclusively for siblings. Papers that met the search criteria were reviewed and coded using the ICF health outcome codes and linking rules proposed by Cieza et al. (2005).

Results

The initial search resulted in 176 individual records that were then screened based on inclusion criteria. Of these studies, 16 papers met the inclusion criteria and were included in the systematic review. The studies included a combined 3,850 participants aged 5-18 years who participated in camp programs that ranged from 6-10 days in length. They contained 135 outcomes, which resulted in 29 second-level ICF outcome codes. The most common ICF outcome codes included emotional functions (11 citations), informal and social relationships (8 citations), and temperament and personality functions (6 citations). The ICF code emotional functions, includes camp outcomes such as decreased anxiety, increased self-esteem, empathy, and happiness. The camp outcomes of forming friendships, social acceptance, and sense of belonging were linked to the ICF outcome codes “informal relationships with friends” and “informal relationships with peers.” Perseverance, adaptability, and coping fall under the ICF outcome code “handling stress.” These results suggest that camp achieves outcomes that align well with the ICF framework, thus supporting the notion that camp can play a critical role in the overall health of youth with cancer.

Implications

The ICF is a promising tool that oncology camp professionals can use to research and develop camp programs to meet the unique health needs of youth with cancer. The ICF can be applied to research on developmental, psychosocial, and health-specific outcomes. Oncology camps that use ICF language for program evaluation could compare their outcomes with data that is collected in other settings (e.g., school services and in-patient recreational therapy settings) to potentially strengthen their justification for camp as a therapeutic modality. Researchers who use ICF language would also be able to compile data from multiple camps or compare data between camps, which would allow them to better establish the therapeutic potential of camp programs as a whole as well as specific program features (e.g., camp duration, activities, ages) in order to establish best practices. More research is needed to understand medical camps as a therapeutic modality and the ICF may provide the needed framework to guide this research.

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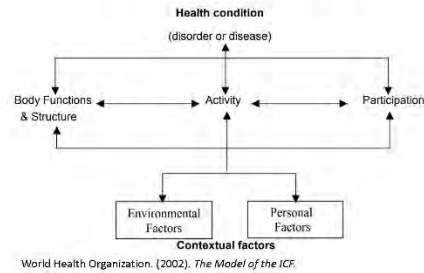
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Health Outcomes of Camp Programs for Youth with Cancer: A Systematic Review Using the ICF

Melissa H. D'Eloia & Kaylee M. Martig, Western Washington University

Introduction

- Childhood cancer, and its treatment, can negatively affect a child's physical, cognitive, and psychosocial development
- Oncology camps provide a setting where camp staff can collaborate with healthcare professionals to counteract the negative effects of cancer
- The International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF) is a global model that provides a scientific basis for understanding and studying health, functioning, and disability



Methods

- This systematic review was conducted in April 2019 using the PRISMA framework
- Inclusion criteria included all peer-reviewed papers published between 1989-2019 that evaluated outcomes of residential camping programs for youth with cancer (less than 19 years old)



ICF code flowchart for camp outcome, "Interest in social activities."

Results

- 176 individual records were screened, resulting in 16 papers which were included in the systematic review
- The most common ICF codes included emotional functions, informal and social relationships, and temperament and personality functions
- The majority of ICF codes fall under the category Activities and Participation

ICF Code	Name of Code	Citations (n)	Examples of Associated Camp Outcomes
b152	emotional functions	11	Psychological wellbeing, moods and emotions, enjoyment, personal growth, gratitude/appreciation, positive attitudes, worries, feeling successful, happiness
d750	informal social relationships	8	Social acceptance, belonging, shared experience of illness, doing things with groups of kids
b126	temperament and personality functions	6	Self-esteem, confidence
d920	recreation and leisure	6	Sociability, freedom, outdoor challenge, fun, diversity of activities, trying new activities, break from routine
d599	self-care, unspecified	5	Escape, respite, finding a balance, independence
d240	handling stress and other psychological demands	4	Perseverance, coping, admitting to making mistakes, adaptability, illness-related stress
d710	basic interpersonal interactions	4	Understanding feelings and emotions, trusting, relationship skills
b164	higher-level cognitive functions	3	Self-efficacy, autonomy, creativity
d570	looking after one's health	3	Attitude toward taking medication, attitude toward medical professionals, physical wellbeing, knowledge of disease
d720	complex interpersonal interactions	3	Making friends, meeting new people

Most common ICF codes with examples of associated camp outcomes.

Implications of the ICF for Camps

- Standardization of research measures through use of ICF language to aid in comparison of research data between settings (e.g., school services, clinical settings, camp settings) and between camps
- Collection of data to support camp as a therapeutic modality, specifically related to activities and participation, through use of ICF qualifiers
- Identification of contextual factors to support specific program features which achieve functional outcomes
- Establish best practices within the camp setting



Photograph courtesy of Camp Korey.

PARTICIPANT PERSPECTIVES OF COUNSELOR-IN-TRAINING PROGRAMS

Jessie Dickerson, Deb Bialeschki, & Jim Sibthorp, The University of Utah and American Camp Association

Contact: Jessie Dickerson, University of Utah, 260 1850 E, Salt Lake City, UT 84112.
jessie.dickerson(at)utah.edu

Attending summer camp is an enjoyable experience for youth. Camp has proven to be a developmentally enriching experience for both campers (e.g., Bialeschki et al., 2007) and camp staff (e.g., Garst et al., 2009). Many camps offer a program that overlays campership with counselor responsibilities: Counselor-in-Training (CIT) programs.

Participating in a CIT program is a significant event in a camper's trajectory, whether it be a capstone to their camper experience or a pathway to becoming a counselor. Few studies have examined CIT experiences (see Bennett, 2015; Katz, 2009), however, both studies sampled from only one organization. Each found an increase in leadership abilities, and Katz (2009) went on to find that participants are transferring some outcomes beyond camp.

Beyond those studies, we don't know why adolescents choose to participate in CIT programs or what participants get out of these programs broadly. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to contribute to the sparse CIT literature by answering three research questions: 1) What are the motivations and expectations for participation in CIT programs? 2) What are the outcomes of CIT programs? 3) What characteristics of CIT programs support the development of these outcomes?

Methods

A sample of 32 ACA accredited camps were selected for this study. These camps' CIT programs served between 5-140 participants (60% female) each summer over a two to eight-week period. From these camps, 204 participants enrolled in the study. Participants were 15-17 years old ($M = 16$) and most participants identified as White (65%).

Data were collected using open-ended qualitative questions and seven Likert-type subscales in a pretest-posttest design. The pretests were distributed two weeks before participants began their CIT programs; the posttests were completed within two weeks after. The pretest asked about participants' motivations for participating, prospective opinions of the program, and included five subscales to help understand the characteristics of their school as a learning context (Sense of Belonging, Teacher-Student Relationships, and Engagement from Panorama Education, 2018; and Experiential Learning –Action and Experiential Learning-Reflection based on scales from the Girl Scouts). Two specific outcome measures were also included: The Leadership Effectiveness Questionnaire (LEQ) Task Leadership subscale (Neill & Marsh, 2003) and the Prosocial Tendencies Measurement-Revised (PTM-R) Altruism subscale (Carlo & Randall, 2002). The posttest assessed the self-reported outcomes of the CIT program and retrospective opinions of the program. The seven subscales were re-administered in order to compare camp and school as developmental settings and to identify outcome growth. One-hundred thirty-two completed pre-test survey responses and 134 post-test survey responses were received.

Qualitative responses were analyzed through an exploratory coding procedure during which broad themes were identified and refined to create a codebook to use for secondary coding. A repeated measures MANOVA was conducted to compare pretest and posttest scores.

Results

Forty-six percent of participants were motivated by the experience they expected to have in the program (*To work on my leadership skills, grow relationships, and have fun!!*); 34% were motivated by continuing their camp trajectory (*I have been attending camp for 8 consecutive years and would love to continue my journey there*); 13% were motivated by wanting to give back or to provide an experience similar to their own to other kids (*I want to help kids who choose to come to this camp just as much as the counselors I had growing up did for me*); 6% were motivated by the opportunity for personal growth (*The main reason I am participating in the CIT program this summer is to learn more about myself and how to work better with others*); and 5% were motivated by the people and relationships to participate (*To see my friends from camp*; $N = 108$).

We asked participants what they anticipated as most challenging about the program and then what actually was the most challenging. To make viable comparisons, these data are based on the 70 participants who provided codable responses on both pre and posttests. Data were coded into five emerging themes. Seventy-four percent from the pre-test and 36% from the post-test reported being a counselor (*Getting kids to listen to me because I'm a first year CIT*); 10% from the pre-test and 29% from the post-test reported hard work (*It took a lot of constant effort, keeping a good attitude even when tired or frustrated*); 3% from the pre-test and 11% from the post-test reported juxtaposition (*Our program requires us to be somewhere between a camper and a counselor, and trying to find a balance between the two was very hard*); 7% from the pre-test and 13% from the post-test reported personal growth (*Probably stepping way out of my comfort zone for the sake of making a fun environment for campers*); and lastly, 4% from the pre-test and 11% from the post-test reported relationships (*Getting along well with everyone in my cabin*).

Finally, 34% of participants reported gaining intrapersonal skills (*Confidence*); 24% reported learning how to work with kids (*How to help homesick kids*); 22% reported learning leadership (*How to be a leader*); 16% reported gaining interpersonal skills (*To listen and to appreciate others and what they have to share/offer*); and 4% reported learning functional skills (*Time management*) as the most important outcomes from their CIT program experience ($N = 103$).

Seventy-two individuals completed both the pretest and posttest, allowing for analysis of the seven subscales. Each of the learning context subscales was higher ($p < .05$) at the CIT program than at school (Sense of Belonging, Teacher-Student Relationships, Engagement, Experiential Learning-Action and -Reflection). The Task Leadership subscale showed a significant increase from pretest to posttest ($p < .05$). The Altruism subscale did not change significantly over time.

Discussion and Implications

The results of this study help build the foundation of CIT research. We have learned that the main motivator for participating in these programs is the experience of the program itself. CIT programs have the potential to develop more than leadership skills to include inter- and intrapersonal skills and functional skills, all of which are important in positive youth development. From both the qualitative and quantitative data, we can infer that the development of leadership comes from CIT programs. From the quantitative data, we can see that CIT programs may provide a fertile setting for growth in many outcome areas due to its experiential, supportive, and engaging context. The quantitative data did not show the development of altruistic tendencies in our sample after participating in the CIT program.

We also learned that participants anticipate the responsibilities expected of counselors to be the most difficult part of their experience, but the actual challenges are different. The experience entailed harder work, especially when being considered both a camper and a counselor. CITs experienced more personal growth and relationships were more challenging than initially anticipated. In order to more effectively manage this expectation, camps should train staff how to be mentors to CIT participants and to foster healthy relationships with better communication. To alleviate some unexpected hard work, camps can be more transparent in their program descriptions and have conversations with CITs about the juxtaposition of their role.

Due to the exploratory nature of this study, further research should be conducted to identify the characteristics of CIT programs that support participant development, the transferability of the developmental outcomes, and the use of the outcomes if participants become counselors. While CIT programs have various goals, this current and future research will assist camp practitioners in creating experiences for participants that are beneficial for their roles as counselors, and in future life settings.

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Participant Perspectives of Counselor-in-Training Programs

Jessie Dickerson, Jim Sibthorp, and Deb Bialeschki
Department of Health, Kinesiology, and Recreation | University of Utah

Introduction

- Camp is a developmentally enriching experience for campers (e.g. Gillard et al., 2014) and staff (e.g. Garst et al., 2009)
- Counselor-in-Training (CIT) programs overlay campership with counselor responsibilities. Little research has examined CIT experiences
- Katz (2009) and Bennett (2015) found an increase in leadership abilities from participation in CIT programs
- Katz (2009) found that some outcomes of CIT programs transfer to contexts beyond camp

Research Questions

1. What are the motivations and expectations for participating in CIT programs?
2. What are the outcomes of CIT programs?
3. What characteristics of CIT programs support the development of these outcomes?
4. Are CIT programs supporting the development of leadership abilities?

Methods

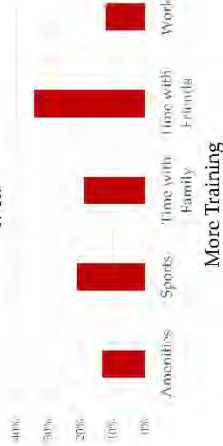
- Thirty-two ACA accredited camps that served between 5-140 participants (60% female) each summer over a two to eight-week period were selected
- Participants ($n=204$) were 15-17 years old and most participants identified as White (65%)
- Mixed methods approach with pre- and post-program surveys
- Pre-program surveys included participant motivations for participation, prospective opinions of the program, five subscales to understand the characteristics of their developmental contexts, and a leadership subscale
- Post-program surveys included self-reported outcomes of the CIT program, retrospective opinions of the program, re-administration of the six subscales
- Qualitative data analyzed using inductive coding and thematic analyses
- Quantitative data analyzed using a Repeated Measures MANOVA

Qualitative Results

Top 3 Motivations to Participate

1. The experience itself
2. To continue on camp trajectory
3. To give back

Missed Opportunities
N=109



Top 3 Outcomes of Participation

1. Intrapersonal skills
2. How to work with kids
3. Leadership

CIT Program Challenges
N=108



Discussion and Implications

- The main motivator for participation in CIT programs is the experience itself
- CIT programs can develop more than leadership skills to include inter- and intrapersonal skills and functional skills
- Participants anticipate the responsibilities to be the most challenging aspect of the program, but the actual experience entails harder work, especially when being considered both camper and counselor
- Training camp staff to be mentors and to foster healthy relationships through better communication can reduce the challenges CIT participants found in relationships
- Transparency in program descriptions and strategies for navigating the role as camper with counselor responsibilities can help alleviate unexpected hard work

Quantitative Results

- Seventy-two individuals completed both the pretest and posttest, allowing for analysis of the six subscales
- Each learning context subscale was higher ($p<.05$) at the CIT program than at school (Sense of Belonging, Teacher-Student Relationships, Engagement, Experiential Learning, Action and Reflection)
- The leadership subscale showed a significant increase from pretest to posttest



FATIGUE AT SUMMER CAMP: PERSPECTIVES FROM CAMP NURSES AND DIRECTORS

Alexsandra Dubin & Barry A. Garst, Clemson University

Contact: Alexsandra Dubin, Clemson University, 263 Lehotsky Hall, Clemson University, Clemson, SC 29634. alexsad(at)g.clemson.edu

Summer camps engage millions of youth in enrichment opportunities during the summertime while employing a substantial young adult workforce to provide high-quality programs and services to camp participants. These employees include administrators (e.g., camp directors) as well as health care providers (e.g., camp nurses) who are responsible for health, safety, and risk management functions. As such, they are critical for the provision of high-quality programs and services. Therefore, addressing factors that negatively impact camp director and camp nurse performance may improve the overall quality of camp experiences. Workplace fatigue among staff has been implicated in camp-related injury and illness events: for example, 25% of staff injuries occur between the fifth and seventh day of a camp session, suggesting that fatigue and/or lessened safety practices emerge as issues as staff become more familiar with the camp routine and responsibilities (American Camp Association, 2011). Furthermore, fatigue may reduce employee performance, such as the ability to retain health and safety-related information learned during training (Garst, Gagnon, & Brawley, 2018). Despite these concerns, few studies have targeted fatigue among camp employees.

The purpose of this exploratory study was to better understand how camp employees, specifically camp administrators and health care providers, experience fatigue in the camp setting and to identify factors that contribute to camp-related fatigue. Ultimately, the study aimed to identify effective practices for identifying and reducing the experience of fatigue among camp employees, as well as strategies for reducing the negative impacts of fatigue within camp settings.

Theoretical Foundations

This study was framed through the lens of performance influencing factors (PIFs), or characteristics of the employee or the position that influences performance or the likelihood of error (Embry, 2000). Fatigue has been widely studied as a PIF in the medical (Baldwin & Daugherty, 2004) and transportation fields (Atkinson, 2000) and research shows that workplace fatigue may result in numerous negative outcomes. These outcomes include reductions in workplace productivity (Atkinson, 2000; Cavuoto & Megahed, 2017), increased rates of poor employee decision-making, and employee accidents and injuries (Atkinson, 2000). However, fatigue has not been a topic of great scrutiny in summer camps (Thomas, 2002). Fatigue is a multifaceted concept involving psychosocial and behavioral processes often difficult to define and distinguish from sleepiness (Cavuoto & Megahed, 2017). Fatigue is defined as an “overwhelming sense of tiredness, lack of energy and a feeling of exhaustion, associated with impaired physical and/or cognitive functioning” (Shen, Barbara, & Shapiro, 2006, p. 70). This conceptualization of fatigue was critical for the interpretation of fatigue in the camp setting.

Methods

Focus groups were conducted with camp health care providers and directors identified through collaboration with the Association of Camp Nursing (ACN). Out of 527 professionals who were contacted about possible participation, a convenience sample of 29 responded and were assigned to one of five focus groups based on their role at camp and experience (RR= 5.5%). Focus groups participants were grouped based on their camp roles (e.g., camp healthcare

provider, camp director) and year of experience (e.g., 1-5 years of experience, 6-10 years of experience). The research team analyzed participant responses using directed content analysis guided by sensitizing concepts from the literature (Patton, 2002), such as the multidimensionality of fatigue (Shen, et al., 2006). The directed content analysis approach allowed the experiences of individuals to be compared, contrasted, and connected to inform answers to the targeted research questions. The research questions were: (a) “How do camp employees conceptualize and experience fatigue within the context of camp?,” (b) “What outcomes do camp employees associate with fatigue within the context of camp?,” and (c) “What strategies do camp employees use to mitigate negative outcomes of fatigue within the context of camp?” Trustworthiness of the data was ensured by the use of multiple coders, and external audit, and attention to the emergence of alternative perspectives (Shenton, 2004; Yin, 2016).

Results

Four themes were constructed from the data: (1) camp-related fatigue is conceptualized as a construct of time, types, and causes; (2) camp-related fatigue is a distinct experience leading to setting-specific outcomes; (3) fatigue is managed using administrative and peer supports; and (4) camp professionals have alternative perspectives of fatigue. Participants viewed fatigue as a unique feeling, some relating it to a feeling of depletion, and identified numerous types of fatigue that are common at camp, such as mental, emotional, and physical fatigue. Unique causes of fatigue, such as around the clock childcare responsibilities, lack of privacy, and the fast pace of the camp schedule were articulated. The camp environment, including the setting, pace, and responsibilities, are often a significant adjustment for staff and can lead to fatigue. For nurses in particular, the lack of qualified staff to step in if they needed a break was a major factor in camp-specific fatigue. Fatigue was further viewed as long-term experience that builds, leading to injury and illness, inhibited decision-making, and inattention to duties. Participants worried about safety issues such as poor camper supervision when staff become fatigued. Workplace fatigue is managed in camp using administrative solutions such as schedule changes to allow for additional rest, staff training regarding fatigue, support for staff MESH needs, and creative time-on solutions. Nurses noted feeling overwhelmed by the MESH needs of the camp community at times, citing the need for additional staff to handle MESH concerns. Furthermore, peer supports such as role modeling, duty sharing, and sharing restful time-off ideas were available to mitigate fatigue on a more individual level. Some participants noted fatigue could be a protective factor by helping staff become more self-aware, which was notable as it was a perspective not found within the fatigue literature.

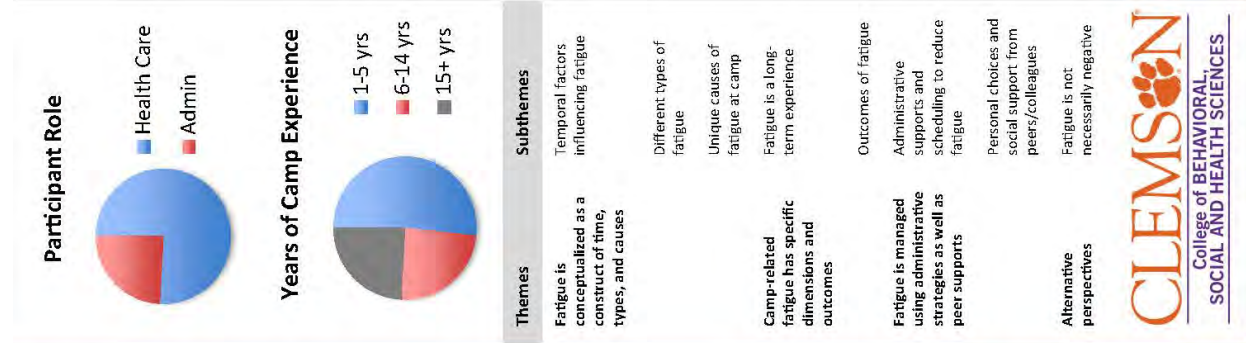
Discussion and Implications

This study explored how camp directors and nurses experience fatigue, as well as their perceptions of how seasonal employees experienced fatigue at camp. A key finding was the critical role of discretionary time in employee fatigue. Time-off is necessary for rest and recuperation, but camp employees do not always make wise use of this time, returning to work more fatigued. The solution is not simply more time off, but encouraging employees to sleep and rest during time off. Helping employees see the value of rest during discretionary time is a critical issue for camp administrators. Administrators may need to reformat time off to encourage rest, or bolster staff training by educating employees on the signs and symptoms of fatigue. Some causes of fatigue were unique to the camp setting. For example, the lack of backup staff to relieve healthcare employees was a serious contributor to workplace fatigue. Nurses felt pressure to meet the healthcare needs of the community even during time off, suggesting the potentially efficacy of staffing models that incorporate work shifts. For seasonal employees, the constant

demands of round-the-clock childcare were particularly fatiguing, especially given the lack of privacy and personal space in most living areas. The demands of round the clock childcare could be mitigated with time-on solutions such as restful evening programs where the pace of camp slows down, or increased time for free play when counselors can more passively supervise. Increasing social support for employees to better meet their emotional needs, such as evening programming for staff to relax together, or mentors to lend an ear, may also be effective approaches. Mental and emotional fatigue can greatly impact employee's ability to interact positively with campers, and thus should be taken seriously, along with physical fatigue. Camp is a powerful setting for personal and professional growth for camp employees, yet living and working at camp may present camp employees with unique challenges regarding fatigue. Fatigue is deceptive as it is a condition most people feel they can endure or manage in their routine. This tendency is concerning in a camp setting where employees are responsible for the health and safety of themselves and of participants. Empowering employees to identify and manage their fatigue more effectively, in addition to addressing the many facets of fatigue will help improve the overall camp experience for both campers and staff, and hopefully support a standard of care for all individuals experiencing fatigue.

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KEY FINDINGS

Camp-related fatigue:

- Is a construct of time, types and causes
- Is a distinct experience that leads to specific outcomes, most of which are negative
- Managed using peer and administrative supports
- May be protective for some staff

Participants said...

“Fatigue is a depletion of all my resources. Not only my natural resources but also my stored resources”

“It can make you short... ‘if a kid asks me a same question one more time, I’m going to scream.’”

“I think [fatigue] affects [staff] decision-making, which is the big concern for me as a director.”



The Experience of Workplace Fatigue in Summer Camp:
Perspective from Camp Healthcare Providers and Administrators

Presenting Authors:
Alexandra Dubin, M.S.¹
Barry A. Garst, PhD¹

Authors:
Tracey Gaslin²
Beth E. Schultz³

¹Clemson University
²Association of Camp Nursing
³Anderson University

Introduction

- Fatigue is a multidimensional experience that can impact employee performance

Methods

- Focus groups with convenience sample of 29 ACN members

Implications

- Administrators should consider the framing of time off to encourage rest
- Time-on solutions that allow for additional rest could help mitigate fatigue



WHEN TO THEME CAMP EXPERIENCES? CAMPER CO-CREATION VS. SOLE-CREATION

Gary Ellis & Jingxian Jiang, Texas A&M University System; Andrew Lacanienta, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

Contact: Gary Ellis, Texas A&M University, 2261 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843.
Gellis1(at)tamu.edu

Camp professionals theme camp activities by introducing an imaginary time, place, and storyline to activities or settings. A wealth of evidence indicates theming enriches the quality of camper experiences. That body of evidence includes the wisdom of camp professionals as well as theory and research. Camp professional Jeff Merhige (2014) provides a compelling endorsement of theming:

Imagine the thrill a camper feels at the opportunity to bring his or her favorite books, movies, and/or television series to life. The idea of traveling to a galaxy far, far away, exploring a world of wizards or demigods, or joining the Rangers of Aurelian in missions can become a reality at camp.

Merhige's endorsement is consistent with a growing body of theory and research from the camp industry and other experience-industry sectors. Tourism scholars emphasize the importance of staging themed experiences for visitors (e.g., Pikkemaat, Peters, Boksberger, & Secco, 2009) and for theming destinations and spaces (e.g., Agapito, Valle, & Mendez, 2014; Chang, 2000). Marketing scholars Pine and Gilmore (2011) identified theming as one of four strategies used by successful experience industry organizations. Camp researchers have also shown that themed activities significantly increase the quality of campers' experiences (Lacanienta, Ellis, Taggart, Wilder, & Carroll, 2018). When theming results in campers "feeling like they were in a story" (Ellis, Jiang, Lacanienta, & Carroll, 2019), its impact is dramatic.

As evidence of the power of theming grows, new questions for camp managers arise. One of these is "when and for whom is theming best suited?" In the Lacanienta et al. (2018) study, theming was impactful in most, but not all activities. Co-creation may explain this curious result. Co-creation is the process through which providers and participants collaborate to build quality experiences (Lacanienta & Duerden, 2019; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). "Co-actualization" (a phase of co-creation; Lacanienta & Duerden, 2019) occurs when campers embrace a theme and enter into an imaginary role in the story. Yet, quality experiences also result from "perceived freedom." Perceived freedom exists when participants exercise their own preferences for their manner of participation, either through co-creation or through "sole-creation." Campers who sole-create choose their own manner of engaging with or disengaging from the activity, committing little or no attention to themes provided. The impact of perceived freedom on experience quality is well-founded in the social psychology of leisure (Walker, Kleiber, & Mannell, 2019). Knowledge of activities and contexts giving rise to co-creation vs. sole-creation could inform camp managers' decisions about when to design themed experiences, yet research is lacking. The purpose of this study was to identify camper characteristics associated with co-creation vs. sole creation. Camper characteristics were those camp managers might use in making experience design decisions: age, sex, skill level, and activity.

Method

Sample

We conducted secondary analysis of existing data (Lacanienta et al., 2018). The data set included 1,847 experience observations from 231, 8-17 year-old campers in three sessions of a 4-

H summer camp. Four hundred seventy-one of the observations were from activities during a camp session in which activities were not themed (59 campers). Two themed camp sessions yielded 1,376 experience observations from 172 campers. More girls than boys (61.5%) participated.

Campers' average age was 11.12 years, and the standard error of that mean was .04. Skewness and kurtosis indicated near-normal distribution by age. Skewness was .37 and kurtosis was .36.

Measurement

Co-creation was hypothesized to be a function of age, sex, activity, and skill level. Campers reported the quality of their immediate experiences on questionnaires immediately following participation in each of eight core camp activities. Co-creation vs. sole-creation was measured by coding the presence of a theme as 1 and the absence of theme as -1 and then multiplying that vector by campers' responses to a question, "I felt like I was inside a story." Campers rated the "story" question on a 10-point scale. Thus, a "10" indicated the highest possible level of co-creation (where campers engaged with theme to become a part of a story) and -10 indicated sole-creation; where campers created their own stories without the presence of theme.

Age, sex, and skill level were also measured through a paper and pen questionnaire. Campers reported their age in years, and they checked a box to indicate whether they were a girl or a boy. Campers also self-reported their skill levels by choosing one of four options: first timer, beginner, intermediate, or advanced. Campers indicated the activity in which they had participated on the same questionnaire used to measure co-creation.

Procedure

Campers rotated through eight activities: challenge course, archery, rifle, kayaking, fishing, crafts, swimming, and dance.

Data Analysis

We used mixed modeling to regress co-creation/sole-creation on campers' age, sex, activity, and skill level. Because existing literature indicates differences in girls and boys' preferences for book themes (e.g., Beyard-Tyler & Sullivan, 1980; Doiron, 2003), interactions with sex were also tested.

Results

Two interaction effects were significant: sex-by-age and sex-by-activity. The sex-by-age interaction was disordinal; co-creation with theme declined with age for boys ($r = -.27$), but not for girls ($r = .01$). The sex-by-activity interaction was ordinal; Boys had higher co-creation for all eight activities, but the magnitude of differences changed across activities. The main effect of skill level was also significant. Co-creation increased linearly with skill level: "first timer," "beginner," "intermediate," and "advanced."

Implications

Our investigation of revealed effects that may inform decisions about when to apply theming. But, results of any study must be interpreted with caution; replication is essential for knowledge to be deemed reliable. Within this very important constraint, recommendations follow:

- 1) The main effect of skill level suggests theming may be more appropriate for campers who have developed at least intermediate skill in the activity. Introducing a theme to first-timers and novices may exhaust attentional resources needed to learn basic skills. As

people develop skill in a task, their ability to perform the task “automatically,” without large investment of attentional resources increases (Kahneman, 2011).

- 2) The sex-by-age interaction suggests that tendency to co-create theme decreases with age for boys, but not for girls. Perhaps it is productive to theme activities for girls of all ages during youth, but less important to theme activities for older boys.
- 3) The sex-by-activity interaction effect suggests that boys and girls may prefer different types of themes. Research on youth book preferences suggests sex differences in preference for expository vs. narrative themes.
- 4) Future inquiry might identify the “active ingredients” of themes. A theme was present in all “themed” activities, but the imaginary story differed for every activity. Some stories were adventurous and followed a hero’s journey (Campbell, 2008) while others were less detailed.

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When to Theme Camp Experiences? Camper Co-Creation vs. Sole-Creation



Gary Ellis, Jingxian Jiang, Texas A&M
Andrew Lacanienta, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo



INTRODUCTION

We identified camper characteristics associated with co-creation vs. “sole” creation of experiences.

METHODS

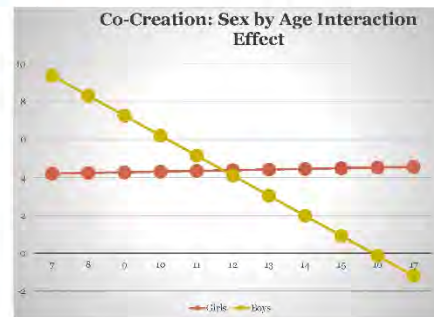
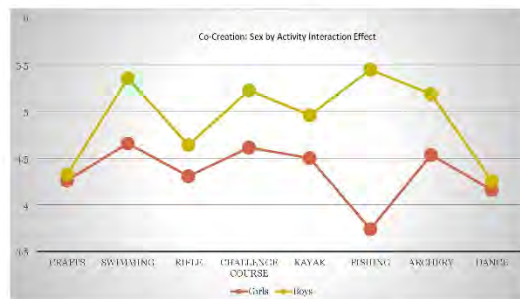
- 4-H Summer Camp
- Camper ages 8-17
- We measured co-creation vs. sole-creation after each of eight activities: challenge course, archery, rifle, kayaking, fishing, crafts, swimming, and dance.

LESSONS TO SHARE....

- ❖ Skill Level Main Effect: Theming may be most appropriate to activities when campers have at least intermediate skill levels
- ❖ Sex-by-Age Interaction Effect: Tendency to co-create diminishes with age for boys, but not girls.
- ❖ Sex-by-Activity Interaction Effect: Boys may prefer different types of themes. In the context of books, boys may like expository books better than narrative books.
- ❖ What are the “active ingredients” of a theme?

RESULTS

Camper Characteristic	F	df ₁	df ₂	p
Sex	4.42	1	210.39	0.04
Activity	4.63	7	1,365.20	<.001
Age	3.70	1	209.90	0.06
Skill Level	19.44	1	1,376.32	<.001
Sex by Activity	2.39	7	1,354.20	0.02
Sex by Age	4.29	1	209.90	0.04
Sex by Skill Level	0.95	1	1,376.32	0.33



2020 ACA Camp Research Forum, San Diego, CA

CASE STUDY: BUILDING RETENTION INTENTIONS OF SUMMER CAMP STAFF THROUGH PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS-BASED REFLECTION EXPERIENCES

Gary Ellis, Jingxian Jiang, Darlene Locke, Jordan Woosley, Linda Co, & Cari Snider, Texas A&M University and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Contact: Gary Ellis, Department of RPTS, 2261 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843.
gellis1(at)tamu.edu

During the planning phase for the summer 2019 sessions of the Texas 4-H camp, managers noted they wished to increase their rate of season-to-season retention of program staff. Managers estimated their retention rate to be 20% for the past few summers and sought to achieve a more-equal balance of returning and new program staff in future summers. Probable causes of attrition were contemplated. Some staff do not return due to major life transitions, such as beginning a career after graduating from college, getting married, or entering graduate school. But, significant numbers of staff remain well-positioned for seasonal employment, yet still choose to pursue seasonal opportunities elsewhere.

The probable reasons for attrition among eligible potential returnees were considered. Fatigue tends to set-in among staff as each summer unfolds. Staff, as a whole, remain fully committed to excellence over the course of the summer, yet the rigors of camp life take their toll. Program staff work long hours, and summertime temperatures in Texas often exceed 100 degrees for several hours each day. Program staff lead, teach, mentor, console, inspire, and manage campers virtually all day and into the evening. They have limited opportunities for relaxed interaction with other young adults. They may miss simple pleasures of daily life, such as snacks that are not part of the regular camp food service offerings. Finally, managers noted that helping staff to notice and celebrate successes resulting from application of their skills and abilities should be rewarding and might help build stronger emotional connections to the camp. Successful application of skills and abilities affirms people's psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Affirmation of placation of psychological needs is highly rewarding experience (Reeve, 2018).

As a step toward addressing the retention challenge and its presumed causes, we created a guided evening reflections program and evaluated its impact on retention intentions of summer staff. The program occurred after hours, when staff were free from responsibilities for directly supervising campers. The guided reflection program included opportunities for adult conversation. Snacks that were not part of the offerings to campers were provided, and a facilitator helped staff members reflect on and acknowledge occasions during the day in which they had successfully exercised their autonomy, competence, and relatedness to solve a problem, capitalize on an opportunity, or enrich the experience of one or more campers. The premise of the reflections program was that recognizing and celebrating instances of meeting program staff's psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness would their increase commitment to the camp and the probability of retention for the summer season of 2020.

Theory and Retention

Staff retention is a significant challenge for many camps. Based on previous research and expert judgement, ACA provides ten "Staff Retention Strategies for Camps" (<https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ujle20/34/2?nav=toCList>). Examples of these include a) ensure that salaries, wages, and benefits are competitive, b) provide an ACA membership, c) provide training, and d) use post-camp interviews to understand staff motives and constraints. Staff retention is also a significant issue in facets of the recreation and hospitality industry other

than camps. Hospitality management research has identified a number of factors affecting retention. Among these are leadership satisfaction (Book, Gatling, & Kim, 2019), talent management strategies (Gupta, 2019), supervisor relations (Afsar, Shahjehan, & Shah, 2018), and management of work-life balance (Deery & Jago, 2015). Research directly linking retention to organismic needs is lacking from that body of literature.

Our strategy for addressing the retention problem was founded in meeting organismic needs, based on self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Self-determination theory maintains that humans have three organismic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Organismic needs are essential “nutriments and environmental supports that all human beings need to thrive” (Reeve, 2018, p. 125). When people lead lives deficient in instances of meeting these needs, severe social and psychological dysfunctions result. Conversely, occasions in which people successfully execute actions that affirm or placate these needs, they feel a highly rewarding sense of gratification and pleasure.

Method

The Texas 4-H Camp provides eight, 2-3 day sessions each summer. The first session begins in mid-June and the last session ends in late July. Summer program staff lead youth through a variety of recreation experiences, including kayaking, archery, swimming, riflery, rock climbing, arts and crafts, dancing, and fishing.

Participants were 20 program staff members, both women and men. All were camp counselors and activity specialists. All were young adults, ages 19-22.

All staff members completed a brief questionnaire at the end of each of the eight camp sessions. The questionnaire included two retention-related questions. One asked staff to estimate their probability of returning next year. The other asked the probability of recommending working at the camp, if asked by a friend. A scale of 0% to 100% followed each question. Staff placed a mark along the line indicating their responses.

An interrupted time-series, quasi-experimental design was used. We implemented the evening reflection program for the last two (of eight) camp sessions. For two evenings of each of these final two camp sessions, program staff assembled in groups of five after completing their daily responsibilities with campers. They relaxed, socialized, and enjoyed refreshments. Two leaders of the reflection program then discussed the autonomy concept with staff members. When shared understanding of that concept was achieved, the leaders asked staff to recall a successful moment during the day that they acted autonomously. A success recalled might be a problem solved, an opportunity seized, or an action resulting in an enriched experience for one or more campers. Staff members shared those stories with their colleagues. The procedure was repeated for the competence and relatedness needs.

We calculated the average intention to return and intention to recommend scores for each session and plotted those means in a time series plot. We calculated R^2 change from a linear (straight line) to quadratic (curve) model to quantify the strength of the relation between time and each of the two dependent variables. The number of data points in the time series (i.e., eight means for each intention) was insufficient for testing hypotheses using inferential statistics.

Results

The means in the time series plot followed the predicted pattern. The initial two sessions produced the highest means, and means of subsequent sessions diminished until we implemented the reflections program for the second to last camp session. Session means increased for that session and for the final session. The means of the last camp session approximated the means from the first two camp sessions. The changes in R^2 from a linear to quadratic model indicated

substantial increases in explained variance. For intention to return, R^2 increased from .12 (linear) to .39 (quadratic), a 225% increase. For intention to recommend, R^2 increased from .32 to .77, an increase of 141% in variance explained.

Results were consistent with the expectation that implementation of a psychological needs-based guided reflections activity would elevate camp staff's intentions to return and recommend. It is very important to note, however, that the interrupted time series design used in this case study controls for very few potentially confounding extraneous factors. In other words, many internal validity threats (e.g., history, maturation, multiple treatment interference, and others) are uncontrolled when an interrupted time series design is used. Nonetheless, results are promising. A future investigation using evaluation designs that better control for extraneous variables is warranted. Future evaluations should also include direct measures of retention.

Implications

This case study resulted in insights about desirable features of an evening reflections program. We offer the following suggestions to camp managers who aspire to create a similar program:

- Hold sessions in quiet area, away from campers.
- Snacks very important. Staff enjoyed eating food other than camp food.
- Facilitators focused conversations on how psychological needs were met.
- Staff discussed each day's highlights. They enjoyed the relaxed, adult conversations.
- Let staff talk as much as they want; it is a conversation.
- Sessions lasted about 30 minutes. Staff seemed to enjoy these very much.

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Case Study: Building Retention Intentions of Summer Camp Staff Through Psychological Needs-Based Reflection Experiences

Gary Ellis, Jingxian Jiang, Darlene Locke, Jordan Woosley, Linda Co, Cari Snider, Texas A&M University and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service



INTRODUCTION

We implemented an evening reflections program for seasonal program staff at a 4-H camp and evaluated the effect of that program on retention-related intentions.

METHOD

Interrupted time-series quasi-experimental design

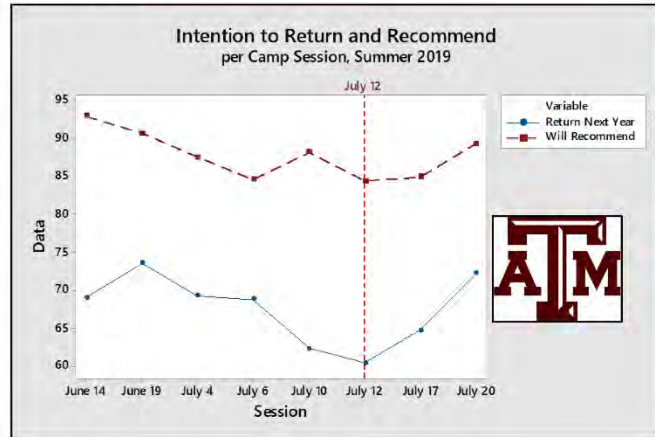
- Measured intention to return and intention to recommend after each of 8 camp sessions
- Last 2 sessions, reflections program implemented, roughly, 8-10 pm.
- Same staff ($n=20$) all summer, 5 staff per reflection; four sessions per night
- Reflections were social experiences.
- Encouraged reflection on occasions that staff psychological needs (autonomy, competence, relatedness) were met.

LESSONS TO SHARE....

- Hold sessions in quiet area, away from campers!
- Snacks very important! Staff enjoyed eating food other than camp food!
- Facilitators focused conversations on how psychological needs were met
- Asked highlights for each day; enjoyed relaxed, adult conversations!
- Let staff talk as much as they want; it is a conversation!
- Sessions lasted about 30 minutes. Staff seemed to enjoy these very much!



RESULTS



Questionnaire

Please estimate the probability of you returning as a staff member next year.

0% ----- 100% certain I
Certain I will not return I will return

Please estimate the probability of you recommending working at this camp, if asked by a friend.

0% ----- 100% certain I
Certain I will not recommend I will recommend

2020 ACA Camp Research Forum, San Diego, CA

THE IMPACT OF CAMP ON SELF-CONCEPT FOR CHILDREN WITH SERIOUS HEALTH CHALLENGES AND THEIR SIBLINGS

Samantha J. Eron, Ashland University

Contact: Samantha J. Eron, Ashland University, Ashland, OH 44805.

eronsamanthaj(at)gmail.com

The history of summer camp can be traced back for over a hundred years. At the age of camp attendance, children are at a critical point in their identity development. The camp experience can allow children to grow in confidence and in turn can shift their self-concept (Krevelen, 1972). For children with serious health challenges attending camp is not always medically or financially possible. Medical specialty camps provide children with health challenges with an opportunity to experience camp in a medically supportive environment, and occasionally free of charge. Some camps also offer this experience for their siblings. But while there is research showing the positive outcomes of camp for children with health challenges, there is little data on the impact of these camps on their siblings. In this study, the goal is to answer the following questions: 1) does summer camp impact the self-concept, 2) is there a difference in the impact of camp on their self-concept between children with health challenges and their siblings?

Conceptual Framework

In Erik Erikson's stage theory, people face eight developmental stages in their life. Of these stages, summer camp participants typically fall into the school age stage or adolescent stage. They are facing the industry versus inferiority crisis or the identity versus role confusion crisis respectively (Erikson, 1968). Children bring these crises with them to camp and various facets of the camp experience help them navigate them. Camps provide opportunities to master new skills and to be surrounded with a supportive peer group which can be helpful in the successful navigation of Erikson's crises.

Self-concept can be defined as the way in which someone perceives their own identity. This perception can include a combination of various identities including ones focused in the past, the present, and the future, and what others think of them (Oyserman, Elmore, & Smith, 2012). Self-concept develops throughout youth development and is relatively stable (Piers, Shemmassian, & Herzberg, 2018). It is possible for experiences, even those lasting less than a week, to have an impact on the self-concept (Krevelen, 1972). The camp experience has been shown to have a positive impact on campers with health challenges including improved attitudes towards illness, self-confidence, supportive relationships, and decreased anxiety (Briery & Rabian, 1999; Desai, Sutton, Staley & Hannon, 2013; Simons et al., 2007).

Methods

Participants are 16 sibling pairs at a medical specialty camp in the summer of 2019. To qualify to participate one sibling was attending a diagnosis specific session and the other was attending the sibling session. The 16 participants attending the diagnosis specific sessions, or campers with health challenges (CWHC) ranged from age 7-17 ($M = 12.7$, $SD = 3.1$, 50% female). The 16 participant sibling campers ranged from age 7-15 ($M = 11.6$, $SD = 2.4$, 68.8% female).

The most reliable way to test the self-concept is through self-reported data. For that reason, I selected the Piers-Harris 3 Self-Concept Assessment for this study. This questionnaire contains 58 yes-or-no questions that generate a numerical score of a person's self-concept. It is intended for ages 6 to 22 and takes 10-15 minutes to complete. The test gives an overall self-

concept score (TOT) ranging from 0-58. This score is broken into six domains of self-concept which can be seen in the following table.

Table 1
Self-concept domains

Domain Name	Abbr.	Score Range	Description
Behavioral Adjustment	BEH	0-10	Measures how the participant views their own behaviors
Freedom from Anxiety	FRE	0-8	Measures a participant's anxiety and dysphoric mood
Happiness and Satisfaction	HAP	0-11	Measures a participant's positive feelings
Intellectual and School Status	INT	0-12	Measures the participant's view of their own intellectual and academic abilities
Physical Appearance and Attributes	PHY	0-6	Measures how the participant views their own physical appearance and attributes (leadership)
Social Acceptance	SOC	0-11	Measures how the participant views their social functioning

I administered the pre-camp surveys during the camper check-in process. After receiving parental permission and prior to completing the survey, I gave participants a clear, developmentally appropriate explanation for the study, ensured them of their confidentiality, and asked for their assent. During the check-out process, I gave participants their post-camp survey, instruction to complete it, and a pre-stamped and addressed envelope to return the survey. The surveys were completed via the paper form.

Results

The scores were subjected to a two-way analysis of variance. The ANOVA revealed that there was a statistically significant main effect of the type of camper (CWHC and sibling), ($F(1,18) = 4.517, p = 0.048$), indicating that the mean total self-concept score was significantly lower for CWHC ($M = 43.556, SD = 11.335$) than their siblings ($M = 50.45, SD = 6.456$). The six domains were also subjected to a mixed factorial ANOVA. The tests revealed a statistically significant main effect of the type of camper in the INT domain ($F(1,18) = 6.957, p = 0.017$), and a statistically significant main effect of the time of testing (pre-camp and post-camp) in the PHY domain ($F(1,18) = 7.826, p = 0.012$).

At pretest, CWHC had a mean TOT score of 43.44 ($SD = 10.19$) and their siblings had a mean TOT score of 49.19 ($SD = 6.86$). A t-test revealed that the CWHC had statistically significantly lower TOT scores than their siblings ($p = 0.035$). Of the 6 domains, t-tests revealed that the CWHC had statistically significantly lower scores than their siblings in the BEH domain ($p = 0.024$) and the INT domain ($p = 0.004$). When compared to normative data, CWHC had significantly lower than average scores in the FRE domain ($z = -1.90, p = .0287$) and in the INT domain ($z = -2.15, p = .0158$). Siblings had significantly higher scores in the BEH domain ($z = 1.88, p = .0301$) and the INT domain ($z = 1.80, p = .0359$).

At posttest, CWHC had a mean TOT score of 43.73 ($SD = 13.35$) and their siblings had a mean TOT score of 52.24 ($SD = 5.24$). A t-test revealed that the CWHC had a statistically significantly lower TOT score than their siblings ($p = 0.036$). In the 6 domains, t-tests revealed that CWHC had statistically significantly lower scores than their siblings in the FRE domain ($p =$

0.038) and the INT domain ($p = 0.010$). When compared to standardized data, siblings had significantly higher than average scores overall ($z = 2.13, p = .0166$), in the BEH domain ($z = 2.40, p = .0082$), and in the INT domain ($z = 1.97, p = .0244$). Siblings were significantly below average in the FRE domain ($z = -1.80, p = .0359$).

Discussion

This study showed that there is an impact of summer camp on the self-concept for children with health challenges and their siblings, specifically in the intellectual and school status domain. This can be attributed to the opportunities children have at camp to learn new things. This can leave them feeling more intelligent post-camp. There is also a significant difference between the overall scores for CWHC and siblings as seen in the main-effect statistic revealed by the ANOVA and the t-tests. This difference in scores can be attributed to the psychosocial impacts of having a health challenge. Comparing the impact of camp on CWHC to the impact on their siblings, there were more areas of growth for the siblings. For CWHC, their overall scores remained non-significantly below the average at pre- and post-test. However, the siblings scores went from being average at pre-test to significantly higher than the average at post-test. In the FRE domain, the siblings scores go from around average to significantly below average. This domain asks questions about sadness, so the feelings about leaving camp could contribute to this decrease in score.

Overall, this study shows that there is an impact of camp on children with health challenges and their siblings. The overall growth and domain specific increases suggest that the impact of camp could be greater for the siblings of CWHC. In practice, camps should consider offering more programming for the siblings of populations served. Camp programs should consider how their programming can make a positive impact on the areas of the self-concept to help children navigate their identity crises. This study was limited by the sample size and the return rate of post-camp surveys. Further studies are necessary to understand what aspects of the camp experience have these impacts on campers and how camps can continue to grow their intentional impact on children.

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The Impact of Summer Camp on Self-Concept Development for Children with Health Challenges and their Siblings

Samantha J. Eron, Ashland University



INTRODUCTION

Camp has been shown to allow children to grow in confidence, which in turn can shift their self-concept. There is research showing the positive outcomes of camp for children with health challenges, but there is little data on the impact of camp on their siblings. The goal of this study was to answer the following questions:

1. Does summer camp impact the self-concept?
2. Is there a difference in the impact of camp on self-concept between children with health challenges and their siblings?

METHODS

- Pre-test and post-test design
- Self-assessment of self concept using the Piers-Harris 3 Self-Concept Assessment
 - 58 yes-or-no questions
 - Overall Score (TOT) ranging from 0-58
 - Gives scores in the following domains:

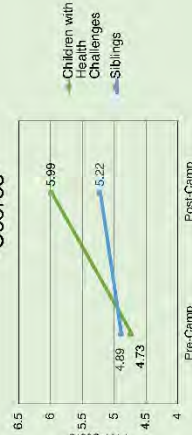
Domain Name	Abbr.	Score Range	Description
Behavioral Adjustment	BEH	0-10	Measures how the participant views their own behaviors
Freedom from Anxiety	FRE	0-8	Measures a participant's anxiety and dysphoric mood
Happiness and Satisfaction	HAP	0-11	Measures a participant's positive feelings
Intellectual and School Status	INT	0-12	Measures the participant's view of their own intellectual and academic abilities
Physical Appearance and Attributes	PHY	0-6	Measures how the participant views their own physical appearance and attributes (leadership)
Social Acceptance	SOC	0-11	Measures how the participant views their social functioning

RESULTS

Domain	Type of Camper	Pre-Test	Post-Test
TOT	CWHC	43.36	43.73
	SIB	51.78	52.78
BEH	CWHC	8.73	8.36
	SIB	9.78	10.00
FRE	CWHC	4.09	4.55
	SIB	6.22	6.56
HAP	CWHC	9.55	9.36
	SIB	11.44	10.56
INT	CWHC	7.73	8.09
	SIB	11.11	11.22
PHY	CWHC	4.73	5.00
	SIB	4.89	5.22
SOC	CWHC	8.55	8.27
	SIB	9.33	9.22

- Statistically significant main effect of type of camper, indicating that the mean total self-concept score was significantly lower for children with health challenges ($M = 43.556$) than for their siblings ($M = 50.48$).
 - $F(1, 18) = 4.517, p = 0.048$
- In the INT domain there was a significant main effect of type of camper, indicating that the mean INT score was significantly lower for children with health challenges ($M = 7.889$) than for their siblings ($M = 10.68$).
 - $F(1, 18) = 6.957, p = 0.017$
- In the PHY domain there was a significant main effect of time of testing, indicating that the mean PHY score was significantly lower at pre-test ($M = 4.80$) than at post-test ($M = 5.10$)
 - $F(1, 18) = 7.826, p = 0.012$

Physical Appearance and Attributes Scores



DISCUSSION & IMPLICATIONS

Camper's self-concept is impacted by the summer camp experience.

The results show several areas in which camper's self-concept was impacted by the camp experience. The physical appearance and attributes domain was the only domain in which there was a significant pre-test to post-test increase. This domain is impacted by the opportunities provided for campers to lead at camp and by the positive recognition given for their personal attributes.

Campers with health challenges had significantly lower scores than their siblings, which is consistent with previous studies that found negative impacts of chronic health conditions on self-concept.

Children with health challenges saw growth in the 'freedom from anxiety domain (FRE) and the intellectual and school status domain, both going from significantly below average to average. This can be explained by the supportive environment that camp provides and the opportunity to learn and master new skills.

Siblings of children with health challenges showed growth in the overall scores (TOT) which went from average to significantly above average. Siblings had significantly above average scores at both pre- and post-test in the behavioral adjustment (BEH) and intellectual and school status (INT) domains, which is consistent with previous studies showing that parents of chronically ill children felt there were increased pressures on siblings to behave well and perform well in school.

Camp programs should consider the positive impacts their programming can have on the different areas of the self-concept to help children navigate their identity crises. Camp programs should offer more programming for the siblings of children served.

Future studies could incorporate qualitative data such as camper interviews, as well as a larger sample size.

STEM CAMPS AS DEVELOPMENTAL CONTEXT: MEDIATIONAL RELATIONS BETWEEN GENDER, CAREER DECIDEDNESS, SOCIOEMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND ENGAGEMENT

Ryan J. Gagnon & Barry A. Garst, Clemson University

Contact: Ryan Gagnon, Clemson University, 276a Lehotsky, Clemson, SC 29634.
rjgagno(at)clemson.edu

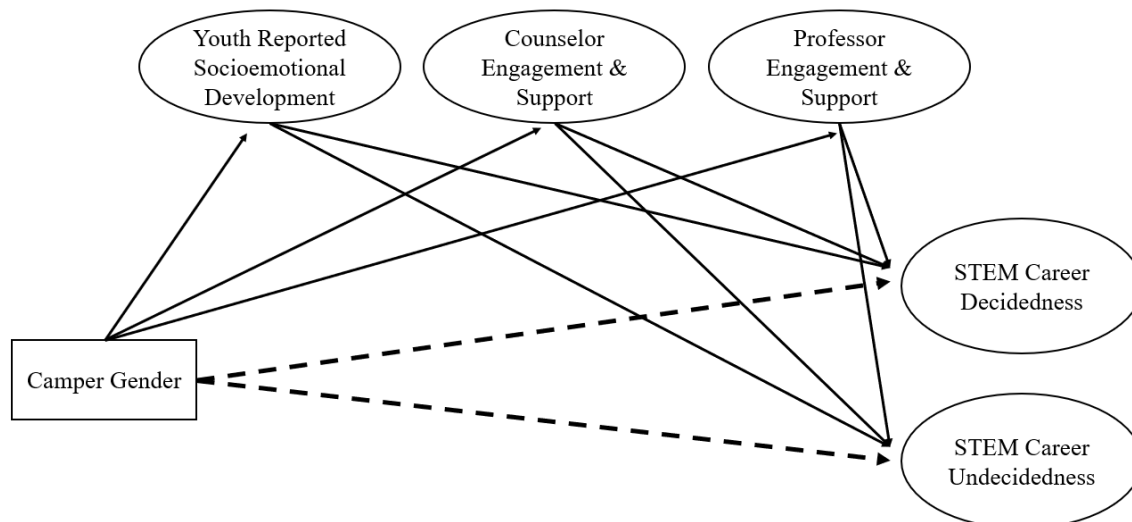
An aggregate of research examining the career fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), indicates a longstanding marginalization of women and people of color (Wang & Degol, 2017). One potential mechanism to reduce gendered marginalization is the use of summer STEM camps (Liben & Coyle, 2014). However, the factors within these programs that promote female aspiration towards a STEM career are less understood. This study examined contextual factors which may explain the relations between gender and STEM career decidedness resulting from STEM camp participation. As illustrated in figure 1, the relationship between gender and STEM career (un)decidedness and potential mediational influences of youth reported socioemotional skill development and counselor/professor engagement and support were examined, to determine how they may account for or enhance the relationship between gender and STEM career (un)decidedness. The present study examined if/how/what factors promoted STEM career decidedness in female campers versus their male counterparts.

Methods

The university-based camp serves as a hands-on STEM experience, where campers engaged with professors in week-long experiments tailored to their interests. Campers stay on-site in campus residence halls, with current university students acting as counselors to guide and mentor campers. Data were collected at the end of seven one-week camps, where campers were asked to complete a paper questionnaire describing their camp experience and responding the measures provided below. The 390 study participants were an average of 15.58 years old, a slight majority of the sample identified as male (51.8%), 69.8% identified as white (69.8%), with the remainder identifying as either African-American (18.7%), Asian origin (5.2%), Hispanic or Latino origin (3.3%), or multiple race (3%).

Figure 1

Proposed Mediation Model



Measures

Youth Reported Socioemotional Skill Development (YRSESD). To assess potential changes in socioemotional skills resulting from the camp experience, the YRSESD scale was utilized (Gagnon & Garst, 2019). The YRSESD is comprised of 21 items reflecting self-reported changes in five factors: (1) communication skills (2) responsibility (3) self-regulation (4) attitude and (5) curiosity, rated on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) format, where higher scores indicate improvement in the corresponding factor. The five subscales demonstrated acceptable levels of internal consistency ($\alpha = .884$ to $.918$).

STEM Career (Un)Decidedness. To assess STEM career decidedness and undecidedness, the career decidedness/commitment scale was utilized (Hirschi, 2009). Specifically, career decidedness assessed the degree to which adolescent beliefs about a potential STEM career path match with their academic interests. Conversely, career undecidedness, assessed how adolescents' beliefs about a potential career have changed. The items were measured on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) Likert style scale, where higher scores indicate improved career decidedness or greater confusion about a potential STEM career path (i.e., career undecidedness). The two subscales exhibited acceptable levels of internal consistency ($\alpha = .771$; $.637$).

Engagement and Support. To measure perceived engagement and support with the camp, two factors were assessed, based upon the Tiffany-Eckenrode Program Participation Scale (TEPPS; Tiffany et al., 2012) camper perceived supportive and engaging (1) camp counselor behaviors and (2) course professor behaviors. All items were measured on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) Likert style scale, where higher scores indicate greater rates of perceived engagement and support. The two subscales exhibited acceptable levels of internal consistency ($\alpha = .836$; $.849$).

To test the study hypotheses, two latent mediational models were examined: a partially mediated model with the direct paths from the study independent variable (IV), camper gender, to the dependent variables (DV), career decidedness and undecidedness included in addition to the mediational paths from camper gender to YRSESD, perceived counselor/professor engagement and support (see figure 1). Second, a fully mediated model was tested with no direct paths between the camper gender and the DVs (see figure 1 dashed paths).

Results & Discussion

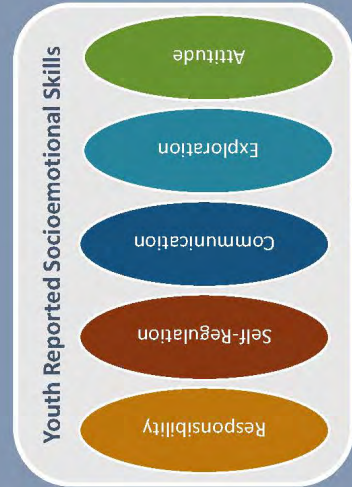
There was no meaningful direct effect of camper gender on career decidedness or undecidedness score, nor evidence of mediational processes. Put differently, there was no statistical difference between males and female STEM career decidedness or undecidedness score, and the mediational variables did not influence this relationship. There are likely complementary explanations for the lack of mediational or direct effects in the present study. Perhaps the most hopeful explanation, the lack of gendered effect could be a result of the systematic and ongoing emphasis towards the development of STEM skills and aspiration within female adolescents (Krishnamurthi, Bevan, Rinehart, & Coulon, 2013). Put differently, the cultural shift towards alleviating longstanding suppression of females from the STEM professions could be working, and camp could be playing an important role. The results may indicate the historical emphases towards equity in camp programs has spilled over into STEM focused camps, allowing stakeholders in the camp industry greater access to resources allotted to those interested in developing STEM capacity in their own camp programs.

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STEM Camp as Developmental Context Examining Gender & Career Decidedness

Ryan Gagnon, Ph.D.
rjgagno@clemson.edu
Barry Garst, Ph.D.
bgarst@clemson.edu
Alex Sandoval, M.S.
asandov@g.clemson.edu



Sample Description
N = 365 Campers
M Age = 15.58
51.8% Male
69.8% White

RQ2: Do socioemotional skills, camp structure, or camp staff behaviors influence STEM Career Decidedness?

A little



RQ3: Do socioemotional skills, camp structure, or camp staff behaviors mediate the relation b/x camper gender and STEM Decidedness/Undecidedness?

No

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No

RQ1: Does camper gender have an influence on STEM Career Decidedness/Undecidedness?

Camper Gender
Male = 0; Female = 1

CFA Model Fit: $S/B\chi^2(695) = 1185.227, p \leq .001, N-NFI = .926, CFI = .934, RMSEA = .043 (90\%, CI .039 \text{ to } .047)$
 Partial Medial Model Fit: $S/B\chi^2(741) = 1368.092, p \leq .001, N-NFI = .905, CFI = .914, RMSEA = .048 (90\%, CI .044 \text{ to } .052)$
 Full Medial Model Fit: $S/B\chi^2(743) = 1369.646, p \leq .001, N-NFI = .905, CFI = .914, RMSEA = .048 (90\%, CI .044 \text{ to } .052)$

PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS OF MEDICAL SPECIALTY CAMP EXPERIENCES INFLUENCING POSITIVE CHANGES IN YOUTH

Barry A. Garst, Ryan J. Gagnon, & Teresa Tucker, Clemson University

Contact: Barry A. Garst, Clemson University, 277 Lehotsky Hall, Clemson, SC 29634.

bgarst(at)clemson.edu

Medical specialty camps (MSCs) serve youth often constrained from attending camp due to a chronic disease, special medical need, or disability (McAuliffe-Fogarty, Ramsing, & Hill, 2007). Research examining MSCs provides evidence of the efficacy of such camps on positive youth outcomes (Moola, Faulkner, White, & Kirsh, 2014). While previous studies of the impact of MSC participation on youth outcomes have primarily been youth-focused (Epstein, Stinson, & Stevens, 2005), fewer studies have examined outcomes of MSC camps from the perspective of parents (Bultas, Steuer, Balakas, Brooks, & Fields, 2015). Furthermore, at a time in which camp researchers seek to identify mechanisms contributing to program outcomes (Henderson, 2018), few studies have assessed MSC program factors that influence positive youth outcomes (Gillard, Witt, & Watts, 2011). Thus, the purposes of this study were to identify: (1) behavioral and socio-emotional changes parents associated with their child's MSC experience, and (2) characteristics of an MSC experience that influenced behavioral and socio-emotional changes in youth based on the perspective of parents.

Method

Data were analyzed from two open-ended questions included on a post-camp online questionnaire distributed to parents whose children attended a one-week, residential MSC camp session. Out of 584 parents who completed the questionnaire, a random sample of 130 responses (22.2%) were selected for analysis (Marshall, 1996). Parents tended to be female (84%); either White (39%) or Latino (13%); and 40-49 years old (47%). Parents were asked, "What, if anything, is different about your child because of their involvement in camp?" and "If you identified something different about your child in the previous question, what do you think caused that change?" The first question primed respondents for the second question (Foddy, 1996). Inductive content analysis proceeded from codes to categories and finally to theme construction, similar to what Yin (2016) described as building a hierarchy. Researcher reflexivity and constant comparative analysis minimized researcher bias (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Results

The first research question was, "What behavioral and socio-emotional changes do parents identify in their children as a result of MSC participation?" Six themes were constructed from the data: increased autonomy (37% of respondents), strengthened relationships (17% of respondents), enhanced empowerment (12% of respondents), greater self and peer acceptance (10% of respondents), increased happiness (16% of respondents), and heightened maturation (6% of respondents). The second research question was, "What characteristics of an MSC experience influenced child behavioral and socio-emotional outcomes?" Five themes were constructed from the data: development of community (64% of respondents), opportunities for personal challenge (11% of respondents), engagement in skill-building programs (11% of respondents), opportunities for exploration (6% of respondents), and self-discovery (4% of respondents). The most common camp characteristic parents identified as influencing positive change in their child was associated with community, which included five sub-themes: shared experiences, supportive staff, positive peer relationships, modeling, and normalization.

Discussion and Implications

This study provides further evidence of positive youth outcomes associated with MSC experiences from the perspective of parents (Bultas et al., 2015), supports prior research on program characteristics of MSC camps that contribute to positive changes in youth (Gillard et al., 2011), and addresses Gillard and Watt's (2013) call for additional studies to validate their findings with other populations and camps. The salience of building youth autonomy as an outcome of MSC experiences in this study echoes Bultas et al.'s (2015) finding that MSC camps fostered youth independence. Further, the prominence of community (and its subthemes) in this study bolsters Gillard et al.'s (2011) "caring connections" (p. 1515) and Gillard and Watt's (2013) "proximity to similar others" (p. 895) as impactful MSC program features.

Several implications for research and practice are suggested. First, practitioners designing MSC experiences can use the constructed themes in this study as a guide for mapping specific camp activities to impactful program characteristics. Second, open-ended questions were well suited for eliciting information about linkages between MSC program processes and outcomes in this study (Patton, 2002), and camp practitioners should consider the use of open-ended questions when constructing parent questionnaires. Third, program characteristics identified in this study can inform MSC program characteristic scale development for research across larger and more representative samples of parents (see Kunz & Grych, 2013).

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Program Characteristics of Medical Specialty Camp Experiences Influencing Positive Changes in Youth

Barry A. Garst, PhD; Ryan J. Gagnon, PhD; & Teresa Tucker, PhD
Clemson University (contact: bgarst@clemson.edu)



Questions

RQ#1: What behavioral and socio-emotional changes do parents identify in their children as a result of MSC participation?

RQ#2: What characteristics of a MSC experience influenced child behavioral and socio-emotional outcomes?

Findings

Changes: Autonomy-37%, relationships-17%, empowerment-12%, self and peer acceptance-10%, happiness-16%, maturation-6%

Characteristics: Opportunities for: community-building-64%, personal challenge-11%, skill-building activities-11%, exploration-6%, self-discovery-4%

Implications

(1) Use themes to map MSC camp activities to impactful program characteristics. (2) Include open-ended questions in parent surveys to inform linkages between MSC program processes and outcomes. (3) Develop MSC program characteristics scale for research w/larger, more representative samples

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE DEFINING MOMENTS OF SUMMER CAMP EXPERIENCES

Barry A. Garst, Clemson University & Anja Whittington, Radford University
Contact: Barry A. Garst, Clemson University, 277 Lehotsky Hall, Clemson, SC 29634.
bgarst(at)clemson.edu

One way to consider what happens to youth during camp is through the lens of experience, defined as “the intersection of the person with the life-world” (Jarvis, 2006, p. 27). Within the camp literature, most studies of camp experience have examined structured experiences (Ellis, Freeman, Jiang, & Lacanienta, 2019) as opposed to subjective/aesthetic and discrete/episodic moments that comprise experiences (Duerden et al., 2018). These moments may be rich in expressions of emotions, feelings, and cognitions; may involve elevation, insight, pride, and connection (Heath & Heath, 2017); or may reflect characteristic peaks and lows (Miron-Shatz, 2009), and as such may help program providers design impactful camp programs (Svabo & Shanks, 2015). Understanding such “defining moments” (Heath & Heath, 2017) may also provide insights into linkages between program components (what we deliver) and program outcomes (what youth receive). Because limited research exists on subjective, defining moments within camp contexts, the purpose of this study was to identify defining moments of camp experiences and examine camp program elements in which these moments occur.

Method

A purposeful sample of early adolescents aged 12-15 who attended a one-week residential summer camp in the Mid-Atlantic United States for two years or more was recruited to participate in this study in cooperation with camp administrators. Out of forty-five youth who were recruited, 21 campers participated (RR=46%) in semi-structured interviews on the last day of camp via Zoom®. Interview questions included, “What was your most memorable and meaningful experience this week?” Participants tended to be female (66%), white (66%), between 12-14 years old (mean age = 13), with an average of 4.2 years of camp experience.

Before data analysis, the research team acknowledged positionality (Bourke, 2014) and read each transcript to become familiar with the data. Next, participant responses from each transcript were segmented into codes using directed content analysis in which theory (e.g., the peak/end rule; Kahneman, Fredrickson, Schreiber, & Redelmeier, 1993) guided identification of the codes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The research team independently coded 20% of the transcripts and then assessed agreement across codes to develop a shared codebook used to code all of the transcripts (i.e., investigator triangulation; Creswell & Miller, 2000). Codes were organized into subthemes based on relationships between codes and themes were constructed to create a final narrative.

Results

The first research question was, “How do campers describe defining moments of the camp experience?” and the second research question was, “What elements of camp experiences elicit characteristics associated with defining moments?” Four themes were constructed to provide insight into these research questions, including: *Theme #1: Moments within novel, ritualized activities enriched through tradition*, *Theme #2: Moments involving friendship-building, often with genuine self-expression*, *Theme #3: Moments reflecting personal challenge, greater awareness, and achievement*, and *Theme #4: Moments reflecting positivity, enthusiasm, and altruism by members of the camp community often accompanied by feelings of safety*. These

themes suggested that moments involving novelty, challenge, friend-making, tradition, achievement, positivity, and safety were most salient.

Discussion and Implications

The study findings support the experience literature in several ways. First, defining moments reflected subjective and discrete elements of both ordinary and extraordinary experiences (Bhattacharjee & Mogilner, 2014). Furthermore, defining moments evoked two of Duerden et al.'s (2018) three dimensions of extraordinary experiences: being memorable and meaningful. Second, defining moments in this study supported Heath and Heath's (2017) conceptualization of these moments as characterized by elevation (e.g., fun and exhilaration during camp activities), insight (e.g., awareness and expression of one's identity), pride (e.g., recognized personal achievement), and connection (e.g., strengthening of peer relationships). Third, defining moments in this study reflected Dipeolu et al.'s (2016) characteristics of camp experiences (e.g., fun, structured, personal/social, self-acceptance, and extraordinary).

This study can help camp practitioners consider how camp experiences might be designed to achieve maximum impact. For instance, based on the study findings novelty, challenge, friend-making, tradition, achievement, positivity, and safety should be considered as the most salient defining moments of camp experiences. Working backwards, camp practitioners can determine how these moments can be engineered into camp experiences. By focusing on discrete, episodic elements of experiences (and by training staff to think about defining moments when planning activities), practitioners may be more likely to create memorable and meaningful experiences (Miron-Shatz, 2009). In addition, using an approach designed to target defining moments, practitioners not working in a camp setting may be empowered to recreate camp "magic" in settings (e.g., afterschool or faith-based programs) where providing a more conventional camp experience is not feasible. Indeed, many of the dimensions of camp experiences often described as unique to camps may indeed reflect defining moments that, if identified, may be easier to replicate across settings.

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Defining Moments of Summer Camp Experiences

Subjective, episodic portions of experiences rich in expressions of emotions, feelings, and cognitions that may involve elevation, insight, pride, and connection (Duerden et al., 2018; Heath & Heath, 2017).

RQ#1: How do campers describe defining moments of the camp experience?

RQ#2: What elements of camp experiences elicit characteristics associated with defining moments?

How data were collected: Conversations with campers via Zoom. Campers were 66% female; 66% white; Avg age = 13; Avg yrs. of camp exp = 4

Theme #1: Moments comprising novel, ritualized activities enriched through tradition

Theme #2: Moments involving friendship-building, most often with genuine self-expression

Theme #3: Moments reflecting personal challenge, greater awareness, and achievement

Theme #4: Moments reflecting expressions of positivity, enthusiasm, and altruism by peers/staff, often accompanied by feelings of safety.

How you can use this research: Assess camp activities to identify “defining moments”; Design camp experiences by paying attention to these discrete elements of camp activities

CLEMSON

BEHAVIORAL
SOCIAL
HEALTH SCIENCES

BUILDING PEOPLE
& COMMUNITIES

Barry A. Garst, Ph.D., Clemson University
Anja Whittington, Ed.D., Radford University
(contact bgarst@clemson.edu)

ACA YOUTH IMPACT STUDY: SERIOUSFUN CHILDREN’S NETWORK

Ann Gillard, SeriousFun Children’s Network & Cait Wilson, YouGov

Contact: Ann Gillard at [anngillard\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:anngillard(at)gmail.com)

Understanding the potential of camp to influence the well-being of children and youth has been a topic of research for many years (Bialeschki, Henderson, & James, 2007; Dimock, 1937; Henderson, Bialeschki, & James, 2007; Henderson, Whitaker, Bialeschki, Scanlin, & Thurber, 2007). Recent research from the American Camp Association (ACA) has indicated camp can be a setting for social-emotional learning and character development-related outcomes (Wilson, Akiva, Sibthorp, & Browne, 2019; Wilson & Sibthorp, 2019). Children and youth experiencing serious and life-limiting illnesses such as cancer, heart disease, or multiple conditions have been shown to benefit from participation in recreational summer camps (Odar, Canter, & Roberts, 2013; Wu, McPhail, Mooney, Martiniuk, & Amylon, 2016).

However, what is less known is how these positive outcomes might be sustained into young adulthood. Understanding how camp might make a difference in people’s lives is a topic of great interest to the camp profession. Addressing this need in 2018, ACA worked with several groups of camps to explore (1) outcomes reported by former campers that were distinct to camp and important to their lives today, and (2) camp mechanisms that helped them develop these outcomes. One of the groups that worked with ACA was the SeriousFun Children’s Network which is a global organization of medical specialty camps serving children with serious illnesses and their families. Exploring the outcomes associated with participation in a medical specialty camp was an important effort for SeriousFun because doing so had implications for program improvement and communications with stakeholders.

The purpose of this study was to investigate former campers’ long-term outcomes from participating in SeriousFun camps, and the program elements at camp that supported the development of outcomes. A second purpose was to explore potential differences between the SeriousFun sample and two nationally representative samples collected by ACA: 1) former campers not positively biased toward camp recruited through an online panel (“panel sample”) and 2) former campers intending to work as a counselor the upcoming summer recruited through summer camps (“former camper sample”).

Theoretical Framework

Developmental Systems Theory (DST) was used in this study to consider the processes between campers and their camp context. According to DST, the nature of the systems in which campers are embedded likely has bearing on their development (Lerner et al., 2014). As Lerner and colleagues (2014) suggest, youth development programs are important resources to enhance the likelihood of youth thriving.

Methods

Participants in the study were 195 former SeriousFun campers aged 18-25 from the United States, Ireland, and Hungary. Using convenience sampling, eight camps from these countries sent study invitations to potential study participants. Participants completed an online retrospective questionnaire containing ten-point scales to measure the role summer camp had on developing each of 18 outcomes (e.g., relationship skills, teamwork, how to live with peers, responsibility), the importance of these outcomes in participants’ daily life, and open-ended questions about respondents’ primary learning from camp and why they responded that way.

Data were cleaned and screened for univariate outliers, and people with missing data were removed from the dataset. Descriptive statistics were performed to measure the role of

camp in developing the learning outcomes and the importance the learning outcomes had in daily life. Examination of confidence intervals was used to analyze differences between SeriousFun data and data from the two nationally representative samples.

Results

SeriousFun Camp Outcomes and Program Elements

Outcomes most distinctly learned at camp (i.e., camps’ role in development) and useful in the daily lives of former SeriousFun campers are located in Figure 1. These means were higher than the average mean for all 18 outcomes ($M = 8.07$ for camps’ role in development, $M = 8.63$ for importance in daily life). SeriousFun camps’ role in development ranged from 6.99 (organization) to 8.91 (living in the moment). The importance of the outcomes in daily life ranged from 7.53 (how to live with peers) to 9.21 (perseverance).

Figure 1

Outcomes most distinctly learned at camp and useful in the daily lives of former SeriousFun campers

Outcome	SeriousFun camps’ role in development mean (95% confidence interval lower/upper)	Importance in daily life mean (95% confidence interval lower/upper)
Appreciation for diversity	8.81 (8.53/9.09)	9.15 (8.97/9.32)
Living in the moment	8.91 (8.65/9.17)	8.72 (8.48/8.95)
Empathy and compassion	8.63 (8.34/8.91)	8.93 (8.71/9.16)
Perseverance	8.46 (8.15/8.78)	9.21 (9.03/9.39)
Self-confidence	8.33 (8.00/8.66)	8.97 (8.76/9.17)
Self-identity	8.26 (7.93/8.59)	9.17 (8.98/9.36)

Camp program elements supporting the development of these outcomes were predominantly *people* (peers and particularly staff). One respondent said, “the counselors allowed us to feel normal despite us being different from everyone else.” Another said, “being around other people who had similar ailments as me” was important for their learning.

National Samples

Some statistically significant differences emerged between the SeriousFun sample and the nationally representative samples regarding camps’ role in development and the importance of outcomes in everyday life. The SeriousFun sample had higher means compared to both samples for camps’ role in developing relationship skills, teamwork, how to live with peers, empathy and compassion, organization, perseverance, career orientation, self-identity, self-confidence, appreciation for diversity, willingness to try new things, living in the moment, and leisure skills. The SeriousFun sample had higher means than both samples for the importance in daily life of teamwork, empathy and compassion, organization, responsibility, perseverance, career orientation, self-confidence, and appreciation for diversity.

Camp Applications

This study investigated former campers’ long-term outcomes from SeriousFun camps and found six outcomes particularly connected to camp and important in daily life. Further, many outcomes from SeriousFun camps were higher than outcomes from the two national samples, indicating SeriousFun camps could be uniquely important for the population of children with serious illnesses. Children with serious illnesses or disabilities sometimes see themselves as different than the norm outside of camp (Devine & Dawson, 2010; Gillard, Witt, & Watts, 2011)

and could feel it is especially important to appreciate diversity and have empathy and compassion for others who are different. Exposure to others with serious illnesses can be an especially powerful driver of feelings of empathy and compassion. Encountering peers with similar circumstances at camp might also support self-identity exploration. Perseverance and self-confidence are two vital qualities in coping with serious illness.

People at camp (especially staff) were reported to be primary drivers of these outcomes. Camps should devote more resources to bolstering the staff element, such as increasing pay and other benefits, training, and incentives for staff to return. Considering developmental systems theory, staff members comprise the camp element who shape and create the developmental setting for children (Lerner, 2018).

Caution should be used when interpreting the results of this study because the SeriousFun sample contained responses from people in other countries (unlike the nationally representative United States samples). More research is needed about how outcomes might be qualitatively different between children with and without serious illnesses, and how people at camp influence the developmental setting and promote positive youth outcomes.

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ACA YOUTH IMPACT STUDY: SERIOUSFUN CHILDREN'S NETWORK

Ann Gillard,
Ph.D., SeriousFun
Children's
Network &
Cait Wilson,
Ph.D., YouGov

Background
Medical specialty
camps
Developmental
Systems Theory
Online survey
N = 195 former
campers

Purpose 1: Investigate former campers' long-term outcomes from participating in SeriousFun camps, and the program elements at camp that supported the development of outcomes.

Purpose 2: Explore potential differences between the SeriousFun sample and two nationally representative samples collected by ACA.

Outcome	Over Mean for Role in Development (M= 8.07)	Higher than other samples	Over Mean for Importance in Daily Life (M= 8.63)	Higher than other samples
Appreciation for diversity	↑	↑	↑	↑
Living in the moment	↑	↑	↑	↑
Empathy and compassion	↑	↑	↑	↑
Perseverance	↑	↑	↑	↑
Self-confidence	↑	↑	↑	↑
Self-identity	↑	↑	↑	↑
Teamwork	↑	↑	↑	↑
Organization	↑	↑	↑	↑
Career orientation	↑	↑	↑	↑
Willingness to try new things	↑	↑	↑	↑
How to live with peers	↑	↑	↑	↑
Leisure skills	↑	↑	↑	↑
Relationship skills	↑	↑	↑	↑
Responsibility	↑	↑	↑	↑

Program Elements: *people (peers and particularly staff)*



Implications

SeriousFun camps could be uniquely important for the population of children with serious illnesses.

Build on opportunities for Appreciating diversity
Exposure to similar others
Nurturing qualities needed to cope with serious illness

Bolster staff

FAMILY DIABETES CAMPS: EVALUATING THE EXPERIENCE OF CAMPERS AND PARENTS

Brendan Kane, Taylor McIntosh, Alex Bitterman, Christina Viglietta, Rowan Williams Eddie Hill, Old Dominion University, & Ron Ramsing, Western Kentucky University
Contact: Eddie Hill, Old Dominion University, Student Recreation Center, Room 2014, Norfolk, VA 23529. ehill(at)odu.edu

A tradition for many, summer camps now serve over 14 million youth annually (American Camp Association, 2013). For youth living with type 1 diabetes, the benefits of camp are significant especially for those who have limited access to recreation experiences (Hill et al., 2015; Ramsing & Sibthorp, 2008). A variant of traditional camp, medical specialty camps, provide youth with the ability to learn, explore, build confidence, and bond with peers who share the same unique, chronic condition (McAuliffe-Fogarty, Ramsing & Hill, 2007). Medical specialty camps that involve the campers' family in the camping experience provide an additional and unique opportunity for growth and independence (American Diabetes Association, 2015). There has been an increase in the use of non-clinical medical specialty camps to positively influence youth within unique population groups like youth with cancer and diabetes (e.g., Hill et al., 2015). Research suggests that proper maintenance and regimen adherence through good glycemic control are essential skills needed to avoid micro and macrovascular complications (American Diabetes Association, 2018). Self-determination theory (SDT) provides a strong framework for medical camps and has been used in other healthcare and motivation research (Deci & Ryan, 2004). Medical specialty camps provide an opportunity for parents to comfortably rely on medical professionals for support and care for their child during camp. The diabetes camp for this current study, however, encouraged family members to actively engage in and participate throughout the experience. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the experience of campers and parents regarding friendship skills, perceived confidence, and independence after participation in family diabetes camp.

Theoretical Framework

The use of SDT plays an essential role in helping to frame what is imperative for growth (Deci & Ryan, 2004). For youth with type 1 diabetes, independence with diabetes self-managements and engaging in a healthy lifestyle are necessary nutrients for positive development. Applied to SDT, motivation may be enhanced when the three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fulfilled (Deci & Ryan, 2004; Deci & Ryan, 2000). Deci and Ryan (2004) describe autonomy as "acting from interest and integrated values" (p. 8). They go on to explain that competence helps to promote challenges that fit one's ability and relatedness being the need for an individual to feel as though they can connect with another individual by having common circumstances. By intentionally programming these three aspects into family diabetes camp, participants have the opportunity to develop these skills to feel more competent and independent when managing their diabetes, while also developing meaningful and lasting friendships with youth who have a similar diagnosis.

Methods

In 2019, a volunteer-based camp provided a recreation experience for 38 youth with diabetes and 33 parents. Grounded in SDT, the camp was designed in collaboration with a university, diabetes center, and the Lions Club. Using SDT, specific camp components were intentional engineered and driven by the theory (e.g., choice time may be associated with autonomy, fostering relations akin to relatedness, diabetes education providing opportunities for

competence). This allowed specific measures grounded in SDT to be effective outcomes to measure. The camp included components of a traditional camp, diabetes workshops, and parent sessions that provide families the opportunity to share common experiences and choice in certain experiences. The camp was designed to emphasize the importance of self-management, and challenge campers through activities with the intent to transfer skills learned to persevere through the daily challenges of living with diabetes. Data were collected utilizing the American Camping Association's (ACA) Youth Outcome Battery (YOB)-Detailed Version, specifically measuring friendship skills; perceived confidence, and independence (to mirror SDT). The ACA-YOB was administered at the end of the three-day program in the camp cabins, proctored by the camp counselors. The parent-version was administered by camp directors at the end of the second Parent Support Group (day 3). The retrospective scales measure gains through the camp experience. To explore the parents', view the same outcomes were examined along with (competence, independence, and friendship) the YOB Parent Perceptions scale.

Results

Thirty-eight campers and thirty-three parents participated in the study. The camper mean age was 9.5 years old with 63% being female and 58% Caucasian. The average length of time since diagnosis was 2.8 years with a self-reported HbA1c of 10. On a 10-point Likert type scale with 10 being the highest level of enjoyment, the campers' average was 9.5. Campers' favorite activity was horseback riding. Using the ACA-YOB preformulated Excel sheet automatically computes change scores for campers and parents' perception. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of campers felt "friendship skills" increased after camp. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of campers felt "more competent" after camp. Eighty-seven percent (87%) of campers felt "independence skills" were higher after camp. The majority of parents were female (58%) and Caucasian (67%). On a scale 1-10 regarding level of enjoyment, parents' average was also 9.5. Parents' favorite activity was rock climbing. Parents completed the questionnaires on the same three outcomes (e.g., friendship skills) immediately following camp. Nearly all parents (94%) observed their child "increased some" in all three outcomes. Friendship skills had the highest observed mean score among parents.

Discussion and Implications

Youth living with diabetes have a need for the camp experience as evidenced by the ADA's three-year study of diabetes camp benefits that indicates an increase in overall diabetes management (ADA, 2015). Results from the current study demonstrate campers making gains in all three outcomes: friendship, competence, and independence after camp. These findings are supported by other diabetes camp research grounded in resiliency and self-determination theories (Hill, Reifschneider, Ramsing, Turnage, & Goff, 2019). The current study added the familial component; a necessary support for healthy diabetes management among youth (ADA, 2018). When youth make gains at camp, the goal is transference where they will continue to demonstrate the skills at home by taking an increased responsibility of their diabetes (i.e. competence). The family camp is an opportunity for camp professionals to share programming skills with medical staff involved three-day camp.

The parents' insight can help to further demonstrate the impacts associated with families as they engage in the camp experience. Previous research at family diabetes camp demonstrated positive perceptions of parents while at camp (Allen, Hill, Smith, & Ramsing, 2019), but limited research has explored identical outcomes of parents and campers at family diabetes camp. This study demonstrated growth in same outcomes from campers and parents. The ACA originally developed the Youth Outcomes Battery for non-medical camps, but the YOB can be easily

applied to medically based camps (Hill et al., 2015). As more medical specialty camps seek evidence-based practice, the ACA-YOB can provide a variety of measures to address many outcomes.

The findings from this study support the idea that intentional camp programming (i.e., SDT) may yield positive outcomes for youth in medical specialty camps. When needs for autonomy (e.g., choice making at camp), competence (e.g. diabetes education), and relatedness (e.g. friendships with youth living with the same disease) are fulfilled, youth are better positioned to self-manage their diabetes. Moreover, camps that include parents/guardians in programs where they can see their child(ren) excel and succeed are perhaps positioned to aid in the transference of skills gleaned in camp to the day-to-day living. Finally, camp professionals that utilize intentional theory-based programming grounded in SDT are simultaneously serving two key stakeholder groups – youth and parents/guardians, thereby enhancing the benefits of camp to a larger audience. Further research is needed on the longitudinal gains and transference once they leave camp.

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Family Diabetes Camps: Evaluating the Experience of Campers and Parents

Brendan Kane, Taylor McIntosh, Alex Bitterman, Christina Viglietta, Rowan Williams, Eddie Hill, Old Dominion University, & Ron Ramsing, Western Kentucky University

INTRO

- For youth with type 1 diabetes, independence with diabetes self-managements and engaging in a healthy lifestyle are necessary nutrients for positive development.
- Self-determination may be enhanced when the three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fulfilled (Deci & Ryan, 2004; Deci & Ryan, 2000).
- Intentionally programming these three aspects into an experience, participants may develop these skills to feel more competent and independent when managing their diabetes, while also developing meaningful and lasting friendships with youth who have a similar diagnosis (Hill et al., 2019).



METHODS

- Volunteer-based camp provided a recreation experience for 38 youth with diabetes and 33 parents.
- This was a three day family diabetes camp.
- Using self-determination theory as a framework, specific camp components were intentionally engineered (e.g., choice time may be associated with autonomy, fostering relations akin to relatedness, diabetes education providing opportunities for competence).
- Data were collected utilizing the ACA Youth Outcome Battery (YOB): Detailed Version to measure: friendship skills, perceived confidence, and independence (to mirror SDT).
- The ACA-YOB parent-version was administered by camp directors at the end of the second Parent Support session (day 3). The same outcomes were examined along with competence, independence, and friendship) the YOB Parent Perceptions scale.
- The retrospective scales measure gains through the camp experience.



When needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fulfilled, youth are better positioned to self-manage their diabetes.



RESULTS

- 38 campers participated in the study.
- Mean age = 9.5 years; 63% female and 58% Caucasian
- The average length of time since diagnosis was 2.8 years with a self-reported HbA1c of 10
- 89% of campers felt "friendship skills" increased after camp
- 97% of campers felt "more competent" after camp
- 87% of campers felt "independence skills" were higher after camp
- 33 parents participated in the study
- The majority of parents were female (88%) and Caucasian (67%)
- On a scale 1-10 regarding level of enjoyment, parents' average was also 9.5. Parents' favorite activity was rock climbing
- Parents completed the ACA-YOB questionnaire on the same three outcomes (e.g., friendship skills) immediately following camp
- Nearly all parents (94%) observed their child "increased some" in all three outcomes; friendship skills had the highest observed mean score among parents



DISCUSSION

- Results from the current study demonstrate campers making gains in all three outcomes: friendship, competence, and independence after camp.
- Findings are supported by other diabetes camp research grounded in resiliency and self-determination theories (Hill et al., 2019).
- The current study added the familial component; a necessary support for healthy diabetes management among youth (ADA, 2018).
- Parents' insight can help to further demonstrate the impacts associated with families as they engage in the camp experience.
- The findings from this study support the idea that intentional camp programming may yield positive outcomes for youth in medical specialty camps.
- When needs for autonomy (e.g., choice making at camp), competence (e.g. diabetes education), and relatedness (e.g. friendships with youth living with the same disease) are fulfilled, youth are better positioned to self-manage their diabetes.

IMPACTS OF A RESIDENT CAMP EXPERIENCE ON THE LIVES OF MILITARY-CONNECTED YOUTH

Debra J. Jordan, East Carolina University

Contact: Deb Jordan, 2406 Belk Building, 300 Curry Court, Greenville, NC 27858.
jordand(at)ecu.edu

Boice (2018) noted that having a parent in the military can often make a child feel different from everyone else; many military-connected children feel alone and believe that no one understands what it is like to have a parent in the military—particularly when a parent is ill, injured, or has died as a result of their military service. Camp Corral (CC) is a one-week residential camp program designed for children of injured, ill, or fallen service members. Its mission is to transform the lives of military-connected children by providing a unique summer camp experience. Based on this camp experience for military connected youth the purpose of this study was to explore two concepts: 1) perceptions of campers regarding the impact of attending CC, and 2) what campers found to be most important about the CC experience.

Theoretical Foundations

Positive Youth Development (PYD) is an approach to understanding young people from an asset, rather than deficit, approach. It emphasizes the strengths of youth and the idea that every young person has the potential for successful, healthy development. Gootman and Eccles (2001) developed a list of eight program features that promote outcomes associated with PYD. The list of eight PYD program features includes: physical and psychological safety, clear and consistent structure and appropriate adult supervision, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, pro-social norms, support for efficacy and mattering, opportunities for skill building, and integration of family, school, and community efforts. Later, Lerner (2004) proposed three additional characteristics that form the foundation of PYD programs: (1) positive and sustained youth–adult relations, (2) life-skill building activities, and (3) opportunities for youth participation as leaders in family, school, and community activities. These characteristics commonly form the bedrock of resident camps.

Griffiths (2019) noted that intentionally designed youth camps have been associated with an increase in PYD, which can include resilience, coping skills, social skills, self-awareness, physical activity, and leadership. Additional outcomes from participation in a military youth camp have been identified, such as increased confidence, competence, independence, personal growth, and coping skills. In addition, making new friends and seeing friends from previous years were the greatest benefits of attending camp. In one study, both campers and parents mentioned increases in child connections, communication, and coping skills, all of which are elements of PYD (Clary & Ferrari, 2015).

Methods

This was an applied mixed-methods research project through which I analyzed secondary data collected by the CC program. More than 3,000 youth (3,248) completed an end-of-camp survey; 53% of them were girls. The age range was 8 to 15 years old with a mean age of 11.5. The survey included quantitative items and one open-ended question. Demographic items included gender and age; other categorical data collected included the number of years a camper attended Camp Corral and a desire to return. SPSS was used for all analyses.

A principal components factor analysis was applied to the instrument and I found a four-factor solution considering only those items with factor loadings above .400 and Eigenvalues greater than 1. The four-factor solution accounted for 64% of the variance with factor 1 making

up 41.5%, factor 2 contributing 8.9%, factor 3 added 7.9% and factor 4 constituting 5.7% of the variance.

The four factors were labeled: Connection to Peers, Self-Confidence, Perceived Counselor Support, and Coping Skills. The reliability of the overall instrument was high at .93; the reliability for each factor was ascertained and those reliability scores were also satisfactory (Connection to Peers = .87, Self-Confidence = .82, Perceived Counselor Support = .87, and Coping Skills = .81). Demographic data were examined and t-tests and ANOVAs (as appropriate) were conducted to determine within sample differences based on the four factors. Responses to the open-ended question provided qualitative data; responses were examined using thematic analysis. I first familiarized myself with the data, coded those data with apparent themes, reviewed the themes and content for fit, and labeled the themes as independent constructs.

Results

Demographic data were limited to gender and age while additional categorical data asked about previous overnight camp attendance, number of times a camper had been to Camp Corral, and a desire to return to a Camp Corral program. An independent t-test was conducted to compare the four factors based on gender. Significant differences were found for all four factors at the .001 level with the mean score for girls being greater than that of boys for each construct. Girls ($M = 4.42$, $SD = .64$) demonstrated a greater Connection to Peers than did boys ($M = 4.15$, $SD = .78$) $t(3244) = -10.89$. Girls ($M = 4.30$, $SD = .63$) also expressed a higher sense of Self-Confidence than did boys ($M = 4.25$, $SD = .69$) $t(3243) = -2.0$. Girls ($M = 4.59$, $SD = .58$) scored higher on the factor, Perceived Counselor Support, than did boys ($M = 4.42$, $SD = .67$) $t(3243) = -7.6$. And, on the fourth factor, girls ($M = 3.87$, $SD = .98$) had higher scores for Coping Skills than did boys ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 1.13$) $t(3213) = -10.33$.

An ANOVA was conducted to explore the impact of age on each of the four factors. Participants were divided into four age groups. Group 1 was comprised of 8-9 year olds ($n = 671$, 20.4%); Group 2 included those aged 10-11 years ($n = 983$, 29.9%); Group 3 was included 12-13 year olds ($n = 979$, 29.6%); and Group 4 were the 14-15 year olds ($n = 650$, 19.7%). Statistical significance was found for the four age groups and each of the factors: Connection to Peers $F(3, 3277) = 17.04$; Self-Confidence $F(3, 3275) = 4.55$; Perceived Counselor Support $F(3, 3276) = 7.23$; and Coping Skills $F(3, 3245) = 13.39$.

Post hoc tests using the Tukey HSD elicited differences in Connection to Peers between Group 1 ($M = 4.23$, $SD = .75$) and Group 4 ($M = 4.46$, $SD = .65$; $p = .001$). Further, Group 2 ($M = 4.21$, $SD = .74$) differed from Groups 3 ($M = 4.32$, $SD = .72$) and 4 ($M = 4.45$, $SD = .65$, $p = .007$); and, Group 3 ($M = 4.32$, $SD = .72$) differed from Group 4 ($M = 4.45$, $SD = .65$, $p = .001$). In terms of Self-Confidence, Group 1 ($M = 4.34$, $SD = .63$) differed from Group 3 ($M = 4.22$, $SD = .68$, $p = .002$). No other statistically significant differences were found for this factor. For the construct, Perceived Counselor Support, Group 1 ($M = 4.46$, $SD = .63$) differed from Group 4 ($M = 4.61$, $SD = .56$, $P = .001$); Group 2 differed from Group 4 ($M = 4.61$, $SD = .56$, $p = .001$); and Group 3 ($M = 4.50$, $SD = .66$) differed from Group 4 ($M = 4.61$, $SD = .56$, $p = .005$). In addition, differences in Coping Skills were found between Group 1 ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 1.06$) and Group 4 ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 1.01$, $p = .01$). Group 2 ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 1.10$) differed from both Group 3 ($M = 3.71$, $SD = 1.05$) and Group 4 ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 1.01$, $p = .002$). Lastly, Group 3 differed from Group 4 ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 1.01$, $p = .006$).

The number of years a respondent had attended CC was explored by the four factors. The number of youth attending camp for the first time was 1150 (35.2%); 2 times: $n = 843$ (25.7%); 3

times: $n = 532$ (16.3%); and more than 3 times: $n = 747$ (22.8%). An ANOVA was applied and differences were found for Connection to Peers ($p = .001$), I found that 1st time attendees ($M = 4.26$) were different than 4+ year ($M = 4.40$) participants; those attending for the 2nd time ($M = 4.28$) differed from those at camp 4+ years ($M = 4.40$). Similarly, for those for whom this was the third year at camp ($M = 4.23$) differed from those who were at camp 4+ years ($M = 4.40$)

The one opened item asked, “What was the most important thing to you about Camp Corral?” and six themes emerged from the data. While it is not possible to analyze qualitative data through quantitative statistical analyses, by looking at the percentages of times mentioned, it appeared as though all ages valued meeting new people and making friends at camp equally. This was the most frequently mentioned theme. The next most frequently mentioned theme was feeling safe and not being judged by others; this, too, was mentioned relatively equally by youth of all ages. Being with other military-connected youth was the third most frequently mentioned importance of CC and the older children mentioned this more frequently than did the youngest age group (24% vs 16% of mentions). Having fun was most often mentioned by the youngest age group (21% vs 14% and 13%) as was the opportunity to escape a challenging home life (7% vs 5% and 3%). Lastly, trying new things (the activities) were mentioned equally by all age groups.

Implications

When implementing camping programs for military connected youth programmers might consider the utilization of strategic planning efforts to optimize experiences for boys (for the four factors), provision of structured and facilitated activities that encourage younger campers to connect to others, and intentional counselor activities to enhance support perceived by the younger campers. Further, noting that attending camp more than three years increased coping skills and friendships, camps may wish to share this information with parents as part of their camper retention efforts.

Further, as supported by Hall, Peden, Kropp, and Mathews (2018) findings can be used to support evidence-based practice by informing staff training, refining programming, and further developing areas in need of improvement. Advisory boards, funders, and other organizational stakeholders can use outcomes identified through research to inform decision-making and promote efficient and equitable allocation of organizational resources.

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Camp Corral What a Difference a Camp for Military Children Makes

Dr. Deb Jordan
Department of Recreation
East Carolina University
Greenville, North Carolina 27836
jordan@ecu.edu



A camp for children of military members who are ill, injured, or fallen
Sessions are one-week long and offered in 21 different states throughout the summer
Camp Corral serves 8 to 15 year olds
Over 3,000 youth were surveyed for this research; 52.8% were girls

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- (1) What were the perceptions of campers regarding the impact of attending a military-children only camp?
 - (2) What did campers find to be most important about attending such a camp?
- Answered using an end-of-camp survey

RESULTS

- Girls > Boys: important to be with other military youth
- Girls > Boys: important to be in a safe space and not be judged
- Boys > Girls: important to have fun



RESULTS

Impacts of attending a military-children only camp:

- Girls > Boys on Peer Connections, Self-Confidence, Coping Skills, and Perceived Counselor Support
- Oldest age group > Youngest age group on Peer Connections
- Oldest age group > Youngest age group on Perceived Counselor Support
- Oldest age group > Youngest age group on Coping Skills
- Youngest age group > Other age groups on Self-Confidence
- Attending camp 4+ times had greatest impact on Connection to Peers and Coping Skills

Most important things about Camp Corral:

1. Being with other military children
2. Meeting people and making friends
3. Feeling safe to be one's self and not be judged
4. Escaping a challenging home life
5. Learning new things and the activities
6. Having fun



NOW WHAT?

- Be intentional about camp programming
- Deliberately help staff develop skills in supporting camper needs
- Use focused facilitation with boys
- Help youngsters to develop coping skills
- Consciously establish and maintain a psychologically safe space
- Purposely increase staff awareness of camper home lives
- Consider what campers find valuable about camp; use that information to enrich camp programming
- Pay attention to age groupings to focus personal growth in specific areas
- Children find it important to be among others who understand their lifestyle and situation; consider this when creating bunk and cabin groups



2020 ACA Camp Research Forum

EXPLORING THE CHANGING MEANING OF CAMP COUNSELOR WORK THROUGHOUT EMERGING ADULTHOOD

Timothy J. Mateer, B. Derrick Taff, Pete Allison, Carter A. Hunt, & Ellen Will, The
Pennsylvania State University.

Contact: Timothy J. Mateer, The Pennsylvania State University, 801 Ford Building, University
Park, PA, 16801, [tjm715\(at\)psu.edu](mailto:tjm715(at)psu.edu)

Previous research has demonstrated that social and emotional learning is one of the key benefits of the camp experience (Bialeschki, Henderson, & James, 2007), and human relationships have been identified as one of the main components promoting these outcomes (Henderson et al., 2007). Previous studies have examined the relationship between camp staff and campers, but results have mostly focused on the camper side of this developmental exchange. The counselor side of this dialectic relationship represents an understudied concept despite the potential benefits to this population. Conceptualizing these “layers” of learning in the camp experience is something few studies have done, but initial evidence indicates growth in multiple areas such as identity exploration (Johnson et al., 2011) and increased emotional intelligence (Jacobs & McAvoy, 2005).

Conceptual Framework

Camp counselors generally fall into the developmental period of emerging adulthood (Johnson et al., 2011). This developmental period, happening from the late-teens to the mid- to late-20s, is characterized by exploration in three primary life areas: work, love, and worldviews (Arnett, 2000). Furthermore, emerging adults find themselves developing a cohesive sense of identity and growing in life responsibilities (Schwartz et al., 2013). Given the dynamic nature of this developmental period, it is important to understand how camp counselors are being impacted by their camp experiences. Most previous camp counselor research has measured short-term outcomes, despite evidence from some studies implying that the meaning associated with the camp experience changes as counselors progress in life (DeGraaf & Glover, 2003). Furthermore, no studies have specifically used emerging adulthood as a lens to understand these long-lasting impacts. Given these gaps, which have pertinent applied implications, this study aims to explore how camp counselor alumni attach meaning to the camp experience at different periods of retrospection, during and after the developmental period of emerging adulthood.

Methods

Shaver’s Creek Environmental Center’s Outdoor School (SCEC-ODS) is a four-day/three-night residential environmental education camp in central Pennsylvania. Informants were SCEC-ODS counselor alumni who served as counselors sometime within the past 15 years. Semi-structured interviews, ranging from 60–90 minutes in length, were used to gather data on the meaning counselor alumni attach to the experience in their current lives. They were contacted for interviews using a combination of chain referral techniques and email solicitations. A quota sampling technique (Bernard, 2011) was used to segment the counselor alumni population in a manner theoretically informed by emerging adulthood theory. Three categories were established for sampling: within emerging adulthood and pursuing an undergraduate degree; within emerging adulthood and out of their undergraduate education; and out of emerging adulthood and out of their undergraduate education.

An inductive approach was taken to data analysis (Babbie, 2013). While allowing themes to emerge naturally from interviews, an effort was made to capture the emic perspective (Creswell, 2007) of counselor alumni on the perceived impact of their counselor experience. This

emic perspective was compared between categories. Themes were then integrated into established theories that best accounted for observed phenomena (Bernard, Wutich, & Ryan, 2016). This approach presents an opportunity to fill a gap in understanding, inform training for counselors at SCEC-ODS and other similar camps, and inform future research.

Results

Analysis of interview transcriptions indicated the SCEC-ODS experience pushed counselors to explore two primary life realms outlined by Arnett's (2000) emerging adulthood theory: work and worldviews. This exploration is driven by eudaimonic feelings (Ryan, Huta, & Deci, 2008) supported by several aspects of the counselor position such as social acceptance, existing as a role model for young campers, and an increased sense of independence. This study builds on previous research about the camp counselor experience as interview data indicate the moral basis of the camp's mission also plays a key role in the sense of meaning derived from the work. For SCEC-ODS, this is primarily environmental appreciation and awareness. This multi-faceted sense of purpose is exemplified by the following quote from an informant:

I think it's a very unique community and it's something that we talk about a lot, at least going into it, how you're supposed to create this welcoming community for the kids, including the environment and everything within the community, not just the people. But I don't think you realize how much it will affect you. Like you will try to create this for the kids, but it'll just kind of happen to you naturally, that you'll become a part of it.

Informants removed from their undergraduate education but still within emerging adulthood utilized the sense of exploration and purpose developed at SCEC-ODS as a bridging tool to integrate one's work and worldview into a cohesive sense of self, a key part of the emerging adulthood process (Schwartz et al., 2013). This process is summarized by the following informant as she reflects on her current work after completing her undergraduate education:

And it's something I brought from Outdoor School, that applies here is that, well first of all, it's the 'you'll never work a day in your life if you love your job' kind of thing. So it's like I never feel like I'm working here. It's just my life, and if someone needs something, I'm going to do it because I love my life.

Finally, informants removed from their undergraduate education and out of emerging adulthood maintained eudaimonic feelings towards their SCEC-ODS experience but integrated the identity-forming aspects of the experience with other competing identity constructs. In attempting to form a stable identity necessary for the commitments of adulthood (Schwartz, Côté, & Arnett, 2005), informants attempted to maintain what they believed to be the most important lessons from their SCEC-ODS experience in their lives while compromising in other aspects. In reflecting on the meaning of SCEC-ODS in her current life, one informant, who was currently working as an elementary school teacher, exemplifies this by stating:

I was sort of romantic about it at first, like, 'I want to be a camp counselor forever. When I graduate from college, I want to go found my own camp.' You know? That didn't happen and my dreams changed but there was definitely this romantic sense about it like, 'Oh, I could do this forever' and then as I moved forward, I could see, you know, the camp life is tricky.

In comparing the retrospective meaning of the SCEC-ODS experience across the three established categories, all three maintained eudaimonic feelings towards their work as a camp counselor. For those still within emerging adulthood but graduated from their undergraduate education, the sense of self developed in the camp environment was used to help bridge different

aspects of identity formation into a more cohesive sense of self. For individuals graduated from their undergraduate education and out of emerging adulthood, the sense of self, formed through SCEC-ODS, was integrated with other competing identity constructs and life goals. This was done through a balancing process where some aspects of identity formed via SCEC-ODS were maintained while others were conceded to other competing social and psychological constructs.

Discussion

This research informs strategies for camps to improve training, curriculum, and post-camp experiences for counselors. By better understanding how counselor alumni perceive their past camp experiences and how this meaning develops with retrospection, provides insight into how camps can train their employees with long-term outcomes in mind. This approach can lead to more mindful and productive employees and post-camp development beyond emerging adulthood. Furthermore, camps can use this understanding of long-term outcomes to better market camp counselor positions. Lastly, this study lays the basis for future research connecting emerging adulthood to long-term learning outcomes from the camp counselor experience.

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EXPLORING THE CHANGING MEANING OF CAMP COUNSELOR WORK THROUGHOUT EMERGING ADULTHOOD

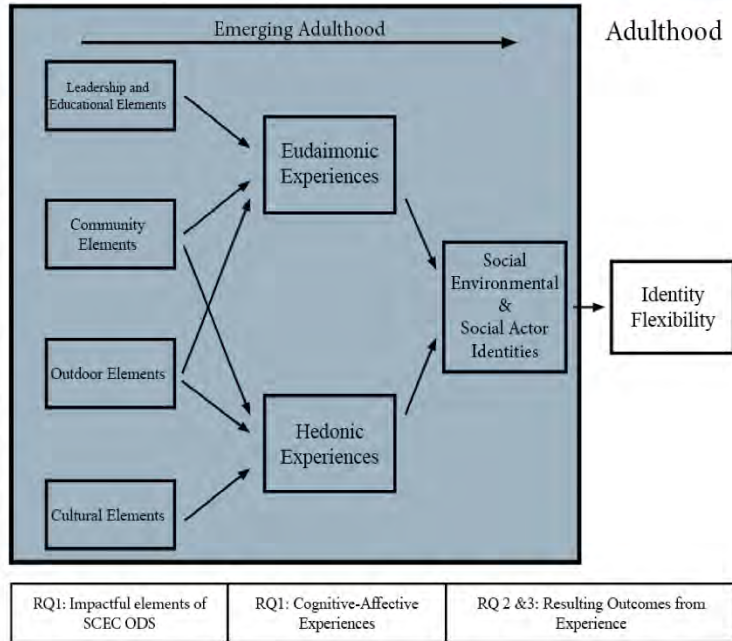
Timothy J. Mateer, B. Derrick Taff, Pete Allison, Carter A. Hunt, and Ellen Will
The Pennsylvania State University

Contact: Timothy J. Mateer, The Pennsylvania State University, 801 Ford Building, University Park, PA, 16801
tjm715@psu.edu

Introduction

The majority of camp counselor research has measured short-term outcomes, despite evidence from some studies implying that the meaning associated with the camp experience changes as counselors progress in life (DeGraaf & Glover, 2003). This study aims to explore this gap in understanding:

- RQ1:** What camp elements do counselors retrospectively cite as most impactful to them in their current lives?
- RQ2:** What meaning do counselor alumni associate with their experience?
- RQ3:** How does the meaning associated with the counselor experience change at different points of retrospection as counselor alumni navigate the developmental period of emerging adulthood?



Methods

Data were collected via 60-90 minute semi-structured interviews with previous counselors at Shaver's Creek Environmental Center. Emergent themes were analyzed and compared across individuals at different life points within Arnett's (2000) emerging adulthood theory.

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Arnett, J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 78*(5), 186-200.
DeGraaf, D., & Glover, J. (2003). Long-Term Impacts of Working at an Organized Camp for Seasonal Staff. *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration, 21*(1), 1-26.

Representative Quotes

RQ1: "I think it's a very unique community and it's something that we talk about a lot, at least going into it, how you're supposed to create this welcoming community for the kids, including the environment and everything within the community, not just the people. But I don't think you realize how much it will affect you. Like you will try to create this for the kids, but it'll just kind of happen to you naturally, that you'll become a part of it."

RQ2: "And it's something I brought from Outdoor School, that applies here is that, well first of all, it's the 'you'll never work a day in your life if you love your job' kind of thing. So it's like I never feel like I'm working here. It's just my life, and if someone needs something, I'm going to do it because I love my life."

RQ3: "I was sort of romantic about it at first, like, 'I want to be a camp counselor forever. When I graduate from college, I want to go found my own camp.' You know? That didn't happen and my dreams changed but there was definitely this romantic sense about it like, 'Oh, I could do this forever' and then as I moved forward, I could see, you know, the camp life is tricky."

Implications

- Care should be taken in differentiating challenging work that results in growth for counselors compared to burnout and exhaustion
- Camp mission may play a key role in how counselors identify with their work and how they integrate outcomes into their post-camp lives.
- Discussions on how to incorporate skills developed as a counselor into other life areas, especially during the transition to adulthood, are important for staff.



DIRECTOR SURVEY OF INDIGENOUS-INSPIRED CAMP PROGRAMS: A BENCHMARK FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION AND EXPLORATION

Tad McIlwraith, PhD, University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada & Stephen Fine, PhD, Canadian Camping Association

Contact: tad.mcilwraith(at)uoguelph.ca

Many summer camps are steeped in an apparent homage to the Indigenous peoples of North America, but as role models and leaders of youth, a contemporary cultural awareness and reconciliation with these diverse communities must be addressed and entered into. This rethinking of the relationship between camps and Indigenous communities' stems from recent concerns with camp programming which many people feel appropriates and homogenizes Indigenous cultures. In Canada, the release of the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Report (TRC) into the history of residential schools has motivated actions around children's programming, cross-cultural awareness, and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. In keeping with the mandate of the TRC, the primary goal of this survey project is to generate the background information required to help the Canadian Camping Association (CCA) to identify and address alleged Indigenous cultural appropriation at children's camps and inform future pathways.

We wanted to know, what's actually taking place at camps currently in this regard? Do Indigenous inspired programs make for a major component of a camp's longtime traditions? If so, is there a background of legitimacy to these programs? In other words, has there been some connection, historic or otherwise, between a specific camp and a local Indigenous leader, community or territory? Do practices of this nature still have a place in contemporary programming for camps? If so, how does a national association align with federal guidelines as per the TRC's Call to Action? The point here is not to denigrate camp programs or erase camp traditions – and this can include games, arts, cabin names and groupings, campfire programs, and such. We want simply to ensure that programs of this nature address and depict First Nations peoples in a present-day context, in concert with current issues and societal norms in order to provide an authentic base for the education of campers, staff and administrators devoid of inaccuracies or racial stereotyping.

Conceptual Foundations

The project is located intellectually in the context of the TRC *Calls to Action* (2015) and in a scholarly tradition of historicizing Canadian appropriation of Indigenous cultures for the assertion of a national identity (e.g., Francis, 1992). Camps are interested in decolonizing their programs (Shore, 2015), and in bringing their programming in line with the goals of TRC but are uncertain about how to achieve these objectives. This project seeks to identify the scope of the issue and to build on a growing conversation within camping circles about the role of non-Indigenous camping professionals and outdoor educators in decolonization (c.f.; Lowan-Trudeau, 2014:43; Root, 2010). It addresses current debates about cultural appropriation – and who has the right to use, display, and teach about Indigenous cultures – in wider Canadian society (e.g., Bundale, 2018; Jago, 2017). Following Ryan McMahon's call (2017), we also strive to make decolonization work personal. Personalizing this project for today's campers, camp staff, parents, and alumni is important because camps have not always acted to change these practices since discussion about their appropriateness began in the 1970s (Eastaugh, 1972; Gerber, 1972). We acknowledge further that need to do our own research and educate ourselves about our camping

history before asking Indigenous peoples to partner with us (also Carlson, 2016; Davis et al., 2016).

Methods

A mixed methods, concurrent transformative approach (Creswell, 2003), was undertaken in order to explore current practices at summer camps in Canada. A camp director’s survey consisting of five-point Likert scaled and open-ended questions was designed based on relevant published materials, input through conversations with Indigenous & Non-Indigenous experts, and review by the Research Committee of the CCA. Initially, journal notes of the various conversations were coded for recurring themes. Themes such as: appropriation vs. co-generated activities, cabin names, camp fire, reconciliation, land-based learning, political correctness, importance to camps, education, challenges, etc., informed the survey proposition and design using Qualtrics survey software. Questions related to current practices that involve Indigenous activities or knowledge, changes made by camp staff over recent years to eliminate such activities, and the extent to which camp professionals surveyed believed this to be an issue. Additional questions asked how the CCA should proceed with this concern and also inquired as to the need for additional education, and policy directives. Qualtrics generated data, both Likert ranked and open-ended response, were then migrated to Atlas ti7 qualitative analysis software. Within Atlas ti7, qualitative themes were matched with corresponding statistical data based on frequency response. Approximately, 700 CCA member camps from across the country were canvassed through the email marketing platform Constant Contact. Seventy-eight directors or 12% of CCA camps responded from a diversity of camp types from all ten provinces across the country.

Findings

How important is an understanding of local Indigenous histories and peoples to camp directors, camp community and alumni?

Figure 1
Importance

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Important to Camp Director	1.00	3.00	1.42	0.60	0.36	71
2	Important to Camp Community	1.00	3.00	1.74	0.58	0.33	70
3	Important to Alumni	1.00	3.00	2.10	0.68	0.47	69

Findings indicate that although only about 33% of the camps surveyed currently use Indigenous-inspired programming, all spoke positively of past and/or present programs and the inherent benefits of Indigenous inspired land-based learning and camp activities. This suggests that respondents emphasized the perceived value of Indigenous-inspired programming over any concern about supposed harms. Although, "all camps spoke positively" about the inclusion of Indigenous-inspired camp programming, Indigenous peoples are saying, in fact, that these activities are not seen by them as honouring or respecting, even if they are seen that way by camps – these will be future steps. Overall, respondents were fairly knowledgeable on issues related to the subject matter, or had at least considered the issues, suggesting that we may be preaching to the converted. Yet, very few camps catered to First Nations youth and no camps exclusively First Nations youth. Participants felt guidance from the Canadian Camping Association in concert with First Nations communities would be valuable with regard to the

above. The problematic inherent to the issue was ranked quite broadly - ranging from moderate to serious - suggesting a need for further outreach and education programs. The small response rate is noted as a limitation. Additionally, the missing element within this study is the surveying of Indigenous leaders along with Indigenous community input. This will take place in the next phase of our research.

Implications

- To develop guidelines and educational programs in concert with First Nations on the appropriate use of Indigenous-inspired camp programs and activities.
- Engagement with First Nations communities is lacking especially for out-trips into Reservations or traditional lands.
- Advocate for the inclusion of First Nations youth and leadership within member camps.
- Further research (future grant application) to advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and the decolonization of summer camps through direct engagement with Indigenous peoples
- Outreach programs and further research particularly around disinformation and stereo-typing that can stem from Indigenous-inspired programming in educational contexts such as camp.
- Applicable to all summer camp programs.

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Director Survey of Indigenous-inspired Camp Programs: A benchmark for further discussion and exploration



Canadian Camping Association
Association des camps du Canada

Tad McIlwraith, PhD, University of Guelph, tad.mcilwraith@uoguelph.ca
Stephen Fine, PhD, Canadian Camping Assoc, sfine@alumni.utoronto.ca

Introduction

The goal of this project is to generate background information required to help the Canadian Camping Association (CCA) to identify and address alleged Indigenous cultural appropriation at children's camps and to develop future guidelines. Our aim is to ensure that programs of this nature are informed by engagement with Indigenous peoples. Further, we seek to ensure that camp programming addresses current concerns and is aligned with societal norms in order to provide an authentic basis for the education of campers, staff and administrators devoid of inaccuracies or racial stereotyping. We also aim to approach Indigenous communities about this work to ensure best practices are informed by community engagement.

Methods

Mixed methods was undertaken in order to explore current practices at summer camps in Canada. A director's survey consisting of five-point Likert scaled and open-ended questions was designed based on relevant published materials, input through conversations with Indigenous & Non-Indigenous experts, and review by the Research Committee of the CCA. Journal notes and narrative data were coded for recurring themes such as: appropriation vs. co-generated activities, cabin names, campfires, reconciliation, land-based learning, political correctness, importance to camps, education, challenges. These informed the survey proposition and design using Qualtrics software. Qualtrics generated data were then migrated to Atlas.ti for qualitative analysis. Seven hundred CCA camps were canvassed through email marketing platform Constant Contact. Seventy-eight directors or 12% of CCA camps responded from a diversity of camp types from all ten provinces across the country.



Figure 1: Kairos Blanket Exercise (educational activity)

Findings

Findings indicate that although only about 33% of the camps surveyed currently use Indigenous-inspired programming, all spoke positively of past and/or present programs and the inherent benefits of Indigenous inspired land-based learning and camp activities. This suggests that respondents emphasized the perceived value of Indigenous-inspired programming over any concern about supposed harms. Although, "all camps spoke positively," Indigenous peoples are saying that these activities are not seen by them as honouring or respecting. Further, Indigenous peoples have not been consulted directly about their perceptions of these issues, so our results are based on the attitudes of the users of Indigenous knowledge alone.

Respondents were fairly knowledgeable on issues related to the subject matter suggesting that we may be preaching to the converted. Participants felt guidance from the Canadian Camping Association in concert with indigenous peoples and communities would be valuable. The problematic inherent to the issue was perceived and ranked quite broadly - ranging from moderate to serious - suggesting a need for further outreach and education programs. The small response rate is noted as a limitation. Additionally, the missing element within this study is the surveying of Indigenous leaders along with input from Indigenous communities and peoples. This will take place in the next phase of our research.

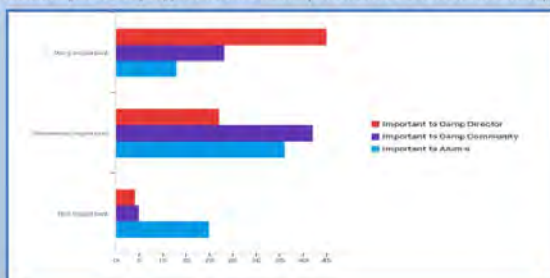


Figure 2: Importance of understanding Indigenous histories and peoples

Implications

- We must develop guidelines on the appropriate use of Indigenous-inspired camp programs in concert with Indigenous peoples.
- Engagement with Indigenous communities is lacking especially for out-trips on traditional territories, treaty lands, or near reserves.
- We advocate for the inclusion of Indigenous youth and leadership within member camps.
- We propose further research to advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and the decolonization of summer camps through direct engagement with Indigenous peoples.
- We seek to develop outreach programs and conduct further research particularly around disinformation and stereo-typing that can stem from Indigenous-inspired programming in educational contexts such as camp.
- This work is applicable to all summer camps and camp programs.

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HOW FAMILIES MAKE THE DECISION TO ENROLL THEIR CHILD AT SUMMER CAMP

Victoria Povilaitis, Daniel Richmond, & Jim Sibthorp, University of Utah
Contact: Victoria Povilaitis, University of Utah, Stewart Building, Room 218, 270 South 1400 East, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84112, victoria.povilaitis(at)utah.edu

Parents are central to the decision-making process that ultimately sends more than 14 million youth to summer camps in the US (American Camp Association, 2016). While there is extensive research on camp-related outcomes, from national studies to studies of particular camps and camp populations (Bialeschki, Henderson, & James, 2007; Garst, Gagnon, & Whittington, 2016; Gillard, Witt, & Watts, 2011; Wilson, Akiva, Sibthorp, & Browne, 2019), there has been little research on what motivates parents to send their children to camp and how the decision-making process works within families. Some camp research has touched on what parents want for their children and perceptions of child development of social-emotional learning skills (SEL; Henderson, Whitaker, Bialeschki, Scanlin, & Thurber, 2007), but there is a lack of research on other factors that contribute to sending children to camp. Studies looking at out-of-school-time (OST) decision-making more broadly have identified motivating factors related to personal, social, physical benefits for children (e.g., Neely & Holt, 2014) and the role that demographic factors play in extracurricular choices (e.g., Bouffard, Wimer, Caronongan, Little, Dearing, & Simpkins, 2006), but there is a need for more camp-specific research on these sending and selection factors. Therefore, the aim of this study was to explore factors involved in the family decision making process and how parents and families engage in deciding to send a child to summer camp.

Methods

Participants in this study included a stratified sample of 449 parent-child dyads from across the US with children attending summer camp in the summer of 2018. Among the children in the study, 51% identified as female and were between the ages of 9 and 12. Approximately 68% were White, 12% multi-racial, 8% African American, 5% Hispanic/Latinx, 4% Asian, and 3% other. Approximately 81% of families were two-parent homes, 14% fell below 200% of federal poverty guidelines, and 46% had household incomes exceeding \$150,000.

We asked parents about goals for their child at camp, factors considered in selecting a specific camp, and who is involved in different components of the decision-making processes. Items were developed from existing camp research (Henderson et al., 2007) and other studies on parent and family decision-making (Cole, Bobilya, Lindley, & Holman, 2018). The research team then followed up with interviews of 239 families in the fall of 2018. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted with data from all 449 families to determine which goals and selection factors were most important for parents who were enrolling their child in a summer camp. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze family decision-making and demographics and interviews were analyzed using a qualitative coding procedures (Saldaña, 2016). Quantitative and qualitative data were triangulated through a coding process with three coders. Each coder independently analyzed data across three data points and classified families into primary and secondary typologies. When there was disagreement among the coders, a fourth coder facilitated discussion until there was agreement among all coders. As not every family had data across all time points, a total of 122 families were categorized into typologies.

Results

Through factor analysis with all 449 families, three factors emerged from 14 items on parental goals for children: intrapersonal development, skill development, and positive experiences. Overall, parents prioritize intrapersonal development and positive experiences over learning new skills. We explored 16 different selection criteria for why parents choose a specific camp. These were captured by six factors: 1) program quality, 2) logistics/cost, 3) institutional ties/connection, 4) child fit, 5) word-of-mouth, and 6) sibling attendance. Parent rated program quality and child fit as the two most important factors and institutional ties/connection and sibling attendance were rated the lowest.

In the camp decision-making process, one parent is primarily driving the decision from purchase initiation and information search to final purchase. The child is most involved during purchasing initiation (~25%). Spouses or partners are mostly involved in the final purchase decision.

Decision-making factors and the decision-making process were largely similar across demographic groups. However, income, access to resources, family history with camps, and preferences varied enough within the quantitative and qualitative data to identify emerging family typologies:

Enthusiast families prioritize camp and have considerable resources. They are more likely to be a two-adult household, have income over \$100,000, a parent with a master's degree, and to spend upwards of \$6,000 on extracurriculars per child. Homes are likely to have two children or less. They are more likely to say camp is an essential experience. Many send kids to four or more weeks of overnight camp.

Constrainer families prioritize cost and logistic factors. They more likely to be single parent households with incomes under \$60,000. They are more likely to spend less than \$1,000/year on extracurriculars. They are less likely to be White and more likely to have less than a 4-year college degree. These families value camp but less likely to say it is a high priority. Summer activities often serve as childcare.

Explorer/Dabbler families have low commitment to camp. They are likely to say camp is a medium priority, they are less likely to say camp is essential. They are likely to be a two-adult household though more likely to be a single-parent household as compared to Enthusiasts and Ecologists. They are more likely than Enthusiasts and Ecologists to have household incomes less than \$100,000 and spend \$2,500 or less on extracurriculars per child. Children are likely to express moderate/low interest in camp.

Ecologist families appreciate camp but value a broad range of activities. Like enthusiasts, they are likely a two-adult household income with an income over \$100,000 per year. They are likely to have a parent with a Master's and spend \$4,000 or less on extracurriculars per child. These homes are likely to have 2 children or less. They are more likely to prioritize several summer activities and send their child to multiple weeks of day camp. Most ecologists send their child to camp to overnight camp for two weeks or less.

Discussion

Findings from this study may help camp professionals recruit and serve camp participants and their families more effectively. With a better understanding of how families come to make the decision to enroll their child in camp and the various factors that influence that decision, practitioners may be able to position their marketing (and scholarship programs) to target certain family typologies and their needs. For example, a summer camp that has children primarily from constrainer families may consider ways to alleviate access issues for campers and thus recruit

more children to participate. This may include providing transportation from major city centers to camp or offering tiered pricing or scholarships.

This study also yields implications for camp practitioners in considering how to promote families transitions between typologies and in particular, how to move families from dabbler/explorer categories to ecologist or enthusiast. Camp directors should consider ways in which to articulate the value of camp to these families so that they place greater priority on the camp experience for their child in future summers. This may result in an increase in camper registrations overall, but also in registrations for returning campers.

Further, upcoming research should explore how family preferences and decision-making for camp change over time. It may be possible that when a child is younger, a family is an enthusiast but as the child's interests change, they become an ecologist or dabbler/explorer. This type of work may offer implications for camp practitioners in the type of programming they offer for different age groups. Finally, as this study was conducted with summer camp families and the decision to enroll a child in camp programming, future research may want to understand how these camp families make decisions regarding out-of-school-time activities throughout the year.

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How Families Make the Decision to Enroll Their Child at Summer Camp

Victoria Povilaitis, Daniel Richmond, and Jim Sibthorp
Department of Health, Kinesiology, and Recreation | University of Utah



Introduction

- Significant research on outcomes for campers, some research about what parents want for their children in terms of development at camp
- Parents are central to the decision to enroll a child, however no research re: the decision-making process with both camper and parent degrees of influence and perspectives
- Aim of the study was to explore factors of the family decision-making process re: how parents and families engage in deciding to send a child to camp

Methods

- Stratified sample of parent and child dyads (n = 449) with children attending camp summer 2018
- 51% female children, 68% white, 81% two parent homes
- Asked: intended outcomes for child at camp, factors considered in choosing a camp, who is part of the decision-making process
- Exploratory factor analysis to determine which factors were most important to families
- Fall 2018: interviews with 239 dyads
- Descriptive statistics used to analyze decision-making and demographics
- Interview notes were thematically coded
- Triangulation between three points (survey responses and interview notes) by three coders
- Classified into primary and secondary typologies
- Fourth coder when disagreement
- Data across all three time points for 122 families

Results

- Factor analysis of intended outcomes for children, 3 factors emerged: intrapersonal development, skill development, positive experiences
- Parents prioritize: intrapersonal development and positive experiences
- Factor analysis of camp selection factors, 6 factors emerged: program quality, logistics/cost, institutional ties/connection, child fit, word-of-mouth, sibling attendance
- Parents prioritize: program quality and child fit
- Do not prioritize: institution ties/connection and sibling attendance
- Decision making during three stages: purchase initiation, information search, final purchase
- One parent is driving the decision through all three phases, child is most involved (~25%) during purchase initiation, spouse or partner most involved during final purchase decision
- Decision-making factors similar across all families, however income, access to resources, family history with camp varied and led to the development of four family typologies described below

**Note: statements in chart about family typologies do not apply to ALL families, but refer to greater likelihood for the statement to apply to these families, unless otherwise indicated "less likely"*

	Enthusiast	Ecologist	Dabbler	Constrainer
Household	• 2 adult • 2 children or less • White	• 2 adult • 2 children or less	• 2 adult	• 1 adult • Less likely White
Parent Education	• Master's degree	• Master's degree	• Varies	• Less than 4 year college
Finances	• \$100,000+ income • \$6,000/child activities	• \$100,000+ income • \$4,000/child activities	• \$100,000 – income • \$2,500/child activities	• \$60,000 – income • \$1,000 –/child activities
Priority of camp	• High: camp is an "essential experience"	• Moderate: value a variety of activities, including camp	• Moderate: low commitment, moderate/low interest for child	• Moderate: value camp, but not "essential experience"
Camp experience	• 4 or more weeks overnight	• 2 or fewer weeks overnight	• Varies	• Day camp as childcare

Discussion and Implications

- Findings from this study may help camp professionals recruit and serve camp participants and their families more effectively
- Practitioners may be able to position marketing (and scholarship programs) to target specific family typologies and their needs
- Consider ways to promote families' transitions between typologies (i.e. Dabbler to Ecologist or Enthusiast)
- Future research: understand reasons why family preferences and decision making styles change over time (e.g. do children have more influence in choosing summer activities when they are older?)
- Future research: consider how families make decisions for their children during out-of-school-time activities throughout the academic year

PSYCHOSOCIAL OUTCOMES OF CHILDREN WITH CHRONIC ILLNESS ATTENDING SPECIALTY SUMMER CAMPS: A REVIEW

Melissa A. Rafferty, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio

Although many children with chronic conditions are well-adjusted and do not experience mental health difficulties, the risk for psychosocial problems in these children is notably higher than their healthy peers. Specialty summer camps have the potential to provide a number of physical, psychological, and social benefits for children with chronic medical conditions. To our knowledge, there are currently only two reviews that evaluate the literature on specialty camps for these children. Epstein, Stinson, and Stevens (2005) examined health-related quality of life and Odar, Canter, and Roberts (2012) analyzed self-perception. The authors are not aware of a published review that critically evaluates the literature on psychosocial outcomes such as anxiety, depressive symptoms, self-esteem, or general quality of life for children with chronic illness attending specialty summer camps. A review that examines a variety of psychosocial outcomes such as this one provides the field with an overview of the strengths of the field and highlights areas in need of greater attention.

Methods

A search of PsycINFO, CINAHL, and MEDLine produced 422 articles published between 1954 and 2019. To be included in the review, the article had to be published in English within a peer reviewed journal and use quantitative research methods. Additionally, the study sample had to include children with specified chronic medical illness (as defined by Boyse, Boujaoude, & Laundry, 2012), and the article had to include psychosocial outcomes that were based on attendance at an illness specialty camp. For clarification, articles were excluded if they did not meet the above criteria, as well as if campers were recruited for non-camp related studies only, if the camps were wilderness, weight-loss, or bereavement camps, or were for children with a sibling or parent with an illness.

Results

Based on these a priori criteria, 41 articles were included for review. Samples included children and adolescents ranged in age between 6-18 years and sample sizes ranged from 23 to 2,114 participants. Qualities of the camps included: overnight summer camps ranging from three days to two-weeks long; with both typical programming as well as camps with specialized programming or interventions related to chronic conditions; for children with type 1 diabetes, asthma, cystic fibrosis, spina bifida, cancer, neurofibromatosis, juvenile immune arthritis, epilepsy, sickle cell disease, heart disease, craniofacial differences, hearing impairment, hematology-related illness, immunodeficiency-related illness, renal-related illness, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis and celiac disease. Thirty-four out of the 41 studies in this review used either a pre- and post-camp design or a three time-point design. By collecting the same assessments before and immediately after camp, it allows for greater likelihood that the changes are due to experiences at camp. Using a third time-point, which was one month to six months after the end of camp, allows the possibility of assessing the longer-term outcomes.

Overall, this review produced evidence that attendance at camp is associated with improved depressive symptoms in children with cancer, diabetes, sickle cell disease, kidney disease, Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis, celiac disease, and liver disease (Meltzer & Rourke, 2005; Meltzer et al., 2018; Weissberg-Benchell & Rychik, 2017; Weissberg-Benchell et al., 2019; Wellisch et al., 2006), as well as increases in social domains, including social skills and feelings of acceptance, for children with craniofacial anomalies, hearing impairments,

cancer, brain tumors, asthma, diabetes, sickle cell disease, kidney or liver disease or transplant, or gastrointestinal illness (Cushner-Weinstein et al., 2007; Devine & Dawson, 2010; Devine et al., 2015; Hill & Sibthorp, 2006; Hill et al., 2015; Meltzer et al., 2019; Pulgaron et al., 2010; Smith et al., 1993; Wu et al., 2016). Only one study found no change in social skills for children with neurofibromatosis (Allsop, Negley, & Sibthorp, 2013).

Several constructs exhibited evidence in support of positive changes as well as alternative or conflicting evidence. General quality of life was shown to increase in campers with cancer, hearing impairments, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, diabetes, and juvenile immune arthritis (Békési et al., 2011; Devine, et al., 2015; Pulgaron et al., 2010; Shepanski et al., 2005), but no change was found for campers with diabetes, oncology/hematology illness, immunodeficiency, renal disease, kidney disease, sickle cell disease, and gastrointestinal illness (Barr et al., 2010; Cheung et al., 2006; Kiernan et al., 2004; Weissberg-Benchell & Rychlik, 2017; Woods et al., 2013). Campers with asthma, diabetes, spina bifida, heart-disease, and cancer exhibited reduced anxiety after attending camp (Briery & Rabian, 1999; Bultas et al., 2015; Kiernan et al., 2004; Simons et al., 2007). However, in a separate study of campers with diabetes and cancer, anxiety was shown to increase in campers who started with lower initial anxiety (Török et al. 2006), and no change was shown for campers with Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, or diabetes (García-Pérez et al., 2010; Shepanski et al., 2005). Finally, improvements in attitudes toward illness were found in campers with diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, and spina bifida (Biery, 1999; Bultas et al., 2015; Sawin et al., 2001), but no significant changes were found in campers with heart disease who attended a specific camp, or campers with cancer or brain tumors, sickle cell disease, renal disease, or heart disease who attended a non-specific specialty camp (Bultas et al., 2013; Faith et al., 2019).

Ideas about the self, which includes self-esteem, self-worth, self-efficacy, and self-competence, also had mixed findings. Ideas about the self were shown to improve in campers with craniofacial anomalies, cancer, and asthma (Buckner et al., 2007; Dawson et al., 2012; Devine & Dawson, 2010; Meltzer & Rourke, 2005; Wu et al., 2016), but for campers with oncology/hematology related illness, immunodeficiency, renal disease, cancer, or diabetes, the changes were either not linear or dependent on other factors, such as age or baseline levels of the measure construct (Hunter et al., 2006; Kiernan et al., 2004; Török et al., 2006). No changes were found in ideas about the self for children with heart disease, diabetes, asthma, or cystic fibrosis (Bultas et al., 2013; Gagnon et al., 2019; Pulgaron et al., 2010; Rubin & Geiger, 1991). Finally, independence seems to depend on whether specific interventions targeting independence are included in camp programming. Two studies that examined the effect of a specific intervention targeting self-management on independence for campers with spina bifida showed increased independence (Holbein et al., 2013; O'Mahar et al., 2010), but five studies found no changes in independence when specific interventions were not included for campers with cancer or diabetes (Dawson et al., 2012; Hill and Sibthorp, 2006; Hill et al., 2015; Weissberg-Benchell & Rychlik, 2017; Weissberg-Benchell et al., 2019).

Other constructs, such as hope, locus of control, resilience or adaptive skills and internalizing or externalizing symptoms assessed by the Achenbach scales had either limited evidence or very little support. Locus of control was examined in three studies, and all found significant changes toward more internalized locus of control for campers with asthma and diabetes (Moffat & Pless, 1983; Rew, 1987; Robinson, 1985). Hope was found to increase in one study for campers with cancer, sickle cell disease, kidney disease, and gastrointestinal illness (Woods et al., 2013), but no change was observed in a separate study for campers with the same

conditions as the first study, as well as heart disease (Faith et al., 2019). Resilience improved in a study of campers with asthma, but there was no change for campers with diabetes in a separate study (Buckner et al., 2005; Winsett et al., 2010). Finally, adaptive skills and internalizing and externalizing symptoms were only investigated in one study each. There was only a change in adaptation to the school environment in campers with diabetes, and there was no difference to internalizing and externalizing symptoms for campers with cancer (Conrad & Altmaier, 2009; García-Pérez et al., 2010).

Conclusion

The depth and breadth of this review allowed for a variety of outcomes to be explored. In general, there is support for improvements in depressive symptoms and social domains, mixed support for anxiety, attitudes toward illness, quality of life, ideas about the self, and independence, and limited evidence for locus of control, hope, resilience or adaptive skills, and internalizing and externalizing symptoms. There is room for growth in the study of psychosocial outcomes in the camp literature; however, there are a number of challenges to this research. For example, it is difficult to use control groups, particularly wait-list controls, when specific camps may only happen once a year and those who attend camp and those who do not likely vary on a number of important characteristics. Thus, it is difficult to conclude whether changes are actually due to camp. There is also large heterogeneity of camp programs, as well as broad differences in study samples. These challenges make it difficult to draw generalizable conclusions from this data. Future research is needed to determine what camps add above and beyond traditional treatments, which aspects of camp are most effective, and whether specific programming is effective for psychosocial outcomes such as depressive symptoms or anxiety.

References can be found at the following website: <https://www.researchgate.net/project/Summer-camps-chronic-health-conditions-and-psychosocial-constructs>

Psychosocial Outcomes of Children with Chronic Illness Attending Specialty Summer Camps: A review

Melissa Rafferty, MA, Department of Psychological Sciences, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH

AIM: To critically evaluate the literature on psychosocial outcomes for children with chronic illness attending specialty summer camps

- Heart disease
- Hematology illness
- Immunodeficiency illness
- renal illness
- gastrointestinal illness
- T1D
- asthma
- CF
- SB
- cancer
- NF
- JIA
- Epilepsy
- SCD
- HI
- CFA

RESULTS

- 41 articles
- Depression **↑**, locus of control = more internalized, adaptation **↓**, no change for internalizing/externalizing
- **Attitude toward illness, general QOL, Hope, Independence, resilience, and social domains** showed both improvements and null results
- **Anxiety and ideas about the self** were mixed (e.g., dependent on baseline levels, had nonlinear results)

CONCLUSIONS

- **Generalizability - difficult due to heterogeneity of camps, conditions, and study characteristics**
- **Future research** - what camps add above and beyond traditional treatments, which aspects of camp are most effective, and whether specific programming is effective for psychosocial outcomes such as depressive symptoms or anxiety.

PSYCHOSOCIAL OUTCOMES: Ideas about the self (12), social domains (10), general quality of life (9), anxiety (7), independence (7), depression (5), attitude toward illness (5), locus of control (3), hope (2), resilience (2), internalizing/externalizing (1), adaptation (1)

CAMP HALLMARKS EXPOSURE SCALE: SCALE DEVELOPMENT

Tommy Reynolds, New England College

Contact: Tommy Reynolds, Tommyareynolds(at)gmail.com

The impression left by a positive summer camp experience is clearly evident in the attitudes of children as they return home. As adult observers to this tangible change, we are left to wonder, which elements of the camp experience most impacted our children? Research conducted by the American Camp Association (ACA) indicated that summer camp exposure benefits children by aiding in the development of self-esteem and confidence, social skills, independence, leadership abilities, and adventurous attitudes (ACA, 2005). Results of ACA research also indicated that individual camper experiences varied widely, but overall, positive growth in the domains of positive identity, social skills, physical & thinking skills, and positive values & spirituality were demonstrated (p. 5).

One identified limitation of ACA's research was that it did not identify structural elements associated with growth at camp. The researchers addressed this limitation noting that all participating camps were accredited by the ACA. They state, "it is quite possible that structural elements of the camp matter little when the industry standards for the program and operation of the camp are met or exceeded" (p. 18). Although this is a reasonable assumption, there may also be valuable information imbedded in individual camper exposure to specific and unique camp elements. The Camp Hallmarks Exposure Scale was developed to not only empirically identify the structural elements associated with a positive summer camp experience, but also to create a way to measure exposure to those elements for future research purposes.

Theoretical Framework

Many campers return from camp each summer with an abundance of stories to tell. These stories contain rich information that can help shed light into the types of experiences that are related to highly measured positive outcomes. The focus of this research is to explore, define, and measure the structural elements that make up a positive summer at camp. What do children report they are exposed to and how can we measure this exposure? Recent research in the field of scale development out of Michigan State University has provided a road map for best practices in a social science scale development process (Carpenter, 2018). This content analysis provides a 10-step guide to the development and reporting of new scales based on a review of research in the field of best practices. This structure serves as the framework for this measure's creation. Steps to best practice scale development include: 1) Research the intended meaning and breadth of the theoretical concept; 2) Determine sampling procedure; 3) Examine data quality; 4) Verify the factorability of the data; 5) Conduct common factor analysis; 6) Select factor method; 7) Determine number of factors; 8) Rotate factors; 9) Evaluate items based on a priori criteria; 10) Present results.

Methods

Qualitative Methods

Qualitative research methods for this scale development included an ethnographic/social constructivist approach to determine the defining attributes of the summer camp culture and experience. Research procedures for an ethnographic study included searching for patterns of a culture-sharing group, engaging in extensive fieldwork, and collecting data primarily through interviews and observations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Carpenter (2018) recommends qualitative research methods to generate the dimensions and items of a scale (p. 26).

Fifteen campers, with at least three years camp experience, were randomly selected from each of three residential summer camps that fall under one umbrella camping organization. Campers participated in focus groups where they were asked to bake cookies and identify the essential ingredients in that cookie recipe. They were then asked to identify the essential ingredients of an ideal summer at their camp. Campers listed their own individual responses to the prompt and also contributed to the categorization of the group's thoughts. Final themes were agreed upon by the groups and recorded. Final themes were evaluated by both an expert panel of the organizations' staff as well as a fourth focus group of expert campers that were selected by the camp directors.

Quantitative Methods

Using key terms and phrases that appeared across focus groups, individual items were created equally representing each identified category. A pilot scale of seven categories with seven questions per category was administered to 60 campers. Pilot test data was put into the SPSS software and the data was examined for quality, factorability, reliability, and based on a priori criteria.

Findings

After a process of principal axis factoring, 25 items were found to best represent six essential ingredients (hallmarks) of a summer camp experience at this collection of camps. The six hallmarks were found to be statistically unique constructs. The hallmarks were defined as:

Camp Community: Exposure to a kind, non-judgmental, accepting camp community.

Relationships: Exposure to meaningful staff and peer relationships.

Tradition: Exposure to traditions and annual special events.

Natural Setting: Exposure to an outdoor setting, a tripping program, and camping.

Challenge: Exposure to opportunities for goal setting and obtainment.

Reflection: Exposure to opportunities for introspection.

Table 1

Final scale item totals and reliability statistics

Hallmark	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Camp Community	5	.863
Relationships	3	.771
Tradition	3	.758
Natural Setting	4	.739
Challenge	5	.704
Reflection	5	.701
Total Scale	25	.810

Table 2

Final scale subscale correlation matrix

	Comm	Chal	Refl	Rela	Trad	Wild
Community	1.000	.115	.200	.295	.277	.196
Challenge	.115	1.000	.372	.437	.091	.037
Reflection	.200	.372	1.000	.282	.242	.036
Relationships	.295	.437	.282	1.000	.322	.087
Tradition	.277	.091	.242	.322	1.000	.058
Wilderness	.196	.037	.036	.087	.058	1.000

Discussion and Implications

Results of this research indicate that there is a reliable way to measure exposure to the hallmarks of an ideal summer at this collection of camps. The hallmarks and the scale were also found to have high face validity by a panel of director-selected expert campers as well as the camps executive team. By tapping into what campers say are the essential ingredients, this research has potentially identified six structural elements that contribute to the well-documented positive outcomes of a camp experience. In doing so, the Camp Hallmarks Exposure Scale provides an exciting opportunity for researchers to explore which specific elements of the camp experience may be correlated with particular outcomes. Internally, having a measurement tool for documenting exposure to the hallmarks of camp will provide organizations with a methodology for program development and evaluation. Furthermore, researchers in the fields of education and childhood development may have interest in the replicability of these hallmarks in other environments. Current limitations include the focused scope on a singular organization of summer camps. Moving forward, this scale will need to be tested for other forms of validity and across different camps and organizations to see if the same structural elements apply to a generalized population of summer camp participants. This scale will also benefit from being tested against known positive outcomes to determine whether or not the identified hallmarks are correlated with this growth.

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Camp Hallmarks Exposure Scale: Scale Development

Tommy Reynolds, New England College
Aloha Foundation



INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 2019, campers were asked to define the essential ingredients to an amazing summer at camp. Their answers were organized and used to create a rating scale designed to measure exposure to the camp experience.

METHODS

Qualitative

Focus groups
Thematic analysis

Quantitative

Pilot Test (n=60)
Factor Analysis
Item Reduction
Construct Identification

LESSONS TO SHARE....

- ❖ By tapping into what campers say are the essential ingredients, this research has potentially identified six structural elements that contribute to the well-documented positive outcomes of a camp experience.
- ❖ The hallmarks and the scale were also found to have high face validity by a panel of director-selected expert campers as well as the camp's executive team.
- ❖ Moving forward, this scale will need to be tested for other forms of validity and across different camps and organizations to see if the same structural elements apply to a generalized population of summer camp participants.

RESULTS

The Hallmarks of a Summer Camp Experience

Camp Community: A kind, non-judgmental, accepting camp community.

Relationships: Meaningful staff and peer relationships.

Tradition: Traditions and annual special events.

Natural Setting: An outdoor setting, a tripping program, and camping.

Challenge: Opportunities for goal setting and obtainment.

Reflection: Opportunities for introspection and self-evaluation.

WHAT THE CAMPERS SAID:

- "There is an understanding that everyone here is trying to become the person they want to be."
- "Everyone here is wearing the same thing, we're all at an equal level, so it's our personality that really lifts us up."
- "Time for self-reflection, trips, opportunities to grow, learning soft and hard skills, traditions, and a close-knit community."
- "Personal growth, personal discovery, love, fun, acceptance from others, adventure, responsibilities, and tradition."
- "Goals, time for reflection, tent-family bonding, no technology, friends, stepping out of my comfort zone."
- "Friendships with campers and counselors, traditions, being present, no technology, celebrating ourselves."

Item Reliability

Hallmark	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Camp Community	5	.863
Relationships	3	.771
Tradition	3	.758
Natural Setting	4	.739
Challenge	5	.704
Reflection	5	.701
Total Scale	25	.810

Subscale Correlation

	Comm	Chal	Refl	Rela	Trad	Natu
Comm	1.000	.115	.200	.295	.277	.196
Chal	.115	1.000	.372	.437	.091	.037
Refl	.200	.372	1.000	.282	.242	.036
Rela	.295	.437	.282	1.000	.322	.087
Trad	.277	.091	.242	.322	1.000	.058
Natu	.196	.037	.036	.087	.058	1.000

*Comm=Camp Community; Chal=Challenge; Refl=Reflection; Rela=Relationships; Trad=Tradition; Natu=Natural Setting/Total



2020 ACA Camp Research Forum, San Diego, CA.

CAMP STORY DRAMA: PRACTICING DELICIOUS FEAR FOR ANXIETY MANAGEMENT

Amy J. Ressler, California State University Bakersfield

Contact: Amy Ressler, California State University Bakersfield, 9001 Stockdale Hwy.,
Bakersfield, CA 93311. aressler(at)csub.edu

This research examines the socio-emotional effects of a summer drama camp program, where all attendees, including staff and faculty, work in a role-playing persona as wizards attending a magical school. Inspired by the *Harry Potter* book series (Rowling, 1998), the camp maintains a fantasy-literature theme, but creates original stories set in a magical summer camp. Campers range in age from 8 -18 and the camp is an overnight, co-ed program. The program is well-established, having created new story dramas each week for 17 years. During each week of the program, the participants enact a newly devised story drama, based on scenarios planned by the camp director and a team of counselors. Each week-long scenario takes the camp through a good-versus-evil story, and the campers work together to solve a mystery or conquer an evil force. The scenarios are enacted in improvisational role-play, and there is no audience for any part of the week-long story drama. Rather, the purpose of the story drama is solely for the participants' personal growth, the development of camp community, and to enjoy the fun of playing a fictional character.

The rationale for this study was to examine a unique, devised-drama summer camp for program development and possible expansion. The purpose of the study was to understand the relationship of the devised drama to the participants' social emotional learning, creativity and character development.

Theoretical Foundations

The Collaboration for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has articulated five core competencies for effective socio-emotional skills: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2012). Development of these skills contributes to a broad range of positive effects, including academic success (Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004), resilience (Werner & Smith, 1982), and risk prevention (Guerra & Bradshaw, 2008). Emotional regulation, as an aspect of self-management, may be influenced through experience (Fox, Levitt & Nelson, 2010). Studies on the effects of drama as a learning medium for students with diverse learning needs have demonstrated the wide range of applicability and success in achieving positive outcomes, such as prosocial behaviors and relationships (Batdi & Batdi, 2015; Hanrahan & Banerjee, 2017) and interpersonal skills (Dickinson, Mawdsley, & Hanlon-Smith, 2016). This study made use of the unique experiential learning perspective that drama contributes to the development of emotional awareness as self-management.

Methods

This program evaluation was based on qualitative research, including a survey of parents, interviews of the teachers, and focus groups of the campers and counselors. Fifty-seven percent of parents responded to the survey (45 of 78). Eighty-one percent of the teachers were interviewed (9 of 11) and two camper focus group discussions were conducted, with 18 campers ranging in age from 11 to 18, all of whom have been coming to the same camp for multiple summers. The teacher interviews, camper focus group discussions and open-ended parent surveys were transcribed and analyzed using open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Analysis procedures included content analysis and framework analysis of the qualitative data. The data

was coded by deriving meaning units, generalizing those meaning units into central themes and then identifying the emergent codes.

Results

The week-long devised story drama is enacted by the entire camp as a whole: campers, faculty and staff, based on a theme and plot created by the camp director. The collaborative nature of the work, the sustained characters, episodes, narratives and micro-narratives place this work under the definition of devised drama. Devised drama is a group or site-specific creation that uses collaboration and contribution as central methods to explore ideas and themes.

The overall structure of the camp itself, which is set up like a boarding school – with prefects, teachers, staff, classes, dorms, daily schedules, etc., lends itself to the ongoing immersive nature of devised story drama. This serves as the pre-text for the devised drama. The “character” that each child creates is sustained for the entire week, is self-defined, and represents the child’s “best wizarding self.” This existing school structure is often challenged in the devised drama, provoking the students to break out of typical student habitus: to be told what to do and when by figures of authority (McKinnon, 2016). Students are pressed to create prolifically and rapidly, to solve riddles, to engage with conflict, to fight foes, to join forces, to analyze the story and its characters – and to depend on themselves and each other rather than adults in typical roles of authority. Rehearsing strategies for survival and resistance by working moment to moment in the drama, depending on other students in character to build coalitions and consensus, exploring action and solving problems can be viewed as practice for real-life challenges and helps them develop personal resilience. This rehearsal for life helps students develop what may be called a “critical-affective stance” (Gallagher, Starkman & Rhoades, 2017). Experiences such as these help students develop the skills of creativity that can be strengthened and called upon in the way that one can use what one knows, when one knows what one knows. The students know they have creativity skills because they have used them. (McKinnon, 2016). The same could be said for socio-emotional skills, such as self-management.

Using a framework of social-emotional learning, emergent themes included self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills. Self-awareness presented in terms of creating a fictional character that the campers could sustain for a week, deciding what parts of themselves and their individuality they wanted to bring out in their character. Characteristics most frequently identified included courage, kindness, and nonjudgmental compassion toward others. Themes of self-management included responding to fear with action, thinking before responding, and moving through shyness to work with a group. Social awareness and responsible decision-making themes presented in response to the story dramas as concern for the well-being of the community overall, making decisions and taking action to benefit everyone, regardless of personal cost. Relationship skills were most frequently described in terms of acceptance of others, an ability to make group decisions and take group actions in the story dramas.

Salient themes that emerged from the data included involvement in the story drama linked to reports of self-efficacy, with enhanced confidence carried through to the campers’ lives outside of camp. Most notably, experiences of dramatic fear, or what is described at the camp as “delicious fear,” where campers enacted scenes of great peril in the story drama, were reported by participants as promoting greater anxiety management outside of camp. Campers suggested that when they are in situations (outside of camp) that caused them personal anxiety, they could recall the emotions of successfully resolving the story dramas and see themselves as empowered.

Implications

Recommendations for camp practice: well-controlled and designed all-camp story dramas that engage campers in good-versus-evil scenarios can be effective socio-emotional learning experiences. The dramatic experience of role-play provides an opportunity to practice facing and overcoming fear within a safe and supportive environment. Camp programs that implement such improvised scenarios should plan improvisational drama training for staff to ensure safety and satisfactory dramatic storylines, provide opportunities for campers to “opt out” of scenes of high dramatic tension, and plan time for reflection and discussion.

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Camp Story Drama: Practicing Delicious Fear For Anxiety Management

Amy J. Ressler, California State University



INTRODUCTION

Campers attending this Harry Potter-inspired program enact original, newly devised story dramas, based on scenarios planned by the director and a team of counselors. Each week-long scenario takes the campers through a good-versus-evil story. Campers work together to solve a mystery or conquer an evil force. The dramas challenge campers with significant moments of dramatic peril, or “delicious fear.” There is no audience: the purpose of the drama is solely for personal growth, development of camp community, and fun.

RATIONALE

The purpose of the study was to understand the relationship of the devised drama to the campers’ social-emotional learning, creativity growth and character development. The study was part of a program evaluation for possible expansion.



METHODS

- Parent Surveys,
- Teacher Interviews,
- Camper Focus Groups

RESULTS

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES were demonstrated through the story dramas:
Self-Awareness – consciously creating a fictional character and sustaining it for a week.
Self-Management – responding to fear with thoughtful action, overcoming shyness to work effectively with a group.
Social Awareness and *Responsible Decision-making* – making group decisions in the drama, taking action to benefit the community regardless of personal cost.
Relationship Skills – acceptance of others, making group decisions, taking group action.



WHAT THE CAMPERS SAID:

- “...when I get anxious or nervous about things that are hard to deal with in the [outside] world, then I think about camp and the dramas and I feel like, I can do this. I can deal with this.”
- “...it makes you braver, it makes you stronger, gives you the idea that you can handle those things.”

WHAT THE PARENTS SAID:

- “Because of camp, my child has more self-confidence.”
- “Whenever he comes up against a situation that previously caused him stress or anxiety he asks, ‘if I was at camp, how would I handle this?’”



LESSONS TO SHARE....

- ❖ Camp is a great place to practice role-playing challenging situations.
- ❖ Drama training for staff is essential to ensure emotional safety and satisfactory dramatic storylines.
- ❖ Provide opportunities for children to take on responsibility in the story dramas, as well as to “opt out” of situations.
- ❖ MOST IMPORTANTLY: Provide time for guided reflection and discussion.

2020 ACA Camp Research Forum, San Diego CA

EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS OF SEASONAL SUMMER CAMP EMPLOYMENT

Dan Richmond & Jim Sibthorp, University of Utah; M. Deborah Bialeschki, American Camp Association

Contact: Dan Richmond, University of Utah, dan.richmond(at)utah.edu

The modern college graduate is expected to have the right combination of knowledge, skills, and experience to meet the needs and demands of potential employers. The problem for many college graduates is understanding what types of experiences matter the most and whether particular experiences are perceived to develop the skills that are valued in the 21st century workplace by hiring professionals (Bills, Di Stasio, & Gërkhani, 2017; Cai, 2013)

The job search process is one where job seekers and employers have access to different or asymmetrical information (Cai, 2013; Stiglitz, 2002). From the employer's perspective, they must use accessible information (e.g., résumés, interviews, reference checks) to determine if a candidate has the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform a job (Bills et al., 2017) while prospective employees use signifiers like education and job experience to distinguish themselves from other candidates (Spence, 1973, 2002). Studies and surveys and employers have identified key skills important for the modern workplace that include communication skills, problem solving, ability to work in a team, initiative, and a strong work ethic (NACE, 2019). Additionally, research has found that employers look to education, job experience, and internships to determine if candidates might fit at their companies (Gault et al., 2010).

The screening of candidates may also signal information to hiring professionals that trigger implicit biases. For example, some vocations can become "gendered work" based on historical precedent and cultural norms and may influence hiring decisions (e.g., nursing, construction; Blackburn & Jarman, 2006). If biases are strong, gender can influence hiring preferences when controlled for education and experience (Darolia, Koedel, Mantorell, Wilson, & Perez-Arce, 2016).

While research about employer-employee matching is extensive, little research has looked at employer perceptions of seasonal employment. Summer camps employ over 1.5 million people and many of these employees are seasonal (American Camp Association, 2016). Previous camp research has examined the impact of camp employment on skills related to college and career readiness (DeGraff & Glover, 2003; Duerden et al., 2014). However, there is a need for more research on whether summer camp experience is viewed as valuable to employers outside the camp industry and whether camp may be viewed as gendered work. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand how hiring professionals view camp employment and gain insight on the skills most essential to the modern workplace.

Methods

Participants were recruited using an online panel of hiring professionals provided by Qualtrics. Participants filled out a survey that included several sections. In the first section, participants evaluated résumé excerpts that portrayed six seasonal summer employment scenarios. Scenarios were presented at random. Respondents rated how likely they would be to interview the candidate and how important summer employment was to their decision. Respondents were randomly assigned employment scenarios with either all male or all female to examine gender bias. The second section had participants evaluate how important SEL skills were at their company and whether they believed camp could influence the development of these skills. The survey also included a section of open-ended questions regarding preferred employee

skills and perceptions of camp employment. Data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods that included descriptive statistics, t-tests, and recognizing emerging themes in open-ended responses.

Results

The sample included 327 hiring professionals where 77.1% identified as female, 74.9% identified as White, 9.2% as Black or African American, 6.4% as Hispanic/Latinx, 5.8% as Asian, 1.8% as Multi-Racial, 1.5% as American Indian or Alaska Native, and 0.3% as other. Participants had a range of experience in HR, from less than a year to 46 years ($M = 12$ years). Major findings include that employers view job-related internships as highly important and that they value when summer camp employees are promoted from summer to summer ($p < .001$, $d = .196$ to $.389$). Additionally, for three scenarios involving camp employment, female candidates were rated higher than males with the same work and educational background ($p < .05$, $d = .218$ to $.244$).

Study participants rated the importance of SEL skills to the workplace and their perception of how working at camp may contribute to the development of these skills. Participants identified relationship skills, an appreciation for differences, and teamwork as SEL skills that were highly important to their workplace that could be highly attributable to camp employment.

In open-ended questions that asked respondents which SEL skills would be most important to companies over the next 10 years, top responses included collaboration skills (43% of respondents), a strong work ethic (40%), and communication skills (31%). Over 72% of respondents had a positive impression of seasonal summer camp experiences, 20% expressed a negative impression, and 8% were neutral.

Discussion

Findings from this study have important implications for the summer camp industry and industry leadership. First, the study highlights the importance of job advancement/promotion at summer camp to employers in other industries. Summer camp administrators may want to help camp staff position themselves for future employment in other fields by providing increased responsibility and leadership opportunities from summer to summer. Second, the study identifies that industry-related job experience is the most important factor when employers evaluate job candidates. For camp leaders, this may mean that either a) they must accept that staff leave after one or two summers to seek out job-related experience or b) they may need to be more creative in helping their best staff ‘job craft’ their position in order to align with employees’ career aspirations. For example, seasonal staff seeking degrees in marketing may be encouraged to assist with the development of camp marketing campaigns as part of their duties during the summer. While it is unclear why female candidates were rated higher than male candidates, findings may indicate that HR professionals either slightly favor female entry-level candidates or that camp work is viewed more favorably if the candidate is female. The third important finding with implications for camp leadership is that employers view relationship skills, appreciation for differences, and teamwork as skills highly important to the modern workplace that are also highly attributable to working at camp. Camp leaders may want to emphasize the opportunity to develop these skills and capacities while recruiting new staff.

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EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS OF SEASONAL SUMMER CAMP EMPLOYMENT

Dan Richmond and Jim Sibthorp, University of Utah
 Deb Bialeschki, American Camp Association

THE NEED

COLLEGE GRADS: Need the right combination of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

THE PROBLEM: What matters most?

IN PARTICULAR: What are employer perceptions of seasonal summer employment?

SIGNALING AND THE HIRING PROCESS

INCOMPLETE INFORMATION: The organization and the job candidate have access asymmetrical information (Cai, 2013; Connelly et al, 2011)

SIGNALING: Prospective employees use signifiers like education and job experience to distinguish themselves (Spence, 1973, 2002).

FIT: The challenge for organizations and jobseekers, according to signaling theory, is to overcome asymmetrical information to find the right fit (Spence, 2002).

METHODS

PANEL SAMPLE: 327 hiring professionals

RATING CANDIDATE RÉSUMÉS: Different combinations of camp vs. non-camp work, promotions, and industry-related experience.

EVALUATION OF SEL SKILLS ASSOCIATED WITH CAMP WORK: Rate importance to work and whether skills were attributable to camp.

OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS: Opinions about camp and advice for entry-level candidates.

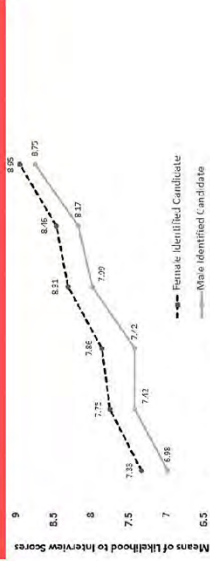
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Do hiring professionals prefer seasonal camp employment to other seasonal employment?
- Do they prefer additional years of seasonal camp employment to a single summer working at camp?
- Do they prefer candidates with seasonal summer camp experience that have been promoted at their camps?
- Do they prefer candidates with career-related summer internship experience over candidates without it?
- Do they rate female candidates higher than male candidates with the same academic qualifications and work experience?
- Which SEL skills do hiring professionals value the most in their workplace?
- How do hiring professionals perceive summer camp employment's influence on the development of SEL skills?

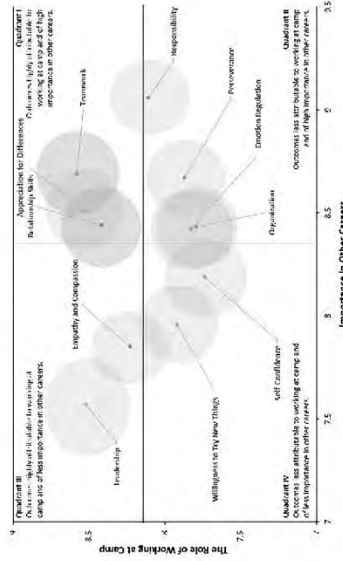
CANDIDATE RÉSUMÉS

1. 3 summers as restaurant server.
2. 1 summer as camp counselor, 2 summers as restaurant server.
3. 2 summers as camp counselor and 1 summer as restaurant server.
4. 2 summers as camp counselor with promotion to head counselor and 1 summer as restaurant server.
5. 3 summers as camp counselor with promotion after 1st year.
6. 2 summers as camp counselor, 1 summer working in same industry as hiring company.

RESULTS



Resumes Excerpts for Candidates 1-5



IMPLICATIONS

- Opportunities for promotion are valuable to both staff and future employers.
- Camps may need to accept that a) staff leave after 1 or 2 summers to seek out job-related experience or b) may need to be more creative in helping their best staff 'job craft' their position to align with employees' career aspirations.
- Camp leaders may want to emphasize the opportunity to develop SEL skills and capacities while recruiting new staff.

MEASURING CAMPER-COUNSELOR RELATIONSHIP QUALITY: DEVELOPMENT OF CAMPER-REPORTED SCALE

Rachel O. Rubin, University of Massachusetts Boston

Contact: Rachel Rubin, University of Massachusetts Boston, 100 Morrissey Blvd., Boston, MA 02125. rachel.rubin001(at)umb.edu

Overnight summer camps are one of the most popular organized programs for children in the United States (Bialeschki, Henderson, & James, 2007). Despite the centrality of the camper-counselor relationship to the camp experience, few studies have examined the nature of this relationship or considered how best to measure aspects of the relationship. The camper-counselor relationships forged within the overnight camp context are unique from other youth-adult relationships—campers and counselors spend significant time together, campers see the relationships their counselors have with other campers, and home-based authority figures are not present. In addition, counselors and campers make their own decisions regarding what they want from the camper-counselor relationship and their commitment to these relationships. Taken together, these considerations lead to a unique relationship for which a measure is not currently available. As the camper-counselor relationship specifically is theorized to be an “active ingredient” leading to many of the positive developmental outcomes reported for campers, appropriate measurement of the quality of the camper-counselor relationship is essential (Akiva & Li, 2016; Snider & Farmer, 2016). This research is designed to develop and validate a camper-reported camper-counselor relationship quality scale.

Theoretical Framework

This study employed positive youth development (PYD) and relational developmental systems (RDS) metatheory. The PYD model focuses on youth development from a strengths-based perspective and suggests that when the strengths of youth are aligned with assets in their community, youth will thrive (Lerner, Lerner, Bowers, & Geldhof, 2015). From this perspective, camp counselors are contextual/community assets who, when leveraged to align with camper strengths (and form close connections), promote PYD. Although counselors are the part of the relationship that can be leveraged, campers also impact the development and quality of these relationships. That is, camper-counselor relationships are co-constructed. Therefore, in addition to the PYD perspective, using an RDS approach—which emphasizes that mutually influential individual-context relations are a key part of development—is essential to fully understand camper-counselor relationships (Overton, 2015). This study seeks to begin to understand relationship quality between campers and counselors by first examining the camper perspective through the development of a camper-reported camper-counselor relationship quality scale.

Method and Results

The purpose of this study was to develop a camper-counselor relationship quality scale to be used with campers, ages 7 to 15. Development included a multistep process as described below.

Measure Development

Item Generation

I generated a list of 30 potential items based on an examination of relationship quality measures used for similar relationships (e.g., mentor-mentee relationships; student-teacher relationships) and on prior summer camp research, specifically a qualitative study on camper-counselor relationship formation research (Rubin, Hagler, Burton, & Rhodes, 2018). I organized these items into three factors: intentionality (deliberate effort counselors put into developing connections with campers), closeness (extent to which campers experience warmth, affection,

and open communication within the camper-counselor relationship), and social strain (involving conflict or campers feeling that their counselor does not like them or have time for them).

Content Validity Evaluation

I conducted a content validation procedure to gain information about the clarity and representativeness of each item and to preliminarily validate the factor structure. Nine experts in the fields of youth development and/or summer camp reviewed and rated each item. Following the content validity method by Rubio and colleagues (2003), I made decisions about which items to remove, keep, and re-word based on the recommendations of expert raters.

Cognitive Interviews

Using the revised camper-counselor relationship quality scale, I conducted cognitive interviews with four children (ages 10-12) who had previously attended overnight summer camp. Cognitive interviews included administering draft survey questions while simultaneously collecting additional responses about participants' thought processes (Beatty & Willis, 2007). After cognitive interviewing was completed, I used identified problems to revise questions on the scale (e.g., changed wording for clarification; deleting or changing items that did not seem to be measuring what I intended).

Measure Evaluation

Data were collected from campers at three different overnight summer camps. Participants included 318 campers ($M_{age} = 12.15$ years, $SD = 2.08$) attending one of the three participating camps. The majority of participants self-identified as female (53.5%) and White (92.1%). Participants completed the camper-counselor relationship quality scale, which consisted of 22 items. All questions were answered on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree." Campers completed this scale about only one of their primary counselors who was chosen randomly.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

To evaluate the psychometric properties of the instrument, I conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA). In conducting the EFA, I used the Principal Axis Factoring estimation method. I determined the number of factors to extract by inspecting the scree plot, examining eigenvalues (based on an eigenvalue of 1.0), and using parallel analysis and minimum average partial correlation analysis (Turner, 1998; Velicer, Eaton, & Fava, 2000). In the three-factor solution, the best fitting solution, all items had loadings above .53 with the exception of six items. I removed seven items from the scale subsequent to these analyses due to low factor loadings or similar loadings on multiple factors. In total, I retained four items on the social strain factor (e.g., "this counselor makes fun of me in ways I don't like"), three items on the intentionality factor (e.g., "this counselor hangs out with me during free time"), and eight items on the closeness factor (e.g., "I look forward to the time I spend with this counselor").

Implications

Results of this study point to a promising measure of camper-reported camper-counselor relationship quality. This measure will be useful in multiple ways. First, a well-developed measure for the camper-counselor relationship provides a new way to study the nature of the relationship itself as well as associations between camper-counselor relationship quality and other important factors (e.g., positive youth developmental outcomes; camper retention; camper demographic characteristics). Second, once the measure has undergone further testing (which I am currently conducting), this measure will be useful for camp practitioners. That is, campers can complete this measure over the summer to better inform camp administrators of the relationship quality between campers and counselors. Camp administrators can then use this

information to track relationship quality across summers, relationship quality between age-groups, and use results to make hiring decisions or create staff trainings specifically designed to address areas of relationship quality that might be lower in a given summer, population, or at the camp overall.

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Measuring Camper-Counselor Relationship Quality: Development of Camper-Reported Scale

Rachel O. Rubin, M.A. University of Massachusetts Boston

INTRODUCTION

Developed and took the initial steps in validating a camper-reported camper-counselor relationship quality scale to be used with campers, ages 7-15

METHOD

- Measure Development
 - Item generation
 - Generated list of 30 initial items
 - Organized items into 3 factors (social strain, intentionality, closeness)
 - Content validity evaluation
 - Nine experts in youth development and/or summer camp rated each item
 - Cognitive interviews
 - Administered draft survey questions to 4 former campers and collected information on their thought processes
 - Selection of 22 items for measure evaluation
- Measure Evaluation
 - Participants: 318 campers (53.5% female, 92.1% White, $M_{age}=12.15$, $SD= 2.08$) attending one of three participating overnight summer camps
 - Participants completed the 22-item relationship quality scale about only one of their primary counselors

RESULTS

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

- Principal Axis Factoring estimation method
- Best fitting model was three-factor solution in which all items (except for six) had loadings above .53
 - Social Strain Factor: 4 items retained
 - E.g., “This counselor makes fun of me in ways I don’t like”
 - Intentionality Factor: 3 items retained
 - E.g., “This counselor hangs out with me during free time”
 - Closeness Factor: 8 items retained
 - E.g., “I look forward to the time I spend with this counselor”

LESSONS TO SHARE...

This scale is a promising measure of camper-counselor relationship quality that will allow researchers and camp staff to:

- Study the nature of the relationship itself as well as associations with other important factors (e.g., developmental outcomes; camper retention; camper demographic characteristics)
- Inform camp administrators of areas of strength and weakness in camper-counselor relationships and use results to make hiring decisions and/or create staff trainings specifically designed to address areas of relationship quality

2020 ACA Research Forum, San Diego, CA

CAMP TO CONGREGATION: ASSESSING THE OUTCOMES OF CHRISTIAN TRAVELING DAY CAMPS

Jacob Sorenson, Sacred Playgrounds

Contact: Jacob Sorenson, Sacred Playgrounds, 19721 Bluffview Place, Galesville, WI 54630,
jake(at)sacredplaygrounds.com

Many of the earliest examples of summer camp in the late 1800s involved pastors taking groups of young people on week-long camping excursions (Paris, pp. 37-39). As the summer camp movement gained popularity and professionalism after the turn of the 20th century, Christian churches continued focusing on a camp/conference hybrid model in which congregations sent young people to camp and church leaders led the programs. Following World War II, Christian camping worked to emulate the wider summer camp movement by moving toward professionalization of camp leaders and establishment of permanent sites. There was a gradual paradigm shift away from camps as merely places where congregations sent their young people towards camps as partners in ministry that could offer direct benefits to their constituents.

One innovative program, developed specifically at Christian camps, was traveling day camp, in which camps sent trained summer staff members to lead day camp programs at host congregations. These programs began in Lutheran camps in the 1980s, and they spread slowly to other denominations before being adopted by several large Evangelical camps in 2007 and following. SpringHill, an Evangelical camp in Indiana, has become the nationwide leader in traveling day camp, operating more than 100 sites annually and serving more than 16,000 campers in 2019. While SpringHill and other Evangelical camps are investing heavily in traveling day camp, convinced of their impacts, many Lutheran camps have begun questioning the value of these programs, focusing instead on their overnight camp programs.

Recent research has provided evidence for the impacts of overnight camps, including the unique characteristics and outcomes of Christian camps (Sorenson, 2018), but traveling day camp has not been examined. Previous studies have included day camp programs alongside overnight programs in the analysis of camp outcomes (Thurber et al., 2007), but there is little evidence for how outcomes differ among camps that offer both overnight programs and day camp programs. The specific impacts of traveling day camp are even less understood.

Methodology

The Camp2Congregation Project was established to investigate the question: *What are the impacts of Christian Traveling Day Camp programs on congregations, families, and young leaders in the church?* The project used an embedded mixed-methods research design, centering on SpringHill day camps, with supplemental and comparative data gathered from four Lutheran camping organizations with longer histories of traveling day camp. Researchers interviewed 20 congregational leaders who had hosted traveling day camps in summer 2018, selected using stratified random sampling of host sites. Codes and themes from these interviews contributed to the development of quantitative assessments for summer camp staff, camper parents, and congregational leaders, along with interview protocols for site visits. The perceived and desired impacts that the initial interviewees identified were tested in subsequent phases of the project. Researchers visited 16-day camp sites in summer 2019, gathering data from focus groups with campers, church workers, volunteers, and summer camp staff, along with audio/visual data and field notes. Each interviewee and focus group participant was able to define for themselves the impacts they observed or perceived. More than 500 summer camp staff from the 5 participating camps completed surveys, including more than 200 with matching surveys from the beginning

and end of the summer. Over 400 parents affiliated with the 16 site visits completed a survey in late May and early June, including parents of children who did not attend day camp, providing a control group. Participating parents were given a follow-up survey in September 2019.

Findings

Traveling day camp is an outreach ministry that thrives as a partnership between the camp and congregation, functioning most effectively when well-trained summer staff facilitate participatory learning. Effective programs promote learning outcomes, enhance faith formation, and serve as doorways to ongoing programs in the camp and congregation.

Theme 1: Programs were enhanced when partnership was prioritized

Traveling day camp functioned as a hybrid of summer camp programming and congregational education programs (e.g., vacation Bible school). Programs relied on effective communication of expectations and coordination of various program elements. At sites where the transactional element of the partnership (e.g. money for services) was most emphasized, the perceived partnership was weakest, sometimes leading to confusion of expectations or a lack of enthusiasm for the program. Sites in which the camp and congregation had robust partnerships, usually including other camp programs and several years of working together, congregations had greater investment in the day camp and there was evidence for greater impacts. Effective partnership depended in large part on the camp's ability and willingness to adapt a high-quality, well-resourced camp program in response to contextual realities and the needs of the congregation.

Theme 2: Traveling day camp is an outreach ministry

The hybrid space of traveling day camp served as a *doorway* to the primary spaces of the congregation and the camp. Many congregational leaders hoped that day camp would bring new people from the community into the congregation, and camp leaders hoped that day camp would lead to participants registering for overnight camp. Both groups cited examples of success. Of surveyed parents whose children attended day camp, 6% said it was their family's first introduction to the congregation, while 25% said that day camp helped their child(ren) get more deeply involved in the congregation. Additionally, 25% said that their child(ren) attended or were planning to attend overnight camp, in part, because of positive day camp experiences. The outreach focus of traveling day camp also sought to include underserved young people and those who may not be able to attend overnight camp, due to such things as financial hardship, physical limitations, or parent apprehension about homesickness. As such, inclusion was a major theme at day camp, particularly for children with special needs.

Theme 3: Effective traveling day camp relies on high-quality, well-trained summer camp staff

The majority of the reflections about traveling day camp programs from both congregational leaders and the campers centered on the quality of staff members. It was clear that the quality of staff was directly related to their level of training and the support they received from leadership. Three-quarters of summer staff indicated that after staff training, they felt prepared and empowered for their role during the summer. Those with less staff training (2-7 days) indicated feeling less prepared and empowered, on average, than those with 10-14 days of training. Training and supervisor support correlated with their performance. Camp staff that did not feel prepared or supported had a higher frequency of reported burnout or exhaustion at the end of the summer and had less of an understanding that their role fit in with the mission/vision of the camp. Camp staff who served on traveling day camp felt more supported by their

supervisors, on average, than staff who served exclusively in on-camp programs, and they also reported a lower rate of exhaustion and burn-out.

Theme 4: Learning at day camp is enhanced when experiences are meaningfully interpreted in the context of trusted relationships

Programs focused on fun, kinesthetic experiences that were intentionally different from the children's normal routines and related to overnight camp experiences. The interpretation and processing of activities fell mainly to the summer camp staff members, who served as both relational mentors to participants and models for emulation. When the curriculum, theme, and message were well-incorporated into the activities, participants showed evidence for knowledge retention and growth in soft skills, such as self-confidence and social skills.

Theme 5: Effective day camp enhances the faith formation journey in the congregation and the home

Faith/spiritual formation was one of the major goals of the programs. Participants had opportunities to engage in Christian practices, such as worship and Bible study, and leaders worked to incorporate faith reflection into the fun, participatory activities. Impacts observed were directly related to and dependent upon the ministry of the congregation and/or the home. Most participants had active faith lives (94% of parents indicated that their family attended worship services monthly or more, including 61% attending weekly), so experiences served to augment these ministries and amplify faith in the child. When congregational and familial faith were not present, there was a hope among camp staff and church leadership that day camp might serve as a seed for a personal faith journey, which may grow in the near term or in the future.

Significance

Findings from the Camp2Congregation Project demonstrate how camp outcomes are enhanced when camps effectively partner with organizations that have year-round access to children. Through traveling day camp, camps were able to engage young people that they otherwise would not be able to access. There was evidence that this engagement increased the constituency of both the camp and partnership organization, enabling wider organizational reach. More importantly, the camps and partnership organizations shared common impact goals, and there is evidence that the partnership enhanced their impacts. While this study focused specifically on Christian camps, it has implications for other camps that partner with year-round organizations. Most significantly, the outcomes are enhanced when the partnership between the organizations is prioritized. As the relationship becomes more transactional (or an exchange for services), potential outcomes diminish.

This study also has important implications for summer camp staff. For camps that employ staff for a long summer season (6 or more weeks), a change of pace programmatically can reduce staff burnout. Camp staff who served some weeks in on-camp programs and other weeks in traveling day camp reported getting more sleep, on average, and feeling less exhausted or burnt out at the end of the summer than those who spent the whole summer either on camp or on traveling day camp. Additionally, the length of staff training matters. Those with less than a week of staff training were less likely to feel prepared and empowered for their role during the summer than those with more training, and the impacts were clear during the site visits. Staff with less training were less effective in their role of supervising the children and running the programs.

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Jacob Sorenson, Sacred Playgrounds

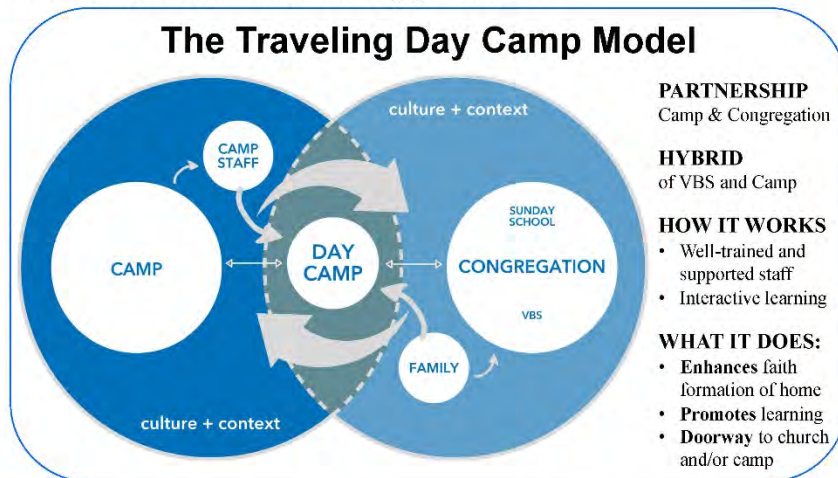


BACKGROUND

Traveling day camp spread among Lutheran camps in the late 1970s and 80s as a way for camps to reach out to constituent congregations and also bring more children to camp. By the 2010s, many Lutheran camps were questioning the value of these programs, while Evangelical camps, led by SpringHill, reinvented traveling day camp on a larger scale.

QUESTION

What are the impacts of Christian Traveling Day Camp programs on congregations, families, and young leaders in the church?



PARENT OBSERVATIONS:

- 98% My child had fun!
- 84% Day Camp had a significant, positive impact on my child.
- 76% Day Camp sparked conversations about God/faith at home
- 66% Child is still singing songs from day camp
- 25% Children attended or will attend overnight camp because of Day Camp
- 25% Day Camp helped child become more deeply involved in the congregation

"It was a great reinforcement of the faith we continue to try to instill in our family."

STAFF FINDINGS:

- 98% Agreed: "I grew in my leadership ability"
- 92% Agreed: "The camp experience had a significant impact on my life"
- 78% Agreed: "Camp experiences have helped determine my life direction and career"
- Staff reporting exhaustion or burnt out at summer's end were significantly less likely to show measurable growth than their peers who reported feeling fresh or simply tired
- Factors sig. associated with lower exhaustion/burnt-out: more sleep, feelings of agency, more supervisor support, feeling prepared after training, and healthy conflict resolution

MIXED-METHODS STUDY Interviews → Site Visits & Focus Groups → Surveys



More info online!
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2020 ACA Camp Research Forum, San Diego, CA

OUTCOMES OF THE CHRISTIAN SUMMER CAMP EXPERIENCE: FINDINGS FROM THE ACA YOUTH IMPACT STUDY OVERSAMPLE

Jacob Sorenson, Sacred Playgrounds

Contact: Jacob Sorenson, Sacred Playgrounds, 19721 Bluffview Place, Galesville, WI 54630, [jake\(at\)sacredplaygrounds.com](mailto:jake(at)sacredplaygrounds.com)

Religiously affiliated camps account for about a quarter of camps affiliated with the American Camp Association (ACA). Previous ACA research has included spirituality as a desired outcome of the summer camp experience, applicable to both religious and secular camps as a component of positive youth development (Garst, Browne, & Bialeschki, 2011). Secondary analysis of data from the *Directions Study* indicated that program emphasis and priority had measurable effects on camper outcomes, specifically noting that spiritual growth was significantly more evident in religiously affiliated camps than secular camps, with campers retaining some of this growth through the 6-month follow-up (Henderson, Oakleaf, & Bialeschki, 2009). The initial phase of ACA's *Youth Impact Study*, however, did not identify spirituality or any other overtly religious outcomes among the 18 learning outcomes "distinctly learned at summer camp that were transferable to other life contexts" (Wilson, Sibthorp, & Browne, 2018).

Methodology

Phase 2 of the *Youth Impact Study* sought to confirm and measure the strength of the 18 learning outcomes by surveying incoming first-year summer camp staff members who had previously been campers at overnight camp. Researchers selected a representative sample of ACA accredited camps, along with a panel sample of former campers recruited online. Outdoor Ministries Connection (OMC), an association of Mainline Christian camping organizations, expressed interest in participating in the study as an oversample, along with several other oversample groups. The goal was to identify the outcomes unique to Mainline Christian camps, in comparison to the larger camping industry. Four denominational camping groups (Episcopal, Lutheran, United Methodist, and Presbyterian) partnered for the OMC oversample. Each denominational group selected 4-6 camps that were representative of their organization in terms of geography and program. Twenty-one camps were invited to participate, and they together gathered responses from 101 incoming summer staff members who met the inclusion criteria of the larger study (legal adult, never had been on staff before, and had been summer camp participants for at least 3 weeks in the USA).

Representatives from OMC, in consultation with professional Christian educators, added five items to the survey alongside those measuring the 18 learning outcomes in the larger study samples. These items were identified in a nationally representative survey of OMC camp directors (2018) as having high priority among a large majority (more than 75%) of OMC camps. All five of these items were directly related to faith and religious outcomes, and they serve to summarize marks of Christian discipleship that are highly valued in the Christian community. These 5 outcomes included:

1. Faith in God
2. Understanding of the importance of participating in the life of a church or faith community
3. Spiritual practices, such as personal prayer and Bible study
4. Understanding of what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ
5. Sense of calling to use my God-given gifts in service to others

As with the other learning outcomes, participants were asked how critical camp was to the development of these outcomes and how important these are in daily life.

Findings

Findings from the OMC oversample demonstrate that faith-related outcomes are distinctly learned at summer camp, and former campers consider these outcomes highly applicable to their daily lives. Of all 23 learning outcomes, participants in the oversample indicated that camp was most critical in the development of their *faith in God*. The other four faith-related outcomes were also among the top 10 when considering how critical camp was. Moreover, most participants indicated that camp was the *primary* space in which they learned faith in God, spiritual practices, understanding what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ, and developing a sense of calling for service to others, even more important than either church or the home. For the outcome *understanding the importance of participating in the life of a church or faith community*, an equal number of respondents indicated that camp was the primary space of learning as those indicating church.

It is important to note that in most of the survey items identical to the larger samples (16 of 18), OMC respondents were statistically equivalent with the ACA accredited sample (measured using *t*-tests). This indicates that the OMC camps had similar outcomes, including such things as self-confidence, teamwork, and willingness to try new things. OMC camps did not prioritize faith outcomes at the expense of other outcomes recognized as critical across the camping industry. However, it is also evident that faith outcomes were not simply tacked on to otherwise secular camp experiences. When asked an open-ended question about what thing learned at camp is most valuable today, more respondents indicated faith-related outcomes than anything else. These faith outcomes were often intertwined with other outcomes common at all camp types, such as independence (“how to independently discover what my faith means to me”), relationship skills (“I learned what it meant to be a part of a community full of Christians and how important that is”), and self-identity (“That I am made by God, called by God, and am loved by God”). Previous research on Christian camping has indicated that faith is incorporated into all aspects of camp life rather than separated into specific program areas (Sorenson, 2018). The OMC oversample confirms these findings and demonstrates that this unique programmatic focus leads to unique outcomes, some of which are directly related to more common camp outcomes, though viewed through a distinctly religious lens.

There were also some notable differences between the OMC oversample and the larger ACA accredited sample in the 18 common learning outcomes. OMC respondents were significantly lower, on average, in their understanding that camp was critical to the development of *responsibility*. They were also lower, though not significantly so, in other outcomes that focused mainly on individual actualization (*independence* and *perseverance*). Conversely, they were significantly higher in their understanding that camp was critical to the development of *empathy and compassion*. Of all the common learning outcomes, *empathy and compassion* was most closely related to overt Christian values. OMC participants were also higher, though not significantly so, in other outcomes related to reaching out to others, most notably *appreciation for diversity*. This finding confirms, along with the critical role of camp in faith development, that the emphasis of OMC camps on Christian teachings has clear effects on camp outcomes.

Significance

The findings of this oversample strongly indicate that Mainline Christian camps have unique outcomes in addition to those common across the camping industry. These outcomes have positive implications for the religious communities that these camps serve, as well as

society as a whole. For the sample group, their camp experiences were among the most influential places of Christian formation for several marks of Christian discipleship valued across the Christian community. This demonstrates that camp is an important ministry partner with congregations and other Christian ministries. In some cases, camp is even more influential than the congregation or home in Christian formation. In a time of diminishing resources for many Mainline Christian groups, the value of camp is oftentimes called into question. These findings offer strong evidence of Christian camp's ongoing value for Christian denominations.

Christian camps also offer unique contributions to the camping industry and society as a whole, even those who do not find value in Christian confessional statements. The study findings indicate that the Christian focus of these camps strengthen their outcomes related to empathy, compassion, and appreciation for diversity. Much of the recent camp research has focused on career readiness and helping individual campers succeed. While it is evident that Christian camps also offer these values, the oversample findings indicate that they are deemphasized in favor of caring for other people. This calls into question the primary purpose of summer camp, whether it is primarily a place to learn how to succeed in our current society or primarily a place to learn how to transform society. With its focus on community living and appreciation for others, camp has the potential to counteract societal pressures that divide people into groups and promote self-fulfillment, even at the expense of others. This study suggests that Christian camps are particularly effective at breaking down barriers that divide people and encouraging compassion for others, key values that our society desperately needs.

It is unclear from this oversample if the outcomes related to faith formation are common across all of religiously affiliated camps, though it is reasonable to hypothesize that this is the case. Since religiously affiliated camps represent up to a quarter of all ACA members and spirituality has been identified as a component of positive youth development, it is evident that faith-related outcomes should be taken into greater consideration in future studies of the camping industry. At a minimum, it is important to account for the role of spirituality, whether overtly religious or not, in contributing to camp outcomes.

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Outcomes of the Christian Camp Experience: ACA Youth Impact Study Oversample

Jacob Sorenson, Sacred Playgrounds



INTRODUCTION

ACA's Youth Impact Study sought to understand former campers' long-term learning from summer camp. Phase 2 (spring 2018) surveyed first-year summer staff members who had been summer campers in order to test learning outcomes uncovered in the previous qualitative phase. **Outdoor Ministries Connection**, an association of Christian camping organizations, participated in the study as an oversample group in order to uncover some of the unique outcomes of Christian camping.

ABOUT OMC

- 8 Christian denominations
- 700 camps/conference centers
- 400k-500k summer campers each year
- 52% ACA accredited



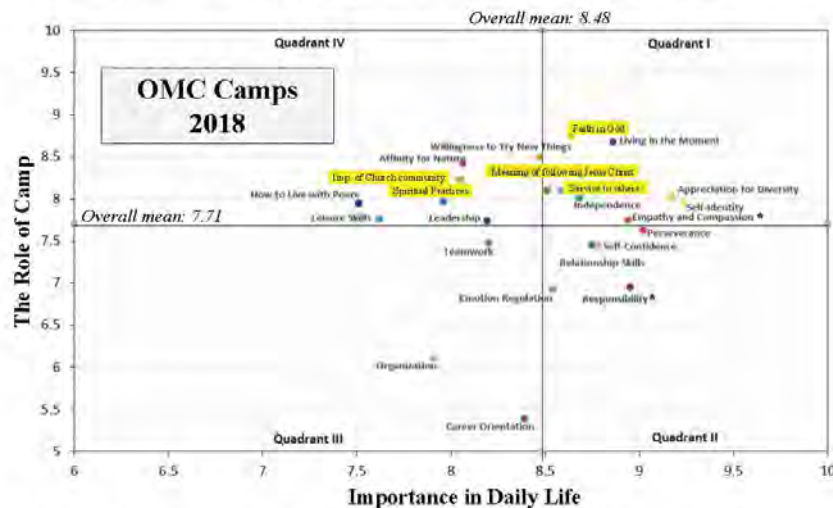
FAITH EMPHASIS

- 87% of OMC directors agreed: "Faith formation should be incorporated into all aspects of camp life"
- OMC directors assigned greater average importance to "Individual faith formation" and "Facilitating participants' experiences of God" than to FUN for all participants

MAJOR FINDINGS

1. Faith Emphasis has clear impacts on camp outcomes.

Participants indicated how critical the *Role of Camp* was to the development of 23 outcomes (y-axis) and how *Important to Daily Life* the outcomes were (x-axis). 5 outcomes were unique to the oversample (highlighted).



2. OMC camps exhibit outcomes related to reaching out to others more than other ACA camps, while having less emphasis on career readiness and individual success.



Empathy and compassion*
Service to others
Appreciation for diversity

Responsibility*
Independence
Perseverance



*Asterisk indicates significant difference in t-test at p<.05

3. Camp is often more critical to the development of faith outcomes than home or church.



4. Faith was intertwined with other common camp outcomes.

WHAT THE STAFF SAID WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOME.

- "I learned how to independently discover what my faith means to me."
- "I learned what it meant to be a part of a community full of Christians and how important that is."
- "God loves us no matter what we do and will always accept us as we are."

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MEASURING THE IMPACT OF SUMMER CAMP ON SCOUTS USA

Christina M. Viglietta and Eddie Hill, Old Dominion University

Contact: Christina Viglietta, Old Dominion University, Student Recreation Center, Room 2014,
Norfolk, VA 23529. cvigl001(at)odu.edu

The framework for positive youth development is an evolving model focused around transforming youth to be assets and contributing members of society (Hill, McClellan-Holt, Ramsing & Goff, 2016). According to Morgan, Sibthorp, and Wells (2014), when youth demonstrate behaviors linked to positive youth development, youth show greater self-esteem and resilience to challenging circumstances (Buckner, Mezzacappa, & Beardslee, 2003; Lerner, Lerner, Alermigi, Theokas et al., 2005; Masten, 2004). Dynamic learning environments are offered through recreation programs. Recreation programs (e.g., Boy Scouts of America summer camp programs) allow youth to try new things, develop new skills, build new relationships, while providing them with beneficial experiences that help support important life skills (Morgan et al., 2014). The Boy Scouts of America is a youth development program that creates attributes of character development. They promote their programs through twelve key points known as the Scout Law during the school year and during summer camp sessions. During summer camp, the participants focus on their character development by achieving merit badges, participating in community service and providing peer leadership (Wang, Ferris, Hershberg, & Lerner, 2015). This study will help to determine the effectiveness of the summer camp program provided by the Boy Scouts of America by determining if there is a continuous increase of character development as set by the American Camp Association's Youth Outcome Battery.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study came from Bandura's self-efficacy theory in 1977. Bandura's theory states that "Self- efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave. Such beliefs produce these diverse effects through four major processes. They include cognitive, motivational, affective and selection processes" (Bandura, 1994, p. 71). These beliefs are used to affect their life choices, goals and work on their personal strengths and weaknesses. There are four main sources of self-efficacy influences: (a) mastery of experiences, (b) vicarious experiences by social models, (c) social persuasion, and (d) reducing the individuals stress reactions (Bandura, 1994, p. 72-73). The vision and mission statement of the Boy Scouts of America (2019) identify similar self-developmental beliefs of major overarching goals of their programs. The major beliefs of this study focus on mastery of experiences, experiences of social models and reducing stress reactions.

Methods

Youth programs are highly interested in the outcomes experienced by their youth and how this information demonstrates the impact of their program to stakeholders, as well as influence program improvement strategies. Completing this program evaluation will help: 1) E\evaluate program goals; 2) document the changes in the BSA summer camp environment so that information can be shared with key stakeholders (parents, funders, staff, etc.); 3) meet expectations for trust-worthy instruments (high reliability and validity statistical checks prove the scales accuracy; and 4) demonstrate our commitment to quality programs that make a difference in people's lives.

The pre-test questionnaires were administered by the researcher before the scouts left for summer camp (July), the posttest questionnaires after they arrived back from summer camp (August), and finally the follow up questionnaires were administered 12 weeks later (November).

We used a repeated measures design to determine any participant change in the outcomes. The questions measured: Independence, Perceived Competence, Affinity for Nature, and Interest in Exploration from the American Camp Association's Youth Outcome Battery. Other questions were asked at the end of each questionnaire to determine demographics and scouting experience.

Results

A total of 28 scouts participated. After consent, assent, and questionnaires were matched; there were 16 usable data sets (57% response rate). The average age of participants was 14 and the average rank being First Class. There was a total of 12 troop meetings between the time of the posttest and the follow-up questionnaire, however none of the participants attended all 12 meetings due to sports, weather, or other obligations. Data were entered into SPSS and analyzed using a Wilcoxon *t*-test. The findings documented slight mean increases in perceived competence and interest in exploration. However, there was a slight decrease in affinity for nature and independence. Overall there was no significant change in any of the measures.

Discussion and Implications

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness at increasing the four outcomes (e.g., perceived competence) of Boy Scouts of America summer camps over the course of four months. There was a total of 12 troop meetings between the time of the posttest questionnaire and the follow up questionnaire, however none of the participants attended all 12 meetings due to sports, weather, or reasons not provided. Over these four months, the participants went from being off of school to back into full swing of school and other extracurricular activities which may have caused the limitation of the completed small sample size of questionnaires. It is also believed that this change may have caused the decrease in affinity for nature and independence. During the summer collection of questionnaires (pre and posttests), the participants made comments about having more "free time" and getting to wake up when they wanted to, whereas during the school year they depend on their parental units more often to wake them up and get prepared for the day. Another limitation noted during the questionnaires is the physical age break of new participants to the scouting program, which is age 11 to the older participants of 16 and 17 years old. The older participants conured in the back of the room and the younger participants sat in front of the room together. It was also observed that the group of participants were getting ready to go cold weather camping on the beach the following weekend after the follow up questionnaires were collected. This could have impacted the affinity for nature outcome as well.

Summer camps provide an outlet for scouts to improve on their character development during the preparation and duration of the summer camp. However, there is sometimes a lack of dedication to the school year program that takes place outside of the summer camp sessions. Overall, this research demonstrated a consistent need for working on the skills and character development that these outcomes measured. Future Scout camps should refine data collection measures to increase sample size, possible recruiting multiple troops at one time. It is also possible troop leaders were fully aware of the specific outcomes being addressed. Scout leaders can use this as a pilot study to help increase the need to program and measure for specific outcomes.

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MEASURING THE IMPACT OF SUMMER CAMP ON SCOUTS USA

Christina Viglietta and Eddie Hill,
Old Dominion University

INTRO

- The framework for positive youth development is an evolving model focused around transforming youth to be assets and contributing members of society (Hill, McChallan-Holt, Kamaug & Goff, 2016).
- Dynamic learning environments are offered through recreation programs. Recreation programs (e.g., Boy Scouts of America summer camp programs) allow youth to try new things, develop new skills, build new relationships while providing them with beneficial experiences that help support important life skills (Wilson & Sibbort, 2018; Morgan et al., 2014).
- During summer camp, the participants focus on their character development by achieving merit badges, participating in community service and providing peer leadership.



METHODS

- BSA summer camps provide a week-long opportunity to be in nature, work on various merit badges, that are considered a "crash course" in a future hobby or career and learn how to be themselves.
- 8 youth participated in the first pre-test, at the end on 16 completed all three rounds of questionnaires.
- The pre-test questionnaires were administered by the researcher before the scouts left for summer camp (July). The posttest questionnaires after they arrived back from summer camp (August) and finally, the follow-up questionnaires were administered 12 weeks later (November).
- The questions measured: Independence, Perceived Competence, Affinity for Nature, and Interest in Exploration from the American Camp Association's Youth Outcome Inventory.



Summer camps provide an outlet for scouts to improve on their growing curiosity and skills during the preparation, duration and after summer camp.



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA



RESULTS

- A total of 28 scouts participated. After consent, assent, and questionnaires were matched, there were 16 usable data sets (57% response rate). The average age of participants was 14 and the average rank being First Class. Data were entered into SPSS and analyzed using a Wilcoxon *t*-test. The findings documented slight mean increases in perceived competence and interest in exploration. However, there was a slight decrease in affinity for nature and independence. Overall, there was no significant change in any of the measures.



DISCUSSION

- There was a total of 12 camp meetings between the time of the pre-test, questionnaires and the follow up questionnaires, however none of the participants attended all 12 meetings due to sports, weather, or reasons not provided.
- There was a slight mean increases in Perceived Competence and Interest in Exploration, but slight decrease in Affinity of Nature and Independence.
- It is believed there was decrease in Affinity of Nature due to the group of participants were getting ready to go cold weather camping on the beach the following weekend. The participants have been used to enjoying the warm weather atmosphere that could not be a negative outlook on nature (Wilson et al., 2018).
- It is believed that the decrease in Independence because of the youth because of want from being on summer break to back into full swing of school and other extracurricular activities. Parents are usually the driving force when it comes to youth participating in activities whereas during summer camp, the youth oversee their own schedules (Morgan et al., 2014).
- There is very little literature about scouting summer camps. With these basic results, there will be a base to encourage further research on the impact of scouting summer camps.
- Future recommendations include measuring staff perceptions, measuring the parents' perceptions of impact and finally, evaluating the year long program and the summer camp program.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CAMP FOR CAMP ALUMNI FROM LOW-INCOME BACKGROUNDS

Robert P. Warner, University of Utah & Laurie Browne, American Camp Association
Contact: Robert P. Warner, warner.robert(at)utah.edu

Income disparities in the USA have created an opportunity gap for youth from low-income backgrounds (Putnam, 2015). The term *opportunity gap* reframes the achievement gap to highlight the potential causes of inequities rather than focusing on disparities in educational performance measures. The opportunity gap suggests that youth from low-income backgrounds may experience fewer opportunities to engage in developmental enrichment activities critical to young adult success (Nagaoka, Farrington, Ehrlich, & Heath, 2015; NASEM, 2019; Putnam, 2015). Potential causes of this gap may include access challenges due to the high cost of programs, awareness of opportunities, logistical constraints, and historical underrepresentation (Allen, Cox, & Cooper, 2006; Browne, Gillard, & Garst, 2019; Putnam, 2015). Developmental enrichment activities often include those that occur outside of school time (OST) or during the summer (Blomfield & Gardner, 2011).

Summer camp is a commonly attended OST experience that provides developmental experiences for youth (e.g., Garst, Browne, & Bialeschki, 2011). Many camps strive to enhance access to these experiences through financial scholarships. In addition to providing financial assistance, some camps specifically focus on serving youth from low-income backgrounds. However, most camps continue to primarily serve youth from middle to upper-class backgrounds (Browne et al., 2019). Subsequently, little research has focused on youth from low-income backgrounds and if there are differences in the lasting value of camp between alumni from low-income backgrounds and alumni from more affluent backgrounds, and if attending camps focused on serving youth from low-income backgrounds afford different outcomes for the youth who attend (Browne et al., 2019; Lerner & Overton, 2008).

Examining the outcomes of camp alumni from low-income backgrounds may be a useful starting point for creating more equitable camp experiences that not only lessen the opportunity gap but provide more culturally responsive and sustaining experiences (Browne et al., 2019). Therefore, we sought to answer these questions: 1) Are there differences between outcomes based on income level? 2) Are there differences between outcomes reported by camp alumni from low-income backgrounds who attended a camp focused on serving youth from low-income backgrounds versus a camp without that focus?

Methods

This study used a cross-sectional design to elicit survey responses from 412 camp alumni 18 to 25 years old ($M = 20.54$, $SD = 2.13$) who attended an ACA-accredited not-for-profit camp ($N = 24$) for three or more weeks as a child. Alumni who responded were 65% female, 74% White (10% Black, 10% Hispanic, 4% Multi-racial, 2% Asian, and .2% American Indian). A majority of alumni had attended an overnight camp (74%) and had also worked at a summer camp (74%). Eighteen percent of alumni reported their childhood family income as low-income (32% lower-middle-income, 43% upper-middle-income, 5% high-income) and thirty-one percent attended camps where more than fifty percent of the campers were low-income. We collected data using an online survey measuring eighteen outcomes linked to camp participation (Richmond, Sibthorp, & Wilson, 2019). The outcomes included: affinity for nature, appreciation for diversity, being present, career orientation, emotion regulation, empathy and compassion, how to live with peers, independence, leadership, leisure skills, organization, perseverance,

relationship skills, responsibility, self-identity, self-confidence, teamwork, and willingness to try new things. Participants provided responses on 10-point Likert-type scales regarding the role summer camp had in their development of these outcomes and the importance of the outcome in daily life. We computed composite scores (camp impact) to demonstrate both camp's role and the importance in everyday life by calculating the square root of the sum of each variable squared. We used multivariate analyses to test for differences in camp impact based on reported childhood income and camp type.

Results

The results indicated that alumni from lower-income backgrounds reported higher camp impact than youth from lower-middle to upper-income backgrounds (*Wilks L* = .769, *F* (51, 834.411) = 1.942, *partial eta*² = .084, *p* = .013). We used a follow-up discriminant function analysis to determine which outcomes were driving this difference. The results suggested that *emotional regulation* (.672), *organization* (.649), *responsibility* (.487), *perseverance* (.480) and *teamwork* (.454) were responsible for most of the differences based on self-reported childhood income group (*R*_c = .376). We then used another MANOVA to test for differences in camp impact among alumni from low-income background based on whether or not they attended a camp serving fifty-percent or more youth from low-income backgrounds. The results indicated marginally significant differences in camp impact between alumni from low-income backgrounds who attended a camp focused on serving low-income youth (*n* = 47) and camps without that focus (*n* = 9), *Wilks L* = .542, *F* (17, 38) = 1.892, *partial eta*² = .458, *p* = .051. In summary, the results of this study suggest that camp alumni from low-income backgrounds reported greater camp impact than alumni from other income groups, and that alumni who attended a camp focused on serving youth from low-income backgrounds reported a greater impact of camp.

Discussion

This study provides continued evidence that summer camp can lead to outcomes with a lasting impact well beyond camp attendance (e.g., Richmond et al., 2019) and that summer camp can be an especially potent experience for youth from low-income backgrounds. The alumni from low-income backgrounds that participated in this study reported greater camp impact than alumni from more affluent backgrounds. These results suggest that summer camp may be an effective context for delivering long-term outcomes that contribute to young adult success for youth from low-income backgrounds.

Other results revealed only marginally significant differences in camp impact for alumni from low-income backgrounds based on attending a camp focused on serving low-income youth and camps without that focus. This effect might be an artifact of the alumni that are part of this sample. However, it is also worth considering the possibility that the camp setting in general offers the potential for developmental experiences regardless of the focus of the camp. While there are limitations worth considering when interpreting the results of this study, the results suggest that attending camp may be especially impactful for youth from low-income backgrounds regardless of the specific focus of the camp (Allen, Cox, & Cooper, 2006; Blomfield & Barber, 2011; Lerner & Overton, 2008).

As income disparities continue to rise resulting in a growing opportunity gap, the results of this study provide a promising outlook for the potential impact that camp can have in creating more equitable developmental experiences for all youth and especially those from low-income backgrounds (Bialeschki, Henderson, & James, 2007; Nagoaka et al., 2015; NASEM, 2019). This research should serve as a catalyst for increased industry-wide efforts to make the summer

camp experience accessible to youth who have traditionally been underserved in organized camping (Browne et al., 2019). Additionally, the results of this study suggest potential outcomes of the camp experience that may be particularly salient for youth from low-income backgrounds. The results may be especially useful evidence when seeking financial support to provide more equitable access. Continued efforts to create more access and equitable experiences may be one way that camps can help bridge the growing opportunity gap for youth from low-income backgrounds.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF CAMP FOR CAMP ALUMNI FROM LOW-INCOME BACKGROUNDS

Robert P. Warner & Laurie Browne



Background

- Income disparities in the USA have created an opportunity gap for youth from low-income backgrounds (Putnam, 2015).
- Youth from low-income backgrounds may experience fewer opportunities to engage in developmental enrichment activities critical to young adult success (Nagaoka, Farrington, Ehrlich, & Heath, 2015; NASEM, 2019; Putnam, 2015).
- Many camps strive to enhance access to these experiences through financial scholarships.
- Some camps specifically focus on serving youth from low-income backgrounds. However, most camps primarily serve youth from middle to upper-class backgrounds (Browne et al., 2019).

Research Questions

- Are there differences between outcomes based on income level?
- Are there differences between outcomes reported by camp alumni from low-income backgrounds who attended a camp focused on serving youth from low-income backgrounds versus a camp without that focus?

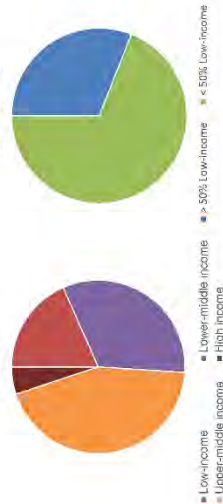
Methods

- Online survey measuring 18 outcomes linked to camp participation (Richmond, Sibthorp, & Wilson, 2019).
- Outcomes included: *affinity for nature, appreciation for diversity, being present, career orientation, emotion regulation, empathy and compassion, flow to live with peers, independence, leadership, leisure skills, organization, perseverance, relationship skills, responsibility, self-identity, self-confidence, teamwork, and willingness to try new things.*
- 10-point Likert-type scales about the role summer camp had in their development of these outcomes and their importance in daily life.
- We computed camp impact scores to demonstrate both camp's role and the importance in everyday life

Sample

- 412 camp alumni 18 to 25 years old ($M = 20.54$, $SD = 2.13$) who attended an ACA-accredited not-for-profit camp ($N = 24$) for > 3 weeks as a child.
- 65% female
- 74% White (10% Black, 10% Hispanic, 4% Multi-racial, 2% Asian, and .2% American Indian)
- 74% had attended an overnight camp
- 74% had worked at a summer camp

Income Camp Focus



Results

- Alumni from lower-income backgrounds reported higher camp impact than youth from lower-middle to upper-income backgrounds ($Wilks L = .769$, $F(51, 834.411) = 1.942$, $partial \eta^2 = .084$, $p = .013$).
- Emotional regulation* (.672), *organization* (.649), *responsibility* (.487), *perseverance* (.480), and *teamwork* (.454) were responsible for most of the differences based on self-reported childhood income group ($R_c = .376$).
- Marginally significant differences in camp impact between alumni from low-income backgrounds who attended a camp focused on serving low-income youth ($n = 47$) and camps without that focus ($n = 9$), $Wilks L = .542$, $F(17, 38) = 1.892$, $partial \eta^2 = .458$, $p = .051$.



Discussion

- Continued evidence that summer camp can lead to outcomes with a lasting impact beyond camp (e.g., Richmond et al., 2019).
- Summer camp may be an effective context for delivering long-term outcomes that contribute to young adult success for youth from low-income backgrounds regardless of the focus of the camp (Allen, Cox, & Cooper, 2006; Blomfield & Barber, 2011; Lerner & Overton, 2008).
- The results of this study provide a promising outlook for the potential impact that camp can have in creating more equitable developmental experiences for all youth, and especially those from low-income backgrounds (Bialeschki, Henderson, & James, 2007; Nagoaka et al., 2015; NASEM, 2019).
- This research should serve as a catalyst for increased efforts to make camp experiences accessible to youth who have traditionally been underserved in organized camping (Browne et al., 2019).
- The results also suggested outcomes that may be most salient for youth from low-income backgrounds.
- Overall, the results may be useful evidence for camps seeking financial support to provide more equitable access.

EMERGING ADULTS' PERCEPTIONS OF SUMMER CAMP AS MEANINGFUL WORK

Robert P. Warner, Victoria Povilaitis, & Jim Sibthorp. University of Utah
Contact: Robert P. Warner, warner.robert(at)utah.edu

Finding meaning and purpose in one's life is a critical developmental task for emerging adults (Arnett, 2000). Among the many settings where meaning-making can occur, researchers frequently identify work as a setting primed for emerging adult development (Arnett, 2000; Mayseless & Keren, 2014; Rosso, Dekas, & Wrzesniewski, 2010). Meaningful work (MW) is the belief that one's employment has value and adds to their sense of purpose and meaning in life (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). Literature suggests that MW may contribute to a broader meaning in life for younger employees (e.g., Rosso et al., 2010).

People find their work meaningful for many reasons, including value or goal alignment, other people at work, the work environment, and significance of the tasks they perform at work (Rosso et al., 2010). Authenticity, self-efficacy, self-esteem, purpose, belongingness, transcendence, and cultural and interpersonal sensemaking, have been identified as mechanisms that influence peoples' perceptions of MW (Rosso et al., 2010). For example, when people feel their work has an impact on others and aligns with their values, they are more likely to find their work meaningful (Grant, 2008). Similarly, when people feel a strong sense of belongingness they identify with and feel connected to others at work and find their work more meaningful (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003; Rosso et al., 2010). While a robust body of literature about MW exists, little is known about emerging adults' perceptions of MW in seasonal employment settings.

Working at a summer camp is a common seasonal job for emerging adults (Browne, 2019). Past research about staff has focused on engagement (e.g., Browne & D'Eloia, 2016), employment motivations (e.g., Richmond, Sibthorp, & Cochran, 2019) and developmental outcomes (e.g., Garst et al., 2009; Johnson et al., 2011). Despite this growing body of literature, little is known about camp as a setting for MW. Understanding if and why emerging adults find summer camp to be MW may illuminate strategies for enhancing the employment experience, as well as positioning camp as a work context well-suited for emerging adulthood development (Chalofsky, 2003). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore emerging adult staff's perceptions of summer camp as MW. The following research questions guided our investigation: 1) Do summer camp staff perceive their work to be meaningful, and if so, why? 2) What at camp, if anything, facilitates staff's perceptions of MW and why?

Method

In this paper we report on the results of two studies intended to investigate summer camp as a setting for MW for both first-year and more experienced seasonal staff. In study 1, we conducted semi-structured interviews (30-45 minutes) with eighty-six 18 to 25 year-old first-year staff ($M = 20$; $SD = 1.87$) from ACA-accredited camps ($N = 39$) varying in type, geographic region, and size. Staff were a majority female (62%) and White (77%). Interviewers took notes, and with consent, recorded interviews for transcription. Grounded theory techniques (Charmaz, 1995) guided our data analysis which began with open-coding of the data for information relevant to the research questions (e.g., description of MW or elements at camp facilitating MW). We then used axial coding to detect patterns between codes regarding camp elements that influenced MW. Finally, we used selective coding to identify salient themes emerging from the data. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings we collaboratively created the codebook, used multiple coders, wrote memos, and engaged in researcher reflexivity (Miles, Huberman, &

Saldaña, 2014). In study 2, we used a cross-sectional design to elicit participation from one-hundred twenty-three 18 to 25 year-old staff ($M = 21$; $SD = 1.55$) who had worked more than one summer at an ACA-accredited summer camp. Participants were a majority female (67%) and Caucasian (87%), and had worked at camp an average of 4 years ($SD = 2.10$). We collected data using an online survey comprised of thirty-one close-ended questions about MW (Steger et al., 2012), job fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002), sense of belonging (Panorama, 2015), and job impact (Grant, 2008). Participants provided responses on Likert-type scales for all questions. Prior to analysis, we calculated composite variables for all scales. We used a multiple regression to determine the extent to which job fit, sense of belonging, and job impact predicted MW.

Results

The results of both studies suggested that staff found working at camp to be meaningful and that several aspects of their work contributed to its meaningfulness. In study 1, most staff said working at camp was meaningful because of the impact they felt they were making and their relationships with others. More specifically, most staff said that their interactions with campers contributed most to their sense of meaningfulness because they could see how their work contributed to campers' growth. Many said these interactions helped them feel like they were giving back and contributing to something bigger than themselves. Their feelings were reaffirmed by the feedback provided to them by campers, parents, and other staff. Staff also described several aspects of the work environment, including the supportive culture at camp and the relationships with other counselors, as important to the meaningfulness of camp work. The supportive environment and relationships with others provided them a sense of belonging, as well as a connection to something bigger than themselves. In study 2, staff reported generally high levels of sense of belonging ($M = 4.23$, $SD = .662$), job fit ($M = 5.096$, $SD = .790$), and job impact ($M = 5.764$, $SD = .404$). Multiple regression results suggested that job fit, sense of belonging, and job impact predicted MW ($R^2 = .582$, $F(3, 119) = 55.251$, $p < .001$). Job fit was the best predictor of MW ($\beta = .414$), followed by job impact ($\beta = .312$), and sense of belonging ($\beta = .268$).

Discussion

Emerging adult staff in these studies believed working at summer camp was a meaningful employment experience. The results suggested that the meaning of camp work, and why staff find it meaningful, varies and likely changes the longer they work at camp (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003; Rosso et al., 2010). These findings help to illuminate strategies that camp employers might use to enhance camp work experiences in an effort to help staff find meaning in their work (Grant, 2007, 2008; Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Providing staff opportunities to reflect on their work experiences may help them become more aware of how camp contributes to their sense of purpose and understand how their values and work experiences align or diverge (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). More intentional opportunities for reflection may also provide opportunities for career orientation, value clarification, and identify development, which can lead to finding meaning in one's life, and further contribute to meeting the needs of emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000). Similarly, opportunities for feedback may help staff better understand the potential impact of their work. Giving staff ample opportunities to reflect and received feedback may serve as mechanism for enhancing youth camper experiences. Indeed, employees that are able to see how their work makes an impact are more likely to engage in behaviors that benefit clients and customers (Grant, 2008). Additionally, staff who find camp work meaningful may experience greater job satisfaction and be more engaged in their work, which may in turn also lead to higher-quality youth camper experiences (Grant, 2007; Rosso et al., 2010). When staff find

working at summer camp meaningful, camp becomes seasonal employment that is not only enjoyable, but also a developmentally-important context for emerging adults as they work toward finding meaning and purpose in their lives.

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Background

- Finding meaning and purpose in one's life is a critical developmental task for emerging adults (Arnett, 2000).
- Work is a setting primed for emerging adult development (Arnett, 2000; Mayselless & Keren, 2014; Rosso, Dekas, & Wrzesniewski, 2010).
- Meaningful work (MW) is the belief that one's employment has value and adds to their sense of purpose and meaning in life (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003).
- People find their work meaningful for many reasons, including value or goal alignment, other people at work, the work environment, and significance of the work tasks (Rosso et al., 2010).
- Understanding if and why emerging adults find summer camp to be MW may illuminate strategies for enhancing the employment experience, as well as positioning camp as a work context well-suited for emerging adult development (Chalofsky, 2003).

Research Questions

1. Do summer camp staff perceive their work to be meaningful, and if so, why?
2. What at camp, if anything, facilitates staff's perceptions of MW and why?

Methods

- **Study 1**
- Semi-structured interviews (30-45 minutes)
- Grounded theory techniques (Charmaz, 1995) guided our data analysis: open, axial, and selective coding

Study 2

- Cross-sectional design
- Online survey comprised of 31 close-ended questions about MW (Steger et al., 2012), job fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002), sense of belonging (Panorama, 2015), and job impact (Grant, 2008).

Study 1

- 18 to 25 year-old 1st-year staff (N = 86; M = 20; SD = 1.87) from ACA-accredited camps (N = 39)
- Majority female (62%) and White (77%).

Sample



- 18 to 25 year-old staff (N = 123; M = 21; SD = 1.55) who had worked > 1 summer at an ACA-accredited summer camp.
- Majority female (67%) and Caucasian (87%)
- Worked at camp an average of 4 years (SD = 2.10).

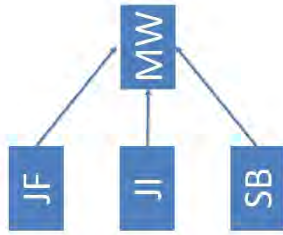
Study 1 Results

- Most staff said working at camp was meaningful because of the impact they felt they were making and their relationships with others.
- The camper interactions helped staff feel like they were giving back and contributing to something bigger than themselves.
- Feedback from campers, parents, and other staff reaffirmed the meaningfulness of camp work.
- The supportive environment and relationships with others provided them a sense of belonging, as well as a connection to something bigger than themselves – helping provide meaning.

“Working at camp was meaningful to me. I felt like I was contributing to something bigger than myself... It's not just about me. It's about them and what I can pass on to the next generation.” -ID 191

Study 2 Results

- High sense of belonging (M = 4.23, SD = .662), job fit (M = 5.096, SD = .790), and job impact (M = 5.764, SD = .404).
- Job fit, sense of belonging, and job impact predicted MW ($R^2 = .582$, $F_{(3, 119)} = 55.251$, $p < .001$).
- Job fit was the best predictor of MW ($\beta = .414$), followed by job impact ($\beta = .312$), and sense of belonging ($\beta = .268$).



Discussion

- The meaning of camp work, and why staff find it meaningful, varies and likely changes the longer they work at camp (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003; Rosso et al., 2010).
- Providing staff opportunities to reflect on their work may help them become more aware of how camp contributes to their sense of purpose and understand how their values and work experiences align or diverge (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003).
- Reflection may also provide opportunities for career orientation, value clarification, and identity development, which can lead to finding meaning in one's life, and contribute to emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000).
- Giving staff ample opportunities to reflect and receive feedback may serve as mechanism for enhancing youth camper experiences (Grant, 2008; Rosso et al., 2010).
- When staff find working at summer camp meaningful, camp becomes seasonal employment that is not only enjoyable, but also a developmentally-important context for emerging adults as they work toward finding meaning and purpose in their lives.

THE EFFECTS OF NON-CAMP AND CAMP FACTORS ON SUMMER CAMP STAFF RETENTION

Robert P. Warner, Dan Richmond, & Jim Sibthorp, University of Utah
Contact: Robert P. Warner, warner.robert(at)utah.edu

Many summer camps struggle with retaining high-quality staff each year (Browne, 2019). Extant literature suggests that people's decision to return to work is often influenced by motivational and situational factors, both unrelated and related to their employment (Smith, 2005). However, the factors most influential to retention may vary depending on characteristics of the specific employment context and employees (Gillard, Witt, & Watts, 2010; Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012).

Seasonal summer camp staff likely decide to return or not return to work at camp for various reasons, both unrelated and related to camp. For example, unrelated reasons to camp might include family or personal relationships and career or educational opportunities (Richmond, Sibthorp, & Cochran, 2019). Camp-related reasons might include burnout (Bailey, Kang, & Kuiper, 2012), job impact (Grant, 2008), job fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002), and a sense of belonging (McCole, 2015).

Despite the continued concerns of retention, little empirical evidence exists that suggests why staff return to their jobs at summer camp (e.g., Gillard et al., 2010; McCole, 2015). Understanding more about the factors influencing staff's decision to continue working at camp or not return may provide useful information camp employers can use to increase retention. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the factors that influence summer camp staff retention. The following questions guided our investigation: 1) What factors influence retention? 2) Do camp factors predict retention above and beyond non-camp factors?

Methods

In this paper, we report on data collected in two studies to examine the reasons for retention among both first-year and staff who have returned to camp for more than two years. Study 1 included 254 staff who had completed their first year of work at an ACA-accredited camp during 2018. Participants were 18 to 25 years old ($M = 19.81$, $SD = 1.77$) and a majority female (69%) and White (74%). We collected data using an online survey that asked staff to rank reasons for why or why they were not planning to continue working at camp the upcoming summer (2019). Study 2 included 135 staff who had worked at a camp for more than one summer and had returned to work at an ACA-accredited camp during 2018. Participants were 18-30 years old ($M = 22$, $SD = 2.64$), a majority female (67%) and White (88%), and had 2-13 years of camp work experience ($M = 4.48$, $SD = 2.43$). We collected data using an online survey with questions about retention, burnout (Demerouti et al., 2010), job impact (Grant, 2008), sense of belonging (Panorama, 2015), job fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002), and non-camp factors (e.g., education and career goals; family and personal relationships). Participants responded yes or no for retention questions and on either five or six-point Likert-type scales for all other questions. Before analyzing these data, we computed composite variables for all scales. We used hierarchical logistic regression to determine the extent to which camp factors (i.e., burnout, job impact, sense of belonging, and job fit) predicted the likelihood of retention above and beyond non-camp factors (i.e., education and career goals; family and personal relationships).

Results

In study 1, about fifty-four percent of staff intended to return, about twenty-six percent were undecided, and twenty-percent reported that it was unlikely they would return to camp. The

top three reasons staff said they were returning were feelings of making a difference (40%), enjoying the work (34%), and having an emotional attachment to camp (28%). The top three reasons staff said they were not returning were poor pay (23%), better job opportunities (17%), and educational opportunities (15%).

In study 2, fifty-five percent of participants said they were returning to work at camp in 2019. Staff reported supportive relationships ($M = 4.19, SD = .77$) and moderately-supportive educational and career goals ($M = 3.58, SD = 1.13$). Staff reported moderate burnout ($M = 2.83, SD = .78$) and high sense of belonging ($M = 4.25, SD = .66$), job fit ($M = 5.16, SD = .79$), and job impact ($M = 5.77, SD = .40$). Hierarchical logistic regression results suggested staff were most likely to return when their education and career goals were supportive of camp employment. Family or personal relationships' support of camp work did not influence retention. In summary, camp factors did not predict retention above and beyond non-camp factors (see Table 1).

Table 1
Hierarchical logistic regression analysis of factors predicting retention

Step	Predictor	<i>B</i>	SE	Wald	<i>e^b</i>
1	Non-camp factors				
	Education & Career	.585	.186	9.882	1.795*
	Relationships	-.103	.260	.156	.902
2	Non-camp factors				
	Education & Career	.459	.199	5.327	1.582*
	Relationships	-.251	.288	.759	.778
	Camp factors				
	Burnout	.096	.343	.078	1.101
	Sense of Belonging	.015	.351	.002	1.015
	Job Fit	.597	.371	2.587	1.817
	Job Impact	-.115	.488	.056	.891

Note. * $p < .05$; $R^2 = .114^{**}$ for Step 1; $R^2 = .146$ for Step 2, however, model was still significant.

Discussion

These studies provide evidence of the factors that influenced camp staff retention among these samples of seasonal summer camp staff. The results of these studies suggest that staff's reasons to continue working at camp may change over time. For example, in study 1, first-year staff reported camp factors (i.e., making a difference, enjoying the work, and emotional attachment to camp) as reasons why they planned to return to work at camp the following summer. However, in study 2, the results suggested that educational and career-related support for camp work was a most important factor influencing more experienced staff's retention. When these results are considered in light of the typical age of seasonal camp staff, it is not surprising that educational or employment transitions impact retention more than job-related factors (Arnett, 2000). Based on the results of these studies, camp employers wanting to increase retention should help staff craft work experiences that are meaningful and meet their educational

and career-related goals (Wrzensniewski & Dutton, 2001). Future research should explore strategies for job-crafting at camp.

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THE EFFECTS OF NON-CAMP AND CAMP FACTORS ON SUMMER CAMP STAFF RETENTION

Robert P. Warner, Daniel Richmond, & Jim Sibthorp



Background

- Many summer camps struggle with retaining high-quality staff each year (Browne, 2019).
- Extant literature suggests that people's decision to return to work is often influenced by motivational and situational factors, both unrelated and related to their employment (Smith, 2005).
- The factors most influential to retention may vary depending on characteristics of the specific employment context and employees (Gillard, Witt, & Watts, 2010; Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012).
- Seasonal summer camp staff likely decide to return or not return to work at camp for various reasons, both unrelated (i.e., family or personal relationships and career or educational opportunities, Richmond, Sibthorp, & Cochran, 2019) and related to camp (i.e., burnout, Bailey, Kang, & Kuiper, 2012; job impact, Grant, 2008; job fit, Cable & DeRue, 2002, and a sense of belonging, McCole, 2015). However, little empirical evidence exists.

Research Questions

1. What factors influence retention?
2. Do camp factors predict retention above and beyond non-camp factors?

Methods

Study 1

- Online survey that asked staff to rank reasons for why or why they were not planning to continue working at camp the upcoming summer (2019).

Study 2

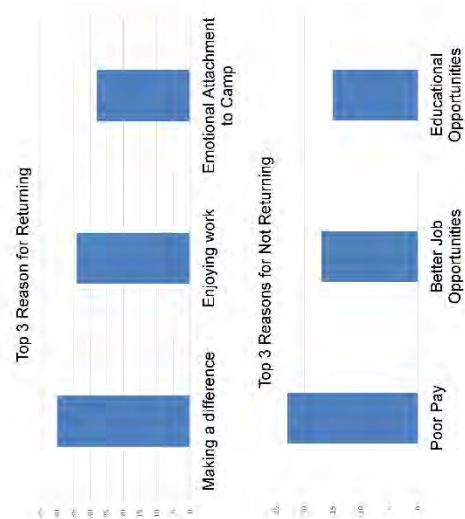
- Online survey with questions about retention, burnout (Demerouti et al., 2010), job impact (Grant, 2008), sense of belonging (Panorama, 2015), job fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002), and non-camp factors (e.g., education and career goals; family and personal relationships)
- Participants responded yes or no for retention questions and on either 5 or 6-point Likert-type scales for all other questions.

Sample

- **Study 1**
 - 254 staff who had completed their 1st year of work at an ACA-accredited camp during 2018
 - 18 to 25 years old ($M = 19.81$, $SD = 1.77$)
 - Majority female (69%) and White (74%).
- **Study 2**
 - 135 staff who had worked at a camp > 1 summer and had returned to work at an ACA-accredited camp during 2018.
 - 18-30 years old ($M = 22$, $SD = 2.64$)
 - Majority female (67%) and White (88%)
 - 2-13 years of camp work experience ($M = 4.48$, $SD = 2.43$)

Study 1 Results

- 54% staff intended to return, 26% were undecided, and 20% reported that it was unlikely they would return to camp



Study 2 Results

- 55% participants said they were returning to work at camp
- Staff reported supportive relationships ($M = 4.19$, $SD = .77$) and moderately-supportive educational and career goals ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 1.13$)
- Staff reported moderate burnout ($M = 2.83$, $SD = .78$) and high sense of belonging ($M = 4.25$, $SD = .66$), job fit ($M = 5.16$, $SD = .79$), and job impact ($M = 5.77$, $SD = .40$).
- Staff were most likely to return when their education and career goals were supportive of camp employment
- Camp factors did not predict retention above and beyond non-camp factors.

Hierarchical logistic regression analysis of factors predicting retention

Step	Predictor	B	SE	Wald	ϕ^2
1	Non-camp factors				
	Education & Career	.585	.166	9.882	1.795*
	Relationships	-.103	.260	1.55	.802
2	Non-camp factors				
	Education & Career	.469	.199	5.327	1.962*
	Relationships	-.231	.288	1.59	.778
Camp factors	Burnout	.096	.343	.078	1.101
	Sense of Belonging	0.05	.371	.026	1.815
	Job Fit	.593	.373	2.487	1.815
	Job Impact	-.115	.483	.054	.851
	Job Satisfaction	-.115	.483	.054	.851

Note. * $p < .05$; $R^2 = .114$ * for Step 1; $R^2 = .146$ for Step 2, however, model was still significant.

Discussion

- Staff's reasons to continue working at camp may change over time.
- First year staff reported camp factors (e.g., making a difference, enjoying the work, and emotional attachment to camp) as reasons why they planned to return to work at camp the following summer.
- Educational and career-related support for camp work was the most important factor influencing more experienced staff's retention.
- Considered in light of the typical age of seasonal camp staff, it is not surprising that educational or employment transitions impact retention more than job-related factors (Arnett, 2000).
- To increase retention camps should help staff craft work experiences that are meaningful and meet their educational and career-related goals (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

REPEATED CAMP EXPERIENCES AND YOUTH LIVING IN LOW-INCOME: AN IMPACT STUDY

Katie Wheatley, Tim Hortons Foundation Camps

Contact: Katie Wheatley, Tim Hortons Foundation Camps, 264 Glen Morris Rd. E, St. George, ON N0E 1N0. [katie.wheatley\(at\)thcf.com](mailto:katie.wheatley@thcf.com)

With 1.2 million children and youth living in poverty in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2019) and 15 million in the United States (National Centre for Children in Poverty, 2019) access to supports and opportunities that enable youth from disadvantaged circumstances to thrive are critical. Youth living in low-income are at higher risk of negative health outcomes (Kirschman et. al., 2010); while lacking resources and access to the “prerequisites for health – including housing, food, clothing, education, safety and the ability to participate in society in a meaningful way” (Shimmin, n.d.). Despite the increased risk factors youth living in low-income face, substantial evidence has emerged suggesting that when youth are “given access to the right services and opportunities, they have a chance to build a brighter future” (Covenant House, 2018). One such opportunity is the repeated overnight camp experience. Previous research has outlined the effects the camp experience has on helping youth at-risk increase positive social skills (e.g. Allen et. al., 2011; Readdick & Schaller, 2005), but little exists pertaining to the impact repeated overnight camp experiences have on youth from economically disadvantaged circumstances.

The purpose of this study is to determine how repeated overnight camp experiences help youth living in low-income cultivate the foundational skills and behaviours necessary to successfully transition to adulthood.

Theoretical Foundations

As Merryman and her colleagues (2012) suggest, the camp environment enables youth living in low-income to build resilience and transfer skills learned at camp back to their everyday lives. By comparing campers who attended a five-week summer day camp to a control group who did not attend, Merryman and colleagues (2012) reported significant differences in the campers’ belief in a successful future for themselves while indicating growth in social skills and positive values when back in their home communities. Wilson and Sibthorp (2018) examined camp learning outcomes most applicable to academics and workplace readiness. By defining the mechanisms at camp including experiential learning, camp schedules, communal living and safe and supportive environments; Wilson and Sibthorp articulate summer camp as a place where youth develop the skills critical to success in school and work (Wilson & Sibthorp 2018). This study applies learnings from Merryman et. al. (2012) combined with findings from Wilson and Sibthorp (2018) as context to determine how the repeated overnight camp experience promotes foundational skill development for youth living in low-income, positively impacting their successful transition to adulthood.

Methods

The outcomes-based impact study measures youth over a five-year, repeated summer camp experience through a mixed methods approach. In the entirety of the study, five data sets were collected (surveys from first, third, and fifth-year campers; and interviews from second and fourth-year campers), however, only fifth-year camper survey data is represented. While the eventual goal is to complete a longitudinal study, retrospective survey data from fifth year campers are included in this abstract. Over 97% of fifth year campers responded to the survey with 67% of respondents completing the survey in full, resulting in a sample size of 554.

Campers aged 16-18 from Canada and the United States are represented in the sample. Surveys were conducted during the last 24 hours of camp at three camp locations in Canada from June – August 2019. Surveys were offered in English and French. Surveys are comprised of 73 questions and statements with 58 statements measured on a 5-point Likert Scale. An example survey statement is “*Because of my camp experience, I have goals in my life*”. Five questions are optional and open-ended, for example: “*Tell us about a special adult in your life who you spend time with.*”

Once survey responses were collected, they were synced, cleaned and converted centrally. Survey questions were coded to 34 specific indicators matched to 6 sub-outcomes. The scores of each indicator, sub-outcome and outcome are averaged, and the mean is calculated for each. The percentage of respondents who achieved a favorable score of >3.5/5 is calculated for each indicator, sub-outcome and outcome. The methodology and analysis procedures were created in partnership with Mission Measurement (2017). Survey results were shared with the Tim Hortons Foundation Camps internal Youth Advisory Council to capture the youth perspective. In October 2019, 13 Youth Advisory Council members provided feedback through an online focus group, approximately 60 minutes in length.

Results

Early evidence suggests repeated camp experiences cultivate the foundational skills and behaviours necessary for youth living in low-income to successfully transition to adulthood. Campers self-reported that their five consecutive summers in the program increased their social and emotional skills (78%) and learning and innovation skills (81%). The data suggests the camp experience helped youth from low-income backgrounds develop positive identity (83%) resulting in increased self-awareness, self-confidence and empowerment; and positive behaviours (80%) increasing one’s ability to control impulses, become motivated and persevere. Campers indicated growth in cognitive skills (80%), suggesting the camp experience increased their ability to think creatively and fostered intellectual curiosity. Interpersonal skills (85%) developed during the camp experience were connected to the campers’ ability to communicate, collaborate and effectively solve problems with others. Consistent with Merryman et. al.’s (2012) findings, which suggest the camp environment is a space where youth from low-income backgrounds can develop transferable skills, and Wilson and Sibthorp’s (2018) definition of mechanisms in the camp setting that facilitate skill development; emerging themes indicate the structure of the overnight camp environment, coupled with the consistency of the multi-year repeated experience, enable youth from low-income backgrounds to build the foundational skills and behaviours necessary to successfully transition to adulthood.

Further research is required to determine how campers sustain their growth once they return to their home communities. The current dataset shows significant growth in sub-outcomes where the camper has full control and less growth when there are elements beyond the camper’s control. For example, 60% of campers surveyed reported growth in their ability to make positive connections with others. When shared with the Youth Advisory Council, members were not surprised by the reduced score when compared to other sub-outcomes and suggested the score is lower because campers do not have control over the adults in their lives or the communities in which they live.

Implications

Despite growth in positive behaviours, only 38% of youth surveyed reported growth in stress management signaling need to better incorporate stress management strategies into the program curriculum. Ongoing engagement initiatives between camp visits are critical for youth

in connecting and transferring learnings from the camp experience to their everyday lives. Findings suggest youth benefit from structured reflection to acknowledge growth and articulate the benefit of their experience, and more work is to be done to determine the lasting impact of camp. Sharing the results with the Youth Advisory Council provided unique insight into understanding the why behind survey results and how to make effective programmatic changes to better meet the needs of youth in our program.

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Introduction

When youth from disadvantaged circumstances are “given access to the right services & opportunities, they have a chance to build a brighter future” (Covenant House, 2018). Tim Hortons Foundation Camps seeks to determine how repeated overnight camp experiences help youth living in low-income cultivate the foundational skills behaviours necessary for the successful transition to adulthood.

Methods

- ✓ Longitudinal
- ✓ Pre, Mid & Post Surveys
- ✓ Retrospective survey data used here

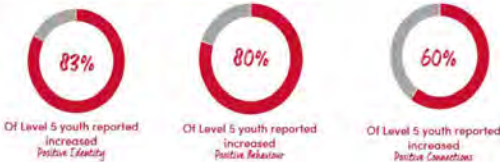


Results



Focus: positive self-identity & awareness; emotional regulation, healthy relationships

As a result of their 5 year summer camp experience:



“I wanted to graduate. It’s been 42 years since someone last graduated in my family and I wanted to break the cycle. I was struggling with keeping time organized and keeping my work ethic up. Over time my grades got better from learning the structure at camp and I ended up graduating as one of the top performing students with a 3.8 GPA.”



Focus: creative & critical thinking, planning & organizing, leadership & collaboration

As a result of their 5 year summer camp experience:



Lessons to Share

- ✓ **Structure, Repetition & Engagement:** continuous camper support & engagement initiatives are critical to transfer learnings & drive impact
- ✓ **The Youth Voice:** Campers at the center of survey questions and format to encourage completion and engagement

Helping kids change their stories

CAMPER OUTCOMES: HELPING GIRLS PREPARE FOR COLLEGE

Anja Whittington, Radford University; Jalisa Danhof, Camp Newaygo; Elizabeth Schreckhise, Camp Alleghany

Contact: Anja Whittington, Radford University, PO Box 6963, Radford, VA 24141.
awhittington(at)radford.edu

Youth need a variety of skills beyond academic achievement to support college readiness. Some of these skills include independence, teamwork, resilience, perseverance, self-efficacy, self-regulation, and critical thinking (Conley & French, 2014; Nelson, 2012, Savitz-Romer & Bouffard, 2012; Tierny & Sablan, 2014). Over the past decade interest in how camp supports college readiness and influences future careers has grown. One study reported that 60% of adults retrospectively stated that camp helped them “to a great extent” develop a variety of college readiness skills (Whittington & Garst, 2018). Another study examined learning outcomes that were attributable to camp but that also are important for everyday life (Richmond, Sibthorp, & Wilson, 2019).

The purpose of this study was to analyze whether attending Camps Newaygo or Alleghany supported girls’ college readiness skills. The objectives were to (a) determine if attending camp supported college readiness skills immediately after their camp participation, and (b) to examine whether the skills gained at camp persisted after the girls’ first semester of college. Specific areas researched included resilience, problem-solving, confidence, independence and teamwork.

Methods

This study is a multi-year project conducted over three years at two different time periods including pre- and post-data collection (on the first and last day of the camp experience) and after the first semester of college (approximately one and a half years after camp participation).

Step 1

Data for this study were acquired from 128 girls between the ages of 15-16 who attended camps Newaygo and Alleghany. This first stage of this study was conducted over a three-year period (2016-2018). Girls who attended camp between their junior and senior year were recruited due to the fact that they would most likely be attending college within the next two years. Data collected included the Adolescent Girls’ Resilience Scale (AGRS), completed on the first and last day of their camp experience and the detailed version of the American Camp Association’s Youth Outcomes Battery (YOB) surveys titled Problem-Solving Confidence, Independence and Teamwork conducted on the last day of camp (ACA, 2013; Whittington, Aspelmeier, & Budbill, 2015). These specific outcomes were chosen due to the following factors: 1) relevance to girls’ development (skills girls/women may be lacking), 2) goals of the camps (what they expect campers to gain from their camp experience), and 3) their relevancy to college preparation.

Step 2

Long-term impacts of camp on college readiness is ongoing. In 2018/2019 22 girls completed an online survey after their first semester of college (approximately a year and half after their participation at camp). The survey consists of the AGRS, YOB scales mentioned above and additional quantitative and qualitative questions related to college readiness skills. It is important to note that the researchers still have an additional two years of data collection prior to the completion of this study.

Results

Results will be shared based on the two stages of data collection.

Step One

Sixty-eight percent of the girls demonstrated a significant change in their AGRS score between the first and second administration of the AGRS. Table 1 depicts the outcomes from the YOB conducted on the last day of the camp experience. This includes: I have good problem-solving confidence was more true today than before camp or at least somewhat more true today than before camp; I have good independence skills was more true today than before camp or at least somewhat more true today than before camp; and I have good teamwork skills was more true today than before camp and at least somewhat more true today than before camp.

Table 1

Percentage Scores from the Youth Outcomes Battery Scales

Skills	More True Today	Somewhat More True
Good Problem-Solving Skills	20%	53.5%
Good Independence Skills	38%	66%
Good Teamwork Skills	42%	71.5%

To further examine outcomes found through the ACA YOB the data was compared to established norms which were created to provide comparison points with ACA-accredited camps. Campers' scores for problem solving-confidence for all categories fell between 60-70% therefore the scores for Camps Newaygo and Alleghany were between the 60-70th percentile compared to the normative sample of ACA-accredited camps. Independence scores for all categories fell between the 60th-70th percentiles compared to the normative sample. Campers' scores for teamwork for all categories fell between the 70th-80th percentiles compared to the normative sample.

Step Two

Preliminary data analysis of the long-term impacts of camp on college preparedness suggest that these skills remain with the girls during their first semester of college. To date, 22 girls who have completed their first semester of college have completed the second stage of the study. The researchers still have two more years of data collection to complete so the data shared are preliminary.

When asked "Did camp prepare you in any way for college?" 86% said yes; 14% reported somewhat; none reported no. Table 2 depicts the percentage reported to how their independence, problem-solving, teamwork and confidence was impacted by their camp experience to a great extent (these were on a 4-point Likert scale).

Table 2

Percentage Scores after First Semester of College

Skills	To a Great Extent
Problem-Solving	76%
Independence Skills	76%
Teamwork Skills	76%
Confidence	64%

Open-ended comments also support these outcomes: One participant stated, "In every way camp has helped me with problem-solving skills. I know how to deal with stress and how to handle difficult situations because of my counselors and my Camp sisters." Another shared,

“Being away from my parents while I was at camp helped me find who I was as a person. I was able to make decisions on my own and develop my own path for my life.”

Future plans for this data analysis include running statistical analysis on pre-, post- and post-post data collection once all data has been collected. Two more years of post-post data collection will be conducted.

Implications

Based on the initial findings of this study, Camps Newaygo and Alleghany do offer opportunities for girls to gain college readiness skills in the areas of resilience, problem solving-confidence, independence and teamwork. The preliminary analysis from surveys after their first semester of college suggests that campers maintain these skills over the long-term. While camps Newaygo and Alleghany are not focused on college preparedness, they offer girls the opportunity to gain skills that support college, careers and their lives beyond camp.

One of the ways this study has helped Camps Newaygo and Alleghany is by offering research which provides them with valuable content to share with families when considering camp. Older campers struggle to attend camp with competing summer experiences, including college preparatory work. Researching the impact camp can have on girls allows practitioners to explain the value of camp to parents. Results of studies like these can help camp directors promote their program and provide evidence that camp supports campers’ college readiness skills (even a year and a half after their participation).

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Camper Outcomes: Helping Girls Prepare for College



Anja Whittington, Radford University
Jalisa Danhof, Camp Newaygo
Elizabeth Schreckhise, Camp Alleghany



RESULTS

Step One

Percentage Scores from the Youth Outcomes Battery Scales

Skills	More True Today	Somewhat More True
I have good problem-solving confidence	20%	53.5%
I have good independence Skills	38%	66%
I have good teamwork skills	42%	71.5%

68% demonstrated a significant change in their resilience score from the AGRS

Step Two (Preliminary Results)

Only one years worth of data collected (2018) which occurred after their first semester of college

Percentage Scores after First Semester of College

Skills	Impacted to a Great Extent
Problem-Solving	76%
Independence	76%
Teamwork	76%
Confidence	64%

“In every way camp has helped me with problem-solving skills. I know how to deal with stress and how to handle difficult situations because of my counselor and my Camp sisters.”

“Being away from my parents while I was at camp helped me find who I was as a person. I was able to make decisions on my own and develop my own path for my life.”

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to: Analyze whether attending Camps Newaygo or Alleghany supported girls’ college readiness skills immediately after camp participation and a year and a half later (after their first semester of college). Specific areas researched included resilience, problem-solving, confidence, independence and teamwork.

METHODS

Step 1

- 128 girls (15-16 years old)
- Over a three year period (2016-2018)
- Completed the Adolescent Girls Resilience Scale (AGRS) & Youth Outcomes Battery Scales (YOB) of Problem-Solving Confidence, Independence and Teamwork

Step 2 (only one year of data collected)

- Online survey using the AGRS, YOB and series of open-ended questions related to college readiness
- Conducted after the girls’ first semester of college

Implications.....

- ✓ Camps Newaygo and Alleghany do offer opportunities to gain colleges readiness skills in the areas of resilience, problem-solving, confidence, independence and teamwork.
- ✓ Preliminary results indicate that campers maintain these skills over the long-term.
- ✓ Even camps who do not focus on or prepare campers for college provide these skills.

2020 ACA Camp Research Forum, San Diego, CA

KEEPING YOUTH ACTIVE THROUGH TRIATHLON: A CAMPS ON CAMPUS MODEL

Rowan Williams, Taylor McIntosh, Eddie Hill, Old Dominion University; Duston Morris, Central Arkansas University; Meg Duncan USA Triathlon Youth Program Manager
Contact: Eddie Hill, ODU, Student Recreation Center, Rm. 2014, Norfolk, VA, 23529.
ehill(at)odu.edu

Positive Youth Development (PYD) programs seek to improve the health, happiness, and competence of youth in a way that helps them become productive and satisfied adults (Linver, Roth, & Brooks-Gunn, 2009). Interventions and programs that are theoretically grounded in PYD seek to develop assets in the youth they serve that emphasize a positive connection to their community and the youth's ability to be effective members of society (OJJDP, 2014). Most PYD programs seek to build on assets, skills, and competencies that youth currently have in one domain of their life, and encourage them to transfer those skills to other (Wiess, 2008). Triathlon camps, where youth participants swim, bike and run in one event, can offer a fun and non-traditional approach to healthy lifestyles (Hill, Morgan, & Hopper, 2018).

Out of School Time (OST) triathlon camps can serve as a natural environment where campers engage in physical activity that help them develop healthy relational skills and can provide positive, life-changing moments. Youth need guidance and support on their path to adulthood. The guidance and support they receive comes from various social support groups and organizations that influence youth's perceptions and worldly views. These OST camps on campus provide opportunities for positive, healthy interaction among youth and various individuals (e.g., college students) who provide support generally related to academics or other essential life skills. Camps on campus provide essential services to youth through academic support, social development, mentorship, and a safe environment. These critical components help youth successfully transition through developmental stages (Hill et al., 2016). Youth triathlon is a multisport that combines swimming, biking, and running into one event. Through triathlon, youth triathletes develop physical and social skills which promotes positive, healthy behavior that extends into their daily lives (Hill et al., 2018). Offering triathlon camp on a college campus is a novel approach to help campers develop physical, mental and social skills that can transcend developmental stages. The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of a five-day youth triathlon summer camp (held on a college campus) on perceived competence, interest in exploration, and responsibility.

Methods

Sixteen youth ages 7-12 participated in the triathlon day camp which took place from 9:00am-4:00pm on a Mid-Atlantic college campus. The use of the college campus provided opportunities and resources often under-utilized during the summer. Each day, campers arrived and was met by a camp staff member (college student) who escorted the camper to the scheduled camp activities. On the first day of camp, counselors administered the 22-item questionnaire created from the Youth Outcomes Battery (YOB) and used a pretest. The researchers specifically measured Perceived Competence, Interest in Exploration, and Responsibility. Daily activities consisted of swimming, cycling, and running activities, nutrition (from a Registered Dietician), and exercises which were built off the USAT Splash, Spin, Sprint Camp Manual (Morris & Duncan, 2017). Other triathlon specific activities included bike maintenance, bike handling skills, and a running form clinic. In addition to triathlon specific activities, the camp included traditional camp programming such as rock climbing, challenge course, and crafts. The week

culminated with a mini triathlon where campers selected distances tailored to their perceived physical competence in which to compete. During the portion of camp, the posttest was administered. The same three YOB constructs were measured quantitatively, as well as open-ended questions grounded to reflect the same three outcomes (Perceived Competence, Interest in Exploration, and Responsibility) as well. Following the completion of the questionnaires, data were entered into Excel, and then exported into SPSS and analyzed using a Wilcoxon *t* test. The qualitative analysis was explored through themes identified by the researchers.

Results

Fifteen of the 16 campers completed the pre and posttest questionnaire (one camper was unable to complete all five of the active camp days). The average age of participants was 9 years old, with 80% of them identifying as male and 67% identifying as Caucasian. Ninety percent of the campers indicated “triathlon helped them stay strong and healthy no matter what.” Over 75% of campers said they would tell their friend about triathlon camp. Eighty-five percent of campers indicated that Triathlon Camp was one of the most fun camps ever attended. All 15 campers indicated they would like to participate in the triathlon camp in the future as well as being more likely to compete in a triathlon because of camp. While all posttest score of the outcomes were higher than pretest, there was no statistical significance. As a note, Perceived Competence did have the largest increase from pre- to posttest.

Open-ended questions were utilized to gain a deeper understanding of the way participants apply the skills learned at camp to their lives. The data collected from the open-ended questions revealed that running was the new information in which they learned the most about (i.e., relates to perceived competence). When asked about what new things they tried at camp, participants reported structured swimming, tire changing/bike maintenance, and rock climbing as the three most prevalent themes (relates interest in exploration) of this study. Participants indicated that helping others and taking the sport seriously were the ways that they took responsibility at camp.

Conclusions and Implications

University camps are actively seeking ACA accreditation. Findings from this study provide evidence-based practices for an innovative OST camp on campus model that enriches youth development through offering the triathlon experience. As numbers decline in traditional sports due to injuries and overall fatigue, triathlon camps offer a new option (Hill et al., 2018). In addition to exposing campers to college settings, OST triathlon camps promote positive, healthy behavior and align with USA Triathlon initiatives which promote youth physical activity and healthy behavior through multisport participation (Case, Hill, & Dey, 2009). These camps focus on fun, safety, and learning physical skill sets (e.g., swimming, biking, and running) that youth can develop and carry through adulthood. Little research exists on OST triathlon camps held on college campuses. Results from this study indicated campers learned new skills and made moderate increase of self-reported scores on the three YOB outcomes, albeit non-significant. A larger sample size would likely lead to significance. This study offered using the ACA-YOB with a new type of camp. Campers were excited and plan to share triathlon with their friends upon completion of camp, increasing visibility and exposure about triathlon. This study supports the desired outcomes, and with USA Triathlon support, other camps can replicate the OST triathlon camps on campus model (USA Triathlon, 2018).

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Keeping Youth Active Through Triathlon: A Camps on Campus Model

Rowan Williams, Taylor McIntosh, and Eddie Hill, Old Dominion University; Duston Morris, Central Arkansas University; Meg Duncan USA Triathlon Youth Program Manager.

INTRO

- Positive Youth Development (PYD) programs seek to improve the health, happiness, and competence of youth in a way that helps them become productive and satisfied adults (Linver, Roth, & Brooks-Gunn, 2009).
- Programs grounded in PYD theory seek to develop assets in the youth they serve that emphasize a positive connection to their community and the youth's ability to be effective members of society (OJJDP, 2014).
- Out of School Time (OST) camps on campus provide opportunities for positive, healthy interaction among youth and various individuals (e.g., college students) who provide support generally related to academics or other essential life skills.
- Camps on campus provide critical components to help youth successfully transition through developmental stages (Hill et al., 2018).
- Through triathlon, youth triathletes develop physical and social skills which promotes positive, healthy behavior that extends into their daily lives (Hill et al., 2018).

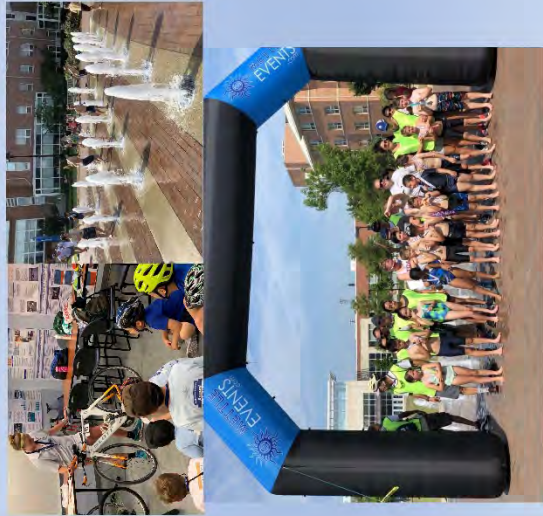


METHODS

- Sixteen youth ages 7-12 participated in the triathlon day camp which took place from 9:00am-4:00pm on a Mid-Atlantic college campus.
- Intentional activities were programmed around the week of multisport.
- The curriculum was built from USA Triathlon's Sprint-Camp Manual (Morris & Duncan, 2017).
- Counselors administered the 22-item questionnaire created from the Youth Outcomes Battery (YOB) as a pretest and posttest measuring Perceived Competence, Interest in Exploration, and Responsibility.
- Concluding the camp was a mini triathlon where campers selected distances tailored to their goal.



Out of School Time triathlon camps can serve as a natural environment where campers engage in physical activity that helps them develop healthy relational skills and can provide positive, life-changing moments



RESULTS

- Fifteen of the 16 campers completed both the pre and posttest
- Average age = 9
- 80% male
- 67% Caucasian
- 90% of campers indicated "triathlon helped them stay strong and healthy no matter what."
- 85% of campers indicated that "Triathlon Camp was one of the most fun camps ever attended."
- 100% indicated they would like to participate in the triathlon camp in the future as well as being more likely to compete in a triathlon because of camp.
- While all posttest scores of all three ACA outcomes were higher than pretest, there was no statistical significance.
- Data collected from the open-ended questions revealed that running was the new information in which they learned the most about (i.e., relates to perceived competence).
- When asked about what new things they tried at camp, participants reported structured swimming, tire changing/bike maintenance, and rock climbing as the three most prevalent themes (relates interest in exploration) of this study.



DISCUSSION

- Findings from this study suggest evidence-based practices for an innovative OST camp on campus model that enriches youth development through offering the triathlon experience.
- As numbers decline in traditional sports due to injuries and overall fatigue, triathlon camps offer a new option (Hill et al., 2018). In addition to exposing campers to college settings, OST triathlon camps promote positive, healthy behavior and align with USA Triathlon initiatives which promote youth physical activity and healthy behavior through multisport participation (Case, Hill, & Dey, 2009).
- Little research exists on OST triathlon camps held on college campuses. Results from this study indicated campers learned new skills and made moderate increase of self-reported scores on the three YOB outcomes, albeit non-significant.
- This study supports the desired outcomes, and with USA Triathlon support, other camps can replicate the OST triathlon camps on campus model (USA Triathlon, 2018).

Day & Time	Outcomes of Triathlon Camp	Outcomes for the Day
Monday 9:00am-4:00pm (see agenda for activities for campers who have previously attended)	Interest in Exploration, Responsibility, and Perceived Competence	Pool Time Running practice Challenge Couch/Ground Initiatives Tire Changing Clinic Bike Maintenance Goal Setting Spin Class
Tuesday 9:00am-4:00pm (see agenda for activities for campers who have previously attended)	Interest in Exploration, Responsibility, and Perceived Competence	Pool Time Bike work-out (cycling and running) Tire Changing Practice Rock Climbing Tire Changing Practice Goal Setting
Wednesday	Interest in Exploration, Responsibility, and Perceived Competence	Pool Time Cycling practice Running practice Triathlon Club Tire to Outdoor Adventure Program Race Nutrition Transition Clinic Goals Poster
Thursday 10:00am-4:00pm (Intramural Sports)	Interest in Exploration, Responsibility, and Perceived Competence	Triathlon Club (MT) (Bioscience Class and running) Intramural Sports Lab with Dietician Transition Clinic MT Training Leave No Trace/Bioscience Clean-up Service Project Goals Poster Presentation
Friday 9:00am-4:00pm	Interest in Exploration, Responsibility, and Perceived Competence	