Examining Gender and Age as Predictors of Personal Development in a Summer Camp Setting as Mediated by Social Capital and Social Support

by

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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 final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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

Abstract

Youth require opportunities to master and demonstrate new skills, make independent choices, and form positive social relationships to encourage positive youth development. Camps provide a unique setting that fosters the development of new sources of social capital and social support. Current literature examining positive youth development in camps has been able to identify some demographic differences in camper experiences at camp, but has not yielded statistically significant relationships and no consensus as to the explanations for those relationships. Using a longitudinal dataset gathered in a camp setting, this study examined the relationships between gender and age and personal development. Social capital and social support were found to have significant roles as mediating variables in the development of personal development at camp. This study enhances the understanding of the benefits to children from attending camp, and why females and older children may benefit the most from these experiences.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

To encourage positive developmental outcomes, youth need access to positive opportunities to master and demonstrate new skills, make independent choices, and form positive social relationships with both their peers and adults outside of their family (Eccles, 1999). Though many youth rely on school to facilitate these experiences, Eccles (1999) noted the significance of out-of-school programs, such as summer camps, in enabling such opportunities. With a focus on summer camps, she argued these out-of-school experiences give youth access to unique settings that foster growth experiences for adolescents to make autonomous decisions, expand peer relationships, and practice leadership. Camp activities aim to challenge individuals to push themselves beyond their comfort zone, embrace diversity, and appreciate individual strengths and weaknesses. Summer camps may serve as therapeutic landscapes (Gesler, 1992), as they help "put in place the kind of safety net needed to support healthy, positive passage through early and middle adolescence" (Eccles, 1999, p. 36). In my thesis research, I position social capital and social support as particularly important features of this safety net.

Social capital has a significant impact on individual well-being (Coleman, 1990; Kim, Subramanian & Kawachi, 2008; Glover & Parry, 2008). Social capital refers to "the consequence of investment in and cultivation of social relationships allowing an individual access to resources that would otherwise be unavailable to him or her" (Glover, Shinew & Parry, 2005, p. 87). Social capital facilitates expressive (e.g., emotional support) and instrumental (e.g., favors) action (Lin, 2001 as cited in Glover & Parry, 2008), which makes it particularly valuable to youth. Summer camps provide opportunities for new relationships to be formed increasing the potential for social capital to be developed (Thurber, Scanlin, Scheuler & Henderson, 2007;

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Henderson, Whitaker, Bialeschki, Scanlin, & Thurber, 2007; Van Ingen & Van Eijck, 2009; Carruthers, 2013).

Thurber et al., (2007) conducted the first study to use a nationally representative sample to demonstrate that accredited summer camps of a minimum of 1-week in duration provide positive youth development to some degree for most children. They observed growth within four domains: (1) positive identity, (2) social skills, (3) physical and thinking skills, and (4) positive values and spirituality. Positive identity represented self-esteem and independence. Social skills summarized leadership, friendship skills, social comfort, and peer relationships. Physical and thinking skills represented adventure/exploration and environmental. Finally positive values and spirituality referred to values/decisions and spirituality. The study determined that the most gains campers experienced were independence, leadership, social comfort and peer relationships. They highlighted the importance of a sustained and engaging experience in an environment of supports and opportunities.

Similarly Henderson et al. (2007) focused on parental perceptions of the positive developmental outcomes of the camp experience. Their study also demonstrated the ability of the camp experience to contribute to positive developmental gains within youth, particularly in the areas of independence, making friends, peer relationships, and leadership. The positive development outcomes identified by Thurber et al., (2007) and Henderson et al., (2007) are consistent with the Five Cs of youth development (Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004).

The literature examining the positive developmental benefits of attending summer camp is growing (Thurber et al., 2007; Henderson et al., 2007; Carruthers, 2013). Much of it speaks to the value of the social aspect of these camps. However, these studies fail to provide any explanations for this development. This study will contribute to the literature by demonstrating

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that not all of the Five Cs of youth development have equal value. I position the social aspects of *contribution* (social capital) and *connections* (social support), as holding particular importance and influence the development of the other areas. This thesis will examine how and why social capital and social support may explain positive development outcomes (personal development) at camp, and how the relationship may differ according to gender and age. Service providers for youth are increasingly required to demonstrate that their programs result in positive growth, and the results of this study will help provide insight for the development of new beneficial interventions and provide the rationale for their use in future programs. The research questions to be addressed are as follows:

1. *Do females experience greater increases in personal development as explained by their social capital and social support?*

2. *Do older children experience greater increases in personal development as explained by their social capital and social support?*

3. *Do social capital and social support influence personal development within a camp setting?*

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section defines concepts relevant to my thesis research, including youth development, social capital and social support. In this chapter, I examine the "Five Cs" of youth development and the role social capital (contribution) and social support (connections) may play in development of the remaining outcomes. Moreover, in consultation with the literature, I attempt to explain through a constructed theoretical model of Positive Youth Development the interplay among these constructs by providing an overview of (1) how and why social capital and social support may explain positive development outcomes (personal development), and (2) how the relationship may differ according to gender and age.

Defining Key Terms

Youth Development

Youth development is comprised of a number of positive developmental goals/outcomes. One of the main goals of youth development is to focus on assets, as opposed to weaknesses:

> *Youth development is more than helping one young person at a time; it entails the creation of a range of contexts or settings, including people and activities that promote youth development* (Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004, p. 17).

Positive youth development programs aim to use individual assets to help develop areas that may not be as strong. Henderson et al. (2007) identified two types of assets: internal and external. In their words,

> *The internal assets include commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity, whereas the external assets include support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time* (p.992)

Similarly, Hamilton and Hamilton (2004) summarize the five main goals of youth development: 1) competence, 2) character, 3) connections, 4) confidence, and 5) contribution. These "Five Cs"

coincide with the internal and external assets that serve as the foundation for positive youth development (Henderson, et al., 2007). The "Five Cs" will be discussed in more detail in the next section as components of positive youth development.

First, *competence* refers to the knowledge and skills a person possesses that allows him or her to function effectively in a variety of circumstances (Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004). A competent individual will be able to understand, adapt, and act on the environment in order to accomplish what they intend, or at least achieve as much as possible. Deci and Ryan (2008) also identify competence as a necessary component of self-determination theory, along with autonomy and relatedness. Autonomy relates to an individual's ability to make decisions for one's self and relatedness pertains to social connections and relationships that reinforce norms and beliefs, provide support and allow a person to feel connected to others (Deci & Ryan, 2008). A person's character is influenced by these social connections, and in turn that affects their development.

Second, character, (Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004), is what makes a person intend to do what is just, right, and good. In other words, the distinctive mental and moral qualities one possesses. As mentioned briefly above, social networks and relationships can have an enormous impact on the choices a person makes. These relationships can have both positive and negative effects on an individual's character.

Third, *connections* refers to "positive bonds with people and institutions that are reflected in exchanges between the individual and his or her peers, family, school, and community in which both parties contribute to the relationship"(Zarrett & Lerner, 2008, p.2). They have both positive and negative impacts on an individual. Positive social relationships with high morals and standards will influence an individual to make better choices, as opposed to delinquent peers that

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may influence more destructive decisions (Prinstein, Boergers & Spirito, 2001). These positive

social relations occur most frequently with adults, but can also be with peers and younger

children (Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004). Young people gain competence and character by being

connected with others, especially caring adults (Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004). Furthermore their

competence and character leads to new connections. These connections also help develop

confidence, which is the fourth goal of youth development.

Fourth, *confidence* pertains to the assuredness a person requires to act effectively. It

enables an individual to demonstrate competence and character in challenging situations

(Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004). Self-esteem and self-confidence are often confused as thought of

as interchangeable. They are quite similar and connected, but there is a distinct difference. Self-

esteem is generally the evaluation one makes about themselves that indicate a self-judgment of

personal worth or value (Zimmerman, Copeland, Shope & Dielman, 1997). Self-confidence in

comparison relates to the sense of trust in one's abilities and competencies and perceived

capability to deal effectively with various situations (Cheng & Furnham, 2002). If one has self-

confidence they believe they have worth. Knowledge, skills and abilities can be viewed as

valuable resources for other individuals, leading to potential social capital gains when resources

can be shared within a social network.

Fifth, *contribution* pertains to one's ability to give to others, and to not simply act for

self-centered purposes (Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004). This relates to Putnam's (2001)

requirements for social capital of trust and reciprocity. If one is to benefit from membership in a

social network, they must be able to contribute and provide other assets to the social group. It is

clear that each youth developmental goal is impacted by social relationships. These

developmental goals/outcomes are treated as having equal value in youth development. Is this the case? Or do the social aspects have a greater influence on positive developmental outcomes?

The sociometer theory helps to further explain the impact of these relationships on individual well-being and development (Leary, 1999). This theory proposes that the self-esteem system evolved as a monitor of social acceptance. The self-esteem motive is not simply to maintain self-esteem, but to avoid rejection and social devaluation (Leary, 1999). This theory suggests self-esteem serves as a psychological meter or gauge that monitors the quality of relationships with others to determine the degree that people value and accept them.

If one observes cues that one's value is decreasing according to others, the decrease in self-esteem will motivate behaviours aimed at enhancing the relational evaluation. In other words, if an individual feels that a friend no longer sees the relationship being of value, the individual will behave in such a way to try and restore or increase the value of the friendship. Similarly, if the individual observes cues that suggest an increase in value according to others, he or she will experience an increase in self-esteem. This theory suggests that people must be responsive to others perceptions and reactions to protect interpersonal relationships versus internal integrity. The sociometer theory highlights the importance of social acceptance to human well-being (Leary, 1999). Baumeister and Leary (1995) also highlight the importance of social connections. Their review of the literature showed multiple links between the need to belong, emotional patterns, behavioural responses, and health and well-being. This literature provides theoretical justification supporting the selection of social capital and social support as key factors in the examination of personal development at camp.

An adopted theoretical model of positive youth development within the context of summer camp is outlined in Figure 1. Social Capital (good citizen) and Social support (social

integration) and Personal Development were selected from the five themes identified in phase

two of the Canadian Summer Camp Research Project (CSCRP) (Glover, Chapeskie, Mock,

Mannell & Feldberg., 2011). The main youth development goals (Five Cs) were incorporated

from Hamilton and Hamilton (2004): competence, character, connections, confidence, and

contribution.

Summer Camp

Social Capital	Positive Developmental Outcomes
(E.g. Contribution)	(Personal development)
&	Eg. Competence, Character, Confidence
Social Support	
(E.g. Connections)	
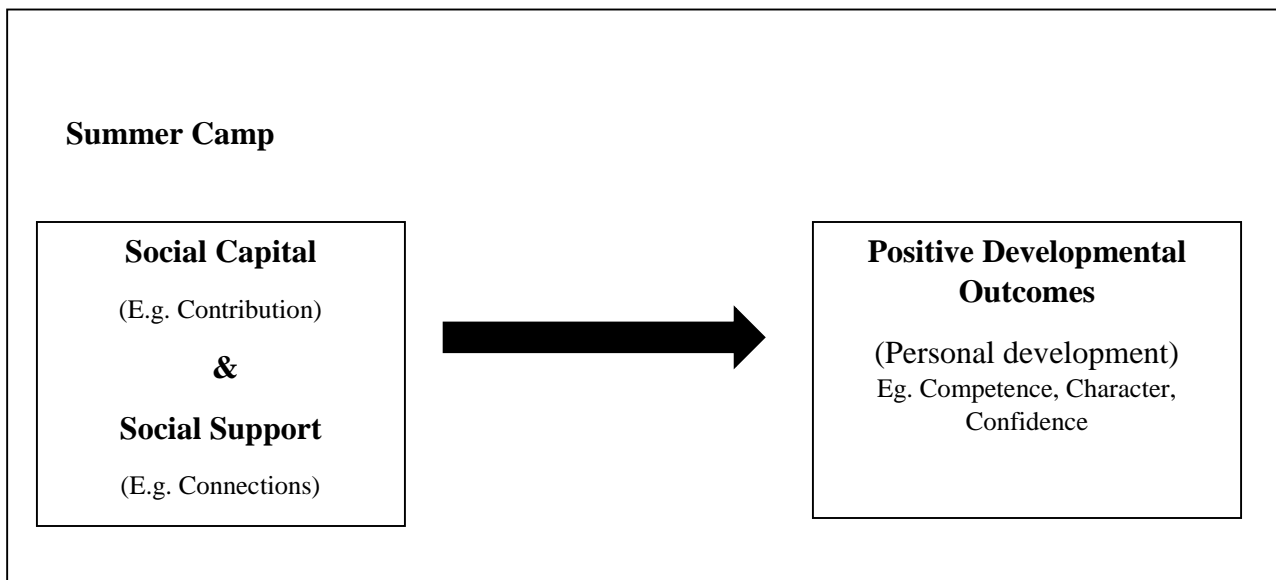
Figure 1. Positive Youth Development Model in a Summer Camp Setting

Individual *character* is often shaped by membership in social relationships. Character can

be influenced by social relationships in a number of ways. Pressure experienced from friends

participating in risky and negative health behaviours such as binge drinking and smoking, can

lead to an individual making similar choices, despite the negative impact on their health and

well-being. Likewise, social groups that value traits such as regular physical activity and good

nutrition habits can influence individuals to make similar choices and form a positive value

system impacting their individual character. These values and norms are established and reinforced by various social groups, in various social settings.

This reinforcement experienced through peer groups can lead to increases in confidence. Social groups can provide support and encouragement to members in challenging times when confidence has been diminished (Resnick & Rosenheck, 2008). Competence and confidence seemingly go hand in hand. One requires confidence to put one's skills and abilities to good use, and one acquires competence when others acknowledge those skills and abilities.

Current research on one's ability to give selflessly others, states that both males and females experience greater developmental outcomes when they contribute and do things for others (Schwartz, Keyl, Marcum & Bode, 2009). This helping behavior can also lead to more social capital gains. Van Ingen and Van Eijck (2009) found that in the leisure context, individuals who are already gifted in high levels of civic engagement and helping behaviours experience greater social capital gains.

Given that each of the Five Cs may be influenced both positively and negatively by their connections and contribution, I believe that these two variables have a significant impact on positive youth development. Thus they should be examined in detail particularly with respect to their role in personal development in a camp setting. This study will demonstrate that individual connections and contribution have an impact on the development experienced at camp, and potentially other settings.

The Camp Setting

The camp setting itself may also have a significant impact on the personal development experienced. Individuals are grouped together in tents or cabin settings and often eat and participate in a wide range of activities as a group. This 24 hours-a-day social group is an intense

opportunity to make new connections, develop social competencies, and acquire social capital. The nature of the activities experienced at camp and the opportunities for choice and skill development make camps a particularly valuable setting. There is extensive literature examining the use of camps for their therapeutic benefits with different groups such as chronic mental patients, cancer patients, children with autism, and youth with disabilities.

Much of this literature examines changes in social status and the ability of camps to facilitate social interactions. Gesler (1992) defines these as therapeutic landscapes. He defines therapeutic landscapes as those that have restorative qualities for environmental, individual, and societal reasons. Gesler (1992) expanded the traditional definition of geography to include the social structures within those settings, rather than simply the interaction of physical and human processes. He notes that these settings instill a strong sense of place, which can be attributed to the physical surroundings, historical context, and release from the routines and demands of daily life (Gesler, 1992). Although this study will not make a comparison between the camp setting and other settings, the potential therapeutic value of the camp setting reinforces the potential for personal development as a result of a camp experience and should be acknowledged and considered for future research.

Social Capital and Social Support

Most definitions of social capital speak to the value of membership in social networks in the form of gaining access to resources that would be otherwise unavailable without such membership (Glover et al., 2005). Portes, as cited in Lesser (2000), states that "to possess social capital, a person must be related to others, and it is those others, not himself, who are the actual source of his or her advantage"(p. 48). Members within a social group must feel a sense of trust and reciprocity within the relationships or social capital cannot exist (Glover & Parry, 2008).

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Friendships have been found to play a particularly important role in managing stressful life events. Glover and Parry's (2008) study of friendships developed subsequent of a stressful life event is an example of the impact of social capital on health. Specifically, they examined women coping with infertility and the friendships they formed with other women experiencing the same life challenge. In Taylor et al's (2002) words,

> *Friendship has been identified as a potential contributor to health and well-being, in large part, because of its links to social support, which has long been associated with health benefits of all kinds, including improved physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual health* [as cited in Glover & Parry, 2008, p. 209].

Individual health and well-being is influenced by social capital developed between friends as it can facilitate both expressive (e.g., emotional support) and instrumental (e.g., favours) action (Lin, 2001 as cited in Glover & Parry, 2008). Glover and Parry (2008) identified three themes pertaining to the development of social capital. They identified both positive and negative impacts. Social capital allowed participants to (1) get by, (2) get ahead, and (3) fall behind. Youth development literature similarly aims to develop necessary skills for youth to *get by* and *get ahead*. Social capital and social support hold clear relevance when examining positive development outcomes.

There are a number of factors that may influence one's ability to develop social capital and social support. Similarly the outcomes influenced by their development will be modified by multiple other factors. The next section will identify the variables expected to have an impact on personal development experienced at camp. Social capital and social support are depicted as potential mediators (Figure 2).
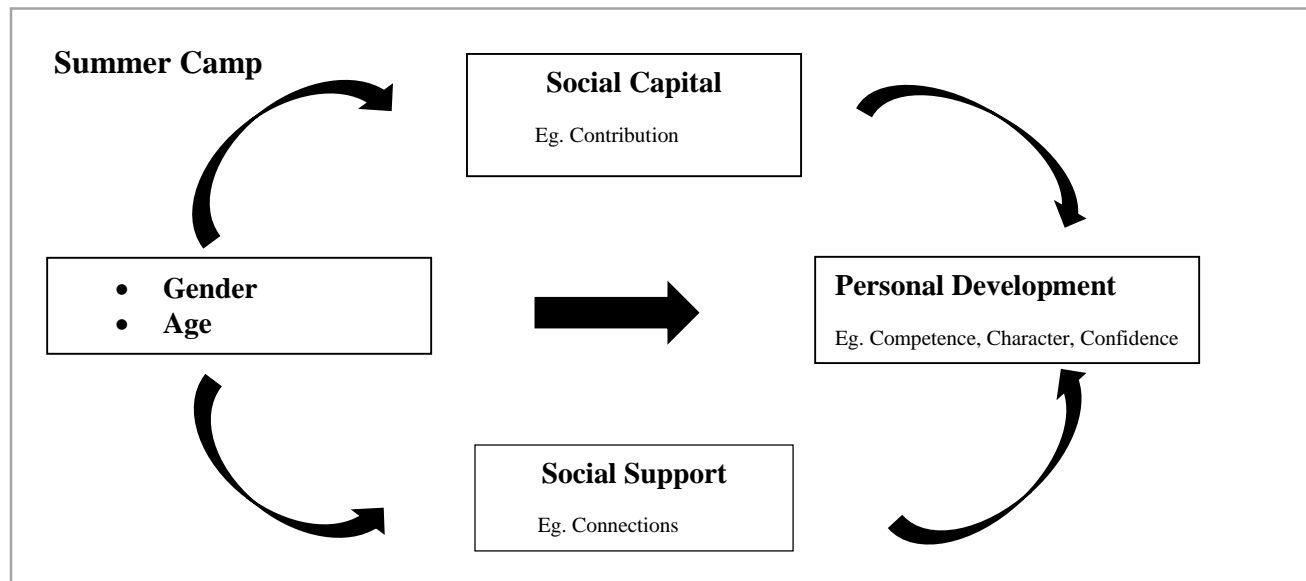
Figure 2. The Influence of Gender and Age on Personal Development as Mediated by Social Capital and Social Support

Gender and Age

Previous studies examining youth development outcomes at camp failed to reach any conclusive findings related to gender and age differences at camp (Thurber et al., 2007; Henderson et al., 2007). Thurber et al. (2007) selected campers aged 8-14. They chose to examine if longer camp stays contributed to greater changes, if intentionally focusing on spiritual development led to greater development in that area, if campers with greater development deficits or room for growth would show the greatest gains and finally if children who enjoyed camp the most experienced the greatest developmental gains. Thurber et al. (2007) expected that longer durations at camp would lead to greater development gains. However, this dosage effect was not supported. They speculated that longer durations at camp might strain peer relationships.

There were inconclusive findings related to age, although unsurprisingly a slight relationship between age and development in a few constructs was found. This outcome suggests there may be younger campers who did not make gains during a longer camp stay, but they were offset by others where the optimal point was surpassed and negative effects resulted. No gender differences were found. The data were collected from both the parents and campers. It would be difficult to examine gender differences unless each parent had both a male and a female child to compare. This analysis was not feasible in their study. Despite these gaps, the findings of the study support theories pertaining to positive youth development that predict multidimensional growth at camp.

Henderson et al. (2007) did not examine gender or age differences at all. They examined if parental perceptions of the developmental benefits of camp were aligned with actual development at camp. Due to the nature of the research questions and the data collected, comparisons could not be made, which further highlights the importance of future research examining these differences.

Despite the lack of research examining these important differences at camp, it is not difficult to make the argument that males and females have very different experiences in most situations. Much of these differences are due to socially constructed norms and expectations for each gender. For example, girls are typically expected to be caring, nurturing and emotional, and boys are to be strong, competitive and not ruled by emotions (Eagly, 2013). From a very young age these expectations are reinforced through such things as the types of toys they are expected to play with and the behaviours they are to demonstrate. Girls are taught to be polite, helpful, and kind, whereas there tends to be more leniency towards boys that is influenced by a "boys will be boys" attitude. For girls, these skills and attributes are developed and reinforced very early and

may be further developed than boys (Eagly, 2013). Schwartz et al., (2009) identified such gender differences in altruistic practices. These gender and age differences may also appear in the structure of peer networks.

Peer Network Structures

Gender differences in friendships may also play in important role in how girls and boys experience summer camp differently. Urberg, Değirmencioğlu, Tolson, and Halliday-Scher (1995) examined differences in the structure of adolescent peer networks. They identified both gender and age differences. Girls were more integrated in school social networks than boys. Girls were also found to make and receive more friendship choices than boys. Girls had an advantage over boys in terms of developing more friendships, but by also focusing their friendship choices on other girls, they were also more likely to have more mutual choices.

Duck and Wright (1993) completed two studies related to gender differences in friendships. The first compared gender differences in the purpose of friendships. The second compared how they reported on the strength or quality of the friendships. Previous developmental psychology research on friendships explained them as having either an expressive or instrumental purpose. Females had previously been associated with expressive relationships and males with instrumental. Duck and Wright (1993) found that instead, males and females have similar purposes for friendships, both instrumental and expressive, but that females are more likely to overtly demonstrate those expressive characteristics. Females also tended to respond more positively about friendship strength and value in regard to levels of emotional expression and permanence. Their findings suggest that females will have an overall advantage over boys by how they view friendships as well as their more overt expressive nature.

Urberg et al. (1995) identified some interesting findings on diversity within friendship groups. Girls were more likely to identify a best friend and hold membership in a clique, but had less diversity within their friend groups. Boys, having less intimacy in their friendships, allows for more diversity, which can be disruptive in friendships with girls where intimacy is higher. When considering these structural differences in a camp setting, it is possible that the camp setting and duration may alleviate potential diversity challenges with girls, but may not address lower levels of intimacy in male friendships.

When examining grade (age) effects, it was determined that, as adolescents progressed through grades (6-12), they became more selective and experienced fewer offers (Urberg et al., 1995). This increase in selectivity is likely due to increases in social cognitive skills, as well as an increase in the value of reciprocity and intimacy between friends (Urberg et al., 1995). In this study, I suggest that older campers will experience greater development largely due to increases in social cognitive skills and general developmental readiness prior to the camp experience.

Some significant gender differences exist as well in general relationships outside of friendships. In particular, there are significant gender differences in helping behaviours. Schwartz et al., (2009) suggest that future interventions aimed at teaching altruistic practices should have different content for males and females. Interventions for males should focus on enhancing helpfulness around the family home. Females require the opposite, and need to be provided opportunities to get them out of the family home. Females could benefit as well from programs that teach a balance between helping others and setting limits as they often over-identify and believe that "their problems are my problems" (Schwartz et al., 2009). As a result it is to be expected that their social experiences and potential positive outcomes within a camp

setting will vary. In particular, I suggest that females will experience greater increases in personal development at camp as a result of more developed social skills, social capital and social support.

Social status can also have a significant impact on the formation of social capital and resulting benefits. "Lin (2001) proposed social structures tend to be hierarchical and relationships within the structure are rank-ordered usually in terms of class, authority, and/or status. Devine and Parr (2008) identified three main assumptions of social capital and hierarchy in social structures. The first assumption is that a member who holds a significant number of resources/benefits can expect to be "borrowed from" more frequently than other members. The second assumption is that some resources are valued more than others, and that individuals with higher ranked resources will in turn be ranked higher in social status. The final assumption identified by Devine and Parr (2008) is that these social structures tend to be shaped like a pyramid, with more members near the bottom of the structure and fewer at the top. An individual's ability to form new relationships seems to play a significant role in the development of social capital as well as increasing their overall rank within the social network.

The literature examining the developmental benefits of attending camps during your youth is growing. However, these studies do not generally provide explanations for this development or bring insight to important gender and age differences (Mahoney, Larson, Eccles, & Lord, 2005; Bouffard, Wimer, Caronongan, Little, Dearing, & Simpkins, 2006; Henderson et al., 2007; Thurber et al., 2007). This research is required to inform service providers of appropriate and beneficial interventions for youth of different genders and age groups.

Hamilton and Hamilton (2004) acknowledge that when designing youth development programs, one cannot assume that each of the domains are developed the same way for each

individual. Gender is a challenge because in some situations boys and girls require different

opportunities (Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004; Schwartz et al., 2009). Hamilton and Hamilton

(2004) note the sometimes "gender is less important than race or class or age or simply interests

and aspirations"(p. 12). These distinctions or potential modifiers ought to be considered when

examining social capital and youth development in any setting.

> *Youth programs and organizations affect participants differently. Outcomes will never be uniform regardless of how good programs and organizations are. Such inescapable differences reinforce the importance of both variety and choice. One activity is not developmentally appropriate and enhancing for all"*(Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004, p. 14).

In summary, positive youth development is dependent on maintaining a balance in the

five areas of competence, character, connections, confidence, and contribution (Hamilton &

Hamilton, 2004). The two areas most likely to get out of balance are connections (social health)

and confidence (mental health). These two areas are sometimes dangerously connected as they

each have an impact on the other. One's connections can help develop confidence, and high

levels of confidence can lead to the development of new connections. If there is a decrease in

either, both will likely be negatively affected. The literature examined in this section has

demonstrated that the main developmental goals of youth development and social relationships

are inextricably aligned. In relation to youth camps and the benefits associated with participation,

several areas of concern and gaps in the literature were identified. Gender and age have been

identified as important variables that warrant closer attention. The current literature examining

youth development and camps does not look at the impact of these variables or how these

relationships may be mediated by social capital and social support. This study hopes to address

these gaps. The purpose of this study is to examine how gender and age impact the development

of personal development in a camp setting. This relationship will also be examined as mediated

by social capital and social support. Listed below are the primary research questions:

1. *Do females experience greater increases in personal development as explained by their social capital and social support?*

2. *Do older children experience greater increases in personal development explained by their social capital and social support?*

3. *Do social capital and social support influence personal development within a camp setting?*

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

This section will outline the research methods for this study, including a description of the survey and the survey sample. A brief description of quantitative methods and secondary data analysis will be included, followed by information related to how the data was collected, and the specific variables that will be analyzed.

Quantitative Method

Due to the nature of the data collected, quantitative analysis will be utilized in this study. Quantitative research is a means for testing theories by examining relationships between variables (Creswell, 2009). Furthermore, after a series of tests are completed to examine these relationships, the hope is that generalizations can be made about the relationships in a variety of contexts. For this study, the data was collected within the context of multiple Canadian summer camps. The goal of this study is to explore how and why social capital and social support may contribute to personal development at camp, and how the relationship may differ by gender and age. The intent is to extend the relevance of its findings to other youth development settings, such as school programs and sports teams.

Secondary Data Analysis

Secondary data analysis involves the analysis of a previously collected data set in a separate study, usually examining a different research question (Miller & Brewer, 2003). There are many advantages to completing secondary data analysis. Advantages as identified by Hofferth (2005) are cost and access, sample size, timeliness and availability. There are limited costs when using secondary data analysis as a research method because all of the data collection costs have been incurred in the initial study. An existing data set with a sample size of over 1,000

participants allows for the examination of cause and effect relationships. Obtaining data that is readily available with such an extensive sample is rare for a masters thesis.

Hofferth (2005) also offers some words of caution pertaining to secondary data analysis. Researchers must be careful to ensure that their research question is a good fit with the data set (Hofferth, 2005). Another complication of using secondary data analysis is having to learn and accurately understand how the data was collected, measured, and analyzed. This can take time, but is a necessary step to ensure that the new research is valid and accurately represents the data (Hofferth, 2005).

The existing national dataset from Phase 2 of the *Canadian Summer Camp Research Project* (CSCRP2) was utilized in this study. The CSCRP2 aimed to examine changes in camper behaviours, attitudes and values in camp settings across Canada. Five themes were constructed during Phase 1 of the CSCRP to represent these changes (social integration and citizenship, environmental awareness, self-confidence and personal development, emotional intelligence, and attitudes towards physical activity). The themes were examined separately against age, gender and new/returning campers. This thesis examines gender and age as predictors of personal development at camp. Social capital and social support are used as mediators of this relationship.

The CSCRP2 data set includes repeated measures, as data was collected at two time points. The first, 48 hours after arriving at camp and the second within the last 48 hours. Accordingly, cause and effect relationships can be examined. Longitudinal analysis is something few Master's theses are able to do. There should be some caution when interpreting the causal nature of this relationship as additional time points would further strengthen the findings of this study.

The Survey

This thesis uses secondary data from CSCRP2, which examined the potential developmental benefits gained through a Canadian summer camp experience. Healthy Communities Research Network designed and administered the CSCRP2, which was funded by the Canadian Camping Association (CCA), the University of Waterloo/Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada seed grant program, and the University of Waterloo Robert Harding Humanities and Social Science Endowment Fund (Glover et al., 2011). The study received ethics clearance from the University of Waterloo.

There were two main goals of the CSCRP. They were: 1) to understand in what areas campers experience positive outcomes based on their camp experiences, 2) to measure the degree of developmental change in these areas experienced over the course of a camp experience. Five themes were constructed in Phase 1 of the CSCRP2 study: (1) Social integration and citizenship; (2) environmental awareness; (3) self-confidence and personal development; (4) emotional intelligence; and (5) attitudes towards physical activity. Camper behaviours, attitudes and values were examined according to these five themes. Counselors were surveyed to document their observations of the campers at the beginning of the camp session. Comparisons were made at the end of the camp experience as counselors were surveyed again to note the changes they observed in the campers.

This study was limited to observing changes in personal development. Social capital, using the good citizen scale, and social support, using the social integration scale, were examined as mediators of the changes in personal development for this research.

Canadian summer camps that hold membership with CCA were invited to participate in the study. Study materials were sent via email to camps that volunteered their participation. The

package included the following items: (1) the survey instrument; (2) complete detailed instructions for conducting the study; and (3) letters that were to be given to participants (e.g., counselors, staff, campers and their legal guardians) that provided information about the study (Appendix A,B,C,D). Previous summer camp studies influenced the survey components used (American Camp Association, 2005 a,b). The researchers developed additional questions based upon personal insights and through the adopted use of existing scales. The construct of social capital was assessed using 6 items. These questions were developed by Troy Glover, the principal investigator, whose main area of expertise is social capital. Social support (social integration) was constructed through 4 items related to camper's ability to make new friend and support received from others. This thesis examined gender and age as predictors of personal development gains at camp. Social capital and social support were used as mediators of this relationship.

Survey Sample

Surveys were completed at 16 camps across Canada. There were 8 camps from Ontario, 3 from Quebec, 3 from Nova Scotia, and 2 from British Columbia. A total of 1, 288 campers were observed. Participants were obtained through convenience sampling method. A relatively representative breakdown of almost every demographic area was achieved. The majority of camps identified themselves as being co-ed. Only 2 camps were exclusively female, and 1 was exclusively male. There was an almost even split between residential camps (9) and day camps (7). The ages of campers ranged from 3-18 years with an even split in genders. The mean age = 10.44 (SD= 3.05). Age group frequencies were as follows: 4-6 yrs = 14%; 7-9 yrs = 22%; 10-12 yrs = 37%; and 13-18yrs = 27%.

The survey used repeated measures evaluation design. Data was collected by camp staff/counselors (no demographics available). No formal training was provided to the counselors, but set-by-step instructions were included in the survey (Appendix B). Counselors were required to observe their campers at two time points: The first observations were to be made within the first 48 hours, and the second observations within the last 48 hours of the camp experience. They were to reflect on camper behaviours and attitudes as they fit under the 5 categories previously identified in Phase 1 of the CSCRP: (1) Social integration and citizenship; (2) environmental awareness; (3) self-confidence and personal development; (4) emotional intelligence; and (5) attitudes towards physical activity. The CSCRP2 revealed significant changes in attitudes and behaviours over the course of the camp experience.

Survey Variables

The following section will provide descriptions for the independent, dependent and control variables. The independent variables are gender and age and the dependent variable is personal development. Social capital and social support are the mediating variables of these relationships.

Independent Variable

The independent variables for this study are gender and age. Gender was found to be a significant main effect for all 6 outcome variables in the original study (Glover et al., 2011). Girls were found to have higher mean scores in good citizen (Girls, M = 5.20, Boys, M = 4.79), social integration (Girls, M = 4.94, Boys, M = 4.57), personal development (Girls, M = 5.15; Boys, M = 4.90), environmental awareness (Girls, M = 4.60, Boys, M = 4.34), and emotional intelligence (Girls, M = 4.83, Boys, M = 4.42). In contrast, boys scored higher in physical

activity attitudes (Girls, M = 4.99, Boys, M = 5.14) (Glover et al., 2011)[1]. Gender differences were examined in this study. This variable was coded as female = 1, male = 0.

Age was found to have a significant impact on the degree of change experienced by campers in Phase 2 of the CSCRP with all six of the outcome variables. According to their findings, older campers appeared to experience the greatest increases in their scores, particularly in four areas: good citizen, social integration, personal development, and physical activity attitudes. This study also observed the impact of age. Age was operationalized as a ratio level measurement using codes identical to the number provided (E.g. 5 = 5 years old).

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable for this study is personal development. The personal development measure was the mean score of 8 questions relating to self-confidence and personal development (α= .87). The questions found in Section C are as follows: "The camper appears to be confident in him/herself"; "This camper needs help with most things he/she does"; "This camper appears to do fine without his/her parents"; "This camper is good at doing things on his/her own"; " This camper makes good decisions"; "This camper likes to try new things"; "This camper has an accurate understanding of his/her personal limits"; "This camper appears to feel good about him/herself". A 7 point scale was used to rank responses (1= very strongly disagree and 7= very strongly agree). Responses were taken at two time points (First 48 hours and Last 48 hours). The 8 items were individually factor analyzed with varimax rotation. The items were deemed reliable and internally consistent by the original research team. The survey containing sections A and C can be found in Appendix A.

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[1] Access to the standard deviations was not obtained, thereby explaining the absence of this information.

Mediating Variables

Social capital (good citizen) and social support (social integration) were used in this study as mediating variables. Mediation suggests that the independent variable influences the mediator, which influences the dependent variable. The good citizen scale was the mean score of 6 questions ($\alpha = .88$). These questions were located in Section A: Social connections at camp. A 7 point scale was used to answer questions pertaining to camper contribution to the group, ability to get along with others and sense of pride of membership in the camp community (1= very strongly disagree and 7= very strongly agree). Responses were given at Time 1 (First 48 hours) and Time 2 (Last 48 hours). The six questions for the good citizen scale are as follows: "This camper gives to other campers as much as he/she receives from them"; "This camper exhibits a sense of pride about being a member of his/her counselor group"; "This camper exhibits a sense of pride about being a member of his/her camp"; "This camper resolves personal conflicts in a positive manner"; "This camper gets along with other campers"; and "This camper gets along with camp staff" (Appendix A). The 6 items were deemed reliable and internally consistent by the original research team through individual factor analysis using varimax rotation. The mean of the standardized deviations for the 6 items were used to represent social capital.

Social support (social integration) is the other mediating variable for this study. The social integration scale was the mean score of 4 items regarding making friends at camp and the support a camper receives from others ($\alpha = .82$). The questions for the social integration scale are as follows: " The camper has a group of closer friends at camps from which he/she can draw support"; "The camper has friends at camp besides those in his/her counselor group"; "When needed the camper receives emotional support from his/her fellow campers"; "When needed, the camper receives other kinds of support from his/her fellow campers". The 4 items were

individually analyzed through factor analysis using varimax rotation. They were deemed reliable and internally consistent by the original research team. All 12 questions from Section A: Social Connections at camp were factor analyzed. Two of the questions were outliers in the factor analyses and were omitted. The two questions were "This camper befriends other campers different from him/herself" and "This camper befriends other campers similar to him/herself".

Research by Van Ingen and Van Eijck (2009) found that individuals that are already gifted in high levels of civic engagement (social capital) and helping behaviours (social support) experience greater social capital gains. These findings in particular led to examining this relationship within the context of a camp setting.

Data Analysis

Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS software to observe social capital and social support prior to the camp experience as a predictor for change in personal development over the course of a camp experience. Descriptive statistics (means and frequencies) were used to achieve an understanding of the sample and demographic characteristics that were controlled for in the analysis. Three linear regression models were constructed to examine the association of social capital and social support prior to the camp experience and personal development, and the impact that social capital and social support gained during the camp experience may have on this association. The first model included the demographic characteristics/control variables and the following models introduced social capital and social support and the mediating variables. Preacher and Hayes (2008) developed a method called bootstrapping, which was used to test multiple mediators simultaneously. A mediator acts as another variable, which "represents the generative mechanism through which the focal independent variable is able to influence the dependent variable of interest" (Baron & Kenny, 1986, p. 1173). This study explored how social

capital and social support mediate the relationship between gender and personal development and age and personal development. The method of bootstrapping allowed for the examination of how two mediators independently impact the relationship between the independent and dependent variable, as well as a statistical comparison between mediators (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

This study was conducted to examine the relationship between age and gender and personal development and the mediating impact of social capital and social support. A conceptual model has been identified (Figure 2), and in this chapter it will be used to report the findings. The average age group for the sample was 10.44 (SD = 3.05). The sample was approximately half female (49.06%). Only 8% of the sample was identified as coming from a minority language background, and therefore ethnicity was removed from the initial study as an independent variable. Personal development, social capital, and social support scores all increased from Time 1 to Time 2 as represented by Means. (See Table 1)

Table 1. *Means and Frequencies for Demographics, Personal development, Social capital, and Social support variables.*

| Variables | Campers | |
	M/Percent	*SD*
Demographics		
Age	10.44	3.05
Female	49.06	--
Personal Development		
Time 1	4.87	0.76
Time 2	5.17	0.90
Social Capital		
Time 1	4.81	0.87
Time 2	5.15	1.00
Social Support		
Time 1	4.50	0.90
Time 2	4.99	0.99

Participants also experienced increases from Time 1 to Time 2 in both Social Capital and Social Support scores (Table 1). Regression analysis was used to determine if the control variables were significantly associated with social capital and social support. Bootstrapping followed to reveal the association of the mediators with the relationship between both gender

and personal development and age and personal development. Each was examined

separately. (See Table 2)

Table 2. *Unstandardized Coefficients for Regression Models Showing Association of Demographics, Social Capital, Social Support, and Interaction terms with Personal Development.*

Variables	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	*SE*	*B*	*SE*
Constant	.49 ***	.11	.03	.08
Age	.01 *	.01	.01 *	.00
Female	.12 ***	.03	.01	.02
Pers. Dev. T1	.92 ***	.02	.72 ***	.02
Soc. Cap. T1	--		-.22 ***	.03
Soc. Cap. T2	--		.46 ***	.02
Soc. Supp. T1	--		-.08 ***	.02
Soc. Supp. T2	--		.11 ***	.02
Adjusted R^2	.66		.81	

Note. n=1179; *$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Gender Differences

Regression analysis revealed that gender was associated with increases in personal development. Age was also associated with increases in personal development. In the test for mediation for Model 1 (Preacher & Hayes, 2008), the total effect (*c*) of gender on personal development was significant ($B = .08$, $p < .01$). Females experienced more significant increases in personal development than males. Compared to the total effect, the direct effect (*c'*) of female gender and personal development was significantly reduced ($B = .01$) with the addition of social capital and social support to the model (See Figure 3). This indicates that social capital and

social support explain a significant portion of the association between gender and personal development gains in a camp setting.

The indirect effects (a_1b_1 and a_2b_2 paths) for both mediators were statistically significant (social capital, *point estimate* = .05, *SE* = .02, *upper confidence interval* = .09, *lower confidence interval* = .01; social support, *point estimate* = .22, *SE* = .01, *upper confidence interval* = .04, *lower confidence interval* = .01). When the two mediators were compared, there was minimal contrast, thus they equally explain the relationship (*point estimate* = .03, *SE* = .02, *upper confidence interval* = .0645, *lower confidence interval* = -.0035).
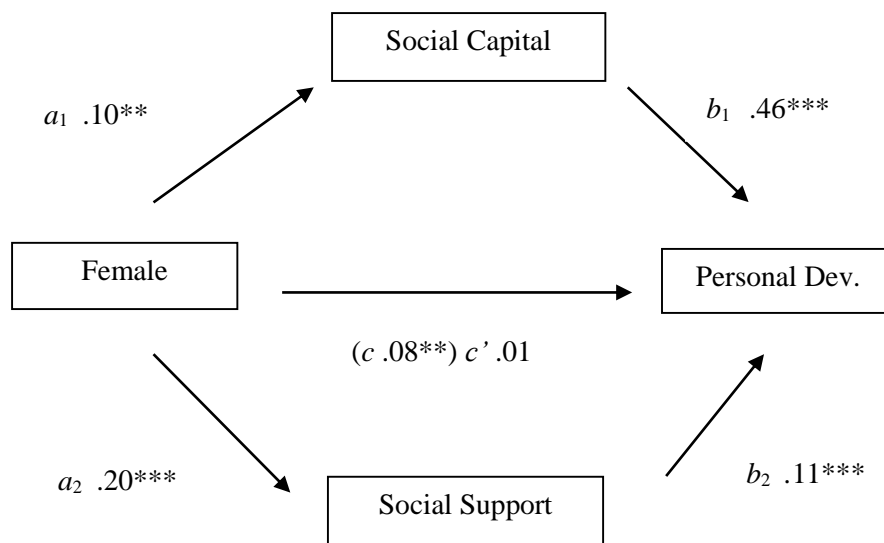
Figure 3. *Association of Gender and Personal Development Mediated by Social Capital and Social Suppor*t
Note: The value in parentheses is the unstandardized regression coefficient for the association between female gender and personal development before the addition of social capital and social support to the model.
n=1179; **p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001*

Age Differences

A similar approach was used to examine the relationship between age and change in personal development and the mediating impact of social capital and social support within those associations. Regression analysis in Model 2 revealed that age was associated with personal development (Figure 4). In the test for mediation (Preacher & Hayes, 2008) it was found that the total effect (c) of age on personal development was significant ($B = .015$, $p < .01$). The direct effect (c') of age and personal development was reduced ($B = .00$, $p < .05$) with the addition of social capital and social support to the model (See Figure 4).

The indirect effects (a_1b_1 and a_2b_2 paths) revealed that social capital and social support were statistically significant mediators (social capital, *point estimate* = .003, *SE* = .0027, *upper confidence interval* = .0086, *lower confidence interval* = -.0020; social support, *point estimate* = .0023, *SE* = .0009, *upper confidence interval* = .0045, *lower confidence interval* = .0008). When the two mediators were compared, only social support was found to be significant (*point estimate* = .00, *SE* = .00, *upper confidence interval* = .0062, *lower confidence interval* = -.0036). The relationship between age and personal development is partially explained by social support, but there are other factors not identified in this model. A small but significant association exists between age and personal development.
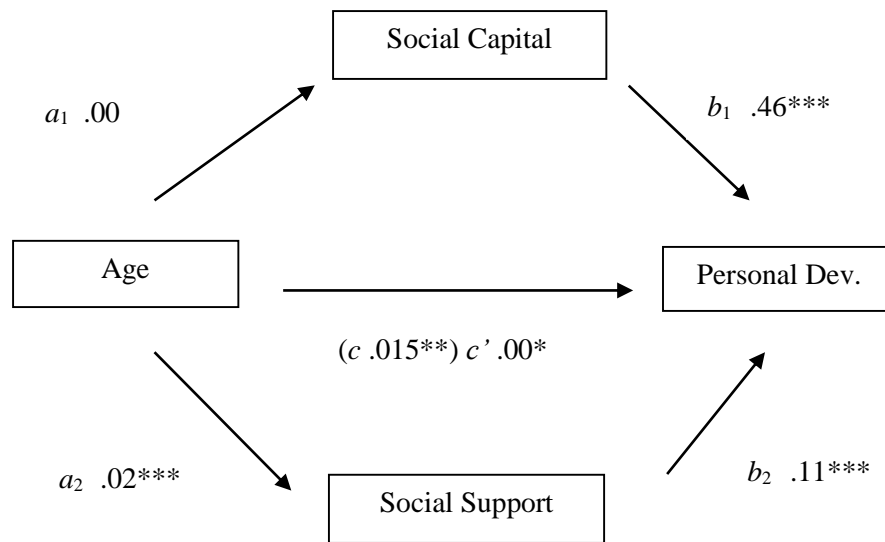
Figure 4. *Association of Age and Personal Development Mediated by Social Capital and Social Support*

Note: The value in parentheses is the unstandardized coefficient for the association between age and personal development before the addition of social capital and social support to the model.

*n=1179; *p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001*

     The major results of this study are that both gender and age are significantly associated with increases in personal development, although the direct effects are lower than expected. Social capital and social support have significant associations with personal development gains. In other words, neither age or gender account for a strong relationship to changes in personal development as measured in this study. Social capital and social support are important factors in the change in personal development.

Social capital as a mediating influence on personal development is much stronger than the direct relationship between gender and personal development. This suggests that the level of and ability to acquire social capital is an important influence on gains in personal development. In contrast the relationship between gender and social support is significant, but when examined as a mediating influence on personal development yields a significant but weaker association.

The model 2 findings show a moderate and significant relationship between social capital and personal development and a weaker but significant relationship between social support and personal development. This suggests there are other factors contributing to the variation in personal development than age. Older children do not consistently experience advances in personal development. A far more important element explaining changes in personal development from a camp experience is social capital.

It is possible that children more confident in new settings and more well-developed social tools may be represented in a camp setting at a higher level than the general population. Additionally, older children that may already have significant social capital and social support may be at or near an optimal level, and thereby lower increases in personal development possible over a short period of time at camp.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to examine the effect of gender and age on personal development at the completion of a camp experience. It also investigated the impact of two mediators, social capital and social support. Mediators may clarify the nature of the relationship between two other variables. Social Capital is measured using a good citizen scale developed by Glover et al., (2011). It consisted of camper contribution to the group, their ability to get along with others, and their pride of membership within the camp community (Appendix A). Social support is measured in this research by the social integration scale used by Glover et al., (2011). It focuses on the making of friends at camp and the support they receive from others (Appendix A).

This chapter will explore the findings of the study with respect to personal development, gender and age. This is followed by a discussion of strengths and weaknesses of the study, and the implications for future research and camp programming.

Social Capital, Social Support, and Personal Development

This study sought to answer three primary research questions and each is discussed below:

1. *Do female campers experience greater increases in personal development as explained by their social capital and social support?*

2. *Do older campers experience greater increases in personal development as explained by their social capital and social support?*

3. *Do social capital and social support explain personal development within a camp setting?*

Social capital and social support have been the subject of many studies. In this research, they are explored with respect to their mediating influence on personal development at camp. Other researchers have looked at positive development outcomes in youth. Hamilton and Hamilton (2004) highlighted multiple ways that social relations influenced positive developmental outcomes. They identified five concepts they believe to be important: competence, character, connections, confidence, and contribution. The conceptual framework for this research incorporated all of the Five Cs (See Figure 2). Instead of all of the developmental goals having equal importance, this research posits that contribution, in the form of social capital, and connections, in the form of social support, are particularly influential.

Eccles (1999) argued that out-of-school experiences give youth access to unique settings that foster growth experiences for adolescents to make autonomous decisions, expand peer relationships, and practice leadership. Research by Thurber et al. (2007) and Henderson et al. (2007) examined developmental outcomes, and focused on those developed at summer camp. They found that there are developmental gains from a camp experience. They highlighted significant increases in leadership, positive identity, and peer relationships. The literature suggests that camp is an important venue for the development of several positive development outcomes (Gesler, 1992), but little was known about the important factors and relationships among them before the work of Henderson et al. (2007).

Gesler (1992) suggests that camp serves as a unique therapeutic landscape that allows individuals to attempt new things, develop new skills, and explore new social roles. It may also be a temporary forum that allows for the acquisition of new sources of social capital and social support, which are shown to have a positive impact on personal development. To test this relationship, the model would need to be applied in school and out of school settings, but is

outside the parameters of this study. The common feature in the literature is that personal development can occur in many places and that there are many factors, which could enhance or interfere with this process. These findings are not surprising as one could anticipate that individuals with more developed social skills would experience greater opportunities for development as they have the social tools to make the most of this opportunity (Demaray, Malecki, Jenkins, & Cunningham, 2010).

The studies by Thurber et al. (2007) and Henderson et al. (2007) looked at developmental outcomes within the camp experience. They did not find any significant gender or age differences, but suggested they may be relevant to consider. The results of the current study suggests that there are both gender and age differences in personal development. These relationships were explored using the mediating variables of social capital and social support. The developmental levels of individuals examined prior to the camp experience are relevant factors to consider.

Camp is a unique setting that provides children more opportunities to develop skills that are not possible in a school setting. There are fewer strict time constraints and more opportunities for developing new social networks. The summer camp environment appears to be a setting particularly adept at nurturing social capital. It allows for shared experiences that contribute to stronger social bonds around a common interest (Gesler, 1992). These gains in personal development were observed for both genders and all ages. This research illustrated that both social capital and social support are important factors to consider when assessing the impact of camp on personal growth.

Gender Differences

The literature for most social research often notes gender and age differences. These differences were explored in the first research question: Do female campers experience greater increases in personal development in a camp setting? This research identified significant gender differences in developmental outcomes. Females were found to experience the greatest increases in personal development during their time at camp. Research by Eagly (2013) supports this finding. She notes that gender role socialization appears to have a significant impact on the behaviours and traits each gender is expected to uphold. In the words of Eagly (2013):

> *The power of expectancies to determine behaviours has been displayed in research on the behavioural confirmation of stereotypes (e.g. Snyder, 1981), including gender stereotypes. This research has provided impressive evidence that, at least under some circumstances, people act to confirm the stereotypic expectations that other people hold about their behavior. Stereotypes about women and men have yielded some of the most striking demonstrations of behavioural confirmation* (p. 15).

Girls are generally expected to be kind and nurturing, leading to the formation of meaningful friendships and social support networks. Girls are also expected to be helpful and contribute to tasks around the household typically more so than boys (Schwartz et al., 2009). These behaviours and skills are developed quite early on, and seem to place girls at an advantage over boys in terms of their development of meaningful relationships. Van Ingen and Van Eijck (2009) found that individuals already gifted in altruistic and helping behaviours tend to experience greater social capital gains, particularly in leisure settings. Schwartz et al. (2009) identified important gender differences that should be addressed in future interventions. These gender differences were demonstrated in this study. Females were found to have significant increases in personal development as explained by social capital and social support. This may be attributed to social skills developed early on, a sense of the importance of social support in their lives, and a need for positive social relationships (Urberg et al., 1995). A more prevalent "ethic

of care" in girls may also contribute to these differences. Skoe and Gooden (1993) found gender differences using the Ethic of Care Interview (ECI), which is a care-based morality measure. They found that girls tend to be more concerned about hurting others and the maintenance of friendships than boys. Boys were found to be more concerned about leisure activities and avoiding trouble. In Skoe and Gooden's (1993, p. 163) words, "Girls grow up with greater relational capacities and greater abilities to empathize and identify with others' feelings." For girls, these tools, developed early on for nurturing and friendship, would be expected to accelerate the positive outcomes of a camp experience.

These differences in relationships and relational capacities may impact upon multiple other settings: future employment opportunities, personal relationships and family bonds. The social capital literature identifies the importance of membership in social networks and gaining access to resources that would be otherwise unavailable (Glover et al., 2005). Two additional concepts include capital deficit, the process whereby subordinates receive worse outcomes, and return deficit, when similar social ties and networks lead to different outcomes (McDonald & Day, 2010). These explanations suggest that there are important interactional factors that must be considered. These include age, gender, race and other minorities. Within the social capital literature, Caucasian males have observed advantages over females and minorities (McDonald & Day, 2010).

Social capital literature that discusses capital deficit and return deficit highlights these significant gender differences. Comparing this literature suggest that although boys may not experience as much developmental benefits as girls at camp, camp still provides opportunities for new connections, which boys may make better use of than females. Capital deficit occurs when subordinate group members, such as females and minorities receive worse employment

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outcomes than dominant groups members (McDonald & Day, 2010). McDonald and Day (2010) found that women and minorities tend to have smaller social networks, resulting in less social capital to draw upon. They therefore lack access to as many informative, influential, and status conferring ties. As supported by the literature on gender differences in friendships, girls have a heavier reliance on strong ties with close friends and family, and have less diversity in their relationships (Duck & Wright, 1993; Urberg et al., 1995). McDonald and Day (2010) found that when women and minorities have contact with people that are different from themselves, they receive more promotional opportunities. Perhaps camp is a unique setting in that it is more accepting of diversity. Placing value on diversity in relationships may contribute to campers benefiting more from the connections made at camp and lead to lower levels of capital deficit. Future research should examine relationships made at camp and their impact on future employment opportunities and other long-term impacts.

Return deficit is another term used in the social capital literature. It occurs when similar types of social ties and networks leads to different outcomes (McDonald & Day, 2010). McDonald and Day (2010) found differences in how women and minorities utilize certain kinds of ties than men. They also note that various contacts may exert less effort for women and minorities than for males, particularly Caucasian males. In terms of specific camp programming, perhaps camps should also teach girls about the instrumental benefits of certain relationships and encourage them to stay in touch with the people they meet at camp. Future research should examine if camp connections help to narrow the gap in unequal access to social capital benefits such as those demonstrated by capital deficit and return deficit.

When social capital and social support were added into the model for this study examining the relationship between gender and personal development, there was a significant

drop in the association. This drop indicates that social capital and social support play a significant role in explaining gender differences in the relationship. Not only were they significant mediators, but they accounted for a great deal of the observed relationships. There are gender differences observed in personal development in a camp setting, but they are primarily attributable to changes in social capital and social support. More important than simply being male or female is the ability of the individual to optimize social capital to enhance personal development. This finding does not hold true when examining age. This study demonstrated the importance of social capital and social support in personal development at camp. It is possible that these relationships may also have further implications for future social networks such as employment opportunities in the future. The next section will explore the relationship between age and personal development and the mediating influence of social capital and social support.

Age Differences

Age was found to have a significant impact on personal development at camp. Acknowledging different stages of development, not surprisingly older children/adolescents have greater social capital and social support resources than younger children, as there is a level of maturity necessary before actions and reactions of others matter. The growth and development literature, such as the works of Piaget and Erikson, demonstrates various phases and attributes children progress through. In the early stages, "others" do not factor into younger children's decisions. The response of others to their behaviour is largely needs based. A baby cries because it is hungry. A parent responds by feeding them. Whether the parent is pleased or annoyed by the demand on their time does not matter to the infant.

As a child grows and develops, the importance of "others" and the development of social networks is increasingly relevant (Eccles, 1999). The influence of social support on their

decisions, behaviours and reactions becomes more pronounced (Eccles, 1999). When placed within a camp setting, the already established influence of social support and the importance of creation and retention of social capital in older children, may give older children an advantage leading to greater personal development. Older children may also have access to higher quality sources of social capital and social support.

Social support can come from a variety of sources, including family, friends, peers and acquaintances. It may be easier to develop or receive these supports within a camps setting due to the time spent together in a variety of social settings and the intensity of the camp experience. In combination, variation in social support may explain the significant influence on personal development (Demaray et al., 2010). The peer support received while at camps is developed with the same people 24hrs/day and may explain the strong social support impact as a mediating variable. Camp groupings are often made based on age or on age and gender. More information on these elements may be required to more fully understand the impact of social capital and social support on personal development.

Camp provides a wide range of experiences for children of all ages and both genders. The data used in this research was drawn from a large database (n=1288) of children attending 16 different camps across Canada (Glover et al., 2011). Some were residential (n=9) and some were gender specific (n=3). The campers ranged in age from 3-18 with a mean age of 10.44 (Glover et al., 2011).

Camp is a setting where children have the opportunity to learn and demonstrate new skills, make independent choices, and form positive social relationships with both peers and adults. It is also an ideal setting to explore personal development outside the family and school setting. This study looked at the relationship between age and gender on personal development

and the mediating influence of social capital and social support. The large sample size allows for robust findings and suggests that the patterns between gender and personal development and age and personal development are more complex. The mediating influence of both social capital and social support were considered. This study found that both social capital and social support were significantly related to personal development.

Higher levels of social capital and social support are found in older children and this contributes to greater increases in personal development within a camp experience. Interestingly, when comparing the two mediators, only social support was found to significantly explain the relationship between age and personal development. At the outset it was anticipated that social capital and social support would be mediating influences in the relationship between age and personal development as they did for gender and personal development. The primacy of the quality of social connections as indicated by social support is supported. Social capital must be viewed as an asset with differential access based, for example, on SES. Do children with higher SES have access to multiple activities to develop social connections in various recreational activities? If so do they come to camp already armed with the tools to effectively develop social contacts and acquire social capital more quickly than a child whose only extracurricular activity is a camp experience in the summer? The uneven distribution may explain this anomaly. Another possible explanation is that the strong influence of social capital and gender, which favours females, may be offset by the less well-developed social capital of the males in this sample masking the impact of age.

One of the key findings of this research was that females and older children experience the greatest increases in personal development while at camp. Gender differences observed are explained by both social capital and social support. It is possible that because females already

scored significantly higher in social capital and social support, the mediators may both play a more significant role in the relationship than purely examining differences in age. For age, only social support significantly explains this relationship.

This study contributes to the current literature in multiple ways. Previously youth development literature examined the Five Cs as having equal value and importance. This study demonstrated a significant association between the social aspects as measured by social capital and social support, and personal development in a camp setting. Important gender and age differences were also identified which should be considered in future program development to optimize the personal development, and acquisition of social capital and social support. This study suggests that future programs should be designed to account for important gender differences in social skills and relationships. Boys generally come into the camp setting at a disadvantage compared to the socially skilled girls. Boys may require programming that specifically addresses this deficit. Activities that instill more helping behaviours could also assist in the development of social capital (Schwartz et al. 2009; Van Ingen & Van Eijck, 2009), which has been found to positively contribute to personal development at camp. Group activities that are co-operative could foster more social support development.

Providing opportunities for campers to learn about themselves and others would be expected to nurture different ways of relating to others. Being able to relate to others is an important first step to developing new networks, social support and social capital. These networks may have far reaching implications beyond the camp setting, such as future employment opportunities. Camp provides opportunities to assume different roles and respond to environmental challenges in a new social setting. These and other experiences to develop social

capital and social support contribute to personal development facilitating healthy passage through adolescence and are expected to carry forward into campers adult lives (Eccles, 1999).

This study further demonstrates the importance of social capital and social support in facilitating personal development and as social concepts that may play important mediating roles in various social settings and social relationships.

Strengths and Limitations

Longitudinal studies allow for the examination of potential cause and effect relationships. This study observed two time points to evaluate levels of personal development on arrival at camp and at the end of camp. Although relying on the assessment of key individuals the observed time period in many instances was quite brief. The way the data are collected and analyzed influences the relationships that can be observed. Collecting data over a longer period of time at post-camp intervals would allow for verification of the observed relationships and the sustainability of the observed increases after camp. The inclusion of data from campers, parents, teachers, and coaches will help broaden the understanding of the camp experience and the role the new skills played in future relationships.

Jarrett, Sullivan, and Watkins (2005) examined the development of social capital through organized youth programs. They determined that the relationships youth developed with community adults, occurred in stages: (1) suspicion and distrust, (2) facilitated contact, and (3) meaningful connection. Their study was conducted over a three to four month period. That makes direct comparisons to this study difficult. However, the intensity and 24 hours per day connections developed at camp and the large sample size contribute to the significant relationships observed. It is possible that due to the time constraints the youth experienced in the CSCRP the results of their social capital and social support scores may be varied.

The results of the study are only relevant for a subsection of society due to the lack of ethnic representation, possible SES variation, and/or other cultural influences in the sample. One cannot conclude that camp is beneficial for all when certain members of society are not represented. However the large sample size suggests that the observed relationships would be quite robust. More research needs to be done to examine these potential differences.

Perceived support vs. actual social support should be explored, because camp may serve as only a temporary setting for these new relationships. Campers may be experiencing increases in perceived social support rather than actual social support gains. These perceptions of support may undoubtedly have a significant impact on personal development, whether long lasting or temporary (Demaray, et al., 2010). The data in this study preclude looking at perceived support. A greater understanding of these relationships is necessary. Examining if the relationships gained at camp were maintained or dismantled after the camp experience might help determine whether they were perceived or actual support.

Implications for Future Research

According to the literature and the findings from this study, designers of camp programs who wish to positively impact camp experiences leading to enhanced personal development should be aware that dividing campers by gender is more than a socially acceptable policy. It also provides for modifications to programming and opportunity for potential personal development gains in connections, confidence, and character. Testing various modifications to programs based on these findings would help to provide further insight, justification, and rationale for program modifications.

To date, there is no consensus in the literature about the definition or indicators of personal development and youth development. This lack of agreement makes comparisons of

findings difficult. Future studies should work towards agreed upon terminology and measurement.

The conceptual model used in this study could be applied to other social settings such as sports teams, clubs or other community organizations. The conceptual model was developed specifically within a summer camp setting. Observing the relationships in different social settings could provide greater insight as to whether the camp setting is a unique contributor to these relationships or not. Testing this model in other settings will also help to determine if these variables and the observed relationships are consistent, regardless the setting.

Only one third of participants attended residential camp. The impact of this more intense camp experience was not examined in this study. It should be explored in the future to assess if the 24/7 camp experience changes the mediating influence of social capital and social support on personal development.

Conducting a more comprehensive data collection to include campers, counselors, directors, and parents might provide greater insights into the personal development process, as well as the stability of the observed changes. The inclusion of teacher observations would also be beneficial in observing the potential transferability of the skills developed at camp. Future research could also examine if the skills and relationships gained at camp lead to future employment opportunities. Camp may provide access to new social networks that give participants and advantage over individuals that did not attend camp, in the working world. The quality of these relationships versus the quantity of relationships may also be valuable to look at.

Recent technological advancements and expansive use of social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter, may make it easier for campers to keep in touch after the camp

experience. Letter writing and phone calls used to be the only method of communication, but children in this day and age do not face these limitations. Possible age and gender differences may also arise in future studies examining the maintenance of connections after camp. It is quite possible that as children age, they gain a greater appreciation for these connections and the instrumental role they can serve for things like future employment opportunities. Examining how children maintain these connections or social capital after camp, and what benefits they have access to because of these relationships would be interesting to look at in future research.

This study provides further insight into the types of programs that contribute to greater personal development for boys and girls at camp. It also provides a new perspective for the five domains of youth development by giving greater importance and value to the social elements of connections and contribution. These two variables may hold significant relevance in future studies examining the transferability of skills gained at camp, the value of the social connections made at camp, and the consistency of the relationship between gender, age, and personal development in different social settings.

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<u>**Canadian Summer Camp Research Project: Observation Survey**</u>

Following the first section of this survey, which asks for background information about the camper, the remaining sections will need to be completed **twice** during the observation period. Please complete one survey for each participating camper in your group this session -- once after the first two days at camp and once at the end of the camp session. The first time you fill the survey out, please *put an X* in the appropriate spot. The second time you fill it out, please *circle* the appropriate answer.

Please be as honest and accurate as you can be. If you have any questions regarding the survey, please speak to your supervisor and/or the research coordinator at your camp.

<u>Example of a completed question:</u>

Answer based on the first 48 hours of camp session   *Answer at the end of the camp session*

2. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A. This camper appeared to enjoy his/her free time		✗	◯				
B. This camper complained about the weather		⨂					

Answer if response is the same for the first and last recording periods

---

Confidentiality

This survey contains items that may upset campers if they were to read your comments. For this reason, and to protect the confidentiality of your campers, please do not leave completed surveys where others (campers or staff) can read your observations.

Information about this camper

Please fill out the following information about the camper this survey is describing. If you are unsure of specific answers, please indicate "unknown" or ask your supervisor for more information that may help you answer the question more accurately.

Answer for FIRST 48 hours = ✗   *Answer for LAST 48 hours =* ◯

1. How old is this camper? _____

2. What sex is this camper? (Please circle your response)

   a. Male   b. Female

3. Has this camper attended this camp before? (Please circle your response)

   a. Yes   b. No

4. Has this camper attended other camps before? (Please circle your response)

   a. Yes   b. No

5. If the camper has attended other camps before, what kind of camps were they? (Check all that apply. If the camper hasn't attended other camps before, please skip to question 6.)

   ☐ day camp ☐ residential camp ☐ traditional outdoor camp ☐ specialty camp

6. What is this camper's first language? (Please circle your response)

   a. French   b. English   Other: _____

7. What is this camper's cultural background? _____

8. Does this camper have any special needs? (Please circle your response)

   a. No

   b. Yes

   If "yes", please explain: _____

Answer for FIRST 48 hours = ✕   *Answer for LAST 48 hours =* ◯

Section A: Social connections at camp

In this section of the survey we are asking you about the camper's friendships and his or her other social connections during the reporting period. We are interested in how many friendships the camper has developed, the nature of these friendships and how much support he or she receives from others at camp. Do your best to answer the questions. If it is not possible to answer a question, however, please leave it blank.

1. How many friends does the camper have in his/or her counsellor group?

    a) *First 48 hours*:_____
                (number)

    b) *End of camp*:_____
               (number)

2. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A. The camper has a group of close friends at camp from which he or she can draw support	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B. The camper has friends at camp besides those in his/her counsellor group.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C. The camper befriends other campers different from him/herself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D. The camper befriends other campers similar to him/herself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E. When needed, the camper receives emotional support from his/her fellow campers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
F. When needed, the camper receives other kinds of support from his/her fellow campers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
G. This camper gives to other campers as much as he/or she receives from them.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer for FIRST 48 hours = ✗   *Answer for LAST 48 hours* = ○

		Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
H.	This camper exhibits a sense of pride about being a member of his/her counsellor group	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I.	This camper exhibits a sense of pride about being a member of his/her camp	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J.	This camper resolves personal conflicts in a positive manner	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
K.	This camper gets along with other campers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
L.	This camper gets along with camp staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section B: Environmental Awareness

In this section, we are assessing the camper's awareness of environmental issues and his/her impact on the environment.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:		Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A.	This camper shows an awareness of his/her impact on the environment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B.	This camper demonstrates behaviours that are environmentally friendly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C.	This camper demonstrates that he/she cares about the environment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D.	This camper thinks we should all take care of the planet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E.	This camper enjoys being in the outdoors	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer for FIRST 48 hours = ✕   *Answer for LAST 48 hours =* ◯

Section C: Self Confidence and Personal Development

In this section, we are interested in the degree of personal growth and self confidence the camper is showing.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:		Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A.	This camper appears to be confident in him/herself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B.	This camper needs help with most things he/she does	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C.	This camper appears to do fine without his/her parents	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D.	This camper is good at doing things on his/her own	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E.	This camper makes good decisions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
F.	This camper likes to try new things	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
G.	This camper has an accurate understanding of his/her personal limits	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
H.	This camper appears to feel good about him/herself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer for FIRST 48 hours = ✗   Answer for LAST 48 hours = ◯

Section D: Emotional Intelligence

In this section, we are interested in the extent to which the camper displays an understanding of his/her own emotions as well as those of others around him/her. *Please reflect upon the camper's age and what would be considered an age appropriate level of development in this area prior to completing this section.*

1. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:		Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A.	This camper displays an awareness of his/her emotions as he/she experiences them	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B.	This camper likes to share his/her emotions with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C.	This camper seeks out activities that make him/her happy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D.	This camper is aware of the non-verbal messages he/she sends to others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E.	This camper presents him/herself in a way that makes a good impression on others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
F.	This camper has control over his/her emotions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
G.	This camper is sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
H.	This camper compliments others when they have done something well	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I.	This camper helps others feel better when they are down	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J..	This camper uses good moods to help him/herself keep trying in the face of obstacles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer for FIRST 48 hours = ✗   *Answer for LAST 48 hours =* ○

Section E: Physical Activity

In this final section, we are interested in the extent to which the camper enjoyed participating in physical activities both in general and relating to specific activities. If an activity listed is not offered at your camp, please indicate N/A (not applicable).

1. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree	N/A
A. When given a choice this camper always chooses physical activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B. This camper has a positive attitude toward physical activity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C. This camper has a positive attitude toward *sports*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D. This camper has a positive attitude toward *active games*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E. This camper has a positive attitude toward *walking*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
F. This camper has a positive attitude toward *active play with other children* (if age appropriate)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
G. This camper is physically active	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Unusual Circumstances

Please describe any reasons why your answers noted on this survey might be out of the ordinary for this camper during either of the reporting periods (e.g., camp-wide activities such as "colour wars", inclement weather, illness, out-trip or field trip).

Reporting period affected (1st or 2nd)	Circumstances (i.e. canoe trip)	Impact on results (i.e. did not participate in usual activities)

Thank you for your time.

Answer for FIRST 48 hours = ✕   Answer for LAST 48 hours = ○

Appendix B: Instructions

University of Waterloo

Healthy Communities Research Network
Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies
University of Waterloo
200 University Avenue West Waterloo, Ontario,
Canada, N2L 3G1

Telephone: 519-888-4567
Fax: 519-888-2440

Instructions for administering the Canadian Summer Camp Research Project

First of all, thank you and your camp staff for volunteering to participate in the Canadian Summer Camp Research Project. We are seeking to observe campers while they are at camp with the intention of measuring the impacts of their participation in the program. The study is intended to help the Canadian Camping Association/ Association des Camps du Canada (CCA/ACC) document the benefits of summer camp. This summer, we are launching a nation-wide study and are hoping to collect over 1,000 completed observation surveys.

For this study, we are asking you to have your counsellors observe a group of campers and document their observations twice during one camp session (once after the first two days and then at the end of the session). We are not asking you to conduct the observations all summer but to select a single session. Our goal is to track any changes in behaviours or attitudes that may occur during the course of participating in a summer camp program such as yours.

This document is designed to describe the study process and instruct you how to administer the study at your camp this summer. If you have any questions or concerns that are not addressed by this package, please feel free to contact our research team at achapesk@uwaterloo.ca or Professor Troy Glover, the director of this project, at (519) 888-4567, ext. 33097.

Included in this package:
- *Step by step instructions explaining how to administer the study*
- *Information letters to be distributed to participating staff members*
- *Information letters to be mailed out to the parents/guardians of potentially participating campers*
- *A camp information survey that will tell us a little about your program*
- *The observation survey for your counsellors to complete (they will complete one survey for each participating camper, filling out the form after the first two days of camp and at the end of the session)* · *Feedback letters to be distributed to participating staff members after they have completed the surveys.* Once you have completed the study, please mail the completed observation surveys and camp information survey to our research team at:

The Canadian Summer Camp Research Project
c/o Dr. Troy Glover University
of Waterloo
2110 Burt Matthews Hall
Department of Recreation & Leisure Studies
Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G1
(519) 885-1211, extension 3097

Sincerely,
Troy D. Glover, Ph.D.
Project Director

Amy Chapeskie.
Co-investigator

	Step by step instructions for administering this study:	Task completed:
1.	Upon receiving this package, please **designate a senior staff member as your research coordinator** who will organize and administer the study at your camp this summer. This staff member should be someone who is accessible to the staff members involved and someone who has access to a secure, locked area at camp where they can store the research materials (e.g., a safe or a locked filing cabinet) and where they will not be accessible to the camper or staff population at large.	☐
2.	**Select the session and groups of campers that will participate in the study.** Ideally, we encourage you to choose the first session of the summer camping season in order to ensure observation of campers at the beginning of their 2010 summer camp experiences. In addition, it would be preferable for you to choose a wide range of campers that represents your entire camper population (e.g. both genders if applicable, from all age categories, etc.), but we understand individual programming needs might make this preference too difficult to fulfil. As such, you are free to select whichever groups will work best for your program. We are anticipating camp groups of approximately 10-12 campers per counsellor but if your program consists of larger groups, feel free to allow the counsellors to randomly select 10-12 campers from their group to observe (please note: they must observe the *same* campers for both reporting periods).	☐
3.	**Mail or email copies of the parent/guardian information letter** to the families of the campers along with your other camp material. Please be sure to include the *camp name* as well as the *name of your research coordinator and his/her contact information* in the spaces provided on the letter.	☐
4.	**Track any contact from parents who choose NOT to have their child participate** and inform the relevant participating staff member to *ensure* these children are *excluded* from the study.	☐
5.	**Prior to the start of the session, hold an information session with participating staff members.** Review the survey instrument and the study procedures so that all participating staff understand what is expected of them. During this session please make sure you address the following issues: · **Confidentiality**: the surveys are to be sealed and returned to the coordinator *immediately* upon their completion. Staff must ensure completed surveys are never left unattended. Staff are not *to discuss* their observations about specific campers with campers or staff members. *(Continued below)*	

			☐
	· **Optional participation**: inform staff members that they can choose now, or at any time, not to participate and that it will not affect their standing with the camp or senior staff in any way. · **Camper Participation**: direct the staff members to discuss the study with their campers upon arrival at camp and offer the campers the option to refuse to participate, reminding them that their choice will not impact their standing with the counsellor or the camp itself. Instruct staff members that if a camper has chosen not to participate they are not to complete a survey for him/her. · **Remuneration/thank you events**: if your camp chooses to do so, you are welcome to offer participating staff remuneration in the form of camp gear, equipment, special events such as BBQ's or in another manner you feel appropriate. · **Appropriate reporting times/settings/behaviours**: inform the staff they are to complete the surveys based on their *general day-to-day observations* of each camper for the given reporting period. *They are to complete the surveys:* away from the campers, without directly asking the campers any questions and without showing the survey to any campers.		
6.	**Complete the camp information survey** and store it with other study materials to be returned at the completion of your participation. This survey should be completed by the research coordinator with the additional input of any other staff members, if necessary.		☐
7.	After the first two days of the camp program, **distribute the surveys to the participating counsellors**. The staff members will complete one survey for each participating camper in their group (in the case of programs with large camper groups, such as day camps, you are welcome to randomly select approximately 10 campers in a given group to be observed). Ensure the staff members complete the surveys and *return them in a sealed envelope* to the research coordinator promptly. To make the process easier: · **Have staff assign random numbers to each camper who is participating (after offering the campers the option of not doing so) and note the number on each survey. To ensure confidentiality, the research coordinator should keep the list of names and their corresponding id numbers in a secure area at camp separate from the completed surveys.** · **Remind staff to mark an "x" in the appropriate answers for the first observation period and to circle their answers for the second period.**		☐
8.	**Collect the surveys in their sealed envelopes and review** at least one of each staff member's surveys to ensure it is being completed properly.		☐
9.	**Secure the completed surveys** in a locked area at camp. This location would		

	ideally be somewhere accessible to as small a number of people as possible (e.g., a locked filing cabinet in the office, or where the camp's own confidential files are stored).	☐
10.	Repeat steps 7 and 8 two days prior to the end of the camp session.	☐
11.	Debrief with participating staff. Ask them about any problems they might have had during their participation, any suggestions they have for making it easier for future participants or any other feedback they might have.	☐
12.	Collect the completed surveys and camp information survey and send them back to the research team. Please include any notes you may have from the debriefing that might assist the research team in improving this process for future participants.	☐
13.	Contact the research team via phone or email to let them know your study is completed and the materials are on their way.	☐
14.	Distribute copies of the feedback letter to each participating staff member and thank them for their participation! Without your support and their participation, this study would not be possible and we are very grateful for everyone's hard work.	☐

Camp Information Survey

(This portion of the study can be completed with the input of any and all relevant staff members)

1. What is the name of this camp?_____

2. Where is your camp located? (please state the province and nearest municipality/point of reference)

   _____

3. Please state how long the camp has been in operation: This camp has been running for _____ years.

4. Please state how long the current director has been in his/her position: _____ years

5. Was the director a director at another camp prior to his/her current position? ☐ No ☐ Yes

   If yes, please state how many years of experience he/she has as a director: _____ years.

6. Is the director the owner of the camp? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

7. Is the director the founder of the camp? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

8. Which of the following categories best describes your camp? (check all that apply)
☐ Faith-based camp   ☐ Community organization   ☐ Charitable foundation

☐ Social agency   ☐ Private, non-profit   ☐ Private business

☐ Corporate sponsored ☐ Other _____

9. What type of camp program do you offer:
☐ Day camp   ☐ Residential ☐ Family   ☐ Travel   ☐ Other _____

10. Is yours a specialty camp? That is, does it provide specialized programming for which it is known? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

- if yes, please describe the specialty: _____

11. How would you describe your camp setting?
☐ Wilderness/Rural   ☐ Urban/Suburban

12. What is the gender distribution of your camper population?
☐ Female only ☐ Male only ☐ Co-ed

13. What is the age of your youngest camper? _____ years

14. What is the age of your oldest camper? _____ years

15. Which of the following program elements are included in your camp program?: (check all that apply)
☐ Wilderness camping (out trips)   ☐ Artistic activities   ☐ Sports

☐ Level programs (e.g., swimming badges) ☐ Adventure/extreme sports ☐ Swimming

☐ Paddling   ☐Leadership training (LIT) ☐Nature based activities

☐Environmental education

☐ Other _____

16. Does your camp serve children with special needs? ☐ No ☐ Yes - if yes please complete (a) and (b) below:

a. *We have campers with…* (check all that apply)

☐ Physical impairments ☐ Cognitive impairments ☐ Sensory impairments

☐ Behavioural problems ☐ High risk backgrounds ☐ Learning disabilities

☐ Specific illnesses/diseases ☐ Other: _____
(e.g., diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS etc…)

b. Is serving campers with special needs the primary focus of your camp program (e.g., do most, if not all, of your campers have special needs?) ☐ No ☐ Yes

If no, how are these campers integrated into your program?

☐ They are integrated as members of regular camper groups	☐ They are placed in specific camper groups comprised of campers who have the same special needs

Appendix C: Information Letter for Staff

University of **Waterloo**

Healthy Communities Research Network
Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies
University of Waterloo
200 University Avenue West Waterloo, Ontario,
Canada, N2L 3G1

Telephone: 519-888-4567
Fax: 519-886-2440

Information Letter

The Canadian Summer Camp Research Project seeks to observe campers while they are at camp with the intention of measuring the impacts of their participation in the program. The study is intended to help the Canadian Camping Association/ Association des Camps du Canada (CCA/ACC) document the benefits of summer camp to Canadians. Because you are a camp counselor at a participating summer camp, we would appreciate your assistance in documenting your observations about the attitudinal, skill, and value changes campers experience during their time at camp.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. Should you agree to participate, it would involve completing two short observation reports for each participating camper to document his or her general behavioural patterns and attitudes. Some campers may not participate based upon their parents' wishes or their own choice to withdraw. To complete each report you will be asked to answer questions based on your general observations during day-to-day interactions with each participating camper during the reporting period. You will be asked to answer questions such as: *Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement, "The camper has a group of close friends at camp from which he or she can draw support"*. There are no anticipated risks associated with this project. The study will not include any identifying information that would link you or the campers to the individual observations.

You are welcome to withdraw your participation at any time before or during the session. Any decision you make regarding participation – whether to participate, not participate, or withdraw from the project at any point – will have no impact on your standing with the camp or the CCA/ACC.

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to complete two separate observation reports for campers identified to you by the research coordinator at your camp, one at the beginning of camp and one at the end of the session, to measure if there has been any noticeable change in their behaviours or attitudes over the course of their participation. These reports will be kept confidential and will be stored in a locked area at your camp before being transported to us at the University of Waterloo. Once we have the reports, they will be locked indefinitely in a filing cabinet. Likewise, any electronic data – statistical results – will be retained indefinitely on a hard drive, which is accessible only to the research team. At no time will your identity be revealed to us. We will receive no identifying information about you from your camp.

We think there is something to be gained from sharing the results of this study with the public and the CCA/ACC. As such, we will be posting updates of the study's progression on our web site at http://healthycommunities.uwaterloo.ca/camp and will possibly be publishing and/or presenting the findings of this study in other settings in the future. In any public discussion of this study, however,

the names of participating camps will be withheld and/or substituted with pseudonyms to ensure further confidentiality for our participants.

This project has been reviewed by, and received clearance through, the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. If you have any questions or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, you may contact Dr. Susan Sykes, Director of this office at (519) 888-4567 Ext. 36005 or ssykes@uwaterloo.ca. You may also contact Professor Troy Glover, the director of this project, at (519) 888-4567, ext. 33097. Thank you for your assistance with this project.

Sincerely,

Troy D. Glover, Ph.D.
Project Director

Amy Chapeskie.
Co-investigator

Appendix D: Information Letter for Parents

Healthy Communities Research Network   Telephone: 519-888-4567
Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies   Fax: 519-886-2440
University of Waterloo
200 University Avenue West Waterloo, Ontario,
Canada, N2L 3G1

Information Letter

The Canadian Summer Camp Research Project seeks to observe campers while they are at camp with the intention of measuring the impacts of their participation in the program. The study is intended to help the Canadian Camping Association/ Association des Camps du Canada (CCAACC) document the benefits of summer camp to Canadians. Because you are a parent/guardian of a child who will be attending _____, we welcome your participation in this study.   *(Name of Camp)*

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. Should you agree to allow your child to participate, it would involve his/her counsellor at camp completing two short observation reports documenting your child's general behaviour patterns and attitudes with regard to topics such as environmental awareness and physical activity. The staff will answer questions such as, "please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement: this camper has a positive attitude toward physical activity". There are no anticipated risks associated with this project. The study will not include any identifying information that would link your child to the observations.

Because of the lack of any information that would link your child to his or her specific observation reports and the large scope of the overall project, we are using what is called "active information, passive permission" which essentially means that if you do not want your child to be observed as part of this study, please contact your child's camp and notify its staff of your wish to withdraw from participating. You are also welcome to withdraw your child from participating at any time before or during your child's involvement in the camp program by contacting the camp. At the start of the camp session staff members will describe the study to the campers and, at that time, your child will also be offered the opportunity to personally refuse to participate. Any decision you make regarding participation – whether to participate, not participate, or withdraw from the project at any point – will have no impact on your standing with the camp or your child's experience while at camp.

The counsellors at your child's camp will complete two separate observation reports, one at the beginning of camp and one at the end of the session, to measure if there has been any noticeable change in your child's behaviours or attitudes over the course of their participation. The reports will be kept confidential and will be stored in a locked area at camp before being transported to us at the University of Waterloo. Once we have the reports, they will be locked indefinitely in a filing

cabinet. Likewise, any electronic data – statistical results – will be retained indefinitely on a hard drive, which is accessible only to the research team.

At no time will the identities of participants in this portion of the study be revealed. The research team will have no identifying information that would link specific reports to individual campers or even any documentation of the identities of the participants.

In addition to the observations conducted at camp, we would like to ask you about any changes you may or may not observe in your child's behaviour and/or attitude after his/her participation in the camp program. If you would like to participate in a brief online survey approximately six months after the camp session (early 2011) please send an email to the research team at achapesk@uwaterloo.ca any time after your receipt of this information letter. You are welcome to participate in the first portion of the study and not the second but we ask that you do not volunteer to participate in the second portion if you do not want your child to be observed at camp as this will impact the manner in which we utilize the data collected from both portions.

If you choose to participate in second portion of the study, we will send you a login id and web address for the online survey early in the new year. This id will be randomly assigned and will not be linked in any manner to your name, your child's name, your email address or any other identifying information. The survey questions will ask you to rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with a general statement regarding you child's attitude and/or behaviour towards types of activities or concepts (for example, "Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding your child after his/her participation in the camp program: my child demonstrates behaviours that are more environmentally friendly").

You may decline to answer any question during the survey. Moreover, you are welcome to withdraw your participation at any time before or during the survey, with no questions asked by closing your web browser or simply not submitting your answers. The web site is programmed to collect responses alone and will not collect any information that could potentially identify you (such as machine identifiers). If you prefer not to complete the survey on the web, please contact us and we will make arrangements to provide you another method of participation.

We think there is something to be gained from sharing the results of this study with the public and the CCA/ACC. As such, we will be posting updates of the study's progression on our web site at http://healthycommunities.uwaterloo.ca/camp and will possibly be publishing and/or presenting the findings of this study in other settings in the future. In any public discussion of this study, however, the names of participating camps will be withheld and/or substituted with pseudonyms to ensure further confidentiality for our participants.

This project has been reviewed by, and received clearance through, the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. If you have any questions or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, you may contact Dr. Susan Sykes, Director of this office at (519) 888-4567 Ext.

36005 or ssykes@uwaterloo.ca. You may also contact Professor Troy Glover, the director of this project, at (519) 888-4567, ext. 33097.

_____at _____.
(Name of camp research coordinator)   (Email, phone and/or other contact information)

Thank you for your assistance with this project.

Sincerely,

Troy D. Glover, Ph.D.
Project Director

Amy Chapeskie.
Co-investigator