

Girls Just Wanna Have Fun: Evaluating the Processes and Impact of a Female Youth-Driven
Physical Activity-Based Life Skills Program

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List of Acronyms

BGC – Boys and Girls Club

GJWHF – Girls Just Wanna Have Fun

PA—Physical Activity

PSRQ – Personal and Social Responsibility Questionnaire

PYD – Positive Youth Development

SUPER – Sports United to Promote Education and Recreation

TPSR- Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility

Abstract

Physical activity programs are contexts that have the potential to foster adolescents' development, yet researchers assert that the environment must be deliberately designed for this to occur (Danish et al., 2004). The Girls Just Wanna Have Fun (GJWHF) program was developed for this purpose and was implemented over the course of one year at a local Boys and Girls Club. The objective of this research project was to evaluate the GJWHF program as there is a dearth of evaluations of community-based programs (Salmon et al., 2007). Results identified successes, challenges, and practical recommendations for community programmers. Further, results found that GJWHF adhered to Petitpas et al.'s (2005) framework for planning youth sport programs that foster psychosocial development. Specifically, GJWHF was successful in providing a positive and supportive female-only environment for female youth that utilized positive leader support to foster the development of friendships and identity formation, and facilitate the development of a variety of life skills, including leadership and teamwork.

Keywords: positive youth development; evaluation; female youth; physical activity; community programming

Introduction

The foundation of our future is in the opportunities we provide to our youth. The theoretical perspective of positive youth development (PYD) sees youth in terms of their potential for healthy development (Catalano, Hawkins, Berglund, Pollard, & Arthur, 2002). PYD emerged as an alternative approach to the reactive methods typically taken in response to problems youth often encounter throughout adolescence (drinking, drug use, drop out, teen pregnancy) (Botvin, 2004; Damon, 2004). As a result, researchers and practitioners work to provide an environment for healthy development rather than fixing problems after they occur (Pittman & Fleming, 1991). Integrating this framework into the physical activity and sport domain has become popular, as this environment can be used as a vehicle to facilitate life skills (Mueller, Lewin-Bizan, & Brown Urban, 2010). Such integration is believed to allow for a dually productive environment: the development of both physical *and* psychosocial skills (Danish, Forneris, Hodge, & Heke, 2004). Nonetheless, researchers assert that the physical activity or sport contexts must be established in a way that developmentally intentional learning takes place to ensure that such programs foster positive developmental outcomes in youth (Danish et al., 2004; Gould & Carson, 2008).

Female youth from families living on low incomes are at high risk for poor developmental outcomes and have the lowest levels of physical activity (Public Health Agency of Canada [PHAC], 2006; Wilson, Williams, Evans, Mixon, & Rheume, 2005). The Girls Just Wanna Have Fun program is a physical activity-based life skills program that has been developed in collaboration with the Boys and Girls Club to help youth overcome these negative outcomes, as well as develop positive psychosocial outcomes. The purpose of this research was to evaluate the processes and impacts of participation in this program. This research is imperative as there has

been a lack of formal evaluation of community-based programs and therefore little is known about the perceived effectiveness of physical activity-based life skills programs (Salmon, Booth, Phongsavan, Murphy, & Timperio, 2007). Moreover, this research responded to calls from PYD researchers to understand how life skills can be developed (Theokas, Danish, Hodge, Heke, & Forneris, 2008).

Review of the Literature

The overall purpose of this review of literature is to examine research regarding PYD, PYD within the domain of physical activity (PA), PA programming, female adolescent development as it relates to socio-economic status (SES), as well as an overview of the Girls Just Wanna Have Fun (GJWHF) program.

Positive Youth Development

Weiss and Wiese-Bjornstal (2009) stated that PYD is the “development of personal skills or assets, including cognitive, social, emotional, and intellectual qualities necessary for youth to become successfully functioning members of society” (p. 1). However, when the multiple biological, psychological, and socio-cultural changes of adolescence occur simultaneously there is an increased risk of problems and social repercussions (Gardner & Steinberg, 2005; Jessor, 1987). Researchers and practitioners believe that when youth are not provided opportunities to achieve optimal development, they may fail to reach adulthood as healthy, resilient, socially responsible, and engaged citizens (Bloom, 2000; Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1995; PHAC, 2006). The PYD framework has emerged in response to the reactive approach historically used when problems such as drinking, drug use, drop out, and teen pregnancy occurred (Botvin, 2004; Catalano et al., 2002; Damon, 2004). Prior to the development of this

framework within positive psychology, deficit models were used that highlighted youth as problems to be managed within society (Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray, & Foster, 1998).

More recently proactive measures have been purposefully incorporated into programs with the goal of yielding positive psychosocial outcomes (Holt & Jones, 2008; Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, & Jones, 2005). Critical characteristics of the PYD framework include having a physically and psychologically safe environment (including supportive relationships and appropriate adult supervision), providing opportunities to belong and for skill building, facilitating positive social norms and providing connections between family, school, and community (Catalano et al., 2002; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Weiss & Wiese-Bjornstal, 2009).

Research has shown that adolescence is a critical time for the best time for intervention (Danish, 1996; Hamburg, 1997; PHAC, 2006), but programs using a PYD framework are critical to enhancing adolescent development (Education Alliance, 2007; National Research Council & Institute of Medicine, 2002; Weissberg & Greenberg, 1998).

Positive Youth Development and Physical Activity

Research dating back to the early twentieth century recognized that the supplementary values of sport and PA exceed the physiological benefits (Danish, Petitpas, & Hale, 1993; Plato, 1920). Plato (adapted from Plato, 1920) argued that there is far more to sport than simply the physical value, and more recent research has shown that both physical and psychological health benefits result from regular participation (International Social Survey Programme, 1992; US Surgeon General Report, 1996). However, a number of researchers assert that sport and PA programs must be deliberately structured to provide youth with the opportunity to develop positive outcomes (Danish et al., 2004; Gould & Carson, 2008).

Apart from being a preferred framework for enhancing youth development, PYD may also have the potential to increase the effectiveness of interventions designed to facilitate youth PA. Interventions in PA may be best served to adopt a shift in focus similar to PYD, where researchers and practitioners move away from a focus on avoiding the negative consequences of an inactive lifestyle (obesity, diabetes, later-developed cancers) and work to create contexts in which youth have the opportunity to form relationships with caring adults and in which healthy living skills are intentionally taught and practiced. This integration of PYD and PA programming may not only help in changing health behaviour in the short-term, but can allow youth to engage in healthy behaviours for a lifetime so that they develop into functioning adults. The rationale for such an approach stems from research that has found that the intermediaries that have been identified in youth PA such as self-efficacy, social support, enjoyment, and removing perceived barriers (Sallis, Prochaska, & Taylor, 2000; Trost, Owen, Bauman, Sallis, & Brown, 2002; Van Der Horst, Paw, Twisk, & Van Mechelen, 2007) are often the same psychosocial factors emphasized through PYD programming. As shown in a number of reviews, these psychosocial determinants of youth PA are the same psychological and social variables significantly associated with later adult PA (Dishman, Sallis, & Orenstein, 1985; Sallis et al., 2000; Van Der Horst et al., 2007). Thus, community-based PA interventions that focus on integrating the psychosocial variables associated with sustained PA may be more effective in enhancing youth PA levels that transfer into adulthood as opposed to interventions that just offer the opportunity to be active without consideration of such variables that play a role in behaviour change.

Physical Activity Programming

A review of the literature relating to youth PA interventions confirms that such interventions can positively impact PA levels and inactive behaviour (Dobbins, DeCorby,

Robeson, Husson, & Tirilis, 2009; Stone, McKenzie, Welk, & Booth, 1998; Thomas, Ciliska, Micucci, Wilson-Abra, & Dobbins, 2004). However, it was reported that many of these interventions were poorly designed, had insufficient evaluations, and were not community-based (Stone et al., 1998).

Research conducted on PA and low SES youth concluded that when planning or implementing a community-based PA program, emphasis should be placed on environmental factors, as activities planned for such youth should occur in a “safe, inclusive, well-maintained environment with an adult to provide support and supervision” (Humbert et al., 2006, p. 481). Such activities should also be inexpensive and convenient, meaning they should be easily accessible both financially and geographically (Humbert et al., 2006; Sallis et al., 1997). Although researchers have suggested that physical education programs within the school environment may be the most promising for having a positive impact on youth, particularly for low SES youth (Sallis et al., 1997), researchers assert that steps should also be taken to provide an environment that supports PA outside of the school setting (Humbert et al., 2006). The Active Healthy Kids Canada (2011) report card identified the after-school period as a critical time to increase PA as the research shows youth are inactive approximately 60% of the time between 3 and 6 p.m., getting only 14 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous intensity PA in this three hour period.

As a result, community programmers and policy developers must take these factors into consideration when offering programs to youth in the community. Such considerations could include attempting to improve accessibility to PA programs (proximity and cost), as well as the number and quality of recreational facilities in lower SES areas. Finally, as adults play a critical

role in youth PA, the presence and ongoing support of these individuals in such programs is essential.

Female Adolescent Development and Socio-Economic Status

Research indicates that female youth, compared to male youth, score consistently lower on all indicators of well-being (PHAC, 2004). By grade seven, 24-38% of females report feeling depressed at least once a week. Furthermore, beginning in grade six, levels of self-confidence markedly decline so that by grade 10 only 14% of females report that they believe in themselves (PHAC, 2004). Although it can be argued that all female youth need opportunities to enhance their development, it is highly recognized that female youth from families living on low incomes are particularly at risk. The Health Behaviour of School-Aged Children Study, a cross-national study supported by the World Health Organization (WHO), considers young people's health within a broad context by looking at how SES, family, peers, and school shape the development of adolescents. Findings from this study revealed that gender and family affluence were two powerful determinants of optimal youth development (Boyce, 2004). More specifically, female youth living in poverty have a greater risk of dropping out of school, having mental health problems, having difficulties with the law, engaging in risk-taking behaviour, incurring a disability, and being faced with premature death (Bowlby, 2005; Canadian Council of Learning, 2005; Correctional Service Canada, 1998; PHAC, 2004; Statistics Canada, 2001).

Researchers also report that one's SES is a powerful determinant of health (Frohlich, Ross, & Richmond, 2006; Lavis, 2002). For example, being from a family with a low income has been associated with lower educational attainment, poorer health outcomes, and lower rates of participation in sport and recreation (Boyce, 2004; Frohlich et al., 2006; PHAC, 2004; Woodfield, Duncan, Al-Nakeeb, Nevill, & Jenkins, 2002). More specifically, families with a

household income greater than \$80,000 were twice as likely to participate in sport and PA as those with incomes less than \$30,000 (Statistics Canada, 2008). Yet, this is not because low SES youth are not as interested in participating in sport and PA. Oftentimes there are constraints, including a lack of accessible programs (Humbert et al., 2006) that prevent youth from participating. The Active Healthy Kids Canada (2011) report indicated that youth from low SES families have less access to organized sport and PA. Seventy-two percent of children living on low incomes were reported as not having access to after-school programs (Active Healthy Kids Canada, 2011). Further, a survey of community-based programs has indicated that less than 50% of after-school programs have PA as a primary component for adolescents (Active Healthy Kids Canada, 2011).

In sum, female youth from families living on low incomes are at highest risk for poor developmental outcomes (PHAC, 2006; Wilson et al., 2005) both physically and psychologically; therefore, community-based life skills PA programs are needed to provide female youth living on low incomes the opportunity to attain optimal development and be physically active outside of school.

Girls Just Wanna Have Fun Program

Coakley (2011) emphasized how difficult it is to develop programs designed to enhance the agency of youth (ages 12-18), yet he advised that forming cooperative and mutually supportive relationships between scholars and community development programmers is critical in order to test the effectiveness of such programs. The University of Ottawa and the BGC of Ottawa developed such a relationship in order to develop and implement the Girls Just Wanna Have Fun (GJWHF) program.

The BGC is a community-based non-profit organization that has been in operation since the late nineteenth century (BGC of Canada, 2012). This organization seeks to improve the psychosocial development of youth while also inspiring them to become productive and responsive citizens (BGC of America, 1998). Programs developed within this organization aim to create opportunities to guide children and youth to develop life skills, enabling them to use these skills to contribute to their communities and increasing their ability towards a productive adult life (BGC of Canada, 2012; Perkins & Borden, 2003). Additionally, BGC is designed to provide community programming to youth within a positive and safe environment and foster the establishment of positive relationships with adults and peers (Perkins & Noam, 2007). The organization runs programs after-school, on weekends, and throughout the summer months, providing opportunities for children from the ages of 6-18, particularly from low income families or disadvantaged communities, to engage in various activities (BGC of Canada, 2012). An identified gap in programming at the BGC of Ottawa is sport and PA programming for female youth. According to the BGC statistics from 2008-09, only 243 females compared to 1012 males participated in sport and recreational programs at the Ottawa BGC.

The GJWHF program is a youth-driven PA-based life skills program. Programs and organizations taking on a youth-driven approach have increased over the past decade in Canada and are leading to positive change within their communities (Fortier, 2006; Hosang, 2003). This approach is also consistent with PYD programming as the PYD framework emphasizes the facilitation of meaningful youth involvement (Coakley, 2011; Education Alliance, 2007). In addition, research in the area of female adolescent development discusses the importance of providing female youth opportunities to become active citizens in their community and has found that experience-based programming positively improved females' self-concept and

behaviour (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Forneris, 2006; Stemmermann & Antonellis, 2000). For the GJWHF program, female youth from the BGC were involved in the development of the program as they chose the various types of PA that they participated in from week to week. Towards the end of the program, the female youth also took on a leadership role and taught some of the life skills they had learned to younger female youth from the BGC. Not only did this process have the potential to help enhance engagement and motivation, but it also had the potential to help develop skills, including but not limited to, goal setting, problem solving, communication, and teamwork that are associated with PYD. Additionally, these leadership opportunities could lead to a greater sense of ownership, empowerment, leadership ability, and planning skills (Larson, Walker & Pearce, 2005) for female youth participants.

The first year of program implementation of the GJWHF was from September until mid-May of 2011-12. Female youth ages 11 to 14 years old were recruited from a number of BGC clubhouses within Ottawa and were provided free transportation to a central clubhouse. Each session was 75 minutes in length and within each session, the youth participated in a life skills activity and some form of PA or sport that reinforced the life skill of the session. For example, the life skill of relaxation and focus was reinforced by yoga, and teamwork and respecting others was incorporated into the sport of basketball.

The program had one leader and four co-leaders. The co-leaders took on roles including facilitating the 'Rose and Thorn' activity at the beginning of each session, explaining and monitoring the sport/PA of each session, behavioural management, and working in small groups with the youth to facilitate relationships. The leader was responsible for facilitating many of the life skill activities, as well as all roles defined above that the co-leaders were responsible for. Further, the leader responsible for sending out weekly email of session plans and facilitating

debrief with co-leaders post-session. All five leaders met 30 minutes before the start of each session to plan and discuss the upcoming session. A 15 minute debrief period also took place with the leaders at the end of the session each week to discuss what went well, what could be improved, and plans for the following week. The specific structure of the program incorporated both the Sports United to Promote Education and Recreation (SUPER) program (Danish, 1996) and Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility model (Hellison, 2011). The integration of these to program models was recommended by Holt (2008). The SUPER program is a well-known sport-based life skills program that has been implemented and shown to be effective in a number of different countries (Danish et al., 2004). The SUPER program is structured to allow for the integration of teaching life skills into various sports. For example, if floor hockey was the chosen sport for the program, in each session of the program the youth would spend time learning how to play hockey (20 min), would spend time learning about one specific life skill each session, such as goal setting, problem solving, overcoming obstacles, or emotion regulation (20 min), and then at the end of the session play hockey with an emphasis being placed on the life skill of the day (20 min).

The Teaching Personal Social Responsibility (TPSR) model was developed for after-school sport programming and PE programs in schools for at-risk youth. TPSR uses a strong instructor-participant relationship that allows for the gradual empowerment of youth by focusing on five main components throughout the program (Hellison, Martinek, & Walsh, 2008). The main components of the TPSR model include: (1) Personal Responsibility or Self-Control; (2) Effort; (3) Self-Coaching; (4) Leadership; and (5) Transference. Each of these five components arose as practical programming guidelines that have been shown to lead to positive outcomes for youth (Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Martinek, Schilling, & Hellison, 2006; Walsh, Ozaeta, &

Wright, 2010). Personal responsibility or self-control refers to the ability to control one's behaviour and conduct, effort refers to participants' ability to apply themselves to a given task, self-coaching refers to the ability to improve in a chosen area using independent goal setting and planned practice (without direct supervision), leadership refers to the ability to direct a group towards an agreed upon goal, and transference is a second-order latent variable referring to the ability to use the skills outlined above in contexts outside of the program (e.g., school, home, etc.) (Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Martinek et al., 2001). To help reinforce these components, the TPSR model uses a specific program structure. The first 5-10 minutes of the session consists of relational time where the leaders chat with the youth about what is going on in their daily lives. Following relational time is the awareness talk. The awareness talk addresses the five different components outlined above and in the GJWHF program additional life skills were integrated from the SUPER program. The rationale for including life skills from the SUPER program was to ensure that the youth were taught a variety of life skills and to avoid too much repetition of the five components (e.g. managing emotions, overcoming obstacles, respect). The awareness talk is followed by the PA plan, similar to SUPER, which was time that the youth engage in sport or PA. As mentioned above, the female participants of GJWHF chose the type of PA in which they wanted to participate in. Examples of such activities included: soccer, cooperative games, swimming, lacrosse, and yoga. The life skill taught in the session was then incorporated into the PA plan. Finally, a debrief meeting occurred at the conclusion of the session where the leaders discussed with the youth progress that had been made that day or any challenges or difficulties faced. The youth also took this time to complete their personal reflection and rate how well they did that day on the five levels of the model: personal responsibility/self-control, effort, self-coaching, leadership, and transference.

Theoretical Framework

The framework guiding this research was Petitpas and colleagues' (2005) framework for planning youth sport programs that promote psychosocial development. Given that enhanced psychosocial development was the overall objective of GJWHF, Petitpas and colleagues' (2005) framework was an appropriate framework for this study. Although this framework has traditionally focused on sport programs, it can also be transferred to the domain of PA, in which such programming incorporates life skills. This framework outlines four critical areas necessary for programs to incorporate in order to facilitate positive developmental outcomes: context, external assets, internal assets, and research and evaluation. The *context* of a program involves creating a psychologically safe environment where participants can develop a sense of initiative, can find a valued role within a group, and where involvement is voluntary (unlike school which is mandated), yet requires persistence and effort over a period of time (Petitpas et al., 2005). *External assets* involve support and promotion of opportunities for individuals to experience success and gain confidence through coaches, mentors, parents, and the surrounding community. The program must also involve intentional teaching of life skills, the *internal assets* youth need to develop to succeed. Life skills are skills that enable people to deal effectively with challenges in their life and succeed in various life domains such as school, work, and their community (Danish, 1997; Danish et al., 1993; WHO, 2006). Examples of these skills include communicating effectively with peers and adults, making effective decisions, being assertive, and setting goals (Danish et al., 1993). However, beyond the development of the life skill, Petitpas et al. (2005) and Gould and Carson (2008) emphasize that in order for a skill to be classified as a *life skill*, an effort must be made to help youth learn to transfer the skill to other life domains (e.g. school, home, work). Finally, for this framework to be complete, Petitpas and

colleagues (2005) state that the program needs to incorporate *evaluation*. Program evaluations have the ability to provide more evidence-based and strategic program planning for the organization in the future (Danish et al., 2004).

As mentioned above, there has been a lack of investigation in community-based settings, and very little information provided about the effectiveness of interventions in these settings (Salmon et al., 2007). Past reviews of the BGC of Canada have shown that this organization provides a nurturing environment and allows for the acquisition of positive behaviours and the development of competence and self-esteem (Carruthers & Busser, 2000; Davison, 2000). Yet, within the BGC, many unique programs are offered and it is critical to gain a more specific understanding of the individual programs within this organization. Many researchers assert that evaluation of a program is just as important, as the actual implementation of a program (Catalano et al., 2002; Salmon et al., 2007). The GJWHF program is one such program that would benefit from both a process and outcome evaluation which was the overall purpose of this thesis. A process evaluation measures fidelity of program implementation (e.g., number of sessions implemented, sessions implemented as designed, leader and participant attendance) and participants' receptivity and enjoyment of the program. Effective program implementation is associated with increased outcomes and research indicates that the collection of implementation data is an essential part of program evaluation (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). An outcome evaluation helps to gain an understanding of the program's specific impact on the individual participants. To this end, attempting to understand if this after-school program can facilitate PYD outcomes and transference of these skills to other domains of their lives is critical, as female youth living in low income families face a number of difficulties that place them at risk from reaching their full potential.

Two initial research questions were proposed to examine this research: ‘How faithful was the implementation of GJWHF program to the TPSR model?’ and ‘What is the experience and perceived impact of participation in the GJWHF program by both youth and leaders on the psychosocial development of female youth participants?’ However, it should be noted that after data collection was completed it was recognized that there was a significant amount of data related to the implementation and perceived impact of the program that was broader than initially anticipated and therefore this thesis is comprised of three articles. The first article represents an overall process evaluation of the GJWHF program. The second article examined how the TPSR model can be effective in helping to enhance youth development. Finally, the third article presents the results of the outcome evaluation of the GJWHF program.

This research contributed to the gaps identified above (Hodge, Danish, & Martin, 2012; Salmon et al., 2007; Samuels, 2006; Theokas et al., 2008). Conducting community-based research enabled researchers to use academic resources in combination with community programmers to further understand and implement a youth PA program. Additionally, this collaboration helped to further knowledge translation to applied settings, which can inform subsequent theory development and research programs. In sum, community-based youth interventions and subsequent research that evaluates these interventions helps to bridge the gap between research and practice resulting in effective youth programming.

Presentation of the Articles

After conducting an analysis of literature, working in collaboration with researchers and the BGC to develop and implement the GJWHF program, an empirical study was conducted to evaluate both the processes and potential impact of the program on its youth participants. Three articles were produced as part of this master's thesis. In the first article, the GJWHF program is thoroughly described and results of the process evaluation are presented including the successes, challenges, and practical recommendations for community programmers and future directions of the program. The second article investigates the TPSR model integrated within the GJWHF program. This paper used a time series analysis, a unique data analysis tool within the field of PYD, to understand the five levels of responsibility. Finally, the third article presents the results of an outcome evaluation using mixed-methods. The specific methodological procedures used to gather and analyze the data are presented in all three articles.

Article 1

Running head: PROCESS EVALUATION OF GJWHF

Girls Just Wanna Have Fun: A Process Evaluation of a Female Youth-Driven Physical Activity-

Based Life Skills Program

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Abstract

The Girls Just Wanna Have Fun program is a physical activity-based life skills program (e.g. Hodge, Creswell, Sherburn, & Dugdale, 1999) that aims to empower female youth. The purpose of this paper was to provide a detailed description of the program and a process evaluation of the first year of program implementation. From interviews with youth and leaders, as well as documentation from the leaders' weekly online log of each implemented session, a number of themes emerged regarding the successes and challenges experienced throughout the program. Themes related to successes included using activities to facilitate relational time, using a youth-driven approach increased initiative and leadership, having communicative program leaders who supported one another and having a variety of physical activities to engage the youth. Themes related to challenges included difficulties with facility and transportation, some activities being too much like school, and behavioural management. Included in the paper is a discussion of practical recommendations for community programmers and future directions for the program. Overall, this process evaluation represents an important step in responding to calls for increased evaluation in community-based programs (Catalano et al., 2002) and aids in understanding the process in which positive youth development programs can be effectively implemented.

Girls Just Wanna Have Fun: A Process Evaluation of a Female Youth-Driven Physical Activity-
Based Life Skills Program

The theoretical perspective of positive youth development (PYD)¹ sees youth in terms of their potential for healthy development (Catalano, Hawkins, Berglund, Pollard, & Arthur, 2002). As a result, PYD programs aim to create opportunities to foster the health and well-being of youth. As Theokas and colleagues (2005) stated, the purpose of PYD interventions is to enhance the development of youth and to increase thriving. Integrating a PYD framework into the physical activity (PA) and sport domain has become popular, as this environment has shown that it can be used as a vehicle to facilitate life skills (Danish, Forneris, Hodge, & Heke, 2004; Gould & Carson, 2008; Holt & Jones, 2008). It is also believed that the integration of PA or sport and life skills creates a dually productive environment: the development of both physical *and* psychosocial skills (Danish et al., 2004; Gould & Carson, 2008; Perkins & Noam, 2007). To this end, researchers assert that the PA or sport context must be established in a way that developmentally intentional learning takes place to ensure that such programs foster positive developmental outcomes in youth.

Systematic reviews of PA interventions for youth support that PA interventions directed at this population can positively impact PA levels (Dobbins, DeCorby, Robeson, Husson, & Tirilis, 2009; Thomas, Ciliska, Micucci, Wilson-Abra, & Dobbins, 2004). However, Stone, McKenzie, Welk, and Booth (1998) reported that the majority of such interventions were hindered by poor program design, less than optimal evaluations, and were not community-based. Moreover, research conducted on PA and youth from low socio-economic backgrounds concluded that when planning or implementing a community-based PA program, activities should occur in an

¹ This paper uses the following abbreviations: Positive youth development (PYD); Physical Activity (PA) Boys and Girls Club (BGC); Girls Just Wanna Have Fun (GJWHF); Sports United to Promote Education and Recreation (SUPER); Teaching Personal Social Responsibility (TPSR)

environment that is safe, fosters a sense of belonging, and involves adult support and supervision (Humbert et al., 2006, p. 481). In addition, the program activities need to be inexpensive and convenient, meaning they should be easily accessible both geographically and financially (Sallis et al., 1997).

Moreover, researchers report that youth from families living on low incomes participate in less PA than more economically advantaged youth (Crespo, Ainsworth, Keteyian, Heath, & Smit, 1999; Woodfield, Duncan, Al-Nakeeb, Nevill, & Jenkins, 2002). In 2008, families with a household income greater than \$80,000 were twice as likely to be physically active as those with incomes less than \$30,000 (Statistics Canada, 2008). In addition, the Active Healthy Kids Canada (2011) report indicated that 72% of parents living on low incomes reported that their children do not have access to after-school programs and a survey of community-based programs also revealed that less than 50% of such programs have PA as a primary component or target adolescents. Yet, this is not because youth from lower-income families are not as interested in participating in sport and PA; oftentimes there are other constraints including a lack of accessible programs that prevent youth from participating (Humbert et al., 2006).

Although Coakley (2011) emphasized that the development of PYD programs designed to enhance the agency of youth (ages 12-18) can be challenging, he advised that community development programmers form cooperative and mutually supportive relationships with scholars in order to test the effectiveness of such programs. This research represents such a relationship between researchers at a University located in Eastern Ontario, Canada and a local Boys and Girls Club (BGC). Together, these researchers and the local BGC developed and implemented the Girls Just Wanna Have Fun (GJWHF) program. The BGC is a community-based non-profit organization that has been established since the late nineteenth century (BGC of Canada, 2012).

This organization seeks to help youth “discover, develop and achieve their best potential as they grow to become Canada's future adults, citizens and leaders, by engaging them in activities that challenge and help them develop healthy minds and bodies” (BGC of Canada, 2012, n.p.).

Research has also recognized the BGC as an organization that provides a positive and safe environment for youth and an opportunity for youth to establish positive relationships with both adults and peers (Perkins & Noam, 2007). More specifically, the organization runs programs after-school, on weekends, and throughout the summer months, providing opportunities for children from 6 to 18 years old, particularly from low income families or disadvantaged communities, to engage in various activities (BGC of Canada, 2012). However, a recently identified gap in BGC programming related to female youth in the domains of sport and PA. To illustrate, from 2008-2009, BGC indicated that only 243 females compared to 1012 males were participating in sport and PA programs within the BGC.

The GJWHF program represents a youth-driven PA-based life skills program.

There are an increasing number of youth-driven organizations emerging in Canada (Fortier, 2006) and these youth-driven organizations and activities are leading to positive change within their communities (Hosang, 2003; Serido, Borden, & Perkins, 2011). Youth-driven programming provides the opportunity for youth to play a central role in decision-making throughout the course of the program (Delgado, 2008). Moreover, best practices in the field of PYD, particularly as it relates to programming include the facilitation of meaningful youth involvement (Education Alliance, 2007). In Coakley's (2011) article which attempted to distinguish what really counts as PYD within the sport environment, he acknowledged that youth empowerment could prove to be helpful in producing positive developmental outcomes for individuals and communities.

Life skills can be defined as skills that enable people to deal effectively with challenges in their life and succeed in various life domains such as school, work, and their community (Danish, 1997; Danish, Petitpas, & Hale, 1993; World Health Organization, 2006). Examples of these skills include communicating effectively with peers and adults, making effective decisions, being assertive, and setting goals (Danish et al., 1993). Hodge, Danish, and Martin (2012) argued that research has been done examining life skill interventions; however, there is a dearth of literature within this field that actually provides the reader with a detailed description of the intervention, the specific life skill(s) being incorporated in the program, the actual content within each program session, and how the physical environment in which the intervention is being delivered affects the process of implementation and overall impact on the participants. Therefore, this paper responds to these identified gaps and aims to provide a descriptive overview of GJWHF and the results of the process evaluation from the first year of implementation. Effective program implementation is associated with increased outcomes and research indicates that the collection of process data is an essential part of program evaluation (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). Therefore, the need for formal process evaluations is essential and more research needs to be conducted on the realities of program evaluation at a practical level. All too often only the positive outcomes and successes are reported and the reality of the day to day implementation of community programming is neglected. Additionally, this paper sought to derive practical recommendations and future directions for programmers and researchers who aspire to run a similar program.

GJWHF Program Framework

The format of the GJWHF program was based on two previous frameworks: Danish and colleagues' (2004) Sports United to Promote Education and Recreation (SUPER) program and

Hellison and colleagues' (1995, 2011) Teaching Personal Social Responsibility (TPSR) model. The SUPER program is a well-known sport-based life skills program that has been implemented and shown to be effective in a number of different countries (Danish et al., 2004). This program encompasses 18 modules where participants are involved in three sets of activities per session: learning physical skills related to a specific sport; learning life skills related to sports in general; and playing the sport. Specifically, within the GJWHF program, youth participated in various forms of sport and PA, whereas in SUPER, youth typically participate in one particular sport. However, GJWHF incorporates the life skill modules developed within SUPER. Within each session, youth participate in a life skill activity as well as some form of sport or PA that reinforces the life skill of the session. For example, the life skills 'relaxation' and 'managing emotions' were reinforced by yoga and 'teamwork' and 'respecting others' were incorporated into the sport of basketball. The rationale for not using one sport was that the programmers wanted the youth to have a voice in which sport and types of PA they wanted to participate in and to provide a variety of activities (see details below in Table 1).

Insert Table 1.

The TPSR model was developed from work with at-risk youth in after-school sport and physical education programming in schools. TPSR focuses on developing a strong instructor-participant relationship that allows for the gradual empowerment of youth (Hellison, Martinek, & Walsh, 2008). The five main levels of the TPSR model include: (1) Personal Responsibility or Self-Control; (2) Effort; (3) Self-Coaching; (4) Leadership; and (5) Transference. Each of these five components arose as practical programming guidelines that have been shown to lead to positive outcomes for youth (Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Martinek, Schilling, & Hellison, 2006; Walsh, Ozaeta, & Wright, 2010). Personal responsibility or self-control refers to the ability to

control one's behaviour and conduct, effort refers to participants' ability to apply themselves to a given task, self-coaching refers to the ability to improve in a chosen area using goal setting and planned practice, leadership refers to the ability to direct a group towards an agreed upon goal, and transference is a second-order latent variable referring to the ability to use the skills outlined above in contexts outside of the program (e.g., school, home, etc.) (Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Martinek, Schilling, & Johnson, 2001). Within each session, the youth were reminded of the five components (e.g., taking responsibility for their actions) and as the program progresses, it is expected that the youth increase their sense of personal responsibility and effort and can begin to self-coach, take on greater leadership roles and begin to transfer the life skills being taught in the program outside of the program.

To achieve these objectives, the TPSR model uses a specific program structure. The first 5-10 minutes of the session is set aside for relational time; a time where leaders check in with the youth to see how things are going in their lives. Within the GJWHF program, the 'Rose and Thorn' activity was used during the relational time (10 minutes) and involved breaking into small groups of four or five people and each youth participant shared one rose (something good that happened that week) and one thorn (something not so good that happened that week). Having youth share in this manner is expected to help them feel proud about their accomplishments, build self-esteem, and talk through any issues or problems that may have arisen in their lives. The GJWHF program sessions borrowed other structural features inherent to the TPSR lesson plan. A Relational time was then followed by an awareness talk. The awareness talk (20-25 minutes) addressed the various life skills incorporated from the SUPER program (e.g., managing emotions, overcoming obstacles, respect). The awareness talk was followed by the PA plan (20-25 minutes) which was time that the youth engaged in a sport or form of PA.

The program started with active cooperative games to help the youth get to know each other and to provide the youth time to choose the physical activities that they wanted the leaders to incorporate later in the program. Once the leaders had a list of different physical activities from the youth, the participants were asked every two weeks what activity they wanted to engage in next. This helped the youth be involved in the decision making regarding the program on a continual basis instead of outlining the physical activities for the whole program. Examples of such activities included: basketball, yoga, swimming, and low organization games (e.g., dodgeball, huckle buckle, etc.). A detailed summary of the GJWHF sessions are outlined in Table 1. This table includes not only the life skill of focus and the sport or PA chosen, but also the number of participants in attendance at each session. Finally, a group debrief (5-10 minutes) occurred at the conclusion of each session where the leaders and the girls discussed progress that has been made in the program session that day, including challenges or difficulties faced. This was when the girls took time to complete their personal reflection and rated how well they did that day in terms of personal responsibility, effort, self-coaching, leadership, and transference.

Throughout the program, there were five sessions where a unique structure took place outside of what was originally planned. For example, when skating and swimming took place, the group had to travel to an outside location and there was not enough time for a full 25 minute awareness talk relating to a specific life skill. However, the relational portion of the session (rose and thorn activity) always occurred. Additionally, there was one session where a photographer was brought in to take the girls' pictures to help them develop a portfolio of themselves to increase confidence and empower the girls. In this session, no specific sport or PA was integrated because of this unique opportunity. Finally, a session was conducted on hygiene as the program leaders thought this was a critical element to discuss with the female youth between the

ages of 11 and 14 as they were beginning to go through puberty and to experience changes to their body.

Near the end of the program, two sessions were set aside to focus on transference of life skills that aimed to help the youth focus on the future, including goal setting and life planning. Following this, the last three weeks of the program were designed around leadership. The girls were responsible for planning, developing, and implementing activities to younger youth within the BGC that incorporated the skills they had learned throughout the program within a sport or PA context of their choice. The girls worked in groups of two or three people and had two weeks of planning within their small groups. The following session involved the girls presenting and teaching their younger peers (6 to 9 years old). The physical activities primarily consisted of teaching younger BGC members a number of the cooperative games.

Methods

Program Participants and Program Leadership

From September 2011 to May 2012, female youth ages 11 to 14 ($M = 11.75$) from two BGC clubhouses within the city met at one clubhouse once a week for the program. The girls were from low income families in a major city in Eastern Ontario. Free transportation to the program was provided to the youth. Although 14 youth were recruited to participate, on average there were between 10 and 12 participants per session (see Table 1 for specific attendance rates). Since this was the first year the program was run, all of the participants were new, yet their length of participation in the BGC ranged from two months to eight years. Five female staff ran the GJWHF program. From these staff members, there was one primary leader, who was also the first author on this paper and four co-leaders. Two of the co-leaders were BGC program staff and two were students at the University of Ottawa. All of the leaders ranged in age from 21 to 46

years old and all had completed or were in the midst of attaining a degree in the fields of Human Kinetics or Social Work. The leaders outside of the BGC who had less experience working with youth had to complete the standardized volunteer training with the BGC as well as three meetings focused on the planning and implementation of the GJWHF prior to commencement in the program. Co-leaders took on various roles throughout the course of the program including facilitating relational activities, explaining and monitoring PA sessions, managing behavioural issues, and working in groups with the girls to help facilitate relationships. The primary leader was responsible for facilitating many of the life skill activities, as well as taking on roles of the co-leaders mentioned above. Additionally, the primary leader was responsible for sending out weekly emails of session plans and facilitating the session debrief with the co-leaders post-session. The leaders met 30 minutes before the start of each program session to plan and discuss the upcoming session. A 15 minute debriefing period also took place with the leaders at the end of the session each week to discuss what went well, what could be improved, and plans for the following week. From this population, 10 of the youth and all five leaders were recruited for this study.

Prior to participation in the program, parental consent forms (see Appendix A) and assent forms (see Appendix B) were distributed to all youth participants and all of the leaders completed a consent form. All procedures were approved by the University Ethics Committee.

Process Evaluation Procedure and Measures

Typically, a process evaluation measures fidelity of program implementation (e.g., number of sessions implemented, sessions implemented as designed, leader and participant attendance) and participants' receptivity and enjoyment of the program (Nakkash et al., 2011; Saunders, Evans, & Joshi, 2005; Shek & Sun, 2012). To document this information, an online logbook

entry was completed by one of the leaders and inputted into the GJWHF online logbook using Survey Monkey (see Appendix C). These online logbook entries were based on the leaders' debrief at the end of each program session. Each entry consisted of the same 10 questions regarding the implementation (date of session; how many youth participated; what life skill was incorporated; were the life skill activities successfully implemented, why or why not?; what PA/sport was incorporated?; were the physical activities successfully implemented, why or why not?; did the session go as planned, if no explain; what went well in the session; what challenges did you face and what could be improved?) and one question that involved rating the group of youth in general on four of the TPSR components (self-control, effort, self-coaching, leadership) on a scale from "Needs Work" (1) to "Great" (4). Transference was not included as it was not possible for the leaders to observe whether the youth had transferred the life skill outside of the program. These questions were discussed orally in the leader debrief session and each leader took a turn documenting key take home messages and inputting results into the online logbook housed on Survey Monkey. Additionally, the leaders were provided access to this online logbook if they wanted to add any additional information that they thought was relevant.

In addition, qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted at the end of the program. A total of 15 interviews were conducted (10 participants, 5 program leaders). The youth interviews were conducted by the lead researcher who was also a program leader and the leader interviews were conducted by a graduate student with experience in qualitative interviewing who was not involved in the GJWHF program. Heath, Brooks, Cleaver, and Ireland (2009) asserted that youth are often more likely to open up to an individual with whom they know, have interacted with and trust, rather than a third party interviewer. In order to further negate the potential for social desirability from the youth, a second opportunity was given to the

youth to provide feedback anonymously. The youth were given a blank piece of paper (five youth prior to commencement of interview, five youth post interview) in which they could write anything they disliked about the program. Upon completion of this form, the youth placed this paper in a sealed envelope.

Due to the time constraints of the program many of the youth were interviewed at their home clubhouse on a night in which the program did not occur. This led to difficulties in arranging an interview with two of the youth which explains why only 10 of the 12 youth were interviewed. Two separate semi-structured interview guides were developed, one for the youth (See Appendix D) and one for the program leaders (See Appendix E). The interview guide for the youth included questions related to their experiences in the program as well as their perceptions of how participation in the program may have impacted their personal development. Questions related to what they, as participants, liked and disliked about the program, their overall experience as a participant in the program, and what they believed they had learned through their participation. The program leader interview guide was composed of questions related to understanding their experiences implementing the program and their perceptions of program impact. For example, questions focused on their overall experience of being a leader, successes and challenges in implementing the program, what they perceived the youth gained from participating in the program, the skills they believed the youth developed or improved throughout the program, and the role of the staff in program. Probes were also used to explore areas of the participants' experiences further. All of the interviews were recorded using a digital audio-recorder.

All of the interviews were conducted outside of the set program time; either during the time before the program started or on a separate night when the youth participants were at their

home clubhouse and a convenient time and place for the leaders. Leader interviews ranged from 25 to 45 minutes, while youth interviews ranged from 15 to 42 minutes. Efforts were made to ensure the youth were comfortable while participating in the interview. Specifically, youth were encouraged that there was no right or wrong answer and that all of their responses would remain anonymous.

It is recognized that having the researcher also be a leader in the program could introduce bias. However, many studies within the field of youth programming have used this approach in the past (Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Ward & Parker, 2012). Further, Coulson, Irwin, and Wright (2012) noted that the majority of published work on the topic of PYD program evaluations is engrained within the reality of practice as many academics, who write about this model, whether through program development, implementation, or evaluation, are also practitioners who work at the community level implementing youth programs. As the first author was also a program leader in GJWHF, Coulson and colleagues' notion holds true and this paper aimed to provide insight at both the academic and community level.

Although the researcher was a leader a number of efforts were made to control for biases throughout the research. First, prior to the start of data collection, the lead researcher conducted a bracketing interview related to PYD and youth programming. Second, an independent auditor also independently coded all of the transcripts, which helped to identify biases and ensure a neutral perspective. Third, as mentioned above, an individual not involved in GJWHF conducted the leader interviews and the youth were also provided an opportunity to provide anonymous feedback about their experience in the program.

Data Analysis

Each interview was audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, resulting in 154 pages of transcripts (12-point font, single spaced). The interview transcripts and the GJWHF logbook were analyzed using an inductive content analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Once all of the interviews were transcribed, the transcripts were read multiple times. First, the lead researcher read through the interview transcripts and logbook to familiarize herself with the data. Upon reading through the data a second time, the researcher made notes in relation to any responses related to purpose of the study or the TPSR model. Third, the researcher re-read the transcripts and logbook along with the side notes from the above step to group responses into broader themes. Finally, the broad themes were organized and relevant quotations identified that supported the emerging themes. In addition, an independent auditor who was a graduate student with experience in qualitative data analysis reviewed the transcripts and logbook entries to examine whether the identified themes were consistent with the data collected. Discrepancies between researchers in the analysis process were further discussed until agreement was reached.

Identification codes were created for each quotation as a means to identify the participants' role in the program. A number was assigned to each participant in the order in which they were interviewed to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Since the leaders have qualitative data from two sources (interviews and the GJWHF logbook), an additional code was included to identify where the quotation was coming from. Quotations taken from the Leader Logbook were identified by the date of the session since all contributions were gathered by one of the leaders from the post-session debrief with all leaders. In addition, for the anonymous feedback provided by the youth, numbers were written on the paper in the order in which they were completed (Y = youth participant; L = leader; LL = Leader Logbook; AYF = anonymous youth participant

feedback). For example, the identification code L-4 would indicate that the individual was a leader and was interviewed fourth.

Results

Because this research focused on the actual implementation of this program, we first report on the fidelity of implementation based on the analysis of the Leader Logbook. Second, we present information on the successes of the first year of this program and finally we discuss challenges from both the leaders' and youth participants' perspectives.

Fidelity of Program Implementation

As noted in Table 1, 30 out of 31 planned sessions were carried out. One session was cancelled due to bad weather during the winter months. There were 23 sessions planned and executed based on the integration of the SUPER and TPSR frameworks, while there were seven sessions in which adaptations were made due to either the time needed for the planned PA (e.g., as mentioned above when the youth went skating and swimming, no life skill sessions were directly integrated because the PA took the entire 75 minutes), issues with transportation for the youth being late or absent, and for holiday and end of session parties.

The average attendance rate across the year was 10.4 youth per session; however, this number did fluctuate from five youth (during March break) to 14 youth. Some youth did drop out over the course of the program due to competing program alternatives within the clubhouse or to lack of interest. However, approximately 10 to 12 participants consistently attended the program throughout the year (attending more than 75% of the program sessions).

One critical component of this program was the large leader support, as on any given night of the program, there was a minimum of four leaders present, and on most evenings there were five leaders. This strong support staff can be attributed to the passion they had towards the program as there was no drop-out of leaders throughout the year. Furthermore, two of the leaders

were undergraduate students who were completing a six-month internship. However, these two leaders chose to stay on in a volunteer position once their six month internship was complete and one of these women decided to return for year two of the program.

Successes

A number of successes reported over the course of the program are highlighted in this section including the use of activities to facilitate relational time, using a youth-driven approach, having communicative program leaders who supported one another, and having a variety of physical activities to engage the youth.

Using ‘Rose and Thorn’ to facilitate relational time. The importance of using an activity like ‘Rose and Thorn’ was recognized by both the youth and the leaders as having a positive impact and an effective means of connecting to each other. Originally, the ‘Rose and Thorn’ activity was planned to be an ice breaker at the start of the program, but it was soon understood that the youth enjoyed this time to share with each other. As a result, the ‘Rose and Thorn’ activity was implemented at the beginning of every session during relational time. It was a general consensus from both parties to keep the ‘Rose and Thorn’ activity as a regular program component, as the girls were asked during a session about a third of the way through the program whether or not they wanted to keep this component ongoing in each session and all youth were in favour as they looked forward to this element as a regular part of the program’s routine. This activity allowed time for the girls to talk with each other, listen to each other and relate to each other, as well as facilitate a relationship with the leaders. One leader highlighted the importance of maintaining this relational activity throughout the duration of the program:

Now they [the youth] all come in and it’s like ‘I have a good rose today’, or ‘I have three roses’ and it’s something that they definitely look forward to and they know it’s coming

at the beginning—they've come to expect it...so we've kept it going all year, and I guess it gives the kids some time to reflect on how their week's been going or some of the problems they've been having at school. And they'll chat about it with you, so it's good to kind of talk through things with them and then it kind of sets the tone for the rest of the session too. So that's been a really cool highlight. (L-5)

The youth also felt supported by their peers and leaders in this activity as highlighted by this quotation: "In 'Rose and Thorns' we get to speak out and say we have a problem, we get to tell people the problem and they'd actually listen" (Y-4). She went on to say:

I like 'Rose and Thorn' because you got to share what's going on in your week and stuff.

I felt like other people would understand what was happening, and what I did and stuff.

Like say I was mad at something, they would understand, and not bombard me. (Y-4)

Another youth shared: "I liked the roses and the thorns. You get to tell what happened, like you can share with everyone what happened in your life. And it kind of helped...like if you don't have anyone to talk to" (Y-9). Similarly, the youth felt that this activity helped increase their relationships with the leaders: "I think it's ['Rose and Thorn' activity] nice—it makes me feel as if they [the leaders] want to know what's going on and it makes me actually feel more comfortable with them" (Y-5).

Some youth shared that the 'Rose and Thorn' activity also helped them to increase their confidence throughout the year. "I can speak out louder in front of them and show my rose and thorn now. At the first day, I couldn't do it because I was too shy. Now I'm comfortable sharing in front of everyone" (Y-8). In addition, although not directly teaching life skills, the leaders observed that the youth learned to respect and listen to their peers, problem solve, and appreciate differences. As a result, one co-leader discussed the importance of having decided as a group to

keep the ‘Rose and Thorn’ activity as part of the relational time at the beginning of every session:

Because of the time pressure...it was a suggestion among leaders that we axe ‘Rose and Thorn’ but that’s what the girls really enjoy and in and of itself – learning to listen to each other, appreciating each other, contributing to the group – that’s what ‘rose and thorn’ does and those are life skills too. (L-2)

Another leader seconded this notion:

(Name of leader) was very correct in saying, I think it is something important, and we don’t want to downplay it that, originally, it was just used as an ice-breaker, but they [the youth] definitely get a lot of skills out of it, in that, the communication skills, listening to others, respecting others when they’re talking, problem solving, someone’s having an issue at school, some of the kids will open and be like, ‘oh, that happened to me too, and this is what I did’ sort of thing. So I think there’s definitely value in that. (L-1)

One of the girls also went on to second this:

I liked just the talking, just getting to know how people’s days were. Because sometimes you’ll see them and they have a smile on and like other times...like when they have a smile on you never really know what’s going on, so I like the fact that we do roses and thorns to see how everybody’s week has been. It kind of shows us that we do care. (P-3)

As seen by the above quotations, the girls seemed to thoroughly enjoy the ‘Rose and Thorn’ activity which provided a supportive environment and fostered relational bonds between youth and other youth, as well as between youth and leaders.

Youth-driven approach increased initiative and leadership. Allowing the youth to have a role in decision-making regarding the program led to increased initiative and leadership

among the youth particularly when they could choose specific activities that they were familiar with and enjoyed. The leaders observed that during a typical program session, the older girls often helped out their younger peers with an activity: “It was great to see a few girls take initiative and demonstrate or explain to other girls how to play some of the games” (LL-April 25, 2012). Additionally, another leader seconded this in a debrief session explaining that, during one activity where the GJWHF youth were working with some of the younger BGC members; “some of the girls had some great teachable moments, like where they brainstormed a quality and then defined it to other younger youth” (LL-April 17, 2012). Furthermore, the youth seemed to take great initiative when it came time to planning and implementing their own PA-based life skill activities for the younger members of the BGC.

The youth took great ownership and pride in teaching their activity, even during the practice run the week before. They were well-spoken in their explanations to the group and showed a lot of confidence and maturity and put forth a good effort. They did demonstrations and used constructive feedback provided by leaders. (LL-May 9, 2012)

Another leader highlighted during a session debrief that the youth were “very creative and the young girls had a lot of fun participating. One group went as far as bringing treats for the girls and adding it in as part of the obstacle course. They really took great ownership” (LL-May 9, 2012). Finally, one of the program leaders reflected on the overall process of the youth-led end-of-program activity:

For the teaching part, I think it went really, really well; better than originally expected. They worked really well. They took on a great leadership role even within their own groups when they were planning and developing the activities they were going to teach to the younger kids. I mean it gave them their own, like it was on them as to what they were

going to choose—everything was left up to them, which was great. I think they really enjoyed having that flexibility and we just kind of walked around and asked them if they needed help, but it was all independent and I think they really enjoyed that. (L-5)

Having communicative program leaders who supported one another. Over the course of the program, a major success was having a strong supportive network of program leaders who were responsible for implementing the program. As one leader explained, consistent communication was critical to effective implementation:

Open lines of communication. We always sent out an email once a week beforehand and just kind of talked about what we're going to be doing, does anyone have any questions or suggestions on how we can make this session better, if we know we're going to be short on kids if it's March Break, so we can kind of adapt it. So I think that's been really good. (L-5)

This helped the planning process over the course of the program to continually keep all leaders involved in what each session would entail. The consistent communication via email also provided opportunities for any of the leaders to deliver feedback or suggestions. Furthermore, having these emails sent out weekly aided in keeping the program structure more fluid and not necessarily set in stone and rigid. As stated in the above quotation, there were weeks where there were low numbers of youth because of holidays (March break, etc.) and the program sessions were adapted in advance from this. Furthermore, in addition to communicating for logistical reasons, leaders communicated with each other for guidance and advice. One leader indicated: “One of the other leaders, she's been working with the BGC for years and years and she has experience working with youth in camps and things like that, so she's sort of the person that I turn to” (L-1).

Having a variety of physical activities to engage the youth. As one of the main goals for this program, each session provided sufficient opportunities for youth to engage in a variety of physical activities. From the leaders' weekly reports of the session implementation, they outlined a number of program achievements with respect to providing an environment supportive of PA. During a program session debrief, one leader stated: "all of the activities were successful in getting the girls active while applying a life skill" (LL- February 12, 2012). Two weeks later, a leader highlighted "the girls had fun and they were successful in getting their heart rates up and getting them active" (LL-February 23, 2012).

Not only was the program successful in facilitating PA, but also providing opportunities to the youth that they might have otherwise not have had the opportunity to do. For example, the program had dance, yoga, and self-defense instructors come in on more than one occasion. The leader documented the following after a dance instructor came into the club:

A youth-led dance instructor tried a new method of dance with the girls called the GROOVE method. It allowed for a lot of independent movement, and I think the kids really enjoyed it. It gave them a sense of ownership and independence, while allowing for creativity. (LL-December 13, 2011)

Yoga was another activity that many of the youth were able to try for the first time: "Yoga went very well! All the girls were sweating and working hard...they all gave 100% effort and tried very hard (no one gave up). Something new and exciting to do!" (LL-November 1, 2011).

Additionally, the youth played lacrosse, went swimming, and skating. For many of the youth, this was their first time on skates. The following quotation highlights one of these unique opportunities: "I really liked the games and how sometimes we would go places—Oh I really liked the swimming activity which was really fun" (Y-1). Another youth shared: "I liked soccer,

racquet hockey—oh and huckle buckle. I liked the walking that we did all the way to the river. And swimming—I got to do tricks in the water” (Y-7).

Overall, the youth participants thoroughly enjoyed the PA opportunities they had during the program. This youth discussed how the experience helped her at school:

Doing all the PA [at GJWHF] helped me at school because when we did this...it sort of got me more active and so I was just like ‘hey I’m going to get more jumpy and stuff like that’. And I don’t know for some reason it just got me happy and I was just like ‘oh yeah I’m going to have something to do after school!’ and my mom is happy because I’m more active. (Y-3)

As mentioned, it is critical to ensure the youth are enjoying themselves during the activities in order to ensure adherence to the program and participation in PA. “We had the girls run a lot, while not really realizing it, and having a lot of fun; you could tell they were all tired at the end but had enjoyed themselves” (LL-January 24, 2012).

Finally, it was noted that overall, the program was a major success as the youth were disappointed that there would be a break in the program during the summer months. As one leader described:

It was so cute. The girls were so disappointed when they heard the program was going to stop. You know one of them was sitting there with her arms crossed, she’s like ‘why are they cancelling the program?’ and (name of leader) was like, well they’re not cancelling—it’s going to start up again in September. But they were really out of sorts, so even that is just the best evidence you can ever have that they’re enjoying it and they don’t want it to stop. Just like little things like that, you know; they’re teenage girls so it’s also not obvious from their body language or their facial expressions. You might think

they're having a terrible time, they're sullen and they're refusing to do everything. But then it comes time 'oh we only have a couple weeks left' and they're all like 'but this is great. We love this, you know'. (L-4)

When asked for suggestions for the program one youth stated: "If it was longer...like if went through the whole summer" (Y-5). Other youth seconded this notion by requesting that the program ran for a longer period of time (Y-6; Y-3). This was evidence that the youth were indeed enjoying the program and were motivated to continue participating in the program.

Challenges

As with any program, especially in the first year of implementation, there were challenges. Such challenges included facility and transportation issues, recognizing that at times some activities were too much like school, and issues related to behavioural management.

Difficulties with facility and transportation. First, one challenge that was encountered was the space allocated for the program—it was too small for the group. In addition, as there were many other programs going on simultaneously throughout the night at the BGC, there was limited space that was allocated to the GJWHF program during specific times. There was a small craft room for the relational time and awareness talk and GJWHF only had access to the larger gymnasium for the PA time. One leader emphasized this issue:

The room for the life skills, once we were more than 12 girls, it was pretty cramped, so it got loud and sometimes it would be hard to talk over them, so if we could get a bigger room, more private, like more isolated. Especially next year, I think we're estimating to get more girls, so a bigger room would be the ideal. (L-3)

Additionally, as the room in which the youth did their life skills activities was right beside the gymnasium, it was often quite loud and distracting having another sport-based program going on at the same time. "If there were people in the gym, the room was right next to the gym and you

could hear all the balls thrown and all the kids playing and having fun so it was a bit distracting” (L-3).

As mentioned earlier, another challenge was transportation. A large majority of the participants travelled, with their leader, to the program from a BGC clubhouse in a different location. As a result, over the course of the year, some issues occurred with transportation since the program relied on taxis to transport the youth from clubhouse to clubhouse. The issue of having non-reliable transportation caused serious disruptions in at least two of the program sessions. The leader stated: “Taxis didn't come again therefore multiple waves of people caused constant interruptions. Only had 15 minutes to do life skill...a little bit frustrating” (LL-December 7, 2011).

Some activities were too much like school. One challenge that was ongoing throughout the program was attempting to avoid having the program feel too much like school for the participants. As many youth left school and travelled directly to the BGC, the program was designed in response to Humbert and colleagues’ (2006) suggestion that PA programs should be developed outside of the school setting and provides an alternative outlet for youth. For the life skills activities, the leaders tried to incorporate as many active or discussion-like activities as possible to avoid the feeling of doing schoolwork. However, for some of the life skills activities, a workbook was used to have the youth write down their ideas related to the skill (e.g., thinking about the future and writing down goals for the life skill of goal setting). Therefore, at times, these workbook activities were a challenge for the leaders.

If you’re someone who is struggling in school and you come to the club and you want to participate in the program, and then you sit down and you get a workbook and it’s full of words you can’t read and you’re sitting at a desk again and I think it kind of re-creates an

environment where a lot of our girls aren't very successful and don't feel very good about themselves...It's very school-like, which I think wouldn't be a challenge at all if the program were directed towards like high achieving girls. (L-2)

Another leader went on to say:

I think having the in-class or sit-down portion does have its benefits, but it's just trying to limit the amount of regimented, school-like activities that there are... You have to be super adaptable and it might not work out exactly how you planned in the workbook or manual. (L-5)

In addition, many of the activities that the girls chose were similar to what the girls would participate in during a physical education class so the leaders made an extra effort to go beyond what would be done in within the school curriculum.

We tried to plan stuff that you wouldn't necessarily do in gym class, or if you do soccer or basketball, try and go one step further than what they [the youth] would do in gym class. If they wanted to play a game of bump, play a game of bump, rather than do drills. You could tell they didn't love it [doing drills] so we kind of left it to be a little bit more unstructured and up to the youth to decide. (L-5)

However, one of the most important elements the leaders recognized early in the program was that the youth were not as engaged when the physical activities were regimented like a sport practice so leaders worked to ensure that the physical activities were less rigid and more enjoyable for the youth.

As long as they're moving and getting PA, that's the most important part of it. I guess be on the basketball team if you want to learn the more structured stuff, so that was something that we had to re-adjust—we were like 'okay, this isn't working as well as we

hoped. We'll move on and try it a different way'. The two interns [program leaders] that we have, they had to do lesson plans for each week so originally, I guess that's what they were used to doing; it was very structured, such as 'we're going to do lay ups with our left hand, then lay ups with our right hand, do some suicides.' And that's not going to work with the girls. They're going to stop coming if it's going to be really regimented like that. (L-5)

This was an adjustment that was made early on in the program and was noted in the Leader Logbook throughout the program as well:

Although there is an aspect to the life skills activities that is a bit "school"-ish - the girls are sitting down and the leader is talking - I still think the girls paid attention and got a great deal out of the activities. (LL-September 27, 2011)

Behavioural management. In line with the above challenge, the leaders, at times, struggled with the behavioural management of the youth. The youth were from two different clubhouses. The youth who were from the clubhouse in which the program was run were often very distracted by other people and other programs at the club. Therefore, there was an ongoing issue of these youth milling in and out of the sessions at their own leisure. This was a frustrating issue for not only the leaders, but also the other youth. One leader expressed her opinion on this issue:

In some ways, I think it's easier for them [girls at home clubhouse] because they have other options, so if they're feeling shy, they can just go hide in the computer room where the girls [from other clubhouse] don't have those options. They bus here and this is the program and they're going to participate in the program. (L-4)

A participant who was a member of the clubhouse in which the program was based, and who seldomly attended the program stated that: “I don’t really participate (*laughs*)...not that much. In the middle, I kinda left and didn’t come for like three weeks or more...and then I did [come back]” (Y-10). Although not discussed during the interviews, some of the youth who attended the program on a regular basis openly discussed their frustration with the lack of commitment of some of the participants displayed during the program sessions.

Related to this, the leaders occasionally struggled with behavioural challenges due to having all of the girls in one big group and so a leader suggested changing this in the future:

Separate them [the youth] into smaller groups...something that we want to work on for next year. Maybe get one or two more leaders...if we do get a big group of 20 girls, split up 10 and 10 and then break those groups smaller. (L-5)

In line with this issue, near the end of the program, there seemed to be a small clique that developed within the group which caused some problems. This was a surprise to the leaders as there were no major social issues between girls throughout the majority of the program, yet near the end of the program there was “bickering between certain girls” (LL-February 7, 2012).

In addition to informal discussions that took place throughout the program, some of the youth took the opportunity to express their concern on their confidential paper indicating elements of the program they did not like: “what I don't like about the GJWHF is that there are no communications between the (name of clubhouse) girls or with the (name of clubhouse) girls and that would be the only reason why I don't really like the program” (AYF-9). Another youth indicated: “I think I didn't really talk to the (name of clubhouse) girls that much and I wanted to” (AYF-8). Lastly, a leader that works at the clubhouse where the program is held has built a

strong relationship with the youth from this clubhouse over many years and tried to explain why this issue might have occurred:

For our girls, the ones at (name of clubhouse), I think they actually were a little bit uncomfortable with the idea that there were new girls coming to the centre that they didn't know and that was kind of like—you know, girls that age, they kind of have their friends and it's a little bit uncomfortable to meet new people. (L-4)

Practical Recommendations for Future Programming

As this was the first year of GJWHF programming, much was learned from the experience as indicated by information collected from leaders and participants. This section highlights recommendations for future years of the GJWHF program and for other programmers implementing a PA-based life skills program for female youth. Many of these recommendations have been addressed in response to the challenges noted above, such as finding a larger space for the program, smaller group sizes, more reliable transportation, and issues with social cliques. More specifically, to reduce cost of the program and ensure program sustainability, housing the program at a local neighbourhood clubhouse in which participants do not have to travel to would eliminate the issue of unreliable transportation.

One element of the program that the youth brought to the attention of the leader was the desire for more involvement in the community. One youth stated:

I was hoping for more out of BGC experiences, like how you guys affect people by helping people like us, I was thinking maybe going out of BGC and affecting the community... having our voice heard and speaking for everyone that's not heard...you know like doing what our leaders do. (Y-6)

Two leaders also suggested the importance of having more leader training in regards to behavioural management of youth.

More of a structure in training would have been helpful and maybe...knowing how to handle certain situations better. I do find that when there are certain things that people will say, where I'm not really sure how to handle the situation, it'd be nice to have the person who is sort of managing the program, have the answers that I'm looking for. (L-1)

Similarly the other leader stated:

We had a debrief with (university supervisor) and at the end of the program, but I think more regular training or informal discussions of the behavioural understanding and how to act on certain behavioural issues that arise because two [BGC leaders] were very good at that, but they didn't know how to develop or lead the program in any way related to the life skills part. So, I think there was a gap that way. (L-5)

Discussion

This process evaluation represents an important step in responding to calls for increased evaluation in community-based programs (Salmon, Booth, Phongsavan, Murphy, & Timperio, 2007) and aids in understanding the process in which PA-based PYD programs can be effectively implemented. The GJWHF program provided low SES female youth the opportunity to participate in a youth-driven PA-based life skills program. The aim of the program was to facilitate life skill development which is believed to help youth develop into healthy adults (Damon, 2004; Holt & Jones, 2008). According to reports by leaders and participants, the overall program structure worked very well with effective relational time, opportunities to develop life skills and time to be active. Ward and Parker (2012) indicated three critical components of a PYD program which distinguish them from other youth programs: activities, goals, and

atmosphere. When the goals of the program align with the delivered activities, resulting in a supportive atmosphere, then PYD is most likely to be fostered.

A main goal of the GJWHF program was to facilitate positive relationships between the youth and leaders to provide a safe and positive atmosphere. Results from this study indicate that the program was successful in providing an environment in which the girls felt comfortable and trusted with their peers and leaders. This was context was facilitated particularly with the use of the Rose and Thorn relational activity. Further, a youth-driven approach proved to be beneficial, not only by giving youth a chance to voice their opinions about various physical activities, but also in having the youth take on leadership roles. Throughout the program, life skill activities were delivered that were used as building blocks to help youth improve such skills and helped in the final phase of the program when the youth were responsible for planning their own activities and within teaching them to younger youth. In sum, it can be inferred from the above results that the GJWHF program goals aligned with the implemented activities, creating a supportive atmosphere that enabled the opportunity for relationship building between youth participants and leaders.

Lessons Learned and Practical Recommendations

As noted above, challenges occurred during the program, yet the leaders and programmers have learned from these and have incorporated these lessons learned into the second year of the GJWHF program that started in September 2012. For example, due to the difficulties we experienced with the facility regarding space and competing activities the program is now run on a night that the BGC location is closed for all other activities which has eliminated many distractions that were pertinent in the first year of program implementation. Additionally, this change has allowed for increased program space which has enabled the leaders

to split the larger group of youth into smaller groups. As a result, the leaders now work in small groups (5-6 youth per group) with two leaders for each group. Furthermore, enrolment in the program has increased from 12 to 15-18 participants through word-of-mouth from past participants and leaders at various BGC clubhouses. In addition, with the increased interest in GJWHF, the youth now come from three different clubhouses and the switch in the day when the program is offered also resulted in the BGC bus being available to pick the youth up at their home clubhouse and bring them to the clubhouse where the program is run. This has eliminated any issues that involved unreliable transportation in the first year of implementation.

In regards to the difficulties the leaders had with behavioural management of the youth, dividing the group into smaller groups has greatly aided in this for the second year of implementation. The challenges related to social cliques primarily arose due to a lack of consistent participation by some girls which caused friction with the girls who did attend GJWHF regularly. Therefore, in future years it would be recommended to have the participants decide on the level of commitment they want everyone to make and the consequences for not keeping that commitment. Also, within this study, it was requested by the leaders to have more in-depth training prior to and during program implementation. It was recognized that not only would this element help with leader preparedness, but would also help the leaders encourage positive interactions between girls in different clubhouses. This is consistent with previous TPSR process evaluations that struggled with adequate training for their leaders as “it is not realistic to expect that the Youth Leaders can learn to become effective TPSR leaders through mere observation or through a 10 minute discussion before or after the first session” (Wright, Whitley, & Sabolboro, 2011, p. 20). Therefore, more training prior to program delivery and ongoing support should be provided by to the program leaders, as it is evident how important the role of

the leaders is in TPSR programs. As a result, the group of leaders now meet every two weeks with the professor overseeing this project to discuss successes, any ongoing concerns, and to plan for the next two upcoming sessions. This has allowed the leaders to feel better prepared and to have more flexibility in the program based on the youth's choice of sport or PA and enables a better integration of the life skill within the chosen activity.

In line with the suggestion from the youth to become more involved within the community, plans have been made for the youth to be junior leaders in a local Running and Reading Club for the second half of year two of GJWHF. This will occur on a different night, in addition to the regular program sessions, responding to the youth's calls for more program sessions. This will also help the youth utilize and transfer the skills fostered within the program to another domain of their lives. This community involvement will provide an opportunity for the youth to act as role models for younger youth and develop a sense of confidence.

Researcher flexibility is essential within the field of PYD programming (Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2005); however, program leader flexibility is also critical when facilitating youth PYD programs (Ward & Parker, 2012). Over the course of the year, many modifications had to be made to the program structure in order to adapt to better meet the needs of the participants, such as modifying the activities to ensure that the voice of the youth participants was being integrated into the program structure and would align with the program goals. Flexibility was crucial when responding to non-controllable factors, such as late transportation or small participant numbers. Within programming, fluidity is crucial for all parties involved. From this study, it was learned that by maintaining continuous and open lines of communications between all leaders and programmers this can be accomplished. The importance of regular meetings with all staff, whether in-person or virtually, is critical in order to communicate and make adjustments if

needed. This notion is in line with previous research as Wright et al. (2011) stated: “this stresses the need for us, as the leaders, to be flexible, always listening, learning, and adapting the program to best fit the participants' needs in order to maximize the benefits that can be attained for these girls” (p. 20).

In addition, as the element of transfer is at the forefront of the PYD literature (Martinek et al., 2001; Walsh et al., 2010; Weiss, Stuntz, Bhalla, Bolter, & Price, 2012), for the second year of implementation, during the group debrief at the end of each session, the youth not only take time to fill out their TPSR self-evaluation, but participate in a more structured discussion that is facilitated by the leaders. Leaders discuss situations where life skills learned in the program can be transferred to other domains of the participants' lives at home, at school, or in their community.

Another recommendation for programmers results from the finding that the activity ‘Rose and Thorn’ was successful in facilitating relational time between youth and between leaders and youth. Within Hellison’s (2011) TPSR model, the first component of the session framework is relational time. However, within the current literature on the TPSR program, suggestions for activities are quite vague in that it is suggested to ‘check in with the youth’ and gradually moving from level 1 (Self-control) to level 5 (Transfer) over the course of the program. For example, Walsh (2008) suggested having ‘informal conversations’ with the youth, such as asking how their day was going or how they were doing in school. While another program girls’-only program called *Let's Move It!* used a variety of different activities to check in with the youth, such as having all youth put one foot in a circle to ensure that everyone was wearing appropriate footwear for the activity session (Wright et al., 2011). From the positive feedback from youth and leaders within GJWHF, it would be recommended to include a more structured activity such

as ‘Rose and Thorn’ or a similar activity to optimize the relational time at the beginning of each program session.

One final element that is important for researchers and practitioners to consider, an issue the leaders faced at the end of the first year of the GJWHF program, was the transition between year one and year two of the program and eventual transition out of the program. Such transitions need to be considered at two levels: creating alternative pathways for youth once the program has finished for the session (three month summer break); and creating alternative pathways for youth as they mature out of the program. This could mean ensuring that the youth are aware of alternative summer programs as well as providing opportunities to be junior leaders or volunteers where they can use their leadership skills and share the knowledge and skills they have gained from the program. This challenge also speaks critically to understanding the importance of facilitating the transfer of life skills outside of the programs so that the youth can continue to use the skills they have developed within the program in their everyday lives (Holt & Jones, 2008). Future research within the field of PYD should continue to focus on these areas.

While this study was successful in understanding the processes of implementing the GJWHF program, there were some limitations within the study. First, there is always the potential of self-monitoring when researchers are involved at a practical programming level; however, because these individuals were involved with the program from the outset, this was not perceived to be a serious issue. Second, having the first author as a leader in the program has the potential for subjectivity, yet a number of steps were taken to counter this, as outlined above.

Conclusion

This paper provided a detailed description of the first year of implementation of the GJWHF program. Such detailed descriptions and process evaluations have been absent in much

of the PYD literature (Hodge et al., 2012). As Durlak and DuPre (2008) argued, collecting process data is an essential part of program evaluation. From this assessment, it was evident that the relational time, providing voice and leadership opportunities along with a variety of physical activities were perceived as having a positive impact on the participants and overall affected the enjoyment in the program. Further, as with any program, specific challenges were outlined including difficulties with facility & transportation, having some activities that were too much like school, and minor issues with behavioural management. Overall, this paper provides important recommendations that can be used to strengthen community PA-based like skills programs and therefore the development of our youth.

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Table 1. Summary of GJWHF Program Sessions

Session #	Date	Attendance	Life Skill	Sport/Physical Activity
1	Sept. 27	10	Communication	Co-operative games
2	Oct. 4	10	Teamwork	Co-operative games
3	Oct. 11	7	Confidence & Courage	Co-operative games
4	Oct. 18	11	Confidence & Courage	Co-operative games
5	Oct. 25	10	Respecting Others	Kickboxing
6	Nov. 1	10	Respecting Others	Kickboxing
7	Nov. 8	12	Responsibility	Lacrosse
8	Nov. 15	12	Responsibility	Lacrosse
9	Nov. 22	11	Dare to Dream	Volleyball
10	Nov. 29	12	None—(taxi late)	Basketball
11	Dec. 6	14	Dare to Dream	Dance
12	Dec. 13	10	None (holiday party)	Dance
13	Jan. 10	10	Goal Setting	Basketball
14	Jan. 17	0	None (cancelled bad weather)	None (cancelled bad weather)
15	Jan. 24	6	Overcoming Obstacles	Co-operative games
16	Jan. 31	12	Seeking Help from Others	Co-operative games
17	Feb. 7	14	Seeking Help from Others	Co-operative games
18	Feb. 14	10	None (skating)	Skating
19	Feb. 21	13	Self-Talk & Thought Control	Yoga
20	Feb. 28	12	Relaxation	Yoga
21	Mar. 6	14	Focus	Yoga
22	Mar. 13	5	Empowerment	Walk
23	Mar. 20	13	Hygiene	Walk
24	Mar. 28	10	None (swimming)	Swimming
25	Apr. 4	8	None (swimming)	Swimming
26	Apr. 10	9	Empowerment & Confidence	None (photos)
27	Apr. 17	9	Leadership	Co-operative games
28	Apr. 24	7	Appreciating Differences & Youth Planning	Co-operative games
29	May 1	8	Youth Planning	Co-operative games
30	May 8	10	Youth Implementing	Co-operative games
31	May 15	13	None (end of program party)	Walk

Article 2

Running head: TPSR EVALUATION OF GJWHF

Using a Time-Series Analysis to Evaluate a Female Youth-Driven Physical Activity-Based Life Skills Program based on the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility Model

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Human Kinetics

Abstract

There is a widespread need to increase levels of physical activity (PA) in female youth and to provide safe after-school community programming for youth from low-income families (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2010). The Girls Just Wanna Have Fun program (GJWHF) was developed in response to these needs and is based on Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) model (Hellison, 1995), an effective framework that has led to positive outcomes for at-risk youth (Martinek, Schilling, & Hellison, 2006; Walsh, Ozaeta, & Wright, 2010). GJWHF is a PA-based life skills program that has been offered to female youth from ages 11 to 14 years old through a local Boys and Girls Club. The purpose of this research was to examine how well the implementation of the GJWHF program adhered to the five levels of the TPSR model using a time series analysis. Eighteen program sessions were analyzed using a time-series analysis for each of the five TPSR levels. Results indicated that participants' self-ratings of the five TPSR levels varied based on type of life skill and PA of each program session, but overall showed a gradual upward trend over the course of the program. Dependent *t*-tests revealed a significant difference for leadership from the start to the end of the program. Additionally, practical programming recommendations were made based on the use of program curriculum. Overall, this research aids in understanding the process in which PYD programs, specifically those utilizing the TPSR model, can be effectively implemented.

Using a Time-Series Analysis to Evaluate a Female Youth-Driven Physical Activity-Based Life Skills Program based on the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility Model

The positive youth development (PYD) framework has emerged over the past two decades as a proactive approach for youth development. As defined by Damon (2004), this approach

...envisions young people as resources rather than as problems for society. The positive youth development perspective emphasizes the manifest potentialities rather than the supposed incapacities of young people – including young people from the most disadvantaged backgrounds and those with the most troubled histories. (p.15)

This framework has been integrated into many different domains including art, drama, and sport and physical activity programs (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003; Weiss, Stuntz, Bhalla, Bolter, & Price, 2012). Many youth for which PYD programs are designed, are individuals considered to be at-risk or from a disadvantaged background (Damon, 2004; World Health Organization, 2006). Thus, the approach to PYD programming is to educate and engage youth in productive activities rather than correct negative behaviour that is often associated with adolescence, and particularly at-risk youth, such as drinking, drug use, pregnancy, and school dropout (Botvin, 2004; Damon, 2004).

The Girls Just Wanna Have Fun (GJWHF) program is an example of such an intervention. Specifically, GJWHF is a youth-driven physical activity-based life skills program for at-risk female youth between the ages of 11 and 14 that was implemented at a Boys and Girls Club in Eastern Ontario, Canada. The program incorporated one session per week for an eight month period for a total of 30 sessions. Within each GJWHF session, youth participated in a life skills activity as well as some form of sport or physical activity that reinforced the life skill of the

session. Life skills can be defined as “abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life” (World Health Organization, 1999, n.p.). For example, life skills such as ‘teamwork’ and ‘respecting others’ were incorporated into the sport of basketball. The program was youth-driven in that the youth decided on what types of physical activity they wanted to participate in and were provided choices regarding activities within the sessions throughout the program. For a complete description of the GJWHF program see Bean & Forneris (submitted 2013).

The GJWHF program is based on Hellison’s (1995) Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) curriculum model. Hellison’s model has been considered an effective physical activity-based life skills paradigm (Bain, 1988; Sandford, Armour, & Warmington, 2006; Siedentop, Mand, & Taggart, 1986) and has been used in a variety of youth programs (Escartí, Gutiérrez, Pascual, & Llopis, 2010; Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Walsh, Ozaeta, & Wright, 2010; Wright, 2011). The TPSR model uses sport or physical activity as a vehicle to teach life skills and promote positive developmental outcomes in youth (Hellison et al., 2000) and was developed from work with at-risk youth in both after-school sport programming and physical education programming.

It also uses a youth-centred approach (McLaughlin, 2000 in Hellison, 2011) and a strong leader-participant relationship that allows for the gradual empowerment of youth. It is important to note that although the TPSR model is typically integrated into a sport or physical activity environment, the environment is simply used as a vehicle for the facilitation of the program values and therefore the primary focus within a TPSR-based program is on developing a sense of responsibility rather than the development of sport or physical activity skills (Hellison, 2011). As a result, the main goal of this model is to promote the holistic development of youth.

The TPSR model consists of five levels of responsibility: (1) Personal Responsibility/Self-Control; (2) Effort; (3) Self-Coaching; (4) Leadership; and (5) Transference (Hellison, 2011; Hellison, Martinek, & Cutforth, 1996). Personal responsibility, also referred to as self-control, refers to the ability to control one's behaviour and conduct; effort refers to participants' ability to apply themselves to a given task; self-coaching refers to the ability to improve in a chosen area using independent goal setting and planned practice without direct supervision; leadership refers to the ability to direct a group towards an agreed upon goal; and transference refers to the ability to use the skills outlined above in contexts outside of the program (e.g., school, home, etc.) (Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Martinek, Schilling, & Johnson, 2001). Two of these concepts address the participants' responsibility for their own well-being (self-control and effort), while two other responsibilities (self-coaching and leadership) addresses the youths' social responsibility for the well-being of others. The fifth element focuses on transfer of responsibility from the program to other aspects of their lives (Hellison et al., 1996). These five responsibilities are depicted as levels in which the program structure is based on and the program sessions progress from one level to the next over the course of the program.

Moreover, the goal is to increase or enhance these five levels of responsibility over the course of the program. To help youth with this increase, the TPSR model uses a specific program structure. Each session of a TPSR program uses the following format that is divided into four components: relational time, awareness talk, physical activity/sport, and group discussion (see Table 1 for how these components were implemented in GJWHF).

Insert Table 1 here.

Hellison and Walsh (2002) reviewed 26 different studies that investigated the impact of using the TPSR model with youth programming and found evidence that the program helped youth improve their self-control, effort, and teamwork. However, studies relating to interventions

using Hellison's TPSR (1995, 2011) model have also found that the program evaluations results are "cautiously optimistic" (Bailey, 2008 in Armour, Sandford, & Duncombe, 2012, p. 3). While evaluations of these programs have indicated the tendency for the programs to facilitate the development of various life skills including respecting others, developing a positive attitude, and fostering a sense of responsibility (Hellison, 2011; Hellison & Walsh, 2002), more research needs to be conducted to better understand possible mechanisms in which developmental outcomes may be facilitated through TPSR and other life skill-based programs (Holt & Jones, 2008; Long & Sanderson, 2001; Sandford et al., 2006).

In addition, although the TPSR model has been integrated into many environments, the majority of TPSR programs have targeted mixed gendered or all-boys groups (Escartí et al., 2010; Hellison et al., 1996; Walsh et al., 2010) and as a result there has been very little documentation on TPSR programming for all-girls programs. Wright and colleagues (Wright, Stockton, & Hays, 2008; Wright, Whitley, & Sabolboro, 2011) have been the first known researchers to document program delivery and evaluation for female youth using the TPSR model. Results from these studies were heavily focused on the implementation process, yet highlighted the improvement in respectful behaviour, self-confidence and comfort level, as well as the transference of lessons learned to environments outside of the program.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand how well the implementation of the GJWHF program adhered to the TPSR model and whether this adherence had any impact on PYD outcomes for female youth. More specifically, this study conducted a time-series analysis to examine the trend in the development of the five TPSR levels. To our knowledge, this is the first study to use a time-series analysis to shed light on understanding the process and perceived impact of a TPSR program. A time series analysis was deemed appropriate as it allows

researchers to examine trends across time, (e.g., a year of program implementation) and to examine whether particular program sessions appear to facilitate or impede the development of PYD outcomes. The times series analysis in this study examined youth and leader ratings of the TPSR levels over the course of the program which allowed for an examination of the impact of various program sessions on the TPSR levels as well as an examination of the congruencies and discrepancies between youth and leader ratings.

Methods

Context

This research was conducted in collaboration with a Boys and Girls Club in a major city in eastern Ontario, and was part of a three year ongoing project which aimed to develop, implement, and evaluate a youth-driven physical activity-based life skills program for female youth. This program was developed in response to a one year research study that explored how female adolescents defined health and their experiences related to physical activity (see Forneris, Bean, Snowden, & Fortier, in press). The results of this study were then incorporated into the development of a youth-driven physical activity-based life skills program offering the opportunity for female youth from families living on low incomes to be physically active within their community. This paper represents the results from the first year of implementation the GJWHF program.

Participants and Procedure

Two categories of participants were recruited for this study: the female participants of the GJWHF program and the program leaders. The participants of the program (N=12) were female youth between the ages of 11 and 14 ($M = 11.75$). Since this was the first year the program had run, all participants had only been involved for one year, yet their length of participation in the

Boys and Girls Club ranged from two months to eight years. There were a total of 12 consistent participants who were all from low income households. Parental consent (see Appendix A for parental consent form) for the study was obtained for all of the participants. Additionally, there were five leaders; the first author, along with four co-leaders (two University student interns, two part-time staff members of the BGC) who implemented the GJWHF program. The mean age of the leaders was 28.6 ($SD = 8.94$; range 21-46). The leaders were required to complete training with the Boys and Girls Club and the GJWHF program prior to the commencement of the program. These individuals took on various roles throughout the program including facilitating relational activities, life skill activities, and sport and physical activity sessions, as well as managing behavioural issues. Additionally, the head leader was responsible for planning each session and sending out weekly emails of session plans to the other leaders.

The youth completed the Personal and Social Responsibility Questionnaire at the beginning and end of the program. In addition, the youth were responsible for completing a self-evaluation of the five TPSR levels at the end of each weekly program session. Similar to the youth, the leaders also completed a post-session evaluation that took place at the end of each session. During this time, the leaders had a debrief discussion wherein they highlighted the successes and challenges of the session, whether the session had been implemented as planned, or if there were any issues that disrupted the program session. It was within this post-session debrief that the leaders, as a group, rated the group of youth collectively on each of the TPSR levels.

Measures

Personal and Social Responsibility Questionnaire (See Appendix F). Escarti and colleagues (2012) recommended that when conducting evaluations of TPSR programs that

researchers should “incorporate some of the recently created scales based on the TPSR model in order to more precisely measure personal and social responsibility” (p. 185). For this study, Escarti and colleagues’ recommendation was followed and the Personal and Social Responsibility Questionnaire (PSRQ) by Li, Wright, Rukavina, & Pickering (2008) was included as one of the measures. The PSRQ was modified from Watson, Newton, and Kim’s (2003) Contextual Self-Responsibility Questionnaire, which assesses participants’ perceptions of personal and social responsibility. The tool is a 14-item questionnaire (7 items for each factor: social responsibility 1-7, personal responsibility 8-14). The construct of social responsibility represents two levels: ‘respect for others’ and ‘caring for others’. The construct of personal responsibility looks at ‘effort’ and ‘self-direction’. This tool used a 6-point Likert scale (1=Very Strongly Disagree; 6= Very Strongly Agree), as Li and colleagues (2008) highlighted that this scale is often used because it eliminates the possibility of neutral responses and is a commonly used scale within the psychological field. The authors indicated that the PSRQ is a valid and reliable tool for measuring perceptions of personal and social responsibility. This measure showed good internal consistency in this study (Cronbach’s Alpha ranged from 0.76 to 0.92).

The youth completed this measure both at the end of the first program session and at the end of the last program session. It is important to note that although there were 12 consistent participants in the program, only eight participants completed the PSRQ at both time points (beginning and end of program). This was the case for two reasons: some of the youth joined a few weeks into the program after the initial (time point one) measure had been completed; and, the program did experience some participant drop-out over the course of the program, particularly in the last few weeks when the weather improved and the youth chose to participate in other outdoor activities as opposed to the GJWHF program. According to the local BGC, it is

very common to have a drop-off in the number of youth coming into the club once the weather improves as the youth prefer to be outside rather than inside the club.

Participant weekly TPSR self-evaluations. At the end of each session, the female youth participants were asked to rate themselves on the five levels of the TPSR model: self-control, effort, self-coaching, leadership, and transfer (see Appendix G). At the beginning of the program these elements were introduced to the youth and an age-appropriate definition was given to the group. The leaders would use probing questions to assist the youth in understanding these terms. For example, for ‘effort’, the leaders would ask the youth “how hard did you try today?” and for ‘self-coaching’ “did you set a goal and work on it today?”. These levels were answered using a 4-point Likert scale (1: Needs work; 2: Okay; 3: Good; 4: Great). This self-rating component helped to focus participants and to assist program leaders in understanding how the youth were progressing through the five levels. At the beginning of the program, a large poster was used for the youth to complete their self-evaluation. The youth placed a sticker under either ‘needs work’, ‘okay’, ‘good’, or ‘great’ for each level of the TPSR model in which they believed they had applied themselves during that session. After four weeks of using this tool, it was observed that there was a lot of peer influence impacting the ratings, and therefore it was decided from that point forward to provide individual handouts allowing for a more private reflection and less peer-influence in the evaluation process. Therefore, results in this study are only those from the point of individual evaluations. In total, the levels were rated by each youth for a total 18 sessions. It should be noted that numbers of self-evaluations collected by the youth fluctuated based on the attendance of each session. Further, there were a few sessions in which self-evaluations were not completed. These sessions were those that did not represent a regular program session and

instead represented a unique opportunity for youth (e.g., swimming at a local pool, outdoor skating in the winter, holiday party).

Leader Weekly Logbook Entries. At the end of each program session, the five leaders would debrief on how the session went, including what went well, challenges that occurred, and how the youth participated as a whole for that session based on self-control, effort, self-coaching, and leadership. Results of this discussion were then entered online using Survey Monkey (See Appendix C). The leaders used a 4-point Likert scale to judge how the group of youth did with respect to the TPSR levels (1: Needs work; 4: Great). However, the leaders only rated the youth on four of the five levels. Transfer was not measured by the leaders as this was not something that could be observed in the program sessions as it was based on the youths' perceptions and levels of confidence in their ability to transfer the skill into other life domains. It should be noted that the leaders collectively rated the youth as a group on these four elements. As with the leaders' weekly TPSR evaluations, there were 18 sessions in which the youth completed self-evaluations over the course of the program. This included one entry per program session where a life skill was implemented

Data Analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS 20.0. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were calculated for all measures (PSRQ, Youth Weekly Self-Evaluation, Leader Logbook Group Evaluation). The Leader Logbook was analyzed using a content analysis organized by date. Dependent *t*-tests were conducted to examine if there were any significant differences on personal and social responsibility measured by the PSRQ from pre to post program as well as changes in the five TPSR levels measured by the weekly evaluations from pre to post program for the youth. Given that there was only one overall leader rating, only

descriptive data could be provided. Additionally, a time-series analysis was conducted for each level of the TPSR model (self-control, effort, self-coaching, leadership, transfer). A time-series methodology “provides a continuous, descriptive record of the experimental variables over the entire course of an experiment” (Gottman & McFall, 1972, p. 274). The time-series analysis documented the participants’ weekly self-evaluations against the activities, life skill and physical activity, each week (See Table 2 for a complete breakdown of what each session encompassed including the session number, life skill of focus, and the particular sport or physical activity integrated into each session).

Using a time-series methodology has both its pros and cons. Firstly, self-monitoring has limitations as a data collection procedure because of its potential for reactivity (Nelson & Hayes, 1981). However, within this study, because the participants completed a self-evaluation of the TPSR levels every week and because it was incorporated as part of the program structure that occurred every session, it was believed that the reactivity from self-monitoring was very low for the participants. On the positive side, time-series analysis can help gain an understanding of the process of program implementation. Specifically within this study, the time-series analysis helped to understand how different program sessions and how structure of program sessions played a role in youth’s experience of various TPSR levels. Overall, this data can help in improving future youth PA-based life skills programming.

Insert Table 2.

Results and Discussion

In this section, the results from the PSRQ are presented first followed by the results of the time-series analysis. It was decided that integrating excerpts from the Leader Logbook into the interpretation of the time-series results helps provide a more comprehensive understanding of the

effectiveness of the TPSR model within the GJWHF program and the associated levels of responsibility. Consequently, it was decided to integrate the discussion into the results section. Throughout this section there was an attempt to integrate past research to help explain or support the findings. However, as this was the first time that a time series analysis has been used in PYD it was sometimes difficult to locate research that was closely tied to results. Nevertheless, the lack of literature available provided an opportunity to identify several areas for future research.

Descriptive statistics for PSRQ indicated that over the course of the program social responsibility increased from pre ($M = 4.60$; $SD = 0.94$) to post ($M = 5.13$; $SD = 0.58$) while personal responsibility remained similar from pre ($M = 4.66$; $SD = 1.09$) to post ($M = 4.41$; $SD = 1.12$). Although the scores for social responsibility increased from pre-post the dependent t -test indicated that this difference only approached significance $t(7) = -2.17$, $p = .066$. However, it should be noted that the small sample size led to low power to detect a statistical significance and as a result, the effect size was calculated (Cohen's $d = -0.624$) indicating a medium effect size. The dependent t -test for personal responsibility $t(7) = .657$, $p = .532$ did not approach significance.

Concrete justification as to why social responsibility increased, yet personal responsibility remained the same cannot be determined; however, the authors speculate two possible reasons for this. First, questions related to personal responsibility were related to effort and self-coaching (such as 'I participate in all of the activities' or 'I try hard even if I do not like the activity') and can be linked to the fluctuation of the self-ratings of these two levels within the youth TPSR weekly evaluation over the course of the program. Also, from the documentation in the Leader Logbook, the girls did not always participate or try their best in the program activities. Therefore, this decrease from pre to post may be an accurate reflection within the

program and may be linked to the program curriculum. Second, a separate evaluation of the GJWHF program showed that the youth perceived the program as a supportive environment that facilitated the development friendships and relationships with peers and leaders which consequently may explain the increase in social responsibility (Bean & Forneris, 2013).

Comparative results for the youth’s self-evaluations from beginning (first session) to end (last session) of program are displayed in Table 3. Descriptive statistic calculations showed that all five of the TPSR levels (self-control, effort, self-coaching, leadership, and transfer) showed an increase from pre-program to post-program. The youth perceived themselves as improving the most in self-control. For the youth ratings, the dependent *t*-tests revealed a significant difference for one of the five TPSR levels: leadership. However, due to the small sample size effects sizes were calculated for all five levels. All five levels showed a moderate to large effect size (Table 3). In sum, there were significantly higher scores for various TPSR levels reported by youth after the last session compared to the scored reported eight months earlier after the first session. . These findings are consistent with previous studies that have found improvements in responsibility behaviours of participants when using the TPSR model, highlighting that the physical activity domain has the potential to be effective for improving psychological and social development of youth (Escarti et al., 2010; Escarti et al., 2012).

Insert Table 3.

The results of the leaders’ evaluations of the youth after the first session and after the last session are displayed in Figure 1. Based on the leaders’ perceptions, the youth were higher in self-control, self-coaching and leadership after the last session. The leaders’ perceived that the youth to put forth a consistently strong effort over the course of the program.

Insert Figure 1.

Results from the five time-series analyses (one for each level of responsibility) are presented in five different figures (Figures 2-6). Within each graph, both the average of the youth rating and the leaders' rating are depicted, except for transfer, where only the youth evaluations are documented, as previously mentioned. Throughout this section, we also discuss the findings from the Leader Logbook that helped explain some of the trends observed in the results of the time-series.

Insert Figure 2.

The youth ratings for self-control were generally higher than that of the leader ratings over the course of the program, yet followed the same general trend (see Figure 3). Although this discrepancy was present throughout the program, the difference between the youth and leader ratings at the end of the program was smaller compared to the beginning of the program. From the analysis of the logbook, it was observed that there were lower ratings of self-control in sessions when the leaders discussed having to intervene more to keep the youth on track and focused. For example, as seen in Figure 3, the leaders rated the youth low on self-control for three weeks in a row when the life skills were Positive Self-Talk, Relaxation, and Focus respectively. To help reinforce these life skills, the chosen physical activity was Yoga. It was noted in the logbook that during these sessions: “during the breathing exercise, some girls had trouble not laughing and staying serious” (February 21, 2012), while in the following session it was documented: “girls losing focus, not paying attention and being disruptive. [Leaders' names] had to step in on a number of occasions and we had to ask a few girls to sit out for a few minutes to regroup” (February 28, 2012). Finally, in the last Yoga session: “it was challenging trying to get all the girls to focus and listen” (March 6, 2012). Although it is desirable for the youth to continually improve self-control over the course of the program, the finding that levels of self-

control oscillated throughout the program is consistent with past research that has found that youth often fluctuate in their ability for self-control throughout a program (Walsh et al., 2010).

The life skill components integrated during these sessions (Relaxation, Focus, Self-talk), are all considered to be ‘lower energy’ life skills where a different type of self-control needs to be applied. The leaders rated the youth low on self-control during these sessions as many youth had difficulty maintaining a quiet relaxing environment. It was also observed throughout the program that the activities for which youth commented as really enjoying (e.g. kick boxing, cooperative games) were also cases in which the leaders rated the youth lower on levels of self-control. Therefore, it may be that youth have more difficulty with self-control when engaging in activities that involve very low energy or when engaging in high energy or high excitement activities.

Upon reflection after the program ended, another possible reason for the discrepancy between leader and youth ratings could be related to the notion that the leaders may have a broader perception of self-control than what the youth perceived self-control to be. While the leaders believed that self-control meant not only the ability for the youth to control one’s temper, but also control other emotions, the youth may have perceived self-control to be primarily controlling one’s temper. Self-control falls in line with the overall element of respect within TPSR which was constantly reinforced over the course of the program and has been the focus of many other programs (Walsh et al., 2010). When the youth spoke out of turn, or were not respecting the rights of others, the leaders would remind the youth to ‘respect each other’. Therefore, the youth may have perceived speaking out of turn to be more closely associated with respect, whereas self-control meant being in control of one’s feelings *and* temper. Although the leaders provided a group rating of the youth for the TPSR levels, it was noted in the Leader

Logbook that youth who continued to speak out of turn throughout the session were documented by the leaders as having a lower level of self-control than those who remained in control of all of their emotions. This could be an additional reason for such discrepancies between the leader and participant ratings for the level of self-control. Therefore, it is recommended that future programs ensure that both the leaders and participants are on the same page with regards to the definitions of the levels. From a programmer standpoint, there is benefit in having agreement and consensus on these elements from the leaders and youth right from the outset of the program, particularly in youth-driven programs. The leaders' role in this negotiation would be to ensure that the agreed upon operational definitions remain in line with the literature. In addition, it is advised, given that one of the goals of TPSR is to empower the youth that the definition results from a joint discussion with the youth to provide the youth increased voice and sense of responsibility over the program in general.

The leaders and youth ratings showed the least discrepancy for the second Dare to Dream session that incorporated dance, and for the Empowerment session that incorporated an outdoor walk. As the logbook stated, the "girls paid attention, remained focused and gave a good effort throughout the dance segment" (December 6, 2011). Leaders noted that these physical activities were those that the youth were very excited about integrating into the program: "almost everyone participated and the girls seemed to be enthusiastic about it" (December 6, 2013), as well as "group listened well on the walk and a few people took the lead on the route" (March, 20, 2012). In addition, these activities also allowed for the youth to have more autonomy over their actions and decision making. For the dance activity, an instructor was present; however, the instructor integrated a GROOVE method of dance which allowed the youth to create their own independent movements. As one leader highlighted that during the walk the youth were allowed to choose

their own route and games to play during the walking session, which seemed to be something they enjoyed: “Again girls had a great time and enjoyed themselves...I believe they like the freedom the walk allowed for (unstructured activity)” (March 20, 2012).

Results from a study conducted by Muraven, Gagne, and Rosman (2008) indicated that during activities in which an individual’s autonomy was supported, youth performed better in terms of self-control. Further, research has also shown that self-control can be influenced by positive affect through intrinsic motivation (Isen & Reeve, 2005). Therefore, since the youth were participating in something that they enjoyed and that they chose, this may have had a positive enhancement on their levels of self-control. Overall, both the youth and leaders believed that the youth improved on their ability to self-control (and respect) one another from beginning to end of the program. This is consistent with past research that has utilized the TPSR model in out of school-based programs (Jung & Wright, 2012; Watson & Clocksin, 2013; Wright, Li, Ding, & Pickering, 2010).

Insert Figure 3.

Similar to self-control, the leader and youth ratings for effort followed the same general trend over the course of the program and showed an improvement from beginning to end of the program which supports the overall goal of the TPSR model (see Figure 4). However, in the case of effort, which likely reflects aspects of self-motivation, the leaders rated the youth consistently higher than the youth themselves. Effort was rated as “great” for all but five sessions by the leaders. In addition, the rating for effort by the leaders never dropped below a level 3 (“good”), indicating that the leaders perceived the youth as putting forth a consistently good effort over the course of the program. In contrast, the mean rating for effort by the youth was only classified as “great” on four occasions over the course of the program, while the remaining sessions fell

between “okay” and “great”. This discrepancy may be due to differences in how youth and leaders conceptualize effort. Although this was not particularly explored in this study it is an important area for future research that incorporates both participant and youth ratings of program components and experiences.

Regarding the fluctuation of effort over the course of the program it appears that for the youth in particular, ratings of effort seemed to be heavily dependent on preference for the life skill and physical activity of the session; if the youth did not enjoy one of the elements of a session, they rated themselves lower on effort (e.g., sessions focused on Relaxation that were combined with Yoga, and one of the Dance sessions). From the Leader Logbook, it was recorded that the Yoga sessions typically went well, yet two or three youth did not put forth good effort (or did not participate), which not only decreased the overall mean of youth self-evaluations, but also impacted the other youth during the session: “Some youth were very difficult and refused to participate. Because of this, they made it difficult for others to focus and relax. Overall, there were some ups and down, but I think the girls who did get into it enjoyed it” (February 28, 2011). From previous research by Escarti and colleagues (2012), who evaluated a TPSR-based program, participants who put forth good effort participated in planned activities regardless of whether the activity was a favourite or not and persisted in all activities even if they were difficult. This is something in which the female youth within GJWHF struggled with and therefore suggests that youth should be encouraged by the leaders to persist through such activities. In terms of recommendations for future programming, it is critical that program developers ensure that the activities implemented are engaging activities and for leaders to challenge the youth by helping them to recognize that although a certain activity may not be enjoyable to them it is an activity from which they can learn something about themselves as well

as it is important to respect others as there may be youth in the program who enjoy the activity and when everyone is engaged and respectful everyone has more fun. It is believed that following these recommendations would help facilitate both the personal and social responsibility in youth. Finally, activities in which the majority of the youth do not appear to enjoy are to be removed from future program curriculums to ensure that the youth-driven approach of the program is maintained.

Insert Figure 4.

Self-coaching was scored consistently higher by the youth than the leaders, yet both the youth and leaders gradually increased the levels of their ratings from beginning to end of the program (see Figure 5). Self-coaching was rated highest by the leaders during the youth planning and implementation sessions near the end of the program where the participants were preparing to teach and then teaching younger Boys and Girls Club members. “Self-coaching and coaching of others...was great! The leadership and initiative that was taken by a number of individuals was impressive and really great to see” (May 9, 2012). During these sessions, the youth were not only setting goals for themselves, but also for the outcomes of their teaching. As a major component of this program is the gradual empowerment of youth participants, these findings support the overall TPSR model in that the levels of self-coaching increased (Hellison, 2011; Wright et al., 2010). On the other hand, Self-coaching was rated poorly by the leaders during the Lacrosse (Responsibility) and Volleyball (Dare to Dream) sessions. It was noted by the leaders that these sessions were impacted by troubles with transportation to the program (the youth arriving late) which negatively impacted the overall flow of the sessions and therefore may have decreased the youths’ ability to reflect on their goals for the session and to work towards those

goals. The youth rated themselves lowest on self-coaching in the second Yoga session, where the leaders also observed that the youth seemed to be less self-motivated than other sessions.

Although within the TPSR model self-coaching is a focus once self-control and effort have been and therefore generally occurs later in the program, from the findings from this study it appears that to enhance self-coaching, it is important for staff to ensure the youth have the opportunity to self-coach (Barker & Forneris, 2012) and to integrate activities that require the youth to take ownership and/or plan activities within the program session (Wright, 2011). Related to the GJWHF program curriculum, it was evident from the Leader Logbook that often times when external instructors came to the program to deliver a session (Self-defence, Dance, Yoga) opportunities were not always afforded to the youth to self-coach. While when deliberate opportunities were given, such as at the end of the program when youth were planning and implementing their own sessions, self-coaching was perceived as higher. As a result, it is recommended that programmers integrate activities in which the youth are familiar with (e.g., Cooperative Games, Soccer, Basketball) are ideal vehicles to encourage youth to self-coach and they already knew the basic fundamental skills and rules of the games, yet could strive to improve. In addition, if outside instructors are brought into the program to encourage them to provide the youth opportunities to self-coach.

Insert Figure 5.

The youth rated themselves consistently higher on the element of leadership compared to the leader ratings (see Figure 6). However, it should be noted that based on the leader ratings, the youth improved two full units (on a scale of four) from the start to the end of the program. The leaders rated the youth highest during the sessions in which leadership was of specific focus; particularly nearing the end of the program when the youth were planning and implementing

their own physical activity session to younger Boys and Girls Club members. “Overall session was great for the girls who took ownership and led a great activity. They were all very proud of themselves and should be” (May 9, 2012). These findings reflect results from past research in that, when youth are provided with specific leadership opportunities, the youth stepped up and utilized their skills (Bean et al., 2013; Denner, Meyer, & Bean, 2005; Larson, Hansen, & Walker, 2005). As Hellison (2011) outlined within the TPSR model, leadership opportunities are typically integrated into a program curriculum near the end of program as leadership is considered to be the fourth level of the model. However, a practical recommendation from this study highlights the importance of providing such opportunities for youth throughout program and not simply near the end of the program. It can be recommended that as youth settle into a program (e.g., after the first month), the leaders create leadership opportunities for youth. In the beginning it is recommended that these roles be realistic for the youth so they experience success, such as explaining the rules of a game. As the program progresses, the youth should be provided with an increasing number of opportunities for leadership, and as they gain confidence, greater roles, such as leading a discussion or leading an activity during a session. Towards the end of the program, having the youth teach what they have learned over the course of the program to younger peers has the potential to be a strong leadership activity. This recommendation is seconded by Wright et al. (2011) as one of their future directions included increasing opportunities for leadership roles throughout the program and as a consistent focus, as other programs have effectively integrated this as part of the program structure.

Further, Wright and colleagues (2010) argued that a supportive socio-emotional climate is critical in fostering the development of leadership skills. The authors stressed that feelings of belonging and caring were fostered in this program primarily through leadership opportunities.

Based on Bean and colleagues' (submitted 2013) process evaluation, the development of a caring and trusting environment in GJWHF was highlighted as a significant finding. Moreover, the authors also noted that having a youth-driven approach helped to increase initiative and leadership throughout the program. Therefore, the development of such types of environments may be critical in fostering such leadership in participants.

It was also observed that there was a large discrepancy between the youth and leader ratings on the first session (Confidence and Courage/Co-operative Games) and the third session (Respecting Others/Kickboxing) on leadership. In these two situations, the youth rated themselves 1.5 units higher than the leaders. It was noted by the leaders in the logbook that in the first session that although the youth participated, there were some issues with regards to whether the session was a success: "Yes and no. The girls participated, but a few of the girls cheated" (October 11, 2011). In the third session, it was recognized by the leaders, that in this session, the guest leader who came in to teach kickboxing structured the session very much like a class and therefore the youth were not provided much opportunity to take a leadership role which helps explain the lower rating. It may be that the youth rated themselves higher because they felt they did a good job staying focused and being good 'students'. Therefore, future programs may want to take into consideration (and provide an option in the self-report methodology to state) whether there were limited opportunities for the youth to take on leadership opportunities and to also ensure that any guest leaders structure their content to allow for both self-coaching, as mentioned above, and leadership opportunities for the youth. Finally, similar to self-control and effort, leadership was also rated lower in the Dance (Dare to Dream) session as well during the second and third Yoga sessions (Relaxation and Focus) which seemed to be sessions the youth had difficulty with effort and self-control which could help explain why they also rated themselves

lower on leadership. This finding helps support the TPSR model in that it is difficult for youth to perceive themselves as leaders when they are having difficulty with self-control and effort. In addition, it helps add to an understanding of how youth may develop the various TPSR. It may not be as linear as suggested in the model, rather these levels may fluctuate throughout a program but unless the youth are able to display the lower levels such as self-control and effort it is not practical to expect them to be able to self-coach or take on leadership roles.

Insert Figure 6.

Transfer was solely evaluated by the youth. Their ratings appeared to remain fairly consistent overtime. The youth appeared to be confident (rating themselves as good (3) or great (4) for the majority of the sessions) (see Figure 7). The only time transfer dropped below a rating of 3 (“good”) was for a session that focused on the life skill of responsibility that was then reinforced with lacrosse as the physical activity. However, it was observed that this low rating may have been a result of the overall atmosphere of the session and not the content of the session. During this session, the youth were asked to complete a section in their workbook and brainstorm one way they could take responsibility in each area of their life including at home, at school, in their community, with their friends, and with their personal goals. While this activity was intended to have a direct element of transfer for the youth to other domains, it was not well received by the youth. From the Leader Logbook, although it was recognized that the intention of the life skill was good: “...successful in the sense that it got the girls thinking about how they could take on more responsibility in different environments (but)...the girls didn't seem as interested in the life skill activity this week...too much like school...and we lost some participation from some girls during the session” (November 8, 2011). This seemed to have a large impact on all program participants and the outcome of the overall session. Hence, it

appears that even when a life skill activity is targeted at a particular TPSR level (e.g. having the youth brainstorm how to be responsible in other domains in their lives as part of reinforcing transfer) if the youth do not enjoy the activity they make take very little away from the activity reinforcing the importance of having engaging activities that the youth enjoy and are not like schoolwork.

Overall, based on their ratings, the youth appeared to be confident that they could transfer the skill to other domains of their life (e.g., school). This is consistent with other research that has investigated transference of life skills within sport (Armour et al., 2012; Camiré, Trudel, & Forneris, 2012; Weiss et al., 2012). More specifically, Armour et al. (2012) and Weiss et al. (2012) looked at youth sport and physical activity interventions and found that participants successfully transferred life skills (e.g., teamwork, leadership, respect, emotional management, and communication) that had been learned in the program to alternative settings such as school, home, and workplace. Although this study did not actually measure transfer and was based on the youth's perception and confidence in their ability to transfer the learned skills within the GJWHF program, results from the self-report of transfer suggests that youth were confident in their overall ability to transfer the majority of the life skills focused on within GJWHF; still, future research should investigate and attempt to measure life skill transfer.

Conclusion

Overall, the results from this study indicated that participants' self-ratings of the five TPSR levels varied based on the type of life skill and physical activity of each program session, but overall showed a gradual upward trend which was also supported by the results of the dependent *t*-tests. Although the youth participants were given choice in this program with regards to physical activity, there were still sessions that the youth did not appear to enjoy which

seemed to negatively impact ratings, indicating that engaging activities are critical in facilitating enhanced levels of responsibility of youth.

The most interesting trend observed across the different TPSR levels observed was that self-control, self-coaching, and leadership were all rated ‘great’ for the last sessions of the program. It was during these sessions when the youth took on a leadership role and were responsible for developing and implementing their own program sessions to younger youth at the club (e.g., teaching a life skill and reinforcing the skill through physical activity). As documented within the Leader Logbook: “the youth showed a lot of confidence and maturity in their explanations, put forth a good effort... used constructive feedback” (May 1, 2012). And again: “the youth took greater ownership and pride in their own activity and led the sessions very well. They were very well-spoken in their explanations to the group and showed great confidence” (May 8, 2012). Finally, it was recorded by the leaders that “the three groups really did a great job in coming up with their own activity and incorporating life skills into it – the phase one of planning went really well. The girls took it very seriously and are looking forward to next week to continue planning” (April 25, 2012).

In sum, this finding indicates the importance of integrating specific opportunities for self-coaching and leadership once the youth have become familiar with the program and activities as these opportunities seem to help reinforce and strengthen the TPSR levels together. Using a youth-driven approach in collaboration with the TPSR model may be an effective program framework as youth-driven programs are known to effectively empower youth and foster leadership (Denner et al., 2005; Larson et al., 2005; Larson, Walker, & Pearce, 2005; Sullivan, 2000). As earlier mentioned, one major component of the TPSR model is to facilitate the gradual empowerment of youth over the course of a program, as programs using this model work

towards the leadership level of responsibility (Hellison, 2011). Using a youth-driven framework in combination with the TPSR model may help to provide youth with empowerment over the entire course of the program.

Although this study does show that the TPSR model may be effective for helping youth develop in a number of positive ways there were limitations in this research that should be acknowledged. First, there was a small sample size of only 12 female youth, as well as only 8 girls at two time points for the PSRQ, which limits the power of the statistical analyses to detect significant differences, as well as generalizability of the results. Second, the majority of the data in this study is based on self-report and not on actual observed change and therefore future research is needed to examine actual changes in life skill development and personal and social responsibility. The small sample size also limited the ability to examine the impact of attendance on self-evaluations, as well as the age and individual differences of youth participants. Third, the self-rating scale for each of the TPSR levels was measured on a four-point scale which limits variability for data analysis. It is important to note that Hellison's intention for the ratings of the levels was for self-evaluation as a learning tool within the program and not as a research tool. We used this rating scale to help understand changes in perceptions in the five levels but in the future, if this measure were to be used as a research tool, it would be recommended to use a broader Likert scale. Further, as mentioned above, for the first four weeks of the program a poster was used for the youth self-rating of the TPSR levels, which peer influence impacted the ratings. Therefore, results in this study are missing for the first four weeks of the program as self-evaluations were skewed. Finally, in future research it is critical to ensure that youth and leaders are in agreement of the definitions of the five different TPSR levels so that evaluations are measuring the same components and so results can be linked to the current body of literature on

PYD interventions using TPSR models. In regards to this, a recommendation for future programming which has been implemented in the second year of GJWHF programming is to add in a trigger question beside each level of the TPSR model on the youth and leader self so that everyone has a constant reminder of the definition of each level, but also so that the youth and leaders are on the same page to avoid the same issue that happened, particularly with the element of self-control.

Overall, the findings from this study help to contribute to a growing body of evidence that supports the effectiveness of well-implemented TPSR programs (Walsh et al., 2010). Using a time-series analysis design was beneficial in allowing an examination of how the TPSR levels may be impacted over the course of the program as well as by the particular structural content of a program's curriculum. Furthermore, this study represents an important step in responding to calls for increased evaluation in community-based programs (Salmon et al., 2007) and aids in understanding the process in which PYD programs, specifically those utilizing the TPSR model, can be effectively implemented. Currently within the field of PYD there is a lack of integration between theory and actual program practice (Brink & Wissing, 2012; Catalano, Hawkins, Berglund, Pollard, & Arthur, 2002). This was the first known study to incorporate a time-series analysis into findings within the PYD literature, which proved to be helpful in gaining an understanding of how actual program curriculum can have an impact on enhancing the various levels of responsibility as defined by the TPSR model. Finally, it is hoped that the findings from this study may help to inform research and practice related not only to the TPSR model, but also to the broader field of youth development in physical activity programming.

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Table 1. TPSR Model Structure for Each Session

Component	Description
Relational Time	The Rose and Thorn activity (5-10 min), where each of the youth share one experience that went well for them during the week and one that was a challenge; used to strengthen relationships between youth and leaders as well as among youth themselves.
Awareness Talk	The Awareness talk was used to teach a variety of life skills included the five levels of responsibility (self-control, effort, self-coaching, leadership, transfer) as well as other life skills (respect, positive self-talk, goal setting).
Physical Activity/Sport	The youth were provided with choice as to what type of activities they wanted to participate in. Some of the activities the youth chose included: basketball, volleyball, swimming, skating, dance, etc. The life skill of the session was integrated into the activity.
Group Discussion	At the end of every session a debrief took place with the leaders and youth to discuss progress and challenges of the session. This is also when youth completed their self-evaluations.

Figure 1. Leaders' rating of youth using the TPSR levels from beginning to end of program (measured out of 4)

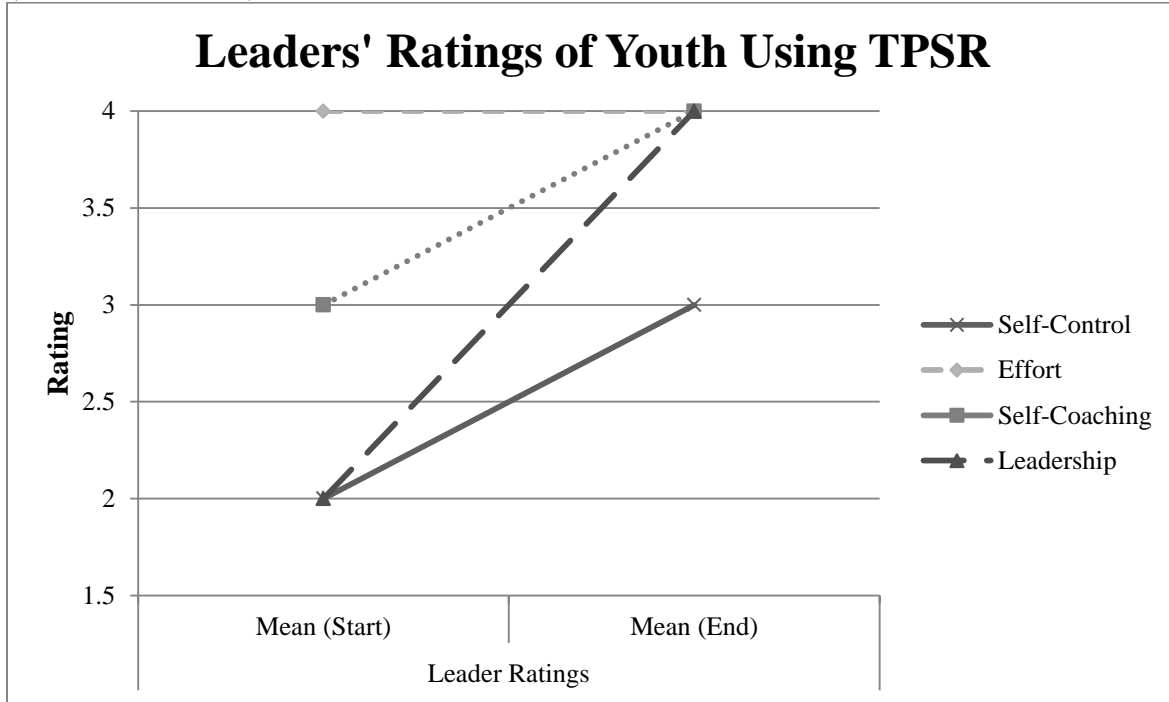


Table 2. Outline of GJWHF program by session (including session number, attendance, and life skill and sport/physical activity integrated). Only sessions that had both program components and TPSR ratings completed are included in the table

Session #	Attendance	Life Skill	Sport/Physical Activity
4	11	Confidence & Courage	Co-operative games
5	10	Respecting Others	Kickboxing
6	10	Respecting Others	Kickboxing
7	12	Responsibility	Lacrosse
8	12	Responsibility	Lacrosse
9	11	Dare to Dream	Volleyball
11	14	Dare to Dream	Dance
15	6	Overcoming Obstacles	Co-operative games
17	14	Seeking Help from Others	Co-operative games
19	13	Self-Talk & Thought Control	Yoga
20	12	Relaxation	Yoga
21	14	Focus	Yoga
22	5	Empowerment	Walk
27	9	Leadership	Co-operative games
28	7	Appreciating differences/Youth planning	Co-operative games
29	8	Youth planning	Co-operative games
30	10	Youth Implementing	Co-operative games

Table 3. Youth Ratings from First Session to Last Session of the Program

TPSR Levels	Pre		Post		<i>t</i>	p	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			
Youth							
Self-Control	3.16	0.41	3.75	0.39	-2.54	.052	1.33
Effort	3.33	1.03	3.83	0.41	-1.00	.363	0.60
Self-Coaching	2.67	1.21	3.75	0.38	-2.41	.061	1.27
Leadership	2.33	0.52	4.00	0.16	-7.60	.001	4.91
Transfer	3.55	0.84	3.75	0.39	-1.04	.348	1.25

Figure 2. Leaders and Youth Ratings of Self-Control as a Function of Life Skill and PA by Session

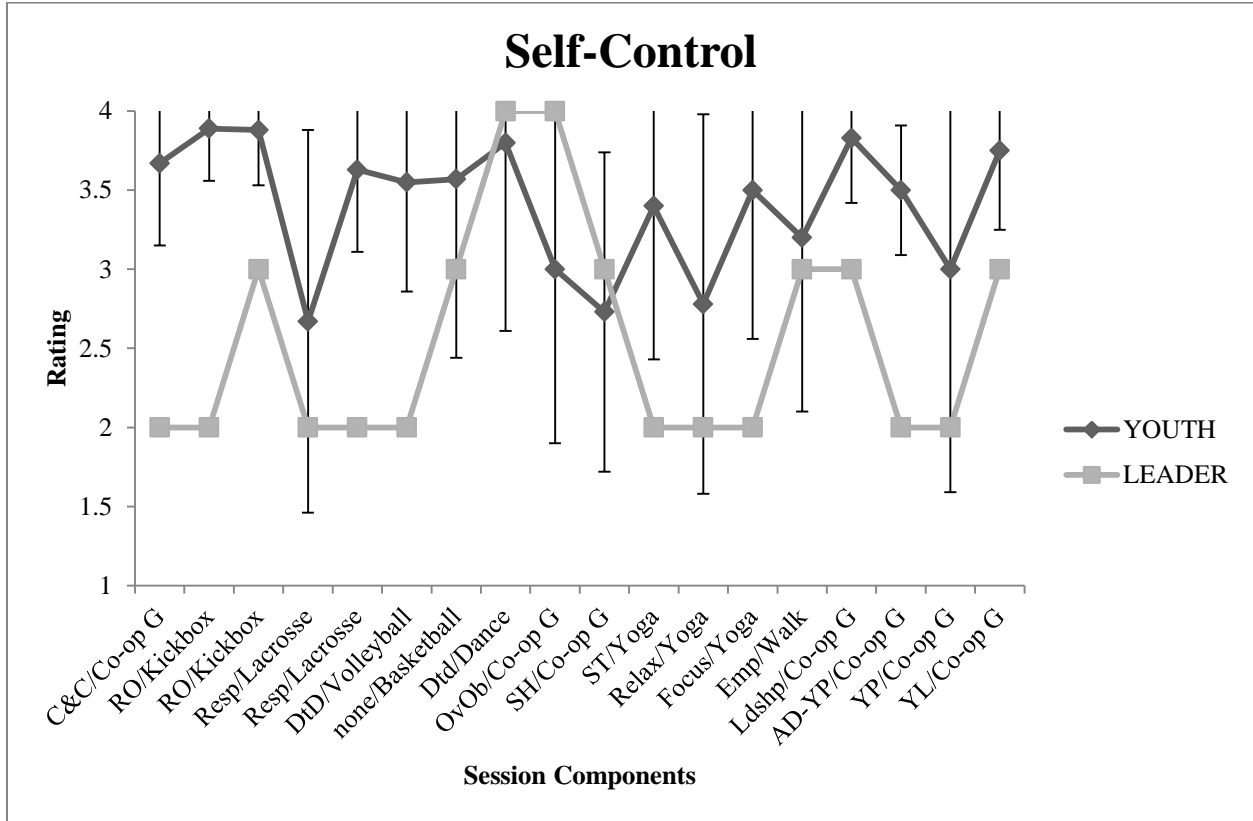


Figure 3. Leaders and Youth Ratings of Effort as a Function of Life Skill and PA by Session

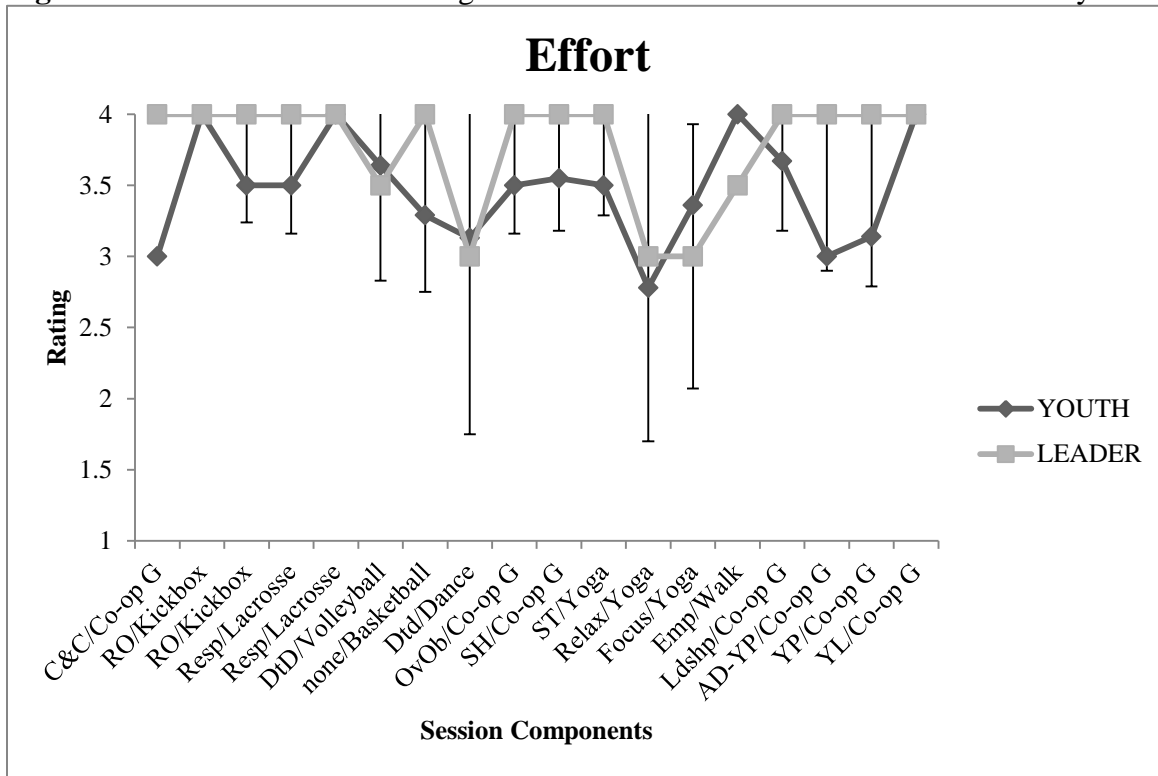


Figure 4. Leaders and Youth Ratings of Self-coaching as a Function of Life Skill and PA by Session

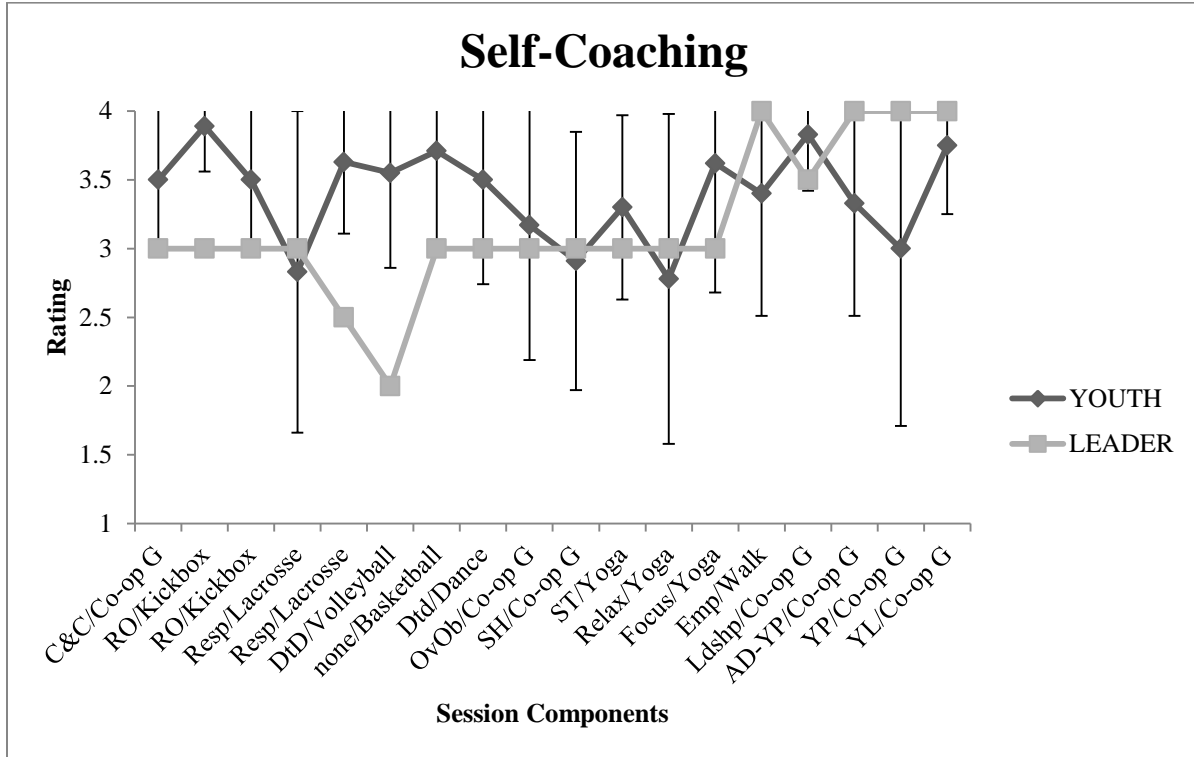


Figure 5. Leaders and Youth Ratings of Leadership as a Function of Life Skill and PA by Session

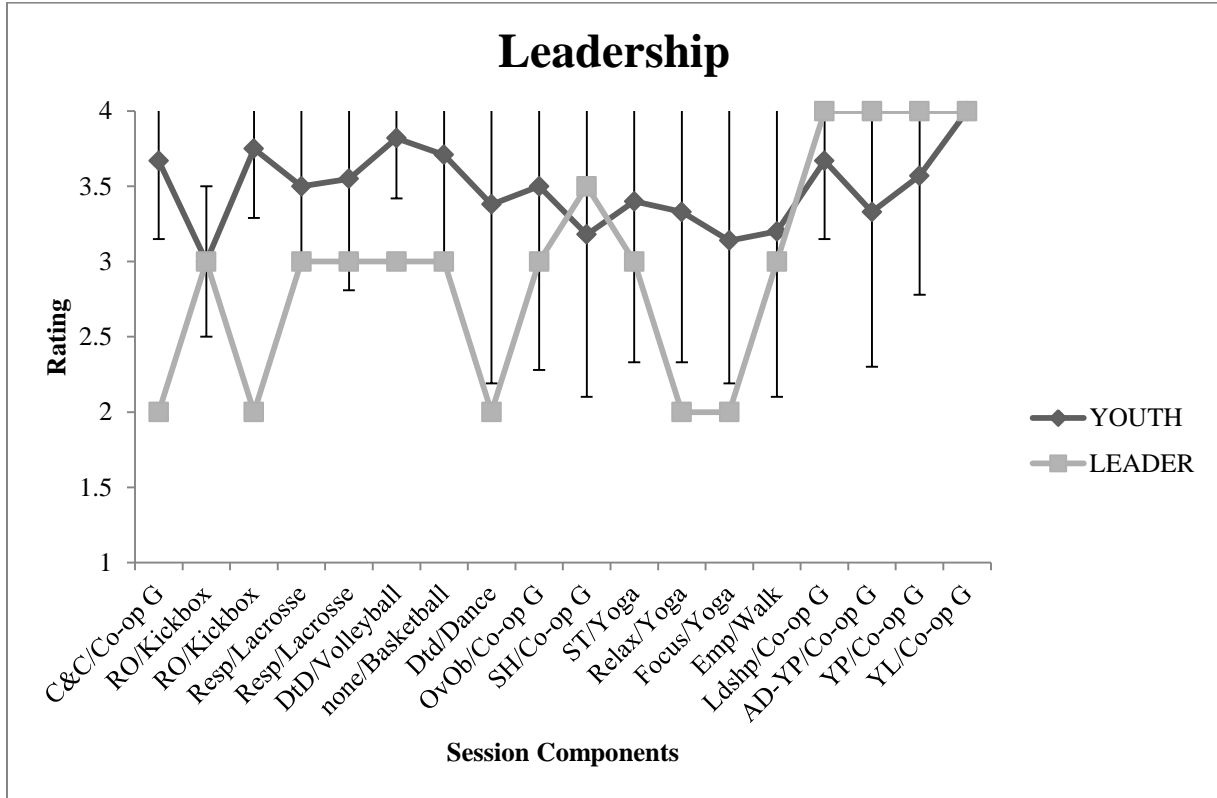
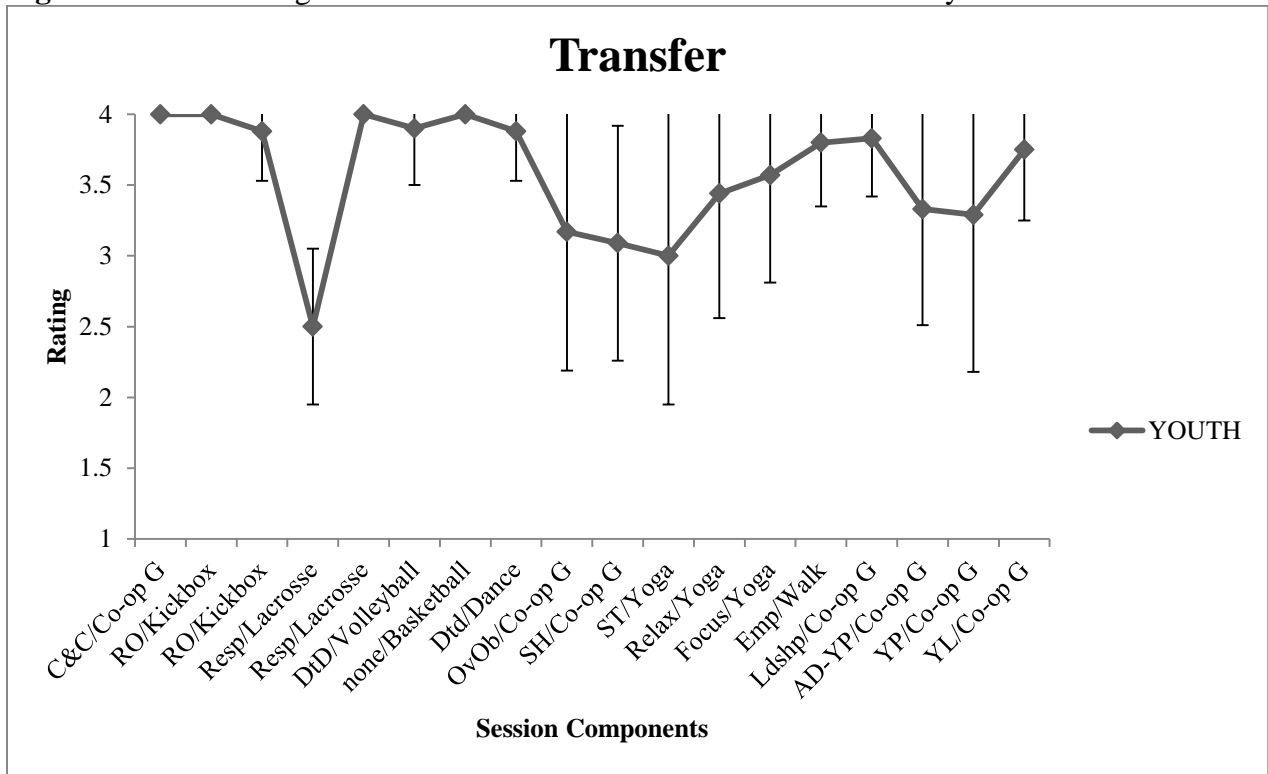


Figure 6. Youth Ratings of Transfer as a Function of Life Skill and PA by Session



Article 3

Running Head: IMPACT OF GJWHF PROGRAM

Girls Just Wanna Have Fun: Understanding the Impact of a Female Youth-Driven Physical
Activity-Based Life Skills Program

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Abstract

Female youth from low-income families are at highest risk for poor developmental outcomes and have the lowest levels of physical activity (Public Health Agency of Canada [PHAC], 2006). As a result, there has been a call for increased programming to engage female youth in physical activity and help them develop the skills to live long and healthy lives (PHAC, 2010).

Researchers have also advocated for using a positive youth development (PYD) framework in youth programming as this approach focused on developing various psychosocial skills to help youth succeed in the future (Damon, 2004). However, there has been little research within the field of PYD investigating the link between process and outcome evaluations, as such findings can aid in understanding relationships between program processes and program outcomes (Saunders, Evans, & Joshi, 2005). One program that was designed to help female youth increase their physical activity and facilitate positive developmental outcomes is the Girls Just Wanna Have Fun (GJWHF) program. Results from this mixed-methods study indicated that the program was perceived as providing a trusting and caring environment through the facilitation of positive leader support, a positive future orientation, a sense of identity and the development of a number of life skills such as teamwork and leadership. Further, for the participants, an all-girls environment was found to be important in fostering and strengthening relationships. This study helped to identify potential mediating processes that may be involved in facilitating PYD outcomes (Botvin & Griffin, 2004; Hodge et al., 2012).

Keywords: program evaluation; positive youth development; physical activity; community programming, female youth

Girls Just Wanna Have Fun: Understanding the Impact of a Female Youth-Driven Physical
Activity-Based Life Skills Program

Positive youth development (PYD) has emerged as an alternative approach to the reactive methods traditionally taken in response to problems youth often encounter throughout adolescence (drinking, drug use, drop out, teen pregnancy; Botvin, 2004; Damon, 2004). The rationale behind PYD is that the foundation of our future is in the opportunities we provide to our youth and therefore it is important to view youth in terms of their potential for healthy development and to provide opportunities to facilitate this development (Catalano, Hawkins, Berglund, Pollard, & Arthur, 2002). Research has shown that not only is adolescence the best time for intervention (Danish, 1996; Hamburg, 1997; Public Health Agency of Canada [PHAC], 2006), but programs using a PYD framework are critical in enhancing adolescent development (Education Alliance, 2007; National Research Council & Institute of Medicine, 2002; Weissberg & Greenberg, 1998). More recently, proactive measures have been purposefully incorporated into community programs with the goal of yielding PYD outcomes (Brown & Fry, 2013; Holt & Jones, 2008; Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, & Jones, 2005).

Within the field of PYD, however, there is a lack of investigation in community-based settings, and very little information about the effectiveness of interventions in these settings (Salmon, Booth, Phongsavan, Murphy, & Timperio, 2007). Community-based research provides an opportunity for researchers and community programmers to work together to bridge the gap between research and practice resulting in effective youth programming. As a result, many researchers have argued for more research on community-based programming, particularly those programs designed to facilitate PYD outcomes (Bailey, 2005; Holt & Jones, 2008; Morris, Sallybanks, Willis, & Makkai, 2003; Ruiz, 2004). However, within the PYD literature, there has

been a lack of community-based program evaluations (Salmon et al., 2007), and more specifically the link between process and outcome evaluations, as few evaluations have identified what mediating processes may be involved in facilitating PYD outcomes (Botvin & Griffin, 2004; Hodge, Danish, & Martin, 2012). Saunders, Evans, and Joshi (2005) stated, results of process evaluations can aid in “understanding the relationship between specific program elements and program outcomes” (p. 134). Therefore, the overall purpose of this research was to conduct a program evaluation on the first year of the Girls Just Wanna Have Fun (GJWHF) program, a community-based youth-driven physical activity and life skills program for adolescent females. More specifically, this study attempts to take an initial step in addressing how various programs components or processes may influence outcomes of youth participants.

Youth physical activity interventions may be best served in adopting a PYD focus where researchers and practitioners move away from a focus on avoiding the negative consequences of an inactive lifestyle (obesity, diabetes, etc.) and work to create contexts in which youth have the opportunity to form relationships with caring adults and intentionally teach and practice healthy living skills (Barker & Forneris, 2012; Holt & Neeley, 2011). This integration of PYD and physical activity programming may not only help in changing health behaviour in the short-term, but may also enable youth to engage in healthy behaviours for a lifetime so that they develop into healthy, functioning adults. Literature related to physical activity programming has identified this context as one that can develop physical skills, but also help to develop teamwork, initiative, and identity (Hansen, Larson, & Dworkin, 2003; Ho, 2008).

GJWHF represents such an approach. The rationale for combining PYD and physical activity is based on previous research on youth physical activity. Prior research has shown that mediating variables such as social support and enjoyment for physical activity (Sallis, Prochaska,

& Taylor, 2000; Trost, Owen, Bauman, Sallis, & Brown, 2002; Van Der Horst, Paw, Twisk, & Van Mechelen, 2007) are also those that are emphasized through PYD programming.

Furthermore, a number of reviews have shown that these psychosocial determinants of youth physical activity are the same psychological and social variables significantly associated with later adult physical activity (Dishman, Sallis, & Orenstein, 1985; Sallis et al., 2000; Van Der Horst et al., 2007). Thus, youth PA interventions that focus on integrating the psychosocial variables associated with sustained physical activity may be more effective in enhancing overall youth development.

As mentioned above, GJWHF was community-based and was developed in collaboration with the local Boys and Girls Club. The Boys and Girls Club is a non-profit community-based organization whose mission is “to provide a safe, supportive place where children and youth experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, develop positive relationships and build confidence and skills of life” (Boys and Girls Club of Canada, 2012, n.p.). The organization focuses on providing opportunities for youth (ages 5-18) from families living on low-incomes. One identified gap within the local Boys and Girls Club was physical activity and sport programming for female youth. According 2008-2009 statistics from the Boys and Girls Club of Ottawa, only 243 females, compared to 1012 males, participated in sport and recreational programs at the BGC.

GJWHF was developed based on this identified gap in program, as a needs assessment was conducted with female youth at the Boys and Girls Club to gather their perspectives and recommendations for programming (see Forneris, Bean, Snowden, & Fortier, in press). Further, research indicated that female youth, compared to male youth, score consistently lower on all indicators of well-being (PHAC, 2004). By grade seven, 24-38% of females report feeling

depressed at least once a week. Furthermore, beginning in grade six, levels of self-confidence markedly decline so that by grade 10 only 14% of females report that they believe in themselves (PHAC, 2004). Although it can be argued that all female youth need opportunities to enhance their development, it is highly recognized that female youth from families living on low incomes are particularly at risk. More specifically, female youth from families living on low-incomes have a greater risk of dropping out of school, having mental health problems, difficulties with the law, and engaging in risk-taking behaviour (Bowlby, 2005; Canadian Council of Learning, 2005; Correctional Service Canada, 1998; PHAC, 2004; Statistics Canada, 2001). In addition, female youth from families living on low incomes have the lowest levels of physical activity (PHAC, 2006; Wilson, Williams, Evans, Mixon, & Rheaume, 2005).

The framework for sport programs designed to enhance psychosocial development by Petitpas et al. (2005) was used to guide this research as Petitpas and colleagues emphasize the various components that should be incorporated into PYD programs in order to foster PYD outcomes. Therefore, this framework can help begin to understand how program processes may be related to outcomes. Petitpas et al. assert that youth need to be engaged in a challenging and motivating activity within a physically and psychologically safe environment (context). These youth also need to be surrounded by responsible and caring adult mentors and a positive peer group (external assets). Finally, the teaching of life skills (internal assets) are critical in helping youth develop the capacity to successfully coping with various life situations. For a detailed description of the program see Bean and Forneris (submitted 2013).

As stated above, this study attempted to link program processes with potential outcomes through understanding the experiences of the youth and the program leaders and their perceived impact of participation in the GJWHF program on the psychosocial development of the female

youth participants. This research used a mixed-methods approach. More specifically, the mixed-methods approach used in this study was an embedded design that embedded quantitative data (supportive role) into a larger qualitative study (Creswell, 2007). The rationale for having the quantitative data play a supportive role in the embedded design was that the major focus of the research was to understand the program processes and components linked to outcomes. As such, an in-depth understanding of the program processes by both the youth and the leaders was critical in order to understand how they may have played a role in the development of PYD outcomes.

Methods

Context

The GJWHF program targets female youth from 11 to 14 years old from a local Boys and Girls Club located in a city in Eastern Ontario, Canada. The first year of GJWHF was implemented from September 2011 to May 2012 and involved one 75 minute session per week. The program had five leaders; three of the leaders were students (two senior undergraduate students and one graduate student) from a local university and two regular staff at the Boys and Girls Club. Within each program session the youth participated in a life skill activity and participated in a sport or physical activity that was designed to reinforce the life skill of the session. For example, the life skills relaxation and managing emotions was reinforced by yoga. GJWHF was developed using a youth-driven approach meaning that the youth were provided voice in the decisions regarding what types of sport and physical activities in which they wanted to participate as well as choice between various life skills activities used to reinforce the skills.

Participants & Procedure

For this research, two categories of participants were recruited: the female participants (ages 11-14) of the GJWHF program and the program leaders. There were a total of 12 youth who consistently participated in the program. Additionally, as mentioned above, there were five leaders that implemented the GJWHF program.

Parental consent forms were completed for all youth participants with the understanding that participation in the program also involved completing questionnaires (at two time points—pre and post program) and a semi-structured interview (see Appendix A). More specifically, the youth completed one questionnaire at the beginning of the first program session and two questionnaires in the final session of the program. The qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted at the end of the program. Fifteen interviews were conducted (10 participants, 5 program leaders). Due to the time constraints of the program many of the youth were interviewed at their home clubhouse on a night in which the program did not occur. This led to difficulties in arranging an interview with two of the youth which explains why only 10 of the 12 youth were interviewed. The participant interviews lasted between 25 and 45 minutes, while the leader interviews lasted from 50 minutes to 90 minute and all of the interviews were audio-recorded. Heath, Brooks, Cleaver, and Ireland (2009) asserted that youth are often more likely to open up to an individual with whom they know, have interacted with and trust, rather than a third party interviewer. Therefore, the lead researcher, who was a program leader, conducted all of the interviews with the youth participants. The five program leaders' interviews were conducted by an external researcher independent of the GJWHF program to decrease the social desirability of responses.

Measures

Pre-Post Measure.

Developmental assets profile (DAP). The Search Institute (2008) identified 40 developmental assets known to contribute to positive developmental outcomes. The DAP quantifies adolescents' reports of the types of assets working in their lives to understand the needs and strengths of youth (Search Institute, 2008). A modified version of the DAP was used within this study (see Appendix H). Only three of the subscales, those most relevant to the GJWHF program, were used. These three subscales were positive values (10 items), positive identity (6 items) and social competencies (8 items). The other subscales of the DAP focus on school and home life, which does not pertain to the proposed objectives and outcomes of the GJWHF program. The items were answered by the youth on a 4-point Likert scale (1= Not at all; 4= Extremely). The DAP has shown good reliability and validity across various samples (Scales, 2011). In this study Cronbach's alpha for the subscales ranged from .71-.78.

Post Only Measures.

Youth experiences survey (YES) 2.0. A modified YES 2.0 was used to assess positive developmental outcomes in youth (see Appendix I). The YES 2.0 (Hansen & Larson, 2005) was designed to assess the experiences of youth participating in different activities, clubs, and organizations. Hansen and Larson (2005) developed YES 2.0 as a self-report questionnaire that focuses on examining various domains of socio-emotional development involving the processes wherein youth are "active and conscious agents of their own development" (Larson, Hansen, & Monet, 2006, p. 851). It should be cautioned that the YES 2.0 does not test whether learning actually occurs, only whether participants report experiences that are related to its occurrence (Hansen et al., 2003). Psychometric testing with 1822 youth indicated that the YES 2.0 is a valid and reliable instrument (Hansen & Larson, 2005). Although the YES 2.0 has 17 subscales and a total of 70 items, only the subscales relevant to the objectives of GJWHF were used in this study.

Participants responded to 31 items (11 subscales) on a 4-point Likert scale (1: Not at all; 4: Yes, definitely). The subscales included were: ‘identity exploration’, ‘identity reflection’, ‘goal setting’, ‘effort’, ‘problem solving’, ‘time management’, ‘emotional regulation’, ‘physical skills’, ‘diverse peer relationships’, ‘prosocial norms’, and ‘linkages to community’ (see Appendix F). Additionally, three open-ended questions were also included in the questionnaire which asks youth participants what they liked about the program, what they did not like about the program, and what they would want to change to make the program better.

At the end of the YES 2.0, the youth were asked to rate themselves on how honest they were in filling out the surveys. This question has been used in previous studies to help control for social desirability in responses (Anderson-Butcher, Newsome, & Ferrari, 2003). This question was completed on a 5-point Likert scale (1: Honest not at all; 5: Very honest). Any youth that indicated they were ‘honest not at all’ (1) or ‘honest once in a while’ (2) were dropped from the study to avoid skewed results. One participant’s responses were omitted from the analyses because they reported that they were not very honest when completing the questionnaire. Therefore, results from 11 youth participants were analyzed.

Semi-structured interviews. Separate interview guides were developed for the participants (see Appendix D) and program leaders (see Appendix E). The participants’ interview guide focused on exploring their program experience and their perceptions of how participation in GJWHF had impacted their development. The interview guide included questions such as: ‘What did you learn in the program?’; ‘What did you like/not like about the program?’; ‘Did this program make you think differently about yourself or your future? In what ways?’; ‘Do you feel any differently from participating in the program? Has the program helped you develop different skills?’; ‘What were your three biggest highlights or favourite parts of

GJWHF?'; 'What was your experience like working with the program leaders?'; 'What do you believe has impacted you the most during this program?'; 'Do you plan to use the skills you've learned in the program in any areas of your life? How do you think that skill will help you at school? At home? With friends? At work?'; 'What do you think would make the program better?'

The interview guide for the program leaders focused on understanding their experiences implementing the program and their perceptions of the impact of GJWHF on the youth. The interview guide included questions such as: 'In your opinion, what successes did you experience related to implementing the GJWHF program?'; 'Do you believe the GJWHF program had an effect on the youth? In what ways?'; 'Have you been impacted by this project and being a GJWHF leader? How?' The interviewers also used probes to further explore areas of the participants' experiences further.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS 20.0. Descriptive statistics were calculated for each of the subscales on the DAP (pre and post) and the YES 2.0. *T*-tests were then conducted to examine whether there were significant differences between pre-test and post-test results on the three subscales of the DAP.

The semi-structured interviews were transcribed verbatim upon completion by the lead researcher. An inductive-deductive content analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994) was used to analyze the interview transcripts. This type of analysis allows researchers to identify themes that have been identified as important in the previous literature while also allowing themes to emerge inductively that could provide new insight. For this paper, Petitpas and colleagues' (2005) framework for planning youth sport programs that promote psychosocial development was used

to guide the deductive analysis as this framework was used to guide the development of GJWHF. An iterative process was used for the content analysis. First, the transcripts were read to become familiar with the data. Second, the transcripts were read a second time and notes were made in the right hand column related to any responses made by the participants related to the purpose of the study. Next, the researcher re-read the transcripts for a third time and began to group responses into broader themes. Finally, these broad themes were organized and pertinent quotations identified that supported the emerging themes. Additionally, two independent coders (an associate professor and a doctoral student) familiar with qualitative content analysis reviewed the transcripts and identified themes. The three coders met to discuss the data analysis and discrepancies between the three coders were discussed further until agreement was reached. A few minor changes to the initial analyses resulted in moving a few quotations from one theme to another as it was deemed that the quotation provided stronger support for an alternative theme. For each quotation, identification codes were created to identify the subjects' roles in the program (P = participant; L = leader). Each code included a number to indicate the order in which the subjects were interviewed and to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. For example, the identification code P-3 would indicate that the individual was a youth participant and was interviewed third.

Results

Given that this research used an embedded mixed-methods approach where the qualitative data took on the primary role, the results section will first present the qualitative results followed by the quantitative results. Overall, the results from this study found that providing a girls'-only, caring environment that establishes trust helps to foster and strengthen the development of friendships, aids in thinking about youth's positive future orientation,

identity formation, and the development of life skills, such as leadership, teamwork, and maturity.

Qualitative Results

From the inductive-deductive content analysis, seven themes emerged: (1) Establishment of Trusting and Caring Environment; (2) Girls' Only Environment is Important; (3) Positive Leader Support; (4) Emergence & Strengthening of Friendships; (5) Positive Future Orientation; (6) Identity; and (7) Development of Life Skills.

Establishment of Trusting and Caring Environment. The youth in the GJWHF perceived an element of trust from the group and the program in general. As one youth shared: "if there was an activity I didn't feel comfortable I would have still done it, 'cause I felt like a trust and everything, but like I didn't feel like I had to because I already trusted everyone and everything" (P-6), while another youth stated:

It was a really relaxed. I felt as if, it was like we could tell you guys (the leaders) stuff and know that it won't be told, like, we can tell you guys stuff and we know you won't go and like gossip about it behind, after we tell you, or like if we want it to be confidential then it is, like not another soul but you, and we trust that about the youth leaders. (P-3)

This establishment of trust went beyond the immediate surroundings of the GJWHF program and extended to the Boys and Girls Club environment, as one of the younger youth participants stated: "I feel more trusted. Like I trusted (name of club manager) when he told me I would go and make friends and I did" (P-10).

In addition to trust, the youth discussed how the program environment was also very caring. This was particularly evident during the relational activity that took place at the beginning of each session. One youth discussed how she could share her feelings during this

activity: “I really liked the rose and thorn thing and I liked how my friends were there too. I liked that I could say what was really bothering me out loud. And things that’s I really wanted to share with everybody” (P-1). Another youth stated:

I liked just the talking, just getting to know how people’s days were. Because sometimes you’ll see them and they have a smile on and like other times...like when they have a smile on you never really know what’s going on, so I like the fact that we do roses and thorns to see how everybody’s week has been. It kind of shows us that we do care. (P-3)

Girls’ Only Environment is Important. This notion of a safe and trusted environment was further reinforced by the program being open to only female youth. Having the all-girls environment seemed to be a strong reason why the youth attended as they shared that this all-girls environment was more comfortable. When asked what she liked best about the program one youth stated that it was “just us girls...so we don’t have to be around boys because boys can be annoying...this one [program] is only girls so you can say whatever you like and do whatever you want” (P-7). Another youth shared a similar experience: “it was a program for girls and it was pretty much for the girls to be comfortable about themselves...and you can share things and it’s a way to have fun” (P-5). One of the GJWHF program leaders, who was also a staff member at the Boys and Girls Club, stated that: “they [the girls] just needed to feel comfortable, just be all girls and stuff...less judgemental at that age too. There are no boys so they can just be themselves” (L-2). She went on to say that “there is less female participation in (other programs at BGC that are co-ed) and sometimes they (the girls) think ‘the guys aren’t going to pass to me’ or something. I think they’re just more comfortable” (L-2).

Positive Leader Support. A predominant theme that emerged from both the participant and leader interviews was positive leader support. The youth discussed the experience of having

supportive leaders whereas the leaders discussed the support they felt from their co-leaders which enhanced their own experience being involved in GJWHF. With regards to the youth experiencing support from the leaders, two subthemes emerged: leaders who were supportive and leaders who challenged appropriately. First, the youth highlighted: “they (the leaders) were very supportive. They (the leaders) were listening to what we were saying and asking questions about what we were saying” (P-7). The youth also expressed that they felt comfortable with the leaders as they felt they encouraged.

Well it was good to get to know you guys (the leaders); you guys (the leaders) helped us all learn our life skills and helped us be active, taught us what girls are meant to do, meant to be here, and girls can have fun too... I did [feel supported] and well it helped me figure out who I am, and I think I am a wonderful person. (P-4)

Similarly another youth stated: “what I really liked about the program is that when you come in they make you feel welcome” (P-5). Finally, one youth talked about her experience with the program leaders:

It was kind of like you’ve known them (the leaders) for a long time because they were so comfortable with you and you’d feel comfortable with them and it feels like you’ve known them for two years. I actually felt very supported by the leaders....I felt supported because when (name of leader), I was kinda not doing it, like they’d help you to do it properly and they’d support you through it. (P-5)

Second, the youth identified that throughout the program, they appreciated that the leaders challenged them appropriately. They felt comfortable while being pushed out of their comfort zone as they still felt supported by the leaders, yet the leaders did not push the youth to feel any sense of anxiousness or discomfort. This is evident by this youth’s quote:

I think it was cool because they (the leaders) had all different types of personalities which was good because everyone (the youth) had different types of personalities too. And because they didn't tell you to stop, but if you wanted to stop they didn't make you feel bad about it. They wanted to push you to your limit, and if you could go over the limit, they'd congratulate you for it, but if they (the youth) couldn't go over the limit, they (the leaders) would be fine and everything and they'd be like 'well you tried your best'. (P-6)

Again, another youth underlined this same notion: "even though you may not want to try something...they still ask you to or try and convince you to do it, unless you actually really, really don't want to" (P-5). Third, as explained by one youth:

There were times when I didn't want to do stuff, and people would just be like 'come on you gotta do it—you can try new things'. And I'd be like 'well you can't learn if you don't try new things' so I'd just be like 'alright'. (P-3)

Additionally, the youth felt they were treated age-appropriately by the leaders. It was discussed how in past programs the youth had been treated at children instead of the maturing adolescents they are growing into. Furthermore, the youth acknowledged that they enjoyed the age of the leaders that they were in their mid-to-late twenties, as they felt there was a reciprocal relationship between each other, as one youth stated:

Having youth leaders who don't act like way, way, way too mature. It's just like they don't act really, really old, like when I say 'old' I mean like they don't act as they we're a bunch of five year olds and they're instructing us to do something. They treat us like the kids we are...Whenever we participate in basketball or something, we have the choice of whether we can participate or not, sometimes 'cause some other groups they'd be like 'o you have to do it and that's final' and treat us like we're five and talking to us like were

five, or like we're animals, and it's sort of sets us back, because we're like 'hold up, why are you treating me like this—I'm thirteen calm down, I'm not five. I was five along time ago, so I think I get it'. But not in this group. (P-3)

Moreover, it was not only the youth that felt supported within the program, but also the leaders. The leaders expressed how working as a team and supporting one another made leading the program more enjoyable. One leader, a long-time worker at the Boys and Girls Club stated: "there were like a lot of really positive things; I definitely enjoyed working with all of the other leaders, I thought the other women were really committed to the girls and to the program and that's always really good" (L-4). Furthermore, one of the leaders expressed the benefit of having a strong support staff over the course of the program:

We had a great support staff within our group...one of our interns has stayed on and she wants to help out next year... The two staff that work at the Boys and Girls Club have been really great in chatting with the girls beforehand; reminding them, making sure to get them prepared, and trying to recruit people... really open lines of communication has been so helpful. (L-5)

Going beyond the direct program leaders, the backing received by staff at the Boys and Girls Club helped provide additional support for the leaders and help to build a positive name for the program.

It's been really, really great in terms of the support from the other leaders; you know you're not going in there blindly; you're not going in there on your own. The support staff, even the program coordinators that work at the clubhouses, the full-time staff, have complimented us on the program and they've been super supportive with fighting to keep it [the program] at a certain clubhouse because they think the program brings great

benefit to the clubhouse. So, it's been really nice to hear all the positive feedback of it.

(L-5)

Emergence & Strengthening of Friendships. From participation in the program, many friendships emerged between the youth from both clubhouses. One youth indicated: "it was a positive experience because you got to know people that you never knew or would probably never meet in your entire life" (P-3). Another youth said: "I liked how none of the girls fought together; we all became friends when we got there even if we didn't know the other girls" (P-4). A leader observed that "what was really important is that the girls enjoy coming here and interacting with each other and having a really good time" (L-4). Furthermore, another leader supported this statement by indicating: "there are a few things actually that we didn't expect to happen, like we didn't expect the friendships that have emerged coming out of that, the social aspect has been really, really great" (L-5). This was further supported by an observation a leader made "meeting other girls from the other clubhouse was neat...even (name of a participant) and a couple of the girls, they are buddies already, you know, which I think is good. They weren't friends before the program and now they are" (L-3).

In addition, the youth also discussed how the program strengthened some of the friendships they had already established. As one youth shared: "one thing is like you get closer to your friends when you're doing activities" (P-2). Another participant explained: "being with my friends because my friends are always there for me and I just wanted to have fun with my friends" (P-7).

Positive Future Orientation. Another theme that emerged from the interviews was that the program helped the youth think more positively about their own future. Many youth outlined how the support from the leaders and participating in the program helped facilitate this change.

One youth stated: “in a positive way, like I know my future is important, but you guys kinda enforced that it was really important and that you can’t wait and you only have one life. You only live once” (P-6). Another youth reinforced this notion by saying:

Before this program, like I didn’t like—I knew what my future was going to be, but I didn’t believe it. And then like after this program, like I believe my future is going to be what I want it to be. (P-2)

These two quotations highlight how important it is to provide youth with a positive environment in which they can flourish and begin to think about a positively-oriented future. The youth continued to emphasize how beneficial this program was for its participants by saying:

Yes, I would [recommend this program] because it is—I think it would be great because it would give you a chance to learn something in life that you wouldn’t actually learn in school so I can change and it can change you and give you a reason to do something. (P-5)

Finally, a leader explained that the youth:

Got to know themselves and to test themselves too and still get some thinking, like when we did goal setting – like that about goals they can have for themselves in the future and so they know it’s something they can accomplish for school or for sports or anything, that gives them an objective, something to look forward to...They were mostly long-term goals, but I think just seeing them wanting to have a goal was good. Just them knowing that it was a good idea to set goals to have some set goals that they can accomplish...it got them motivated and it was good for them. (L-2)

Identity. The program was perceived by the youth and leaders as helping the youth to develop a sense of identity. A youth highlighted that GJWHF “helped [to] express myself so I

can be me, not somebody that I shouldn't be" (P-7). A second youth stressed the same notion by saying the program is "[a positive thing for girls] because they get to learn who they are and that they have a spot on this earth to like use it, instead of just letting it fly away" (P-4). Another youth indicated that the life skill activities often helped her to shape who she was:

I liked how we had our little books and we worked in our little books a lot of the time...ever since I've written those things in the box, I'm like that. So if I wrote 'nice', I'm nice. And say I wrote 'sporty', now I'm more sporty...taking time in the program to reflect on different characteristics about me has made me think about them a little bit more, you know. (P-4)

Finally, a leader indicated that the life skill activities helped to facilitate the process of understanding themselves: "it would get a few of them to reflect more on their thinking, their behaviour, and who they are. And I think that's a big part of it" (L-3).

Development of Life Skills. The youth and leaders also discussed individual life skills that they believed developed as a result of participation in GJWHF. The life skills of leadership and teamwork seemed to be the predominant skills. As one youth explained, "It helped me be a leader...and it helped you to accomplish things...and your goals...and like try new things...and that you can be confident no matter what" (P-10).

Additionally, one leader mentioned that in some of the activities, the youth who had more experience acted as leaders and helped those with less experience:

It was always nice to see when the girls would help each other out. We went skating one time on the canal and I think that was the time when they showed the most help towards each other because there's a lot of different levels of ability and some of them had never skated before, but the other girls who were better would always wait for them and try and

teach them. So, I thought it was really positive, seeing them grow in that way, trying to help the other girls and not just skate off. (L-2)

As mentioned above, teamwork was also identified as a skill that was developed. One youth stated she “learned how to be better teammates and work as a team in sports” (P-2), while another youth said she learned “teamwork, we used teamwork when we played the games that the girls made up in our groups” (P-7). Furthermore, one youth talked about a specific activity in which she recalled working together as a team with the other participants of GJWHF:

When we did the game where it was like...you hold hands and hold people’s hands and the doctor has to untangle you...Ya I liked that game ‘cause it was kinda like a challenge because...there’s times where the people who are tangled are trying to get untangled and when the doctor has to get you untangled. I liked it because it was a challenge for most of the group –everybody and everyone. (P-5)

Additionally, it was perceived that learning these life skills helped the youth mature as the leaders discussed how specific youth changed and ‘grew up’ over the course of the program. One youth highlighted that out of all of the life skills she learned throughout the program, she believed she would use all of them at some point in her everyday life:

I think I’d use all of them (life skills learned in the program), and I think I have and would use all of them; like right now through my process of growing up I think I’ve been using all of them. I personally think everybody is trying to use all of them, but without realizing that they are. (P-3)

A leader spoke about one of the younger individuals specifically: “she grew up from the program, my little (name of girl), which was really neat and she was only 11” (L-3).

This leader went on to say:

The girls grew up because of the program, they have a little bit more insight...and I think it helped them a lot and it helped a lot of the girls to think more about different things because of the [work]book and I think it gets them thinking a little bit more, which is good. (L-3)

Furthermore, she went on to say: “the teaching component (life skills)...like the conversation that the girls were having, you would never expect it. There were a few of them who actually grew up a little bit” (L-3).

Quantitative Results

The descriptive statistics (*M*, *SD*) of the DAP (pre and post) and the YES 2.0 are presented in Table 1. The results of the *t*-tests that examined differences from pre-program to post-program on the DAP indicated no significant differences for the three subscales of the DAP (Positive Values [*t* = .567, *p*. = .59]; Positive Identity - [*t* = -.289, *p*. = .78]; Social Competencies [*t* = .480, *p*. = .65]).

Insert Table 1.

However, from the descriptive results of the YES 2.0, it appears that the youth perceived the GJWHF as a program that helped them develop a number of positive attributes. In particular, the subscales with a mean of 3.0 or higher on a 4-point scale included identity exploration, identity reflection, goal setting, effort, physical skills, developing diverse peer relationships, prosocial norms, and linkages to the community. A limitation that should be noted at the forefront was the issue with youth participants’ lack of enthusiasm and enjoyment of completing the questionnaires. As part of the end-of-program questionnaire booklet, the youth were provided the opportunity to state what they enjoyed and did not enjoy within the program. The youth

stated that they least enjoyed completing the questionnaires as an overall dissatisfaction. It is believed that the lack of significant quantitative findings may be, in part, due to the youth's lack of focus and motivation to complete these measures seriously as in their interviews they talked at length about the positive impact of the program and provided specific examples of such impact. Additionally, what the youth conveyed during the interviews was consistent with observations documented in the Leader Logbook. However, the youth did not take the quantitative measures seriously as they complained while completing the measures and did not seem focused throughout the process. Therefore, the authors do not believe the quantitative measures fully reflect what actually occurred over the course of the program and therefore may explain some of the discrepancies between the qualitative and quantitative results.

Discussion

The GJWHF program was originally developed in response to research that examined youths' perceptions of health and physical activity (see Forneris et al., in press for details). Results of this first year evaluation showed that the program resulted in meeting the needs identified by the youth in the study conducted by Forneris and colleagues (in press), such as the need for more opportunities within the Boys and Girls Club that involved solely girls and creating an environment that fostered social support. In addition to responding to the needs identified by female youth, both the quantitative and qualitative results of this study indicate that GJWHF was also perceived as a program that fostered a positive future orientation, identity, and the development of various life skills.

As there is a dearth in current PYD literature that links results from process and outcome evaluations, this study attempts to bridge this gap as more integration of these results would prove to be beneficial to understand proximal outcomes or mediators of PYD outcomes. To address this, Petitpas and colleagues' (2005) framework for planning youth programs that foster

psychosocial development was used as the guiding framework for the study. Results from this study indicate that overall, the GJWHF program was perceived as meeting the guidelines set forth by Petitpas et al. (2005) in their framework. As outlined in the introduction, this program framework involves four critical components: context, external assets, internal assets, and research and evaluation.

Within Petitpas et al.'s framework, the goal of creating a psychologically safe environment (context) for youth participants is critical. It was evident from this study that the GJWHF program provided a psychologically safe environment based on two of the qualitative themes: the establishment of trust and caring environment and the girls' only environment. When discussing the program's environment, the youth referred to the comfort level felt that the leaders provided which fostered a safe environment. In addition, the youth enjoyed the all-girls aspect as they explained it helped them feel more comfortable and that they could be themselves. As found by Forneris et al. (2013) being in an all-female environment was not only identified as being more comfortable compared to being with their male counterparts, but was also perceived to help increase confidence and to lead to increased physical activity participation within Boys and Girls Club time. These results coincide with previous findings that suggest a female youth's social environment can impact self-perceptions and confidence levels (Coleman, Cox, & Roker, 2007; Krahnstoeover-Davison & Jago, 2009; Sherwood & Jeffery, 2000).

In addition, Eccles and Barber (1999) and Petitpas et al. (2005) have asserted that an important component of creating PYD programs that foster psychosocial development is that youth must be able to find a valued role within the group. Moreover, past research has also identified peer support as playing an important role in continued participation in youth programs and physical activity (Coleman et al., 2007; Forneris et al., in press; Krahnstoeover-Davison &

Jago, 2009). This appears to be the case in the GJWHF program, as the youth often discussed how within the GJWHF program they were able to develop new relationships and strengthen existing friendships. Results from the YES 2.0 also indicated that the female youth participants believed that the GJWHF provided opportunities to develop diverse peer relationships and develop linkages to their community.

As mentioned by researchers in previous literature, great care is needed when purposefully structuring the environment of a program to facilitate positive developmental outcomes (Gould & Carson, 2008; Flett, Gould, & Lauer, 2012). A number of PYD researchers have recognized that although creating positive contexts for youth through community programming can serve as a protective mechanism, it is the quality of relationships that youth can form with caring adults that is most likely to lead to positive developmental outcomes of youth (Petitpas, Danish, & Giges, 1999; Ullrich-French & McDonough, 2013; Winfield, 1991). According to Petitpas and colleagues (2005), strong external assets such as program leaders, coaches, teachers, and parents are critical as they have a strong influence over the support and opportunities provided to youth to experience success and gain confidence. The results of this study indicated that the GJWHF leaders were strong external assets for the youth. The youth perceived the leaders as supportive because the leaders listened to them and challenged them appropriately which has been shown in past research to be important for fostering PYD outcomes (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Larson, 2006; Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray, & Foster, 1998). Therefore, findings from this research would advocate for youth girls-only programs that incorporate supportive female leaders as role models as one way to increase programs effectiveness for fostering PYD outcomes. It has also been recognized that the impact of such relationships is influenced by the length of program. Catalano et al. (2002) conducted a review of

youth programs and found that 80% of the programs that were found to be effective had leaders who maintained involvement with the youth for a period of at least nine months. Given that all of the leaders maintained consistent involvement in the GJWHF program that ran for a period of nine months (September-May), it seems likely that such commitment facilitated these high-quality relationships with the leaders.

Within Petitpas et al.'s (2005) framework, the notion of external assets typically refers to relationships between youth and adults. However, in this study, it appeared that the leaders themselves also perceived their co-leaders as external assets. The leaders talked about how they learned, developed greater expertise, and gained more confidence as a program leader through their relationships with other leaders. Therefore, it appears that ensuring commitment from leaders and fostering a positive team environment can benefit the leaders which ultimately and indirectly impacts the youth participating in the program.

In addition, the results from this research highlight that although Petitpas et al. (2005) established independent program components for facilitating the psychosocial development of youth within a program, there can indeed be overlap between components, as although the leaders serve as external assets, they also played a large role in creating a psychologically safe environment (context) in how they structured the program, which reinforces the importance of having strong, supportive leaders who can develop quality relationships with youth within the context of a program.

The third component of the framework for planning youth sport programs that foster psychosocial development is internal assets. According to Petitpas and colleagues (2005), programs should “strive to teach important life skills in a systematic manner and contain clear strategies to foster generalizability of these skills to other domains” (p. 70). It is believed that

intentional teaching of life skills is critical in order for youth to manage various life situations (Schmid et al., 2012). Results from this study illustrate that the youth perceived the program to help facilitate participants' positive future orientation, helping the youth to develop a sense of identity, and also to develop life skills such as leadership, teamwork, and maturity. From the DAP, results showed a minor increase from beginning to end of the program on positive identity whereas, no change in positive values and social competencies. Although the YES 2.0 does not measure change over time, the results that showed high scores on Identity Exploration, Identity, Reflection, Goal Setting, Effort, and Prosocial Norms provide support for perceptions of life skill development uncovered in the interview data. As mentioned above, interpreting findings from the quantitative data should be cautioned as the youth were not focused or putting forth their best effort while completing the measures.

From the qualitative results, it was also perceived by the youth and leaders that GJWHF helped the youth learn how to work together and increase their leadership skills. This is consistent with past research (Bean & Forneris, submitted 2013; Howell, 2010). In Bean and Forneris' (2013) study which used a time-series analysis to understand how the GJWHF program curriculum adhered to the TPSR model, results indicated a significant increase in leadership from pre to post program.

Further, in both the interviews and the YES 2.0, the youth discussed that the program helped them develop physical activity skills. More specifically, during the interviews, the youth explained that the program helped them to try new activities that they had not tried in the past and that the support from the leaders helped them feel more confident about taking on this challenge. These results support the integration of PYD principles into physical activity programming (Mueller et al., 2010; Weiss & Wiese-Bjornstal, 2009).

In addition to the intentional teaching of life skills, Petitpas et al. (2005) discussed the importance of programs facilitating a sense of identity. Within GJWHF, both the quantitative and qualitative results indicated that the program helped to foster a sense of identity. More specifically, in the qualitative interviews the youth discussed how the program helped them to think about who they are and/or who they want to be. Identity formation was also supported by the results from the YES 2.0 in that the youth scored high on both identity exploration and identity reflection and the DAP which indicated a slight increase in the mean of positive identity from pre-program to post-program. Furthermore, related to identity, the youth discussed in the interviews how participating in GJWHF helped them to think more positively about their future. Recent research has found that hope or a positive future orientation was a stronger predictor of positive PYD trajectories compared to other self-regulatory skills (e.g., problem solving and goal setting) (Schmid et al., 2012).

The fourth and final component of Petitpas and colleagues' (2005) framework is conducting research and evaluation of PYD programs. Such an evaluation should have the ability to provide evidence-based and strategic program planning for the organization in the future (Petitpas et al., 2005). This notion is seconded by authors who argue that evaluation of a program is just as important as the actual implementation of a program (Catalano et al., 2002; Salmon et al., 2007). When discussing research and evaluation, Petitpas et al. (2005) suggested that both quantitative and qualitative methods are of value which was the approach used in this research.

However, as mentioned above, difficulties were experienced with the youth completing the self-report quantitative measures. Previous research has shown that self-report measures are not perfect as respondents may inaccurately recall events or be affected by social desirability or emotions (Schwarz, 1999; Stone et al., 2000). In addition, a limitation of using the YES 2.0 is

that it is designed as a post-measure only which does not allow researchers to measure the impact of the program on actual change in PYD outcomes. Although previous research has used the various forms of the YES (including YES, YES 2.0 and YES-S) at only one time-point (Hansen & Larson, 2005; Hansen et al., 2003; McDonald, 2010; McDonald, Coté, Eys, & Deakin, 2012), it is recommended that researchers utilize the YES measures at multiple time points throughout the program (e.g., mid and end of program) to gauge a change in youth's perception of experience over the course of the program. However, regardless of these limitations, it has been argued that youth self-report measures are still valuable sources of information particularly in relation to their own development (Hansen et al., 2003).

Although this study indicates that the GJWHF was perceived as having a positive impact on the development of the female youth participants it is not without its limitations. First, although the data collected were from all of the youth who consistently participated in the program, the sample size was small which makes it difficult to generalize the results. Second, as often the case in program evaluation the data were based on self-report through the questionnaires and the interviews and therefore the results are based on perceptions as opposed to observational data. As with any study in which the researcher is involved in program implementation, there is a potential for reactivity by both the participants and leaders. However, since the lead researcher was involved constantly over the course of the program this was not something that was seen as a big concern. Finally, an issue that takes place particularly in the field of PYD that no one really talks about is the issue that youth do not take the questionnaires seriously. From the first author's observations during the completion of these measures, the youth did not seem focused and often complained about filling them out. Therefore, we do not believe the results of the quantitative measures reflect what was actually going on in the

program. In contrast, youth were willing to talk and provide lots of examples during the interviews with regards to their experiences in the program. What they conveyed in the interviews was consistent with observations in the program.

Future research should further investigate the link between processes and outcomes within PYD programming. Moreover, as mentioned above, studies should utilize the YES 2.0 measure at multiple time points over the course of the program to better measure youth's perceptions of PYD outcomes. Finally, based on the methodological lessons learned, when conducting questionnaires with at-risk youth participants, it would be beneficial to use a different medium of conveying the questions within the measures, either online or orally during an interview, as it can be a challenge to have at-risk youth complete questionnaires accurately.

Conclusion

Findings from the first year evaluation of the GJWHF program provides initial data-based evidence that the program is having a positive impact on facilitating positive developmental outcomes for youth participants. It appears that developing programs that support Petitpas et al.'s (2005) framework for youth programs by providing a positive context that helps youth feel comfortable and find a valued role, incorporating strong leaders who develop trusting and caring relationships with the youth, and actively integrating activities that foster internal assets into program sessions are keys to providing effective programs for enhancing PYD. Moreover, due to the limited evaluation research for community-based interventions that use a physical activity context for promoting the positive development of youth, this study provides a foundation for future research.

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Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations for the DAP and YES 2.0

Scale	Pre-Program		Post-Program	
	M	SD	M	SD
DAP				
Positive Values	3.28	.29	3.16	.71
Positive Identity	2.96	.55	3.04	.58
Social Competencies	3.28	.32	3.17	.50
YES 2.0				
Identity Exploration			3.33	0.47
Identity Reflection			3.06	0.79
Goal Setting			3.15	0.69
Effort			3.14	0.62
Problem Solving			2.76	0.79
Time Management			2.78	0.60
Emotional Regulation			2.93	0.68
Diverse Peer Relationships			3.00	0.70
Prosocial Norms			3.32	0.88
Linkages to Community			3.14	0.56
Physical Skills			3.60	0.95

Note: DAP –1-Not At All/Rarely, 2-Somewhat/Sometimes, 3-Very/Often, 4-Extremely/Almost Always;
 YES 2.0 - 1- Not At All, 2- A Little, 3 – Quite a Bit, 4- Yes, Definitely

General Discussion & Conclusion

The general objective of this research project was to evaluate the GJWHF program. Taking into account the amount of data collected during this one year evaluation, data were presented in the format of three articles. The first article consisted of a process evaluation which investigated the successes and challenges of the first year of program implementation. Results from this evaluation found that the program was successful in using activities to facilitate relational time, using a youth-driven approach to increase initiative and leadership, having a variety of physical activities to engage youth, and having communicative program leaders who supported one another. Conversely, the program struggled with difficulties related to the facility and transportation, behavioural management, and had some activities that were perceived as being too much like school. From this, practical recommendations for community programmers and future directions for the program were discussed. The second article examined how well the implementation of the GJWHF program adhered to the TPSR model and whether this adherence had any impact on PYD outcomes. A time series analysis was conducted to understand relationships between the five levels of responsibility and the GJWHF program curriculum. The results showed that participants' self-ratings of the five TPSR levels varied based on type of life skill and physical activity of each program session, but overall showed a gradual upward trend, including a significant difference on the youths' ratings from the start to the end of the program for leadership. Finally, a program evaluation was presented which attempted bridge the gap between process and outcome evaluations with aim to understand the perceived impact of GJWHF on female youth participants and program leaders. This evaluation used a mixed-methods approach and the results indicated that the program was successful in providing a positive and supportive female-only environment for youth that fostered the development of trust

and friendships, positive leader support, and facilitated the development of a variety of life skills. The following discussion integrates the results of these three articles and includes practical applications from these findings.

The results from the third article indicated that the GJWHF program is structured in an appropriate way as it relates to Petitpas et al.'s (2005) framework for planning youth sport programs that foster psychosocial development. This framework recognizes four critical components a program should integrate in order to foster psychosocial development for youth: 1) context; 2) external assets; 3) internal assets; and 4) research and evaluation. The overall structure of the program, including the youth-driven aspect and the TPSR model structure impacted the overall outcomes that were indicated by both the youth and the leaders and provided an environment to foster psychosocial development. These results were further supported by the process evaluation. With regards to providing an appropriate program context, the youth thoroughly enjoyed the girls-only environment which was requested in the pilot study for this research (Forneris, Bean, Snowden, & Fortier, in press). The youth expressed that the all-girls environment helped them feel more comfortable and enabled them to be themselves. In addition, the youth discussed feeling that the leaders created a trusting and caring environment and effectively used activities to facilitate relational time.

In line with this, previous PYD literature has indicated the importance of positive social relationships and their influence and overall impact on development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Particularly, building positive and supportive relationships with adults (external assets) outside of one's family and fostering a sense of belonging are critical aspects that impact developmental outcomes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Gould, Flett, & Lauer, 2012; Petitpas et al., 2005). Therefore, within program development and implementation, programmers should

deliberately incorporate this as part of the program structure, including specific staff training, as providing a caring climate that allows for positive adult–youth relationships are associated with positive outcomes (Catalano et al., 2004; Gould & Carson, 2010; Gould et al., 2012; Ullrich-French & McDonough, 2013). In this study, the process and outcome evaluations indicated that the leaders of GJWHF were supportive and challenged the youth in a developmentally appropriate manner. In addition, they provided support for one another, meaning that not only were the leaders a support system for the youth, but also for the program leaders. The leaders expressed how having a strong and supportive network of staff helped to provide an enjoyable environment in which they could count on and learn from each other. As discussed by Ullrich-French and McDonough (2013) “interpersonal relationships at the mesosystem level play a pivotal role in person–context interactions, and therefore in outcomes related to youth functioning by fostering motivational, achievement, developmental, and well-being outcomes” (p. 280).

Examining the successes and challenges of implementing GJWHF for the first year helped gain insight into what activities or program sessions went well and not so well. Through the qualitative interviews with the youth and results from the TPSR time series analysis, it is evident that sessions that led to lower ratings on the various TPSR levels involved activities that the youth did not enjoy (e.g. yoga). Although in the GJWHF program, the youth were provided voice and made decisions with regards to which type of activities they wanted to try, these results highlight the importance of observing the sessions and being flexible enough to adapt program sessions to ensure the youth are engaged and enjoying the activities being implemented. Therefore, it is recommended that leaders involved in youth programming make adaptations to program session plans when necessary based on the reactions and feedback from the youth. This

recommendation is also supported by past research (Nakkash et al., 2012; Ward & Parker, 2012) that has expressed that when planning and implementing a program, a pre-planned structure of the program is needed but should act as a tentative framework, as the need for fluidity and adaptability is crucial when working with adolescents, particularly if the program is youth-driven (Nakkash et al., 2012).

Process evaluations help researchers and programmers understand why a program was or was not successful, and what components aided or inhibited this result (Bartholomew, Parcel, Kok, & Gottlieb, 2001; Linnan & Steckler, 2002). In addition to the general process evaluation in article 1, the TPSR time series analysis aided in better understanding the sessions that went well and that could be improved or changed for future years of implementation in relation to the different TPSR levels of responsibility. More specifically, it was observed that the sessions that allowed for greater leadership roles with increased responsibility were those that led to increased ratings on the levels of responsibility, whereas the sessions in which the ratings were low or there was a greater discrepancy between the leader ratings and the youth ratings were often sessions in which the youth did not enjoy the activities. This highlights the importance of incorporating activities that provide leadership opportunities regularly throughout the program that keep the youth engaged.

Year Two Implementation

The leaders and programmers learned from the implementation and evaluations of the first year of GJWHF. From this, they have incorporated various lessons learned into the second year of the GJWHF program that started in September 2012. First, the program has now integrated a follow-up component on the element of transfer. At the end of the session when the youth complete their self-evaluation, the leader asks for specific examples of how the youth

believe they can transfer the life skill of focus into their daily life. Further, the program has additionally provided an opportunity for youth participants to become involved in their community and transfer the skills learned within the program into their community. Moreover, for the second year of the program, the youth have been given a number in which they write on all of their measures (pre-post, self-evaluations, etc.) so that individual differences can be measured throughout the program and individualized outcomes can be explored in future research. The leaders are responsible for their small group of youth (4-5 youth per group) and are responsible for rating these youth individually at the end of every session on the 4 levels of TPSR (self-control, effort, self-coaching, leadership) instead of rating the overall group, which will further help to monitor individual differences throughout program involvement and participation.

Such practical applications are the result of properly documenting the program process and attaining feedback from both youth participants and leaders over the past year. This further highlights the importance of obtaining feedback and providing the youth voice over the course of the program to best meet the needs of the participants (Health Canada, 2001; Motivate Canada, 2010; Rail, 2009).

Armour, Sanford, and Duncombe (2012) stated that any positive impact seen immediately after short-term PYD interventions is likely to be tentative and short-lived, particularly when participants have considerable personal problems or issues. This speaks to the importance of having a long-term program that is offered each year and is an integrated program within the Boys and Girls Club. This was an initial goal created collaboratively by the organization programmers and researchers and is a key element that is currently in the works.

Limitations

As with any research, the present research had limitations. First, as mentioned previously, the sample size was very small which makes it difficult to detect statistical significance and generalize the results to other similar programs. Second, as often the case in program evaluation, the data were based on self-report through the questionnaires and the interviews; therefore results are based on youth and leader perceptions. However, feedback from the leaders was recorded through the program leaders' logbook which was based on observations and outcomes of each program session. Furthermore, with any program evaluation, there is potential for reactivity and the potential to influence overall behaviour change. As outlined in article two and three, there was non-significance in much of the quantitative measures including the PSRQ and DAP. It is believed that these results may be, in part, due to the youth's lack of focus and motivation to complete these measures seriously as in their interviews they talked at length about the positive impact of the program and provided specific examples of such impact. Further, as the YES 2.0 questionnaire is a post-only measure, there was no baseline to measure from. Finally, there are certain biases of being program leader within the program and an author within the field of research even though it is common practice within the field of PYD programming (Coulson, Irwin, & Wright, 2012; Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Ward & Parker, 2012). However, much was done to attempt to maximize objectivity when conducting analyzing the data. Specifically, prior to data collection, the lead researcher conducted a bracketing interview related to PYD and youth programming, as well as using an independent auditor for analysis, and attaining perspectives of multiple leaders and participants.

Future Research

Based on the research and its limitations, the following are suggestions for future research. First, as this study was the first within the PYD field to use time series analysis, future

research should further investigate the five levels of TPSR (or other program frameworks) with program curriculums, and further look at the influence of attendance levels and age on these five levels to further understand program impact. Second, a comparative study between participants within the GJWHF program and a control group of individuals who did not participate in the program would be beneficial in understanding the impact of program participation. This data was collected within this study, yet due to the large amount of data collected and the small number of youth in the control group, the data was not included in this manuscript and will be analyzed separately. Finally, as a predominant element of life skill development is the effort to transfer such skills to other domains, such as one's school, home, or community (Gould & Carson, 2008; Petitpas et al., 2005), future research should examine the transference of life skills developed within programs to these other domains. For example, within the second year of GJWHF program, youth have been provided with opportunities to volunteer within their community where they could use a variety of skills they have gained from the program. This would not only provide an opportunity for youth to continue to use the skills they have developed within the program in their everyday lives (Martinek, Schilling, & Johnson, 2001), but also provide an opportunity for researchers to directly measure this transfer. Further, longitudinal studies would be beneficial for this type of research (Holt & Jones, 2008).

A void within the PYD literature is the link between process and outcome evaluations. As Saunders, Evans, and Joshi (2005) stated, results of process evaluations can aid in identifying associations between particular program elements and program outcomes. This research study attempted to make an initial step in filling this gap by investigating the results of the five levels of responsibility within the TPSR model: self-control, effort, self-coaching, leadership, and transfer. Further, this study used Petitpas et al.'s (2005) framework for planning youth sport

programs to promote psychosocial development to begin to understand the associations between program processes and outcomes of participants. Future research should continue to investigate these relationships. More specifically, it would be beneficial to understand if and how the five levels of responsibility with the TPSR model help to predict PYD outcomes.

Overall, this research indicated that the GJWHF program is perceived as fostering the development of the female youth participants, including the five levels of responsibility outlined in the TPSR model. Most likely, this overall finding is due to the fact that the GJWHF appears to meet the guidelines of Petitpas et al.'s (2005) framework for sport programs designed to foster psychosocial development. Therefore, it is recommended that program developers ensure that youth programs create a positive and safe context that involves caring and supportive leaders who take the time to teach various life skills. Moreover, it is important that such programs incorporate evaluation, as this research did, to be able to learn of the successes and challenges and incorporate such findings to ensure the quality of youth programs continue to improve. It is only through such steps that we will continue to provide youth the opportunities they need to thrive.

Statement of Contribution

I, Corliss Bean, was responsible for gathering and analyzing the majority of the data used in this study. An external researcher independent of the GJWHF program was responsible for conducting and transcribing the leader interviews to the potential for social desirability. Furthermore, I was responsible for writing the above three articles as part of my master's thesis. Dr. Tanya Forneris reviewed all three articles on numerous occasions throughout the writing process and provided feedback; however, Dr. Forneris' contribution was strictly at an organizational and conceptual level.

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Appendix A: Parental Consent Form

Title of Project: “Working with youth for youth: The development, implementation and evaluation of a youth driven sport and recreation-based life skills program for female youth”.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study is to work with female youth to develop a recreation and life skills program and then to provide this program for female youth in Ottawa. In addition, this research project will evaluate the effect of the program.

Participation: If you provide consent for your child to participate in this research project, she will be invited to participate in the recreation and life skills program that will take place at the Boys and Girls Club. The program that your child will participate in will start either in the Fall of 2011 or the Fall of 2012. There are only 20 spots in the program and so to ensure that as many female youth as possible can participate and to evaluate the program well we will have two programs (one each year). Your child may sign up at the Boys and Girls Club for the program once this form is completed and the registration will be first come/first serve. More specifically, this program will introduce female youth to different physical activities (e.g., dance, soccer, yoga) and life skills (setting goals, communication, teamwork, leadership). To evaluate the program your child will be asked to complete a survey that will take approximately 20 minutes to complete on four occasions (Fall 2011, Spring 2012, Fall 2012, Spring 2013). In addition, after your child has completed the program she will be asked to participate in an interview (20-30 minutes) to talk about her experiences in the program. All of the surveys and the interviews will be done at the Boys and Girls Club and the interviews will be audio-taped (without names). However, if you prefer not to have the interview recorded, handwritten notes will be taken.

Risks: I do not anticipate any negative effects during or following participation in this project.

Benefits: The participation of your child in this project will allow your child to be active, learn about different ways to be active and develop life skills that could help them succeed in the future. Furthermore, there are a number of opportunities in this research for your child to express his or her own thoughts and views related to the program which can help in improving how programs for female youth are developed and implemented into the community.

Confidentiality and Anonymity: The anonymity of your child will be protected. Apart from the consent form and the assent form completed by your child, the name of your child will not be written on any documents. This consent form and your child’s assent form will be placed in a locked filing cabinet within a locked office and filed separately from the interviews. Also, the audio-recordings of the interviews will be placed in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office. At the end of the project the data will be kept secure for a period of five years, after which all of the data will be destroyed.

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Recording Procedures: The interviews will be recorded using a digital voice recorder. No identifying information (e.g., name) will be recorded. However, if you prefer not to have the interview recorded, handwritten notes will be taken.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal: The participation of your child is completely voluntary. She may withdraw from the project at any time without penalty. Also, your decision to allow your child to participate or not will not impact his or her access to the Boys and Girls Club in any way.

For any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this project, you can contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa, 550 rue Cumberland, Room 159, Ottawa, ON, K1N 6N5, (613) 562-5841 or ethics@uottawa.ca

Consent:

I have read this consent form and I understand the procedures of this research project. Also, I understand that the participation of my child is completely voluntary and she may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. My signature indicates my consent for my child to participate.

- I permit my child to participate in this project
- I permit my child to participate in this project but do not permit the interview to be audio-taped.

Name of Child (Please Print)

Name of Parent (Please Print)

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Signature of Second Parent/Guardian (if applicable)



Université d'Ottawa • University of Ottawa

Faculté des sciences de la santé
École des sciences de l'activité physique

Faculty of Health Sciences
School of Human Kinetics

Appendix B: PARTICIPANT ASSENT FORM

TITLE: Working with youth for youth: The development, implementation and evaluation of a youth driven sport and recreation-based life skills program for female youth”

This form may have some words that you do not know. Please ask the researcher or your leaders to explain any words that you do not know.

What is this study about?

The purpose of this research is to understand your experiences of participation in the Girls Just Wanna Have Fun program.

What happens to me if I choose to be in this study?

If you are in this study you will be invited to participate in an individual interview. The interview will take about 30-45 minutes to complete and will be recorded.

You do not have to answer any question you do not want to answer and you can stop the questionnaire or interview at any time.

Will you tell anyone what I say?

We will not tell anyone the answers you give us. We will not share your answers with your parents, teachers, friends, or anyone else. Also, when discussing or writing about this research, we will never use your name.

Consent:

I have read this form and I understand the information about this study. I am willing to be in this study.

Youth name printed	Youth signature	Date
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Signature of person conducting informed consent	Date
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Appendix C: Survey Monkey Leader Logbook

Survey Monkey Leader Logbook

1. Name
2. Date
3. How many youth participated in the program today?
4. What life skill did the session focus on today?
5. Were the life skills activities successful? Why or why not?
6. What physical activity or sport did this session incorporate?
7. Were the sport/PA activities fun and successful? Why or why not?
8. Overall, did the session go as planned? If no, explain.'
9. Overall, what went well in the session?'
10. Overall, what challenges did you face and what could be improved?
11. Overall how would you rate the group today on...
 - a. Self-Control
 - b. Effort
 - c. Self-Coaching
 - d. Leadership
12. Any other observations, important points?

Note: Question 11 measured on a 4-point Likert scale (Needs Work to Great).

Appendix D: Participant Interview Guide

GJWHF Participant Interview Guide

- A. Introduction, overview of purpose of interview, assurance of confidentiality
- B. Demographic Information
 - Age, gender, year of school, length of membership in BGC
- C. Interview Questions
 1. Tell me a little bit about the program you just participated in.
 2. What did you learn in the program?
 3. Was the program a positive experience, a negative experience, or a little of both? Explain.
 4. What did you like about the program?
 5. Was there anything you did not like about the program?
 6. How do you feel differently from participating in the program?
 - i. Health
 - ii. Relationships
 - iii. Family
 - iv. Friends
 7. Do you feel any differently from participating in the program? Has the program helped you develop different skills (not physical activity skills)?
 8. Did this program make you think differently about yourself or your future? In what ways?
 9. What aspect did you like best about the program? Why?
 - a. What were your three biggest highlights or favourite parts of GJWHF?
 10. Which physical activities did you like best?
 11. Have you done more physical activity now that you have participated in the program? In what ways? Give examples.
 12. What was your experience like working with the program leaders?
 - a. How did you find the leaders?
 - i. Supportive, etc.

13. Did you see changes in other girls who participated in the program?
(positive/negative)
14. Does this program help youth better express themselves - to give youth a voice? In what ways?
15. Was this program a positive thing for girls? Why or why not?
16. What do you believe has impacted you the most during this program?
17. What did you learn by being involved in the program? Give Examples.
18. What skills have you learned in the program?
19. Do you plan to use the skills you've learned in the program in any areas of your life (school, home, with friends?)
 - a. How do you think that skill will help you at school?
 - b. At home?
 - c. With friends
 - d. At work?
 - e. Can you give me some examples?
20. If you have not transferred the skill, for what reasons have you not used the skills you have learned outside of the program?
21. Is there anything you hoped would have happened in or after the program that did not happen?
22. What do you think would make the program better?
23. Given what we have discussed today is there anything else you would like to say?

Prompting Questions:

1. Can you tell me a little bit more about that?
2. Can you give me an example of what you mean?
3. Are there other ideas you have?
4. That is really interesting, can you tell me more about that?

Appendix E: GJWHF Program Leader Interview Guide

- A. Introduction, review of purpose of interview, assurance of confidentiality
- B. Demographics – Age, gender, etc...
- C. Interview Questions
 - 1. Overall what was your experience of being a leader of GJWHF?
 - 2. How was the GJWHF program perceived by the participants?
 - 3. In your opinion, what successes did you experience related to implementing the GJWHF program?
 - 4. In your opinion, what difficulties did you experience related to implementing the GJWHF program?
 - 5. What strategies did you use to keep the youth engaged in GJWHF? Which strategies were the most effective?
 - 6. Do you believe the GJWHF program had an effect on the participants? In what ways? Examples.
 - 7. Have you been impacted by this project and being a GJWHF leader? How?
 - 8. Do you think this is a program that should be continued at the BGC? For what reasons?
 - 9. Is there anything you hoped would have happened in this program that did not happen?
 - 10. What suggestions do you have for improving the GJWHF program club?
 - 11. Given what we have discussed today is there anything else you would like to say?

Appendix F: Personal and Social Responsibility Questionnaire

Instructions: Read each of the following statements and circle the number that best represents you!

Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
-----------------------------------	------------------------------	-----------------	--------------	---------------------------	--------------------------------

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

1. I respect others
2. I respect my program leaders
3. I help others
4. I encourage others
5. I am kind to others
6. I control my temper
7. I am helpful to others
8. I participate in all of the activities
9. I try hard
10. I set goals for myself
11. I try hard even if I do not like the activity
12. I want to improve
13. I give a good effort
14. I do not make any goals

Note: All questions are measured on the 6-point Likert scale above.

Appendix G: Participant Weekly Self-Evaluations

Participant Self-Evaluation

Date: _____

Please rate yourself based on this session’s participation on the following five elements:

Skill	Needs Work	Okay	Good	Great
Self-Control				
Effort				
Self-Coaching				
Leadership				
Transfer (of skills to other areas of my life)				

Appendix H: Developmental Asset Profile

My Strengths- The Developmental Asset Profile

Instructions: Read each of the following statements and circle the number that best represents you!

1	2	3	4
Not At All or Rarely	Somewhat or Sometimes	Very or Often	Extremely or Almost Always

I.....

1. Stand up for what I believe in
2. Feel in control of my life and future
3. Feel good about myself
4. Avoid things that are dangerous or unhealthy
5. Build friendships with other people
6. Stay away from smoking, alcohol and other drugs
7. Express my feelings in proper ways
8. Feel good about my future
9. Deal with frustration in positive ways
10. Overcome challenges in positive ways
11. Plan ahead and make good choices
12. Resist bad influences
13. Resolve conflicts without anyone getting hurt
14. Take responsibility for what I do
15. Tell the truth even when it is not easy
16. Accept people who are different from me
17. Have a sense of purpose in my life
18. Help make my community a better place

- 19. Have good health habits
- 20. Want to help others
- 21. Try to help solve social problems
- 22. Have respect for other people
- 23. Sensitive to the needs of others
- 24. Help others in my community

Note: All questions are measured on the 4-point Likert scale above.

Appendix I: Modified Youth Experience Survey 2.0

The Youth Experiences Survey (YES) 2.0- GIRLS JUST WANNA HAVE FUN

Based on your current involvement please rate whether you have had the following experiences in the Girls Just Wanna Have Fun program.

Age: ____.
 Gender: _____.
 Race/Ethnicity (Check all that apply)
 White
 Black/African American
 Asian
 American Indian
 Hispanic/Latino
 Other _____.

Your Experiences In.....			
[Activity]			
Not At All	A Little	Quite a Bit	Yes, Definitely
1	2	3	4

IDENTITY EXPERIENCES

Identity Exploration					
1. Tried doing new things		1	2	3	4
2. Tried a new way of acting around people		1	2	3	4
3. I do things here I don't get to do anywhere else		1	2	3	4

Identity Reflection					
4. Started thinking more about my future because of this activity		1	2	3	4
5. This activity got me thinking about who I am		1	2	3	4
6. This activity has been a positive turning point in my life		1	2	3	4

INITIATIVE EXPERIENCES

Goal Setting					
7. I set goals for myself in this activity		1	2	3	4
8. Learned to find ways to achieve my goals		1	2	3	4
9. Learned to consider possible obstacles when making plans		1	2	3	4

Effort					
10. I put all my energy into this activity		1	2	3	4
11. Learned to push myself		1	2	3	4
12. Learned to focus my attention		1	2	3	4

Problem Solving					
13. Observed how others solved problems and learned from them		1	2	3	4
14. Learned about developing plans for solving a problem		1	2	3	4
15. Used my imagination to solve a problem		1	2	3	4

Time Management					
16. Learned about organizing time and not procrastinating (not putting things off)		1	2	3	4
17. Learned about setting priorities		1	2	3	4
18. Practiced self-discipline		1	2	3	4

BASIC SKILL

Emotional Regulation				
19.Learned about controlling my temper	1	2	3	4
20.Became better at dealing with fear and anxiety	1	2	3	4
21.Became better at handling stress	1	2	3	4
22.Learned that my emotions affect how I perform	1	2	3	4

Physical Skills				
23.Athletic or physical skills	1	2	3	4

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Diverse Peer Relationships				
24.Made friends with someone of the opposite gender	1	2	3	4
25.Learned I had a lot in common with people from different backgrounds	1	2	3	4
26.Got to know someone from a different ethnic group	1	2	3	4
27.Made friends with someone from a different social class (someone richer or poorer)	1	2	3	4

Prosocial Norms				
28.Learned about helping others	1	2	3	4
29.We discussed morals and values	1	2	3	4

Linkages to Community				
30.Got to know people in the community	1	2	3	4
31.Came to feel more supported by the community	1	2	3	4

How honest were you in filling out this survey?

Very honest Pretty honest Honest some of the time Honest once in a while Honest not at all
 4 3 2 1 0

1) **WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT GJWHF?**

2) **WHAT DIDN'T YOU LIKE ABOUT GJWHF?**

3) **WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE TO MAKE THE GJWHF EVEN BETTER?**