S'more than *just* fun and games:

Teachers' perceptions on the educational value
of camp programs for school groups

by

Hannah-Ruth Feldberg

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

Learning does occur at camp, but what kind of learning? And do what participants learn at camp transfer to other parts of a young persons' life after the camp experience? This evaluation research study was designed to compare what a camp program anticipates as its outcomes to what outcomes it actually achieves. It set up an outcome evaluation that sought to understand what program staff at Camp Giving Tree anticipate are the developmental outcomes for students attending a 3-day, 2-night School-Camp Partnership Program (SCPP) as compared with teachers' perspectives on their students' developmental outcome achievements as a result of their participation in the SCPP. This study found that camp staff and teachers perceived that at camp, student learning was connected to four main themes: (1) positive risk taking, (2) social competencies and comforts, (3) engagement with creative thinking (4) strength of character. One month after camp however, teachers observed that hardly any transfer seemed occurred in their students' behaviour at school. Even though hardly any transfer was reported, teachers believed that camp gave their students hope and optimism for their future and that if school was more like camp, their students would be able to learn more. The discussion focuses on three main themes: (1) on the concept of transfer as it relates to program structure and the prediction of behaviour change (2) positive risk taking related to the concepts of positive psychology and optimism and (3) the idea that learning can be more enjoyable if it includes reflection, if it promotes creative thinking and if the learning environment is highly social. This study's conclusions suggest opportunities in: future research design and future youth programming opportunities (especially related to on-going support after a single recreation experience). Finally, this study urges people, programs and institutions directly involved with youth development to take on more of a deliberate role in supporting transfer from one experience to another for young people.

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Dedication

To my parents, Wendy and Shlomo Feldberg, who have always supported me in meeting my goals and who have always found a way to support their children in keeping all their academic doors open.

And to the *right* camps – those that understand the power that camp has to change the world, one camper at a time, one camp community at a time.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

"I think I've figured out the amazing allure of summer camp…When all is said and done, people of all ages want to be a part of something bigger and more important than themselves. More than anything else, this is the value that camp teaches kids. It offers them a perspective and provides them with a headstart on the road to becoming fully human" (Eisner, 2005, p 156).

Michael Eisner, former Chief Executive Officer of the Walt Disney Company, captures a common sentiment shared among many of those who have attended residential camp as children: camp is a meaningful and enriching experience that can have a positive, long term impact on the lives of its participants. The general intent behind the camp experience, namely the development of pro-social skills, the transfer of traditional ecological knowledge, and the inculcation of enduring social values, traces far back to the field's origins (Paris, 2008). Indeed, the very first summer camps established in the late 1800s used their remarkable natural settings and the promise of 'fun' to attract adolescents to engage in programs designed explicitly to instill valuable skills, character development, attitudes, and beliefs (Paris, 2008). Popular media consistently support these seemingly enduring benefits (Henderson, Bialeschki & James, 2007). Moreover, the camping profession's claims of camp's benefits resonate strongly with those who have enjoyed the camp experience.

1.1. Defining Camp

In the context of this study, camp refers to a setting where children are temporarily lodged in order to participate in experiential, recreation-focused programs aimed at achieving specific social and developmental outcomes for participants. Temporary lodging in new settings, often in the natural environment, allows for a child to experience a sense of escape. People are often attracted to participate in camp experiences because of its promise of fun, games and skill building, but participating in play is also necessary for youth's positive development and growth

(Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, Hektner & Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). Camp settings are also highly social environments, placing their youth participants in a close living arrangement that forces adolescents to co-exist with peers and adult role models. Consistent with Kolb (1981), experiential education suggests that optimal learning happens when participants can experience educational opportunities directly, and learn from their personal involvement through action and reflection. Dominant camp discourse seems to support the idea that camp programs have great potential for the developmental outcomes and growth of children and youth (Henderson et al., 2007), yet hard evidence is generally lacking.

1.2. *Why Study Camp?*

Hard evidence of the benefits of camp is crucial if the profession wants to remain relevant to the public at large and broaden its market appeal. While camps have steadily grown in popularity over the last century (Henderson et al., 2007; Paris 2008), concerns persist among camping professionals about the future growth and prosperity of the industry. As the number of extracurricular activities and programs accessible to youth continues to expand, camp has become just one of many options to parents and guardians searching for a beneficial experience for their children. Moreover, the Canadian camping industry worries that a changing societal demographic mix suggests that there is an increasing number of parents and guardians who have no appreciation for traditional camp experiences (Faber, 2009). Many newcomers to Canada, particularly refugees, have negative associations with the term 'camp' or are simply not attuned to its (Canadian) cultural relevance. These parents are not interested in 'fun and games'; they want their children to have experiences that will advance their future prospects (Faber, 2009).

The camp profession, of course, believes its product fits these ambitions. For these reasons, research is crucial to establishing camp as a meritorious experience for youth.

1.3. Camp in the Literature

To be sure, peer-reviewed publications and unpublished theses centred on camp settings do exist. Fields as diverse as sociology (Groves, 1990), psychology (Cartwright, Tabatabai, Beaudoin & Naidoo, 2000; George, 1984; Groves & Groves, 1977), education (primarily environmental and others) (Brannan, Arick & Fullerton, 2002; Dimock & Hendry, 1929; Fullerton, Brannan & Arick, 2002), experiential learning (Taniguchi, Widmer & Duerden, 2007) leisure studies (Chenery, 1981; Henderson, Powell & Scanlin, 2005;), history (Paris, 2008), child, youth and adolescent development (Chenery, 1991; Henderson & Bialeschki, 2008), family studies (Grupper & Mero-Jaffe, 2008), and counselling (Collins, 2006; Fletcher & Hinkle, 2002; Fuentes, 2002) include studies of camp within their bodies of literature. Even so, the bulk of these publications focus on camp indirectly, reducing it to a context in which other social phenomena (Anshel, Muller & Owens, 1986; Butterfield & Woods, 1981; Carlson & Baumgartner, 1974; Culp, 1988; Iada, Imura, & van der Smissen, 1986), medical conditions (Goodwin & Staples, 2005; Meltzer & Rourke, 2005; Miller, 2000) or physical abilities (Brannan, Fullerton & Arick, 2000; Day & Kleinschmidt, 2005; Mosher, 2005) are studied. All told, only in the past decade or so has there been a growing number of studies focused on *outcomes* of the camp experience (Henderson et al., 2007), thereby offering a small amount of literature supporting claims that camp is beneficial for young people.

Indirect evidence does exist, however, suggesting camp has the potential to advance youth development goals. For example, several studies report improvements to human health

when people are exposed to natural settings (Canin, 1991; Davis-Berman & Berman, 1994; Ulrich, 1984; Ulrich et al., 1991). Meanwhile, a separate body of literature suggests optimal learning environments that are highly social in nature foster genuine relationships between peers and between learners and teachers (Scales & Leffert, 1999). These sorts of findings point to possible connections between camp and pro-social and pro-environmental outcomes; outcomes that warrant closer examination by researchers.

1.3.1. Camp Outcomes

The American Camp Association has conducted several large-scale camp studies focused specifically on outcomes (ACA, 2005, 2006a, 2006b). In particular, these studies have concentrated on the promotion of active participation and caring relationships, as well as emotional, social, spiritual and physical growth for the campers (ACA, 2005, 2006a, 2006b). Even so, these studies have ignored whether such outcomes transfer outside of the camp setting. Accordingly, this thesis aims to explore the challenge of transfer. In the field of psychology, the term 'transfer of training' has been used to study people's ability (including children) to learn new knowledge, skills, values and attitudes gained from one experience and understand how effectively that information transfers to other circumstance in life (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Newstrom, 1984; Wexley & Latham, 1981). So the question is not only what are the initial benefits of camp programs, but also what are the *lasting* benefits of the camp experience.

1.4. The Question of Transfer

Program evaluation and environmental education studies indicate that students demonstrate positive social and developmental outcomes as a result of their participation in

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formal education outdoor learning programs. Synthesized research of 150 studies related to the benefits of student participation in outdoor experiential learning programs (programs that loosely fit with my definition of camp stated above) suggest increases in student social and developmental growth when students returned to their school communities (Rickinson et al., 2004). Other studies reveal students improved their grades, increased their participation in class and were more interested in various subjects (such as science and English) in the classroom as a result of participating in an outdoor camp-like programs (The California Department of Education, 2005). While successes at school, such as grades, are important, those in soft skills, such as social competences also warrant attention. The question remains, however, what, if any, new skills, new knowledge, new values or new attitudes transfer outside of the camp environment in the form of behavioural change?

1.5. *Purpose of Study and Research Questions*

The purpose of this study was to gather the perceptions on initial participant outcomes associated with Camp Giving Tree's School-Camp Partnership Program (SCPP) and the extent to which they transfer outside the camp setting. This study sought to answer, with the use of focus group, mini-focus group and one-on-one interview data, the following questions about the program, with the broader goal to document the positive outcomes of the camp experience as observed by the teachers and SCPP staff:

1. What do Camp Giving Tree program staff understand to be the initial and intermediate outcomes of the SCPP for student program participants?

2. A) What are the teachers' perceived initial outcomes of the SCPP as measured at the end of each day of the 3-day camp experience?

B) What are the teachers' perceived intermediate outcomes of the SCPP as measured one month after the camp experience?

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Experiential Learning Paradigm

This study sought to understand teachers' perspectives on the developmental outcomes their students experience at or shortly after a school camp program. Experiential learning, I believe, plays a significant role in facilitating such outcomes. Experiential learning is a process of resolving conflicts between action and reflection. Dewey (1938, 1958) believed experiential learning theory connects the human experience to human growth. An experiential learning framework focuses on conducting research with the awareness that varying environments with real-life settings are difficult to study (Kolb, 1981). Learners actively experience something, reflect on their experience, and then apply insights from their reflection to their next experience. This application then reflects what has been learned.

2.2. Chapter Overview

This literature review focuses on an experiential education, learning paradigms and is framed from a philosophical perspective drive by pragmatism. It is structured to reflect the logical sequence of inputs, activities, and outputs that lead to desired outcomes of the camp experience. The first section on inputs, activities, and outputs reviews literature related to place, positive youth development, and optimal learning environments. The second section examines literature associated with the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values that might be learned at camp and how these initial outcomes might transfer to other areas of life. All told, this chapter advances the notion that camp offers a beneficial setting for youth that leads to positive outcomes. The third section will explore the idea of transfer; does the process of learning new knowledge, skills, values and attitudes transfer from one setting (camp) to another (like school)?

This literature review explores the nature of camp acting as an optimal learning environment, as a vehicle to support positive youth development and to explore if knowledge from a camp experience transfers to school settings.

2.3. Inputs, Activities, and Outputs

The words 'inputs', 'activities' and 'outputs' are terms used in program performance measurement (Schacter, 2002). *Inputs* into a program are the resources devoted to or absorbed by the program. *Inputs* into a camp include finances, facilities, personnel (staff and volunteers), supplies, and equipment invested into a program. *Activities* are what the program actually does with its *inputs*. In the context of camp, the design and delivery of *activities* include programming like swimming, archery, high ropes, art and crafts, and other such activities. It can also refer to *activities* in the dining hall (e.g., lessons about food waste, table manners), on the bus to camp (e.g., singing, games), and during the off-season (e.g., camp events, activities focused on reconnection). *Outputs* are the direct products or services of the program activities. Examples of camp *outputs* include the number of campers who attended camp or the number of groups served. This section of the chapter will focus on various ways camp program *inputs*, *activities* and *outputs* offer an optimal learning environment for youth. Specifically, this section will explore components of camp's restorative setting, its ability to allow young people to play, its focus on positive youth development with an emphasis on camp's ability to support relationship building and intrinsically motivating young people to learn.

2.3.1. A Restorative Environment

Scholars in environmental psychology, social geography, social ecology, resource-based recreation, and tourism argue landscapes and physical spaces matter to people (Tuan, 1980; Sime, 1995; Williams & Stewart, 1998; Stedman, 2003a as sited in Hammitt, Backlund & Bixler, 2006). Humans typically feel connected with a physical space when they use or experience it (Relph, 1976; Brandenburg & Carroll, 1995; Stedman, 2003a as cited in Hammit et al., 2006). Their interactions within a space lead to the construction of social or physiological meanings. Space, by definition, is devoid of human meaning (Sime, 1995; Tuan, 1977), whereas place, by contrast, reflect emotions, experiences, and meanings. Humanistic geographers who seek to understand the meanings humans attached to a physical area of land or space are thus said to study *place*.

The human-to-place coupling process (Roberts, 1996 as cited in Hammitt et al., 2006) enables recreation spaces to become locations where humans experience and assign some kind of meaning to a physical space, therein making it a place. Kyle, Graefe, Manning and Bacon (2004) argue that involvement with an activity is one way to form place attachments. Even so, most studies published in leisure studies have failed to recognize the important role settings play on activities (Kyle at al., 2004). Place theory, however, leads me to believe camp transcends its *activities*. Place, in my view, plays an important role in understanding the camp experience holistically.

When giving consideration to camp as a place, I am referring specifically to camps that offer their participants exposure to a natural, outdoor setting. Evidence suggests children develop a positive sense of place about nature-based camp surroundings (Thurber & Malinowski, 1999). Kaplan and Kaplan (1989) found that there are four dimensions of restorative environments – (1) fascination, (2) being away, (3) coherence, and (4) compatibility. Kaplan and Kaplan argue

environments that offer a place to experience something interesting (fascination), an escape from the every day setting (being away), a way in which to function as 'another world' (coherence), and an atmosphere where the needs of the individual are met (compatibility) are regarded as restorative. Not surprisingly, natural, outdoor settings fit this description (Wohlwill, 1983; Ulrich, 1983). Indeed, several studies underscore the restoration effects of exposing youth to nature (Gesler, 1993; Hart, 1979; Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Moore, 1986; Thurber & Malinowski, 1999; Ulrich, 1984). Moreover, the study of biophilia, "a fundamental, genetically based human need and propensity to affiliate with other living organisms" (Kahn, 1997, p 1), suggests humans are in their proper state when around natural spaces (Kahn, 1997; Kellert & Wilson, 1993).

Given the restoration effects of nature, Louv (2006) laments that children today are disconnected from the natural world. He argues modern children suffer from what he calls *nature-deficit disorder*. Louv interviewed thousands of families across the US and found that, though some children were connected with the sense of wonder associated with nature, a significant number felt playing in nature seemed "unproductive, off-limits [and] alien" (Louv, 2006, p 10). So why are these findings problematic? On a much larger scale, one could argue - along with evidence of global warming, environmental pollution and resource depletion - the natural environment needs protection or it will not be able to sustain future eco-systems, including human populations. If young people have no interest in the natural environment, why would they be interested in protecting it?

On a smaller scale, however, Louv (2006) speaks to a generation of young people growing up without directly experiencing the natural environment, and he argues that this lifestyle is markedly different than that of previous generations. Indeed, studies have shown the more directly a child experiences nature, the more positive his or her environmental attitudes,

values, skills and knowledge base will be as he or she grows into adulthood (Bixler, Floyd &

Hammitt, 2002; Carlson & Baumgartner, 1974; Chawla, 1988; Kaplan & Kaplan, 1982; Kaplan

& Peterson, 1993; Thompson, Aspinall & Montarzion, 2008). These positive views towards

nature might offer hope for the protection of the natural environment in the future. Louv is

calling on everyone, from institutions to individuals, to address *nature-deficit disorder* by

ensuring natural environments plays a key role in the lives of young people. Given his

'diagnosis', Louv's book has developed a significant following, including many camp

professionals, who see camp as a possible prescription.

 Organized camping has always been connected with creating a sense of place for

children, and this sense of place often exists in natural settings (Paris, 2008). Camp settings are

significant because they allow a child to create a 'home away from home', by directly

experiencing nature. Experiential learning connects human development to direct experience –

and the camp setting allows for young people to negotiate and experience their own development

process, *in* nature. Adding fun, children-centred activities to a natural setting presumably only

adds to the positive effects of the setting itself.

2.3.2. Opportunity to Play

 Fun for children is usually associated with play. Regardless of where play takes place,

understanding the philosophical assumptions of play is a critical step to understanding its role

and value in the processes for all human development (Rieber, 2001). The concept of play falls

into two theoretical categories: classical and dynamic. Classical theories focus on *why* people

play, whereas modern dynamic theories focus on *how* people play (Gilmore, 1966). Dynamic

forms of play include psychoanalytic and developmental theories. Psychoanalytic theory asserts

children can express themselves and act out inner feelings they are unable to verbalize. Erikson (1902-1944) expanded on Freud's view that play was primarily emotional by explaining that the act of play develops self-esteem in children (Shipley, 1998). In this way, play facilitates children's understanding of their social world while they practice real-life experiences (Butler, Gotts & Quisenberry, 1978; Rogers & Sawyers, 1988). Play also has significant therapeutic value for children to express anxiety, fear, confusion, hostility, and negative emotions (Axline, 1947; Fein, 1985). Thus, there is value in play beyond simple 'fun and games.'

Developmental theories explain how positive play experiences can facilitate intellectual growth in the developmental stages of a child (Garvey, 1977). Piaget (1970) believed when children play they learn how to adapt to their environment. There appears to be a significant positive relationship between children playing and their ability to learn problem-solving skills (Hektner & Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). Irrespective of the category or type of play, children who engage in such activity learn and develop as individuals.

Play is often described as a sort of activity where effort and commitment are devoted to the task at hand. Play, playfulness, and having fun with adults may contribute to the maintenance of cognitive functioning and emotional growth for a child later in life (Crosnoe, Johnson & Elder, 2004). Play is an important mediator for learning, socialization, motivation and balance throughout life (Blanchard & Cheska, 1985; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Provost, 1990, Yawkey & Pellegrini, 1984). There seems to be a misconception that play is irrelevant to formal and informal learning for adults and is even described as a form of unsophisticated, or immature learning by some (Rieber, 2001). However, Glickman (1984) and Singer (1995) suggest play can achieve educational outcomes, no matter the developmental stage of life. Therefore, long-term

benefits of play enable intellectual and social growth for children, adolescents, and adults with clear educational value.

Camp programs are often associated with structured and unstructured play. Though every individual experiences camp differently (Henderson at al., 2007), understanding the role that 'fun' plays in achieving developmental outcomes for campers warrants attention (Delansky, 1991). In recent years, child and adolescent physiologists as well as social scholars have been studying the notion of the 'bubble wrapped child', in books such as *Nation of Whimps* (Marano, 2008) and *Too Safe for their own Good* (Ungar, 2008). This literature speaks to a social concern that young people are growing up without opportunities to partake in "flow experiences" (where skill meets effort producing intrinsic rewards) expressed through play (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, 1990, 1975, Hektner & Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Play can develop a young person's ability to take healthy risks beyond existing personal boundaries (Ungar, 2008). Camp addresses these concerns by creating safe spaces where children can learn how to 'fail forward' and experience profound play opportunities. This study will explore these topics further.

2.3.3. A Focus on Positive Youth Development

Research indicates there are both external and internal assets that lead to positive youth development in our society. External assets are related institutions and people found in the lives of young people, including schools, communities, neighbourhoods, family, adult role models, and peers (Scales & Leffert, 1999; Witt, 2005). Internal assets refer to aspects of individual development related to a young person's locus of control, motivation, social competencies and value system (Lerner, Lerner, Almerigi & Theokas, 2005; Scales, 1990, 1996; Scales & Lefferet, 1999). The former offers the support, empowerment, boundaries, and expectations that youth

need to experience positive youth development (PYD). All things considered, Scales and Leffert (1999) argue youth need to use their time constructively. The constructive use of leisure time – time outside of school or apart from formal educational obligations – include opportunities for youth to develop awareness, skills and knowledge through activities such as music, theatre, other arts, sport, clubs, or organizations at school and in their community (faith-based and secular) as well as at home (Scales & Leffert, 1999). Camp, presumably, fits within this category, too. The notion that youth transfer knowledge, skills, attitude and values from one environment to another is cited in the PYD literature (Mahoney, Larson & Eccles, 2005, Nicholson, Collins & Holmer, 2004; Scales & Leffert, 1999).

Not surprisingly, the most important settings for PYD are sites where youth can learn and develop positive skills and values. Youth need opportunities to socialize, plan, and make decisions (Scales & Leffert, 1999). They need to learn how to exercise their personal values related to equality, social justice, integrity, honesty, caring for others and personal responsibility (Lerner et al., 2005; Scales & Leffert, 1999). Interpersonal skills, such as forming friendships and resolving conflict, are therefore very important to PYD. Youth need to have positive identity, self-esteem, sense of purpose, and opportunities to feel optimistic about their personal future (Scales, 1994, 1996; Scales & Leffert, 1999). Settings that can encourage all of these skills are undoubtedly crucial to PYD.

What is equally as important to the encouragement of youth developing these identified skills is a setting that is youth centred. Learning environments that support these outcomes are safe, espouse values that are accepted by youth and their older role-models, involve the youth participants' families, foster positive relationships among youth and between youth and adults, offer youth-centred programming, utilize diverse and accepting learning approaches, provide

authentic instruction for all youth involved, stimulate discussions about educational and personal futures, create social capital within the lives of the youth, connect one learning environment with another (e.g., school with extra-curricular activities) and encourage and enable youth to contribute to their learning community and others (Scales, 1996; Witt, 2005). Camp, in my view, represents an optimal learning environment because its setting and programming meet these expectations (Henderson et al., 2007; Henderson et al., 2007a).

2.3.4. Strong Relationships and Role Models

The best learning environments are highly social in nature (Scales & Leffert, 1999). The social dimension of a learning environment is referred to as its 'culture' and its physical dimension is known as its 'climate' (Midgley et al., 1998). A culture and climate that encourages genuine relationships is important to the creation of optimal learning environments and a key component to promoting PYD. More specifically, genuine, supportive and trusting relationships built among peers and between young persons (i.e. student) and their adult figures (i.e. teachers) create optimal learning environments (Scales, 1996; Scales & Leffert, 1999). The social nature of camp presumably lends itself to being optimal for learning.

Relationship development, in my view, sets camp apart from other growth experiences. At school, most teachers teach large classes of children. The size of the class subsequently constrains them from providing students with individualized attention. At camp, by contrast, the ratio of counselors to children is much lower, so counselors have more opportunities to build meaningful relationships with their campers. In this regard, camp invites nurturing and supportive relationships.

These close relationships benefit the children involved. The education literature, for example, reveals students who perceive a supportive relationship with their mentor/teacher are more satisfied with their educational experience (Erkut & Mokros, 1984). Moreover, studies consistently show the presence of supportive relationship between students and their teachers/mentors are correlated with higher grades (Jacobi, 1989). In a camping context, research demonstrates that camper relationships with counsellors predict the extent to which campers enjoy their camp experiences (Taniguchi, Widmer & Duerden, 2007). Further, the potential for increased positive self-concept for campers increases when campers perceive a positive relationship with their counsellors (Cherney, 1981). Further still, research showed that learning is most meaningful when campers reflect on their experiences with their counsellors and with their peers with whom they shared the camp activity (Taniguchi, Widmer & Duerden, 2007). The relationships developed within a camp setting position camp as an optimal learning experience.

2.3.5. Intrinsic Learning

Achievement theory explains that goal mastery is an effective and long-lasting approach to learning. Goal mastery involves intrinsic motivation, self-adequacy and locus of control. Learning environments that foster a 'love of learning' (learning for the sake of learning) instead of learning for the achievement of a grade, show more effective learning results (Scales, 1996). When learners become intrinsically motivated to master a subject or skill, they become significantly more motivated to learn and engage in that environment (Scales, 1996). When a subject or skill is of interest to the learner, he or she feels empowered and motivated to continue. Along with learning for its own sake, believing in one's abilities to achieve the task at hand helps

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build on existing skill sets and competencies (Shim & Ryan, 2005). Learners also take responsibility for their personal character approach to an activity, such as their determination or persistence, that link their learning goal with their learning achievement (Gutman, 2006; Maehr & Midgely, 1991).

So why do the learning environments, and the way people learn, matter to youth development? Research has shown a direct connection between intrinsic motivation and adaptive motivation (Gilman & Anderman, 2006). When youth are interested in learning for its own sake, believe in their abilities and take responsibility for their learning approaches, the motivation from achieving these learning concepts seems to be highly adaptive. More specifically, intrinsic learning motivation has shown adaptability in the lives of young people, from a classroom setting to extra-curricular activities and to family and social relationships (Gilman & Anderman, 2006). To my knowledge, no studies have connected the camp setting as an optimal learning environment to the positive effects of adaptive motivation for youth development. This study will explore these ideas further.

Intrinsic and adaptive motivation are key reasons Keagan (1994) argues self-authorship of learning should be a major aim of education. Providing a space for learners to take charge of their own learning is therefore crucial to the learning process as well. But first the learner needs to be motivated to learn in order to take charge of their educational experiences. I believe camp programs are structured to support intrinsic and adaptive learning environments.

2.3.6. Summary

Based on the literature reviewed camp, as both a setting and a program or set of activities, can serve as an optimal learning environment because (1) it can offers children a meaningful,

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restorative place in which to learn; (2) it can allow children opportunities to engage in play; (3) it can promote the principles of positive youth development; (4) it can advance the development of positive relationships; and (5) it can encourage learning for the sake of learning. These characteristics based on the literature review lead to several positive outcomes, outcomes I shall explore in the next section.

2.4.   *Outcomes*

The previous section focused on *inputs*, *activities* and *outputs*, or rather, how camp programs "keep busy" (Schacter, 2002, p. 33). The following literature review will focus on outcomes, or rather, how camp programs "*make a difference"* (Schacter, 2002, p. 33). This section will focus these sorts of outcomes and impacts that the camp experience has on its participants by drawing on findings from the American Camping Association (ACA) outcome evaluation studies (ACA, 2005, 2006a, 2006b; Henderson, Powell & Scanlin, 2005; Henderson et al., 2007; Henderson et al., 2007a; Henderson & Bialeschki, 2008).

All three ACA outcome evaluation studies (ACA 2005, 2006a, 2006b) involved over 80 ACA accredited camps, with data collected from close to 5000 families over the course of four years. The first ACA (ACA, 2005) study sought to understand if growth occurred at camp in the following outcome domains: (1) positive identity (e.g., self-esteem and independence) (see Tables 1 and 2), (2) social skills (e.g., leadership abilities, friendship skills, peer relationships, and social comfort) (see Tables 3, 4, 5 and 6), (3) physical and thinking skills (e.g., adventure/exploration and environmental awareness) (see Tables 7 and 8); and (4) positive values and spirituality (e.g., values, decision-making, and spirituality) (see Tables 9 and 10). This study asked parents and campers to answer the same questionnaires before they started

camp, within one month of returning from camp and six months after camp to track and measure

any changes in campers' development.

2.4.1. ACA Study I

Table 1 – Outcome Domain: Positive Identity Measuring Self-Esteem

Positive Identity theme: Self-Esteem		
The ACA described self-esteem as: feeling confident, competent, gaining success from experiences and making genuine contributes		
The ACA questionnaire measured: self-esteem, optimism, self-worth and perceived importance		
	Pre-Camp	Post-Camp	6 Month Follow-up
Parents	Overall average reported an increase from pre to post camp	Further increases were reported from post camp to follow-up
Campers	Overall average reported an increase from pre to post camp	Post camp increases were maintained

Table 2 – Outcome Domain: Positive Identity Measuring Independence

Positive Identity theme: Independence		
The ACA described independence as: feeling a sense of social connection, experiencing achievement, feeling self-sufficient, taking healthy risks, feeling a sense of autonomy and accepting responsibility		
The ACA questionnaire measured: self-sufficiency		
	Pre-Camp	Post-Camp	6 Month Follow-up
Parents	Overall average reported an increase from pre to post camp	Further increased gains were reported from post camp to follow-up
Campers	Overall average reported an increase from pre to post camp	Further increased gains were reported from post camp to follow-up

Table 3 – Outcome Domain: Social Skills Measuring Leadership Abilities

Social Skills theme: Leadership Abilities			
The ACA described leadership abilities as: earning social responsibility, exploring new roles, learning to take responsibility for self			
The ACA questionnaire measured: initiative, self-concept as a leader and perceived social respect			
	Pre-Camp	Post-Camp	6 Month Follow-up
Parents	Overall average reported an increase from pre to post camp		Further increases were reported from post camp to follow-up
Campers	Overall average reported an increase from pre to post camp		Further increases were reported from post camp to follow-up

Table 4 – Outcome Domain: Social Skills measuring Friendship Skills

Social Skills theme: Friendship Skills			
The ACA described friendship skills as: forming positive relationships that foster trust and respect			
The ACA questionnaire measured: camper's willingness to introduce themselves, talking and playing new peers and demonstrating social inclusion			
	Pre-Camp	Post-Camp	6 Month Follow-up
Parents	Overall average reported an increase from pre to post camp		Losses in the original post camp reporting were found
Campers	Overall average reported an increase from pre to post camp		Losses in the original post camp reporting were found

Table 5 – Outcome Domain: Social Skills Measuring Peer Relationships

Social Skills theme: Peer Relationships			
The ACA described peer relationships as: keeping and maintaining relationships, exercising conflict resolution skills, appreciating differences, forgiving faults			
The ACA questionnaire measured: how well campers got along with their peers, if other campers liked it when they were around			
	Pre-Camp	Post-Camp	6 Month Follow-up
Parents	Overall average reported an increase from pre to post camp		The increases made from pre to post camp were maintained
Campers	Overall average reported a loss from pre to post camp		Increases were reported when compared with pre-camp

Table 6 – Outcome Domain: Social Skills Measuring Social Comfort

Social Skills theme: Social Comfort			
The ACA described social comfort as: camp acting as a safe place for youth can be 'themselves'			
The ACA questionnaire measured: if campers were worried about making friends, keeping friends or having their feeling hurt in a social setting			
	Pre-Camp	Post-Camp	6 Month Follow-up
Parents	Overall average reported an increase from pre to post camp		Further increases were reported from post camp to follow-up
Campers	No differences were reported between pre and post camp tests		Increases were reported compared with post camp tests

Table 7 – Outcome Domain Physical and Thinking Skills
Measuring Adventure/Exploration

Physical & Thinking Skills theme: Adventure/Exploration			
The ACA described adventure/exploration as: taking healthy risks, learning new skills and trying new thing			
The ACA questionnaire measured: willingness to try new things			
	Pre-Camp	Post-Camp	6 Month Follow-up
Parents	Overall average reported an increase from pre to post camp		Losses were reported from post camp to follow-up
Campers	Overall average reported an increase from pre to post camp		Results reported a return to pre-camp levels

Table 8 – Outcome Domain: Physical and Thinking Skills
Measuring Environmental Awareness

Physical & Thinking Skills theme: Environmental Awareness			
The ACA described environmental awareness as: teaching and exposing young people to nature and conservation practices			
The ACA questionnaire measured: recycling behaviours, how much campers respected and protected natural resources			
	Pre-Camp	Post-Camp	6 Month Follow-up
Parents	Overall average reported an increase from pre to post camp		Increases in post camp tests were maintained at follow-up
Campers	No differences between pre and post camp tests were reported		Results remained consistent with pre-camp tests (no increases)

Table 9 – Outcome Domain: Positive Values & Spirituality
Measuring Values and Decision Making

Positive Values & Spirituality theme: Values and Decision Making			
The ACA described values and decision making as: test decisions making skills (individual and collaborative) around adult guidance/presence			
The ACA questionnaire measured: levels of respect, considerations and thoughtfulness, collaborative action and following community rules			
	Pre-Camp	Post-Camp	6 Month Follow-up
Parents	Overall average reported an increase from pre to post camp		The gains made from pre to post camp were maintained
Campers	Overall average reported no gains from pre to post camp tests		Results maintained pre-camp test levels (no increases)

Table 10 – Outcome Domain: Positive Values & Spirituality Measuring Spirituality

Positive Values & Spirituality: Spirituality			
The ACA described spirituality as: the connection to nature, people, creating a home away from home and/or a higher power			
The ACA questionnaire measured: the level of connection youth have spirituality (that is, their connection to nature, people, sense of place, higher power)			
	Pre-Camp	Post-Camp	6 Month Follow-up
Parents	Overall average reported an increase from pre to post camp		Further increases were reported from post camp to follow-up
Campers	Overall average reported in increase from pre to post camp		Losses were reported from post camp to follow-up tests

According to the ACA's (2005) first national outcome evaluation study, positive results were found (Henderson, Powell & Scanlin, 2005; Henderson et al., 2007a) with overall gains in camper self-esteem (see Table 1), independence (see Table 2), leadership abilities (see Table 3) and social comfort (see Table 6) after camp, and showed further increases six months after camp. Parents identified gains (post camp with further increases six months later) in their child's peer

relationships (see Table 5), positive values and decisions making (see Table 9), and spirituality (see Table 10) (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2008).

In the case of environmental awareness, no overall average gains in camper outcomes (see Table 8) were found. However, the study mentioned that if a camp had environmental education or awareness directly in its mission, statistically significant increases were reported in camper environmental awareness. The outcome domain of physical and thinking skills related to adventure/exploration (i.e. trying new things) showed the greatest increases (as compared to all other outcome domains studied) after camp. Indeed, the study found that 75% of campers said they had learned something new at camp (ACA, 2005). However, six months after camp, parents and campers reported losses in adventure/exploration (see Table 7). Losses from post camp to six-month follow-up tests were also reported by parents and campers in the outcome domain of social skills measuring friendship skills (see Table 4). That is, originally it was reported that campers increased their abilities to foster respectful and trusting relationships after camp, but six months later, these skill did not seem to transfer outside of the camp experience. The idea of transfer is of particular interest to this study. In this example, what campers presumably learn at camp (i.e. friendship skills) did not appear to have lasting effects on camper behaviours. More research is needed to understand the idea of 'transfer' and this kind of outcome finding.

In addition to parent and camper, pre-camp, post camp and six month follow-up tests, staff observed and measured their campers' behaviour related to the outcome domains at the beginning of camp and again near the end (ACA, 2005). On average, staff found there were increases in all outcome domains (positive identify, social skills, physical and thinking skills, and values and spirituality) and in all of their subsequent themes (self-esteem, independence,

leadership abilities, friendship skills, peer relationships, social comfort, adventure/exploration, environmental awareness, values and decision making, and spirituality) (ACA, 2005, Henderson, Powell & Scanlin, 2005; Henderson et al., 2007a).

2.4.2. ACA Study II

Taken as a whole, the first national ACA study (2005) found a clear answer to its question: yes, growth did occur at camp. Even though campers (as participants in a camp experience), staff (as observers of their campers' camp experiences) and parents (as observers of campers pre and post camp) had differing responses, the overall average responses showed that there is great opportunity for positive outcomes in youth development during a camp experience. Indeed, the ACA (2005) national outcome evaluation study found that growth generally does occur at camp. For the second national research study, the ACA took these findings and sought to measure how much camp contributed to developmental supports and opportunities for young people through the camp experience (ACA, 2006a).

This second national study wanted to examine to what extent camps offer experiences that research (much like my PYD review) has revealed as critical in adolescents becoming successful and productive adults (ACA, 2006a). That is, how much did the developmental opportunities and supports found in the four domains of supportive relationships, safety, youth involvement and skill building, contribute to PYD (ACA, 2006a). This study sought to understand the relationship between optimal camp experiences and their connection to camp type and camper characteristics.

Eighty ACA camp types of multiple backgrounds (nonprofit agency, private for profit, religious camp and others) studied over 8000 young boys and girls and their experiences at camp

during the summer of 2004. The most noteworthy results found that the greatest strength of summer camp programming is its ability to build supportive relationships between youth and adult figures (camp staff) (ACA, 2006a). The study found, however, that if camps had a temporary lodging component to them and were at least four weeks long or more, the experience of supportive relationship forming would be more optimal for youth (ACA, 2006a). More research is needed to understand what the key components of the temporary lodging camp experience is and how these components might lend themselves to more optimal experiences for youth.

Comparisons were made between optimal experiences in supportive relationship forming at camp to other youth focused programs or institutions (i.e. secondary school). These comparisons concluded camp was significantly more effective at creating quality relationships that youth need for their developmental processes, more so than any other youth focused organization (ACA, 2006a). Both this finding, and understanding the key components of temporary lodging (or residential) camps and program length might aid other youth focused programs and institutions in creating more optimal developmental opportunities and supports. More research is needed to understand what it is about these results contributed to optimal experiences for youth at camp.

2.4.3. ACA Study III

The third ACA national study took the results of these focused outcome studies to help inform and guide camp program improvement (ACA, 2006b). Camps learned to measure their existing outcomes and make action plans to implement change for the improvement of their youth development processes. The ACA (2006b) found if camps could make three consecutive

organizational plans to change (1) structure, (2) policies, and (3) activities – they would be more successful in their overall program improvement. This national study found that the more intentional and youth centered a camp program was, the more likely it was to create rich (or richer) experiences for youth. By and large, this research could help youth-focused organizations build new knowledge about program assessment, planning and implementation related to how change is created and supported (ACA, 2006b).

2.4.4. Summary

The collective anecdotal narrative from campers, parents and camp staff, about camp being a positive experience was supported by the ACA's research efforts (ACA, 2005, 2006a, 2006b). Along with schools, after school recreation programs, community recreation programs and religious organizations – these studies clearly identify camp programs as an effective delivery vehicle for PYD. This research heightened the value camps have in the developmental process of youth and PYD delivery systems. Most importantly, the three ACA national studies helped all youth focused organizations and institutions better understand "what type and how much organizational change is required to significantly enrich the contributions made to youth's development" (ACA 2006b, pg. 24). ACA study results urge camp professionals to refrain from isolating their program capabilities (i.e. limiting their programs to summer months) and instead find ways to partner with parents, teachers, coaches, mentors and clergy – all of whom, collectively and collaboratively, can play important roles in the lives of youth.

2.5. *Transfer*

The focus on transfer potentially makes this study a contribution to the existing body of camp literature. While proponents of camp advance the notion that camp provides participants with a transformative experience, they have yet to establish its impact outside of the camp setting. In other words, no studies to my knowledge have explored the concepts of transfer related to camp. Consequently, camp professionals will speculate on anecdotal evidence that camp 'does a world of good' for their participants. However, it is important to understanding what specifically may or may not transfer from the camp experience to other aspects of a campers' life. This kind of research is valuable for camp professionals' ability to plan, organize and structure their programs to best meet developmental youth processes.

The concept of transfer refers to what someone learns in one place and how that information transfers to other areas of life (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Newstrom, 1984; Wexley & Latham, 1981). Transfer (or "transfer of training") has traditionally been studied in the field of psychology, and focused on the cognitive abilities of the individuals under examination. Though camp research has studied the outcomes of camp experiences, it remains silent on what skills, knowledge, and values transfer from the camp setting to others areas of the campers' lives. I aim to address this deficiency.

Scholars interested in transfer not surprisingly come from the education profession. Most researchers in this area compare activities and examine how learned information from one activity transfers to the next. This approach is known as the study of transference in a situated learning perspective (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989; Greeno, 1997; Greeno, Collins, Resnick, 1996). For example, when someone learns something from participating in one activity, transfer is the influencing factor that leads someone to continue to use what they previously learned.

Therefore, context is a condition for the success of transfer (Greeno, 1997). Salomon and Perkins (1989) distinguish between low road and high road transfer. Low road transfer refers to highly practiced skills that require little reflection and knowledge and transfer almost automatically (like reading or writing). High road transfer is more complex insofar as it explains the deliberate and conscious act of connecting ideas. These are terms I aim to consider as I explore transfer from a camp setting.

2.5.1. The Inert Knowledge Problem

The inert knowledge problem in the field of transfer embodies the concerns scholars have about the traditional classroom (Brown & Campione, 1981). Students do learn important information at school, but are often unable to transfer this knowledge to a real world context (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1985). A student might learn about fractions in school, for example, but is unable to transfer this knowledge to baking measurements while cooking at home (Pugh & Bergin, 2003). The issue regarding the inert knowledge problem is that students are often capable of transferring knowledge, but choose not to do so for some particular reason. Studies have shown that if a student does not like a particular subject, he or she might study for an exam, but have no interest in applying that same knowledge to his or her daily life (Renkl, Mandl & Gruber, 1996). Presumably camp, for the reasons listed above, provides a learning environment that encourages campers to retain and use the knowledge they gained from their experiences. An example of this idea in a camp context could be that a camper learns to plant trees at camp so when they return to school, they might be motivated use this knowledge in a science class garden project.

2.5.2. Motivated to Transfer

That individuals are motivated to initiate transfer from one activity to another is yet another area of transfer research. Researchers have been interested in what factors influence the initiation of a transfer attempt, specifically related to students applying knowledge to out of school contexts. Free choice transfer speaks to the idea that individuals need not transfer information to participate in a particular activity, but they choose to do so out of personal interest (Salmon & Perkins, 1989). Salmon and Perkins (1989) studied the idea that some knowledge is so well understood that connecting ideas (high road transfer) happens without any effort. This kind of transfer is known as forward reaching transfer (Salmon & Perkins, 1989). Free choice and forward reaching forms of transfer are particularly useful in understanding how students transfer their school learning to out of school learning.

Pugh and Bergin (2003) have found that a key concept of the transfer of knowledge is directly related with motivation. When a young person feels a greater sense of self-concept as a result of skills transferring from one activity to another, they are likely to be more committed (and perhaps motivated) to improving that skill (Hautala, 1988). These ideas are consistent with my review, in section 2.3.5., related to intrinsic learning motivation. Be it school or activity skills, studying transfer is of great interest to understanding what camp learned knowledge, skills, attitudes and values participants might transfer to other areas of participants' lives.

2.6. Do 'Fun and Games' Transfer to S'more Outcomes?

Experiential education has always been closely linked with organized camping and camp programs. Experiential learning asks participants to experience situations directly and then reflect on this experience. When participants have the opportunity to connect with the camp's

settings (such as their natural environment, or creating a sense of place) or their activities, they might have the opportunity to interact with smaller groups of people to build genuine relationships. These genuine relationships might foster an optimal learning environment where experiences motivate young people to continually participate and learn. Understanding what developmental outcomes come from the participation in camp programs are of great importance, and so too is understanding how these outcomes transfer from the camp setting to other areas of the camp participants life.

Camp experiences are short lived, so if important positive development outcomes are a result of these time sensitive experiences, understanding what transfers from camp to other settings is important for youth development. Not only can other youth focused organizations and institutions learn from the developmental outcomes camp programs provide youth, but camps can learn how to better plan and structure their programs to support optimal youth development. It is not enough for camps to simply provide opportunities for positive developmental outcomes for youth and *hope* these outcomes continue to affect their campers' lives after camp is over. Camps need to first understand, what, if any, outcomes transfer to other aspects of their campers' lives. Thereafter, camps need to adjust or improve their programs so that the youth they serve can have optimal developmental growth opportunities beyond the camp experience. My aim is to assist the Camp Giving Tree in forwarding these aims. The chapter that follows outlines the methods I propose to use to advance this purpose.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

In his treatise on education published in 1922, the President of Harvard University, Charles W. Eliot wrote "I have a conviction that a few weeks spent in a well-organized summer camp may be more valuable educationally than a whole year of formal school work." (Eliot, 1922 as cited in American Camp Association, 2005)

3.1. Purpose and Rationale

This evaluation research study was designed to compare what a camp program anticipates as its outcomes to what outcomes it actually achieves. It set up an outcome evaluation that sought to understand what program staff at Camp Giving Tree anticipate are the developmental outcomes for students attending their School-Camp Partnership Program (SCPP) as compared with teachers' perspectives on their students' developmental outcome achievements as a result of their participation in the SCPP. This study is an outcome evaluation research project interested in understanding the impacts of, benefits of and or changes attributed to a 3-day, 2-night camp program had on the developmental growth of student participants.

Although I refer to my study as an outcome evaluation because of my focus on outcomes specifically, the purpose of this particular program evaluation took on the characteristics referred to by Patton (1996, 2008) to as a *developmental* program evaluation. Developmental program evaluation is not necessarily interested in judging whether a program should continue, nor is it automatically focused on program improvement; rather, it seeks to generate knowledge about a program to understand how it might best adapt to meet the needs of its participants (Patton, 1996, 2008).

Michael Zooyoff, the general manager of Camp Giving Tree's facility, indicated to me that enrolment has increased every year since the SCPP began (personal communication, January 27, 2009). It is my contention, however, that increased enrolment does not tell us much about

the outcomes of the SCPP for students' development. Thus I felt it necessary to shift attention from outputs to outcomes by constructing my research as an outcome evaluation study focusing on outcomes of the SCPP from multiple perspectives.

In order to achieve the rich results I was looking for, the study was designed to explore multiple perspectives at different stages of the program. Accordingly, this outcome evaluation study sought to explore what Camp Giving Tree program staff anticipated would be the outcomes of the SCPP for student participants in order to understand what the same staff believed were the existing outcomes of the program they currently facilitate. Second, this outcome evaluation study sought to explore teachers' (a) perceptions of as their students' developmental outcomes during the SCPP and; (b) reflections on their observations of their students' developmental outcomes back in their school community, one month after the SCPP. Third, the outcome evaluation study aimed to compare the data sets of the camp staff with that of the teachers as this comparison offers some insight into how the Camp Giving Tree SCPP can best serve student groups in the future.

Given that the purpose of this outcome evaluation study sought to understand and evaluate how the SCPP might best serve its participants, I believed the best way to explore these outcomes was through the use of qualitative research methods. Indeed, Henderson et al (2007) suggests the best way to understand camp experiences is through small-scale qualitative research studies. Chenery (1987) echoes these observations when she states that she believes qualitative approaches are best positioned to capture the rich experiences at camp. Moreover, Kolb (1981) argued experiential learning happens in 'real-life' settings, so my research, given its focus on experiential learning, sought to explore teachers' observations of their students' lived experiences at camp and later in their school setting. Since qualitative inquiry builds reflexivity

into its research design, I intended to incorporate this type of flexibility into my study in order to obtain the rich description I was interested in capturing. Therefore, the evaluation design for this study was qualitative insofar as it involved the collection and analyses of qualitative data collected from focus group (more then or equal to four people), mini-focus groups (fewer than or equal to three people) and one-on-one face-to-face interviews. As a result, the entire study's framework is a philosophical perspective driven by pragmatism, where its design is specifically meant to practically help the Camp Giving Tree deliver the best SCPP it can to future participants.

3.2. My Role as a Researcher

In this study, my role as the researcher was to serve as a primary data collection instrument (Creswell, 2003). I knew that I would not able to separate my assumptions, values, and biases from that which I was studying (Locke et al., 2000 as cited in Creswell, 2003, p 184). Instead I used them to my advantage through the research process in keeping with "best practices" by qualitative researchers when they openly articulate how their experiences and values shape their study (Creswell, 2003; Mertens, 2003). With this reflexivity (openness to expressing and admitting to values, interests and bias), they have an opportunity to develop a process of "verification" throughout their research processes, as opposed to measurable validations (Creswell, 2003).

I believe my camping background and experience were assets to this outcome evaluation research study. For almost as long as I have been a student in formal educational institutions, I have been a camper participating in informal educational camp institutions. My twenty-two years of overwhelmingly positive camp experience led me to take an interest in camp research. When I

chose this topic for my research, I was specifically interested in how camp programs can best meet the needs of their participants. Equally of interest, I have always deeply cared about financial accessibility to recreation programs like camp. My camp experience has informed my belief that camp can be a positive experience, enhancing all-round youth development and the transfer of skills to formal educational outcomes. I believed my role as a researcher in this outcome evaluation study afforded me the chance to exercise my reflexivity and gain important skills to serve youth through better recreation opportunities into the future.

Before I conducted any group interviews, I had visited the facility location on a number of occasions, both to set up this research project and as a representative of the University of Waterloo for a funded research project under the supervision of Dr. Troy Glover. My connection with the site and the staff worked to my advantage in that I was able to build on-going interest in the study by continuing to build strong rapport with the staff whom were a part of the focus group interviews. Michael Zooyoff, the general manager of the facility, acted as the 'gatekeeper' for my study, granted me access to the Camp Giving Tree site for research and also helped me recruit SCPP staff as research participants in my study. Mr. Zooyoff's connections with public school personnel also gave me access to recruiting the public school principal, teachers and school site to conduct this study. Through Mr. Zooyoff's introduction, the principal of Dunwoody Public School, Eugene Pollock, agreed to have the school apart of the study. Mr. Pollock helped me recruit the teacher chaperones for the study and granted me assess to the school setting to conduct some of my interviews. Finally, I received ethical clearance from the Green Mountain District School Board in order to conduct research with a school under its jurisdiction.

3.3. *Research Setting and Participants*

My attendance at the Ontario Camps Association annual conference in January of 2007 was key in the setting up of this study for it was there that I met a number of staff members from the Camp Giving Tree facility and discussed the idea of conducting outcome related camp research for this master's thesis. Camp Giving Tree staff were open to having me conduct outcome related research at their camp. Like many other camp professionals, who recognize a shift within the camp field to focus on outcomes when evaluating the worth and merits of camp experiences, they shared certain urgencies to understand the outcomes of camp programs where these might prove helpful for accountability and the recruitment of future campers.

3.3.1. *Research Setting*

A qualitative research paradigm generally follows commonly accepted assumptions: that study participants will be studied in their natural settings and will involve participants in the research process (Creswell, 2003; Rossman & Rallis, 1998 as cited in Creswell, 2003). In respect of these assumptions, the setting for this research study took place at two sites. The first site was Camp Giving Tree's physical location, located in South Western Ontario. According to its mission, Camp Giving Tree aims to bring children a brighter future, and uses camp programs as a vehicle to achieve this goal. The way in which the SCPP tries to meet the Camp Giving Tree mission is by providing fun and unique activities for youth focused organizations (like school) to participate in a 3-day, 2-night camp experience. More specifically, the SCPP is sponsored; offering free camp experiences to community groups and schools that serve youth who come from economically challenging and disenfranchised communities. In Dunwoody

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Public School's case, like other schools selected for the SCPP experience, the student body demographic included families from a community (a region in South Western Ontario) that would not have been able to afford an experience like this, nor would the school have it in their budget to pay for their students and teachers to attend. Fifty-seven students from Dunwoody Public School attended the SCPP 30 of who were female and 27 of who were male. I observed that approximately half of the girls in attendance were 12 years old (in grade 7) and the other half were 13 years old (in grade 8). The schools' population had a student body of about 120 students total, with two 7th grade and two 8th grade classes, where each class had around 30 students in their enrollment. Therefore the SCPP served almost half of the student body for the 3-day, 2-night camp experience.

Over the course of the 3-day SCPP, youth participate in and learn about agriculture education (such as farming skills), the natural environment (through activities such as nature hikes), creative arts (such as a craft or drama), adventure activities (such as leadership team building initiatives) and outdoor recreation (such as orienteering) (D. Turner, personal communication, February 9, 2009). Dan Turner, Camp Giving Tree's program manager, explains that SCPP staff take into account unpredictable weather, and are prepared to facilitate outdoor and indoor activities for varying group sizes to meet the SCPP program goals (personal communication, February 9, 2009).

The SCPP program is designed for students to have some control over the activities in which they participate but all students partake in evening campfire programs including traditional camp songs, skits and games. Some of the specific activities Dunwoody Public School students participated in over the 3-day, 2-night program in included high ropes course climbing, nature education hiking, tree planting, learning about the farm animals at the facility,

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leadership team building activities and mask making. Before the students leave, they are asked

to share their SCPP experiences with a local storeowner whose store donations helped fund the

camp experience for that given youth organization or agency. The role of teachers during the

SCPP is to supervise their students and to participate in the daily camp activities with their

students. Before the SPCC, schools that attend were invited to identify their objectives and goals

for their time spent at the site. These goals and objectives were supposed to be connected to the

needs of the particular school group. To my knowledge, no such objectives or goals were

provided by Dunwoody Public School administrators or teachers. Camp Giving Tree therefore

did not tailor their SCPP program for the school and delivered their standard 3-day, 2-night

program schedule for the group.

The last SCPP for the 2009 winter season hosted the Dunwoody Public School group on

Wednesday March 25th through Friday March 27th, 2009. The program began once the bus

picked the school group up at their school (with a Camp Giving Tree staff member on board) and

finished when the bus dropped the group off back at school three days later. Three meals a day

were provided for the students, along with supplies for any activities and programs in which

students participated. Dunwoody Public School was located about fifteen minutes from the

facility.

The Camp Giving Tree is a four-season facility that has run camp programs since it

opened in June of 2002. The facility is found on 400 acres of the rolling hills and wetlands of

South Western Ontario. It includes walking trails and fields, twenty natural ponds, a working

farm with living cattle, horses and sheep, and grows plants and vegetables in its greenhouse. In

addition to these natural and living elements, the camp has a huge repertoire of outdoor

recreational equipment and facilities including a campfire program area, sports fields, an outdoor

swimming pool, high and low ropes courses, a thirty foot climbing wall, an orienteering course, as well as paddle boats, kayaks and canoes. The indoor facilities at the site include an eco-centre classroom, an observatory, a computer, audio-visual, and digital photography laboratories, arts and crafts supplies as well as pottery equipment. The site has conventional camp facilities, including a dining hall, empty space to run activities, meetings and temporary lodging accommodations, known as bunkhouses.

The second research site was Dunwoody Public School, located in South Western Ontario. The school was a part of the Green Mountain District School Board but has since closed as of June 30th, 2009. It had a school population of about one hundred and thirty students and staff total (E. Pollock, personal communication, February 27, 2009). There was private space to conduct research focus groups with teachers in their staff room after school hours. Accordingly, I conducted interviews at this site with teachers on March 27th, 2009 (the last day of the SCPP) and on April 20th, 2009 (the one month follow-up focus group interview).

3.3.2. Study Participants

The first set of research participants in this study were the eight people who organized, ran, planned and delivered the actual SCPP at the Camp Giving Tree facility, two were female and 6 were male, all under the age of thirty at the time of the study. One was the program manager, two were full time year-round staff and five were co-operative education students working full time at the Camp Giving Tree facility. Participants ranged in experience with youth focused programming from a few months to over ten years in related professional and educational backgrounds.

The second set of research participants in this study included the five educators from Dunwoody Public School who acted as chaperones for their students during the SCPP: two full time teachers, two student teachers and one principal. The two full time teachers acted as chaperones for the entire 3-day, 2-night experience, whereas the student teachers and principal were only present for part of the SCPP. One of the full time teachers was female, in her late thirties, had about fifteen years of teaching experience and was teaching a grade 7 classroom for the academic year of 2008-2009. The other full time teacher was male, in his early to mid-thirties, had about eight years of teaching experience and was teaching a grade 8 classroom for the academic year of 2008-2009. The male and female student teachers, both in their early twenties, were pursuing their undergraduate degrees in education and had been working at Dunwoody Public School throughout the 2008-2009 academic year.   They both assumed SCPP chaperone roles starting on the second evening of the SCPP experience (March 26th, 2009). The male principal of the school was only present at the SCPP on March 26th, 2009. He had over twenty years of teaching and education administration experience when the study was conducted.

Because teachers had the opportunity to draw on their experience of working and seeing the same students everyday for ten months a year, I believe they were the uniquely suited to understand the outcomes of camp experiences related to students. That is, they would have seen the students before, during and after their participation in the SCPP. Next to time with their families, children and youth spend the majority of their time at school (Mundy, 1998), so it is argued here that teachers serve as pillars of educational supervision and consistency in the lives of their students. Teachers might be the best evaluators of what outcomes happen initially as a result of the camp experience, and further, how these outcomes may transfer to the school setting.

It is also important to recognize that teachers are also clients that the Camp Giving Tree are trying to serve, in that if teachers fail to see the value in the SCPP for their students, they might be unwilling to recommend their students return as primary clients. Understanding what these key stakeholders in the SCPP perceive as the outcomes for their students is thus extremely important for program development. Both full time teachers had been chaperones at the Camp Giving Tree SCPP the previous year, where at that time, the SCPP had been their first exposure to any camp experience. Both student teachers had attended summer camps when they were growing up, and one student teacher had been a counsellor at a camp.

3.4. Data Collection Strategies

3.4.1. Consent Forms

Michael Zooyoff invited all the staff at the Camp Giving Tree SCPP to be a part of the study, and they all orally agreed to participate before I conducted my first interview with them. I sent research participants' consent letters to Michael Zooyoff via email (during the week of March 16th - 20th, 2009) for him to distribute to the SCPP staff that were willing to be participants in the focus group, mini-focus group and one-on-one interviews. I always took time to explain the study, confidentiality, my role as a research, and the value of research consent forms. Between March 24th and March 26th – I collected eight research participant consent forms and conducted three interviews (one focus group interview, one mini-focus group interview, and one one-on-one interview).

The principal at Dunwoody Public School, Mr. Eugene Pollock, had been in touch with Michael Zooyoff and agreed to have his school be a part of the study. The principal promoted the study with the teachers who were going to be the chaperones at the SCPP. On the first day of

the SCPP, when the school group arrived at the Camp Giving Tree, I introduced myself to the teachers explained how the study would work, the study timeline, interview schedules and my role over the three day experience. The two full time teachers orally agreed to participate and signed their research participant consent forms. The principal orally agreed to be apart of the study weeks before the SCPP and signed a consent form on the morning of March 26th, 2009 when I conducted a one-on-one interview with him. The two student teachers orally agreed and signed their consent forms on March 27th, 2009 when I conducted my interviews with them at lunchtime.

I also used passive consent letters to notify students at Dunwoody Public School and their parents that research was going to be conducted by a graduate student from the University of Waterloo during their SCPP experience. The letters described the fact that I was not interested in directly using students as research participants, but rather was only interested in studying the teachers' perspectives on the educational value of camp experiences for students. This letter was sent to Eugene Pollock during the week of March 16th – 20th, 2009, who distributed the letter through the proper school channels.

3.4.2. *Focus Groups, Mini-Focus Groups and One-on-one Interviews*

This study aimed to embrace multiple perspectives and honour differing viewpoints in the data collection and analysis processes. Therefore I chose to use focus groups and mini-focus groups as well as face-to-face one-on-one interviews with research participants in order to collect qualitative data for this study. Having the flexibility to conduct group interviews, mini-group interviews or one-on-one interviews at any given time during the SCPP allowed me to work with the schedule of the SCPP, to ensure the program quality was not compromised due to my

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research study. Therefore this outcome evaluation study used focus groups, mini-focus groups and one-on-one interviews to its flexible advantage to best understand the outcomes of student experiences at camp from the perspectives of both teachers and camp program staff. Consistent with qualitative evaluation design, to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena being studied, the entire research process is structured as an emergent path, as opposed to following a strict prescription of research questions and design (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988).

Krueger and Casey (2008) explain that focus groups of any size are made up of people who have certain characteristics that supply qualitative data by participating in a focused conversation that help researchers understand a topic of interest. People who are a part of a focus group possess specific characteristics, similar to each other, in a way that is important to a researcher. Focus groups can range in size to have as many as ten people, or as few as four (Krueger & Casey, 2008). Focus groups that have four participants or less are often called mini-focus groups or group interviews (Krueger, 1994). Applied research literature suggests there are advantages and disadvantages to different focus group sizes. A focus group discussion usually follows an interview guide with a logical sequence of questions relevant to that topic (Krueger, 1994). Focus groups are said to be useful tools in guiding program development and have been found helpful in understanding a topic prior to, during, and after an event, experience or program (Krueger & Casey, 2008). In total, I conducted one focus group with the SCPP staff, one mini-focus group with the SCPP staff and four mini-focus groups with the teacher research participants.

Creswell (2003) says that the advantages to one-on-one interview research methods are the fact that the researcher can 'control' for the direction of the conversation through the structured, semi-structured or unstructured and generally open-ended nature of the questions they

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ask. Similar to focus groups and mini-focus groups, the purpose of asking open-ended questions of the research participants enabled me to understand the views and opinions of the research participants. There are weaknesses to face-to-face one-on-one interviews, including the fact that there are always biases present (from the researcher and the research participant) and that everyone had differing abilities to express their views. Indeed these weaknesses exist in focus group research methods as well due to the fact that humans will always have personal perspectives and bias based on their experiences in life. Qualitative researchers acknowledge and embrace the lens through which they see the world and interpret the data collected. Rather than discount bias, qualitative researchers use their lenses as research assets (Eisner, 1991; Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988). In total, I conducted one, one-on-one interview with a member of the SCPP staff and four one-on-one interviews with different teacher research participants over the course of the 3-day, 2-night SCPP experience.

For all of the interviews I conducted, be it using focus groups, mini-focus groups or one-on-one interviews, I always used semi-structured and open-ended research questions that followed the Focused Conversation Method (The Canadian Institute of Cultural Affairs, 2003). The Focused Conversation Method follows the idea that there are four levels to basic human thinking that facilitate rich discussion: Objective, Reflective, Interpretive and Decisional. The first level, *Objective*, is in reference to accumulating the facts, getting the basic information about a situation and understanding sensory (what is seen, heard and so forth) impressions about a situation. The second level, *Reflective*, allows participants to offer their personal reactions to a situation or a question, make associations between ideas, as well as share emotions and images related to that topic. The third level, *Interpretive*, resembles 'brainstorming'. At this level, meanings and values are shared and significance, purpose and implications around a topic are

explored. The last level, *Decisional,* is a summary, resolution, action, or future direction that offers 'next steps' and even urges participants to make some kind of commitment to the conversation that has just taken place. Though research interviews are not necessarily interested in making decisions or commitments related to a certain topic, summarizing what the group or person talked about at the end of the conversation is important for the flow of human thinking (The Canadian Institute of Cultural Affairs, 2003). Therefore, when it was appropriate, I tried to structure my interview questions guides (see Appendix A – C) to reflect the Focused Conversation Method.

With these levels of human thinking in mind, I followed interview protocol throughout the focus groups, mini-focus groups and one-on-one interviews that included instructions to myself as the interviewer (including opening statements, welcomes, notes to self, warm up conversations and so forth), key research questions, probes to follow up questions, transition messages, topics of discussion, reflections of the day's activities and frontloading activities for the next day with space to take down reflective and descriptive notes. Because the strength of focus groups and one-on-one interviews lie in their ability to ask open-ended questions (Creswell, 2003; Krueger, 1994), my aim was to ask questions that started with *who, what, where, why, when* and *how* that create open-ended questions, where *did, have, can* and *will* prompt close-ended questions. Though I believe my interview guides were thorough (see Appendix A – C) both the SCPP and teacher focus groups and one-one-one interviews allowed me to follow a semi-structured format. By that I mean that I was able to follow natural conversations (and asked appropriate follow-up questions) that were not included on my interview guides.

3.4.3. Observations

For the entire 3-day, 2-night SCPP, I observed students as they experienced camp. In my observations, I was looking to find similarities and differences in what teachers were saying in mini-focus group and one-on-one interviews. I used the themes I explored in my literature review (Chapter 2) to help me frame the student behaviour I observed. I connected my observations to the questions I asked teachers in our semi-structured evening focus groups and interviews, prompting them to reflect on their own observations and therefore drawing out the richest data.

3.4.4. Researcher Notes

I followed observational protocol during the SCPP suggested by Bogdan and Biklin (1992) to included observational data in the form of both descriptive and reflective notes. The descriptive notes included were "portraits of the participants, a reconstruction of dialogue, a description of the physical setting, accounts of particular events, or activities" (Creswell, 2003, p. 189). I also kept some demographic information about my research participants and descriptive information keeping track of the date, time, and place where the observations took place in the research field (Creswell, 2003).

The reflective notes included my personal thoughts including my feelings, any hunches I had, my observations of participant impressions of a situation – including all subtle and big picture ideas (Bogdan & Bilken, 1992 as cited in Creswell, 2003). All told, my descriptive and reflective field notes (see Appendix D for my field notes template) were used to help me articulate my observations so that I could adequately frame further questions and topics of discussion in later focus groups and one-on-one interviews.

In addition to taking detailed notes, I recorded, with participant permission, all focus group and interview conversations with my ipod mp3 audio-file recorder. Krueger (1994) suggests that recording conversations is a key way to verify quotes during any research analysis. Therefore, in order to ensure that I could verify quotes from focus groups, mini-focus groups and one-on-one interviews, I could then re-listen and transcribe all data sets of conversations I conducted for this study.

Because I was present throughout the entire SCPP with the Dunwoody Public School group, informal conversations arose between myself and teachers while transitioning from one activity to another, and between meal times (and at other moments throughout the day). Not only was the content of these conversations important to this research, but so too were these conversations important in building rapport with teachers. I believe that this rapport helped foster a more comfortable atmosphere for the study interviews, which I believe led to richer, more descriptive data. I did not audio-record these informal conversations because it would have forced me to interrupt valuable informal conversation. I did, however, record descriptive and reflective notes about these conversations in my field journal, that I used to prompt further questions in evening interviews.

3.5. Procedures

The following section outlines the steps I took in order to conduct this outcome evaluation study. Here, I describe the focus groups, mini-focus groups and one-on-one interviews that I conducted, the schedule of interviews, the interview questions guides and the rationale for each interview conducted (see Appendix A - G). Qualitative research design is the collection of data and includes multifaceted, interactive and simultaneous processes to honour

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the complexities of research. The more all encompassing the findings are, the better the

qualitative study is/ will be (Creswell, 2003). Therefore, this research study was designed to be

open to understanding the process of participants finding meaning in their lived experiences (or

in this outcome evaluation study, the perspectives on lived experiences) as well as the product

(Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990; Merriam, 1988).

Indeed, qualitative researchers are not interested in vast generalizations about a particular

phenomenon. Instead, they seek to understand and capture the meanings of research

participants' specific lived experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mirriam, 1988). Qualitative

research design procedures should represent multiple realities (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The

presentation of multiple realities can be presented with the use of words (or visual

representations) to describe experiences rather than using numbers (Creswell, 2003; Fraenkel &

Wallen, 1990; Merriam, 1988). This study used these qualitative research characteristics and

tried to take all of these characteristics into account while framing its outcome evaluation study

design.

3.5.1. SCPP Staff Focus Groups, Mini-Focus Groups and One-on-one interviews

Patton (1996, 2008) suggests that a utilization focused evaluation (UFE) will be

successful if the people who are responsible for running the program under examination are

involved in the evaluation process. My study methods conformed to this model because SCPP

staff expressed an interest in the results of the research. For this reason, the SCPP program staff

were involved in the research process from the beginning and throughout the entire study

(starting with a interviews, followed by a member-check, and a planned final presentation of

findings) with the intention to encouraging direct ownership over future SCPP program development through an expectation of findings with practical applications.

Accordingly, to begin this study, I conducted a focus group and interviews with program staff at Camp Giving Tree aimed at understanding their mandate, mission, program aims and desired outcomes of the SCPP as it relates to school groups. Because this study is an outcome evaluation, I first needed information with which to compare any other outcome evaluation findings. Later in this evaluation study I compared the outcome evaluation data from the SCPP staff with that of the data collected with teacher focus groups and interviews.

On March 24th, 2009, the day before the SCPP with Dunwoody Public School began, I conducted one two hour focus group interview with five of the Camp Giving Tree staff. On the morning of the March 25th, 2009, I conducted a mini-focus group with two other Camp Giving Tree SCPP staff for one hour before the school group arrived at the site. I interviewed my final camp staff research participant on March 26th, 2009, for an hour between program activities. The interviews with the camp staff asked them to comment on their perceived outcomes related to *all* student groups who participate in the SCPP.

This focus group, mini-focus groups and one-on-one interviews used the existing SCPP paper evaluations forms (internal and external) (see Appendix E & F) as a springboard to understanding what the program staff were looking for in its current evaluation processes. The focus groups and interviews followed a semi-structured interview format (see Appendix A). Some examples of the questions asked the SCPP staff included:

- *What do you think students learn when they come to the SCPP?*

- *In what way(s) can a 3-day, 2-night camp program affect the children who come here?*

- *When there is a school group participating in the SCPP, what have you seen happen?*

- I see that on the existing evaluation form you ask teachers to fill out, you want to know if teachers anticipate any changes in their students after they leave camp. If you were a teacher, how would you answer that question? What kinds of things have you seen teachers write in the past? Do these questions help you understand the outcomes of the SCPP for students?

3.5.2. Teacher Mini-focus groups and One-on-one interviews

Over the course of the 3-day, 2-night SCPP, I conducted small group interviews or one-on-one interviews with teacher research participants. Whenever I conducted interviews, irrespective of size, I was very flexible to in my timelines, in my ability to stop and start the interview again and in my ability to find private space where teachers felt they could speak confidentially about what they had observed that day. Since there were only two full time teachers supervising the entire SCPP experience, interviews often needed to be one-on-one, or in the middle of an interview, one teacher would need to leave in order to check in on their students and then come back to the interview. The Camp Giving Tree camp staff were always aware of where the interviews were taking place, so they knew where to find the teachers should they have needed them.

On March 25th, I conducted one mini-focus group interview with both full time teachers in the evening time. On March 26th, I conducted three one-on-one interviews with the principal, and with both of the full time teachers separately. On March 27th I conducted two mini-focus group interviews and one short one-on-one interview with a full time teacher. The mini-focus group interview with the student teachers took place at the SCPP, as did the one-on-one interview with the full time teacher, while the second mini-focus group interview I conducted happened back at Dunwoody Public School after the SCPP had finished.

Conducting mini-focus groups and one-on-one interviews over the course of the entire 3 day SCPP experience itself granted me the opportunity to understand if and what teachers saw as progression or changes in student behaviour over the course of a short time. It was useful to allow time for teachers to reflect on their observations each day as I came to recognize outcome patterns and themes emerging from their observations and reflections. The mini-focus groups and one-on-one interviews followed a semi-structured format with questions focused on outcome related themes during a camp experience (see Appendix B). Examples of questions and topics I asked in the interviews were:

- *Tell me about what you saw and heard today*

- *What do you think your students got out of _____ (name an activity)?*

- *What do you think your students learned today?*

- *Yesterday you said _____, are you finding similar examples of that today? Why or why not?*

- *Any surprises?*

- *Now that the entire camp experience is over, what do you think your students got out of the experience, overall? What pops out in your mind?*

3.5.2.1. Teacher Mini-Focus Group One Month after the SCPP

I returned to Dunwoody Public School on April 20th, 2009, one month after the SCPP had been completed to conduct one final focus group with the teacher research participants involved in the study. This stage of the outcome evaluation study design aimed to understand if the perceived outcomes of both the teachers and camp staff in fact transferred into student behaviour change at school in the month following the SCPP experience.

April 20th, 2009 was selected because this was a time that all the teachers would be available to come together for the final follow up mini-focus group. Due to their declared scheduling conflicts, only two teachers (one full time, one student teacher) out of the five who originally participated in the study were available to meet for the hour long follow-up mini-focus group interview. The other full time teacher offered a few minutes worth of insights at the beginning of the mini-focus group but had to leave almost immediately after it began due to other obligations. During this follow-up interview I conducted a member check, where I showed teachers the themes that were coming out of the data from the previous interviews. Both teachers present agreed that the results I compiled and offered were consistent with what they perceived during the SCPP.

I followed up with the missing 3 teachers over email and voicemail messages to ask if they wanted to meet to have another scheduled follow-up interview, or if they wanted to offer their observations with a phone interview or by answering questions over email. I did not hear back from any of the teachers over email or phone to re-schedule any follow-up interviews, phone interviews nor did I hear back from them in regard to email follow up. I sent all teachers the information I had brought together and analyzed up until that point asking for their insights and feedback as a member check procedure. I said in the email that if I did not hear from them, I could assume they agreed with the analysis I had done on the data I had compiled up until that point. None of the teachers got back to me with any feedback or comments.

I conducted the final mini-focus group using a semi-structured interview guide (see Appendix C for focus group interview guide details). The interview was conducted in the staff room of Dunwoody Public School after the school day had finished on April 20th, 2009. During this interview I connected ideas from the data collected during the SCPP and framed questions to

the teachers around comparing camp and school settings. My interview guides reflected this idea (see Appendix C). Some examples of the questions I asked included:

- During camp, you talk a lot about _____, and although school is a different setting, have you seen any of that same or different than _____?

- Have you observed anything that students learned at camp, transferring to a similar school situation?

3.5.3. Outcome Evaluation Presentation

Though this stage of my outcome evaluation study did not aim to collect or analyze data, it was nevertheless important for the purposes of UFE. This outcome evaluation study was conducted so that the intended users of the research could use the study's findings to best meet the needs of their program participants. Because it has been almost two years since I conducted my research, it is my intention to suggest best practices for the future of the SCPP at the Camp Giving Tree, as I believe the findings are still relevant for program development.

3.6. Data Analysis Procedures

The data I was analyzing was split into three data sets: (1) the data I collected from the SCPP staff interviews, (2) the data I collected from the teacher interviews during the SCPP and (3) the data I collected from the teacher interviews one month after the SCPP. My data analysis procedures included the six steps Creswell (2003) explains as the pillars to all qualitative research data analysis. These analysis procedures were on-going and simultaneous with the research collection process. The first step to my research process was to organize and prepare all of my focus group and interview conversations into typed transcripts. I transcribed all teacher

interview data collected during the SCPP within the month following the SCPP so that I could analyze the data and propose the content to research participants at the April 20th, 2009 follow-up interview. I then transcribed the follow-up interview data in the month following, as well as the SCPP staff interview data.

The second step of my data analysis directed me to study the typed transcripts from the focus group, mini-focus groups and one-on-one interviews. I read over the completed data set and wrote down in the margins of the transcripts any general ideas or thoughts I had that emerged. I tried to answer the following question: What, in general, were my participants saying? (Creswell, 2003). Van Manen (1990) describes this process as a holistic approach to data analysis, where researchers ask themselves if there were one or two phrases that might capture the "fundamental meaning or main significance of the text as a whole" (p. 93). I wrote notes and attempt to create holistic phrases in the margin of all typed transcripts.

The third step of my data analysis procedures involved what qualitative researchers call "coding." Rossman and Rallis (1998) explain coding as the process of organizing material into sections (or chunks) before assigning specific meaning to those sections (as cited in Creswell, 2003). Van Manen (1990) explains selective reading approaches in qualitative research analysis as a process where researchers read a text several times and ask themselves: "What statement(s) or phrase(s) seem particularly essential or revealing about the experience being described?" (p. 93). Creswell (2003) supports this type of analysis approach using the term "in vivo". In vivo refers to researchers being encouraged to use the terminology of the research participants to label immerging categories of ideas.

As I am a highly visual learner, I physically re-wrote sections of the transcribed data and put it on one side of an index/e card. On the reverse side of that same index card, I wrote the

statement and phrases that seems essential to the experience being described. I used in vivo techniques where I tried to capture and reflect the terms and language used by research participants (Creswell, 2003). I followed this procedure for each data set using different colours to indicate different data sets and themes found in the data. When each data set was sorted into index cards (with quotations on one side and with statements and phrases/in vivo labeling on the other), I began sorting the index cards into sections or categories.

During this next step of the coding process, when ideas from my second step and more specific statements and phrases from my third step were all in front of me, I was able to connect concepts by grouping the index cards into clusters. Tesch (1990) urges researchers to use columns as a way to cluster similar topics together, but to also include major topics, unique topics, and left over topics. I sorted the clusters into physical columns and used symbols (circle, square, triangle, octagon, etc.) as ways to differentiate and identify emerging clusters. The use of symbols assigned no particular meaning or name to the group of ideas that were emerging in the data.

This next step (Creswell's fourth step in the qualitative research process) in this coding process was to assign meaning to the sections that had been sorted into clusters. I replaced the symbol index card with a named index card that spoke to the ideas emerging from the entire category. Naming the category or cluster of ideas identified a theme that linked all the labeled index cards together, and tried to get at the meaning of the entire collection of ideas. The creation of thematic concepts at that point in my analysis also sought to create additional layers to the complexities of the newly organized data. Van Manen (1990) writes that "Themes are the stars that make up the universe of meaning we live through. By the light of these themes we can navigate and explore such universes" (p. 90). Creswell (2003) urges "sophisticated qualitative

studies go beyond description and themes identification and into complex them connections."
The way in which I interpreted and presented my findings addressed Creswell's push for deeper
meaning, and Van Manen's value in thematic naming through qualitative research.

Creswell's (2003) fifth step in qualitative research data analysis is to find a way in which
to best represent my interpreted findings. In the next section, I describe my solution in presenting
the study findings, wherein I analyzed my data sets together so that a direct comparison could be
made between research participants' perceptions.

3.6.1. Outcome Logic Model

The Outcome Logic Model (OLM), first developed by the United Way of America in
1996, is now the most widely used approach to measure program outcomes in the not for profit
sector (Hendricks, Plantz & Pritchard, 2008). Generally speaking, the model is a practical tool
used to measure program outcomes that reflect a logical evolution interested in understanding the
benefits or changes program participants experience during or after their participation in a
program (Hendricks, Plantz, & Pritchard, 2008). Programs have *inputs* (resources consumed by
the program), *activities* (what the program actually does with the resources to fulfill its mission)
and *outputs* (direct products of the activities) (United Way of America, 1996). These are
important things to track. However, the OLM places its value on tracking the outcomes of a
program initially, intermediately and in the long-term (Schacter, 2002). The United Way of
America (1996) explains that initial outcomes usually reflect what someone learns as a result of
participation in a program – be it new knowledge, skills, values or attitudes. Intermediate
outcomes reflect how a person's behaviour might be modified as a result of participation in that
program. In the long term the model is interested in measuring the outcomes of an altered status

or improved condition as a result of someone's participation in that program (see Appendix G for a visual representation of an OLM) (United Way of America, 1996).

Camp Giving Tree's staff attended a 4-hour workshop in the fall of 2008 where they learned how to construct OLMs. I was one of the research assistants present throughout this training exercise. Given that Patton (1996, 2008) urges researchers to keep evaluation research utilization focused and Creswell's (2003) urges qualitative researchers to find useful ways to present research data, I chose to present my data in a way that embodied the key components of the outcome logic model. This way, Camp Giving Tree's stakeholders could make sense of the data in a way that they have been trained. I did not present the data from my study in a visual outcome logic model but instead compared analyzed data sets of research participants and their perceived views on initial and intermediate outcomes. In section one of the findings chapter (see Chapter 4) I compared the initial outcomes perceived by camp staff and teachers in regards to what students were learning at the SCPP. In section two of the study's findings, I presented what camp staff anticipated as the intermediate outcomes of student behaviour at school one month after the SCPP compared to what the teachers perceived and observed as the intermediate outcomes of their students behaviour at school one month after the SCPP experience.

Again, this study did not seek to specifically make judgment or recommend improvements to the SCPP; rather, it sought to understand and gain knowledge about the outcomes of students at a camp program from the perspectives of their teachers. In addition to which, understanding what kind of impact the SCPP has on students within a school context (where comparisons were applicable and observable by teachers), knowledge was gained to understand intermediate developmental outcomes after the students have left the camp setting. I

believed that comparing outcomes in my findings served as a relevant way in which to evaluate the SCPP and which made research relevant for the staff at Camp Giving Tree.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

The two ethical issues related to this study were chosen research methods of observations and research participant and setting identity protection. The purpose of this study was to understand the perspectives of teachers related to what outcomes they perceived during a camp experience and what outcomes they perceived and observed transferring from the camp setting to school. Although teachers were asked to reflect and comment on their observations related to their students' camp experiences – they had already spent half of an academic year teaching, supervising and observing their students at school, and fulfilled a similar supervisory and observing role during the SCPP. The difference here was that I was asking teachers to tell *me* about their observations of their students during camp for the purposes of the outcome evaluation study.

Although teachers were observing their students as they normally did at school, and students seemed to be used to having their teachers around them in an observing capacity, students were made aware of my study and that I was asking teachers to reflect on their observations of students' experience at the SCPP and later at school. Students had the right to know that their teachers were sharing information about what they observed their students doing at camp and at school. The students whom the teachers were observing were made aware of the study and my presence during the SCPP when they arrived to the Camp Giving Tree campsite. My role as a researcher was not to make the students feel as though they were being 'watched' by me or by their teachers, but rather that I was interested in evaluating the SCPP as a whole.

This was made clear to students at the beginning of the SCPP, as I was introduced as a student researcher from the University of Waterloo. I then explained to students what my role as a researcher was and that I would be around for the 3-day camp experience to try and evaluate the program by talking to their teachers.

To address the idea that this outcome evaluation study asked teachers to observe students throughout the SCPP and later to reflect on what they observed at school after the SCPP, I sent letters home to all of the students' families notifying them that research was taking place but that it was concerned with teachers as research participants. The letter told parents and students that I would be present throughout the SCPP in an observing role, where my observations were only to be used to strengthen interview questions with teacher research participants. This information letter acted as a passive consent form that explained that students were by no means participants in the study.

Along with the use of observations to understand the outcomes of the SCPP, another ethical issue was protecting research participant identity. Since the camp staff and teacher focus groups, mini-focus groups and one-on-one interviews were very intimate and since the sample size of research participants was small, it was difficult to guarantee complete confidentiality. To address these issues of confidentiality, I presented study findings in quotations from teachers by writing things such as "one teacher observed…" and "another staff member said…" as opposed to using one pseudo-name for each teacher. Along with protecting the identity of the teachers and camp staff participating in the study, student names also came up during the teacher interviews. Teachers and camp staff rarely spoke directly about a specific student, but when they did (as there were fifty-seven students present for this SCPP experience), I never used the student's name in my reporting. Instead I wrote '[student name]' where a name of a student was

used in the interview data. Pseudonyms are used in the reporting process for this study to protect the identity of the camp program, school, school board and names of any camp staff or school administration who provided me information about their research groups and settings.

3.8. Verification

Creswell (2003) explains that the strength of qualitative research is its use of validity throughout the entire research process. To build trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility (Creswell & Miller, 2000) into my qualitative study, I included a series of member-checks with my research participants. Member-checking is used in qualitative research studies to verify data analysis by taking research findings back to the original participants in order to ensure they feel the findings are accurate (Creswell, 2003).

I presented the results of the SCPP staff's interviews by specifically noting initial and intermediate outcomes discussed with the 8 staff people. I sent an email to Michael Zooyoff in April of 2009 to circulate to his staff team with instructions to generate feedback and comments as necessary. It was indicated to me that the synthesized information I presented to Mr. Zooyoff in the email was accepted by the SCPP staff.

The first teacher member-check was conducted on April 20th, 2009 when I conducted the teacher follow-up mini-focus group interview. As previously mentioned, the two teachers who were present for the follow-up interview accepted my analysis of the findings up until that point. The other three teachers were given an opportunity to comment on the analysis I had done on the initial outcome data set but I had said that if they did not get back to me I would assume my analysis had been accepted. Indeed, I did not hear from any of the three teachers in regards to the information I sent them for member-checking.

Finally, I sent my analysis of the follow-up interview via email communication to the two teachers who participated on April 20, 2009. I asked them to make email me back with any comments or feedback and told them that if I did not hear from them, I would assume they accepted my analysis of the findings. Indeed, I did not hear back from the two teachers with feedback or comments, so based on the terms of my study, I assume that my analysis of the interview was accepted.

In all cases, though email communication for member-checks proved unresponsive, the inclusion of continual member-check strategies helped verify my data analysis. Patton's (1996, 2008) interest in having research participants (member ownership) over both the evaluation process and evaluation findings helps build opportunities for research participants to take ownership over the evaluation research process has been a focal point of my proposed outcome evaluation study design.

In conclusion, this outcome evaluation study, reflected in Patton's (1996, 2008) UFE approach was designed to understand what the Camp Giving Tree SCPP staff perceived were the outcomes of their camp program for students compared to what teachers perceive as the outcomes of the same camp program for their students. The findings provided insight into how Camp Giving Tree's SCPP could best meet the needs of their program participants from the educational community.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

The research questions for this exploratory evaluation study sought to examine what the resident staff and visiting teachers at Camp Giving Tree understood to be both the initial and intermediate outcomes of the three-day camp School-Camp Partnership Program (SCPP). The first focus of this chapter will be a presentation of the findings of the research participants (staff and teachers) with respect to what each thought students might learn during the SCPP. The second focus will be a comparison between what staff anticipated student learning behaviour might be after the SCPP and what teachers observed about learning behaviour transferred to school over the course of the month following. My precise interests were in (1) Camp Giving Tree staff's and teachers' perceptions of initial outcomes and (2) Camp Giving Tree staff's perceived intermediate outcomes as compared with teachers' perceived intermediate outcomes, as observed during the month following the SCPP.

This chapter is organized in respect of a basic principle in evaluation research: to make sense of what ought to happen as compared with what actually happened. I will present my findings in four primary sections describing the following themes: (1) Positive Risk Taking, (2) Social Competencies and Comforts, (3) Engagement with Creative Thinking (4) Strength of Character.

Sections 1 - 4 comprise two sub-sections: (1) Initial Outcomes according to both staff and teachers (2) Intermediate Outcomes comparing staff's anticipated outcomes with observed outcomes by teachers. Section 5 presents findings from the teacher follow-up interview, data which did not fit within my proposed Outcome Logic Model format but which was regarded as significant for inclusion in this chapter.

It is presumed for the purposes of this study that mastery of the learning skills, knowledge, values and attitudes discussed here is normally acquired very gradually by students in the grades in question and usually not in programs of short duration such as the ones described in the research. This study makes no claims about definitive acquisition of learning in the circumstances and the environments reported.   Nevertheless, this study is open to the inclusion of data that illustrate instances that behaviour change can happen abruptly.

Research participants used the terms 'learn' and 'transfer' in their responses which I have retained in this study while at the same time employing outcome research terminology such as 'initial outcomes' and 'intermediate outcomes'. Since 'initial outcomes' refers to what is learned as a result of direct experiences (in this case at the SCPP), the term 'initial outcome(s)' will be used interchangeably with the term 'learn' for the remainder of this chapter. Likewise, the term 'intermediate outcome(s)' refers to how someone might use what is learned in a particular circumstance and how this learning might transfer into modified behaviour. For the remainder of this chapter, therefore, I will use the term 'transfer' interchangeably with the term 'intermediate outcome(s)'.

This study distinguishes the responses of Camp Giving Tree staff research participants from those of teacher research participants bearing in mind their respective experience leading their groups. When the Camp Giving Tree staff spoke about initial outcomes of the SCPP, they were generalizing their observations based not only on the study group but on all student groups who had previously participated in the program. In contrast, the teachers' insights related only to their students during that academic year.

Sections 4.1. (and subsequent sub-sections 4.1.1., 4.1.2., 4.1.3. and 4.1.4.) reports the

initial outcomes perceived by staff and teachers. Section 4.2. (and subsequent sub-sections 4.2.1,

4.2.2., 4.2.3. and 4.2.4.) reports the intermediate outcomes perceived by staff and teachers.

4.1. Initial Outcomes as Perceived by Staff and Teachers

All initial outcomes data reported by staff and teachers was related to value based and

attitudinal learning rather than knowledge and skill development.

4.1.1. Outcome Theme 1: The Value of Positive Risk Taking

Staff and teachers believed student participants in the SCPP learned the value of taking

positive risks. As one staff member explained: *"I think it's the value of failure as a positive*

thing. [Students] are trying new things. They think it's going to be easy, it's not. They are

shooting two feet [archery], they realize everyone else is screwing up, too, so it's okay to fail

because it's positive failing – positive learning. Positive: 'Nothing bad can happen when I try

something new.'" One teacher said that at the SCPP, students were *"trying new things"* and

learning to *"take a little bit of a risk"*. Another teacher tried to imagine what a student trying

new things at camp might say: *"...if I say this thing sucks and I don't really give it a shot, then*

yes – it will. But if maybe I'll try it and participate and then maybe it will be better." Both

teachers and staff perceived trying new things with a positive attitude represent important

learning goal. Another staff member explained: *"we want students to take safe risks and*

learning they can try whatever they want and go for it...and I think more than anything its about

finding - helping them to decide on making good choices."

Programming at Camp Giving Tree was designed intentionally to steer youth toward

making choices that represent positive lifestyle values: e.g., healthy eating, active living,

resisting negative peer pressure. In part, taking positive risks, for the Camp Giving Tree staff, meant adopting a positive attitude toward new experiences. This idea was shared by a teacher who noted that taking social risks was necessary if one were to *"give it a try".* Mealtime at the SCPP, for example, included singing and standing on chairs in an effort to make the social occasion of the meal more comfortable. One staff member said: *"...at first they don't want to sing or stand up and they don't understand it, but at the end they are actually having fun!"* The staff explained that this type of informality is deliberately programmed with the goal of helping young people develop risk-taking behaviour for positive results.

Teachers felt as though students were more willing to take risks in situations where they learned to *"...get out of their comfort zone."* One teacher said: *"It was interesting to see some of the kids I would not have thought of – go out of the comfort zone but they did."* Teachers saw the value in students being willing to try new things and challenge their comfort level because they were learning the importance of attitude in approaching new experiences and taking risks.

Staff acknowledged that student risk taking would not always lead to immediate success, but noted students could be led to trust their goals about positive attitude and willingness to persevere. As one staff member explained: *"...at archery last week –[the students] all think they can just get a bulls-eye and then they try it and they find out how hard it is to even hold the bow. And then you show them how do it and they get better and gain confidence and they want to do it over and over again. And then become willing to try new things for the rest of the week and maybe once they leave here".* This staff person showed confidence that the SCPP experience helped students learn to embrace the value of trying new things and of perseverance that builds student confidence through skill development over time.

Beyond learning how a positive attitude can help a young person take risks, teachers also mentioned that a positive attitude at camp helped students learn to have a sense of optimism for their future. One teacher said that: *"[students] learn that having a positive attitude makes things better."* Another teacher spoke more broadly about positive attitudes, in that students would learn that the camp experience *"provides them with memories – good positive thoughts in their head…so this will always be something positive in their life."*

These examples show that some of the teachers believed when their students learned to have a positive attitude, it would be useful for approaching new challenges and worth adopting in their life as a whole.

4.2. Intermediate Outcomes Perceived by Staff and Teachers

4.2.1. Outcome Theme 1: Value of Positive Risk Taking

Though staff felt it was logical to assume that what students learned at camp about positive risk taking would transfer to school, they ultimately did not actually see these assumptions through while teachers did. Findings showed that the learning, which staff assumed would transfer from camp to school, was very different from what teachers observed in their students' behaviour during the month following the SCPP.

Some staff members believed that the learned attitude of positive risk taking would be expressed in students being *"more up for trying new things"* when back at school. In the words of one staff member: *"Maybe [the students] think they are not a physical person, but they give it a shot and realize 'Hey, I can do this!', then maybe it will open up a whole new avenue to think 'Maybe I should try more in gym.'"* In this example, only one staff described what a positive attitude and willingness to try new things might look like at school.

In contrast, teachers were unable to identify clearly that positive attitudes, and the value of positive risk taking transferred to the school setting. One teacher said: *"I heard a couple of kids talk about it [the SCPP] and I heard them talk about the activities but in terms of an attitude change – no"*. Similarly, another teacher mentioned that they *"did hear them talk about [it – the SCPP experience]…so that did make a lasting impression."* It could be assumed that the behaviour observed by teachers was related to students reflecting and talking about their positive experiences at camp; however no behaviours reflecting an overall attitude change were reported.

The majority of the study's findings indicate that teachers perceived student behaviour and student attitudes as negative in school settings when compared to the positive attitudes observed in their students one month before at the Camp Giving Tree SCPP. In fact, one teacher perceived that only negative attitudes seemed to transfer to the school setting. The teacher said: *"…we were in the school from the bus from not even half hour and we already had problems…attitude problems"*. This is a striking observation because the teacher remembered the difference between the attitudes observed in students at the SCPP and on the same day, how different they were when the group returned to school. Teachers consistently reported that students had different attitudes at camp from those at school. One teacher identified that one group of students in particular had more positive attitudes about their experiences at camp than they did back at school, saying: *"…attitude wise – the girls were better at camp than in terms of here [school]"*. According to the same teacher, the girls displayed negative behaviours related to language use. The teacher observed that the female students who had gone to camp were making *"nasty comments"* about classmates and peer groups, despite the fact that some Camp Giving Tree staff had originally anticipated more positive body and verbal language among students when they returned to school. Camp Giving Tree staff had identified intermediate

outcomes of positive body and verbal language such as *"smile more at school"* and *"behaviours like 'Thank You, Please'"* in the classroom.

One teacher noted positive outcomes from camp: *"...the boys in my class I find have been a lot better. Some were difficult before camp but then after camp he's kind of mellowed out."* Camp Giving Tree staff had predicted positive outcomes of this kind, as illustrated by one staff person's comment about students having *"more mutual respect"* for one another when back at school. These examples show that, although positive attitudes were expected by staff and experienced by teachers, they did not emerge as a dominant theme in the data.

Camp Giving Tree staff and teachers thought that because students had learned about positive attitudes at camp, they would be more willing to try new things as an intermediate outcome. Nevertheless, that one month later, one teacher was amazed that one student who had been willing to try new things at the SCPP, did not display the same willingness in the school setting. The teacher admitted that they *"... think about it and it still amazes me. [At camp] He did the drama thing no problem. Now here [at school] we have airbands and he won't do it."* (This teacher's observation will be at the heart of my description in Chapter 5 of the components that contribute to learning environments capable of promoting positive risk taking.)

A significant teacher observation was: *"I tried to look for things that might transfer [back to school]...but it was just such a negative contrast to camp."* All the teacher research participants present at the follow-up interview agreed with this teacher's observation of student behavior; furthermore, they expressed disappointment in having to share their honest feelings about their students' behaviour, i.e., lack of transfer, when I met with them one month after the SCPP. (One teacher even expressed fear that they might be/were ruining my study.)

4.1. Initial Outcomes perceived by Staff and Teachers

4.1.2. Outcome Theme 2: Social Competencies and Social Comforts

Staff and teachers believed participants learned effective social competencies and social comforts at the SCPP. Initial outcomes related to social comforts generally spoke to how the SCPP helped participants gain new social ties that deepened existing social relationships with their peers. One staff member noted this idea that *"bonding with friends"* as an initial outcome of the camp experience; they also mentioned that activities such as team building and cooperative games offered at camp help students expand and enhance existing social ties among their peers at school. Echoing staff perceptions, one teacher said that camp encouraged students to *"take the risks so you can go outside your own little group."*

Taking positive social risks was also identified as something students were learning at camp; thus, if a student learned to take some kind of social risk, in turn, their peers might learn to be more socially accepting of them. Such an experience of social acceptance might deepen social ties between peers groups at school. Support for positive social risk taking was noted by another teacher who said student learned to have "*more acceptance of each other"*. Another teacher believed that camp was a positive experience for students to build relationships when they said that students *"...get to see other kids succeeding and trying – they get to hear everybody else cheering them on...so many good parts in terms of relationships with those students."* Teachers perceived that students were learning that a reward for trying something new, even if the attempt was unsuccessful, facilitated social acceptance by their peers.

Taking the idea of social risk further, one teacher said that camp allowed students to *"go out on a limb and participate in the activities and how that is okay to do this and that you're going to do it. And in doing so, you're going to have the students see a different side of you*

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perhaps. And they look at you differently." The same teacher gave an example after observing a camp activity: *"...[student name] who is the quietest, not very out-going kid in the class, and up she went and the kids encouraged her. I was surprised."* Students learning to grow in social acceptance of one another, especially when taking social risks, was supported by a Camp Giving Tree staff person who stated that camp programs allowed young people to see *"...kids in different ways",* and perhaps helped students to learn more about one another.

Beyond students learning to accept one another socially, staff and teachers believed that camp taught students to find commonalities among themselves. One staff member said students could *"…realize 'Hey, he climbed just as high as I did or even higher, so maybe there are common things among us – so maybe we're in different classes or cliques', but then they realize that they do have some things in common and we can do things together."* Echoing this observation, one teacher said: *"...I think it does open them up to seeing and dealing with other people."* [and this is important because they] *"...get to be very comfortable with their friends and that's it."*

When students see they have commonalities with peers with whom they do not normally socialize, staff and teachers believe their students learn to get along better within a social context. One staff member said: *"We can do a team builder [exercise]– and will we be best friends? No. But we could at least talk about it. And will we feel more comfortable with each other? Yes – because of that shared experience…"* In other words, staff understood shared experiences at camp were helping young people gain skills necessary to feeling socially competent and comfortable. Because of camp, a staff member said students learn they have *"one more connection when they go back".* Similarly, another staff member remarked: *"...we've gotten to know people in a new light and a new context. And we can take that shared experience*

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and they can reflect on it and say: 'Hey, remember when we were talking to each other as

friends?'" Staff believed the shared experience of camp could serve as a social resource upon

which the students could draw when they returned to school. Teachers and TCHF staff believed

that shared experiences helped students develop relevant and useful social competencies

important to student development.

In relation to an activity with a focus on safety, one teacher said that students were

learning that *"...a team of you (that) have to work together to get them up safely."* This idea of

students learning the importance of working with one another, even if they are not friends, is one

echoed by another teacher who said that students were learning to *"respect each other and work*

together regardless if they like each other." One teacher provided an example of this (regarding

a partner-trust activity between students): *"...they could have said: 'You know, I'm going to walk*

my guy into a wall'...but they still seemed to pull it off'". One teacher summed it up concisely

when he or she said that at camp students were learning *"...teamwork and [to] support each*

other – you know - get along."

4.2. Intermediate Outcomes Perceived by Teachers and Staff

4.2.2. Outcome Theme 2: Social Comforts & Social Competencies

Overall, staff anticipated that students would value the *"sense of community"* that was

created at camp, and that this value would be transferred to school. One measure for

intermediate outcomes for social competency and social comforts, according to the Camp Giving

Tree staff, might be students talking to each other more at school. One staff member said *"I*

think that's what children do with these experiences when they go back to school. They may not

become best friends but they will be able to talk to each other." Another staff member included

the measure of showing *"mutual respect"* as a learned attitude that might transfer back to school.

Mutual respect was expected to be displayed through behaviour whereby students were, as one staff member put it: *"...willing to work more together as a group, they are willing to face challenges head on as a unit instead of by themselves."*

Two teachers reported that they had observed their students working together more successfully in the classroom than before camp. One teachers said that students were *"...a bit more willing to work together"* while another teacher noticed, when it came to group projects in the month after camp, *"...some of them are a little more willing to participate in presentations."*

Teachers also observed that students on the whole seemed to talk and socialize with their teachers more positively in the month after camp, whereas the data on *"socializing between peer groups",* on the other hand produced mixed findings. One teacher found, regarding one student with whom they had had negative interactions before camp, that (the) *"...attitude towards me before camp and after it was little bit better"*. The data illustrated the theme of positive relationship building is connected to the theme of positive attitudes. The same teacher noticed that female students in particular seemed to be more socially connected with one of the other teachers after camp. The other teacher agreed and said: "*Yes, they [the female students] were more willing to talk"*. Again, the theme of a positive attitude and the willingness of a student to try new things (like talking to their teacher) is also a positive social behaviour, and so these themes seem to work together when it comes to transfer.

One teacher's expectations strongly connected the importance of social comfort with student learning but were not met. He or she said, *"You think about [student name, who participated in drama activities at Camp Giving Tree SCPP], she is someone who can do the acting and silliness in front of grade 8's and you would think she would be a person to put her hand up [in class]...but she isn't."*

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In contrast, one staff person supposed that intermediate outcomes could be that *"recess behaviour could potentially change – team building behaviours might change. Social connections might be different. Day to day classroom behaviours – Thank you, Please"*. Another staff member wondered if social acceptance and the deepening of social ties might result in *"sitting with people they don't normally sit with at school"*. The expectation was that students would be more willing to be socially positive towards one another, inside and outside of the classroom, after their experience with the SCPP.

Related to the idea of social acceptance, two teachers noticed some students were more socially accepting of one another after the SCPP experience. One teacher said that his or her students were more willing to work together in class when *"...last week I made sure that the groups were different than usual and they didn't complain."* This same teacher said that these students *"...were more willing to work with different people"* after the SCPP then before. The same teacher gave an example of social acceptance noticed in one student in particular: *"...camp made [student name] more comfortable in class and more willing to participate. I think camp helped him to be more accepted and like he fit in..."*

Another teacher noticed gender made a difference, noting *"the boys are more accepting as a class",* whereas *"the girls seem to have gone back [to negative attitudes]"*. This same teacher provided an example of the boys being more socially accepting: *"...a few boys used to sit off alone but they do seem to sit as an entire group now. I never thought about that but they do seem to sit together"*.

With respect to peer-to-peer social competencies and social comforts, teachers observed some transfer. One teacher mentioned that, although some of the students were more comfortable socializing together after camp, they seemed to use these gained skills in a negative

way. That is, the teacher noticed that some female students seemed to leverage their new formed friend connections from camp by displaying negative behaviours when back at school. They said that in the month after the SCPP *"...the girls…[displayed] a lot of pettiness and cattiness…just little things that are blown out of proportion…not just one or two [like before camp] but all six or seven."* Another teacher observed that some student peer groups seemed to *"form back into their cliques again".* On the other hand, it was observed that other peer groups expanded their social connections when the teacher *"noticed a few of them were more accepted – more into the circle…before they kind of ignored her."*

Some staff members expected greater leadership skills to be displayed by students at school after the camp experience and anticipated initial outcomes to be *"maybe older kids will support the younger kids…"* In other words, since some SCPP schools send students from multiple grades to camp, older students might feel more socially connected to younger grades when they returned to school. The teachers did not report any transfer related to students taking on mentorship or leadership roles for younger grades within their school.

Such data provides evidence in support of transfer related to social competency and social comforts to the school setting. Overall, however, teachers could identify only a few examples of social behaviour transferred to school in a positive way. Teachers' observations focused on a lack of learning social competency and social comforts being transferred from the camp experience to the school setting.

4.1. Initial Outcomes perceived by Teachers and Staff

4.1.3. Outcome Theme 3: Engagement with Creative Thinking

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At the SCPP, both staff and teachers noted high levels of student engagement that yielded positive effects on creative thinking. At camp, teachers perceived that their students were learning how to learn when they said that students were displaying the outcome of learning *"learning skills"*. Staff data indicated that the SCPP encouraged *"... [participants] to learn new ways of thinking."* Furthermore, staff noted that students might also have been finding the learning process itself enjoyable; students "…*will struggle with group work, but they come out of it with more out of the box thinking, creative thinking."* Here the data shows that camp helps students develop thinking about multiple approaches to a problem, which is a mark of creative thinking.

One teacher identified the importance of motivation in learning and the fact that learning at camp was perceived as enjoyable for students. He or she commented, *"I find that if a child is at school and they are unhappy [with school] then their learning becomes sort of tainted…[compared with camp]...they want to be there and they want to learn."* Another teacher supported this idea: "*Things that are going on are engaging for kid at camp*". Another teacher said that because of camp's learning design*"...you trick them into learning"*. These sentiments were echoed by other teacher who said that at camp, students *"...don't look at it as if its learning, they look at as if it's a lot of fun!"* Similarly, one staff member even boasted, *"...not to toot our own horn, but we make learning fun!"* Both staff and teachers valued the fun learning activities that helped their students stay engaged in learning.

The different types of learning opportunities that students could be exposed to and gain learning skills from were framed, as one teacher noted, *"to engage a kid in a way that fits their learning style...and that's why I say, here [camp] they are in their element of learning styles."* Teachers agreed that certain camp activities helped young people acquire the particular learning

skills they needed as individuals to be successful in school settings. Experiential learning opportunities seemed to be widely celebrated by the teachers, in particular for kinesthetically motivated students. One teacher gave the example: *"A couple of students who were basically uninvited [to camp] - and they did come…those kids in particular, they get a chance - I think that they have a good chance to be better students because so much of what we do here is sort of kinesthetic type stuff"*.

Teachers identified that reflecting on activities played an important role in the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that students might have acquired through their exposure to experiential learning at the SCPP. At the end of every activity, the Camp Giving Tree staff would lead students through a discussion focused on the reasons that the activity mattered and how students could learn its lessons. One teacher noted: *"It was put on them [the students] and they had to validate what and why"* of the activities and their lessons in the greater scheme of a students' life at school and at home. One teacher noted: *"…the connection was strong…like the connection from this - to how are you going to use this"*. In other words, teachers thought that students had shown they had learned the value of reflection on their own learning process and how they could connect new knowledge, skills, attitudes and values gained from one experience to another outside of camp.

Staff maintained that the SCPP engaged young people in new experiences so that they could see their world, and their role within it in a new light, thus facilitating the acquisition of creative thinking skills. One staff member commented: *"I don't want to stereotype but for a lot of them [SCPP participants], Toronto is Canada to them. But when they get the opportunity like this one, which is truly unique for them to come to camp and like to see the outdoors and some of these cool activities. I'd like to think some of the things we do here are more Canadian than*

Toronto. It's a whole, different eye- opening experience for them." Another staff person added

that camp experiences are *"opening avenues to teach young people that there is something*

different beyond what you're used to and beyond your city walls". One staff person said that

camp helps students *"open their eyes to what else is out there".* These three examples show that

staff members believed students could gain new knowledge, for example, about Canadian

culture; and that camp exposed young people to new opportunities that broadened their current

worldview, providing them with a new understanding of the world.

All Camp Giving Tree staff agreed that students were exposed to an array of important

subjects and topics when they participated in the Camp Giving Tree SCPP. One staff member

said that the SCPP exposed students to *"a piece of everything - outdoor experiential education,*

leadership, environmental, agriculture – they are getting a slice of everything." In particular,

the SCPP seemed to focus on environmental education topics that encouraged young people to

take on a greater sense of responsibility connected to their natural environment. One staff

member mentioned that the outcome of student learning about environmental education at the

SCPP would allow young people *"to be aware of what's out there and how they affect it and be*

able to protect it".

4.2. Intermediate Outcomes Perceived by Teachers and Staff

4.2.3. Outcome Theme 3: Engagement with Creative Thinking

One staff member proposed students might *"approach things differently"* at school

because of their time at camp. In other words, since students had gained *"out of the box"* and

"creative" thinking skills, they could behave differently at school because of having acquired

new skills in approaching problems from multiple directions. Reflecting on possible transfer of

skills related to creative thinking, one staff member wondered if *"maybe they are interested in the environment or going through school or college or university and maybe they get excited about learning about the environment or maybe they want to learn more about animals and maybe camp was that step for them"*. In other words, exposure to an engaging topic such as environmental studies would encourage students to broaden their range of interests, inspire them to learn more and stimulate their creative thinking processes. Another staff member broadly noted that at camp *"we've put that bit of a spark inside of them"*. This spark of inspiration to learn about a new subject can describe the source of a student's motivation for embracing new ways of thinking.

With respect to the transfer of the outcomes to the direct school setting, one staff anticipated student curiosity would play a role in motivation for learning: *"I hope that the questions are still coming"*. They added that maybe a student would *"...remember [what the Camp Giving Tree staff member] was talking about at the barn, and 'I'm going to see if my teacher can help me'"*. One staff member even believed that students could transfer their attentiveness, motivation and engagement in their camp learning process to the classroom. They expressed the hope that students would be *"...more attentive and they pay attention more in the classroom..."* after the SCPP experience.

It may have also seemed logical to teachers that if students were successfully engaged in their learning experiences at camp that similar engagement in classrooms, especially related to similar topics and subjects, might transfer to the classroom setting. Teacher data, however, did not indicate that students were particularly engaged in the identified learning process at school, nor did they observe that students took their curiosity at camp and continued to seek information

at school about a chosen subject. In fact, teachers reported few intermediate outcomes related to the transfer of engagement in creative thinking to the school setting one month after the SCPP.

The data yielded only one example of students displaying an intermediate outcome behaviour that camp staff anticipated teachers might see in their classroom. A teacher shared that one of their students had been struggling academically before camp, but since being back at school the teacher had noticed that this student seemed to be making more of an effort to participate and learn in their classroom: *"...in my class he doesn't just sit there and say 'Okay, I'm going to do this'. He asks for help when he wants help. He's actually taking initiative to do better. So I think, for him, it was a very positive experience."* This example also serves to illustrate that each individual will experience the impact of learning at camp differently. In this case, as noted by the teacher, the experience was positive and perhaps contributed to a more positive school learning experience for this one student.

Generally speaking, no teachers reported any transfer of specifically engaged or attentive classroom behaviours after camp. In fact one teacher commented that even though they had seen their students eager and willing to participate in learning activities at camp, back at school *"the same hands still go up"*.

With respect to the transfer of students' willingness to reflect on learning activities: while students willingly reflected on completed activities as part of the camp experience, none of the teachers observed any behaviours that showed their students had connected the lessons of the camp activities to the school setting; nor was there any observed indication that students learned reflecting skills without an instructor (i.e. a camp staff member) to prompt them. Students learned some aspects of creative thinking and learning-to-learn skills during the camp experience

but not enough data emerged to support the notion that these skills transferred significantly beyond the camp experience.

4.1. Initial Outcomes Perceived by Teachers and Staff

4.1.4. Outcome Theme 4: Strength of Character

Though much less dominant than the other three themes presented so far; the fourth theme that emerged in the research data was that of strength of character in students. The data showed clearly, though, that staff and teachers believed that students learning both independence and responsibility for self and for others were important aspects in the development of strength of character. TCHF staff spoke about how students might learn new knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that would contribute to the building of a young person's character. One staff member related this theme to *"all sorts of personal, moral and character building stuff"*, while another staff person believed that for some, *"camp is a huge shift in character"* (where shift in character referred to positive behaviour in students). One staff person said that camp taught students to *"learn different skills and new skills that create positive habits and these are things you can take with you – positive character development."* This staff member's comments underscored the staff's convictions that positive risk taking contributed to strong character.

In the initial outcomes related to strength of character, staff and teachers included the shaping of values associated with responsibility and independence. One teacher said that camp allowed students to learn *"how to take responsibility."* A staff member felt students learned *"independence – where they are on their own, even if they're with a group, they still have to show up on time."* Another staff member added that students needed to *"make sure they eat enough, sleep enough, take care of themselves, shower and all that stuff"* when exercising their

independence at camp. A staff member said that in their experience of the SCPP *"eventually you'll see them getting each other to do things. They know that we won't let any of them go out unless all their coats are done up. So they start taking responsibility for each other."* One of the teachers identified that while at camp students were learning to take personal responsibility *"...since there are four people to a room they have to take responsibility for their own stuff, to keep it in an organized state."*

With respect to the concept of responsibility as it relates to finishing a task, one teacher pointed out that students were also learning how to be responsible when putting effort into their work. One teacher gave the example that students *"... want to make a nice mask and [are] willing to suffer through that part [putting Vaseline on their face and getting dirty] of it...it was a surprise for me because so often I've seen them go: 'Meh – it's good enough' and hand it in."*

A different teacher pointed out that students were taking on new roles of responsibility at camp: *"...the role that some of these students have taken on with them stepping up and helping has been great – and I've noticed that here."* Learning responsibility in groups was noted by another teacher who said that at camp *"some of the students you wouldn't think would take that role, are stepping up."* The concept of taking on group responsibility, in the aforementioned examples, shows how students had taken the initiative to speak and act for the group. Thus, teachers acknowledged the importance of these types of camp learning activities in strengthening a young person's character.

Another aspect of the theme of strength of character was noted by a staff member and relates to students developing a sense of gratitude at the SCPP. One staff member remarked that students *"... will appreciate their experience here and understand how important letter writing is and donating to something so other kids can have a similar experience to them."* The theme

of gratitude emerged in regard to a programmatic expectation that students write a 'Thank You' letter to the sponsor of their SCPP experience. The staff member believed that the experience of expressing gratitude increased empathy in participating students, which in turn could have contributed to strengthening character. Even though the data supported staff members' perceptions about a marked display of student gratitude, it did not support the same perceptions among teachers.

4.2. Intermediate Outcomes perceived by teachers and staff

4.2.4. Outcome Theme 4: Strength of Character

Camp Giving Tree staff anticipated that students at school would display strength of character by *"leadership and cooperation"* behaviours. Though it seems reasonable that teachers may have observed student behaviours of cooperation and leadership in the classroom, overall this was not the case. The teacher data showed little evidence that student behaviour related to strength of character changed the way in which Camp Giving Tree staff thought it might in the school setting. In one case only, a teacher mentions that students seemed to be taking on group responsibilities: *"I've seen some people step up during snack at school. It's not new but more people are willing to help after camp."* It is instructive to note that only one teacher could name an activity in which students displayed 'responsibility' behaviours believed to have been transferred from camp.

4.3. Additional Themes in the Data

Although this research set out to study initial and intermediate outcomes of student learning, strong evidence emerged from the data pointing to positive teacher attitudes towards

camp learning experiences despite a perceived lack of learning transfer among students in school settings. In this section, I summarize the data concerning teacher attitudes towards camp learning by their students.

In the post-camp, post-classroom follow-up interviews teachers reported little transfer from their students' camp learning to the school setting. Teachers explained the lack of transfer as follows: *"...I don't notice a whole lot because school is academic. It is. And we can make it fun as much as – non-academic as we can, but it's school."* On the other hand, all teachers enthusiastically expressed, their confidence that camp programs provided valuable educational opportunities for their students. One teacher said: *"If we could make school like camp – it would be awesome!"* Another teacher's opinion was that students would then be able to *"...do so much more!"*, while yet another teacher stated: *"Oh, it would be amazing!"*

Teachers perceived the most significant value of camp to lie in its non-academic programming that provides experiential learning opportunities they deem important. In particular, they proposed that if school had inputs and activities similar to camp, it might be more like the camp experience. Teachers also identified resources (i.e. inputs) and program design specifications (i.e. activities) needed for school to be more like camp: A different *"environment"* and *"physical space"* that was *"kid friendly"*.

Teachers said: *"... it would need to be 'something that is going to get them motivated'"; "something interactive"* in its program design; activities *"would have to be fun";* teachers would have the ability to be creative with the curriculum: *"If we had the ability to cut down on the curriculum with permission from the Ministry, we probably could make it more like camp to a certain degree."* I find this quote particularly interesting because it seems this teacher does not think they can be creative using their teaching techniques to meet Ontario education ministry

curriculum standards. The SCPP's experiential activities use facilitation techniques that this teacher seems to admire and aspire to in his or her teaching style.

The interview data revealed consistently that staff and teachers viewed the value of camp learning in a highly positive light. In all the interviews conducted with staff and teachers, the theme of students' positive attitudes was consistently identified. Even when the teacher data did not allow for significant transfer from the camp to the school setting, teachers nevertheless perceived camp as a place where students can gain a sense of optimism because they felt it opened the door to possibilities and a sense of hope for their future. In the words of one teacher *"...even if they can't transfer it to the real world – if we don't see it – maybe we're not seeing it here at school but maybe they've learned something and at home or elsewhere. Just because we can't see it doesn't mean they haven't learned something."* This teacher was hopeful that transfer was still happening for their students', even if they had not observed a positive change in student behaviour over the month after the SCPP experience.

Teachers commented, as follows, that camp: *"...gives an option too. So let's say they don't [get] along with Mum and Dad and let's say they want to turn somewhere other than drugs – then it gives them something to look to – something positive. They have this opportunity".* Another agreed: *"...as opposed to just getting dragged down and sucked down. You know, getting pregnant when you're 16 and getting social assistance and I'm just going to do it because this just must be the way of life because that's what's happening in my family or whatever my aunt did and my cousin did and that is what we do. And they can go out into the real world and see how real life can really be. How like if they make different kinds of decisions – what it can be like for them."*

In the words of another teacher: *"I'd like to do this and all it takes is one event to get them hooked on something. So if we can give them that opportunity – definitely."* Having teachers report that they wished school was more like camp helped clarify for this study that camp learning was perceived as a valuable experience for students, despite data that failed to report significant transfer of learning from camp to school settings. In other words, teachers seem to think of camp as a gateway drug to 'hope'. Where camp meets education, I see 'Camp-Ucation'!

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is to explore and discuss relevant literature as it correlates to and helps to explain the findings in my study. I will draw on the literature review provided in chapter 2, and will also explore new bodies of literature to explain the findings in detail. I have chosen to focus on three key themes: (1) Transfer (2) Positive Risk Taking (3) Engagement with Creative Thinking. A strong focus will be on the concept of transfer as it relates to program structure and the prediction of behaviour change. Secondly, I will explore positive risk taking related to the concepts of positive psychology and optimism. Lastly, I will explore the idea that learning can be more enjoyable if it includes reflection, if it promotes creative thinking and if the learning environment is highly social.

5.1. Theme 1: Transfer

As previously discussed in chapter 2 (see section 2.5 – 2.6), transfer in the education field of research refers to learning that has taken place in one situation and how that information transfers to other areas of life (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Newstorm, 1984; Wexley & Letham, 1981). "Low road" transfer refers to highly practiced skills (e.g., reading) that transfers readily where "high road" transfer requires the deliberate and conscious choice to connect ideas (Salomon & Perkins, 1989). The inert knowledge problem, in the field of transfer, refers to the notion that students may learn important information in the classroom but lack the ability (potentially correlated with motivation) to transfer knowledge from the classroom to 'real life' (Renkl, Mandl, & Gruber, 1996). I argue that camp might serve as a learning environment that would encourage campers to take what they learned during their three-day camp experience and

transfer it to their school learning environment. Moreover, I suggest this type of research would be my contribution to the academic literature related to positive youth development and camp programming.

Both the Camp Giving Tree staff and the teachers identified multiple outcome themes related to the benefits of camp experiences for students. Camp staff and teachers often spoke about similar themes, albeit using different language to describe the same phenomenon. For example, camp staff referred to the outcome of *"life skills"* for campers, while teachers referred to the outcome of *"character development"* for their students. Nevertheless, four very similar themes emerged from all the data collected from both sources. From the perspectives of Camp Giving Tree staff (speaking for all Camp Giving Tree SCPP campers) and from the perspectives of teachers (referring to their students), the outcomes for participants in the SCPP were related to: a) positive risk taking b) social competencies and social comforts c) engagement with creating thinking and d) strength of character.

With respect to initial outcomes, the majority of the findings for both teachers and camp professionals point to how overwhelmingly positive the SCPP experience was for student participants. One month later, however, the findings expressed less positive reports from teachers. The teachers' perceptions of intermediate outcomes of the SCPP as measured one month after the camp program indicated that overall hardly any transfer had occurred. In fact, in some cases, teachers perceived more negative behaviours from their students after camp as compared with these student behaviours before camp.

Although in my literature review I discussed the concept of transfer, in the following section I will provide more detail about the concept of transfer and a discussion of how to best achieve a higher level of successful transfer outcomes in youth programs. In particular, I will

focus on transfer as it relates to program structure and how programs could perhaps be best

structured to achieve longer-term outcomes. I will also explore what the key aspects of

predicting behaviour change might be (with reference to intermediate outcomes), and if

programs might incorporate these concepts into their development. I will draw from the findings

in my study to further link academic literature to practical program knowledge.

5.1.1. 'Program Structure' as it relates to Transfer

In the concept of program structure, my literature review will include ideas around how a

program is designed and delivered, as well as components that go into a program (like inputs and

activities). These ideas are important when seeking to understand what transfers from one

program to someone's life as well as why things do or do not transfer.

Lerner (1995) found that consequences of short-term youth programs do more harm than

good. In some cases, participants involved in a short lived programs felt less hopeful and

empowered than before their participation in the program. Though it was still possible that the

short-term program did improve the lives of people involved, the issue remains that the inability

to sustain the program may result in participants having feelings of loss, anger and

disappointment with potential for feeling exploited (Lerner, 1995).

To a degree, the research cited above helps provide insight into why the teachers seemed

frustrated with their students' negative behaviour one month after the SCPP. Teachers observed

negative attitudes in their students and in some cases more negative behaviours than before the

SCPP experience. Perhaps teachers were frustrated because they learned that their students were

capable of more positive attitudes and behaviours at camp, but at school this knowledge and

these skills, attitudes and values developed at the Camp Giving Tree did not seem to transfer to

the school environment. Insufficient research has been conducted to identify an optimal amount of time needed for a youth development program, such as camp, to make the most impact on participants learning and behaviours. This insufficiency in programmatic best practices research is compounded by the challenging reality that, no matter the program, every individual participant will experience youth programs (like camp and others) differently (Lerner, 1995; Royse, 1998).

Youth development prevention programming researchers interested in programs that promote positive behaviours, and prevent negative behaviours, have found that the amount of time which youth spend participating in a program is a key component to its lasting effects (Nation, Crusto, Wandersman, Kumpfer, Seybolt, Morrissey-Kane, & Davino, 2003). That is, participants need to be given a "sufficient dosage" of program exposure to ensure its lasting effects (Durlak & Wells, 1997). Research has also shown there has to be sufficient follow-up with participants to support the on-going program impact (Frost & Forrest, 1995). Studies indicate that the effects of many preventative interventions tend to gradually diminish over time. To address this deficiency in lasting program effects, on-going support such as the continuation of a program focused on reinforcing and building on the gained skills typically help maintain the original positive outcomes (Zigler, Taussig & Black, 1992).

This collection of literature sheds light on the results of my study, in so far as the SCPP was only three days long. The short duration could indicate lack of sufficient dosage or exposure to the program; furthermore, the program did not provide any form of follow-up after the original experience. Transfer literature informs us that the more deliberate the opportunities to apply new learning, the more likely this new learning will transfer from one experience to another (Greeno, 1997). Teachers and camp professionals agree that student participants are learning new skills,

knowledge, attitudes and values at camp, they may see this as an opportunity for schools and their teachers to create similar experiences where participants can apply their new knowledge. For this study however, it is not overly surprising that very little transferred into the school setting because it seems that teachers did not make the effort to facilitate these deliberate transfer opportunities. This study does not claim it to be the sole responsibility of the teachers to ensure learning transfer occurs but rather points to an opportunity for the Camp Giving Tree and the schools they partner with to improve together the positive lasting affects of the SCPP for students over time.

5.1.2. 'Predicting Behaviour Change' as it relates to Transfer

Though understanding previous programming research related to youth and the concept of lasting outcomes may help explain how the program could have been be more successful, it does not explain why, according to teachers, hardly any transfer occurred. Though it may not be surprising that little transfer occurred, it is worth isolating the influences that affect transfer, as displayed through some kind of behaviour change. This section will explore how human behaviour change can more easily be predicted, and how this could help with understanding the concept of transfer at it relates to youth programs.

Research has shown that attitude, target, action, context and time, (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977) are all factors that affect behaviour change. Affective attitude (psychological process of feeling emotion) is a significantly more powerful predictor of behaviour than cognitive attitude (psychological process of thought) (Lawton, Conner & McEachan, 2009). Therefore, understanding the emotional reaction and consequences that people have to their behaviour change is important. Simultaneous behaviour change seems to be more easily achieved than

trying to change single behaviours at a time (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). Consistent with these findings, the health, behaviour, human resources and training literature interested in the concept of transfer and behaviour change found that transfer has been found to be setting-specific. That is, some training is more likely to transfer to other work places, for example, based on the given work structure, work design and job type (Burke & Hutchins, 2008). The scale and scope of behaviour change research in humans continues to be a multiple of progressive, regressive and static tendencies (Nowack, 2009) that remain difficult to explain.

The isolated ideas of affective attitude (emotion) and setting playing key roles as a predictor of behaviour change related to camp experiences would require more research. My research suggests, however, that teachers and camp professionals see the camp experience as affectively engaging for young people, and more so than the classroom setting. It seems from the data that both teachers and camp professionals see emotion and setting as being specific to camp. I, on the other hand, reflect in this study how these isolated aspects of behaviour change could be brought to a school setting for long term impact. If camp can promote positive behaviour change in only a few days, imagine what school could do in an entire academic year, should the same behaviour change factors be present.

Taylor, Russ-Eft, and Taylor (2009) found that the key to long-term behaviour change is in the planning process that should also include deliberate opportunities to practice new skills. Consistent and on-going feedback has also been found as an important component for successful behaviour change over time (Nowack, 2009). Though not a sole predictor in behaviour change, intentions serve as a key motivator in the probability of predicting when behaviour will actually change (Shcolz, Schuz, Siegelmann, Lippke & Schwarzer, 2008). When intentions are supported

by self-regulatory skills, like self-efficacy (see Bandura, 2004) and planning skills (Leventhall, Singer, & Jones, 1965), behaviour prediction becomes even more probable.

Action and coping planning skills and abilities increase the likelihood that (in some cases, very complex) behaviour change will occur. Action planning speaks to the where, when and how of implementing an intended behaviour (Gollwitzer, 1999). Action planning links behavioural responses to intentions, but intention has to happen first (Gollwitzer & Sheeran, 2006). Coping planning refers to anticipating barriers that might hinder the implementation of one's behavioural intention. Further, coping planning includes details regarding how to overcome such barriers that help individuals maintain behaviour change over time (Scholz, Sniehotta & Schwarzer, 2005; Sniehotta, Scholz & Schwarzer, 2005).

If intention to change behaviour seems to be a key to the success of long-term behaviour change, Camp Giving Tree staff need to look at how they incorporate these aspects of planning into their program design. My conviction is that this deliberate connection of long-term behaviour change to participant intention (exercised through planning and coping skills) and the process of supporting participants through on-going feedback is not currently a part of the Camp Giving Tree program. Had these key components of long-term behaviour change been a part of the program, perhaps the teachers would have reported more intermediate outcomes displayed as behaviour changes in their students in the school setting.   More research is necessary to explore this concept further, as is a camp – school program that would ensure the identified transfer conditions would be present.

To best support the likelihood of transfer, management and training scholars have proposed an integrated transfer model that identifies three main categories: 1) transfer influences,

2) time periods and, 3) stakeholder supports (Alvarez, Salas & Garofano, 2004; Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Burke & Hutchins, 2008; Ford & Weissbein, 1997; Salas et al., 1999).

The first category identifies the four primary themes that influence transfer known as 1. Learner characteristics 2. Trainer characteristics 3. Work environments 4. Intervention design and delivery. *Learner characteristics* are related to an individual's abilities, motivations, personality, perceptions, expectations and attitudes (Alvarez et al., 2004; Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Ford & Weissbein, 1997; Salas et al., 1999*). Trainer characteristics* are related the trainer's experience and knowledge on the subject and how to teach the subject (Burke & Hutchins, 2008). Transfer is influenced by the *work environment* in which any influences existing or occurring outside the environment will affect learner outcomes. And finally, *intervention design and delivery* are related to what the learning program consists of and how it is delivered (Alvarez et al., 2004; Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Ford & Weissbein, 1997; Salas, Cannon-Bowers, Rhodenizer & Bowers, 1999).

The second category that influences transfer is identified as time period. *Time period* recognizes that before, during and after the learning process, transfer needs to be supported in different ways. Activities that support transfer before, during and after the learning intervention should be in place to prepare learners at all stages of the learning process for transfer (Broad, 2005; Broad & Newstrom, 1992). Burke & Hutchins (2008) suggest that transfer can best be supported when the activity has no specific timeline and end point attached to them. An example of this could be a learning activity designed to allow for a trainer to give on-going, consistent feedback to the learner.

The third category that influences transfer is identified as *stakeholder support*. Stakeholder supports typically include the learning participants (trainee), the instructor who

designs, develops and delivers the intervention (trainer), the learner's supervisor (supervisor) (Broad, 2005; Broad & Newstrom, 1992). Burke and Hutchins (2008) identify two other key stakeholders that support transfer as: 1. Others who are involved in the learning (peers, co-workers, colleagues) and 2. The organization itself. Organizations have the opportunity to create a culture that supports transfer where there is an organizational commitment to the concept and process (Burke & Hutchins, 2008). Stakeholder support needs to also be displayed through transfer evaluation processes. That is, scholars believe that multiple measuring instruments and players are needed to properly evaluate the transfer of training displayed in behaviour change in the work place (Taylor, Russ-Eft & Taylor, 2009).

If this proposed transfer model could be applied to the way in which the Camp Giving Tree staff develop their programs and later evaluate the effectiveness of their programs, on-going transfer might be more likely to occur for program participants. That said, a more holistic approach to the program would need to be created, one in which school partners and teachers understood their role in more long-term behaviour changes for student participants. At this point, it is not clear to me that the Camp Giving Tree has deliberately asked their school partners to follow-up with a) evaluating what students learned and gained from their SCPP experience and b) the role teachers (or other important school stakeholders) could play in supporting student transfer of learning at school. Lastly, to apply this type of training construct like the Camp Giving Tree SCPP, not only would students, teachers and school partners need to be apart of the entire program and process, but so to would the students' parents and guardians. Schools accounts for a significant portion of a young persons' life, but home life would need to be factored into this type of model to really measure camps longer term outcomes.

5.2. Theme 2: Positive Risk Taking

Both camp staff and teachers perceived that a key outcome theme from the Camp Giving Tree SCPP was related to a community culture of 'positivity' (positive attitudes and behaviours where a positive atmosphere is created) seemed to be expressed in student participants' willingness to take positive risks. From the attitudes that camp staff role-model, to the way the activities are structured and delivered, the overarching theme from the teachers' perspective is the opportunity for their students to learn about positive attitudes and behaviours. Camp staff agree that a culture of 'positivity' is a key component to the success of the Camp Giving Tree camp programming. This section will explore the concept of a positive culture and the impacts 'positivity' might have on a young person exposed to it.

In social settings, groups of people develop ways of doing things and not doing things, thereby building and creating group cultural social norms (Peterson, 2006). The idea of group culture informs habits and expectations that arise from daily interactions. Research across multiple settings (such as schools, after school programming and sport programming) suggest that adolescents' perceptions of these kinds of social norms have immediate and lasting effects on their behaviour (e.g. Blum & Rinehart, 1997). Research has also shown that when a teacher is experiencing positive flow experiences (where challenge meets skill producing intrinsic rewards) related to classroom learning, it also has positive contagious effects on the flow experiences of their students (Bakker, 2005; Basom & Frase, 2004). Youth focused programs that encourage positive social norms and discourage norms related to problem behaviours tend to be more effective in achieving positive youth development goals (Goodenew, 1993, Ford & Harris, 1996, Eccles at al, 1996b).

According to data collected from teachers and camp staff in this study, as well as my observations during the SCPP, the ideas of contagious flow experiences and positive social norms seem connected to some of the outcomes reported in this study. Staff and teachers often spoke about camp providing an opportunity for young people to try new things in a positive way and with no fear of failing. I believe that positive social norms created by camp staff (who they themselves seemed engaged in their roles as instructors) contributed to creating a camp environment where people could experience the concept of flow. Anecdotally, the concepts of positive social norms and contagious flow support the idea that positivity breads more positivity.

Intermediate outcomes as perceived by teachers one month after the SCPP showed that student behaviour transferred much less positively to school, if not hardly any in comparison to camp. It makes sense that the same positive social norms found at camp were not reinforced by the existing classroom culture and the flow experiences of students' teachers. I am not suggesting the teachers are not engaged with flow during their classroom teaching; however it is possible the way in which school subjects are presented (in their teaching technique for example) might hinder the positive contagious flow experiences that seemed to happened at camp between staff and students.

Why should exposure to positive experiences be important to a young person's development? In my literature review, I discuss the importance of positive youth develop as constructs to guide youth programming evaluation and to describe optimal learning environments within a camp setting. The effect of positive events in someone's life, throughout their life, and how these positive events affect the individual's development over time is called positive psychology (Huebner, Gilman & Furlong, 2009; Peterson, 2006). In similarity to PYD,

positive psychology focuses on individuals, groups and environments effecting positive outcomes in life and all the factors that matter to someone's positive psychology.

Positive psychology indicators include social-emotional concepts like life satisfaction and hope, cognitive development like wisdom and academic competences as well as physical exercise and eating behaviour. These indicators interact with a number of difference factors in a person's life that influence the positive psychological development of the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The factors that interact with an individual throughout their lifespan are their own interpersonal variables (such as self-esteem or physical activity), the setting of an individual's daily experience (such as at home, school or with peer groups), the distal contextual factors (such as an individual's neighborhood or services found in a community) and the overarching institutional patterns of culture, economic, social and educational and political systems (Schalock & Alonso, 2002). Child and youth well-being is most likely connected to multiple determinants of various systems and factors in their environment. Schalock and Alonso (2002) found student satisfaction at school to be connected to a school environment's positive psychology, i.e., related to the concepts of hope, optimism, school connectedness, health and physical activity (Schalock & Alonso, 2002).

Consistent with the findings in my study, from the perspectives of camp staff and teachers, the Camp Giving Tree SCPP serves as an optimal setting to provide positive psychological development opportunities for young people. This literature helps to inform, in particular the second outcome theme of social competencies and social comfort. That is, if youth feel socially connected to their school (and to their peers and teachers who experience school along with them) as my research data described, then perhaps camp experiences can influence a young person's positive development.

5.2.1. 'Optimism' as it relates to Positive Risk Taking

Teachers seem to be optimistic that camp programs providing positive opportunities that might even help their students become optimistic about their own future. Similarly, camp professionals in this study as a whole are optimistic about the positive impact of camp programming on young people in the long-term. But why do teachers and camp professionals believe camp is a positive experience for youth people in the long-term? And why is learning about optimism as a young person even important?

Optimism literature supports the general idea that people expect there will be good outcomes in the future (Scheirer & Carver, 1985). If people look forward in a positive sense, they generally have "a sense of confidence about the attainability for a goal value" (Carver & Scheirer, 1999, p. 183). The concept of optimism has been studied as a problem solving strategy to reframe the reality of a situation in a positive way (Scheier et al., 1986). In fact, during times of stress, optimism can be used as a strategy to gain social support by looking for the positive sides to a situation (Chang, 1996; Helton, Dember, Warm, & Matthews, 1999; Scheier, Weintraub, & Carver, 1986). Conceivably, optimism is a skill that can benefit individuals in their future.

Along with the positive benefits of optimism as a skill, being optimistic has been proven to prevent or even immunize people from mental health issues such as depression (Seligman, 1991). Research has shown that when teachers promote optimism in their classroom through attributing student success to effort and failure to lack of effort, students gain a greater understanding for and build their own perceptions of optimism (Dweck, Davidson, Nelson, & Enna, 1978). This type of technique is something that the Camp Giving Tree staff spoke about in the interviews related to the messages that they want students to take away from camp

activities (i.e. the message that every one tried their best). Camp programs could very well be providing an opportunity for young people to learn about optimism, practice optimism coping skills and to even improve their mental health. These themes seem to be consistent with the findings for the initial outcomes of the SCPP for students, but they did not seem to transfer to the school setting. Perhaps this is an opportunity for teachers to explore the skill of optimistic thinking and apply it to daily classroom activities and the school community culture as a whole.

5.3. Theme 3: Engagement with Creative Thinking

The term *engagement with creative thinking* is used in this study in awareness of a larger discussion regarding engagement in learning as a predictor of learning success. My findings indicate that both camp staff and teachers believed that students were genuinely interested and engaged in their learning at the SCPP. In fact, students seemed so engaged in their learning at the SCPP that both teachers and camp staff believed that student learning was fun! The SCPP provided an opportunity for its participants to play and explore the theme of 'fun'. But what is meant by the term *'fun'* for the purposes of this study? The education literature suggests that the characteristics of fun are relative, situational, voluntary, and natural (Bisson & Luckner, 1996). *Fun* has been found to have a positive effect on the learning process by inviting intrinsic motivation, the suspension of one's social inhibitions, the reduction of stress, and the creation of a state of relaxed alertness (Bisson & Luckner, 1996). In this section, by further exploring intrinsic motivation related to student learning engagement, I hope to shed light on why young people find learning to be more engaging and fun at camp.

One study, based on flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) looked at student engagement as the simultaneous occurrence of high concentration, enjoyment and interest in learning

activities (Shernoff, Csikszentmihalyi, Schneider & Shernoff, 2003). Concentration is central to flow and directly linked to meaningful learning (Montessori, 1976) where depth of process and academic learning meet (Corno & Mandrinach, 1983). Enjoyment, related to student engagement is connected to the demonstration of competencies, creative accomplishments and school performance (Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde & Whalen, 1993; Nakamura, 1988). Finally, student engagement is related to interest in the subject as it directs attention, reflects intrinsic motivation, stimulates the desire to continue engagement and is directly connected to school achievement (Hidi, 1990; Schiefele, Krapp & Winteler, 1992). Studies have shown that when these three happen at the same time, student engagement is very high (Shernoff et al., 2003). It could be argued that, according to teachers and Camp Giving Tree staff, these three things (concentration, enjoyment and motivation) were present during the SCPP because research participants found that students displayed initial outcomes of some kind while at camp.

Though comparing camp learning activities to mandated school subjects may not be relevant, it is possible that at school, students were missing some aspects of these three key components of engaging learning opportunities. Perhaps teachers reported little transfer from camp to school because the approach to learning (that is, the way the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values within a program are delivered) varies significantly within each setting. If the content changes, but the approach to learning remains (i.e. experiential approaches to learning like those used at the SCPP), perhaps students would feel more engaged to their learning at school. More research is needed to understand this further.

Interestingly enough, one study (Shernoff et al., 2003) showed 3,630 high school students were least engaged while in classrooms than anywhere else throughout their regular day. While in class, concentration was high but interest and enjoyment were low. The study showed that

students spent time in class listening to lectures, taking notes doing homework and/or studying and smaller amounts of time were in group discussions, group work or talking to teachers individually. These findings support the notion of schools offering passive, individualistic and teacher controlled activity dominated by direct instruction (Goodlad, 1984). Different approaches are needed in the classroom if greater enjoyment, motivation, and opportunities for action in the learning process are to be valued and adopted as learning goals (Bassi & Delle Fave, 2004; Shernoff et al., 2003).

The findings in my study indicated that camp not only provided opportunities for students to be engaged in learning, but as perceived by their teachers, students seemed to concentrate, enjoy and were interested in the activities that were offered at the SCPP. Perhaps some of the research explored here provides insight into why staff and teachers expressed the idea that camp was not like school – and that that was a good thing. Thus, if camp was not like school and that was a good thing, a question follows naturally: How could school be more like camp?

5.3.1. 'Reflection' as it relates to Engagement with Creative Thinking

Consistent with the experiential learning paradigm (see Dewey, 1938, 1958; Kolb, 1981) upon which I framed this study, I will investigate its findings related to the concept of reflection. My study found the Camp Giving Tree staff identified reflection as one of the key aspects to all the activities in which students participate. Teachers recognized the SCPP deliberately used reflection as a tool to encourage the concept of learning transfer by student participants. After each activity, students participated in discussions about the activity and were asked to reflect and draw connections from the activity to their daily lives. One month later, teachers identified the value of reflection in their own work, (as it related to providing better educational opportunities

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for their students) but felt they lacked the time to actually follow-through. The following section will explore the educational value which reflection plays in learning and transfer, a concept that both the Camp Giving Tree staff and teacher perceived as an important in this study.

Learning theorists Glenn and Nelson (1988) agree that not all experiences result in learning, so perhaps it is only when experience is analyzed and reflected upon that generalizations are formed to influenced future action. Experiential learning scholars identified experiential learning as the most useful foundation of programs serving youth (Blacker, 2001; Jeffs & Smith 2005; Ord, 2009; Smith, 1988; Young 2006). Young (2006) suggests youth work (including programs like camp) is a dynamic process that leads to action. Action in experiential education is the process of learning by doing – where reflection is both in and on the action (Schon, 1983). Kolb (1981) argues reflection is essential for learning because it bridges the concrete experience to the abstract concept, creating knowledge out of the individuals' experience. The act of reflection requires the individual to first return to the experience, then to attend to or connect with their feelings on the experience and third to evaluate the experience (Boud, 1985). Yancey (1998) agrees that reflection has multiple meanings related to revision, self-assessment and analysis of learning. Dewey (1897), the founding father of experiential education, said that "education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience; that the process and the goal of education are one in the same thing" (p. 78).

It was noteworthy that SCPP deliberately incorporated reflection into their entire program, and it seemed that the participants (according to the teachers and staff) gained great insight into their learning as a result. Perhaps these reflection practices help explain why research participants identified numerous initial outcomes. And perhaps, among other reasons, it

is the absence of these reflection practices at school that help explain why less intermediate outcomes were present for students as perceived by their teachers.

Reflection research can be found mostly in the education field, especially related to experiential education (Boud, 1985; Schon, 1983) though in the last decade it has been a focus in business, management and training research (see Dubinsky, 2002; Matthew & Sternberg, 2009; Sternberg, 1996; 1997) and most prominently in the field of service learning (see Eyler, Giles & Schmiede, 1996; Hatcher & Bringle, 1997; Jacoby, 1996; Marcus, Howard & King, 1993; Porter-Honnet and Poulsen, 1989).

Reflection training research can be found in the education and organizational management fields (Matthews & Sternberg, 2009). Training research often examines how individuals and groups acquire explicit and tacit knowledge. Explicit knowledge is that which can easily be explained and articulated to pass onto others (Sternberg, 1996). An example of explicit knowledge is the writing of a manual aiming for readers to easily follow its instructions. Tacit knowledge, however, is typically not articulated or communicated, but recognized as both an outcome of experienced-based learning and as the basis for continuous learning (Matthews & Sternberg, 2009). Examples of tacit knowledge include the ability someone has to use algebraic formula or how someone speaks a language. Though tactic knowledge is connected to action and context, it is complex and difficult to study due to the individualistic nature of learning (Nonaka, 1994; Sternberg, 1996, 1997).

Some reflection research in the field of training showed that those who reflect on training experiences were more likely to develop more efficient problem solving skills regarding the specific task, than those who did not reflect on their training (Matthews & Sternberg, 2009). Perhaps the outcomes that camp professionals and teachers identified are indeed complex like

tacit knowledge, and more research needs to done in this field to understand the type of knowledge young people gain at camp. That said, at no time do camp professionals and teachers identify the learning opportunities that students have as 'training opportunities' – perhaps this warrants more research as well.

Dubinsky (2002) says that service learning pedagogy sits on a tripod of three equally weighted ideas: service, learning and reflection. According to some service-learning scholars, reflection bridges service and learning as the "intentional consideration of an experience in light of particular learning objectives" (Hatcher & Bringle, 1997, p 153). That is, students participate in community service, then use experiential education techniques to reflect on their involvement to gain deeper understanding of the community needs and their own sense of civic engagement (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996). Research has shown that when students reflect on their service activities, there is potential to reformulate assumptions, create new frameworks and build perceptions that might influence future action. A service learning study done by Sheckley, Allen, and Keeton (1993) has shown that if students do not think seriously about their service their experience may serve to support presuppositions, reinforce stereotypes and fail to critically guide future action.

Service learning program deliverers need to deliberately structure reflection learning opportunities via multiple activities and forms (i.e. writing, oral discussions, etc) into all service learning projects (Yancey, 1998). Collaborative reflective discussions have been found to create new group knowledge, which can be an important learning outcome from any group learning opportunities (Krajcik & Blumenfeld, 2006). Not only do participants in service learning need reflection structured into their programs, but so to do external stakeholders. Funding groups, for example, need to clearly understand what new knowledge participants acquire as a result of their

participation in a service learning project that the funders are financially supporting. Service

learning literature suggests that properly reported reflection helps external stakeholders (funders)

understand the value of service learning projects, and the educational value these programs have

for participants. Research has indicated that funders are asking for clear frameworks of

reflection components in reporting and evaluation documentation and processes (Hatcher &

Bringle, 1997). As discussed in chapter 2, there has been a growing trend in the camps industry

to more properly track and evaluate the impacts camp programs have on their participants. These

impacts help inform people (parents, funders etc.) of the value that camp programming offers to

youth. The service learning field (that seems experiential in nature) and the camp industry could

work together to adopt best practices for tracking program value and to inform programmatic

decisions.

The value of reflection in the role of participant learning is clearly important. Reflection

practices reinforce learning and lend themselves to reinforcing future action (transfer). Both

teachers and camp staff recognize this, and the SCPP supports this process by deliberately

ensuring that each activity has a reflection component to it. The Camp Giving Tree staff asks

teachers to fill out evaluations of the SCPP when it is complete. Perhaps the Camp Giving Tree

might consider tracking the reflection components to their program, throughout the entire

program. Not only should the students be reflecting on their learning, but so also should the

teachers. In this way, educators and other potential partners interested in participating in the

SCPP might be able to see the clear value in reflection processes as a part of the educational

value to the program. Perhaps this evaluation process could act as a key component to

connecting reflection practices to learning in other settings (such as school) and increase the

likelihood for transfer.

5.3.2. 'Creativity' as it relates to Engagement with Creative Thinking

Both camp staff and teachers talked about camp being a place where students were so engaged in their learning that it led to their ability to exercise their creative thinking skills, often saying that camp provided the opportunity for young people to *'think outside the box'*. With reference to these insights, both camp staff and teachers identified camp as a place where young people might have *'that spark'* that could inspire more interest in a particular subject or prompt a behaviour change. It seemed to me that teachers and camp professionals found that camp allowed kids to think in a different way, whether it be connecting with their peers more deliberately or paying more attention to their attitude and approach to different situations. All research participants seemed to agree that camp provided young people with the space to be inspired and to exercise inspiration applied to creative thinking.

The concept of 'the spark' or inspiration is studied within topics related to creativity and human innovation. Plucker (2004) says that "creativity is the interaction among aptitude, process and environment by which an individual or group produces a perceptible product that is both novel and useful as defined within a social context" (p. 90). The study of human innovation is interested in how new knowledge and innovations are created (Carlsson, 1997; Edqvist, 1997). Creativity and human innovation have been studied in the fields of psychology, science and technology, business and economics, social sciences and in the arts (Hemlin, Allwood & Martin, 2008). Runco (1994) says that the theory of creativity includes the concept of inspiration as one of the first stages in the human creative process (Runco, 1994).

Amablie (1996) says that creativity is a function of three aspects: expertise, motivation and creative thinking skills. Being an expert in knowledge (be it technical, procedural or intellectual) is connected to creativity. Though not all motivation is created equal, intrinsic

motivation seems to produce more motivation than that of a reward; in other words, a love of learning is connected to creativity. Finally, the flexibility and imagination used to solve problems are the creative thinking skills needed to participate in the creative process. Perhaps these ideas help explain why teachers and camp professionals felt that camp acted as a rich opportunity for young people to be creative - in that they were able to experience inspiration and were motivated to learn and practice creative thinking skills.

The environment where an individual or group works directly affects their creative potential. Creative Knowledge Environments (CKE), studied predominantly in the business literature are "those environments, contexts and surroundings, the characteristics of which are such that they exert a positive influences on human beings engaged in creative work aiming to produce new knowledge or innovations, whether they work individually or in teams, within a single or in collaboration with others" (Kanter, 1996, 1997, pg. 197). Research has shown that environments where people have collective pride and faith in the talents of those working there, and which also emphasize collaboration and teamwork (Kanter, 1996, 1997) are likely to be optimal CKEs. I am suggesting that, based on the findings of my study, camps could be compared with the CKE. While campers may not have delivered innovative products, they were nevertheless creating knowledge and learning how to participate in the creative process as a result of learning new ways of participating in groups formed in a new environment.

Why does creativity and being in a creative knowledge environment matter? Today's economy is based on labour, capital and knowledge (Florida, 2002; Howkins, 2001). The knowledge economy, otherwise known as the creative economy (see Florida 2002; Howkins, 2001), is focused on creativity, innovation and ingenuity. Schools were designed to meet the economic and industrial needs of the first half of the 20th century (Callahna, 1962). If economic

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needs have changed in include knowledge and creativity, then perhaps schools need to adapt to this societal and economic need (Sawyer 2004). Currently, schools are often focused on helping young minds consume knowledge, with great emphasis on material, mastery of skills and facts as opposed to creating and gaining a deeper understanding of knowledge itself (Bereiter, 2002; Brandsford, Brown & Cocking, 2000; Sawyer, 2003, 2004a, 2004b). Researchers argue that educators need to better understand the role teaching and creativity plays in a knowledge society (Sawyer, 2006) and how creativity can promote well-being for students (Plucker, Beghetto & Dow, 2004; Richards, 2007).

Creativity has been identified as an essential part of every day life (Richards, 2007), where everyday settings like work (Agars, Baer & Kaufman, 2005), home and in social settings (Baer & Kaufman, 2005; Cropley, 2006) and school (Beghetto & Plucker, 2006) need to nurture the creativity process. Researchers have studied how creativity is valued in the classroom. Some teachers value the creative process and include it throughout all lesson plans (Runco, 2004) where other teachers find creativity disruptive to their classroom (Beghetto, 2007a; Scott, 1999: Westby & Dawson, 1995). In fact, some teachers believed that creativity came at the cost of not being able to cover the entire curriculum and might lead the class off-topic (Beghetto, 2007).

These attitudes towards developing creativity, as a valued 'commodity' in the lives of young people, is consistent with insights that came up in my follow-up teacher interviews related to the SCPP outcomes. One teacher said they wished school was more like camp and that the Ministry were more flexible with curriculum standards to allow for an educational space that embraced creativity. Teachers in this study identified how camp provided a creative space for students to develop their create thinking skills. In the context of camp, teachers indeed value activities that promote creativity. When it comes to the school setting, however, they note

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barriers that prevent creativity within the classroom room. Teachers, in fact, did not report on any form of activity they termed 'creative' and which transferred to the classroom setting from the SCPP.

Education research has shown that group work and discussion can lead to creative learning (Azmitia, 1996; Crook, 1994). Indeed, Deutschman (2004) agrees that innovation happens most often when people are working together. It is well documented that important learning mechanisms include opportunities for students to collaborate (Scardamalia & Bereiter, in press), be engaged in inquiry process (Krajcik & Blumenfeld, 2006) and participate in deeper knowledge and reflection (Brantford et al., 2000). Problem Based Learning (PBL), for example, is a learning approach that uses all three of these learning mechanisms to engage students with problems they need to solve collaboratively and later reflect on their learning together (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). PBL as an approach to learning is being adopted by education systems at different levels (i.e. secondary and post secondary school). Other student learning research indicates that when group work occurred, there was high enjoyment, high concentration and high interest within the learning process of secondary and post secondary students (Peterson & Miller, 2004).

Based on this study's findings, the Camp Giving Tree approach to program delivery (via camp activities) seems to embrace this same collaborative learning approach for young people since both teachers and camp professionals indicated that that learning can be more fun at camp. As the literature illustrates, collaborative approaches to learning encourage greater creativity, which, in turn helps young people exercise creativity in problem solving skills.

5.3.3. *'Highly Social Environments' as it relates to Engagement with Creative Thinking*

In my literature review, I have tried to position the camp setting as a highly social environment that emphasized the need for meaningful and supportive relationships (between

peers and between students and teachers/mentor) and role models for youth. The perceived outcome findings in my study somewhat supported this notion. However, I do not explore the factors that might influence the role of an adult figure (teacher or mentor) acting as mediator to optimal learning environments for youth.

In classroom settings, for example, teacher who cultivate environments of high involvement tend to help their students become self-directed learners who are more engaged in their learning experiences (Gilman, Furlong & Huebner, 2009). Teachers focused on process and procedure within the learning environments they cultivate, typically motivated students with extrinsic factors and have low levels of involvement (Turner & Meyer 2004; Turner at al, 1998). Educational instruction that is both challenging and emotionally supportive can provide students with positive feelings and motivations towards learning important (Anderson, 2005; Ruthunde & Csizk, 2005; Shernoff et al., 2003; Turner & Meyer, 2004). Best practices in showing emotional support within educational instruction includes teachers providing support for students to solve problems independently, asking questions for conceptual understanding, providing consistent and on-going feedback, offering strategies to problem solving and encouraging students by role modeling enthusiasm, humour and safe risk-taking (Turner & Meyer, 2004). Camp staff, therefore, might serve as a key influence to camp being an optimal learning environment for youth. The inputs and the outcomes from the camp staff's perception, and the teachers perceived initial outcomes, support these ideas.

Some positive youth development (PYD) literature argues that organized after-school programming can provide optimal learning environments for students (Mayoney, Larson & Eccles, 2005), just as camp seemed to do. Shernoff and Vandell (2007) have shown that student engagement is high during after-school programming and in some cases, where academic

achievement is improved as a result of their participation in that program. One study showed that students could display the teamwork, collaboration and initiative skills they learned from the program in their classroom work, resulting in higher academic achievement (Shernoff & Vandell, 2007). Here, after-school programming seems to have provided the opportunity for young people to transfer what they learned after school to the classroom setting.

Perhaps school-camp programs like the SCPP can look at their programs in the context of classroom learning and explore direct ways in which they can foster the transfer of learning skills. This might help future transfer opportunities between camp programs and classroom learning. I am unaware whether the Camp Giving Tree has deliberately linked the two settings together with the aim of learning development opportunities for their participants. My data indicates that camp professionals are highly interested in camp program outcomes, but less interested in the intermediate outcomes of the impact of camp learning on student participants. A major point of this study has been to show that an opportunity has been missed for linking school and camp as settings invested in positive youth development, where both settings are interested in the long-term effects of positive behaviour change in young people.

Camp staff and teachers perceived camp to be a place where students were motivated to learn, were willing to try new things and were interested in participating in learning activities that were engaging and fun. These findings were consistent with my literature review where I identify camp as a setting and structure that provides an optimal learning environment for youth because of its restorative effects, and because it offers youth an opportunity to play, focuses on PYD constructs, is highly social with emphasis on supportive relationships and promotes intrinsic motivation. It is fair to say that I created my own optimal learning environment

equation (or formula) within the camp setting and structure. I did not, however, explore in detail all the factors that influence optimal learning.

Some research indicates that students tend to be more engaged in learning when learning activities in school are structured more like non-academic classes (Shernoff et al., 2003) and after school extra-curricular activities (Shernoff & Vandell, 2007). Generally speaking, these types of activities promote initiative, autonomy and the opportunity to interact with peers and adults. Peterson and Miller (2004) say that when students have the opportunities to be active, demonstrate and practice their skills, they will be more likely to engage in the learning process. Therefore, it is not only the activities that the Camp Giving Tree SCPP can offer to students, but how the activities are actually structured and delivered (by Camp Giving Tree staff) that make the learning experience optimal (and fun) for students.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1. Summary of Study Purpose and Design

The aim of this study was intended to address the gap that exists in academic literature focused on outcomes of camp programming connected to the transfer of behaviour from camp to school for young people. The study intended to identify and examine the initial participant outcomes associated with the SCPP provided by the Camp Giving Tree and the extent to which they transferred outside of the camp setting. Research participants in this study were the camp staff who delivered the SCPP and the teachers who participated in the SCPP as student supervisors to the experience. The study was designed to compare two main data sets: (1) camp staff and teachers perceptions on the initial outcomes of 3-day, 2-night camp program for their students and (2) camp staff's anticipated intermediate outcomes for students with teachers' perceptions of their students intermediate outcomes (transferred behaviour) when back at school, one month after the SCPP experience. All research data was collected through focus groups and small group interviews conducted with semi-structured questions and conversations.

6.1.2. This Study in Review

In this study, the Camp Giving Tree camp staff and teachers believed that there were positive impacts on the development of students participating in a three day, two night camp program. Participants in this study acknowledged that students gained knowledge, skills, values and attitudes related to taking positive risks; felt more socially competent, comfortable, and engaged in creative thinking and even seemed to strengthen their character in small ways because of their participation in the SCPP.

One month after the SCPP, even though camp staff believed students would take what they had gained at camp and apply it to the school setting, teachers reported that overall they had observed hardly any transfer of learned attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from camp to school as displayed in student classroom behaviour. Moreover, teachers seemed to report more on the negative behaviours students displayed at school instead of the positive behaviours the Camp Giving Tree staff anticipated students would display. Teachers reported some positive behaviour transfer, but it was not the prominent theme found in the data. Despite their negative perceptions, teachers strongly believed that camp was an important and positive opportunity for their students to experience. In their follow up interviews, teachers explicitly expressed a desire for school to be more like camp. Indeed, as the data suggested, teachers expected camp to be *'s'more than just fun and games'* and that camp programming had educational value for their students.

6.2. Implications for Further Research

6.2.1. Research Design: A Framework

Just as the ACA's outcome studies created a framework for other outcome research to follow (ACA, 2005, 2006a, 2006b), on a much smaller scale this study could act as a building block for future research on camp connected to the concept of transfer. This study proposes a possible framework of camp programming outcome themes related to positive risk taking, social comforts and social competencies, engagement with creative thinking and strength of character of which researchers could use in designing future studies. My study's chosen design was limited to understanding only the opinions shared by the teachers who participated in the follow-up interviews one month after the SCPP experience. I think it would be useful to test this study's

framework by using quantitative measures (perhaps using pre-, during- and post surveys) to explore what other educators from other schools attending the SCPP identify and track as initial and intermediate outcomes. Though in this qualitative study I embraced my own research bias and accept that the framework I propose is based on a few teachers' perceptions, the next step in future research should be testing this study's proposed framework with a larger sample size of teachers. Studying a larger pool of educators from different schools observing different students attending the SCPP would create a more accurate picture of understanding perceived outcomes. A large sample size of research participants, ranking their perceptions of student outcomes on a scaled questionnaire or survey would minimize the bias I brought to the study, and the bias of the few teachers I studied (Creswell, 2003; Sandelowski, 1995).

This study helps the Camp Giving Tree understand *what* teachers' value. A follow-up study should focus on understanding *how much* teachers value the educational learning opportunities their students have at Camp Giving Tree SCPP experiences. From this point, future studies can be used to explain the degree to which young people learn new skills, values, and knowledge at camp and how these initial outcomes transfer to school settings. Given that this study's research questions are interested in measuring perceived outcomes between one time period (during camp) and another (one month after camp), quantitative research tools, like surveys for example, could help future researchers place a measurable value on what is learned at camp compared to what behaviour changes occurs at school.

While the research participants for this study were based on perceptions of the camp staff of the Camp Giving Tree and the teachers, I would recommend future research to measure the perceptions of others involved in the lives of the students who attended the SCPP, as well as the students themselves. Though ethical clearance from school boards and universities in regard to

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the use of minors in academic research studies can prove very challenging, it is important that young people have a voice in this research. I think it is important to understand what students themselves believe transfers from camp to other areas in their own life (Fisher & Lerner, 2005). Further, this kind of study could continue to explore transfer beyond classroom walls, thereby seeking to understand what might transfer from initial outcomes to intermediate outcomes as it relates to young peoples' lives outside of school structures (e.g., social settings, peer groups, extra-curricular activities, and home life). Therefore beyond teachers, camp staff and students themselves, I would recommend future studies explore the inclusion of parents, guardians and other adult figures who are well positioned to share their perceptions of the educational value of camp programming for young people (Fisher & Lerner, 2005; Flanagan & Faison, 2001).

It is important to continue tracking and documenting the value around the connection of camp learning and academic success because formal schooling is not the only institution that cares about the positive development of young people. There is not enough evidence in academic literature to support the educational value of camp programming for youth. Doing so will enable organizations, like Camp Giving Tree, to build a stronger argument for the value in the learning opportunities camp offers young people. If more information can support the notion that positive camp experiences lead to future success, both academic and interpersonal, perhaps camp programming can continue to be positioned as a valuable educational experience for young peoples' development.

Learning how valuable the full participation of research participants is in the success of a small qualitative study was a key learning outcome this research. I am grateful for the participation of those involved in this study, but my results were directly effected by the limited number of participants in the mini-focus group and one-on-one interviews (Knapik, 2006). I

suggest any research done within a program actually builds data collection (i.e. focus groups, interviews, surveys) into the program itself (i.e. within the program, there is an activity that prompts responses that researchers can document). During the SCPP, finding separate time away from students to conduct small interviews with their teachers was difficult to manage. Similarly, expecting all teachers to be present for the one-month follow-up interview proved challenging due to scheduling conflicts with all teacher research participants. This follow-up must be set up during the program's development to insure effective data collection.

6.2.2. Speaking the Same Language to the Right People at the Table

I am grateful that in my research I had the opportunity to study education in the way I did - that is, within the context of informal education -- but I strongly recommend leisure researchers deliberately link youth development research with education research when pursing research around camp programming. My study design could have been stronger had I consulted more deliberately with the education literature. Doing so would have directed me to best practices used in the education field around teachers' perceptions of student behaviour change observed in classrooms and school activities (see Jackson & Bruegmann, 2009; Methe & Hintze, 2003). In particular, I think learning the terms and language that the formal education field uses to refer to concepts of pro-social skill development would have helped me in linking the language camp staff perceived as initial and intermediate outcomes in order to better serve their program recipients.

Beyond language though, connecting education research with recreation and leisure research could prove to be strategic when attempting to deliberately influence decision makers in budgetary and policy changes. Studying the Camp Giving Tree SCPP allowed me the

opportunity to provide camp staff with recommendations on their program, which they can immediately implement should they choose to do so. The ability to potentially influence future program development was much easier working within the Camp Giving Tree camp institution, given that the decision makers who deliver the program were directly involved in the study and interested in its results. In my view, research on camp programming connecting recreation and leisure with education should also try to connect policy makers (e.g., someone from the school board) to the study's findings in some way. Though both formal and informal educators believe that camp programming has potential to provide educational value for a young persons' learning, those who make decisions on behalf of a young persons' educational future should therefore be involved in studies like this so they can understand the educational opportunities that exists within camp programming. Effectively communicating research findings between disciplines and having decisions makers involved in studies like this could create opportunities for positive youth development within a formal educational system.

6.3. Implications for Practice

6.3.1. Increase the Chances of Transfer through On-going Support

As shown in this study, both camp professional and teachers perceived a program like the SCPP to provide positive learning opportunities for students. Though hardly any transfer was reported in follow-up interviews, teachers nevertheless maintained that the experience was positive for their students and they wished their school setting could be more like camp – where learning was fun. From what I know of my 15 years of experience involved with the development and delivery of youth programming and from understanding of the research participants in this study, I recommend the Camp Giving Tree staff consider providing on-going

support to reinforce learning lessons from the SCPP after schools participate. On-going support would likely need to involve students, teachers, school administration and parents (Wehman, Abramson & Norman, 1977).

For students, on-going support could involve (but not be limited to) post SCPP school visits that involve further programming designed to connect the learning lessons of camp to students in their direct school environment. For teachers, on-going support could include (but not be limited to) ideas around training teachers how to continue the learning lessons from the SCPP, within a classroom and school setting context, set up to easily meet curriculum standards. For school administrators, on-going support could take the form of demonstrating the educational value of the SCPP and its fit within the Ontario educational curriculum requirements. For parents, on-going support could involve a joint effort of post SCPP experience follow-up where the Camp Giving Tree staff and the schools ensure their students' parents completely understand what their child was involved with at camp. More specifically, involving parents so they completely understand the impacts of the camp experience on their child, how what is learned at camp could help their child in or outside of school, and how parents can help support their child continue to transfer what was learned at camp to other areas of life. I would also recommend doing a full literature review to best understand how parents track transfer of learning in their child's development (starting with Haynes, Comer & Hamilton-Lee, 1989).

All on-going supports would need to be designed to allow stakeholders (teachers, school administration, parents) to easily participate. The Camp Giving Tree staff would need to assume the responsibility for all aspects of the post SCPP supports. I suggest committing to this concept for at least two years in a row, so that, in its first year, the Camp Giving Tree staff could pilot post CCP follow-up programming with a select number of schools that would participate in the

SCPP at the beginning of the school year. In its second year, given a significant amount of feedback from participants involved and tracked behaviour changes of students, the Camp Giving Tree staff team could expand the follow-up programming at a few additional schools. Indeed, this suggested process would certainly call for more research to accompany this type of programmatic opportunity.

Consistent with experiential learning, frontloading an experience before it happens and debriefing an experience after it is over seems to increase the likelihood transfer occur for students (Hutchinson & Dattilo, 2001). Camps running school-camp programs like the Camp Giving Tree SCPP could consider providing training to teachers and/or support them with a follow-up visit with the school to increase the likelihood of initial outcome transfer. In fact, I would suggest that this practice becomes a regular feature of the program should the stakeholders involved want the initial outcomes from camp to transfer into intermediate outcomes. Creating some kind of resource guide that includes "how to" tips on how to increase the likelihood of transfer and the role a teacher can play in this process could serve as a huge opportunity for transfer to increase from camp to school.

In my example of a follow-up interview that was scheduled for over a month in advance with all five teacher research participants, only two teachers had time to participate in the follow-up interview. Whatever the reasons for the others' absence, the two teachers present for the follow-up interviews had significant information to share with me in regards to transfer of student beahviour after the SCPP. All teachers were given the opportunity to provide their thoughts and feedback regarding student transfer over email and phone call, but none of them followed up with me. I felt I had missed important data that could have been collected and that might have been available for improved programming at the Camp Giving Tree. To avoid future

problems, I recommend staff executing the SCPP should set the expectation that recipient schools of the free program would need to comply with two conditions: (1) schools must participate in the 3-day, 2-night program, and (2) schools must participate in post program follow up (that would include support and evaluation processes). I followed up with teachers over email to offer them other opportunities to provide me their feedback and thoughts, but received no response. It seems that without actually having on-going support systems as a part of the program, where participation post SCPP experience is an expectation, for participating in the program from the beginning,

6.3.2. Existing Program Recommendations

Though in the findings of this study I did not report on the Camp Giving Tree "Great Beads" program, a program designed to advance the five themes of teamwork, environmental concern, goal setting, responsible leadership as well as creativity and adventure. Even so, it deserves a short mention here. The Great Beads program is something the Camp Giving Tree uses in its summer camp programming for campers and has adapted for their SCPP student participants. In essence, it recognizes campers and participants for their efforts by awarding beads for certain learned and displayed beavhiours (connected to the five themes listed above). The goal of the program for campers is to receive all five beads, which signifies great leadership potential and learning experiences. For example, a young person would receive a green bead representing 'environmental concern' because he or she found a way to conserve energy, reduce waste and showed respect for the environment through behaviours during their camp or SCPP experience.

If the Great Beads is used at the SCPP, perhaps as a part of the post CCP program, I recommend the Camp Giving Tree provide a clear description of the program to teachers in the form of a 'Best Practices' guide with examples of how it could work at school. Moreover, information about how to implement a tool like the beads program in the classroom would add to the value of the SCPP. Such a resource would allow teachers to explore using the program with students at school who did not attend the SCPP. It might be worth expanding the concept of the Great Beads program linking it with the Ontario curriculum – this way the rewards for the beads are connected to the required character education that schools are responsible for delivering for all their students in the province. An inclusive approach to involving students, teachers, administrators and even parents who did not attend the SCPP would be pivotal in the successful implementation of a tool like the Great Beads (Athanassiou, McNett & Harvey, 2003; King-Sears & Cummings, 1996).

6.3.3. Feedback and Evaluation

Since the SCPP is a free program for schools, camp staff often informally wondered aloud if teachers were providing them with honest feedback. Instead reporting positive results to ensure that their students would not lose out on the opportunity to attend future SCPPs should teachers give negative reviews about the experience. I felt this study collected honest feedback from teachers because, as a researcher, I acted as a neutral third party. Nevertheless, it is important that camps providing free programs seek to generate honest feedback from their participants. Perhaps providing direct instructions to teachers, via follow up communication and suggested SCPP follow-up programming after the camp program, would underscore the importance of honest feedback in the future of the program and the quality of programming for

all participants (Chelimsky, 1995; Shulha & Cousins, 1997). For program improvement's sake, the SCPP staff need to find a way to communicate to their partners and teachers that any negative feedback would not jeopardize their 'spot' at the SCPP for next year.

The best feedback is generated when the experience is relevant and fresh. The richest interview data I collected was during the first and second days of the camp experience, as I had a captive audience at camp. Even the last day of interviews was less robust, as a discussion, because teachers had already begun thinking about the other things required of them the moment they got back to their school setting. Currently the Camp Giving Tree staff hand out their written evaluation forms at the last meal, right before the group is about to leave and travel home. My observations led me to believe the student participants and teachers have, at that point, already 'checked-out' mentally when they receive their evaluation forms. Better timing related to when the evaluation surveys are conducted would result in the most honest and relevant feedback. Cronbach (1982) suggests that evaluation practices should generate feedback throughout the entire program as opposed to waiting until the end. My experience in camp programming implementation tells me that Camp Giving Tree staff member should meet with teachers every night (or when teachers are supervising the bunks) to debrief the day and generate the relevant and timely feedback. I would even suggest that Camp Giving Tree staff bring an audio recording device to capture quality quotes from teacher participants. Follow-up programming where the evaluation questions continue to be asked, especially interested in tracking on-going behaviour change (transfer) over time, will be necessary to avoid losing needed data (Patton, 2008).

On-going reflection and debriefing practices seemed to be something the teachers really appreciated at the end of the day during the camp experience. It brought up the concept of

reflection in my follow-up conversations with teachers where they expressed an interest and value in on-going reflection throughout their teaching day even if at camp this had not happened at optimal junctures in the program. Creating this kind on-going, supportive, reflection focused relationship between teachers and the Camp Giving Tree staff could lead to stronger transfer for students. Further still, teachers could learn how to lead reflective activities and discussions with their students to support transfer in student behaviour in a school setting.

6.3.4. Teacher-Camp Professional Networking

The Camp Giving Tree has an opportunity to connect the education community, and more specifically classroom teachers, with the expertise of camp staff. Camp professionals could learn from the expertise of classroom teachers. Teachers viewed camp as 'fun' and a place where learning was engaging and motivating for their students. Much of this 'fun' learning seemed to be attributed to the way the programs were delivered by the camp staff. Seemingly, teachers could learn from camp professionals (e.g., activity facilitation) insofar as these professionals adapt 'fun' practices into their own classrooms and deliver similarly academically motivating and engaging lessons. Camp professionals could learn what teachers need related to educational curriculum standards and help camps directly reinforce themes founds within education standards, albeit within an experiential framework. The opportunity for camp staff and teachers to share ideas and approaches would be a collaborative effort (Tuire & Erno, 2001) in best practices for positive youth development programs and institutions.

6.3.5. If You Can't Beat 'Em, Join 'Em

Camps (including the Camp Giving Tree) should focus their marketing efforts on clearly articulating and supporting educational worth and value related to character education. Character education continues to be a relevant and important subject within educator circles and institutions. As Canadian demographics continue to change and evolve, the ability of camps to articulate the educational value of these experiences have within the framework of Ontario's character education curriculum standards will be important. Simply put, camps need to be more strategic in lining up their impacts and outcomes with those systems and institutions that parents and community members look to as an authority. A simple example from the study was related to how camp staff identified an outcome for campers as developing 'life skills' where teachers identified camp as developing 'character'. In this case, the Camp Giving Tree need not change the program's aim to achieve these initial outcomes, but rather, camp staff needs to speak the same language as educational professionals to ensure all teachers and parents can easily understand the value of camp experiences from a 'school' lens.

6.4. Final Word

This study shows that when camps create opportunities for young people to have positive developmental learning outcomes related to taking positive risks, gaining social competencies and comforts, learning to engage with creative thinking skills and learning to strengthen their character they can serve as a positive experience for a young persons development. While this study did not show any significant sense of transfer, as observed by the educators involved in the experience, the results should be not be interpreted as evidence that camp programming does not 'work'. It does work. Moreover, it has great potential to lead to meaningful change in the lives of its youth participants. To harness this potential, however, educators must see themselves as

partners in this endeavour who have responsibility for facilitating transfer effectively. Camp staff have a role, too, in terms of supporting these educators and offering guidance to transfer facets of the camp experience to the classroom. In this sense, the findings in this study offer important directions for future research and practice. From a research standpoint, leisure and recreation studies should devote more time to evaluating *what transfers* after a positive recreation experience, *how it transfers,* and how can help *support* educators and program leaders to encourage transfer more effectively. We can extend the scope of intentional camp programming to include pre and post program objectives by thinking of youth programming experiences not in isolation, but rather holistically. That is, where one 3-day, 2-night camp program experience would not stand alone in the development of a young person's life (or any length of camp program for that matter), but rather it would be accepted and deliberately supported by all those who help young people develop into adulthood (teachers, parents, coaches, camp counsellors etc) as on-going youth development experiences that encourage life long learning and transfer of that learning from one experience to the next.

This study outlines the missed opportunities found in the provincial approach to educational development; teachers do not perceive a sense of responsibility for supporting their students' transfer of learning from camp to school, nor do camp professionals aim to design their programs with the needs, let alone integration, of formal educators as a priority. This deficiency is an opportunity for researchers and professionals to educate stakeholders to take on a more active and effective role in increasing the transfer potential of the camp experience. Young people, as the focus of this relationship, will benefit from the much-needed cooperative efforts of informal and formal educators; empowering transfer from one learning environment to the other can only serve to support their positive development.

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Appendix A – SCPP Focus Group Interview Guide

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

FOR CAMP GIVING TREE –
SCHOOL-CAMP PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM STAFF

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Demographic information about research participants:
_____
_____
_____
_____

Consent Forms:
* Ask all SCPP to sign the research consent forms (as they have all verbally agreed to participate in the focus group, this will be the formal step in this part of my research process)

Opening statement/Welcome:
Welcome, go over names, ask if I can record the conversation with my ipod mp3 audio-recorder thank yous, go over the purpose of the study, explain why I'm using focus groups. Estimate that the conversation should take about an hour. Questions?

Focus group guidelines:
* There are no right or wrong answers
* Everyone has knowledge that I wish to draw from
* We will follow a semi-structured interview guide, and I will ask a number of follow up questions and to further clarify ideas, I might attempt to paraphrase what focus group participants are saying

Notes to Self:
Maybe review 'outcomes' with the group? Review the OLM model and why we focus on outcomes (re-visit the outcome workshop that I was a part of on January 9th, 2009).
** THIS IS ABOUT BUY IN!

Topics of Discussion/Questions:
OUTCOMES! OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL GROUPS SPECIFICALLY!!!

- What do students learn at the SCPP? New attitudes? New values? New skills? New knowledge? How do you know they learn things?
- Do student groups learn things that other youth agencies might not learn? Why or why not?
- What do students do as a result of what they learned? Either at camp (what you see) or what you think they might do after they leave camp?

- Do you think students will continue to do things related to what they learned at camp?
- Do you think a camp experience for students can affect the school community directly? How so? In what ways? Can you give examples?
- What do campers take away from camp experiences?
- How do we know what they take away?
- What is the SCPP really good at?
- What does the SCPP staff team understand as the outcomes of the SCPP?
- How is this program currently evaluated? How do you know if you're doing a good job? Achieving your mission? Meeting participant needs?
- Who values this program right now? Who are the stakeholders in the SCPP for school groups? Why are these people important?
- How do you know?
- What do you want to know?
- How might this outcome evaluation study be valuable to the Camp Giving Tree organization and camp?

Objective Level Questions
(general information, facts, impressions, sensory)

* What is the mission and mandate of the SCPP? What are the priorities of the SCPP? priority of the SCPP?
* What happens a SCPP school program? How do you think the SCPP effects students specifically?
* What are you general impressions of the SCPP affects on children participants? On teachers?
* What do you see happen during SCPP school programs? What do you hear from the teachers and students before, during or after the program?

Review of current paper work (internal and external written evolutions):
Note to self: see Appendix E & F for these evaluation forms

The evaluation form Camp Giving Tree staff/ the evaluation form from teachers
* What is the current evaluation process of the SCPP for school groups?
* Internal evaluation form: What is the purpose of this document? What is the process that you use it? Is this process effective? How so? How do you know it effective?
* Teacher evaluation form: What is the purpose of this document? How do you use it to evaluate the SCPP? Has it/does it help with evaluation the SCPP? How so? Can you provide an example? What are the kinds of things that teachers say that help you evaluation the SCPP?
* I see that on the existing evaluation form you ask teachers to fill out, you want to know if teachers anticipate any changes in their students after they leave camp. If you were a teacher, how would you answer that question?

* Has the Camp Giving Tree evaluation process helped your improve/adapt your program in the past? How so? To what degree?
* Do you follow up with any written documentation from teachers? Why or why not?

Reflective Levels Questions
(personal reactions, share emotions and images, associations between ideas)
* You get to see students over the course of 3 day camp programs, what do you see in their behaviour? Do you see a difference between the first day and the last? Can you provide examples?
* What kind of stories do you tell people about the SCPP and its affects on students? Tell me a story!
* What does your gut tell you about the value of the SCPP?
* What frustrates you about the SCPP with school groups?
* What excites you about the SCPP with school groups?
* What is your favourite part of the SCPP? What is your least favorite?

Interpretive Level Questions
(brainstorming, implications, significance, purpose)

* So what are students learning at the SCPP?
* What are students doing because of what they learned at camp?
* What happens with school groups and students right after they leave ?
* What happens with students a few weeks after the SCPP? A few months later?
* Do you think the SCPP has lasting effects on students? How so? How long do these effects last? What might influence these effects? (neg or pos)
* What are the outcomes of these programs?
(NOTE TO SELF: except GREAT bead discussion) – Probe – why do the great beads matter? Why the GREAT beads? How does the GREAT beads measure outcomes?)
* How is a school community affected?
* What do you think teachers think?
* What do you think students think?
* Have there been situations where teachers and/or students were unsatisfied with the SCPP? What happened? What did you do about it?
* How does the Camp Giving Tree adapt with program change? What is the process of change right now?

Decisional Level Questions
(resolutions, action, next steps, future direction, commitment, summary)

* I'm going to be asking teachers what they understand as the outcomes of the SCPP for their students during and one month after the SCPP – what do you think teachers might talk about? Identify? Do you think that's different than what you have said? Why or why not?
* How do you feel about this study? What do you think will come from it?
* Do you think this kind of information could help you with future SCPP programming development or adaptation?
* How might you use the findings in the study?
* Am I missing anything? Are there any other ideas that speak to student group outcomes from the SCPP?

* To summarize: This focus group was meant to explore what you, the SCPP staff, believe are the anticipated and desired outcomes of the SCPP. We've covered topics such as _____, _____, _____, _____ and _____ (paraphrase). Are we missing anything? Does this cover all the things you think happen to students at the SCPP?

Note to Self:
* Explain the purpose of a member check.
* Explain that I will send the data to Mr. Zooyoff to circulate and get feedback from SCPP staff

ANY QUESTIONS?

Thank participants for their time.
See you in a few days!

Appendix B - Teacher Repeated Check-In Focus Group Interview Guide

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FOCUS GROUP GUIDE
FOR TEACHERS – REAPEATED CHECK-IN FOCUS GROUPS DURING THE SCPP

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Demographic information about research participants:
_____
_____
_____
_____

Opening statement/Welcome:
Welcome! Ask if I can record the conversation with my ipod mp3 auido-recorder, thank yous, go over the purpose of the study, explain why I'm using mini-focus groups and interviews. Estimate that the conversation should take about an hour. Questions? Explain why I'm doing Repeated Check-In focus group.

I will look for a space to conduct the focus groups that are away from students (for privacy) and once students have gone to bed. The Camp Giving Tree facility has a lot of meeting space, so we will make it work around the teacher's comfort and schedule at camp. The space might change each day.

Focus group guidelines:
* There are no right or wrong answers
* Everyone has knowledge that I wish to draw from
* We will follow a semi-structured interview guide, and I will ask a number of follow up questions and to further clarify ideas, I might attempt to paraphrase what focus group participants are saying

Topics of Discussion:
* What are the ACTUAL outcomes you are seeing in your students' behaviour? AT CAMP?
- New skills? New values? New attitudes? New Knowledge?
- REMEMBER: I am observing camper/students – so add questions in this interview guide based on my descriptive and reflective notes that speak to specific examples!
* Ideas from my observations might also connect with my lit review:
Example: camp as a restorative environment, camp as a vehicle to Positive Youth Development, camp and positive relationships/role models, camp as a social place, camp and intrinsic motivation – optimal learning environments, PLAY…look for these things in my observations

Objective Level Questions
(general information, facts, impressions, sensory)

* Tell me about the day! How has it been going for students thus far? What have you seen? What have you heard? What kind of interactions are happening? Examples? Tell me about that…

* What did you see? What did you see your students do today?
* What did you hear? What did your students say today? What did you talk about today?
* So far, is the SCPP meeting your expectations? Anticipated and/or desired outcomes of the program? How so? Why or why not? Can you give me an example?
* What are your overall impression of the day? What are your students getting out of this experience so far? Today? Examples?

Reflective Levels Questions
(personal reactions, share emotions and images, associations between ideas)

* What do you think your students got out of _____ (activity)? Is that important? Why or why not? How so? How might that be important later?
* Any surprises in what you saw today – while observing your students? Any frustrations that you saw while observing your students today?
* What do you think your students learned today? New values? Expressed how? New knowledge? Expressed how? New skills? Expressed how? New attitudes? Express how? Can you give me an example? In what activities did you observe these things?
* How might the experiences of today be valuable for your students?
* How did you feel about the activities and programs of the day?
* Are there any activities that students have done today, are similar to those of school curriculum or activities?
* What excited you about today re: observing your students?
* What does your gut tell you about the experiences your students had today?
* What frustrated you today while observing your students?

Interpretive Level Questions
(brainstorming, implications, significance, purpose)

* Does this SCPP experience seem to matter to your students? Why or why not? How do you know? What have you seen/heard that convinces you of this?
* In what way can the experiences of today help your students in the future? At school or otherwise?
* What did students learn today? Give me an example…
* What lessons were learned today by your students? Are these lessons important? How could they help students at school?
* Was anything specifically significant about your students participating in today's program, or an activity in particular? Why was that important to the student(s) you think?

FOR the 2nd and 3rd Repeated Check-In:
- Yesterday you said you observed _____, are you finding similar examples of that today? Why or why not? How was it expressed? Tell me about that experience? Examples?

Decisional Level Questions
(resolutions, action, next steps, future direction, commitment, summary)

* So overall, what do you think your students got out of today's camp experience? Examples?

* What do you anticipate your students might get out of tomorrow's activities/program? Why? How so?

* How could you summarize your observations for the day?

* What are your overall impressions?

* What are things you'll be looking to observe for tomorrow? Why?

* Are there any activities in particular that you think will teach students a new skill, knowledge, values or attitude over the SCPP experience? Why is this important?

AT THE LAST Repeated Check-In Focus group:

* Now that the entire camp experience is over, what do you think your students got out of the experience, as a whole? What pops out in your mind?

* To summarize: This focus group was meant to explore what you, the teachers, observed in your students during the SCPP. We've covered topics such as _____, _____, _____, _____ and _____ (paraphrase). Are we missing anything? Does this cover all the things you think happen to students at the SCPP?

Note to Self:

* The teachers might be tired, be aware of this. Camp days are LONG days. I want the richest data…so try to adapt to their schedule. Talk to SCPP staff if focus group time isn't work…maybe we can figure something out in the schedule?

Note to Self on March 27th, 2009/ The last Repeated Check-In focus group:

* Remind teachers about setting the last focus group date (during the week of April 21st – 24th, 2009 at school, the time and location)

ANY QUESTIONS?

Thank participants for their time.
See you tomorrow! OR See you in a month!

Appendix C - Teacher Post-Camp Focus Group Interview Guide

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FOCUS GROUP GUIDE
FOR TEACHERS – POST-CAMP FOCUS GROUP

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Demographic information about research participants:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Opening statement/Welcome:
Welcome Back! Ask if I can record the conversation with my ipod mp3 auido-recorder, thank yous, go over the purpose of the study, explain why I'm using focus groups. Estimate that the conversation should take about an hour. Questions? Review what we've talked about (a little) in past focus groups. Explain why I'm doing Post-Camp focus group.

Member-Check:
* Explain the member-check, its purpose, what kind of feedback I'm looking for, I'll take notes. If you do not think this OLM is accurate, please let me know!
* I WILL START THIS LAST FOCUS GROUP WITH THE MEMBER CHECK – SHOW data FROM THE REPEATED CHECK-IN FOCUS GROUPS
* Collect feedback from teachers about this data

Focus group guidelines:
* There are no right or wrong answers
* Everyone has knowledge that I wish to draw from
* We will follow a semi-structured interview guide, and I will ask a number of follow up questions and to further clarify ideas, I might attempt to paraphrase what focus group participants are saying

Topics of Discussion:
* FOCUS ON INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES – WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING AS A RESULT WHAT STUDENTS LEARNED AT CAMP? What are students doing that teachers can observe?
* SO…now that camp has been over for a moth – IS THERE A CONNECTION BETWEEN WHAT YOU SAW YOUR STUDENTS learn at camp to what might have TRANSFERRED to the school setting (classroom/school community?)
- New skills? New values? New attitudes? New Knowledge? – What are students DOING at school as a result of the things they LEARNED at camp?
* Ask questions about how the context HAS changed from camp to school – what do the teachers think? Camp provided _____, and school may not…get teachers to speak to this idea

* I will need to give CONTEXT to certain questions – that is, if for examples teachers talked about activities at camp, but identified the positive aspects of social behaviours in their students during that activity – I need to frame the SOCIAL behaviour, not the activity. Comparing camp and school can be difficult. Be ready to make comparisons between setting contexts.

Objective Level Questions
(general information, facts, impressions, sensory)

* How is school after the SCPP? Have you seen the students you observed at the SCPP during school hours? How so? In class, during extra-curricular activities? What have you observed?
* What was it like when you first got back to school? The first week back? The second week? The third? Now the fourth?
* Have you see any specific behaviour change in your students from before camp to after camp? Can you give an example? And to what degree have you seen this change?
* What have you heard your students talking about related to their camp experience? Anything related to what they learned? New attitudes? Values? Knowledge? Skills? Do you agree with what you're hearing? Why or why not?
* Re: Member-check -- Since you've looked at what you were saying a month ago during the SCPP, have anything you mentioned come up at school? Like what? (TRANSFER)

Reflective Levels Questions
(personal reactions, share emotions and images, associations between ideas)

* Have you seen your students use new ideas/knowledge/values/attitudes/skills they learned at camp, at school? How so? Give an example. What was that like for you to observe? What do you think it was like for your students?
* Has anything excited you about what you've observed in your students since they've been back at school?
* Has anything frustrated you about what you've observed in your students since they've been back at school?

Interpretive Level Questions
(brainstorming, implications, significance, purpose)

* Was there value in the SCPP that you have seen help (be more successful? Socially? Academically?) students in some way at school? Why or why not? How so? Examples?
* Has anything your students learned at the SCPP transferred to the school setting? Like what?
* Is there anything the SCPP Camp Giving Tree program should be doing more of? If they did, might something be more likely to transfer to the school setting? Like what? Ideas? How do you think that might help school groups and students in the future?
* During camp, you talk a lot about _____, and although school is a different setting, have you seen any of that same or different _____?
* Have you observed anything that students learned at camp, transferring to a similar school situation?

Decisional Level Questions
(resolutions, action, next steps, future direction, commitment, summary)

* How would you summarize your observations of students over the last month, since the SCPP?
* Have you noticed any specific behaviour changes in your students because of the SCPP? Like what? Do you think these behaviours will last? Why or why not? What might help them last?
* What would you like to see the SCPP do in the future to see more or less change in your students? Ideas?
* Would you be involved with the SCPP, or other camp programs, in the future? Why? Why not?
* Do you see an educational value to camp programs? Why? How so? How would you try and measure these experiences? What do you want to be asked?
* Anything else?
* Now that the entire camp experience has been over for a moth, what do you think your students got out of the experience, as a whole? What pops out in your mind?

* To summarize: This focus group was meant to explore what you, the teachers, have observed in your students behaviour one month after the SCPP experience. We've covered topics such as _____, _____, _____, _____ and _____ (paraphrase). Are we missing anything? Does this cover all the things you think happen to students at the SCPP?

Note to Self:
* Explain how the last Member-Check will work (email).
* If email, get email addresses

ANY QUESTIONS?

Thank participants for their time.
GIVE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS THANK YOU CARDS!

Appendix D - Researcher Field Notes Template

RESEARCHER FIELD NOTES TEMPLATE

Date: _____   Time: _____   Location: _____

Demographic information: _____

Check one – NOTES FROM either:
❑ Post Focus group conversations. WHICH FOCUS GROUP? _____
❑ During SCPP - Observations
❑ During SCPP - Unplanned conversation with teachers

DESCRIPTIVE DATA
 "portraits of the participants, a reconstruction of dialogue, a description of the physical setting, accounts of particular events, or activities" (Creswell, 2003, p. 189)

REFLCTIVE DATA
 …personal thoughts including my feelings, any hunches I have, my observations and impressions of a situation – including all subtle and big picture ideas (Bogdan & Bilken, 1992 as cited in Creswell, 2003)

Appendix E – Camp Giving Tree

School-Camp Partnership Program Internal Evaluation Form

Evaluation Form – Internal Use

Name of Group: _____
Date(s) of Visit: _____ to _____
Person completing form: _____ **Today's Date:** _____

Host:	Staff:

Please answer the following questions by circling one number (1= ☹ poor/no/not at all and 5= ☺ excellent/yes/very

Overall Experience:

1. How would you rate student behaviour during this trip?   1   2   3   4   5

2. How would you rate teacher involvement on this trip?   1   2   3   4   5

3. How satisfied was this group with the meals served?   1   2   3   4   5

4. How satisfied was this group with the facilities?   1   2   3   4   5

5. How well suited was the program schedule for this group? 1   2   3   4   5

6. Do you think this group should be invited to return next year? 1   2   3   4   5

Group Schedule (please record activities and times)

	Day 1 Date: _____	Day 2 Date: _____	Day 3 Date: _____
Breakfast			
Morning Programs			
Lunch			
Afternoon Programs			
Supper			
Evening Programs			

Would you like to follow up with a Manager regarding this group? Yes No

Please <u>attach</u> this form to the original <u>Group Schedule</u>

Appendix F – Camp Giving Tree School-Camp Partnership Program

External Evaluation Form

Evaluation Form – *School Groups*

School Camp Partnership Program 2009

Name of Group: _____
Date(s) of Visit: _____
Your Name: _____ **Position:** _____
Phone #: _____

Email_____

Theme or Objective of Trip: _____

Please answer the following questions by circling one number (1= L poor/no/not at all and 5= J excellent/yes/very)

Booking Process:

1.	How please were you with your overall process of booking your trip?	1 2 3 4 5
2.	How straight forward were the booking forms and materials?	1 2 3 4 5
3.	How would you rate the quality of the customer service you received?	1 2 3 4 5
4.	How effective was the pre-visit held at your school?	NA 1 2 3 4 5
5.	Did you face any obstacles when booking your trip?	1 2 3 4 5

If so, please comment
General comments:

Programs:

1. How pleased were you with the content of the programs?   1   2   3   4   5

2. Were the lesson plans appropriate for your group?   1   2   3   4   5

3. Was the quality of instruction suitable for your group?   1   2   3   4   5

4. How well does the program reflect your objectives for the trip?   1   2   3   4   5

5. Did your students learn from the programs?   1   2   3   4   5

6. Did your group learn concepts here that they may not have in the classroom? Yes ☐   No☐   Don't Know ☐

General Comments:

Staff:

13. How helpful was the host/staff?	1	2	3	4	5
14. Were you pleased with the staff/student interactions?	1	2	3	4	5
15. Were you satisfied with the instructors?	1	2	3	4	5
16. How pleased were you with the manners, actions, and efforts made by the entire staff?					
	1	2	3	4	5

General Comments about Staff:

Outcomes & General Feedback:

17. Why do you feel that a trip like this is important to your students?

18. What do you think was the best thing your students got out of their experience at camp?

20. Do you anticipate seeing any changes in your students after their trip to camp?

21. What new concepts or skills will your students take back to their classrooms and communities?

22. Can you recommend any changes to make this program more suitable for your group?

23. Would you like to come again and/or recommend other groups to come?
_____

24. Additional comments and suggestions:

Would you like to follow up with a Manager regarding your experience? Yes ☐ No ☐
If yes, please provide your complete contact information:
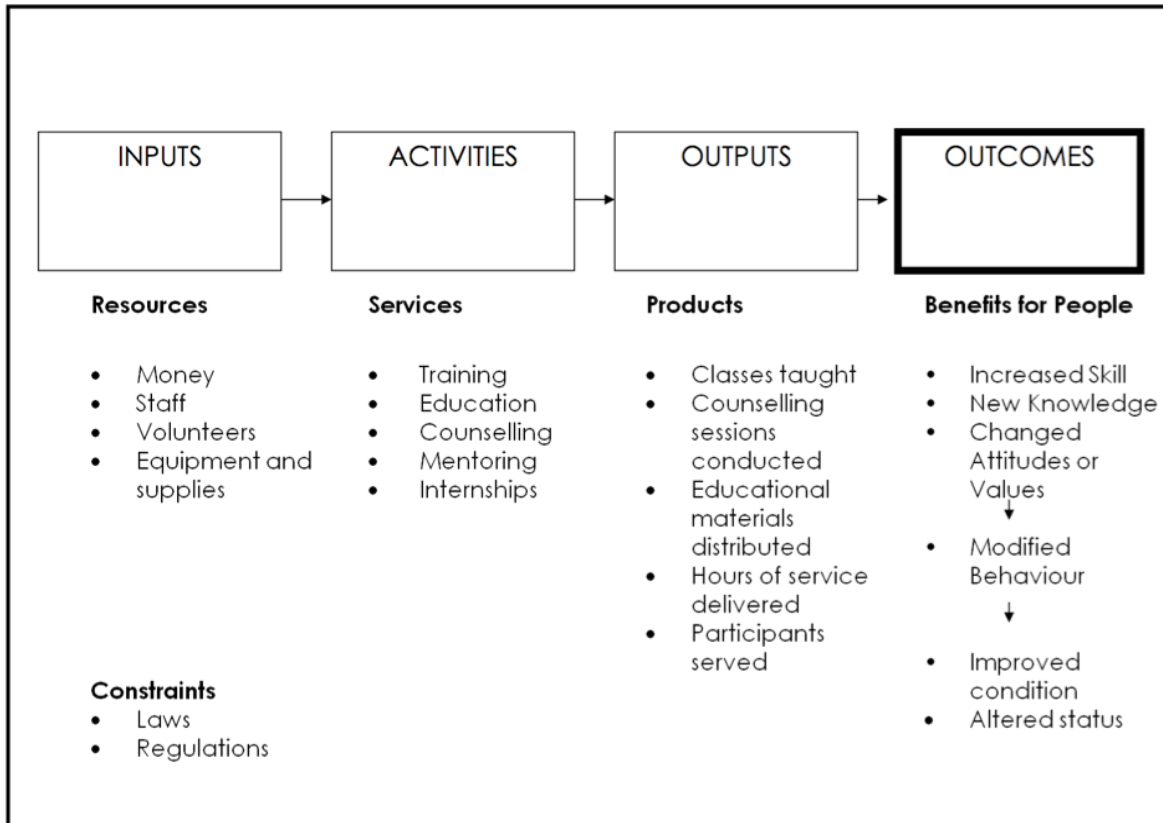Name: _____   Position: _____
Phone: _____   Email: _____

Thank you for attending Camp Giving Tree and for completing this evaluation.
Your opinion is greatly appreciated and will enhance the quality of our SCPP program. Thank you!

Appendix G – Outcome Logic Model

Program Outcome Model

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES
Resources	**Services**	**Products**	**Benefits for People**
• Money	• Training	• Classes taught	• Increased Skill
• Staff	• Education	• Counselling	• New Knowledge
• Volunteers	• Counselling	sessions	• Changed
• Equipment and	• Mentoring	conducted	Attitudes or
supplies	• Internships	• Educational	Values
		materials	
		distributed	• Modified
		• Hours of service	Behaviour
		delivered	
		• Participants	
		served	• Improved
Constraints			condition
• Laws			• Altered status
• Regulations			

United Way of America (1996). *Measuring program outcomes: A practical approach.*

    Alexandria, VA: United Way of America. As cited in a workshop presentation by T.

    D. Glover (January 9, 2009), *Bead there, done that: Constructing outcome logic models*,

    St. George, ON.