



JOURNAL OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Bridging Research and Practice

Volume 11, Number 3
Winter 2016

Contents

Feature Articles

Youth Motivations for Program Participation

[Article 161103FA001].....Page 7-25

McGuire, Jenifer K.; Dworkin, Jodi; Borden, Lynne M.; Perkins, Daniel; Russell, Stephen T.

Through their participation in youth programs, young people have access to opportunities to learn and build important skills. A total of 214 youth between the ages of 10-19 (mean 15.5 years) completed an online survey about characteristics of youth programs they participated in, didn't participate in, and had participated in but quit. We found that youth participated in activities that provided a benefit to meet personal goals or develop skills. However, our findings suggest that youth may leave activities, or never join them, based on different sets of motivations than the reasons they stay in activities. There was variability across demographic groups: Males reported more problems with past activities, sexual minority youth were more likely to endorse social problems with past and never joined activities, and ethnic minorities reported less support for personal goals and connection to adults in current activities and more logistic barriers for activities never joined.

An Examination of Self-Esteem and Empowerment of African American Female Youth in an After School Program

[Article 161103FA002].....Page 26-41

Unroe, Taylor; Barnett, Rosemary V.; Paynes-Purvis, Caroline

This study investigated self-esteem and empowerment in three African American female cohort groups in an after school program. A sample of 136 students in the after school program comprised the three one-year female and male cohort groups. For this study, 71 African American females in the female cohort groups were analyzed. Social Cognitive Theory and Resiliency Theory were used to explore factors potentially influencing self-esteem and empowerment of an at-risk African American female population, with the after school program serving as a protective factor. Participants completed the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP), but only DAP empowerment items were analyzed. No significant differences were found in self-esteem levels for the three separate female cohort groups. However, evidence was found for a positive correlation between self-esteem and empowerment. Study conclusions identify implications for after school program staff as they identify needs and conduct youth programs accordingly.

The Prevalence of Rape Myths among Middle School Students across Gender and Socioeconomic Background

[Article 161103FA003].....Page 42-56

Dyehouse, Melissa; Pilat, Mary

A study designed to investigate the level and type of rape myths that are endorsed among middle school youth in terms of gender and socioeconomic background is reported in this

paper. Participants were 582 seventh and eighth grade students who took part in Project Equality, a rape and sexual assault prevention curriculum that took place during eight, one and a half-hour sessions. The modified Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale was administered to students before and after Project Equality. Results indicate that males endorse higher levels of rape myth acceptance, both before and after the intervention, although the number of endorsed myths decreased. Rape myth endorsement decreased following the intervention among participants of differing socioeconomic backgrounds. Males and females showed lower levels of rape myth acceptance following the intervention. Implications include finding more effective ways to target male youth and that Project Equality works to lower rape myths among middle school youth.

Potential Success and Barrier Factors for Implementation of the Transition to Independence (TIP) Model

[Article 161103FA004].....Page 57-71

Kalinyak, Christopher M.; Gary, Faye A.; Killion, Cheryl M.; Suresky, M. Jane

In this qualitative study, 28 key stakeholders who work with transition-aged youth participated in focus group discussions addressing success and barrier factors regarding implementation of a transition to independence process (TIP) program for youth, ages 14–29, in three Midwestern cities. All participants had prior knowledge of TIP. The paradigm shift to client-oriented goals and services was acknowledged by respondents as the prime benefit of TIP; youth are more motivated to follow through on self-determined goals. Barrier factors for providers involved collaboration with agencies adhering to provider-oriented interventions, provision of TIP methods training, and reallocation of time and money. Barrier factors for youth involved mistrust of service providers, overcoming maturational deficits, and acquiring and maintaining relationships, reputations, and social supports.

Program Articles

Building a Youth Development System in Kenya: Comparing Kenyan Perceptions of Local and National Systems

[Article 161103PA001].....Page 72-88

Allen, Lawrence R.; Garst, Barry A.; Bowers, Edmond P.; Onyiko, Kennedy K.

The purpose of this paper is to begin a dialogue of developing a integrated and comprehensive system for youth in Kenya by identifying factors impacting the creation of a youth development system and exploring recommendations supporting and advancing such a system. The results of two collaborative assessments of the needs and strengths of Kenyan youth and the youth-serving programs based on the perspectives of practitioners, policy-makers, and scholars of youth-development are presented. The study was framed from the perspective of a systems approach to youth development in Kenya (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Overton & Lerner, 2012). Osgood (2012) identifies four steps for developing a systems approach for serving the needs of youth: (1) self-assessment, (2) goal identification, (3) planning, and (4) networking. The first step, self-assessment, was initiated through a SWOT analysis with two different groups of youth development professionals across a 2-year period (2014-2015). The 2014 SWOT analysis presented the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to developing a youth development system from a national level, whereas the 2015 SWOT analysis focused on these same factors but from a more local level of youth development programs and services. The results of these two analyses are presented and initial recommendations for building a more integrated and comprehensive youth development system in Kenya are presented. The need for further input and investigation is also discussed.

A Church, University, and Extension: A Partnership for Creating Healthy Youth and Healthy Living

[Article 161103PA002].....Page 89-94

Webster, Nicole; Smith Jr., Maurice D.

Within many urban communities, there has been a steady decline in healthy living practices among minority families. This decline is often due to the lack of health services and health knowledge of youth and adults (Shirley, Roark, & Lewis, 2012). In order to better reach these particular audiences it has been suggested by scholars and practitioners to focus on community based programming. Partnerships formed through entities such as universities and community organizations have been shown to be quite successful in creating healthier families. This paper discusses one such program focused on increasing health knowledge of urban families.

Activities offered included health screenings and healthy living programming for youth.

Program results showed that nearly 95% of youth found the activities informative and gave them ways to think about their health and the health of their families.

Evaluation of the Health Rocks! Program: The Association of Youth Engagement with Program Outcomes

[Article 161103PA003].....Page 95-104

Xia, Yan; Taylor, Sarah; de Guzman, Maria Rosario T.

This evaluation research examined the relationship between program process and program outcome, specifically, youth engagement in the national 4-H Council *Health Rocks!* program and their program outcomes. Based on program evaluation surveys completed after the program by participants, youths' engagement in the program was associated with their gains in knowledge and skills about substance use, and personal assets related to avoiding risks. When youth participants find a program interesting, are actively engaged in the program, and find the program staff friendly, they benefit more from the program. Findings underscore the importance of engaging curriculum and friendly staff to the success of extension or afterschool youth programs. The evaluation method may offer an example of balancing rigor of evaluation design and feasibility of implementing an evaluation.

Successful Use of eXtension and Online Training Modules in Mandatory Biennial Volunteer Recertification

[Article 161103PA004].....Page 105-115

Hein, Wendy; White, Trisha; Williams, Janaleen

Quality volunteers are essential to the success of 4-H programs. Although much attention has been paid to the initial orientation of volunteers, additional training is typically optional.

Beginning in 2013, our county required all adult volunteers to complete at least one hour of continuing education as part of a biennial recertification process. We used existing resources ("eLearning for Volunteer Orientation"; eXtension webinars). There was no significant difference in volunteer retention between re-screening and non-re-screening cohorts ($p=.855$).

We collected 166 volunteer ratings of 23 recorded webinars on eXtension. Volunteers gave concrete examples of how they would use the information learned in their volunteer role.

Examining the Use of Social Media among Four-H Alumni in Louisiana

[Article 161103PA005].....Page 116-131

Zammit, Kali B.

The purpose of this study was to examine the use and determine the preferred method of social media among 4-H alumni in Louisiana. Based on a review of literature, communicating with

youth through social media has become a major trend and necessity, especially among 4-H Youth Development and Cooperative Extension Service professionals. A 24-item instrument was developed and administered online to Louisiana 4-H alumni who received the 2011 Louisiana 4-H Senior Honor Cord and provided usable e-mails.

The overall preferred method of social media among Louisiana 4-H alumni was Facebook and text messaging. A majority of 4-H alumni use their smart phones or personal computers to utilize social media. Some of the primary reasons that 4-H alumni use social media are to communicate with friends, view photographs, and become updated with current events. Overall, 100% of surveyed 4-H alumni use some form of social media.

Transformative Leadership: The Camp Counselor Experience

[Article 161103PA006].....Page 132-140
Femrite, Stephanie; Flatt, Jenny

A study, utilizing focus groups, was conducted with teens serving as camp counselors at the North Central 4-H camp in Missouri. High school students, 14-18 years old, served as camp counselors during a four-day residential camp the summer of 2014. Each counselor was a current 4-H member and had served as a 4-H camp counselor in Missouri for at least one year, some serving as many as five years. Comparing two training models, evidence was found that intentional training sessions are crucial for the empowerment that leads to transformation.

Using the AGsploration: the Science of Maryland Agriculture Curriculum as a Tool to Increase Youth Appreciation and Understanding of Agriculture and Science

[Article 161103PA007].....Page 141-146
Barczewski, April Hall; Bennett, Sheryl; Gordon, David; Hutson, Thomas; BhaduriHauck, Sara Meagher

AGsploration: The Science of Maryland Agriculture is a 24-lesson, peer-reviewed curriculum that includes experiential hands-on activities and built-in pre-/post-evaluation tools. Lesson topics include production agriculture, the environment and nutrition with emphasis on how science relates to each topic. Student pre-/post- evaluation data reflects participation in AGsploration positively affects students' attitudes about agriculture and science. Separate evaluations were developed to survey two groups of trained teen teachers about the curriculum immediately following their training, 1-2 years after using the curriculum and another 3-4 years post involvement. The results demonstrated that teen teachers were an effective way to disseminate the curriculum and these same teens increased their agriculture knowledge, life skills and interest in agriculture science education and careers. A similar evaluation was conducted with adult educators following a training session and another 1-2 years after actively using the curriculum. This data suggests that the curriculum is well received and valued.

Research and Evaluation Strategies

When 'el intérprete' is also the 'learner': An Innovative Youth Empowerment Project for Immigrant Youth

[Article 161103RS001].....Page 147-158
Pirie, Alex; Goldstein-Gelb, W.; Landaverde, Maria; Mistry, Jayanthi; Kim, Jeewon; Pufall-Jones, Elizabeth; Contreras, Mariah M.

In this paper, we present a Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) project that documented an innovative youth empowerment program at a community based organization. The program at the core of this paper is aimed at strengthening cultural brokering, empowerment, civic engagement, and leadership skills by engaging youth as bilingual

interpreters at community events to facilitate the participation of adults with limited English proficiency. Through the research-practice integration reflected in our study, we highlight how immigrant youth, engaged in activities that facilitate reflective thinking about their roles as cultural brokers, can be powerfully supported in navigating across their multiple cultural worlds.

Monitoring Structured Experiences during Youth Programs: Development of Brief Measures of Perceived Value and Engagement

[Article 161103RS002].....Page 159-174

Ellis, Gary D.; Taggart, Allen S.; Martz, Jill; Lepley, Toby; Jamal, Tazim

A brief questionnaire that can be used to routinely monitor the quality of structured experiences for youth is discussed in this paper. Structured experiences are discrete periods of time in which youth gather for activity under the supervision of adult or youth leaders. Four-item measures of perceived value and engagement were created. A questionnaire including these measures along with items from the 4-H Common Measures was administered to 219 youth from 11 4-H clubs. Data were analyzed for evidence of reliability and validity. Alpha reliability estimates were .82 and .71 for the two multiple-item monitoring instruments. Correlations (validity coefficients) ranged from .48 to .61. Multiple regression results were consistent with predictions. Significant relations were found between perceived value, engagement, meaningfulness and supportiveness of social climate and safety of social climate. Results thus suggest that these instruments may be appropriate for use in monitoring structured experiences for youth.

Impacts of a Southern Indiana Summer Camp: Adult Reflections on Childhood Experiences

[Article 161103RS003].....Page 175-187

Snider, Colin L.; Farmer, James R.

Scholars have well documented the impact on youth of attending a residential summer camp. Quantitative studies, generally consisting of pre/post assessments, have found positive outcomes related to self-esteem, self-efficacy, hard skills, and social skills. We explored the long-term outcomes of the camp experience through adult recollections of the camp experience. Participants' interviews provided four primary, emergent themes: self growth, affinity for nature, life skills, and relationship. Outcomes appear to stem from camper-counselor relationships and unstructured free time. This study highlights the lifelong benefits of the camp experience and suggests there is utility in collecting adult long-term recollections of childhood memories.

Evaluating the Ecological Impact of a Youth Program

[Article 161103RS004].....Page 188-206

Grant, Natalie; Bennett, Jo; Crawford, Marcus

Youth are the weakest population within the workforce and long-term unemployment leaves them unable to develop work skills, reaches into their future prospects, and can weaken the economy, education systems, and overall social structure. Through ecological qualitative methodology, the reported research gathered in-depth accounts of experiences of ten urban youth who participated in a federally-funded Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). To develop an understanding of aspects of the youth's lives, individual interviews were conducted and ecomaps were completed with participants. Personal narratives support the premises that documenting the ecosystems of individuals provides insights into daily lives, histories, and lived experiences in a way that provides a window into how services and prevention efforts can be targeted. Results concluded that for these participants, the SYEP made a difference in their lives

in terms of helping them make connections to positive role models, learning workplace communication, and providing an entrance into the workforce on varying levels consistent with their barriers. This research can be applied to inform practitioners, teachers, and decision makers with a better understanding of the social, emotional, educational, and workforce realities of adolescents. The research advances the conversation about federally funded youth employment programs creating opportunities for marginalized youth to learn skills for succeeding in the mainstream economy.