

ARE THEY GETTING THE MAIN IDEA?:  
A CASE STUDY OF CONSULTING TO AND EVALUATING A CAMP-BASED  
LEADERSHIP PROGRAM FOR LOW-INCOME ADOLESCENT FEMALES

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation relied on a case study format to document the process of consulting to the Main Idea summer camp organization, located in the Northeastern United States, in order to evaluate its Leadership Bunk, a program that aims to enhance low-income adolescent female participants' psychosocial development in the areas of leadership, resiliency, self-esteem, communication skills, teamwork and problem-solving abilities in ways that foster ongoing connection with the camp and that can generalize within and beyond the camp setting. In the dissertation the Leadership Bunk program is described while the five guiding program evaluation questions are delineated that examine: (a) whether the program is serving the population it believes itself to be serving, (b) whether the program's goals and objectives are being met, (c) what factors and program components may be associated with the changes documented for participants over time, (d) what improvements could be made to the program's design, and (e) what enhancements could be made for future similar program evaluation efforts. Then, relevant psychological literature is presented to provide theoretical grounding for the case study investigation and findings. A description is provided of the quantitative and qualitative consultation methods utilized to formulate and structure the program evaluation plan, including participant-observation, permanent product review, interviews, focus groups, surveys, and ratings scales along with the Resiliency Scale for Children & Adolescents, Self-Esteem Questionnaire and Assertiveness Scale. The program evaluation findings are then documented, indicating that the program is generally serving the target population that it is supposed to be serving and that participants are attaining stated program goals. In addition, the findings identify factors that may contribute to the changes observed and also offer recommendations for improvements and enhancements to the program's future design and evaluation. The dissertation concludes by addressing the

contributions of the project to the Main Idea summer camp organization, the psychological literature and the consultant's professional development.

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This dissertation is dedicated to all the past, present and future campers in the Maine woods. My childhood and adolescent camp experiences provided a foundation for my psychosocial development that without doubt made attaining my doctorate possible. My awe and learning continues, seeing the transformation that camp can foster for youth – and adults.

My gratitude is also with my dissertation chair, Charlie Maher, Psy.D., and committee member, Anita McLean, Psy.D.

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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

#### *Abstract*

This chapter introduces the dissertation: a case study based on a program evaluation consultation project for The Main Idea, a ten-day annual summer camp experience provided free of charge to low-income females from the Northeastern United States. Specifically, the consultation focuses on the process of evaluating the camp's "Leadership Bunk" program. Participation in this program is believed to enhance 12-14 year-old participants' leadership abilities, self-esteem, resiliency, communication skills, teamwork abilities and coping skills – all considered to be developmental protective factors. Though offered since 2001, the Leadership Bunk program has never been formally evaluated. Background on the program and the project are provided and the case study's guiding program evaluation questions are outlined.

#### *Introduction*

"One of the claims often made by those of us in the camping world is that by spending time at camp, children can significantly change their lives for the better. What we generally imply is that they become more responsible, more creative, more balanced, and more resilient in their ability to live their lives and that they learn to integrate values and beliefs that they may not have access to as clearly in the non-camp world. *It is clear that we provide an environment in which campers and counselors grow and change, but it may not be as easy to define how that change takes place or how we ensure that our environment will foster that change. [ital added by author]* Many of the situations that change our lives are the direct results of our interactions with a specific person or group of people who allow us to see both ourselves and the world in different ways. In moments of personal transformation, these people have a powerful impact on our perceptions – they believe in our capacity to be more than we are currently being,

and they expand our perception of what is possible in our own lives and in the world.” (Boffey & Overtree, 2002 as cited in the Main Idea Pre-Camp Booklet)

This quotation, taken from the counselor-training pamphlet used by the Main Idea in their “pre-camp” staff training exercises captures the essence of the motivation for this case study: an effort to apply a human services program planning and evaluation framework to understanding the complexities of the effects of a camp-based leadership program on a group of low-income adolescent female participants. The case study documents the process of using Maher’s (2000) program planning and evaluation framework to consult to staff at The Main Idea, a nonprofit organization that provides an annual 10-day overnight camp to low-income adolescent females from Northeastern United States urban areas and rural Maine. While the Main Idea program is recreational and not geared to be specifically therapeutic or educational, the program founders, current directors and other key stakeholders believe participation has a beneficial impact on campers’ psychosocial development. Before this project, the Main Idea and its sub-programs, such as the Leadership Bunk leadership development program, had never been formally evaluated. This program evaluation process is the focus of the exploratory research project.

The project’s consulting activities included developing an evaluation plan for The Main Idea’s “Leadership Bunk” program, implementing it, developing procedures to assure program evaluation processes become institutionalized within the organization and providing recommendations for future Leadership Bunk program implementation. As anticipated, the process of evaluating the program required framing the existing program in more formalized terms for consistency and clarity. The dissertation writer’s role as a participant-observer throughout the August 2008 summer camp session provided the opportunity to consult to the organization as a whole as well as the Leadership Bunk

program. The exploratory study focuses on an evaluation of the organization's leadership development program, with added feedback provided toward systemic issues within the camp organization that are relevant to the Main Idea's general camp initiatives.

This chapter introduces the reader to the Main Idea, its Leadership Bunk program, its participants and the dissertation project's objectives. Subsequent chapters will address this project's relevance to the adolescent developmental psychology literature, the project's methods and procedures, and the findings with regard to specific program evaluation questions and general feedback based on the consultation.

#### *What is the Main Idea?: Camp Program Background*

Camp Walden, located in Denmark, Maine, is a for profit overnight summer camp that for over 90 years has been providing girls from across the United States and around the world a home away from home, relationships, bonding and self-esteem enhancement – in addition to enjoyable indoor and outdoor activities for spending the summer. Due to its cost, the camp typically serves upper-middle to upper class, predominantly white females ages nine to 15. The camp owners' decades of experience with campers from more privileged backgrounds supported their belief in the ability of the camp environment and its inherent activities to positively impact female development and self-esteem. Thus, in 1968, the Camp Walden owners initiated the Main Idea, a program where low-income girls “who would not otherwise have the chance” could attend overnight camp on Camp Walden's grounds for ten days at summer's end free of charge. Main Idea was an effort to provide such an experience to “all girls,” regardless of their families' financial resources.

According to the program directors, the Main Idea camping program is not aimed to be therapeutic, or particularly educational; recreation is the goal. The directors specifically

state that the campers “come to be kids and not worry about taking care of other people...to have fun, learn new things and make friends where their families don’t have to worry financially,” yet there is agreement that the Main Idea camping program generally aims to foster campers’ self-confidence in effort to promote resiliency to the prevalent stressors and potential exposure to increased risky behaviors in campers’ home communities. Despite such objectives and anecdotally supported positive outcomes, The Main Idea has not conducted program evaluation procedures at any time in its history.

### *Main Idea Camper Backgrounds*

The Main Idea directors and board believe a uniting characteristic of Main Idea campers is that they are “girls who would not otherwise have the chance to attend summer camp.” The Main Idea campers are all female. Their ages range from nine to 15. Various cultural backgrounds are represented amongst the campers, including Latina, Black, White and Native American. The campers all reside within driving distance to the camp in Southern Maine and transportation to the camp is provided. Campers come from rural towns throughout the state of Maine as well as other Northeastern urban metropolitan areas like the greater Boston and New York regions. The Main Idea’s cultural diversity tends to be distributed along these rural-urban divides. More of the campers of color hail from urban areas, whereas the majority of girls from Maine are White, with a few Native American campers from the Northern areas of Maine. The campers are recruited by community social services agencies as well as by word of mouth from former campers and their families.

The Main Idea is a recreational – not therapeutic – camp. The program does not have the resources to manage campers who are unable to remain in good behavioral control throughout the summer session. This ability to maintain appropriate behavioral control (i.e.,

refrain from physically aggressive or other inappropriate behavior) as well as “low-income” socioeconomic status are the two main criteria for attending camp Main Idea.

Campers are considered “low-income” by their registration in the National School Lunch Program. This federal program provides funding to educational settings and residential child-care institutions for meals for children whose families are eligible based on household size and income. The 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk program participants’ families’ reported annual earnings ranged from \$13,200 to \$48,000.

Low income is considered to be correlated with a number of developmental risk factors (Bamaca et al., 2005). These relationships are further detailed in the next chapter. One of the guiding program evaluation questions of this case study is to understand whether, indeed, Main Idea campers are indeed “at-risk” due to their socioeconomic status and the limited exposure to opportunities such as camp attendance that their counterparts with greater financial resources might enjoy.

#### *“Leadership Bunk” Program Background*

While in the early days of the Main Idea campers typically attended the program for a single 10-day session, over time directors of the organization observed the value of participants returning repeatedly. Now, given appropriate behavior and interest in returning to camp, campers typically return for multiple summers, from when they begin until at age 12 their experience culminates by participating in the two-year “Leadership Bunk” program. This leadership development program of the Main Idea is the main focus of this program evaluation case study.

The organization’s key stakeholders maintain that recreation is Main Idea’s overarching goal, but in 2001 they formalized the more structured Leadership Bunk program.

Given the program's more formal status and potential to generate funding for the Main Idea based on its goals and objectives of enhancing campers' psychosocial development, the camp directors recommended this program as a focus for the dissertation project in the early stages of the writer's consultation with the Main Idea.

In addition to the typical camp events, Leadership Bunk participants, Main Idea's oldest campers (ages 12 to 14), engage in daily activities aimed to prepare them for future leadership positions as camp counselors and to engender skills that foster psychosocial development in a manner that is thought to generalize outside of their camp experience. Although the majority of campers' day-to-day activities are not altered in this program's efforts, it is believed that participation in this supplemental program enhances campers' self-esteem; improves their leadership, teamwork, communication and coping skills; and fosters resiliency against behavior that is detrimental to their optimal development (e.g., substance abuse, high school dropout, teenage pregnancy). At the outset of the consultation, the Main Idea directors stated their belief that Leadership Bunk participation results vary based on the individual, but the overall outcome is a camper with improved self-esteem, an enhanced self-concept as a leader, who is better able to assert herself and effectively resolve conflicts with others. A program evaluation is appropriate in order to assess whether participation in the Leadership Bunk program is associated with such hypothesized changes in campers' behaviors, abilities and self-concepts.

The existing Leadership Bunk program did not require a re-design of the program, but needed to be placed into an evaluable form that continues to resonate with participants and staff. This entailed operationalizing the program goals, procedures and outcomes in a measurable manner that can then be incorporated into standard program practices. The method of placing the program into an evaluable form is described in Chapter III. This

process is the basis of the consultation project, and typically involves program adjustments with the expectation that program implementation does not adhere firmly to design. The program evaluation process compares and contrasts what the clients believe they are doing with what is actually happening, based on qualitative and quantitative data. This research yields verification, validation and new understandings of existing efforts, as well as suggestions for improvements in future rounds of program implementation.

### *Leadership Bunk Program Goals*

The following program purpose was stated in the program description at the outset of this dissertation project: “The Leadership bunk is designed to help girls build self-esteem and gain leadership skills. They will do this by working with staff and their peers.”

The stated goals were:

1. “To learn to work together to complete a common task and reach a common goal
2. Learn to solve problems and resolve conflict without heated argument or violence
3. To use creativity to lead events for younger campers”

Additionally, camp stakeholders articulated that a desired tangible program outcome is for participants to advance to the next phase of the Main Idea program. This means either returning for the second year of the Leadership Bunk program or becoming “Junior Counselors.”

Further conversations with program developers and key stakeholders described more specifically psychosocially-oriented goals of the program. These include fostering participants’ self-confidence, assertiveness, effective communication skills; enhancing

campers' coping, teamwork and problem-solving skills and self-concept as leaders; and encouraging behaviors associated with success (e.g., attending college).

Program staff asserted their belief that enhancing these abilities in campers prevents participation in risky behavior. Staff think that Main Idea and Leadership Bunk attendance enables campers to “take care of themselves in healthy and constructive ways so they don’t resort to drugs” and to be able to function in families and their communities with their self-esteem in tact. They believe this program helps participants “use a voice and find a voice” and “know who to turn to and when to ask for help.”

The program’s initially stated goals required further adaptation to incorporate program director’s expected outcomes and to frame that in a manner conducive to measurement in ongoing program evaluation procedures. One task of the consultation project entailed attaining stakeholder buy-in once these goals were reframed as recreational, educational and psychological instead of solely recreational, as they were at first considered. The program evaluation process includes examining the program’s goals as they are currently stated, and using feedback from participants, staff, directors and the consultant to clarify the goals and formulate them as measurable entities that are then examined over time. The formalized objective and goal statements are presented in Chapter IV along with the results of an initial evaluation of whether the Leadership Bunk’s goals were met during the summer 2008 session.

#### *How Might They Get the Main Idea?: Possible Factors Associated with Positive Program Impact*

The Main Idea believes that the program’s objectives are achieved within the context of a positive relational experience. This includes campers’ participation in teambuilding activities that foster self-esteem and assertiveness, where they cope with challenges as a



group and overcome fear in new activities. Staff works to provide safety and emphasize success.

The camp staff also believes that providing a “safe environment” where “kids can be kids” leads to campers opening up and connecting with others. They believe that campers have positive relational experiences during the summer (e.g., asking for help, making connections) that make these skills “transferable” to when campers return home. They believe these skills provide a buffer for campers against engagement in risky behaviors (e.g., substance abuse, gang involvement) and result in greater success in life (e.g., completing high school, attending college). The camp directors and staff are describing what psychologists label a wellness promotion or competence enhancement programs in that they aim to enhance participants’ resiliency and bolster factors that are protective against engaging in risky behavior (Elias, 1987; Cowen, 1991). These and other psychological constructs relevant to understanding the potential processes at work in the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program are further elaborated in Chapter II.

The program activities include the general ones inherent in a camp setting where everyone is living and playing together (e.g., cleaning the bunk for “inspection,” canoeing), as well as experiences that imbue Leadership Bunk campers with an enhanced sense of responsibility and collaboration (e.g., planning evening activities, building trust and communication skills on the ropes course). The Leadership Bunk program developers aim for the “natural” achievement of the program’s stated goals by keeping program activities as true to typical camp happenings as possible. Much thought and effort goes into crafting a truly “camp” experience so the activities do not more strongly resemble “school or therapy.” Initial discussions with program staff about past program implementation indicated that the

activities in which the campers participate vary, but the program's theoretical foundation and goals remain the same.

### *Main Idea's Ideas about Difference*

Differences – with regard to culture, geography and socioeconomic status – are always important to consider in any psychological intervention or assessment. As such, the issue of cultural difference is also examined as part of this case study, noting how difference is currently addressed at the Main Idea as well as providing recommendations for addressing multiculturalism in the camp setting in future sessions.

During the initial consultations with Main Idea directors, the consultant broached the question of how the program addresses differences between participants (i.e., girls from rural vs. urban areas and various ethnic backgrounds). The directors responded that staff works to set a “tone” from the beginning that there are “no racial comments, no judging.” They stated that “bunk rules” even incorporate this notion that “here we’re all campers,” thus placing an emphasis on campers’ similarities, not their differences.

Upon probing, the stakeholders began to acknowledge potential implications of difference: groups do coalesce in the 10 days at camp, and some campers are even related or from the same neighborhood. They also offered that the implications of annual family income vary between places like Boston and rural Maine. Regardless of a given family's resources, some girls may bring more expensive belongings to camp like iPods and cell phones, whereas others present with little to nothing, relying on donated clothing and flashlights the Main Idea provides. The staff stated that campers do notice differences and comment, but asserted that this is addressed as part of the camp learning experience. They

suggested that encountering such diversity, including meeting staff from all around the world, may have an “eye-opening” positive impact on campers.

In Chapters IV, within the broader discussion of determining program improvements and enhancements and documenting general observations from the consultation process, this case study examines how the Main Idea addresses differences between campers and whether participants feel this is appropriate and useful.

### *Projects’ Benefits*

To the Main Idea organization.

Key program stakeholders (i.e., camp directors, board members) voiced the need for data that would point to program improvements, new ideas and resources – and help them take the program “to the next level.” This program evaluation provides quantitative and qualitative information with which to assess assumptions and beliefs about program outcome that were previously based on anecdotal experience. From the outset, program administrators also acknowledged the consultation project’s opportunity to provide the “metrics” needed to warrant funding resources in our current era of accountability which often relies on the demonstration of evidence-based practice, accomplished by monitoring interventions’ progress and outcome over time.

This consultant’s availability provided human and academic resources that were previously unavailable to the organization. Timing for this consultation project was appropriate for both humanitarian and pragmatic reasons related to the agency’s fundraising needs. The stakeholders were particularly invested in this project because Main Idea’s founder – who spearheaded major fundraising efforts – passed away a few years ago, followed shortly by her daughter’s sudden death in the spring of 2008. Thus, the current key

stakeholders continue to recalibrate their program fundraising activities. As such, Chapter IV includes suggestions for additional funding sources as well as data to include in future grant-seeking and fundraising marketing materials.

Stakeholders also stated their interest in identifying what impact the program has on campers' lives outside of and after camp, as well as what resources the program can provide to keep participants feeling connected to the Main Idea. As such, an additional aspect of the consultation project included designing a system for campers to keep in touch with each other and program staff in effort to provide a framework for sustaining connection and monitoring the impact of program participation over time.

The current program stakeholders hope and understand that this dissertation project heralds the beginning of an institutionalized, ongoing evaluation process. They are receptive and committed to the incorporation of program evaluation activities into their future procedures. One director stated, "its a great place to start for future years."

To the Leadership Bunk participants.

Optimally, Leadership Bunk campers' willingness to engage in this research project will result in an enhanced consolidation of their learning at camp by way of engaging in the added reflective exercises the program evaluation entails (van Linden & Fertman, 1998). The value of such reflection in leadership development is further explicated in Chapter II. Additionally, valuing the campers' feedback about the program, eliciting it and incorporating it into future iterations of the Leadership Bunk ideally serves as an empowering experience for the youth. They may also find benefit from a more enduring connection with the camp and each other through the system developed for keeping in touch (described in Chapter IV).

To the consultant.

As a Camp Walden camper during my adolescence, this project allowed me to apply my interest in consulting and program planning and evaluation to a program of personal interest. In addition to spending two glorious August weeks in Maine, as a consultant I also developed a deeper understanding of adolescent development and what interventions – including camp-based ones – are effective with this age group. Chapter V further addresses my reflections on this dissertation project’s contributions to my professional development as a psychologist. From here forward, I refer to myself as “the consultant.”

To the field of psychology.

This exploratory study of a camp-based wellness promotion program for low-income female adolescents provides the field of psychology with further understanding about each of these topics individually and in relationship to each other, based on qualitative and quantitative program evaluation pilot data. While a broad discussion about a range of psychological topics related to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk is presented in Chapter II, the existing literature offers scant empirical research about the use of recreational camp-based competence enhancement programs and such interventions’ impact on adolescent development. This case study worked to fill that gap.

Additionally, recent psychological literature calls for research on effective interventions that take into account cultural competence as well as evidence-based practice (Whaley & Davis, 2007). This dissertation project aims to address both of these important timely issues in the context of a formal program evaluation of the Main Idea’s Leadership Bunk.

*Program Evaluation Procedures*

The consultation model and program evaluation approach are detailed in Chapters III, but the general method includes answering the program evaluation questions stated below by synthesizing data collected at program baseline (pre-program), end of program (post-program) and at follow-up months later. The sources of information include the various people involved in the implementation of this program including camp directors, program staff and participants. This data is collected by methods including camper surveys and assessment measures, group discussions, staff interviews and ratings as well as the consultant's ongoing participant-observations. This exploratory case study yielded data and formalized procedures that inform ongoing and future phases of program implementation and evaluation.

*The Main Ideas of the Dissertation Project: Summary*

In essence, this case study documents the writer's consultation to the Main Idea camp using Maher's (2000) program planning and evaluation framework. While those previously involved with the Leadership Bunk program report positive outcomes – supported by previous informal evaluations in the form of post-program surveys – a formative plan for evaluation was not included in the existing Leadership Bunk program design. This consultation developed a formal program evaluation plan and implemented a portion of it, specifically that which was feasible in a yearlong period. The results, detailed in Chapter IV, provide thorough qualitative and quantitative feedback based on an examination of previous anecdotal claims about an existing program's effectiveness and an organizational interest in institutionalizing program evaluation procedures.

The case study addresses various aspects about the process of participating in the 2008 Main Idea program. Initially, the evaluation clarified whether assumptions about the entire target population of participants were true, with regard to risk, resiliency and other factors. The program's goals and objectives were distilled into a form that is measurable over time and a procedure was developed for the Main Idea to determine whether such goals and objectives were met in the 2008 implementation of the Leadership Bunk program. In effort to examine this, the case study explored key variables the program is thought to address such as self-esteem, leadership, resiliency, teamwork, communication and coping skills to assess for changes over time. The consultation also explored what activities and environmental factors may be associated with program outcomes. Program evaluation results provide data about the program's impact, and optimal structure and delivery. Additionally, newly developed and piloted procedures offered guidance to staff with regard to future program evaluation efforts as well as procuring funding and other resources.

#### *Program Evaluation Questions*

In sum, the dissertation, a case study of an exploratory research consultation project, answers the following program evaluation questions with regard to the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk program:

1. To what extent is the program serving the target population it claims to be serving?
2. To what extent did the program meet its stated objective and goals?
3. What factors may be associated with program outcomes?
4. How can the program design and implementation be improved and enhanced?
5. How can future program evaluation efforts be improved and enhanced?

The next chapter, Chapter II reviews the psychological literature relevant to the case study of evaluating a camp-based wellness enhancement program for low-income adolescent girls and to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk's core psychosocial constructs. Chapter III outlines the methods of investigation used to carry out the program evaluation. Chapter IV presents the results of the program evaluation and recommendations for the Main Idea and its Leadership Bunk program. Chapter V provides a conclusion to the dissertation case study project and addresses the project's contribution to the consultant's professional development.



## CHAPTER II

### Linking the Literature with the Main Idea Leadership Bunk

#### *Abstract*

This chapter documents a psychological literature review of the key topics relevant to the program evaluation case study of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program. Topics reviewed include the developmental stage of adolescence, specific issues of female development, risk and resiliency, relational theory and its applications to female adolescence, assertiveness, conflict resolution, teamwork and cooperation, self-esteem, implications of low socioeconomic status and cultural differences, youth leadership development activities, prevention and wellness promotion programs as well as the opportunities camp-based programs offer.

#### *Introduction*

Sound psychological practice includes surveying the literature in order to inform interventions. Such an endeavor provides terms and theories with which to ground the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program evaluation. This chapter documents a review of the existing psychological literature of the key topics current program directors have identified as relevant to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk camp program. The discussion addresses the developmental stage of adolescence, specific issues of female development, risk and resiliency, relational theory and its applications to female adolescence, assertiveness, conflict resolution, teamwork and cooperation, self-esteem, implications of low socioeconomic status and cultural differences, youth leadership development activities, prevention and wellness

promotion programs as well as the opportunities camp-based programs provide. For each topic, the meaning of the terms is defined and clarified from the Main Idea's point of view, then framed within the context of relevant psychological literature and empirical research.

As described in Chapter I, the consultation process will optimally provide the Main Idea with data with which they can continue to enhance their program design, delivery, evaluation and fundraising efforts. Additionally, this dissertation may add to the current knowledge in the psychology field by contributing to the existing literature, particularly with regard to recreational skill-building camping programs' role as wellness promotion and competence enhancement programs.

### *Adolescence*

All Main Idea Leadership Bunk participants, aged 13 to 14, are firmly within the developmental stage of adolescence. Adolescence marks another chapter of lifelong separation-individuation processes. The developmental tasks of adolescence include further separation and individuation from parents and developing a coherent and positive sense of self that can adaptively take the individual from childhood to adulthood (Gilligan, 1982). Individuation is defined as changes in an individual's relationship to oneself and the world (Levinson, 1978 as cited in Gilligan, 1982). The conflict during this process is between maintaining ties to central figures while also establishing autonomy (Wexler, 1991). Gilligan notes that relationships are an intrinsic aspect of the ongoing process of individuation throughout the lifecycle, particularly in times of transition such as adolescence. During adolescence, individuals further separate from and renegotiate relationships with their parents. Peer importance is increased, but does not replace school and family (Hanes, Rife & Laguna, 2005). Parents remain important in the lives of adolescents, but peers and friends

take over the role of primary sources of feedback about the self when individuals reach this separation-individuation milestone (Thorne & Michaelieu, 1996).

During the adolescent developmental stage, peer relationships change and the peer group's influence increases (Englund et al., 2000). Among other things, Thorne and Michaelieu's (1996) longitudinal study of memory content demonstrated this phenomenon. They found recollections of more memories of peers during adolescence and parents in childhood. Overnight camping experiences like the Main Idea aim to provide campers with an opportunity for independence and autonomy from the family within a safe network of peers, resonating with the developmental tasks of adolescence. This case study will provide Main Idea data to better understand the impact of participation on campers over time.

Wexler (1991) notes that self-absorption and preoccupation are common during adolescence, as individuals struggle to understand who they are; however, successful development into adulthood hinges on the ability to move beyond self-preoccupation into stable and full relationships with others. He notes how identification with peers helps adolescents buffer the loss of internal identifications with parents that often accompany the separation-individuation process. Without this peer relationship stopgap, adolescents struggle for a sense of cohesive identity – defined by Erikson (1968 as cited in Wexler, 1991) as “a sense of psychosocial well-being” (p. 34).

Another primary task of adolescence is to develop a positive, coherent sense of who one is and how she views the world (van Linden & Fertman, 1998; LeCroy, 2004).

According to van Linden and Fertman (1998), specific early adolescent (10-14 years old) needs include understanding physical and emotional changes related to puberty, self-acceptance, acceptance of and love by others (including significant adults), awareness of responsibility to others, decision-making skills, independent judgment and acceptance of

consequences of one's actions, ways to manage feelings and the start of a personal values system. Wexler (1991) notes how the adolescent's cohesive identity is fostered by a sense of comfort in one's body, a sense of direction in life and the inner confidence that one will be recognized and acknowledged by important others in one's life. These are all aspects the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program aims to foster in order to facilitate adolescent youth's identity development and relationship capabilities. They are also further addressed later in this chapter as multidimensional elements of self-esteem.

### *Risk in Adolescence*

Empirical research documents that adolescents' lives are currently more challenging than ever. This fact comes in tandem with increasing levels of at-risk behavior for adolescent populations – defined as activities youth engage in which increase the likelihood of adverse psychological, social and health consequences (Kazdin, 1993). This includes rising substance use, academic underachievement, school misbehavior, delinquency, criminal activity and problems associated with risky sexual behavior (LeCroy, 2005; van Fertman & Linden, 1998). Risky behavior is related to the commonly understood adolescent need to rebel; Wexler (1991) describes the age appropriate need to “affiliate intensely with others who rarely conform to what parents or other caretakers desire” (p. 38). While this is common to the developmental phase of adolescence and some element of rebellion must be tolerated, risky rebellious behaviors can have concerning long-term outcomes. Researchers identify specific adolescent risk factors, including economic deprivation, family difficulties, academic difficulty and association with delinquent adults or peers (Hanes, Rife & Laguna, 2005).

The Main Idea identifies at-risk adolescents by way of their socioeconomic status, believed to preclude them from the opportunities often more easily available to their better-resourced peers. Alongside the typical challenges of adolescents – such as opportunities to

engage in behavior like substance abuse, sexual activity and truancy – these girls are believed to face additional challenges of growing up with low-incomes, including fewer resources and increased strains on their families. Despite individual differences, adolescent youth are often united in the experience of giving up childhood roles and determining which roles to carry into adulthood (van Linden & Fertman, 1998). As not all low-income children are “at-risk,” and not all “at-risk” adolescents are of low socioeconomic status, one aim of this program evaluation case study is to determine whether such a label as “at-risk” is appropriate for the Main Idea Leadership Bunk participants.

### *Resilience in Adolescence*

From risk to resilience.

The psychological literature demonstrates a recent shift from a focus on risk to an emphasis on its counterpart, resilience. Current research – like this program evaluation case study – includes a more strengths-based orientation, examining factors that contribute to resilience in youth. A 2008 American Psychological Association Task Force Report on Risk and Strength in Black Children and Adolescents reflects the field’s interest and commitment to such reframed research and contrasts it with the previous common exclusive focus on risk factors and problematic outcomes for youth, particularly those of color.

### Definitions.

Resilience is commonly defined as “the ability to bounce back” and positively adapt in the face of adversity (p. 4, Prince-Embury, 2008a; Thorne & Kohut, 2007). Resilient children have also been described as “healthy children in unhealthy environments” (p. 406, Cowen, 1991). Resiliency is often linked with the concepts of risk and vulnerability (Prince-Embury, 2008b). It is commonly accepted that vulnerability, caused by the cumulative effects of numerous environmental and personal factors, is counter-balanced by resources,

resilience and protective factors. Resilience provides an explanation for why some children are able to overcome large obstacles, while others struggle to transcend difficult environments and early experiences (Prince-Embury, 2007).

Notions of hardiness, self-esteem, social skill, competence, optimism and absence of pathology pepper the vast – yet often vague – research about resiliency (Prince-Embury, 2007; Jordan, 2004c). Recent literature has demonstrated a shift to understanding resilience as an essential characteristic of normal youth development, not only relevant to at-risk populations or others in adverse circumstances, but as a factor that facilitates adaptation to the general events, conditions and processes that take place as one's life unfolds (Cowen, 1991). Resilient youth are capable of dealing with stress and pressure, coping with every day challenges, recovering from disappointments, adversity and trauma. They can develop clear and realistic goals, solve problems, relate comfortably with others and treat themselves and others with respect (Prince-Embury, 2007). These aspects all resonate with skills the Main Idea Leadership Bunk works to promote.

#### Resilience: trait or state?

Studies of resiliency help the field of psychology understand whether resiliency is a state or trait variable. Current research indicates that resilience is best explained by a biopsychosocial model which denotes various factors that influence each other (Prince-Embury, 2007). The model suggests that, in addition to innate biological factors, the environment can also influence a child's expression of resilient behavior. Some aspects of resilience might be better understood as a byproduct of experiences rather than a trait-like level of susceptibility to their impact (Weiss, 2008). While some factors associated with resiliency (e.g., temperament and intellectual abilities) are more innate and developmentally embedded, others can be taught (Prince-Embury, 2007). Good peer relations, positive

relationships with adults, communication and coping skills are examples of the resiliency factors that interventions like the Main Idea and environments like camp can influence. (Prince-Embury, 2008a; Prince-Embury, 2007). The Main Idea Leadership Bunk program's goals are in line with such efforts to facilitate resiliency through experiences in a protective environment.

#### Resiliency risk and protective factors.

Much of psychological research addresses resiliency through the lens of resiliency protective factors – those that help individuals and groups adapt to adversity – and are shown to protect individuals from risk. Identified resiliency protective factors include intellectual ability, easy temperament, autonomy, self-reliance, sociability, effective coping strategies and communication skills (Prince-Embury, 2008a).

Researchers have grouped resiliency protective factors into three main categories: individual qualities, family qualities and supportive systems outside of the family (Thorne & Kohut, 2007). The latter further supports the adolescent need for supportive non-family relationships such as those available within a camp setting. A full discussion of family protective factors is both outside the scope of this literature review as well as the program evaluation task at hand.

Prince-Embury (2007) has extensively researched resiliency in children and adolescents and developed an assessment measure, the Resiliency Scale for Children & Adolescents (RSCA), that taps three domains of an individuals' resilience: sense of mastery, sense of relatedness and emotional reactivity. Senses of mastery and relatedness have been identified as resiliency protective factors, whereas high levels of emotional reactivity constitute a youth resiliency risk factor. Yet, according to Prince-Embury (2007), resiliency risk and protective factors are not necessarily opposites, but rather in perpetual interaction.

Resiliency is understood as having sufficient personal resources to match one's level of emotional reactivity, while vulnerability is defined as having insignificant resources to outweigh one's emotional reactivity (Prince-Embury, 2008b).

The RSCA provides a way of quantifying the three main constructs of resiliency, and includes a numerical method of contrasting any discrepancy between individual's vulnerability (i.e., emotional reactivity) and resiliency (i.e., sense of mastery, sense of relatedness) – a discrepancy which is understood as the core of resiliency deficits, regardless of the varying manifestations of symptoms (Prince-Embury, 2007). This assessment measure is used in the program evaluation research and further described in the discussion of the methods in Chapter III, as well as in the results of the program evaluation in Chapter IV.

#### Promoting resilience.

The ability to regulate or manage emotional reactivity has been found to be a significant factor in fostering resiliency (Prince-Embury, 2007). While the Main Idea Leadership Program does not consider itself a therapeutic setting, aimed to target affect regulation skills in campers, its effort to improve conflict resolution skills without “heated arguments or violence” is in line with the notion of reducing emotional reactivity in participants. Its stated potential – and evaluated actual ability – to intervene effectively in this domain will be further addressed throughout the remainder of the chapter and program evaluation case study.

Various factors of resiliency are inter-related. Strength-based interventions can leverage skills from one domain of resiliency (e.g., sense of mastery) functioning into another domain (e.g., sense of relatedness) (Weiss, 2008). Many of the inter-related constructs the Main Idea aims to promote such as assertiveness, self-esteem and leadership fall under the larger umbrella of resiliency protective factors. Each construct is further elaborated and



applied to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program throughout the remainder of this chapter.

Recent literature documents the increasing recognition of the importance of focusing on resiliency when developing and evaluating mental health preventative and promotional programs (Weiss, 2008). This case study provides further research on resilience that can optimally inform the development of preventative interventions for under-resourced children and families (Cowen, 1991). This program evaluation works to address Weiss' (2008) call for research into what types of participants best benefit from resiliency programs by examining the actual baseline risk and resiliency levels of Leadership Bunk campers and then understanding what impact program participation has on these levels over time.

### *Female Adolescence*

In the 1970s, at the same time the Main Idea was in its early years of developing a camping program for low-income girls, feminist developmental psychologists began to address the gendered distinctions between male and female development and note that “one size does not fit all.” Many writers were reacting to theories based largely on the understandings of male development emphasizing separation that were not “fitting” observed trajectories of female development. What followed was a shift in understanding from women being seen as problematic and overly dependent to a new, nuanced model of normative female development.

One of the main themes of these distinctions was the different relationship between self and other. Whereas females' self-definition relies more heavily on their sense of affiliation – understood as a sense of relationship and connection to others – the male gender identity typically emphasizes separation and difference (Gilligan, 1982). This is thought to result from early childhood situations with caregivers (primarily mothers) where

girls are seen as more like their mothers that in turn strongly influence personality development from a young age. Early relational experiences provide girls with a basis for empathy built into their core definition of self in a way boys do not. In time, they see themselves as more continuous with and related to the external world than boys who tend to experience firmer ego boundaries. Gilligan notes how this means the issue of dependency is experienced differently in women than men.

The idea of women defined by attachment and men by separation is now understood as oversimplified, but at that time was introducing a new paradigm in reaction to theory based mainly the study of males. This research brought to light the importance of affiliation and the ability to maintain relationships as central in the female organization of self. We now understand that separation is more difficult for women. This means girls typically arrive at puberty – and its intrinsic emphasize on separation – with a different interpersonal orientation and previous experiences than male counterparts (Gilligan, 1982).

Perl (2008) summarizes feminist, intersubjective psychoanalytic theorists writing about adolescent development and how these theorists, like Gilligan, have challenged the traditional notion that adolescents progress from being attached to detached, substituting this with the idea that the development of autonomy comes within the context of ongoing relationships and other people. She and other like-minded writers suggest that adolescents do not need to detach from parents and other important figures in their lives, but rather look to these people to recognize and validate the adolescent's budding independence. This optimal process contributes to the development of a coherent sense of self and of enriched attachments to others, seeing oneself as a separate, yet in relationship. Perl avers that the vulnerabilities of female adolescence are exacerbated when girls are not offered a different choice than detachment and separation.

With this broadened theory, we can now incorporate an understanding of the role of healthy attachment throughout the adolescent process of separation-individuation when designing interventions for female adolescents. The Main Idea staff do this by aiming to validate campers' growing autonomy by offering a positive experience of affiliation and connection.

#### Vulnerabilities of female adolescence.

Research demonstrates that compared to boys, girls are faced with more and different biological and social challenges during adolescence (Benjet & Hernandez-Guzman, 2002). While both genders encounter puberty and physical changes, females additionally encounter earlier physical maturation than boys and physiological changes that are more obvious to the outside world. Added to this is that the timing of physical maturation typically coincides with the documented challenging transition to middle school. These combined challenges bring more risk factors to female teenagers (Nolen-Hoeksema & Girgus, 1994). Girls face additional unique struggles during the challenging developmental period of adolescence: they confront confusing physical and cognitive changes which they must address while negotiating their need for continuous relationships in their families, schools, peer groups and communities.

#### Loss of voice.

Gilligan (1982) coined the now popular notion that in adolescence, females “lose their voice” as girls begin to fear that both by speaking, and having a “voice,” she will either hurt someone else or not be heard at all. Brown and Gilligan (1992) elaborate, describing adolescence as a crossroads where girls bid farewell to childhood and embrace womanhood. Girls and women are notoriously concerned with the impact of their feelings and actions on others. Jordan (2004a) calls this “relational awareness” (p. 14). Of concern is that often

during adolescence, self-expression and awareness of one's own authentic feelings, thoughts, needs, and desires are lost in effort to protect others and maintain bonds out of fear that honest expression would disappoint others and break connections (Brown & Gilligan, 1992). A false or idealized pseudo-relationships and disconnection from one's own true thoughts and feelings may result and is often particularly salient in individuals with low baseline levels of self-worth. This can result in depression, eating disorders or a more generalized loss of vitality and authenticity. Teenaged girls thus need buffers for their self-esteem as well as help to understand that voicing one's own needs is not "selfish" (Gilligan, 1982). Encouraging girls to express their voice is a valuable preventative intervention during adolescence.

This is related to a core construct of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program: assertiveness and communication skills. Adolescent girls need help learning to see assertion as an act of communication, instead of one of aggression. This line gets blurred as girls make their way into adolescence. The Main Idea works to provide positive experiences of authentically connecting and communicating with others, in the face of disagreement, without irreparable ruptures in relationships.

In 1994, building on Gilligan's writing, Mary Pipher captured the experiences of adolescent girls in her bestselling book, *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*. In her case study descriptions, Pipher refers to the common decrease in self-confidence, assertiveness and importance of relationships she sees in female adolescents. Many of Pipher's writings provide support for the Main Idea Leadership Bunk intervention. She describes that in early adolescence, girls' resiliency and optimism decreases and they become less inclined to take risks: "They lose their assertive, energetic and 'tomboyish' personalities and become more deferential, self-critical and depressed" (p. 19); "they emerge from adolescence with a diminished sense of their worth as individuals" (p. 63). In a similar vein,

Jordan (2004b) writes about how assertiveness can be confused with or called “neediness” (p. 34) which makes it risky to demonstrate vulnerability or ask for support or help.

#### *Assertiveness at the Main Idea*

The Main Idea defines assertiveness as “knowing how, and not being afraid to, ask for help.” They add that assertiveness also means “having the skills to seek out help and standing up for yourself when necessary.” Differences in campers’ assertiveness can relate to their personality and leadership styles. Directors note that, for example, to some girls appropriate assertiveness means knowing when to lower rather than raise their voices, demonstrating recognition that one can use other methods to assert and express oneself effectively.

Assertiveness is shown to mediate resiliency in females and is associated with individuals who have higher social competency and personal efficacy levels (Taylor et al., 2002). In order to increase campers’ self-efficacy and influence their resiliency in positive directions, the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program incorporates assertiveness training that encourages individuals to seek and achieve their needs. The Main Idea also believes they can encourage campers to assert their voice by providing responsive figures in a responsive environment.

Taylor et al. (2002) describe their Social Competency Program, a relationally-oriented program that provides children a school-based, structured opportunity during the transition to middle school to learn relational skills, practice communication and address interpersonal issues. The vision of this program, like the Main Idea, is that children experience a sense of being part of a caring and cooperative community which is expected to decrease feelings of psychological distress, isolation and powerlessness as well as delinquent or violent acts while improving skills such as cooperation, assertion, empathy, self-control, problem-solving and

communication. Program developers believe the curriculum provides a context for youth to cultivate healthy relationships and find relational support with peers and adults. Program evaluation results focused mainly on the corollaries of increased assertiveness in female participants such as smoother transitions to middle school, increased interpersonal skills (e.g., introducing oneself, joining activities) as well as experiencing a greater sense of social competency and personal efficacy.

### *Relational Model*

A program such as the Main Idea Leadership Bunk aims to buffer female adolescents during their developmental crossroads and mitigate the vulnerabilities of female adolescence, such as falling levels of self-confidence and assertiveness by enhancing resiliency protective factors. While the components of effective interventions for female teenagers are discussed more broadly below, here the theoretical foundation for the Main Idea and its Leadership Bunk – the relational model – is outlined. The Main Idea relies on the relational model in effort to provide social-emotional learning, skills training and support to female campers.

Development of the relational model marks an evolution of psychology of women. This theory considers women's tendency to value relationships, affiliations and connection as a characteristic strength and a lifelong attribute. Individuation begins in infancy, progresses through childhood, and over time, further individuation, such as that typically occurring in adolescence, leads to mutuality and interdependence. An outlook previously labeled as pathological dependence is now reframed as a separate self in relation to others. Gilligan (1982) contrasts the relational tenet of "self and other, viewed as different but connected rather than as separate and opposed" (p. 147) with earlier classical psychoanalytic theory's exclusive emphasis on agency and competition. Despite Western culture's dominant emphasis on self-sufficiency and independence, relational theorists consider isolation a

fundamental component of all human suffering – male and female – and thus emphasize the importance of both healthy levels of agency and value the ability to relate to and depend on others (Jordan & Walker, 2004; Jordan, 2004c).

Jordan (2004c) uses the phrase “relational resilience” to describe a process Main Idea espouses: fostering meaningful mutually empowering and empathic relationships. This entails encouraging support, making vulnerability safe and enhancing relational competence and awareness. This involves recognition that relational skills can be both imparted and practiced (Jordan, 2004b).

#### *Female Adolescents’ Need for Relationships*

Relational theory states that the development of mutually growth-fostering relationships is crucial for healthy female psychological and social development (Taylor et al., 2002). Pipher (1994) describes how relationships are roots in the “storm” of female adolescence. Social support is documented to have a buffering effect against life stressors and to increase resiliency (Steese et al., 2006). Notably, perceived support is more important than actual support in terms of psychological wellbeing (Prince-Embury, 2007). Empirical evidence documents success in relationships as a source of stress relief and predicting positive outcomes such as social competence, social skill and positive self-esteem (Prince-Embury, 2007). Supportive, caring relationships with adults and peers are demonstrated to foster self-esteem in adolescents (Birndorf et al., 2005).

Pipher (1994) and other psychologists describe how growing up requires a village that many adolescents no longer have. Today’s society cannot rely on adolescents’ families alone to foster mental health. Tolan and Dodge (2005) address the prevalent misconceptions that mental health difficulties are a result of an individual’s character, a family’s adequacy – and are a random affliction, beyond anyone’s control. Rather, they suggest, other systems

(e.g., camp) can – and should – intervene and take as their role the fostering of youth mental health. Elias & Clabby (1992) agree, noting the parental “safety net is itself frayed and riddled with holes” (p. 6.). Authors note that adolescents need mentoring and relationships with women that are not adolescents’ mothers, teachers or therapists. The Main Idea camp staff aim to fulfill these needs. Such relationships are shown to be effective at buffering teens from risk (Pipher, 1994; Brown & Gilligan, 1992).

Additionally, because of the de-idealization of parents during this developmental phase, teens often turn to idealizing their peers or other role models in their lives (Wexler, 1991). Resilient children find both non-parental adults who can help and have a strong ability to make and keep a few good friends (Prince-Embury, 2007). This might not mean being part of the popular crowd, but having friends who remain from youth through adulthood. The Main Idea Leadership Bunk program aims to foster resiliency by way of campers’ supportive relationships with each other and staff. Program staff hope that campers have positive relational experiences at camp which they take away as memories and relational templates that can inform their future behavior and relationships.

#### Relational conflict resolution.

Conflict is a natural part of authentic relationships (Jordan & Walker, 2004). Likewise, the experience of resolving relational ruptures is an essential component of mental health. Psychologists describe how when others are perceived to be open to reparation and one can see this as an option, individuals experience feelings of effectiveness, self-confidence in adversity, and faith in others (Fosha, 2000; Wallin, 2007). Fedele (2004) also notes that women, in particular, need to be able to keep the experience of anger within a context of connection to others.



One of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk's goals is to help campers resolve conflicts without heated arguments or violence. This emphasis on such adaptive conflict resolution is in line with relational theorists writing on the topic. Writing about the female adolescent loss of voice, Brown and Gilligan (1992) note that seven and eight year-old girls describe getting "really mad" (p. 45), but this tends to disappear by early adolescence. The authors discuss this shift in the context of the developmental norm of idealizing peer relationships and a common adolescent fear that disagreement or conflict cannot be repaired to keep the relationship in tact. Brown and Gilligan (1992) describe how females often remain silent or find themselves at a relational impasse rather than risk openly expressing discord. The authors note how part of this silencing is out of concern that such conflict could result in either violence or a feeling of isolation. Additionally, girls are often encouraged by society and some role models to "be nice." This moves the conflict underground; girls are discouraged from expressing their anger to others or themselves.

In Gilligan's (1982) research she found that for groups of girls, fighting often lead to terminating a game, whereas boys demonstrated greater resilience to work through points of contention and resume play. This speaks to the female developmental need for knowledge, skills and abilities that allow for disagreement without the accompanying experience of severed connections or the disappointment of playful activities abruptly ending unnecessarily. Girls need opportunities to express anger and discord in ways that allow them to suspend the fear of hurting others, based on faith that with skills – and, when needed, adult help – conflict can be adaptively and effectively resolved.

Effective conflict-resolution involves acknowledging differences instead of maintaining an illusion of solidarity (Fedele, 2004). This is also relevant for dealing with individual differences that arise at Main Idea, even if they do not provoke conflict. Jordan

(2004c) addresses effective ways of repairing disconnections. She highlights the importance of everyone involved in such a process being invested in working through difficulties *and* taking some responsibility for what has occurred. It is important to share reactions and feelings authentically, but with attention to their effects on one another and relationships. Additionally, older women such as teachers, mothers or camp counselors are often needed to mediate girls' relational conflicts (Brown & Gilligan, 1992). A sense of safety, like the Main Idea strives to provide, is required to address relational impasses and foster relational resilience. These descriptions of an effective conflict resolution process resonate with Main Idea's objectives to enhance campers' resilience in a manner that will generalize to other settings and relationships outside of camp.

#### Relational problem-solving.

Whether resolving conflicts or other problems, programs like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk employ a relational approach to problem solving, based on an understanding of the typical female psyche. Elias (1987) supports the promotion of youth's coping skills, as these – along with social support and self-esteem – are known to mitigate biopsychosocial risk factors and vulnerabilities. Elias notes that even without such vulnerabilities, the absence of these factors will increase the likelihood of the need for mental health services. Due to girls' typical affiliative relational styles they often have an easier time than boys thinking of additional agreed-upon options instead of imposing outright competition between choices (Gilligan, 1982). Communication skills are key to fostering girls' problem-solving abilities. By talking through alternatives without relying on logic alone, girls can negotiate in a manner that preserves relationships.

A balance of feelings and action is necessary for optimal problem solving, yet females tend toward emotion-focused coping (Jordan, 2004b). This is an adaptive approach

in situations where one has little control, but in situations where one can effect change require more problem-focused coping. Programs like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk must take note of this when assessing participants' needs and developing interventions addressing problem-solving skills.

#### Cooperation and teamwork.

Gilligan (1982) outlines the relational tenet regarding the need for affiliation: women will demonstrate greater flexibility and tolerance in order to maintain relationships, but will prefer to “fail” rather than to succeed if success means being loss of connection and being “left alone at the top.” She notes that stereotypical girls’ games are jump rope or hopscotch. These involve taking turns and one person’s winning does not equal another’s losing. More than males, females value and excel at the opportunity to rely on and cooperate with others. Girls tend to prefer teamwork which is less threatening to relationships than outright competition. Thus relational goals are to replace a sense of “underlying antagonism with a mutuality of respect and care” (p. 140, Gilligan, 1982).

Relational theorists encourage fostering a simultaneous sense of connection and competence, whereas society’s typical independence-focused and individual-oriented system often pits agency and connection against each other (Jordan, 2004a). Relational competence emphasizes the good of the community, not simply dominating to attain individual needs. Jordan (2004a) emphasizes that communities like Main Idea that encourage connection and the enhancement of abilities are necessary to increase members’ resilience and courage. The idea of fostering cooperation, coping and problem-solving skills in order to maintain fun and togetherness in the face of conflict is a cornerstone of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program.

### *Self-Esteem at the Main Idea*

Defining self-esteem: a multidimensional construct.

Self-esteem is an evolving construct both in the psychological literature, and in the context of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk. Currently, the Main Idea defines self-esteem as having a positive sense of who you are and your various capabilities. Programs generally target self-esteem for intervention efforts because of its believed relationship with functional behavior and satisfaction with life, yet there is little consistency in the field of psychology for how the term is actually defined, despite common threads (Guindon, 2002).

Currently, there is concern the term is over-used and considered a “panacea” (p. 204, Guindon, 2002). Researchers question unidirectional links between self-esteem and healthy development that are independent of other influences and unilaterally positive, instead suggesting that self-esteem and adjustment are recursive: self-esteem is both a cause and an effect for and of resilient adaptation (DuBois & Hirsch, 2000).

While earlier theorists like Rosenberg considered self-esteem a one-dimensional, global construct that is relatively enduring and trait-like, other writers on the topic have differentiated self-esteem into dimensions of the self with regard to certain abilities and relational contexts (Guindon, 2002; DuBois & Hirsch, 2000). Specific dimensions of self-esteem include feelings about oneself in the context of the family, school, peer group, as well as one’s perceived body image and physical abilities (DuBois & Hirsch, 2000). There is recognition that self-esteem varies across different experiences and individual roles. This notion of self-esteem as multidimensional influenced by a variety of complex factors and that can have bidirectional consequences for adjustment and is now widely recognized and accepted in the literature, especially that pertaining to adolescents (DuBois & Hirsch, 2000; Dusek, 2000).

Global self-esteem does not change as easily as selective self-esteem, so it is likely that interventions such as the Main Idea Leadership Bunk might impact certain selective aspects of self-esteem (Guindon, 2002). Additionally, adolescents can demonstrate varying levels of self-esteem across dimensions (DuBois & Hirsch, 2000). Research efforts are limited if they do not address this multidimensional concept of self-esteem. Thus, this project will incorporate a multidimensional definition of self-esteem, assessed by the Self-Esteem Questionnaire that yields both subscales and global scores of this construct, further elaborated with the other methods of the study in Chapter III. These concepts of self-esteem remain impure, but they are a step toward a unified understanding of a reliable and valid definition of a concept.

#### Related constructs.

The Main Idea camp directors also note, “self-confidence goes hand in hand with self-esteem.” Within the psychological literature, various related terms like self-concept, self-efficacy and self-confidence are often substituted for or linked with the phrase self-esteem. Much of the research fails to differentiate self-confidence and self-esteem (Haney & Durlak, 1998). As discussed above, the construct of self-esteem is still evolving, so it is important to consider multiple dimensions, as well as self-efficacy and internal locus of control which the literature also identifies as key determinants of resiliency – a related construct also under examination in this case study (Steese et al., 2006; Prince-Embury, 2007).

Guindon (2002) provides working definitions of the related constructs self-esteem, self-concept and self-efficacy. Self-concept is understood as broad perceptions of oneself, based on experiences and interpretations of one’s environment. People appraise themselves on multiple dimensions and have various self-concepts for different aspects of their lives and experience. Self-efficacy is considered a person’s assessment of her competency,

effectiveness and agency. Self-confidence is understood as self-acceptance and self-respect, tied to a belief that one will master challenges and overcome obstacles. Self-concepts, self-efficacy and self-confidence are all considered building blocks to self-esteem. Individuals with high self-esteem are confident in their perceptions and judgments and for the most part believe that through their own efforts they can resolve their concerns favorably.

DuBois and Hirsch (2000) link self-esteem with self-efficacy. They also acknowledge that different settings, levels of strain and personality factors have unique, bidirectional contributions to self-esteem. The Main Idea agrees with these ideas, believing that providing the benefits of a camp environment to girls who might not otherwise have the chance to attend can impact campers' self-esteem. Such beliefs are also in line with psychological literature indicating that perceived competence and social support can buffer the strains on self-worth inherent in adjusting to adolescence. DuBois and Hirsch (2000) point to the need "for studies that bridge the gap between investigation of psychological and contextual influences on the self-esteem of young adults" (p. 9). This pilot, exploratory dissertation project attempts a small piece of this work.

Self-esteem's documented decline in adolescence.

As stated above, a key developmental task for early adolescents is achieving a positive sense of self (LeCroy, 2004). However, the only consistently documented linear change in self-esteem across the lifespan is the substantial decrease upon entry into early adolescence (Robins & Trzesniewski, 2005; Seidman & French, 2004). At this time, boys tend to show higher self-esteem than girls. This is believed to be related to different abilities and self-concepts, such as decreasing sense of capability in math skills and body image for girls compared to boys (Thorne & Michaelieu, 1996). Additionally, girls tend to blame themselves more when things go wrong and take less credit for success (Jordan, 2004b). This

is associated with lower resilience and self-esteem. Gilligan (1982) also documents that lack of connection with others is associated with low self-esteem, as adolescents need mirroring from others at this time to see themselves as worthwhile. This provides further support for programs like the Main Idea that work to intervene with adolescent girls in effort to enhance various dimensions of self-esteem and thwart a common problematic trajectory.

#### Relationship between self-esteem and risky behaviors.

The typical decrease in adolescents' self-esteem is particularly troubling as many authors support the notion that self-esteem is a mediating variable in adolescents' resilience and participation in risky behaviors. Dusek's (2000) research found bidirectional relationships between self-esteem and a number of additional variables among early adolescents, such as school stress, deviant behavior and substance abuse.

Low self-esteem is often associated with increased levels of risky behaviors. This includes higher rates of teenage pregnancy, substance use, problem eating, juvenile delinquency, depression, suicidal ideation, loneliness and alienation, social anxiety and peer rejection or bullying (Haney & Durlak, 1998; Dusek, 2000; Wild et al., 2004; Seidman & French, 2004). The risky behaviors that can plague adolescents are also marked by signs of disengagement from school and other social systems considered to have a positive impact on development (Seidman & French, 2004).

Poor coping skills, low self-esteem and low self-efficacy along with favorable attitudes toward drug use are typically present in adolescents who engage in drug use and other risky behaviors (Caplan et al., 1992). For example, Crump et al.'s (1997) study demonstrated that within 1256 African-American children those with the lowest levels of self-esteem were twice as likely to have ever smoked cigarettes as compared to those with the highest level of self-esteem. The link between low self-esteem and increased risky

behavior is more prevalent in adolescent females (Engels et al., 2005; Wild et al., 2004).

Youth are thought to engage in such risky behaviors to garner peer respect and to buffer self-esteem (Caplan et al., 1992).

#### Relationship between self-esteem and resilience.

Adolescents with high self-esteem are shown to be less preoccupied with peer approval, suggesting they would be less likely to engage in risky behavior (Thorne & Michaelieu, 1996). High self-esteem is often associated with resiliency and positive outcomes. This includes better social and interpersonal relations, greater satisfaction with life, enhanced physical health and higher levels of coping and academic achievement (Haney & Durlak, 1998; Dusek, 2000). Protective factors, including positive senses of identity and self-esteem are demonstrated to strengthen the resilience of low-income children against participation in risky behaviors (Thomas et al., 2003). This is quite relevant to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk target population under discussion.

There are notable caveats to consider about the relationship between self-esteem and resiliency. In the available research, levels of self-esteem typically only account for a small amount of variance in other measures (Dusek, 2000). Additionally, high levels of self-esteem can have negative consequences, not just the favorable ones typically assumed (DuBois & Hirsch, 2000). In some situations high self-esteem can be associated with delinquency, deviant behavior and alcohol use (Dusek, 2000).

#### Self-esteem and female needs for affiliation.

While the wish for peer approval is universal in adolescence, researchers and theorists make gendered distinctions about the impact of relational experiences on self-esteem. As described above, female early adolescents' positive sense of self is typically



enhanced by activities involving cooperation and togetherness, while their male counterparts tend to thrive in activities emphasizing agency or competition (Brown & Gilligan, 1992).

Empirical research supports the link between high self-esteem and female experiences of affiliation. In their longitudinal study examining gender differences in the relationship between self-esteem and themes of personal memories, Thorne and Michaelieu (1996) found that young women's memories about wanting to help female friends was associated with lasting high and increasing levels of self-esteem from ages 14 to 23; whereas chronically low or decreasing levels of self-esteem were associated with recollections of failure to get approval from friends. This research further documented gender-bound differences in levels of self-esteem: males with higher self-esteem were more concerned with getting ahead of others, whereas females with high self-esteem were more concerned with connecting with others, and particularly with helping friends. The authors describe that adolescents with high self-esteem are typically socially at ease, whereas the desire for approval from female friends predicts low self-esteem. Thorne and Michaelieu's findings support how adolescent self-esteem is increasingly situated in peer relationships, as compared to family relationships, and that there are gender differences in typical male and female relational patterns.

These results also encourage that high self-esteem for women can be cultivated in contexts like the Main Idea where affiliation and assertion of agency, particularly in the service of others, are encouraged. The authors underscore that a collaborative female gender role involves this combination of assertion and affiliation. Their research provides further support for the Main Idea's use of a relational theoretical model and for examining the impact of such experiences of assertiveness and affiliation on self-esteem over time.

Effective interventions targeting self-esteem.

While the Main Idea program evaluation is a unique endeavor without exact documented analogs, many other research projects have investigated interventions targeting self-esteem in adolescents. According to Haney and Durlak's (1998) meta-analysis, self-esteem is a worthy focus for preventative and promotional intervention. They report that interventions targeting self-esteem were more effective than those aiming to enhance specific behaviors or social skills. While connections and causality remain unclear, the meta-analysis showed that some interventions can enhance adolescents' self-esteem and self-confidence, resulting in concomitant positive changes in adjustment.

Additionally, research demonstrates that settings that incorporate social and emotional learning into their curriculum often yield adolescents who do not demonstrate the typical adolescent decrease in self-esteem (Seidman & French, 2004). The Main Idea aims to emulate such results. According to the APA Task Force on Sexualization of Girls, specific activities that the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program includes such as sports, music, arts and rock-climbing have shown a positive effect on girls' self-esteem and self confidence and are related to a healthier self-image (Munsey & Meyers, 2007).

Support for proposed research on self-esteem.

Numerous self-esteem researchers call for future studies that are in line with the aims and design of this program evaluation case study of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk. Authors encourage the implementation of adolescent prevention/promotion interventions – with particular selective intervention for under-resourced families and neighborhoods, such as Main Idea campers (Seidman & French, 2004; Hirsch & DuBois, 2000). These authors also call for future similar research to include additional long-term follow-up analyses and assert that sociocultural and individual differences must be carefully considered in examining

adolescent self-esteem. Hirsch & DuBois (2000) voice the need for additional qualitative case studies of trajectories of female self-esteem that transcend investigations of standard psychotherapy interventions. Specifically, they recommend additional research and writing on social-community self-esteem enhancement interventions, such as the Main Idea. Thorne and Michaelieu (1996) encourage future researchers to examine whether adolescent females' self-esteem is enhanced by experiences of helping female friends and developing a voice in relationships with female peers. Haney & Durlak (1998) also emphasize the importance of grounding self-esteem targeting intervention programs in a theoretical rationale, such as the Main Idea's use of a relational model.

#### *Implications of Low-Income Status*

The following two sections of this literature review address the topics of low socioeconomic status and cultural differences with regard to relevant constructs for this case study of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program. Research documents the demonstrated consequences of growing up poor. Low socioeconomic status is often associated with risk factors like health epidemics, competition for neighborhood resources and relative deprivation (Bamaca et al., 2005). Low-income individuals are at greater risk for using socially disapproved or illegal avenues to meet their needs because of a lack of other resources (Hanes, Rife & Laguna, 2005). Poverty is also associated with a range of physical, emotional, behavioral and academic challenges, including early onset offenders, school dropout, low academic achievement, drug and alcohol problems, delinquency and crime and teenage pregnancy.

Low-income parents also often have less time to spend with children and can struggle to find supervision for children during non-school hours (Hanes, Rife & Laguna, 2005). Thus, keeping children "out of trouble" requires monitoring that can be more

difficult for low-income families. Non-school hours are considered the times most risky for deviant or dangerous behavior. Camp can provide a valuable opportunity during such times. Unlike their peers from other socioeconomic classes with greater resources, economically disadvantaged youth are often unable to engage in enjoyable experiences that foster healthy psychosocial development, such as summer camp. The Main Idea aims to supplement community and familial efforts to bolster adolescent girls' resiliency and self-esteem, aiming to fill some perceived gaps related to overburdened parents struggling to provide for their families. It is critical to promote resiliency in economically disadvantaged children because the combination of increased life stressors and fewer resources to use in coping often results in lower levels of resilience (Weiss, 2008).

Low socioeconomic status and self-esteem.

A family's socioeconomic status is related to its children's levels of self-esteem, particularly once youth enter adolescence. Researchers have found factors such as being on welfare to negatively affect children's levels of self-esteem. Authors theorize that as children age they become more aware of differences in social class, resulting in their feeling more responsible for their self-presentation. Similarity is needed during the middle school years and youth often compare themselves to peers to determine relative superiority or inferiority. Here low-income adolescents find themselves in a bind because "social status is achieved for adults, but ascribed for children and adolescents" (p. 353, Whitbeck et al., 1991).

Seidman and French's (2004) study also supports a link between socioeconomic status and self-esteem. Their results document a notable drop in self-esteem during participants' early adolescence. Of note, youth participants who resided in neighborhoods and households with low levels of resources and stressful family, neighborhood and school environments demonstrated greater vulnerability to these decreases in self-esteem.

The intersection of low-income and cultural difference.

Psychological literature documenting the impact of social class generally examines the combined factors of culture and class (Taylor, Gilligan & Sullivan, 1995). Often these characteristics are highlighted when discussing youth who are “at-risk,” a phrase Taylor, Gilligan and Sullivan (1995) note has become a proxy for low socioeconomic status. Building on Gilligan and her colleagues’ earlier research, these authors engaged in qualitative research with girls deemed “at-risk” for early high school dropout and teenage motherhood in effort to understand the impact of class and cultural difference on female adolescence. All participants were of poor and working class, many were also ethnic minorities, thus demonstrating many similarities to typical Main Idea Leadership Bunk participants.

Taylor, Gilligan and Sullivan (1995) found that these early adolescent girls, in contrast to their counterparts from middle-class backgrounds, were quite capable of asserting themselves, of expressing anger and demonstrated less concern about hurting others’ feelings. Yet, these girls endorsed a unique, pervasive experience: a sense that nobody listens, cares or asks about their thoughts and feelings. The authors came to understand that for these girls, the risk is of not as much of losing their voice come adolescence, but rather of not feeling heard or taken seriously. The authors elaborate that this perceived lack of an effective, heard voice is what can drive these girls into problematic psychological isolation – a different route to a similar tenuous psychological place as their better-resourced peers who lose their voices. The girls they interviewed also were noted to have fewer “safety nets” (p. 4) when they made the inevitable mistakes of adolescence. Additionally, the youth in their study found it unusual to engage with women who truly listened to them. The experience of not having an effective voice can precede the development of psychological problems, thus

suggesting the importance of older women like the Main Idea camp staff and directors listening in a nonjudgmental manner to these girls in safe, empowering settings like camp.

### *Cultural Differences at the Main Idea*

Main Idea campers are united in their low-income status – a criteria for acceptance to participate in the program – but represent a wide range of racial and ethnic identifications. While cultural differences cannot be ignored, some authors posit that socioeconomic status mitigates these differences to an extent, noting that other factors besides ethnicity, including geographic location, religion, race, economic class and level of education can be obscured when ethnicity is overemphasized (Von Foerman, 1981 as cited in Nichols & Schwartz, 2001). This resonates with the Main Idea program directors' attitude toward difference at the outset of the consultation. They acknowledged that differences exist at the Main Idea, but encourage campers to transcend differences to be seen and consider themselves as part of the greater camp community. This case study examines the utility and appropriacy of such a stance in Chapter IV.

The psychological literature demonstrates equivocal results about the relationship between cultural affiliations and various constructs under examination in this case study, such as resiliency factors and self-esteem. The many nuances of these inter-related topics are beyond the scope of this project, but highlights of the research are described below.

#### Increased risk.

While minority ethnicity is often correlated with low socioeconomic status and its aforementioned associated risks, adolescent girls of color may be subject to additional potential risks than their white counterparts with similar resources. Girls of color living in disadvantaged urban communities face increased challenges of early adolescence. These can include prejudice, poor schools, limited prospects for the future, violence, family stress and

fewer positive adult role models (Hirsch et al., 2000). Additionally, early maturation is typical among minorities and constitutes another risk factor (LeCroy, 2005). Adolescents of color are also exposed to structural racism unlike their white peers (Thomas et al., 2003).

Varying cultural affiliations may implicate different types of risks. Studies indicate Latina adolescents have among the highest rates of depression and more barriers to mental health services – including potential language or communication barriers, mistrust and fear of treatment, different cultural notions of mental health, and different cultural norms for seeking help (Huang et al., 2005). Latina cultural norms may protect from school dropout or early motherhood, but potentially also encourage depression and self-silencing, particularly of feelings of anger. Latina adolescent girls also may be prone to the challenges – as well as benefits – of living biculturally (Taylor, Gilligan & Sullivan, 1995).

African-American youth grapple with higher numbers of under-resourced schools, disruptions in family life and negative influences in peer the group (American Psychological Association, Task Force on Resilience and Strength in Black Children and Adolescents, 2008). These difficulties are compounded by pervasive racism such as lower educational expectations or racial profiling. In the face of these challenges, the Task Force encourages strength-based opportunities like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk where youth can experience a sense of community and active engagement in proactive activities.

Cultural differences and self-esteem.

Adolescent self-esteem must be examined through a culturally sensitive lens. The existing literature about the relationship between cultural factors and adolescent female self-esteem is broad, but inconclusive. Wild et al. (2004) found that lower self-esteem in adolescence appeared to increase the odds of adolescent pregnancy for blacks and Hispanics, but not whites and Native Americans. As noted above, Latina teenagers may have particular

vulnerabilities. Benjet and Hernandez-Guzman (2002) found that, on average, these girls tend to be more depressed and have lower self-esteem than their white, black or Asian-American counterparts.

Despite a plethora of research documenting a decline in self-esteem at the outset of female adolescence, African-American girls have been shown to demonstrate greater resilience in this regard. Hirsch et al. (2000) note that, unlike their white middle class counterparts, African-American girls are better able to maintain their voice and are seen to demonstrate increases in self-esteem during the transitions into middle school and adolescence. Further specific research on African-American adolescents demonstrated results that support the Main Idea Leadership Bunk's aims. McCreary and colleagues (1996) found that stressful life events and lack of perceived support from friends were predictive of African-American adolescent participants engaging problem behavior (e.g., drug and alcohol use, delinquent acts), yet strong support from friends and higher self-esteem attenuated the effects of stress.

Increased resilience.

While there are documented risks associated with racial minority, other literature demonstrates how particular cultures foster resiliency protective factors. Race can be a protective factor, particularly when strong ethnic identification is present in inner-city African-American children (Birndorf et al., 2005; Thomas, 2003). One explanation for this is that African-American females are traditionally socialized to have beliefs about feminine gender identity that are associated with resiliency factors like self-confidence and assertiveness (Belgrave et al., 2000).

The lives of adolescent girls of color are complicated because their notion of female identity might often contrast with that of their white, middle-class peers (Hoyt & Kennedy,



2008). Brown and Gilligan (1992) found that in their research sample, girls from non-dominant cultures and classes often spoke in the loudest voices. Taylor, Gilligan and Sullivan (1995) further examined this theme in their interviews with low-income girls primarily of color and found that this tendency to be more outspoken protected the girls from the typical trajectory of loss of voice and self, but could prove self-defeating or costly in settings where outspokenness is stereotyped and fuels prejudice. In their interviews, girls noted that speaking up gets them into trouble.

In theorizing about the culturally and class-bound differences they observed, Taylor, Gilligan and Sullivan (1995) suggest that out of the need to defend against pervasive racism and societal realities, African-American girls are commonly brought up in ways that result in them having less trouble difficulty asserting themselves when angry or in disagreement. The authors note their concern that these girls' tendency to fiercely hold on to their self-confidence may be at odds with their ability to comfortably express desire for relationships. The authors suggest that this can make girls vulnerable to meeting their natural human need for connection in sexual relationships about which they feel ambivalent, and then may result in undesired pregnancy.

Strength-based, resiliency promoting interventions like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk during adolescence can be particularly useful to girls negotiating their identity, along with coping with potential race, class and gender discrimination. Much psychological literature supports the idea that membership in minority groups can intensify adolescent identity struggles; however, because it brings issues to a head, this can foster self-discovery and a further developed sense of self (Pipher, 1994). African-American and Latina families and cultures often emphasize relationships and interdependence (Taylor, Gilligan & Sullivan, 1995). Thus, the Main Idea Leadership Bunk's similar focus may particularly resonate with

campers these cultural backgrounds. This case study will take the psychological literature into account when examining the role of cultural differences in the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program.

### *Leadership Development*

#### Definitions of leadership.

Like self-esteem, leadership is a challenging construct to measure and is linked with a variety of definitions. At Main Idea, leadership means “stepping up, taking responsibility, showing maturity, not getting into trouble and being a role model to younger kids.” Yet, the definition of leadership at Main Idea is also one that is personalized and individualized to each camper, “based on where a girl is.” In order to ground the concept of leadership in psychological theory and relevant literature, van Linden & Fertman’s (1998) writing on youth leadership was examined for this literature review and case study. This model emphasizes transformational leadership styles and was selected for conceptualizing the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program because of the fit with the current Main Idea program staff’s notion of leadership. van Linden and Fertman (1998) acknowledge the complex meanings of leadership. They note that leadership is generally considered an ability to use one’s skills to recognize aspects of a situation in order to influence the actions of others and to motivate others to unite for common cause.

These authors also define two distinct types of leadership: transactional and transformational. van Linden and Fertman (1998) define transactional leaders as those who “exchange promises of rewards and benefits to subordinates for the subordinates’ fulfillment of agreements with the leader” (p. 9). This product-oriented leadership style focuses on “doing” and dovetails with a more masculine style of relating.

These authors also lay out another definition of leadership that is instrumental to understanding the Main Idea program: transformational leadership. Transformational leaders follow their moral compasses and exemplify ideals that others can identify with. They think about the long-term instead of focusing only on short-term needs. These leaders also help others move past their own self-interest for the good of the group. This is a leadership style where leaders are role models. These leaders are focused on helping individuals transform from followers into leaders. There is an emphasis on synthesis of multiple ideas and options. This notion of transformational, interdependent leadership has more emphasis on “being” and resonates with the feminine affiliative, collaborative style described by the relational model (Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008). It is particularly important that female adolescents experience such models of leadership that resonate with other aspects of their identity (i.e., race, class, gender) otherwise leadership potential is not integrated into their identities and a disconnect from voice and identity occurs, often resulting in increased levels of depression and decreased levels of self-esteem (Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008).

Individuals can incorporate elements of both transformational and transactional leadership into their personal style. Thus, the Main Idea concepts of leadership dovetail with this integrative definition of leadership: influencing others in an ethical and socially responsible way while thinking for oneself, communicating thoughts and feelings to others, and helping others understand and act on their own beliefs (van Linden & Fertman, 1998).

#### Adolescent leadership.

van Fertman and Linden consider leadership a set of skills and abilities that all adolescents can learn, practice and benefit from when incorporated into teens’ individual personalities. Such an integrative leadership style, compared to a strictly transactional leadership style, better resonates with the lives of adolescents. The authors note that

transactional leadership (e.g., being class president or captain of a team) is not a typical part of all adolescents' lives – many are not offered the chance. The Main Idea Leadership Bunk works to combat participants' lack of self-concept as leaders, common to many adolescents.

The Main Idea's understanding of leadership informs the assessment of leadership development via the Leadership Bunk program. The Main Idea agrees with leadership theorists that *all* adolescents have leadership abilities, not just a chosen few – the issue is whether and how they are tapped. Many everyday behaviors can be seen as acts of leadership, but creativity is required as the ways leadership manifests can be unpredictable and must come to the surface as a result of various experiences. van Linden and Fertman (1998) agree, noting “in adolescence, leadership is manifested in more ways than standing up in front of a group to speak, planning a dance, or leading a meeting. It's an energy, an ability, that reveals itself in a variety of ways” (p. 20).

The Main Idea directors concur with this notion that each camper's leadership must be seen as unique. They describe how advancement in leadership qualities for one camper might mean making an announcement in the dining hall, whereas that is second nature to a different girl. Another camper might demonstrate her leadership capabilities by helping put younger campers to bed in their bunks in the evening. They also give examples of enhanced leadership skills after camp, contrasting “a girl who becomes class president at school versus a girl who finally has the courage to tell her brother to ‘stop hitting me.’” The Main Idea Leadership Bunk considers enhanced leadership as a “relative” measure against oneself, not against or in competition with others.

Caveats of leadership development initiatives.

While leadership has many positive connotations, there are a few caveats to consider. There is a real issue of negative leadership. This is often associated with gangs and other

delinquent behavior, and requires understanding of cultural context and an ecological approach to understanding behavior and intervening with adolescents.

Additionally, leadership is commonly incorporated into various programming efforts (e.g., religious institutions, community agencies, sports programs) and van Fertman and Linden (1998) point out is that the name “leadership” is often used to attract participants to activities that are not truly leadership-oriented. This is will be considered during the program evaluation task at hand. Part of the proposed program evaluation task is to further clarify and distill what the specific “leadership” aspects of the Leadership Bunk are, particularly so they can be examined over time as an outcome measure.

Another concern is that just because an adolescent learns about leadership, does not mean she feels like a leader or has the desire to lead. Adolescents can sometimes fear leadership, worry that it will translate to “bossing” or entail overwhelming responsibility. Sensitive programming takes all of these potential caveats into account.

Important components of leadership development programs.

van Linden and Fertman emphasize the importance of experiential learning and reflection on leadership experiences. Being educated about these concepts is not enough; adolescents need applied activities and time to reflect on their experience. Thorne and Michaelieu (1996) also highlight the important intrapsychic function of recounting memories. Reflection and recollection are understood to help individuals solidify and consolidate their knowledge, maintain gains over time and guide present and future behavior. A reflective stance toward experience is also correlated with secure attachments and resilience (Wallin, 2007).

Encouraging participants to reflect on their experience helps manage the above-mentioned caveats by ensuring participants are using newly fostered leadership skills for

socially responsible means and that they distinguish leadership and its associated assertiveness and teamwork from “bossiness.” The reflection process enhances insight about one’s leadership skills, pride in accomplishments and disappointment and need for future learning by way of a cycle of self-reflection and feedback from others that fuels a leadership self-concept. van Linden and Fertman (1998) suggest the following prompts for adolescent reflection: “What am I doing and why?” “What am I learning?” And “Am I acting as a leader?” (p. 59).

This type of reflection is in line with the assessment measures and surveys that will be part of the Leadership Bunk program evaluation design. As leadership’s meaning is individualized for Main Idea campers, qualitative measures will best capture change over time. These are described in-depth in Chapter III.

In addition to reflection, van Linden and Fertman (1998) outline additional qualities of good leadership learning experiences. High-quality leadership experiences base their design on the needs and experiences of participants; distinguish transactional and transformational leadership; provide a safe, structured setting in which to learn and practice skills; and are supervised by well-trained staff. The Main Idea Leadership Bunk program’s model includes these as well as a choice and a voice in decision-making – other important components van Linden and Fertman emphasize for adolescents to find leadership participation individually meaningful and feel a sense of agency.

It is unsurprising that these recommended qualities are built into the existing Main Idea Leadership Bunk program design, as van Linden and Fertman (1998) note how “the apparent fit between what the current literature recommends and what adolescents are actually taught may be more a function of intuition than the result of deliberate, knowledge-based planning on the part of program coordinators” (p. 59).

van Linden and Fertman (1998) also acknowledge that leadership experiences often occur naturally in home, community and school settings, but agree with the numerous community psychologists who acknowledge that society cannot rely solely on the schools to provide leadership and other resiliency promoting experiences for adolescents. This supports the use of a camp-based promotional program like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk.

Dovetailing with relational theory and developmental psychology literature, van Linden and Fertman (1998) emphasize that groups are important venues for adolescents. Participating in group-based leadership development programs can build participants' self-worth by using positive relationships and work with peers to practice critical thinking skills in realistic settings. Skills and confidence are often solidified through interaction with others. These authors also acknowledge the power of peer approval and recommend peer group settings for learning new skills. As leadership theorists recommend, camp serves as an environment that it is safe for risk-taking, practicing new skills and giving and receiving feedback.

Research on leadership development interventions.

While many experiential youth leadership bunk programs exist, few have been empirically studied. Hindes et al. (2008) report the success of the Teen Leadership Breakthrough program on impacting participants' emotional intelligence and multiple dimensions of their self-concept. These changes were seen to be significantly greater than the control group and sustained over time, based on follow-up data. The authors associate these results with the use of a short-term curriculum emphasizing decision-making, empowerment that utilizes experiential activities, direct instruction and feedback about leadership skills.

Hoyt and Kennedy (2008) also document results of their qualitative study of a six-week feminist-based structured leadership program for a diverse sample of low-income adolescent girls. They note that following program participation, girls' definition and understanding of leadership expanded, the girls demonstrated greater self-confidence and were more inspired to act as leaders. Participants attributed changes to role models of female leaders, awareness of multiple concepts of leadership and the program's environment of trust and mutual respect.

Association of leadership with healthy development and self-esteem.

Many authors address the relationship between leadership and a number of additional concepts that are relevant to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk's existing program design and program evaluation inquiries. Writers state that one of the important roles of leadership activities in peer group settings is to promote healthy, risk-reducing behavior and social competence (van Linden & Fertman, 1998; Englund et al., 2000). Leadership programs are also known to develop self-esteem, self-awareness and self-confidence as well as interpersonal skills, emotion regulation and cooperation (Hindes et al., 2008). This supports the appropriateness of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk's long-term objectives.

Adolescent leadership experiences are also associated with enhanced self-esteem and success in future employment. This is relevant to Main Idea Leadership Bunk's objectives of increasing self-esteem as well as the program founders' hope that participants will attend college in the future. These associations may be a product of participants' belief that they can play an important role in organizations and settings, based on their leadership experiences (van Linden & Fertman, 1998). When adolescents receive help developing their leadership abilities their self-concept as potential leaders is enhanced. Research on the relationship between leadership and self-esteem often operationalizes self-esteem as an internal locus of



control or sense of agency (Englund et al., 2000; van Linden & Fertman, 1998). McCullough, Ashbridge & Pegg (1994) found adolescents who took on leadership roles compared to their peers to have higher internal locus of control and more prestigious career goals. These authors consider leadership another predictor of future success and a sign of psychosocial adjustment.

### *Prevention Programs Targeting Adolescents*

The community psychology literature commonly addresses the topic of preventative interventions: those that target individuals before psychopathology or problematic behaviors and their accompanying difficulties begin or fully blossom. This includes both preventing serious dysfunction as well as maximizing the development of sound mental health (Cowen, 2000). Within the broader realm of preventative interventions come selective or secondary interventions and wellness promotion and competence enhancement efforts. Each of these terms are defined and explained in their application to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program.

#### Selective interventions.

Selective interventions identify target groups based on a common risk factor and then design efforts to counter the risk by enhancing protective factors. The selection of appropriate participants does not entail individual assessment of a child's behaviors in order to include them in the intervention (Weisz et al., 2005). In the case of Main Idea, the uniting risk factor is low-income status while the program objectives are comprehensive wellness promotion and competence enhancement, not specific outcomes based on a camper's individual profile. Like previous studies, the Main Idea uses qualification for free school lunch as a proxy for socioeconomic status (LeCroy, 2004). Also relevant to the Main Idea, selective interventions often rely on key social institutions and novel settings that can

minimize the risk for psychological disturbance and promote positive development (Seidman & French, 2004; Cowen, 1991). The Main Idea believes camp serves as such a wellness promoting setting. This is further elaborated below.

#### Wellness promotion and competence enhancement interventions.

As discussed with regard to resilience above, the field of psychology is demonstrating a growing sentiment that the enhancement of strengths is associated with the prevention of later difficulties (Weisz et al., 2005). Such efforts have psychosocial as well as economic benefits. Mental health promotion efforts are likely to reduce long-term health care costs (Tolan & Dodge, 2005). For decades community psychologists have been emphasizing resilience and competence, as opposed to dysfunction and risk, echoing Cowen's (1991) earlier calls for promoting wellness as an alternative to repairing established disorders – an idea of preemptively building health instead of fighting sickness after its onset, a more difficult task. Wellness enhancement initiatives have a broader objective than disease prevention; they aim to enhance normal development (Elias, 1987; Cowen, 2000).

#### Key components of prevention and promotion efforts.

Cowen (1991) broadly describes the inter-related ingredients of wellness promotion programs, all part of the recipe of the Main Idea experience: resilience, competence, social system modification and empowerment. Cowen's definition of resilience resonates with those addressed earlier in this chapter. Cowen defines competence as possessing skills and this definition is intrinsically related to self-efficacy. Thus, wellness promotion interventions often include skills-training that broadens participants' adaptive coping repertoires in the face of adversity (LeCroy, 2004). Many authors describe health promotion programs for optimal youth development that focus on building social skills through such avenues as youth training (Cowen, 1991; Weisz et al., 2005). In addition to preventing future negative

outcomes, such positive youth development programs can have valuable benefits in their contents, including enhanced interpersonal skills, quality of adult and peer relationships, academic performance and commitment to school (Cowen, 2000; Weisz et al., 2005).

Cowen (1991) notes that childhood experiences of competence are essential for the development of a sense of empowerment and control over one's fate. He and others address empowerment as an orientation of values that is in line with community psychology promotional efforts. Empowerment can occur at individual, group or systemic levels. It involves not simply fixing problems or providing advice, but providing communities with resources and skills with which to help themselves (Dale, 2008). Empowered individuals and groups feel a sense of control over their communities, have enhanced confidence and are less likely to feel disaffected with school (Elias & Clabby, 1992).

The Main Idea aims to empower campers by imparting skills and giving responsibility in the camp social system setting with the hope that the sense of empowerment will generalize to campers' lives outside of camp in their communities, homes and schools. Community psychology theory supports this idea that intervening at one level would inevitably impact other aspects of the microsystem in which these youth are involved (Dalton et al., 2001).

Other valuable components of prevention and promotion programs are addressed in the psychological literature. Zeldin and O'Connor (2005) reviewed the research on youth development programs and consolidated their findings into suggested best practices in such programming. They assert that, broadly, youth consistently need safe places, challenging experiences and caring people. More specifically, they recommend essential experiences of youth development:

“opportunities for self-directed and active learning – exploration, reflection, expression and creativity; opportunities to take on new roles and responsibilities –

group membership, contribution and service; emotional support – nurturance, friendship and emotional safety; motivational support – high expectations, standards, structure and boundaries; and strategic support – guidance and help in decision-making, and access to resources” (p. 1, Zeldin & O’Connor, 2005).

These experiences should happen in the varied settings of youths’ lives. When young people have such opportunities and supports they are less likely to abuse substances or drop out of school – and more likely to succeed in school, have positive connections with their communities. The Main Idea includes these opportunities in the design of its Leadership Bunk program. This program evaluation and consultation will examine how true to design such efforts are executed and what impact they have on participants.

Casting a wide wellness promotion net.

Optimal promotional programs target positive development and competence generally using a strength-based approach, as opposed to working to remediate a particular problem (LeCroy, 2004; Weisz et al., 2005). A comprehensive approach to risk prevention is considered more effective – in terms of cost and impact on adolescents – as risky behaviors are considered to have comparable mediating factors (Caplan et al., 1992). This comes from the understanding that specific problem behaviors (e.g., substance abuse, adolescent pregnancy) are symptomatic of a constellation of inter-related problems (e.g., low resiliency, low self-esteem). While all children benefit from communication skills and abilities to work cooperatively, such skills can close gaps among students from diverse cultural backgrounds or low socioeconomic strata such as the Main Idea participants (Elias & Clabby, 1992).

Potential roadblocks to wellness promotion efforts.

While wellness promotion is a valuable concept, and prevention programs are becoming more visible in the mental health landscape, such efforts can face challenges (Cowen, 2000; Weisz et al., 2005). One struggle in evaluating wellness promotion programs is the long gestation period before efforts may demonstrate their impact (Cowen, 2000). This

can translate to difficulty obtaining funding for such efforts. Additionally, wellness promotion efforts, while under the broader umbrella of prevention, must be differentiated from early interventions (e.g., the Main Idea promotional effort compared to a camp program for children with Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder). All of these factors will be considered within the programming evaluation and consulting recommendations made to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program.

Research on wellness promotion programs.

Meta-analyses show that positive youth development, or health promotion, programs both promote social skills and school achievement while preventing later social, academic and psychological problems such as risky sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental health problems, pregnancy, delinquency (Weisz et al., 2005).

Controlled studies on specific promotional efforts also yield positive results. LeCroy (2004) writes about “Go Grrrls,” a preventative intervention for adolescent girls based on a structured curriculum of social competence enhancement. Similar to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk, Go Grrrls targets – among other competencies – self-acceptance, peer relationships and responsible decision-making. A controlled study of this intervention demonstrated participants’ improved peer self-esteem, self-liking and body image, competence, assertiveness and perceived sources of help as well as decreased levels of hopelessness. While this program differs from the Main Idea Leadership Bunk in that it was an after-school intervention, more structured and its program evaluation included a control group with enough power for statistical analysis, it still provides useful information in the context of designing and evaluating promotional programs like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk that emphasize competencies to help participants successfully interact with their peers, family and society. Their research also supports the design of the program evaluation case

study at hand where longer-term follow-up is included to further evaluate impact of interventions over time.

Caplan et al. (1992) also describe their social competence promotion program for inner-city adolescents. Their goals were to enhance interpersonal and personal effectiveness in order to prevent development of maladaptive behavior. The mechanisms they used overlap with some of The Main Idea's interventions. They taught participants developmentally appropriate skills and information, fostered prosocial and health-enhancing values and beliefs and created environmental support networks the participants could use to reinforce the program's benefits. The results also provided modest support for improvements in social and emotional adjustment – understandable given that it usually takes longer to change these constructs. This research also demonstrated how providing broad-based skills can influence a specific targeted behavioral variable as in this case participants' intentions to use substances decreased. This provides support for programs like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk using a broad approach to optimally effect change in a variety of behaviors and attitudes.

#### Prevention and promotion with adolescent girls.

Young people can experience a range of conditions that are likely to range across the lifespan; hence, early intervention can reduce current risk but also suffering and risk in adulthood (Kazdin, 1993). This literature review has already addressed the vulnerabilities of adolescence, particularly for girls, demonstrating the importance of building competencies during the female transition from adolescence to adulthood.

The transition to adolescence is a valuable point of intervention for risk prevention and resiliency promotion programs. Efforts during such “normative ecological transitions” (p.1145) can affect the ongoing transformations in adolescents' self-definitions and

interpersonal relationships while providing an opportunity for positive growth and maturation (Seidman & French, 2004). As adolescence is characterized by further definition of one's identity, programmatic interventions and novel experiences provide the chance for youth to explore various aspects of their still malleable identities. Youth can often internalize appropriate intervention during this time, resulting in an impact in the short and long-term (Thorne & Michaelieu, 1996).

Unfortunately, while the need for efforts during this transition is frequently documented in the media and psychological literature, relatively few prevention programs are designed to address the challenges of females' transition to adolescence (LeCroy, 2004). The Main Idea Leadership Bunk program does not consider itself a panacea to counter the challenges of adolescence, but one piece of many components that may increase resiliency and decrease risky behavior in low-income adolescent girls. This understanding dovetails with community psychologists' long-held ideas that "baby steps" toward broader goals can result in "small wins" that fuel widespread and lasting change (Elias & Clabby, 1992).

Gender-specific programs like the Main Idea are required to address uniquely female adolescent biological, psychological and social issues. (LeCroy, 2005). Thorne and Michaelieu (1996) provide empirical evidence that same-sex peers are an important primary reference group for adolescents in this phase of self-concept development. Their research provides initial evidence for the contribution of same-sex peers to healthy levels of self-esteem. LeCroy's (2005) research also describes how the Go Grrrls program suffered from less attrition once implemented in all-girls setting, compared to previous limited success targeting mixed-gender groups. An all-girls' program like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk immerses campers with their valued and needed peers during the vulnerable early adolescent years.

Additionally, resonating with the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program design, Fedele recounts Jean Baker Miller's (1986 as cited in Fedele, 2004) characteristics of growth-enhancing relationships that often take place in groups of females: experiencing a high level of energy together, experiencing empowerment, opportunities for greater self-understanding and clarity about others, and opportunities to develop greater authenticity and self-worth. Fedele notes that these experiences the Main Idea works to foster are known to lead to women desiring more connection outside of the group.

Preventative and promotional efforts for adolescent girls must take their developmental needs into account (LeCroy, 2005). The psychological literature documents how adolescence is a developmental period associated with risky or delinquent behaviors, as well as a time when youth are refining their aspirations for the future and transitioning into new roles they will take on as adults (Hanes, Rife & Laguna, 2005; van Linden & Fertman, 1998). Adults working with adolescents must recognize youth as capable of becoming and functioning as adults (Gilligan, 1982). The Main Idea works to meet this developmental need in structuring the Leadership Bunk program with the expectation that campers can succeed with growing levels of responsibility, culminating as future members of the camp staff.

### *Camping Programs*

Literature about promotional interventions for youth consistently addresses the value of delivering programs to foster mental health in the many settings in which youth develop (Tolan & Dodge, 2005; Weisz et al., 2005). While research documents that a range of settings have housed beneficial interventions, we have not exhausted the contexts for the delivery of prevention and treatment to youth. Main Idea works to promote wellness and foster optimal development within the camp setting. This case study examines the potential for camp-based programs like the Main Idea to serve as wellness promotion interventions.



The psychological literature is encouraging about the value of camps as appropriate and effective youth interventions. Mishna and colleagues (2001) state that camping experiences provide an opportunity to enhance participants social and emotional functioning while having fun and engaging in normative activities with peers. There exist a number of various camping opportunities with various purposes, including recreation, therapeutic, education and prevention as grown, yet minimal research addresses the success and effectiveness of camping programs. Like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk, many of these programs are anecdotally considered effective, but there is a dearth of data to support such statements. Hanes, Rife & Laguna (2005) acknowledge the difficulty of accounting for so many variables that influence the outcome of camp programs. This program evaluation case study aims to heed their call for the collection of descriptive data to support the efficacy and funding of such important intervention efforts. The most salient contribution to the psychological literature that this dissertation project provides is to assess the camp environment as an effective setting in which to promote low-income adolescent females' wellness through participation in a relationally-oriented 10 day overnight camp experience that emphasizes leadership development and enhancement of other psychosocial competencies. This fits with the broader need for evidence-based practices, that are also "field-initiated," (p. 625), as in developed in the context of those they intend to serve (Huang et al., 2005).

#### Camping program research findings.

Compared to other constructs addressed in this literature review with regard to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk, research about the psychological impact of camping experiences is scarce. Much of the existing research refers to therapeutic camps – those that target particular disorders and bring participants to attend based on a treatment-oriented

agenda. While Weisz and colleagues (2005) note that many of these have been successful, they fall into a category to which the Main Idea Leadership Bunk – a recreational camping program – does not belong. The limited information about comparable recreational camping programs is addressed here.

Consistent with the Main Idea's belief that participating in camping experiences enhances self-esteem and self-efficacy, research documents a correlation between camp experiences and a shift toward an internal locus of control (Nowicki & Barnes, 1973). Similar to the Main Idea program, these authors emphasized key components of camp as social reinforcement, working together to accomplish goals and the activities camp includes. They found campers' increased "internality" to generalize to life outside of camp – as the Main Idea Leadership Bunk hopes happens for their campers. Likewise, a meta-analysis of a program similar to camp activities, Outward Bound, demonstrates immediate, short-term and long-term impact on participants' self-concept, leadership, academics, interpersonal skills and desire for adventure (Hindes et al., 2008). Additionally, Grayson (2001) documents an evaluation of a summer camp intervention program for at-risk youth, demonstrating that the youth's self-esteem increased by participating in the program, but that long-term effects were not maintained. This is a concern for many youth development initiatives and suggests that programs like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk can work to increase self-esteem, but require methods for promoting long-term results.

Hanes, Rife & Laguna (2005) also evaluated a summer camp program's impact on at-risk participants. This program had similar features to the Main Idea in that it included problem-solving activities, mentoring and the general development of prosocial skills. However, different from this case study, the camping program was a day camp, not overnight, and the evaluation measures of outcome were mainly regarding school attendance

and performance. In their controlled study, they found that their campers obtained higher grades and had fewer absences, days tardy and numbers of detentions than the control group members. Like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk, the program relied on a relational model, emphasizing the role of social bonding – attachment and connection with others – in enhancing resiliency.

The sense of belonging at camp is also considered protective against risky behaviors. Hanes, Rife & Laguna (2005) concluded that camp is a socializing agent and an attachment figure whose values and norms get internalized by participants. Participants who are attached then subsequently behave in certain ways out of fear of jeopardizing the relationship. This supports the use of relationally-oriented interventions like the Main Idea for increasing resilience in low-income adolescents.

Like Thorne & Michaelieu (1996) write about the importance of memories which “serve to guide current actions and anticipate future events” (p. 1375), Hanes, Rife & Laguna (2005) believe camp-based social bonding experiences are internalized, resulting in protective prosocial skills and traits. They suggest that internalization processes of camp experiences the byproduct of a blend of recreational and educational activities, many of which rely on teamwork. Mishna, Michalski and Cummings (2001) also include reflection, as discussed previously with regard to internalizing leadership experiences, as a suggested mechanism for the generalization of camping experiences.

Mishna, Michalski and Cummings (2001) support the Main Idea program’s beliefs about the impact of such an experience as attending camp, specifically reporting the association of such experiences with heightened self-esteem, improved relationships with peers and adults, enhancing responsibility and improved physical and social skills. Like this case study, these authors used a multi-method approach to evaluate a three-week long

camping program's effect on campers' social competence and self-esteem. Unlike the Main Idea, this was a therapeutic camp with male and female campers. Overall they found camp enhanced participants social competence, self-confidence and self-esteem, decreased their sense of isolation and provided an opportunity for vulnerable children to enjoy activities they otherwise might not have been able to, which contributed to enhanced skills and functioning while enjoying fun with their peers. Campers also endorsed feeling "safe" at camp and high levels of satisfaction with the camp program. Parents saw improvements in their children also in areas of self-control, cooperation and responsibility. This study relied on parental measures that are beyond the scope of this current program evaluation, but will be considered for future evaluation methodology. The investigators also found that measurable behaviors of cooperation, assertion, empathy and self-control did not change significantly over the camping program three weeks, but some did by six-month follow-up, whereas other gains dissipated by this time. These findings further pique curiosity about results of the evaluation of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk's program for female participants in a non-therapeutic setting where the impact is examined at various intervals.

Most relevant, to this case study is Katz's (2008) dissertation about leadership development among camp counselors-in-training (CITs). With the understanding that camps are transformational leadership enterprises that benefit from their role as non-academic institutions, this qualitative and quantitative research examined the opportunity for CITs like the Leadership Bunk participants to be mentored by more experienced staff and to and serve as role models to younger children. Results indicate that CITs saw themselves as more self-confident, organized, positive, empathetic, assertive and likely to assume leadership roles in the future. Katz notes that participants attributed their growth to having interested mentors, thorough training and clear and well-articulated expectations.

In summary, research on camp-based interventions highlights the value of a relational model. Many authors concur that camp settings can foster self-esteem and leadership skills while meeting youth's other developmental needs by providing a safe environment that fosters social bonding. Campers can benefit from engaging with each other in new challenges for which they receive social reinforcement and then internalizing such positive experiences. Many of these components of effective camping interventions are addressed separately below with regard to psychological theory and its application to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program.

#### A new environment.

Removing adolescents from high-risk environments – even temporarily – is also an effort to decrease risk factors and promote resiliency. The camp setting provides safety and competing reinforcing activities to compete with risky behaviors (Wild et al., 2004). Environments like the Main Idea that provide social support and opportunities for connectedness are considered valuable components of efforts to mitigate youth's environmental stressors and risk factors. Lack of such experiences can lead youth to seek out such connection by joining with disaffected youth, such as gangs (Elias, 1987). At camp, a milieu is created that provides campers with positive experiences that are thought to be different from others they have had. While campers are often excited, they often express fear that experiences of rejection and difficulty at home will replicate at camp (Mishna, Michalski & Cummings, 2001). Camp staff and fellow campers work to provide these new experiences that disconfirm such fears.

The experience of temporarily being away from family and school during this developmental phase of separation-individuation is optimal for healthy development (Pipher,

1994). A different environment from school or home can be a relief to teenagers and a place to more openly explore interests (Brown & Gilligan, 1992).

A safe place.

Removing participants from dangerous environments is not enough: effective programming requires a safe and cooperative context (Hirsch et al., 2000; Taylor et al., 2002). Adolescent females particularly need safe places like camp to escape the “storms” of adolescence (Pipher, 1994). Research also suggests that a feeling of safety may be predictive of high self-esteem in adolescent females (Birndorf et al., 2005). Evidence demonstrates that programs in such safe contexts nurture the social and emotional growth of children, increase their competencies and decrease their risks for violence and antisocial behavior, while improving the management of feelings, social adjustment and peer relations (Taylor et al., 2002). Effective leadership development initiatives have also included an emphasis on developing a sense of safety within the working group (Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008).

While not camp-based, other programs that emphasize safe settings demonstrate positive results. The Girls’ Circle was a program developed for adolescent females to meet participants’ needs for perceived social support. Like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk, the Girls’ Circle used a relational model that focused on increasing connections, building empathic skills and developing resiliency (Steese et al., 2006). The Girls’ Circle fostered a “safe space” for participants where the girls could challenge existing self-concepts, take risks and gain mastery through a variety of social emotional and skill-building activities. Steese and colleagues’ research found that social support and self-efficacy levels were more influenced than self-esteem and locus of control, but all intended outcome variables were influenced in positive directions. Hirsch et al. (2000) also describe the benefits of providing a safe haven of an after-school program that serves as the context for youth development programs for

early adolescent girls. These authors note how this secure environment that is responsive to girls' voices fosters and supports adolescents' sense of self.

In general, camping programs pride themselves on providing a safe environment in which campers can play and develop. At camp a supportive atmosphere is created and maintained that fosters youth's ability to take risks that help enhance social, emotional and physical skills (Mishna, Michalski & Cummings, 2001). Dependability, respect, care and empathic listening foster a sense of safety and security (Jordan, 2004b). These characteristics are incorporated into the Main Idea camp environment. This is also consistent with the notion of a holding environment that is known to be essential to healthy development.

The Main Idea staff maintain safety by enforcing limits, boundaries and rules as necessary, but also developmentally-appropriately take adolescents' input into consideration, as the campers take part in making the rules. Similarly, Mishna, Michalski & Cummings (2001) describe a camp-wide "anti-bullying" effort that contributes to the establishment of safety. Like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk, these authors describe their camp's reliance on a "Challenge by Choice" model. This means no one is forced to do things, but no one sits on the sidelines as an observer. Instead, campers are encouraged to push themselves to take safe risks up to one's chosen comfort limit.

New activities.

At camp, youth can safely experiment and try new activities. Exposure to the range of recreational activities in a safe environment enhances campers' social skills, self-confidence and self-esteem (Mishna, Michalski & Cummings, 2001). In addition, teamwork, learning and practicing new skills outdoor fun and play as well as communal work are considered important purposes of camp and to contribute to lasting values. Resiliency is promoted by decreasing fear of failure and increasing sense of competence (Weiss, 2008).

Through challenging themselves their resiliency may be enhanced as a result of experiencing competence and mastery in new or unexpected ways, resulting in social reinforcement.

Research documents that experiences can be systematically structured for youth to maximize the likelihood of learning and an increase in their self-efficacy beliefs (Prince-Embury, 2007). Strength-based theories of building youth self-efficacy encourage this model of helping children find their “islands of competence” in order to respect and foster them (Weiss, 2008). Individuals intrinsically strive to experience competence – to feel one can successfully move and change things. Responsive environments like the Main Idea are known to foster feelings of competence in community members (Jordan, 2004a). Additionally, positive expectations about the future predict higher school achievement (Prince-Embury, 2007). This provides a theoretical basis for the influence of camp directors’ emphasis to Leadership Bunk campers about the importance of completing high school and going on to college.

#### Relational experiences.

The literature supports the Main Idea’s notion that a relational model, based on teamwork is developmentally appropriate for adolescents (Englund et al., 2000). Relational theory postulates that adaptive psychological development requires individuals to develop mutually growth-fostering relationships. Camp programs like the Main Idea work to foster what Gilligan (1982) describes as a females’ needed sense of interdependence – where the self and other feel connected, not opposed, and everyone takes responsibilities while looking out for one another. Opportunities for support, nurturing, “girl talk” and to “hang out” (p. 217) encourage the relationships that are integral to optimal female development (Hirsch et al., 2000). Joint participation in sports, social events and psychoeducational efforts also fosters camaraderie. The “bunks” where campers reside during their stay at the Main Idea



are inherently relational as small, interdependent groups, facilitated by staff members.

Belgrave et al. (2000) among others report success using a similar format.

These authors also demonstrated the positive effects of female role models and mentorship on early adolescent girls' resiliency. Katz (2008) also found that mentorship was a key component of camp-based leadership development initiatives. The Main Idea encourages such relationships. Leadership Bunk campers are considered to benefit from relationships with staff as well as interactions with younger campers. Hirsch et al. (2000) also found the strong relationships between staff and participants as well as adaptive cliques of peer friends to be important component of their youth development initiative for adolescent girls. These authors encourage efforts like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk that emphasize the formation of caring adult-youth relationships and are modeled on a developmental rather than deficit framework.

Additionally, camp provides a group setting in which to address powerful affect. Homesickness, a typical side effect of camp, can lead to shame and vulnerability when one is left alone with the powerful feelings, but can become a source of bonding and pride when feelings are shared and discussed (Fosha, 2000; Mishna, Michalski & Cummings, 2001).

#### *Main Idea Leadership Bunk as Promotional Intervention*

The Main Idea Leadership Bunk is a selective prevention effort that is thought to promote wellness and enhance competency by teaching new skills, fostering positive relational experiences and temporarily removing low-income adolescent females from challenging environments. The Main Idea works to provide a positive relational experience by creating an atmosphere of trust, positive communication and responsiveness. Optimally, campers internalize this experience and find lessons and skills from camp generalize to other – potentially more difficult – settings. The Main Idea program believes that all participants

benefit from a camping experience that buffers youth from risky situations, regardless of their baseline functioning. While the program believes participation works to prevent such described risky behavior, the focus is preventative and promotional in that it is focused on resilience and campers' strengths, not their pathology or deficits.

The Main Idea Leadership Bunk is designed to provide a recreational opportunity that also meets adolescent campers' developmental needs described throughout this chapter. The program provides leadership training and greater responsibilities at camp, with the notion that, with practice, participants can demonstrate leadership and relational competence. The camp experience also promotes and supports other developmental tasks, including the needs to explore one's identity (i.e., participate in a range of activities to discern what one likes and dislikes); to separate from family (i.e., an opportunity to be away from home at overnight camp for 10 days); to experience non-parental role models (i.e., in older campers, staff); and to effectively relate to one's peer group (i.e., fellow campers with whom they might be able to establish new routines, compared to those at home or at school).

The psychological literature, particularly Pipher's (1994) discussion of the needs of adolescent girls, provides much support for the camp program's efforts. Fitting with what the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program aims to provide, Pipher (1994) highlights the importance of caring relationships, meaningful activities, respect, challenges and physical and psychological safety in order for adolescent girls to grow into healthy, self-assured adults. She writes that teenage girls "need identities based on talents or interests rather than appearance, popularity or sexuality. They need good habits for coping with stress, self-nurturing skills and a sense of purpose and perspective. They need quiet places and times" (pp. 283-284). These components of developmentally appropriate growth-fostering opportunities align well with the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program's design.

Pipher (1994) includes camp in her list of opportunities for growth. She attributes teenage travel to places like overnight camp as providing “a break from family” (p. 288) and much-needed perspective where girls see that junior high is not all of life, that there will be other places and people in the future. She expands that because adolescent girls are focused on separating and individuating from their parents, when they most need help, they are unable to reach out to their parents. Teenage girls often have an easier time taking the hands of peers and older role models at this point. Such relationships can stabilize girls, provide a sense of belonging as well as foster positive change. Notably, with regard to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk, Pipher also addresses the importance of girls’ leadership activities and communities where they experience something larger than their own lives. She adds to this the success of women in cooperative, all-female environments and the impact of these environments on fostering girls’ resiliency.

### *Conclusion*

Based on a comprehensive review of the literature of various relevant constructs, the case study of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program evaluation utilizes a multidimensional understanding of self-esteem, a personalized notion of leadership and emphasizes resiliency over risk. The relational model and community psychology concepts of promotional and preventative interventions provide frameworks in which to understand the camp program’s efforts. This study supplements the relational theory and camping literature with additional research, specifically contributing to the existing psychological literature with regard to the value of wellness promoting, skill-building overnight recreational camp experiences for low-income adolescent females. Specific research methods are delineated in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER III

### Approach to Consultation and Methods of Investigation

#### *Abstract*

This chapter describes the range of qualitative and quantitative methods of investigation used during this case study of the process of consulting to the Main Idea camp program to conduct a program evaluation of its existing recreational, overnight, camp-based Leadership Bunk wellness promotion program. The methods are based on the program evaluation framework presented in Maher's (2000) Resource Guide for Planning and Evaluating Human Service Programs and a literature review of community psychology participatory action research methods. General descriptions of the case study approach and the program's design are provided. Program evaluation questions are delineated and specific methods for program evaluation procedures are detailed, culminating in an outline of the program evaluation plan.

#### *Introduction*

Program evaluation activities are a mainstay in the field of psychology, and more generally, amongst human services programs. Engaging in a program evaluation of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk fits with the field of psychology's broader needs and calls for evidence-based practices, that are culturally competent and "field-initiated," (p. 625) – as in developed in the context of those they intend to serve (Huang et al., 2005).

This chapter describes the approach and methods utilized when consulting to the Main Idea in order to engage in a program evaluation of its Leadership Bunk program. The research methods rely on the human services program planning and evaluation framework

set forth by Maher (2000) as well as general community psychology concepts of participatory action research (Elias & Clabby, 1992; Kidd & Kral, 2005). As a case study, the program serves as its own control and was evaluated using a time series procedure (Maher, 2000). The pre-program and post-program qualitative and quantitative methods of investigation described were conducted over the 2008 Main Idea summer camp session and follow-up assessments were completed within one year of completing the 2008 Leadership Bunk program. Below, the program is described with regard to the consultant, clients, target population and program design. Then, the multi-method program evaluation procedure is outlined and addressed specifically with relevance to the guiding questions and methods of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program evaluation case study at hand.

### *Approach to Consultation*

Cherniss (1976) defines consultation as a process in which one or more individuals who possess certain knowledge and skills help individuals and groups within a particular social system or organization address one or more organizational problems. In this case study, the author is in the role of program evaluation consultant while the Main Idea camp directors are the main clients, with board members and camp staff also serving as key stakeholders. The target population is the group of Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers.

### *Action research.*

Action research is encouraged for practitioners to plan, manage, evaluate and document prevention and psychosocial competence enhancement efforts, such as the Main Idea camping program and Leadership Bunk program (Elias & Clabby, 1992). Kidd & Kral (2005) describe participatory action research as in some ways intuitive, but born from calls in the late 1960s for research to provide more practical benefits for communities and organizations. The two main objectives of such efforts are to produce knowledge and action

plans that are directly and pragmatically useful for the community at hand and to empower individuals and communities through consciousness-raising efforts. It is an approach and process that can be applied to various human services programs and endeavors and then customize to the needs of a particular organization or program. This approach is most commonly used in the field of psychology, specifically community psychology. Action research has a good track record – particularly in health promotion contexts – of facilitating broadened understanding, improved service and enhanced relationships between service providers and consumers. It is also particularly encouraged for use with marginalized populations, such as ethnic minorities, as it is seen to integrate participants further “into the research dialogue” (p. 192, Kidd & Kral, 2005), encouraging empowerment, thus resonating with the Main Idea’s philosophy and target population.

Maher’s program evaluation model.

In Maher’s (2000) framework for the process of evaluating human services programs, the consultation process follows the following steps: approaching the organization to assess the context and the needs for human services program planning and evaluation consultation services; developing program evaluation questions; specifying program evaluation question protocols, including methods for how data will be collected and analyzed; engaging in the program evaluation data collection and data analysis; providing feedback to the clients and organization that can be used to inform future program implementation and evaluation efforts. Throughout the process, researchers and participants work together to develop goals and methods, gather and analyze data and implement results in a way that both raises critical consciousness and promotes change for participants (Kidd & Kral, 2005). The process is linear, but cyclical and continually evolving. This research is reflexive due to the consistent exchange between data collection and reflection. The process

allows enough flexibility to make necessary mid-course changes to research questions and methods in order to fit the needs of the situation, but remain rigorous enough to provide reliable and valid data and feedback to influence organizational human services efforts (Kidd & Kral, 2005).

Such research efforts can struggle to be taken seriously as they are lesser-known in the field, differ from controlled, experimental designs and are often best served by qualitative research – although quantitative methods are not ignored (Kidd & Kral, 2005). While this type of research is qualitative and community-based, criteria of scientific rigor, including reliability and validity, are still included. Community psychologists doing this type of research suggest that the rigor comes in the focus on the standardized process that can be applied to a range of problems and questions, replicability and validity resulting from triangulation from various methods (Kidd & Kral, 2005). Specifically, Maher (2000) emphasizes the importance of program evaluation efforts remaining practical, useful, proper and technically defensible. His framework is further detailed below, as applied to the program evaluation and consultation efforts to the Main Idea that are the focus of this discussion.

### *Identifying the Client/Organization*

The first phase in a human services program evaluation task is to identify the client or group to which one will consult. In this case, the consultant was aware of the Main Idea camping program as a former camper at Camp Walden and as an early graduate student identified the Main Idea as a possible prevention and wellness promotion-oriented organization to which she would like to consult with as a program evaluation-focused dissertation project in the process of receiving her doctorate in clinical psychology. Initial discussions with camp directors in the spring of 2007 were positive, indicating that, prior to

her death, the Main Idea's founder had hoped someone with appropriate and available temporal and knowledge resources would make themselves available to study the Main Idea. A visit to camp in the summer of 2007 was planned to initiate ideas for appropriate program evaluation research. From this point forward the consultant began to note the process that constituted using participant-observations to broadly document the case study of the consulting experience.

#### Approaching the consultation.

Maher (2000) and Cherniss (1976; 2000) outline important questions for consultants consider before and during initial discussions with clients. In order to make rational, coherent choices and prevent ambiguity and confusion about the consultant's mission and role – which typically result in less effective consultation – one must consider whether a consultation is appropriate in a given situation, if so, whose interests the consultation will serve (particularly in the case of conflicting stakeholder interests within the system) and what the appropriate primary focus of the consultation may be (Cherniss, 1976; 2000). It is important that the consultant and client develop collaborative, mutually respectful relationships, strive for working consensus, share similar goals and values, are clear about the available technical and temporal resources and that the context is clarified – including how motivated for help an organization is and relevant larger societal and cultural factors (Cherniss, 1976; Elias, 1987). In the case of this consultation, the Main Idea's general initial excitement and openness to the program evaluation consultation as well as the rapport and relationship between consultant and camp directors, based on time together at Camp Walden together as youth, facilitated the natural progression of these steps and resulted in the aforementioned desired characteristics. Additionally, amongst stakeholders there were not blatant competing interests; it was clear that the consultant would work with the camp



directors primarily, while simultaneously considering the needs of other relevant constituencies such as board members and other Main Idea staff.

#### *Determining the Client's Needs for Program Evaluation*

Once the client was identified, the next phase of the program evaluation process entailed conducting a needs assessment in order to determine an appropriate primary focus of the consultation. The primary focus influences when and where the consultation occurs, the entry process, initial activities and the initial questions that are emphasized (Cherniss, 2000). Such a focus must be flexible in order to maximize the effectiveness of the consultant and consultation, and also must be determined by an assessment of the current needs and problems, abilities, values, ideas, circumstances, timing, obligations, resistances and perceived benefits of a program or organization (Maher, 2000). This was conducted during the visit to the 2007 Main Idea summer session, guided by Maher (2000) and others' recommendation that the researcher first initiate a forum where dialogue starts and experiences are shared (Kidd & Kral, 2005).

Cherniss (2000) encourages that the consultant's needs, values, previous experience and preferences are also taken into account during the initial consultation and needs assessment in order to influence the choice of the primary focus. In this case, the investigator had identified the Main Idea as a prevention and wellness promotion program to which she would like to consult in a program evaluation capacity. As a graduate student in clinical psychology, with particular requirements of her training institution, she also approached the needs assessment with her own desire to intervene and consult in the commonly chose primary focus of the realm of the mental health of individuals – where the goal of the intervention is to bring about change that facilitates prevention or treatment of emotional problems (Cherniss, 2000).

Based on a positive rapport between client and consultant, the dialogue continued to evolve naturally during conversations to determine a primary focus that would meet the needs of the Main Ideas as well as the consultant. From the Main Idea organization's perspective there were two primary needs the project could serve. The first was to determine methods for following Main Idea campers over time in order to understand the benefits of the program and impact on campers after they leave the campgrounds, specifically to determine whether the Main Idea was succeeding in providing girls who would not otherwise have the chance to attend camp with a self-confidence enhancing experience. The second, yet related, goal was to garner data that could quantify or describe in a more qualitative evidence-based manner the benefits of Main Idea programming in order to validate their efforts when seeking future funding from private individuals, corporations and potential granting funding sources. This need for evidence-based practices is prevalent in the current era of accountability. There is a strong push – in the field of psychology and beyond – for human services programs to be scientifically based. Specifically, many current primary prevention programs are empirically grounded (Cowen, 2000). Achieving this often means developing interventions separate from practice conditions (Tolan & Dodge, 2005). Program evaluation of existing programs like the Main Idea pragmatically meets the mandate for evidence-based practice in typical practice settings while ensuring the viability of such anecdotally effective programs.

The Main Idea's initially formulated broad goals were appropriate and realistic, but consultant and clients agreed upon the need to pilot some of these efforts with a segment of the Main Idea population in order to make the dissertation project more feasible and stay within the allotted human and temporal resources. Within the Main Idea's total census of approximately 120 campers per summer, two more formative programs were suggested as

foci of the research. The “Trips” program and the “Leadership Bunk” program were each identified as options as they were more structured and already sources of funding streams beyond the Main Idea’s typical budget (which is solely accounted for by private donations and Camp Walden resources). The Leadership Bunk was selected for the program evaluation case study, as this program was more in line with the consultant’s previous experience and desire to work on mental health and prevention-related efforts. It was determined that, within a broader program evaluation of the Leadership Bunk, the technology for following up with campers over time could be designed, implemented and evaluated with current Leadership Bunk campers in order to pilot what could optimally be come a larger scale endeavor in the future.

While the needs assessment process and discussions went smoothly, they were not without some initial conflicts of interest and ideas, as predicted by Cherniss (2000) who normalizes such a phenomenon and predicts some initial conflicts or disagreements between consultant and client. In this case, the Main Idea directors desired the benefits and resulting data of program evaluation efforts, but were wary that such activities would make what they deemed to be a “fun, recreational” experience “too much like school.” There were not problematic relations, but a lack of congruence between the consultant’s and the organization’s goals, values and perceptions, as the consultant saw this program based on its initially stated goals as a psychosocial, wellness promotion intervention, and the Main Idea directors considered it a strictly recreational experience for campers. In line with Cherniss’ (2000) guidance, mutually agreeable resolutions were determined. Minimally intrusive methods for evaluating the program were determined that would not dramatically change the typical delivery of services and would remain in the spirit of camp activities. Additionally, based on her own experiences, supervision and review of the psychological literature, the

consultant was able to understand one of her roles in the consultation effort as to help the camp organization reframe their Leadership Bunk intervention as a recreational activity that is believed to accrue psychosocial benefits for participants. This heeds Cherniss' (2000) guidance that clients are often reassured by the consultant taking a respectful, but knowledgeable and authoritative position and that a consultant must be wary to automatically provide clients what they request. In the course of the needs assessment discussions the partially conflicting needs of consultant and client were compromised into a primary focus that captured the consultant's interest in carrying out a program evaluation of an existing camp-based wellness promotion program and the Main Idea's desire to follow their participants over time and demonstrate program benefits by way of metrics and rich descriptions in order to secure additional funding.

*Placing the Existing Leadership Bunk Program into an Evaluable Form*

Once the Leadership Bunk was chosen as the primary focus of the consultation, program evaluation procedure entailed detailing the program design further with regard to its goals, participants and activities. Youth leadership development experts van Linden and Fertman (1998) recommend a leadership development program evaluation framework in line with that of Maher (2000). Such an approach outlines program goals and desired outcomes, clarifies basic information about participants and activities, and assesses what is done to build a skill-enhancing environment before examining the outcomes and impact of program participation. This program clarification informs the ongoing planning and development of future program activities. Discussions with camp directors and other key stakeholders, including previous Leadership Bunk program implementers and their written materials provided the basis for the consultant to frame the existing Leadership Bunk in a more structured form that could then be evaluated. This "evaluable form" is described below.

### Participants.

Leadership Bunk participants are the oldest Main Idea campers. These adolescent females range from age 13 to 14. The 2008 Main Idea session included 17 Leadership Bunk campers. These campers were of varying cultural backgrounds, including Latina, Black and White. All campers resided in the Northeastern United States, including rural Maine and the greater Boston and New York City areas. All Leadership Bunk campers are returning campers, having spent at least one prior summer at Main Idea. Main Idea campers are typically referred by community social services agencies.

The Main Idea campers must meet basic eligibility criteria for participation. These include being girls of low-income “who would not otherwise have the chance” to attend camp and are capable of remaining in good behavioral control. Low-income socioeconomic status is determined by campers’ classification in the National School Lunch Program, a federal program that provides funding to educational settings and residential child-care institutions for meals for children whose families are eligible based on household size and income. The 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk program participants’ families’ reported annual earnings ranged from \$13,200 to \$48,000.

As limited economic resources typically impede children’s ability to attend camp, the low-income status is also considered a proxy for this eligibility criterion. As discussed in previous chapters, low income is correlated with a number of developmental risk factors. This program evaluation case study works to understand whether, indeed, Main Idea campers are “at-risk” due to their socioeconomic status and the limited exposure to opportunities such as camp that their counterparts with greater financial resources might enjoy. This is further discussed in the next Chapter when answering program evaluation Question 1.

As the Main Idea is a recreational – not therapeutic – camp, the program does not have the resources to manage campers who are unable to remain in good behavioral control throughout the summer session, hence this ability is required for campers to be accepted to the Main Idea.

#### Staff.

In addition to general Main Idea counselors who live with the campers and conduct daily activities, one staff member was appointed in 2008 with the sole responsibilities of planning, coordinating and implementing the Leadership Bunk program. Other Main Idea counselors assisted the Leadership Bunk coordinator in implementing the Leadership Bunk activities. Approximately 10 staff members, including the two camp directors contributed their input to the research project.

#### Activities.

Leadership Bunk participants engaged in typical camp activities (e.g., watersports, landsports and creative activities) for four out of the six daily activity periods during the 10-day camp session. Two daily activity periods daily were dedicated Leadership Bunk time where the entire Leadership Bunk attended the same activity together. While these are flexible, based on available resources and the Leadership Bunk coordinator's decisions, typical activities include teambuilding exercises, ropes course, planning an evening activity, writing and performing a play and going on an overnight camping trip.

These activities aim to prepare Leadership Bunk participants for future leadership positions as camp counselors and aim to engender skills that foster psychosocial development in a manner that also generalizes outside of their camp experience. The Leadership Bunk is a two-year program. Campers who are successful in two years of Leadership Bunk activities are then invited to return as Main Idea Junior Counselors.

While many Leadership Bunk activities are similar to common camp experiences, a number of themes were emphasized. “Challenge by Choice” is a common theme encouraged in camp settings (Mishna, Michalski & Cummings, 2001). Campers are encouraged to take risks and step outside of their comfort zones, which are understood to vary by individual. Leadership Bunk staff also encouraged campers to be assertive, communicate positively, act as role models for younger campers and to take an active part in team activities and the greater camp community. The fact that differences between campers exist was acknowledged. Throughout the activities, all participants – staff and campers – were encouraged to keep in mind that this is also a time to have fun. Throughout the course of the Leadership Program, campers were gradually given increasing responsibilities.

#### Goals.

When the Main Idea camp directors initially introduced the consultant to the Leadership Bunk, written objectives and goals were provided. The program description at that time stated the following objective: “The Leadership bunk is designed to help girls build self-esteem and gain leadership skills. They will do this by working with staff and their peers.”

The existing materials also stated the following goals:

1. “To learn to work together to complete a common task and reach a common goal”
2. “Learn to solve problems and resolve conflict without heated argument or violence”
3. “To use creativity to lead events for younger campers”

As part of standard program evaluation consultation procedure, the goals were placed into a more structured format in order to assess the 2008 program's ability to meet them. The evaluable format includes operationalizing the goals in a manner that is specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and include a timeframe (Maher, 2000). Goals must also not disrupt typical routines, provide useful information to validly assess whether they have been attained, and be legally and ethically proper as well as technically sound with regard to reliability and validity, when applicable (Maher, 2000).

As such, the Main Idea Leadership Bunk's objectives and goals were elaborated during the consultation, based on discussions with key stakeholders and participant-observations. The following objective statement was developed:

The Leadership bunk is a recreational overnight camp-based program designed to help adolescent girls build self-esteem, communication, teamwork, coping and leadership skills so they can demonstrate resilience and achieve success in the Main Idea community and elsewhere, currently and in the future. Campers will achieve this by working collaboratively with staff, peers and younger campers to engage in physical, fun and creative activities.

The following goals were delineated, based on the progress over one session of participation in the Main Idea Leadership Bunk:

1. Campers will develop an improved self-concept as a leader
2. Campers will demonstrate increased self-esteem
3. Campers will demonstrate improved communication skills (i.e., asserting oneself in an appropriate and effective manner)
4. Campers will demonstrate improved teamwork abilities (i.e., successfully work together to complete a common task and reach a common goal)
5. Campers will demonstrate improved coping skills (i.e., learn to solve problems and resolve conflict without heated argument or violence)



6. Campers will advance to the next level of Leadership Bunk (i.e., return to Main Idea as a second year Leadership Bunk camper or Junior Counselor)

These currently stated goals inform the program evaluation activities of this consultation. They also provide benchmarks for evaluating individual and group success in future Leadership Bunk cohorts.

#### *Delineating Program Evaluation Questions*

Once a primary focus has been identified and the program has been clarified and placed into an evaluable form, specific questions can be determined to guide the program evaluation process. Like the goals described above, these questions must be operationalized to be specific, measurable, attainable and relevant within a noted timeframe. The following program evaluation questions were devised, based on conversations between the consultant and the Main Idea directors, as well as the consultant's knowledge and experience evaluating human services programs.

1. To what extent is the program serving the target population it claims to be serving?
2. To what extent did the program meet its stated objective and goals?
3. What factors may be associated with program outcomes?
4. How can the program design and implementation be improved and enhanced?
5. How can future program evaluation efforts be improved and enhanced?

The first question examines the Main Idea Leadership Bunk participants in order to better understand their baseline characteristics as the program's target population. This line of inquiry explores whether the program is actually serving the target population the Main Idea believes itself to be serving with regard to whether the eligibility criteria are appropriate and being met. The second program evaluation question works to determine whether the

Main Idea Leadership Bunk's objectives and goals, as re-stated above, are being achieved, as demonstrated by improvements in measurements of key variables between pre-program, post-program and follow-up. The third question provides preliminary feedback about program components that may be associated with the positive impact of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program, as indicated by results of Question 2. The fourth question addresses what enhancements and improvements the Main Idea could make for the future delivery of its Leadership Bunk programming. The fifth question evaluates the program evaluation and recommends optimal methods for ongoing Main Idea camper follow-up endeavors. Following a general description of the methods of investigation, a protocol for utilizing these methods to answer each question is outlined.

#### *Program Evaluation Methods*

In line with Maher's (2000) recommendations, specific methods of investigation were chosen, that are practical, ethical and technically defensible. The methods are practical in that they do not disrupt typical operations of the program. They are useful as the Main Idea finds their data valuable. The methods meet ethical requirements, demonstrated by the Rutgers University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects approval on 12/3/2008. When available, reliable and valid methods were chosen to meet the criterion of technical defensibility. Mishna, Michalski & Cummings (2001) advocate that program evaluation efforts, such as this case study of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk, include qualitative as well as quantitative measures to capture subtle changes over time. These camp researchers found that open-ended opportunities for individuals to express themselves yielded more revealing and nuanced data than standardized instruments. In an effort to gain thorough and comprehensive evaluation feedback, multiple qualitative and quantitative methods, including those with open-ended and standardized questions, were

employed in the Leadership Bunk program evaluation. These include psychological literature review, consultation, participant-observation, permanent product review, a norm-referenced instrument (i.e., Resiliency Scale for Children and Adolescents), rating scales (i.e., Assertiveness Scale, Self-Esteem Questionnaire), surveys, focus group discussions and individual interviews.

#### Psychological literature review.

Reviewing the psychological literature is a common procedure in clinical and research endeavors in order to provide theoretical and empirically driven guidance. This entails surveying relevant resources (e.g., books, journals) and synthesizing information.

#### Consultation.

The writer's role in conducting the program evaluation case study was that of a consultant. In addition to her personal interest in the project, graduate-level clinical psychology coursework, mentorship with professors and previous experiences evaluating human services programs provide training for the consultant's work with the Main Idea.

#### Participant-observation.

The author was present for the duration of the 2008 summer session of Main Idea. The author's consulting role included working with the director level staff, assisting the Leadership Bunk coordinator and observing and facilitating Leadership Bunk activities. These roles informed participant-observation, a method that provides qualitative data on program processes and organizational dynamics.

The consultant's role as a participant-observer at the Main Idea dovetails with what Elias (1987) describes in the community psychology literature as a "participant-conceptualizer" (p. 542). This includes being involved in community processes and facilitating some, but at the same time working as a psychology professional, conceptualizing

processes within a psychosocial framework and body of knowledge. Participant-conceptualizers are particularly relevant in community non-mental health settings like camp where prevention is targeted by supporting and enhancing normative development (Elias, 1987). Fitting with the Main Idea's and the researcher's understanding of her role and objectives as consultant, Elias (1987) notes that a community psychologist in such a setting is committed to furthering normal development as well as to creating knowledge and the promotion of program.

A participant-observer gains access to contexts, people and information that would often be difficult to gauge or inaccessible using traditional methods (Kidd & Kral, 2005). Taylor, Gilligan and Sullivan (1995) highlight how their roles as "outsiders" of the systems they were researching served as an advantage, encouraging participants to articulate things that an "insider" would know intuitively (p. 36).

Participant-observation in action research such as this case study involves high level of personal connection and involvement. Optimally the participant-observer approaches the situation with an attitude of respect, authenticity and openness to experience (Kidd & Kral, 2007). Such an attitude typically yields understanding, engagement, change and growth for the participant-observer and the program participants.

Action research involving this personal involvement is known to generate pragmatic information very relevant to those actually involved (Kidd & Kral, 2005). The researcher, as a participant-observer, is brought into the participatory process, resulting in a better understanding of where research can be helpful and to be more available to respond to requests for improvements in both program implementation and evaluation efforts. Kidd and Kral describe how such a stance acknowledges that participants are the experts on their own world; in turn, the researcher also provides new knowledge through consulting efforts.

The strength is the synergy generated by the mutual exchange of expertise that dialectically promotes optimal programming and change.

Psychologists-in-training are well equipped to take on a participant-observer role. Dale (2008) notes how the psychologist-in-training's skill set (i.e., listening and communication skills, inquisitiveness) are key to grasping the culture of an organization like a camp and to connecting with members of the system. Dale also speaks to the value of immersing oneself in a culture with which one hopes to engage in order to understand the networking, cultural nuances, sociopolitical institutions and the difficulties with which the community grapples, as well as "the community's 'way of doing business'" (p. 794). At the same time, the researcher and community psychologist must remain aware that inquisitiveness and curiosity can be interpreted as something obtained for personal gain versus a means to understand information in a community.

Another caveat this case study takes into account with regard to the participant-observation method is the importance of the researcher remaining critical of all perspectives. This includes those of the participants, who may be prone to groupthink or "consensus tyranny" (p. 191, Kidd & Kral, 2005). This critical stance also applies to the researcher. Hoyt and Kennedy (2008) note the importance of a participant-observer scrutinizing her own assumptions, biases and perspectives, and acknowledging that certain beliefs inform how the results of such a program evaluation case study are framed. Additionally, observers are known to affect the systems they are interpreting. This implication of the consultant's participant-observer role must be taken into account when analyzing the case study. Other researchers advocate incorporating participant-observations into program evaluation efforts. Hirsch, Roffman, Deutsch, et al.'s (2000) multi-method qualitative program evaluation of an after school program, similar in some ways to the Main Idea, also included

detailed field notes as well as survey research, structured interviews and review of archival documents.

Additionally, Englund, Levy, Hyson and Sroufe (2000) recommend the participant-observation method, in tandem with self-reports, when research is conducted with adolescents to assess their social competence. The authors note that participant-observation allows for behavioral observations of adolescents in the peer group setting that is rarely used in research, but particularly capable of tapping salient adolescent developmental tasks, including leadership abilities, working cooperatively with peers, participating in group discussions, articulating one's own ideas, considering others' perspectives and ideas, coordinating behaviors and effectively problem-solving and negotiating conflict. Additionally, observations rather than direct questions of adolescents avoid the "frontal assault" (p. 609) that can lead respondents to provide less valid, socially acceptable responses (McCullough, Ashbridge & Pegg, 1994). Based on a review of the psychological literature as well as the consideration of the needs of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program, participant-observation is a useful and warranted method to incorporate into this investigation, along with more direct methods of inquiry addressed below.

#### Permanent product review.

The permanent product review method entails a review of existing program documents and databases. For the Leadership Bunk program evaluation, this included examining program participant applications and other written materials on file with the Main Idea. This provided camper demographic information and written descriptions of program activities, goals and objectives. Such data informed the examination of baseline differences between participants and contributed to placing the program in a formative state for evaluation.

Permanent product review is a standard method within program evaluation procedures (Maher, 2000). Haney and Durlak (1998) call for additional preventative programmatic research that collects additional data beyond self-reports, including ethnicity and socioeconomic status as well as levels of behavioral functioning and academic performance. The Main Idea Leadership Bunk program evaluation permanent product review of camper files will incorporate some of these variables.

Norm-referenced instrument: Resiliency Scale for Children and Adolescents.

Norm-referenced instruments are common tools of psychological inquiry as they are poised to yield reliable and valid data that can provide empirical support for interventions. Within this category, the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program evaluation utilized the Resiliency Scales for Children & Adolescents (RSCA) (Prince-Embury, 2007). This set of scales was developed to provide reliable and valid data about baseline resiliency qualities and changes in this set of constructs over time. Additionally, a suggested use of this measure is as a pre-intervention benchmark against which various interventions' impact can later be examined – as it is used in this program evaluation case study. The consultant's personal communication with Dr. Prince-Embury (April 8, 2008) provided express permission to incorporate this instrument into this case study.

The RSCA assesses the multiple dimensions of resiliency one relies on to deal with isolated aversive events as well as cumulative life stressors, based on the definition of resilience as the degree to which an individual's resources equal or exceed their reactivity to internal and external stressors (Prince-Embury, 2007). The norm-referenced measure is comprised of three scales that tap multiple aspects of healthy development. The Sense of Mastery scale taps youth's beliefs about their skills and competence. The Sense of Relatedness scale examines youth's beliefs about the qualities of their relationships. The

Emotional Reactivity Scale measures how well youth feel about their ability to control their emotions (Thorne & Kohut, 2007). Each scale includes subscales and the measure yields a resiliency profile with two general indexes that demarcate youths' strengths (Personal Resource Index) and weaknesses (Vulnerability Index) (Prince-Embury, 2007). These indexes are then compared to identify inconsistencies between an individual's emotional reactivity and strengths (Thorne & Kohut, 2007).

The RSCA scale is a theoretically and empirically sound method that is written at a third grade reading level and normed to provide *T* scores that clinicians and researchers can use to compare resiliency profiles across and within youth ages nine to 18. The RSCA includes norms for normative populations as well as clinical ones (Weiss, 2008). The three scales were each put through rigorous examinations to document internal consistency and test-retest reliability in both clinical and nonclinical samples. Factor analyses then addressed structural validity and helped develop subscales.

The RSCA was chosen for the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program evaluation as a practical, time-efficient self-report with good psychometric properties that casts a wide net for gathering data, complements other methods and taps the key construct of resiliency. It is efficient and easy to administer in a group or individual setting and provides a quantitative snapshot profile of youth's levels of resilience and vulnerability (Thorne & Kohut, 2007). Additionally, the scale is quite relevant to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk as it is considered valuable for prevention activities before symptoms occur or pathological patterns become entrenched (Prince-Embury, 2008b). This instrument's ability to assess vulnerability instead of symptoms is a boon to preventive screening, as once symptoms have occurred it is more likely they are interfering with youth's functioning and greater likelihood they will develop into a full-fledged psychological disorder. The RSCA's questions are also less intrusive than



more disorder-specific questionnaires (e.g., the Beck Depression Inventory), instead yielding nondiagnostic, strength-based, individualized data that meets the needs of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program evaluation efforts (Weiss, 2008). The RSCA was administered at pre-program to understand program participants' baseline characteristics, as well as at post-program and follow-up, when possible, to assess for change in resiliency over the course of participating in the Leadership Bunk program.

Rating scales: Assertiveness Scale and Self-Esteem Questionnaire.

The Leadership Bunk program evaluation included two self-report rating scales that yielded additional quantitative data. All self-reports are subject to social desirability effects (Guindon, 2002). The program evaluation data analysis takes this into consideration with regard to multiple methods and instruments. LeCroy and Daley's (2001) Assertiveness Scale and Dubois, Felner, Brand, et al.'s (1996) Self-Esteem Questionnaire are self-report scales that prompted Leadership Bunk campers to answer a number of questions about themselves at pre-program, post-program and attempted follow-up. These measures were then scored by the consultant to yield quantitative data about changes over time with regard to multiple dimensions of self-esteem and assertiveness. Each of these rating scales is described further.

Assertiveness Scale.

LeCroy and Daley (2001) developed the Assertiveness Scale in their research evaluating the Go Grrrls program – a program similar to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk in its curriculum and the target population it serves. Thus, following Maher's (2000) recommendations, this method was chosen as it had shown benefit in other previous program evaluations. Personal communication with LeCroy in (March 30, 2008) granted permission to utilize these measures in the program evaluation dissertation research.

The Assertiveness Scale is a seven-item self-report that assesses girls' ability to speak up for themselves effectively, mainly in the context of social situations and abstinence from substance use (i.e., alcohol, marijuana, cocaine or crack). Substance abuse is a concrete example of risky behavior targeted by prevention programs. Additionally, substance abuse prevention is a major funding stream for wellness promotion programs; thus this measure was also relevant to the Main Idea's need for this research to support potential future additional funding. A copy of the Assertiveness Scale is included in Appendix A.

#### Self-Esteem Questionnaire.

Dubois et al.'s (1996) Self-Esteem Questionnaire (SEQ) was chosen as a reliable, valid, user-friendly, measure that was developed on the premise of a multidimensional definition of self-esteem – one that is in line with how the Main Idea Leadership Bunk understands the construct, as addressed in Chapter II. The SEQ has also been used with similar populations in comparable program evaluation efforts. Numerous instruments to assess self-esteem were considered for this program evaluation, including the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale, Harter's scale and the Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory. These other measures were ruled out because of unidimensional notions of self-esteem, lack of cultural appropriateness and time required for administration. The consultant's personal communication with Dubois (March 26, 2008) provided express consent to use the SEQ in the dissertation program evaluation case study.

The SEQ is a 42-item self-report that yields quantitative data with regard to six dimensions of youth's self-esteem that vary with regard to relational contexts: peers, school, family, body image, sports/physical activities and global feelings about oneself (Dubois & Hirsch, 2000). A copy of the SEQ is included in Appendix A.

### Surveys.

In order to supplement gaps and complement other program evaluation data garnered from other methods, the consultant developed surveys to gather information demonstrated to be important based on an assessment of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk's program evaluation needs. These surveys provided data about participants' reports of changes over time with regard to target variables, program satisfaction and perceived program impact. Survey results also guided the needs assessment and pilot implementation of following up campers after the 2008 Main Idea session ended.

### Camper surveys.

Leadership Bunk program participants completed questionnaires on the first day of the program inquiring about self-esteem, leadership traits, assertiveness, social problem-solving skills, coping skills, resiliency and protective factors, as well as hopes, expectations and concerns about program participation. Program participants completed similar surveys at post-program and follow-up to assess change over time in responses, program satisfaction and perceived benefits and impact of the Leadership Bunk program. Copies of these surveys are included in Appendix A.

### Counselor surveys.

Additionally, at the end of the 2008 Main Idea session, selected counselors who worked with Leadership Bunk campers were asked to complete surveys about each camper. These counselor surveys supplemented the post-program interviews (described below) and consultant's participant-observations, providing staff's impressions on the overall impact and success of the program as well as additional subjective observations of campers' behavior. The consultant elaborated an existing version of this survey into a set of questions that assessed staff's perceptions of the impact program participation had on individual campers

with regard to key Leadership Bunk emphases, including self-esteem, leadership traits, assertiveness, social problem-solving skills, coping skills and resiliency and protective factors. Questions address individual campers' amount of participation, involvement and interaction with others, and levels of reinforcement for participating and interacting. A copy of these surveys is included in Appendix A.

#### Focus groups.

Leadership Bunk program evaluation methods also included structured group discussions at the beginning and the end of the August 2008 program. The discussions were geared to identify campers hopes, expectations and concerns about the program; articulate participants' understandings and definitions of key constructs (e.g., what does leadership mean?); evaluate program satisfaction; assess changes in individual and group leadership abilities and understandings; observe camper behavior and group dynamics; and guide long-term progress monitoring efforts. Focus Group guides are included in Appendix A.

The leadership is particularly ripe construct for assessment within focus groups instead of individual self-reports. van Linden and Fertman's (1998) capture the challenges this investigator encountered seeking paper-and-pencil leadership measures, noting that existing leadership measures are typically geared toward adults and business organizations. Focus groups, instead, provide program evaluation data while building the reflective component of experiential leadership learning into leadership programming, as van Linden and Fertman advocate.

Focus groups are standard program evaluation procedures (Maher, 2000). Englund et al. (2000) encourage assessments and observations in group settings for adolescents to provide additional data in a less threatening way than individual self-reports. Kidd & Kral (2005) also advise that the participatory action researcher first initiate a forum where

dialogue starts and experiences are shared. A general benefit of qualitative research like focus groups is that individuals are able to describe their own and collective experience (Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008). Additionally, the flexibility of focus groups' open-ended questions is particularly favored in research with adolescent females that probes into personal topics (Brown & Gilligan, 1992). In line with the Main Idea's desires and approach, qualitative focus group methods stay more true to existing programming, protect campers from a barrage of paperwork and are in sync with personalized and individualized approach the Main Idea takes to understanding leadership development.

#### Individual interviews.

Semi-structured individual interviews were also conducted with Main Idea staff and campers. The consultant spoke frequently with Main Idea camp directors before, during and after the 2008 summer session. Ongoing interviews and discussions with directors clarified program evaluation needs, program goals and program evaluation questions. Post-program exit interviews with counselors addressed what the staff believed the campers gained from their experience in the program and how effective they believe the program was in achieving its stated goals and objectives. These interviews asked for anecdotes about the 2008 program and gathered feedback to evaluate the evaluation project.

Semi-structured follow-up interviews were conducted via telephone with Leadership Bunk campers within one year of completing the 2008 Main Idea session. These discussions addressed the ongoing impact of participation in the summer 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk program and yielded data about short- and medium-term program impact, program satisfaction, and changes over time in participant's leadership, self-esteem, assertiveness and other resiliency factors. See Appendix A for detailed Individual Interview guides.

Interviews are a staple method of program evaluation (Maher, 2000). Hoyt and Kennedy (2008) note the importance of follow-up interviews in their research to learn how participants think about leadership as time has elapsed since engaging in a leadership-focused program. In the case of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program evaluation, this method was anticipated to be the most realistically viable to obtain follow-up data with campers spread across the Northeastern United States. Brown and Gilligan (1992) also encourage this method, noting that adolescent females in their qualitative research were more engaged when probed with open-ended questions about themselves. This method is understood to both garner genuine information and to provide campers with an empowering experience of being listened to and having their feedback valued. These efforts are believed to facilitate girls maintaining their voices.

#### *Time Frame*

The program evaluation and surrounding case study is based on the Summer 2008 session of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk. Initial conversations with key program stakeholders, including camp directors, staff and board members began in Spring 2007 and continued throughout the consultation. The Rutgers University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects approved this research project in December 2008.

The program evaluation activities took place during the August 2008 Main Idea session. Focus groups were conducted and pre-program measures (i.e., RSCA, SEQ, Assertiveness Scale, camper surveys) were administered to all Leadership Bunk campers on the first day of overnight camp attendance. Post-program focus groups were conducted and the similar measures were administered to the same campers on the final day of the 2008 session. Program staff completed post-program measures and participated in interviews during the last two days of the program. Within one year of participation in the 2008 Main

Idea Leadership Bunk program follow-up measures were administered to Leadership Bunk campers via Internet and mail, with subsequent interviews taking place over the telephone.

Follow-up data collection, analysis and ongoing consultation continued through 2009. The results and findings were finalized and presented in 2010.

The program evaluation protocols addressed below refer to three specific points in time: pre-program, post-program and follow-up. Methods and the timeframes during which they were administered are summarized in Table 1.

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Table 1  
Time frame of 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk program evaluation methods

<i>Method</i>	Ongoing	Pre-Program	Post-Program	Follow-Up
Psychological Literature Review	X			
Consultation	X			
Participant-Observation	X			
Permanent Product Review		X		
Resiliency Scale for Children and Adolescents		X	X	X*
Assertiveness Scale		X	X	X**
Self-Esteem Questionnaire		X	X	X*
Surveys		X	X	X*
Focus Group Discussions		X	X	
Individual Interviews	X		X	X*

\*Attempted; conducted with majority of program participants

\*\*Planned, but not implemented (addressed in Chapter IV)

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*Program Evaluation Plan*

Using Maher's (2000) framework, a program evaluation plan includes a protocol for answering each program evaluation question. Each protocol states the program evaluation question and then identifies the relevant data collection variables, what methods (i.e., instruments, procedures) will be used to collect data on the variables, what procedures will be used for data analysis (Maher, 2000). Below is the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program evaluation plan, as comprised of five protocols, one for each extant program evaluation question. The parties responsible for carrying out the program evaluation, as well as the guidelines for communicating its findings are discussed separately later in the chapter.



Table 2  
Program evaluation plan

PROGRAM EVALUATION PLAN			
<u>Program Evaluation Question 1:</u> To what extent is the program serving the target population it claims to be serving?			
<i>Data Variables(s)</i>	<i>Data Source(s)</i>	<i>Method of Data Analysis</i>	<i>Method of Data Presentation</i>
Program eligibility criteria; baseline levels of resiliency and risk	Permanent product review; consultation; interviews with directors and staff; Resiliency Scale for Children & Adolescents; participant-observations; psychological literature review	Interpretation of pre-program data on individual and mean levels; comparison with previously held assumptions about the program	Qualitative descriptions; figures; tables
<u>Program Evaluation Question 2 Protocol:</u> To what extent is the program serving the target population it claims to be serving?			
<i>Data Variables(s)</i>	<i>Data Source(s)</i>	<i>Method of Data Analysis</i>	<i>Method of Data Presentation</i>
Resiliency; leadership; self-esteem; communication skills; teamwork; coping skills; advancing to the next level of Leadership Bunk; succeeding in the Main Idea community and elsewhere	Resiliency Scale for Children & Adolescents; Self-Esteem Questionnaire; Assertiveness Scale; camper surveys; camper interviews; camper focus groups; counselor ratings of campers; counselor interviews; participant-observations	Comparison of pre-program, post-program and follow-up quantitative group mean data; interpretation of qualitative data for themes; examination of individual responses when relevant and illustrative	Qualitative descriptions; figures; tables

Table 2 – continued  
Program evaluation plan

<u>Program Evaluation Question 3 Protocol:</u> What factors may be associated with program outcomes?			
<i>Data Variables(s)</i>	<i>Data Source(s)</i>	<i>Method of Data Analysis</i>	<i>Method of Data Presentation</i>
Factors associated with positive program outcomes	Camper surveys; focus groups; camper individual interviews; counselor interviews; participant-observations; psychological literature review	Quantification of group level percentages of relevant survey responses; examination of separate sources of qualitative data for emergent themes; synthesis of themes	Chart of survey responses; qualitative description of themes that emerged
<u>Program Evaluation Question 4 Protocol:</u> How can the program design and implementation be improved and enhanced?			
<i>Data Variables(s)</i>	<i>Data Source(s)</i>	<i>Method of Data Analysis</i>	<i>Method of Data Presentation</i>
Existing program design and components; program staff considerations; systemic issues within the broader organization; diversity issues; potential funding resources	Post-program and follow-up camper surveys; staff interviews; camper focus groups; camper interviews; participant-observations; consultation; psychological literature review	Examination of qualitative data for emergent themes; synthesis of themes	Qualitative descriptions of themes that emerged
<u>Program Evaluation Question 5 Protocol:</u> How can future program evaluation efforts be improved and enhanced?			
<i>Data Variables(s)</i>	<i>Data Source(s)</i>	<i>Method of Data Analysis</i>	<i>Method of Data Presentation</i>
Optimal ways to monitor progress and maintain contact with and between campers after the Main Idea ends via needs assessment; additional ways future program evaluation efforts can be improved	Camper surveys; camper focus groups; staff interviews; participant-observations; consultation; feedback on pilot progress monitoring	Quantification of mean percentages of relevant survey responses; analysis of efficacy and utility of pilot progress monitoring activities; determine emergent themes in qualitative data	Charts of survey responses; qualitative descriptions of themes that emerged

*Responsible Personnel*

The program's target population includes all campers in the Summer 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk. Campers were responsible for providing data about their experience in the form of surveys, focus groups, individual interviews and participation in program activities under the consultant's participant-observations. Main Idea staff, including camp directors and counselors working with the Leadership Bunk campers, also provided data through individual interviews, discussions with the consultant and surveys about campers. All research participants (i.e., Main Idea campers and staff) signed IRB-approved consent forms before participating in procedures related to data collection.

The consultant was primarily responsible for determining and carrying out appropriate procedures for the program evaluation case study. Throughout the course of the consultation, the consultant conducted an ongoing review of the psychological literature and acted as a participant-observer at the Main Idea. Additionally, the consultant procured the RSCA and obtained the Self-Esteem Questionnaire and Assertiveness Scale authors' permission to use these measures in the program evaluation dissertation research. The consultant also carried out the permanent product review during the 2008 "pre-camp" session of Main Idea – a time when counselors are involved in training activities and the campers have not yet arrived.

A self-report packet including the RSCA, SEQ, Assertiveness Scale and camper surveys was administered to Leadership Bunk participants at on the first and last day of program participation under the consultant's supervision in quiet space with room between participants to ensure privacy. Focus groups were conducted with the campers immediately following completion of the self-report packet. Post-program interviews with counselors who worked with Leadership Bunk campers were conducted in the last two days of the 2008

session of Main Idea. Counselors were also asked to complete surveys regarding the individual Leadership Bunk campers at this time. Campers were contacted within one year of completing the 2008 Leadership Bunk and asked to complete a self-report packet via Internet or mail and to subsequently participate in a telephone interview with the consultant. Ongoing semi-structured interviews and discussions with camp directors were a staple of the entire consulting process from 2007 through 2009.

#### *Guidelines for Communication and Use of Program Evaluation Information*

The final component of the program evaluation plan involves explicating guidelines for the communication and use of information yielded by the program evaluation. As the resulting answers to the five program evaluation questions were communicated and utilized in the same manner, it is unnecessary to indicate guidelines on a question-by-question basis.

Once the data program evaluation was collected and analyzed, following the program evaluation plan procedures delineated above, results were communicated to the Main Idea stakeholders, documented in Chapter IV and prepared for presentation at the defense of the dissertation project. In addition to being presented as this program evaluation case study dissertation, the consultant also presented results and recommendations to the Main Idea directors and board at various times in formal and informal discussions. The program evaluation data will remain available to the Main Idea in order to support future fundraising efforts from individuals, foundations and granting organizations.

The information resulting from the program evaluation and surrounding case study was used to inform the future design, implementation and evaluation of the Leadership Bunk program and broader operations of the Main Idea camping program. Specifically, the program evaluation data informed subsequent implementations of the Leadership Bunk program, including summer 2009 when the consultant continued as a Leadership Bunk

supervising staff member at the Main Idea. This experience was outside of the scope of the dissertation consultation project and is thus not discussed herein.

### *Conclusion*

The program evaluation findings and evolution of the consultation process are addressed in depth in the remaining chapters. Specific answers to the program evaluation questions – to the level that they could be answered – are presented in Chapter IV.

## CHAPTER IV

### Program Evaluation Results

#### *Abstract*

This chapter presents the results of the five program evaluation questions that anchored this case study. For each question, the methods for answering the question under investigation are summarized and quantitative and qualitative results are provided, with visual illustrations where relevant and informative. In answering the guiding five questions, general observations and feedback about the Leadership Bunk program and Main Idea camp program are also provided.

#### *Introduction*

This chapter provides analysis and interpretation of the quantitative and qualitative data gathered to answer the five key questions that guided the case study of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program:

1. To what extent is the program serving the target population it claims to be serving?
2. To what extent did the program meet its stated objectives and goals?
3. What factors may be associated with program outcomes?
4. How can the program design and implementation be improved and enhanced?
5. How can future program evaluation efforts be improved and enhanced?

The first question examines the Main Idea Leadership Bunk participants in order to better understand their baseline characteristics as the program's target population. The second

question determines whether the Main Idea Leadership Bunk's objectives and goals are being achieved, as demonstrated by improvements in measurements of key variables between pre-program, post-program and follow-up. The third question provides preliminary feedback about program components that may be associated with the positive impact of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program, as demonstrated by positive results to Question 2. The fourth question addresses what enhancements and improvements the Main Idea could make for the future delivery of its Leadership Bunk programming. The fifth question evaluates the program evaluation and recommends optimal methods for ongoing Main Idea camper follow-up endeavors. Each question is discussed separately below with regard to the methods used and the case study's findings.

# QUESTION 1: TO WHAT EXTENT IS THE PROGRAM SERVING THE TARGET POPULATION IT CLAIMS TO BE SERVING?

This question examines campers' baseline characteristics in order to clarify whether the target population is reflected by camp directors' and other key stakeholders' previous descriptions of Main Idea Leadership Bunk participants. More specifically, answers to this question provide program stakeholders with data about whether the current eligibility criteria and descriptions of the target population are appropriate and accurate. This line of inquiry has implications for validating claims about this target population and using this research to generalize to other Main Idea campers and other similar populations. Additionally, as the only unique eligibility criteria for Leadership Bunk campers within Main Idea admission is their previous attendance of the camp, answers to this program evaluation question have broad implications for Main Idea's general recruitment procedures and eligibility criteria. The case study findings with regard to this program evaluation question indicate that the program is generally serving the target population it claims to be; however this line of investigation also illuminated nuances with regard to the Main Idea's eligibility criteria and descriptions of its campers.

Procedures for answering this question began with placing the program into an evaluable form that specified eligibility criteria for participation. This was a standard procedure early in the consultation that identified the following eligibility criteria as data variables to investigate with regard to the target population:

- Low-income socioeconomic status
- Previous attendance as a Main Idea camper
- Oldest campers in the Main Idea program
- Ability to remain in good behavioral control
- "At-risk"



These were determined based on existing eligibility criteria reflected by permanent product review of program descriptions and language camp staff and stakeholders used to describe the target population in early consultation discussions.

Numerous methods provided detailed descriptions of the target population that yielded data about the variables under investigation. These included the consultant's permanent product review of camper applications, ongoing consultation with Main Idea directors and interviews with staff as well as the Resiliency Scale for Children and Adolescents (RSCA), a norm-referenced instrument administered to campers on the first day of the 2008 Main Idea camp session (Prince-Embury, 2007).

#### *Eligibility Criteria and Camper Age Demographics*

Once all Leadership Bunk applicants were selected for the 2008 session, permanent product review provided general demographic data that could further clarify the target population with regard to ages and previous Main Idea attendance. This method also allowed the consultant to assess whether all Leadership Bunk campers qualified for the National School Lunch Program, thus meeting the eligibility criteria for low-income status.

The consultant's permanent product review of the Main Idea databases helped further clarify the target population and confirm that, with regard to the first three eligibility criteria, the Main Idea population is as previously described. Figure 1 below depicts how all 17 of the Leadership Bunk campers had attended Main Idea previously, and six were returning for their second year of the Leadership Bunk program. Additionally, as is typical, the group was comprised of the oldest Main Idea campers, and was divided evenly between 13 and 14 year-old girls, with eight 13 year-olds and nine 14 year-olds in the 2008 session.

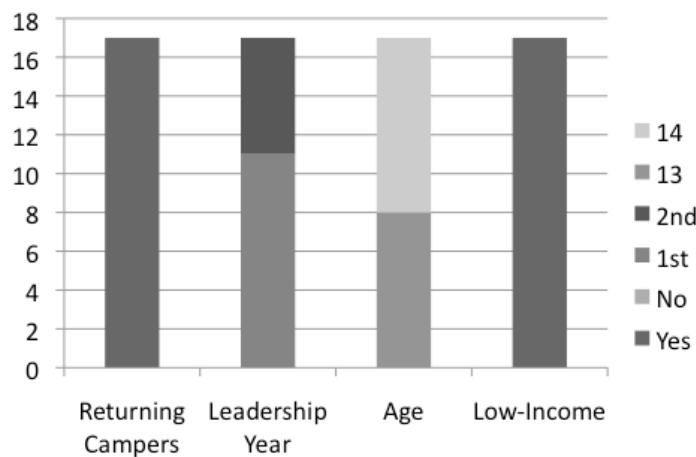


Figure 1. Eligibility criteria and camper age demographics.

The Main Idea databases of camper applications also indicated that each Leadership Bunk camper was eligible for the National School Lunch Program, thus met the Leadership Bunk's low-income socioeconomic class eligibility criteria. The mean annual family income for a 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk camper was \$22,240, with the range spanning from \$13,608 to \$48,678.

#### *Behavioral Control*

The ability to remain in behavioral control is included as an additional criterion for eligibility. This is defined as the ability to refrain from physical fights or violence and to use age-appropriate verbal methods to resolve conflicts. The reason this is included as a requirement to attend the Main Idea is because the camp is not – and does not bill itself as – a therapeutic camp. As such there is a “no tolerance” policy for physical fighting and other risky behaviors. As appropriate verbal conflict resolution skills are something the Leadership Bunk program seeks to impart, more flexibility is given in this arena, however, the Main Idea strives to maintain a physically and emotionally safe environment for campers. Verbal altercations are discouraged, although the Main Idea also recognizes that conflicts naturally emerge within groups. As such, campers are encouraged, with the help of counselors, to work through fights to continue to enjoy activities. The Main Idea believes that this can

result in campers potentially having new, different experiences where they gain a sense of accomplishment from effective conflict resolution.

The consultant's participant-observations and individual interviews with camp counselors indicated that all of the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk participants were able to demonstrate ability to remain in good behavioral control. There were no violent or physical altercations between campers during the 2008 session. However, a handful of verbal incidents occurred between campers, some of which were common camp pranks taken too far, others more serious and racially charged. The Main Idea's policy is to "treat verbal abuse like a punch." As such, these incidents were addressed in the camp setting through individual discipline or punishment when necessary. They were also discussed with the entire Leadership Bunk group as they were considered teaching moments for effective conflict resolution skills that allowed many campers to learn from the mistakes of a few.

None of the incidents were serious enough to warrant campers being sent home from camp or not invited back to camp the for future sessions. Rather these events emphasized the importance of retaining campers who engage in such behaviors and are "on the fringe" in order to have further opportunities to work with such campers to reinforce adaptive conflict resolution skills – one of the missions of the Main Idea. As the incidents that did arise could be managed by typical camp procedures, the eligibility criterion of campers remaining in good behavioral control was considered met.

Participant-observations and procedures to answer this aspect of the program evaluation yielded three recommendations with regard to camper's ability to remain in good behavioral control. First, while the incidents were eventually addressed appropriately within the camp setting, there was a lack of clarity about roles and procedures for disciplining campers. Future Main Idea sessions would benefit from such clarification about how verbal

altercations are addressed on individual and group levels and by whom. Second, the surveys counselors completed to evaluate campers (Leadership Bunk and all Main Idea campers) would benefit from a specific question asking whether or not the camper remained in good behavioral control this summer – physically and verbally. This can provide a quick data point for determining if campers should be asked to return in the future and can keep a record of incidents that arose, even if they did not warrant disciplinary action or removal from camp. Third, further clarifying this program eligibility criterion for the purposes of this program evaluation provided a more clear definition to provide to community agencies that refer campers to the Main Idea program. Camp directors can use the phrases used within this program evaluation report with regard to good behavioral control to describe the types of individuals who would be appropriate to attend the Main Idea.

#### *At-Risk*

The phrase “at-risk” first needed to be defined and operationalized with regard to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program. This was done through psychological literature review and consultation with the authors of the Resiliency Scales for Children and Adolescents (RSCA) (personal communication, April 8, 2008). The RSCA provided a norm-referenced tool to objectively obtain data about the target population’s levels of risk and resiliency, based on a definition of resilience as an individual’s ability to weather adversity, demonstrated as a contrast between one’s personal resources and their reactivity to internal and external stress. Thus, at-risk youth’s reactivity overrides their reliance on their more adaptive resources (Prince-Embury, 2007). This definition was discussed with Main Idea key stakeholders and understood to resonate with the Leadership Bunk program, particularly in its emphasis on individual strengths, its awareness that resilience varies by individuals and their current conditions, and the notion that resilience can be taught and levels can change as

a result of intervention. Such an understanding of risk and resilience coupled with the use of the RSCA allowed this construct to be measured over time to gauge program impact. This is further discussed when answering program evaluation Question 2.

Initially, program evaluation procedures needed to clarify at a basic level whether assumptions were true about the entire Leadership Bunk target population being “at-risk” and in need of resiliency promoting interventions, or whether differences emerged at baseline with regard to risk and resiliency. The 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk pre-program RSCA data provided a baseline measurement of Leadership Bunk participants’ levels of resiliency and vulnerability that allowed for comparisons amongst each other and against clinical and nonclinical adolescent female norms. Various RSCA domains and index scores were examined on individual and group levels. Graphs and descriptive statistics are interpreted below in order to understand the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers’ baseline levels of risk and resiliency.

#### Leadership Bunk pre-program resiliency profiles.

Three Scales of standardized scores comprise the RSCA Resiliency Profile. These include the Sense of Mastery (MAS), Sense of Relatedness (REL) and Emotional Reactivity (REA) scales. Prince-Embury (2007; 2008b) describes how a sense of mastery builds on the notion of self-efficacy – a sense of competence driven by innate curiosity and a source of problem-solving skills. A youth’s sense of mastery taps their sense of optimism about the world and one’s life in the future. This concept additionally refers to one’s adaptability – the ability to learn from mistakes and accept feedback.

According to Prince-Embury (2007), an individual’s sense of relatedness indicates her belief in the need for and availability of social support. This is particularly relevant in the face of adversity, when it is thought that previous positive experiences of support provide

internalized mechanisms that shield youth from the potential negative impact of adverse events. Furthermore, a sense of relatedness is based on previous interpersonal experience, including a sense of trust, comfort with others, perceived access to support and ability to tolerate differences (Prince-Embury, 2008b). The notion of relatedness is intertwined with the relational model that provides a theoretical frame for the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program.

Emotional reactivity is understood by Prince-Embury (2007) as the speed and intensity of a child's negative emotional response in the face of adverse events or circumstances. This resiliency domain includes a youth's sensitivity to emotional reactions, recovery time and impairment as a result of emotional arousal and is related to youth's ability to modulate and regulate emotions, attention and behaviors.

Table 3 denotes the qualitative labels used to interpret the RSCA Resiliency Profile scores. Scores in the average and above-average ranges of Sense of Mastery (MAS) and Sense of Relatedness (REL) scales indicate that youth experience relative strengths in these areas; their sense of mastery and opinion of the quality of their relationships serve as a resource to them and are considered protective factors (Thorne & Kohut, 2007; Weiss, 2008). However, above average on the Emotional Reactivity (REA) scale indicates potential for vulnerability and heightened risk factors.

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Table 3  
Ranges for interpreting RSCA resiliency profiles

RSCA score rankings based on resiliency scale *T* score ranges (p. 26, Prince-Embury, 2007)

<b>Ranking</b>	<b><i>T</i> Score Ranges</b>
High	$\geq 60$
Above average	56-59
Average	46-55
Below Average	41-45
Low	$\leq 40$

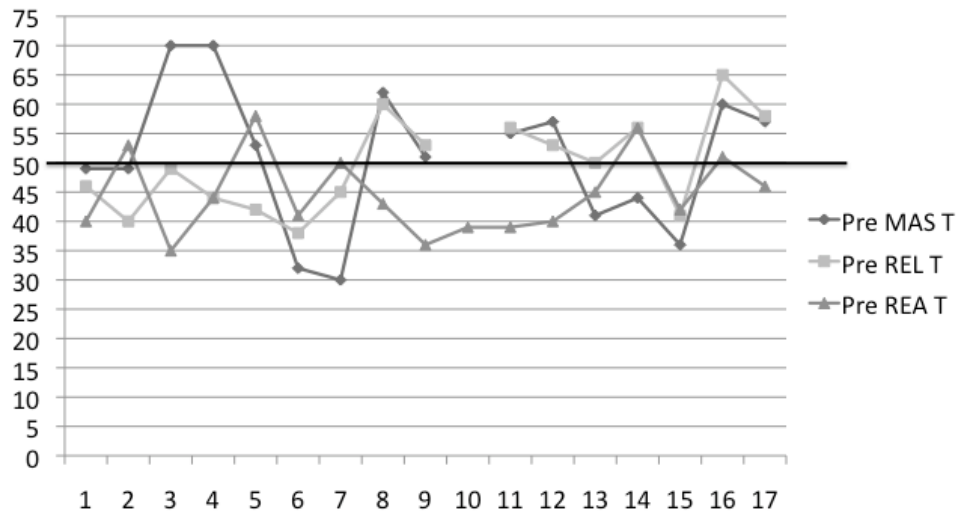


Figure 2. Pre-program individual campers' resiliency profile (MAS, REL, REA *T* scores).

Figure 2 illustrates the range of individual campers' *T* scores as well as individual strengths and weaknesses within Resiliency Profiles, by contrast to the RSCA norm-referenced mean score marked at 50. Fitting with the participant-observations, there was great diversity amongst the campers at pre-program; some campers seemed painfully shy or potentially depressed while others appeared boisterous and confident. The campers' Resiliency Profiles reflect varying levels of mastery, relatedness and emotional reactivity –

understandable in a mixed group with regard to a construct that develops at different rates over time for different individuals, particularly given varying contexts (Weiss, 2008).

While Leadership Bunk campers' Sense of Mastery (MAS) and Sense of Relatedness (REL) scale scores each spanned the range from low to high amongst the 17 campers, the Emotional Reactivity (REA) scores did not spread as far from the mean. The lowest score fell in the low range, but the highest Emotional Reactivity *T* score was 58, in the above average, not high, range. As the higher the Emotional Reactivity score, the higher risk and vulnerability, this is a positive reflection on the resiliency of the group of 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers.

However, there were some noteworthy RSCA scores that indicated levels of risk within the heterogeneous 2008 Leadership Bunk group. Five campers' (29%) pre-program Sense of Mastery scale scores fell in the below average range, six campers' (35%) Sense of Relatedness scale scores were also in the below average range and two campers (12%) indicated above average levels on the Emotional Reactivity scale. Taken together, this demonstrates that some, but not all, of the Main Idea participants are demonstrating concerning baseline levels of risk and resiliency.

While individual Resiliency Profiles provided further clarification of the target population's baseline levels of risk and resiliency, pre-program scores were also examined on a group level to better understand the target population. Figure 3 depicts descriptive statistics of Leadership Bunk pre-program RSCA scores, including means, modes and medians.



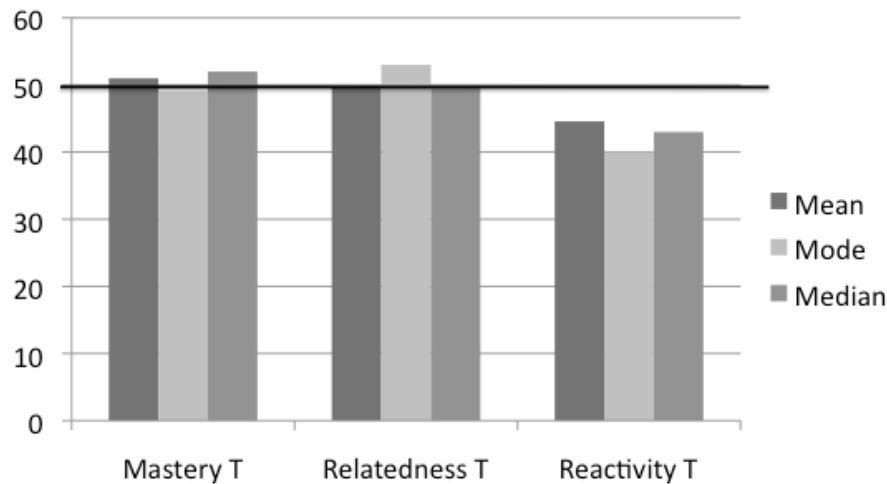


Figure 3. Pre-program Leadership Bunk group level resiliency profile.

Despite the range of individual level scores discussed above, the Main Idea Leadership Bunk pre-program mean scale scores for the Sense of Mastery (51), Sense of Relatedness (49.75) and Emotional Reactivity (44.59) indicate that, as a group, Leadership Bunk campers demonstrate the relative strengths and resiliency of average mastery and relatedness and below average vulnerability. The Leadership Bunk's pre-program scores are similar to the norming group means for Sense of Mastery and Sense of Relatedness, but below that of the norming group on the Emotional Reactivity Scale. This is particularly noteworthy as emotional reactivity is considered more predictive of psychological vulnerability than personal resources like sense of mastery and relatedness. Thus, on average, Leadership Bunk campers demonstrate a protective asset in that they are less likely to experience difficulties self-regulating that are associated with behavioral problems and vulnerability to psychopathology (Prince-Embury, 2008b)

Prince-Embury (2008a) suggests using RSCA as a general screening measure to identify children who are at-risk for psychopathology when exposed to life stress and adverse circumstances. This measure is a valuable for such screening as it can predict

membership in a clinical versus nonclinical group with 78% sensitivity and specificity. Figure 4 strikingly contrasts the Main Idea Leadership Bunk mean Resiliency Profile scores with those from the RSCA's clinical (adolescents with particular disorders) and nonclinical (12-14 year old females) norming samples. The Leadership Bunk mean Resiliency Profile is similar to the RSCA nonclinical group with regard to mastery and relatedness, indicating that, as the Main Idea has asserted, its campers are not in need of therapeutic services.

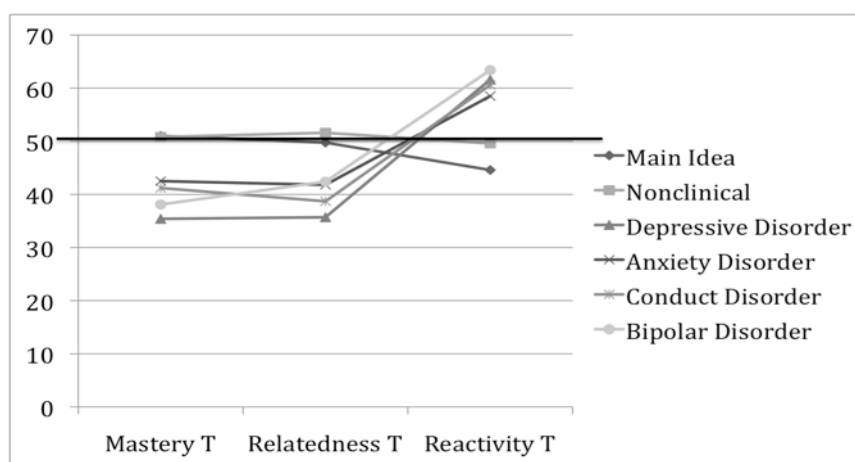


Figure 4. Comparison of Main Idea campers with nonclinical and clinical populations.

Further, permanent product review of camper applications and medical files demonstrated only one camper of 17 who carried a psychiatric diagnosis (Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder). The camper was not on psychotropic medication for her condition and, like her fellow bunkmates, remained in good behavioral control throughout the 2008 Main Idea session.

While the mean score of the Leadership Bunk Sense of Mastery scale is very similar to the nonclinical group, the Sense of Relatedness scale score was slightly below the nonclinical group, suggesting that while these campers are not in the “at-risk” range with

regard to this construct, enhancing Leadership Bunk campers' relatedness remains a worthy goal for intervention.

Interestingly, the Leadership Bunk's level of Emotional Reactivity fell in the below average range, underneath both the standard mean and the nonclinical group's mean score. This finding bodes well for the Leadership Bunk campers, as the ability to modulate or otherwise manage emotional reactivity has been found as a significant factor in fostering resiliency (Prince-Embury, 2008b).

While this group of campers may be less emotionally reactive, and subsequently less vulnerable to psychopathology and adversity than their counterparts in the general population, a social desirability effect may also be at play in campers' pre-program responses. While honesty was encouraged and confidentiality promised when girls were administered the RSCA, self-reports have a natural tendency to inflate scores and the campers might have been consciously or unconsciously invested in making a positive impression about their ability to handle stress and difficulty, lest their responses cast them in a negative light to themselves or the consultant and the Main Idea. Brown (2003) notes adolescent girls' resistance to admitting vulnerability to themselves as well as others out of a need to preserve a self-concept as confident, invulnerable and "tough" (p. 171). Yet, Prince-Embury (2007) developed the RSCA with that common caveat of self-reports in mind, phrasing questions tapping the emotional reactivity domain in ways that apply to common situations youth face in an effort to make it difficult for the respondent to "fake good or fake bad" (p. 25).

Leadership Bunk pre-program resource and vulnerability index results.

The RSCA Resource and Vulnerability Indexes were developed to profile the discrepancies between strengths and weaknesses in sharper contrast than an examination of the three scale scores of the RSCA provides. The Resource Index (RES) is calculated as an

average of the Sense of Mastery and Sense of Relatedness Scales. The Emotional Reactivity scale score accounts for most of the variance of the Vulnerability Index (VUL), which predicts clinical versus nonclinical youth with good specificity (Prince-Embury, 2008b). High Vulnerability Index scores suggest youth are at risk for experiencing difficulty in adverse situations, while high Resource Index scores suggest greater internal and relational resources and strengths (Thorne & Kohut, 2007). The mean for these index *T* scores is 55. As an initial gross screen, any Resource Index scores below 45 indicates the youth is at potential risk, as does any Vulnerability Index score over 55 (Prince-Embury, 2007). Table 4 denotes the qualitative labels used to interpret the RSCA index scores.

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Table 4

Ranges for interpreting RSCA resource and vulnerability indices

RSCA index rankings based on resiliency scale *T* score ranges (p. 30, Prince-Embury, 2007)

<b>Ranking</b>	<b><i>T</i> Score Ranges</b>
High	$\geq 60$
Above average	55-59
Average	45-54
Below Average	41-44
Low	$\leq 40$

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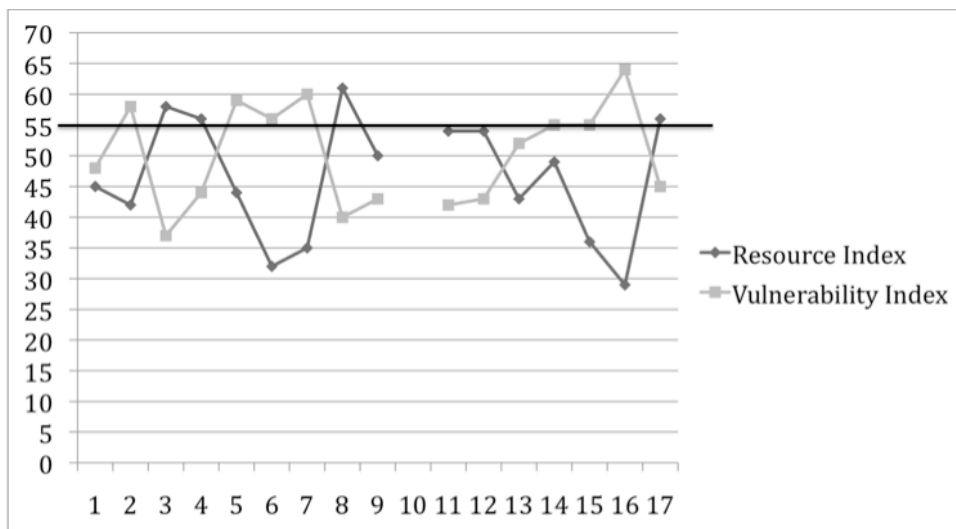


Figure 5. Pre-program individual camper resource and vulnerability index *T* scores.

Figure 5 illustrates the range of individual campers' Resource and Vulnerability Index *T* scores with the norm-referenced mean score marked at 55. The ranges of Resource Index scores, 29 to 61, and Vulnerability Index scores, 37 to 64, span the entire norm-referenced range from high to low, indicating that Leadership Bunk campers span the range of resources and vulnerability, as measured by the RSCA indexes. Six 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers (35%) endorsed above average or high Resource Index scores at pre-program assessment, while eight campers' (47%) Vulnerability Index scores fell in the at-risk below average or low ranges. This further indicates that while not all Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers demonstrate concerning levels of risk or resilience at baseline, a sub-segment of the target population does, thus supporting programmatic intervention with regard to this construct.



Figure 6. Pre-program resource and vulnerability index means, modes and medians.

Figure 6 provides descriptive statistics of Leadership Bunk pre-program RSCA index scores, including means, modes and medians. While there is a range of scores noted above, the Main Idea Leadership Bunk mean index scores both fall within the average range, with the mean Resource Index *T* score of 46.5 and mean Vulnerability Index *T* score of 50.06. The mean scores from Leadership Bunk participants fall below the RSCA norming group means, indicating that, as a group, these campers are less vulnerable, but also have fewer resources than their average counterparts. While further statistical analysis to examine the magnitude of this discrepancy were not feasible, this data provides greater clarification about the target population and offers a quantitative benchmark for comparing the Leadership Bunk campers to normative populations and for measuring the effects over time Leadership Bunk interventions intended to promote campers' resilience.

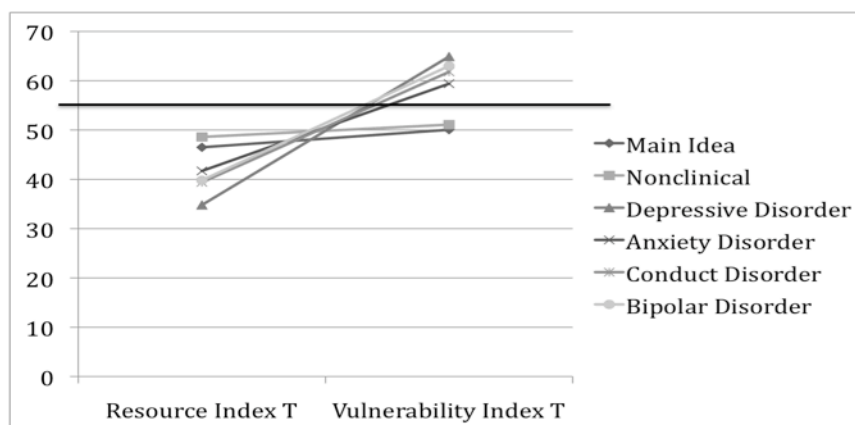


Figure 7. Comparison of Main Idea campers with nonclinical and clinical populations.

Figure 7 contrasts the Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers' mean Resource and Vulnerability Index scores with norms of their counterparts in general clinical and nonclinical populations (Prince-Embury, 2007). Similar to the findings in the domains of mastery, relatedness and emotional reactivity that comprise the index scores, Leadership Bunk patterns are in line with, but fall below the nonclinical group's scores. This suggests that while these youth are less vulnerable than their counterparts in nonclinical populations, their mean levels of resources – while within the average range at pre-program – could stand to be enhanced. Lower Resource Index scores generally have higher associations with psychological symptoms (Prince-Embury, 2008b). As such, these results indicate that the target population is appropriate for the Main Idea's Leadership Bunk intervention, in effort to prevent psychopathology or other adverse outcomes in the future.

While sub-scales and changes over time are further examined when elaborating forthcoming program evaluation results, analysis of the pre-program RSCA Resiliency Profiles and index score data indicates that while not every camper demonstrates risk in the form of RSCA-measured vulnerabilities, a substantial number do with regard to below average Mastery, Relatedness and Resources as well as above average Emotional Reactivity

and Vulnerability. This data suggests, as anticipated, that as a group, the Leadership Bunk were resilient in some ways, particularly their group levels of vulnerability in the form of emotional reactivity, but, nevertheless, stood to benefit from increased resources, particularly an improvement in the sense of relatedness that the Main Idea aims to impart. While the group's low mean levels of vulnerability and emotional reactivity bode positively for them, these statistics do not negate the potential benefit campers – particularly the individuals whose risk as measured by the RSCA was greater than the average of their peers – could receive from Leadership Bunk interventions that work to elevate mastery and relatedness and further decrease emotional reactivity. Further program evaluation results presented in answering Question 2 will address whether despite strengths and resilience, the Leadership Bunk intervention served to promote positive changes in areas of resilience and elsewhere.

#### *Moving Beyond At-Risk*

While analysis of the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk pre-program RSCA data provided greater clarification, quantifying the varying degrees of participating campers' actual levels of risk and resilience, further discussions with camp directors addressed the loaded topic of the validity and utility of labeling Main Idea campers "at-risk." While some Leadership Bunk campers demonstrated some risk factors in their RSCA results, the average results were fairly consistent with nonclinical populations. Additionally, all campers remained in good behavioral control throughout the summer and their responses to the Assertiveness Scale (discussed further in the Question 2 findings) questions regarding substance abuse-related behavior failed to indicate they were in jeopardy of engaging in this risky behavior.

All campers qualified for the National School Lunch program, thus meeting the low-income eligibility criteria for Main Idea attendance; however, Taylor, Gilligan and Sullivan (1995) note that the psychological literature often tends to fuse individuals who are of low



socioeconomic status – as well as those of minority cultural backgrounds – with those considered at-risk, highlighting these “risk” factors without deeper understanding of the individuals at hand. When youth are labeled in this manner, the focus shifts from examining systemic contextual factors and social conditions, and can therefore result in faulting the individuals – a process that is disempowering as perspectives and voices are further silenced. Thus, Taylor and colleagues (1995) note that the label “at-risk” can connote social, emotional, intellectual or other deficits and can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. This program evaluation works to undertake a more thorough analysis, heeding Taylor et al.’s (1995) call to hear about “at-risk youth’s” experience in their own words and take into account Kidd and Kral’s (2005) emphasis on the need to consider why particular groups are in need of services and examine the definitions – and implications – of such terms as “at-risk.”

In addition to reviewing the data and psychological literature, the program evaluation case study further consulted with camp directors and others regarding the use of the “at-risk” description of Main Idea campers. These conversations resonated with the arguments in the psychological literature against such pejorative labels to describe Main Idea and Leadership Bunk campers. One camp director acknowledged that the girls are “low-income,” but stated her particular concern with such labels as “at-risk, low-income or inner-city as its such a diverse group.” Likewise, as a participant-observer, the consultant heard from a former camper, now a junior counselor, that when she saw the existing Main Idea website where campers are described as “disadvantaged and underprivileged, I felt bad – like a charity case.”

The camp directors noted their main concern about campers’ risk is that these youth have less access to educational and economic resources than others their age. Thus, the

phrase “girls who would otherwise not have the chance to attend summer camp” became considered a more apt description of Main Idea campers than those “at-risk.” This is more in line with the philosophy of empowerment to which the Main Idea ascribes and resonates with psychological literature, such as a recent report by the American Psychological Association (2008), that encourages strength-based opportunities like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk where youth experience a sense of community and active engagement in proactive activities and where youth are considered “‘at-promise’ as opposed to ‘at-risk’” (p. 3). This also fits with the former Main Idea camper quoted above, who recommended that the Main Idea consider its programming a “scholarship.” While this phrasing has not yet been adopted, it is in line with camp directors’ descriptions of how they position the Main Idea to recruiting community agencies and campers’ families as a setting that is not therapeutic, but rather an opportunity that can serve as a reward or source of positive reinforcement for campers.

The push to evaluate aspects of the Main Idea program and use results to better the design and implementation is in line with the organization’s general trend toward clarifying definitions and developing more formal procedures for camp activities so the program can run smoothly for years to come. The website edits are possible at this time, as are continued ongoing program evaluation efforts. In the future, surveys and discussions with campers would benefit from inquiring whether campers have, indeed, had other opportunities to attend other camps in order to determine if the currently adopted phrasing is accurate and supported by program evaluation data.

## QUESTION 2: TO WHAT EXTENT DID THE PROGRAM MEET ITS STATED OBJECTIVE AND GOALS?

This line of inquiry – common in program evaluation procedures – utilizes data to understand whether and how much the program is succeeding in attaining its stated objectives and goals. Such efforts also yield information about whether the objective and goals, as currently stated, are appropriate, and suggest revisions when necessary, thus additionally informing the evolving design of the program.

In order to answer this program evaluation question, the Main Idea Leadership Program's objectives and goals needed to be described in an evaluable form. This specifically meant reframing the objective and goals in a manner that was specific, relevant, possible to attain and that could be measured within a noted timeframe (Maher, 2000). The following are the revamped objective statement and list of the program's goals, with key data variables underlined:

The Leadership bunk is a recreational overnight camp-based program designed to help adolescent girls build self-esteem, communication, teamwork, coping and leadership skills so they can demonstrate resilience and achieve success in the Main Idea community and elsewhere, currently and in the future. Campers will achieve this by working collaboratively with staff, peers and younger campers to engage in physical, fun and creative activities.

1. Campers will develop an improved self-concept as a leader
2. Campers will demonstrate increased self-esteem
3. Campers will demonstrate improved communication skills (i.e., asserting oneself in an appropriate and effective manner)
4. Campers will demonstrate improved teamwork abilities (i.e., successfully work together to complete a common task and reach a common goal)
5. Campers will demonstrate improved coping skills (i.e., learn to solve problems and resolve conflict without heated argument or violence)

6. Campers will advance to the next level of Leadership Bunk (i.e., return to Main Idea as a second year Leadership Bunk camper or Junior Counselor)

In order to evaluate whether the objective and goals were attained, the case study relied on the method of triangulation of various data sources (i.e., combining data on key variables from quantitative assessments and qualitative reports and observations) in a pre-program, post-program and follow-up time series. The mélange of methods included quantitative camper self-report measures (e.g., the RSCA, Self-Esteem Questionnaire and the Assertiveness Scale) as well as qualitative camper surveys, focus groups and individual interviews, staff interviews and surveys, and the consultant's participant-observations.

Qualitative program evaluation data supported the notion that the goals, as currently stated, are appropriate. This was evidenced in campers' pre-program surveys when they were asked to indicate their goals, responses included "find something I can feel proud of myself for," "make friends," "get along with girls," "overcome fears," "be more confident," "be more responsible," "work well with kids," "work together," "learn how to communicate with others," and "be louder." These statements suggest and support the importance to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk target population of self-esteem, confidence, collaboration with others and communication skills, among others things.

For the most part, the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk attained its stated goals and objectives, demonstrated over the course of the 10-day session and at follow-up, fitting with the program's objective to foster change at camp and beyond, now and in the future. Below, core constructs of the objective and goal statements (i.e., resiliency, leadership, self-esteem, communication skills, teamwork, coping skills, advancing to the next level of Leadership Bunk and succeeding in the Main Idea community and elsewhere) are distilled and linked with the quantitative and qualitative methods used to assess changes over time. Specific

results on key variables are detailed. When possible, descriptive statistics are provided. Further statistical inference to assess changes over time was not feasible as the sample size did not providing ample power. Such inference is also unwarranted due to the program evaluation method of investigation, as the program evaluation method does not test a hypothesis, rather provides qualitative and quantitative data that answers questions about the program as a whole. Future research with a larger sample size with adequate power would benefit from the ability to test for statistically significant differences between points in the time series. Such inference was beyond the scope of this pilot program evaluation project.

Qualitative descriptions and themes that emerged from the analysis of these sources are added for further clarity and understanding when relevant and useful. The inclusion of qualitative descriptions complements the Main Idea's need for quantitative metrics for program evaluation and justification with the flexibility qualitative research allows for acknowledging personalized understandings of goal accomplishment on individual camper levels.

### *Resiliency*

According to the objective statement, the Main Idea Leadership Bunk aims to enhance participants' resilience at camp and beyond. In order to examine the overarching impact of Leadership Bunk participation on participants' levels of resiliency, the RSCA indexes of resources and vulnerability provided a quantitative metric to gauge changes over time from pre-program to post-program and follow-up.

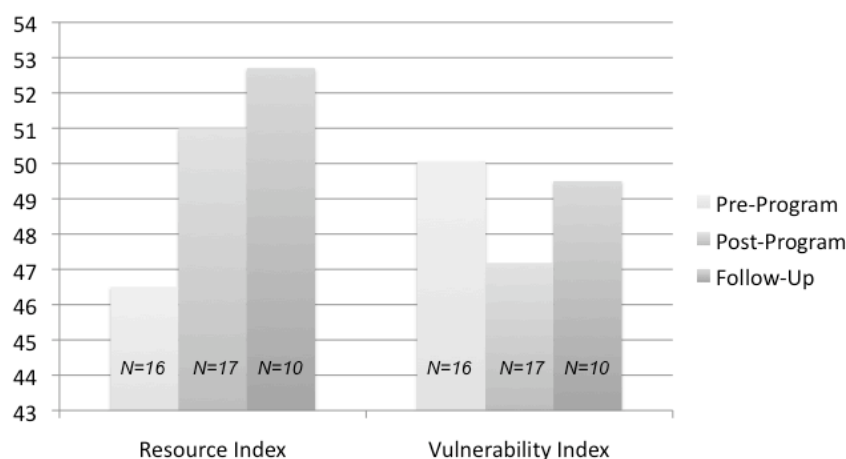


Figure 8. Mean RSCA resource and vulnerability index *T* scores over time.

Whereas the results of Question 1 addressed 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers' baseline RSCA levels, this line of inquiry evaluates the norm-referenced data for changes over time. Figure 8 illustrates the 2008 Leadership Bunk participants' RSCA Resource and Vulnerability Index mean *T* scores and their changes over the course of pre-program, post-program and follow-up.

While all 17 participants were administered the measure at three points in time, these results reflect an N=16 at pre-program, N=17 at post-program and an N=10 at follow-up due to missing data or inability to obtain follow-up data from participants, despite numerous attempts via multiple methods (i.e., internet, mail and telephone) discussed further in regards to Question 5.

The RSCA Resource and Vulnerability Indexes were developed to profile the discrepancies between individuals' strengths and weaknesses. The Resource Index is calculated as an average of the Sense of Mastery and Sense of Relatedness Scales. High Vulnerability Index scores suggest youth are at risk for experiencing difficulty in adverse situations, while high Resource Index scores suggest greater internal and relational resources and strengths (Thorne & Kohut, 2007).

As a whole, the mean index scores at all three points in time fall below the RSCA mean *T* score of 55, within the average range (see Table 4.2 above for score ranges) (Prince-Embury, 2007). These mean scores fall in line with or are better than (i.e., above with regard to resources, below with regard to vulnerability) the norms for clinical and nonclinical populations in Prince-Embury's (2007) sample.

While they remain in the same average range throughout the year of assessments, they do demonstrate changes over time in generally positive directions. Over the course of the 10-day program, the Resource Index mean grows from 46.5 to 51, a 9.7% difference. Then gains are maintained and the mean grows another 3.3% to 52.7 for the sub-sample assessed at follow-up within one year of completing the 2008 Leadership Bunk program.

The Vulnerability Index mean changes over time also demonstrate optimistic results for the program evaluation of the Main Idea, decreasing from 50.06 to 47.18, a 5.6% difference from pre-program to post-program. At follow-up, the sub-sample of 10 campers who were assessed yielded an increase back up to 49.5 – an increase from post-program of 4.9%, but still a decrease of 1.1% from pre-program levels.

While this pilot program evaluation cannot deduce firm causation for such results, it is possible that campers either were unable to maintain the gains with regard to their levels of vulnerability once they left the camp environment, or that the sub-sample who responded to follow-up inquiries reflect a more severe level of vulnerability than the group of 2008 Leadership Bunk campers as a whole. However, in the campers assessed over time, they seem to maintain gains with regard to internal and relational resources that correlate with participation in the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk program.

As such, these data indicate that the program is attaining its goal of promoting resilience in its participants, demonstrated by increasing levels of resources and decreasing levels of vulnerability, as measured by the RSCA.

### *Leadership Qualities*

The Main Idea Leadership Bunk's objective and goal statements emphasizes its aim to both build campers' leadership skills and enhance their self-concepts as leaders. In the pre-program focus group, the 2008 Leadership Bunk campers definitions of leadership included "teamwork," "responsibility," "not being afraid to be yourself and find yourself," "confidence," "being a role model – including the first to say 'shhh,'" "following rules," and "being positive." Combined, these in line with both the staff's understanding of a relational, transformational model of leadership as well as in line with the goals and objectives of the Leadership Bunk program.

Like the Main Idea, many sources in the psychological literature consider leadership a personalized and individualized construct. Thus, numerous researchers about the topic of youth leadership advocate flexible qualitative leadership assessment strategies, rather than structured tools (McCullough, Ashbridge & Pegg, 1994; van Linden & Fertman, 1998). This program evaluation heeded such calls to examine multiple sources of information. In order to evaluate achievement of the program's leadership development objective and goals, the case study examines campers' pre-program, post-program and follow-up self-report surveys as well as counselors' surveys about campers at post-program for quantitative data and qualitative descriptions of changes over time. Knowledge gained from the consultant's participant-observations, camper interviews and focus groups and interviews with Leadership Bunk staff also supplemented this data, when relevant.



Self-concept as a leader.

While the Main Idea understands leadership as individualized to each girl, the surveys and interview protocols the consultant developed for this program evaluation offered methods to examine trends on this variable. Self-report surveys asked the campers to rate how often they feel like a leader. Post-program and follow-up surveys and individual interviews also inquired about the impact of camp on their leadership self-concept.

Figure 9 depicts changes over time in campers' responses to a self-report survey item administered at pre-program, post-program and follow-up asking them to rate "I feel like a leader" on a Likert scale (i.e., never, rarely, sometimes, often, almost always) (See Appendix A for self-report surveys). All 17 Leadership Bunk participants responded to this item at pre- and post-program. Follow-up data reflects responses of 14 campers.



Figure 9. Leadership Bunk "I feel like a leader" survey response means.

The data trends indicate how Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers' attitudes about themselves as leaders changed during their time camp and after. On average, survey responses indicated growth in self-concept as a leader during the course of Main Idea. These gains remained consistent at follow-up. When the qualitative labels were quantified, results

indicated a 4.6% improvement in self-concept as a leader between pre-program and post-program, with an additional gain of 2.5% at follow-up of the sub-sample of 14 participants.

Additionally, post-program and follow-up surveys (see Appendix A) inquired whether campers feel more, less or the same of a leader *because of camp*. At post-program, 15 out of the 17 participants, or 88.2% indicated that as a result of attending camp they felt like more of a leader, while the remaining two (11.8%) endorsed feeling the same of a leader. Of the 14 surveyed at follow-up, all reported feeling like more of a leader. In post-program open-ended responses, multiple 2008 Leadership Bunk campers noted that at camp they learned “to be a leader” or “that I am a leader.” Follow-up interviews elaborated this, with campers describing feeling like a leader more often, such as demonstrating more independence and needing “less guidance,” “encouraging younger campers,” “participating more” and being more interested in “leading and being in charge,” in school or working with younger children. Additionally, some noted how they felt like more of a leader, but had “always been a leader.” In line with the Main Idea’s variety of accepted leadership self-concepts, one camper emphasized feeling more like a leader, but relying on a “quiet” leadership style.

#### Leadership skills.

In addition to camper self-report surveys, focus groups and interviews that tapped changes in campers’ self-concepts as leaders, counselors working with 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers were also queried as to improvements in campers’ leadership qualities over the course of the 10 day camp session on reports they completed on each camper (see Appendix A for a copy of the counselor survey). In response to the question “How have camper’s leadership qualities changed since the first day of camp?” 76%, or 13 out of 17 reports, indicated that the camper had demonstrated improvement in her

leadership (i.e., “Better Leader”). The remaining 14%, or four responses, indicated no change in the campers’ leadership skills.

Qualitative analysis of the counselors’ further comments yielded some notable themes. Counselors generally concretized improvements in leadership skills as speaking up more, taking responsibility, being more interactive with others and reinforcing or modeling positive behavior – even if a girl was typified as a “quiet leader.” Counselors contrasted such leadership abilities with more negative tactics such as using intimidation.

Based on review of the case study program evaluation with regard to changes in campers’ leadership abilities over the course of the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk program session and at follow-up, results indicate that the program is achieving its goal of improving participants’ leadership skills and self-concepts as leaders and its campers’ and staff’s definition of leadership is in line with a transformational, not simply transactional, style of leadership.

### *Self-Esteem*

The Main Idea Leadership Bunk’s objective and goal statements each note their intention to strengthen campers’ self-esteem via participation in the program. This program evaluation case study took into account Guindon’s (2002) assertion that triangulation of multiple raters using qualitative and quantitative assessments is the best method to measure self-esteem, as self-reports often indicate experienced self-esteem, while observation captures observed self-esteem.

The Self-Esteem Questionnaire (SEQ) provides a quantitative measure with which to assess participants’ self-esteem at pre-program, post-program and follow-up across various dimensions. This measure can answer whether campers demonstrate increased self-esteem

over the course of their Leadership Bunk participation and beyond. Counselor ratings of campers, the self-efficacy subscale of the norm-referenced RSCA and camper survey questions about dimensions of self-esteem also complement SEQ results in examining self-esteem changes over the course of program participation and beyond. Surveys about campers also queried counselors about changes they observed in the way the camper feel about themselves over the course of the camp session. Additionally, knowledge gained from the consultant's participant-observations, camper interviews and focus groups and interviews with Leadership Bunk staff also supplement this data, when relevant.

#### Self-Esteem Questionnaire.

Fitting with the definition of self-esteem endorsed by the Main Idea as well as recent sources in the psychological literature (see Chapter II for further discussion), the SEQ measure provides separate sub-scales for global self-esteem, as well as quotients for other self-esteem domains, including how one feels about oneself with regard to peers, family, school, athletics and one's physical characteristics.

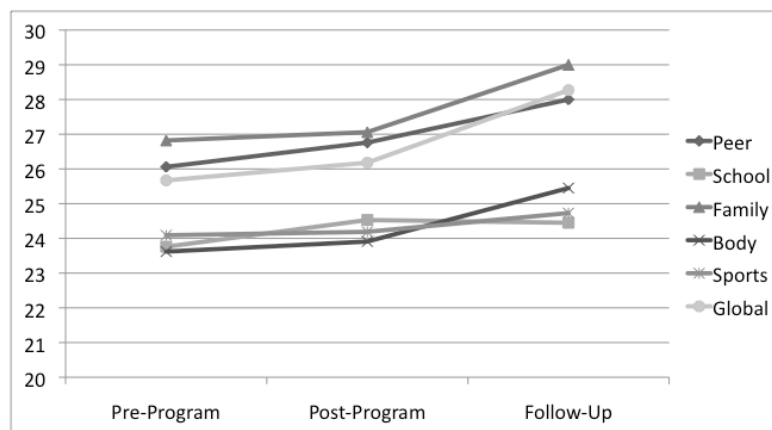


Figure 10. Leadership Bunk Self-Esteem Questionnaire means by dimension.

Figure 10 charts the trajectories of 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers' SEQ scores. Pre-program and post-program data points reflect mean SEQ results from the entire sample ( $N=17$ ), whereas follow-up data is based on the 11 participants who responded.

Personal communication with Dubois (December 10, 2008), one of the measure's developers, indicated that the researchers have not generated enough appropriate norming data to support qualitative labels for the SEQ at this time; however, as guidelines for interpreting the data in the context of program evaluation results, he states that scores below 20 (i.e., the conceptual midpoint of the response scale) indicate low self-esteem. Dubois also noted the caveat that in nonclinical populations, such as the Main Idea Leadership Bunk participants, scores are always positively skewed.

2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk participants do not demonstrate baseline deficits in self-esteem, as measured by the SEQ. This is in line with results from the RSCA, as addressed with regard to the results of program evaluation Question 1. The SEQ data provides further information with which to clarify the characteristics of the target population. Like resilience, with the strength-based model the Main Idea ascribes to, a lack of deficit does not preclude self-esteem as a worthy wellness promotion goal, particularly during the tender transition time of female adolescence, as elaborated in Chapter II.

Despite robust baseline mean levels of self-esteem at pre-program, the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program participants demonstrated improvement on all dimensions of self-esteem over the course of participation in the 2008 session (as measured from pre to post program). Table 5 depicts the percentages of change over time on the SEQ. Due to the methods of this program evaluation case study and the small sample size, further statistical inquiry to document magnitude of effect was not possible.

Table 5

Self-Esteem Questionnaire percentages of changes over time

	Peer	School	Family	Body	Sports	Global
Pre-Program to Post-Program	2.7%	3.2%	.9%	1.2%	.4%	2.0%
Post-Program to Follow-Up	4.6%	-.3%	7.2%	6.4%	2.2%	8.0%
Pre-Program to Follow-Up	7.4%	2.9%	8.1%	7.2%	2.7%	10.1%

At the time of follow-up, for the 11 participants queried, all dimensions except for school-related self-esteem continued to increase. While the methods of this program evaluation do not allow deduction of causation, and these results may be due to chance, some loosely held hypotheses are possible. The trend of increasing self-esteem after the programming end could suggest either the ongoing influence of participation in the Main Idea Leadership Bunk – perhaps particularly for those who were receptive to follow-up data collection – or it could be a result of outside influences not picked up by data collection methods. The documented improvements with regard to peer self-esteem fit with campers’ descriptions at follow-up of improved relationships and enhanced pride in their social selves. The decrease in academic self-esteem for those who responded at follow-up is also consistent with material from individual interviews of campers at follow-up that describe the challenges – as well as the excitement – of advancing to and within high school.

#### Counselor surveys.

Post-program Main Idea counselor surveys also queried staff about changes in campers' self-esteem over the course of participating in the 2008 Leadership Bunk, asking "How do you think the camper feels about herself since the first day of camp?" (see Appendix A for full survey). Results indicated that counselors did not believe any of the 17 participants felt worse about themselves after participating in the 2008 Leadership Bunk program at Main Idea. Seven of the 17 (41%) were deemed to feel better about themselves, whereas 10 (59%) were not observed by counselors to demonstrate a change in self-esteem.

Counselor qualitative comments on surveys add an important layer to understanding these results and further clarify the target population. Counselors described campers who demonstrated improvements in self-esteem in such ways as taking more adaptive risks or speaking up more to their peers. Notably, many of the campers who were not observed to improve in self-esteem were described as presenting to the program with high levels of self-esteem that they maintained over time. Counselors spoke of these camper attributes in positive terms, such as "she came in confident, comfortable in her own skin," or "she came in already strong, knowing what she wanted."

#### Camper surveys.

While this case study provides program evaluation pilot data that is primarily correlational in nature, particular questions from camper surveys supplement the SEQ and counselor survey data to demonstrate increases in camper self-esteem over the course of participation in the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk. The camper survey data aids the case study in examining whether such differences can be attributed to program participation. Specifically, questions asking campers whether "*because of camp*" they have noticed feeling

better about themselves, their bodies, their friendships, and their families serve as additional metrics for assessing whether changes are due to Leadership Bunk program participation.

Please see Appendix A for copies of survey measures.

Table 6

“Because of camp” self-esteem survey response percentages

	<i>Self</i>	<i>Body</i>	<i>Friendships</i>
<b><u>Post (N=17)</u></b>			
<i>Better about my...</i>	70.6%	17.6%	70.6%
<i>Same about my...</i>	29.4%	82.4%	23.5%
<i>Worse about my...</i>	0.0%	0.0%	5.9%
<b><u>Follow-up (N=14)</u></b>			
<i>Better about my...</i>	78.6%	21.4%	64.3%
<i>Same about my...</i>	21.4%	78.6%	35.7%
<i>Worse about my...</i>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Table 6 captures the frequency of responses, in percentages, at post-program and follow-up to Leadership Bunk participant surveys inquiring about changes campers experienced in their self-esteem (with regard to bodies, friendships and in general) “because of camp.” All of the 2008 Leadership Bunk participants (N=17) completed the survey at post-program; whereas 14 participants responded to follow-up entreaties. The results documented in Table 6 indicate that the majority of participants reported improved self-esteem with regard to general self-esteem, as well as feelings about the friendships. Strikingly, only 5.9% of campers (i.e., one camper) noted feeling worse about any of these areas as a result of camp, and this was at post-program. These results, coupled with counselor surveys and SEQ results, provide quantitative support that the Main Idea Leadership Bunk is



achieving its goals of improving camper self-esteem, particularly with regard to general self-regard and one's relational abilities with peers.

The majority of campers experienced no change in their feelings about their bodies that they would attribute to attending camp. Unlike some programs targeting adolescent female participants (e.g., LeCroy & Daley's (2001) Go Grrrls program), the Main Idea Leadership Program does not specifically target campers' physical or bodily self-regard for improvement over the course of participation and at follow-up.

#### Self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy is a construct closely related to self-esteem, as discussed more broadly in Chapter II. The RSCA's self-efficacy subscale provides a quantitative measure for evaluating changes in Leadership Bunk participants' self-efficacy over the course of their participation and beyond. The RSCA creator, Prince-Embury (2007), considers self-efficacy to reflect an individual's experience of her own perseverance, flexible problem solving and decision-making. These are further discussed with regard to other aspects of the Leadership Bunk's goals and objectives.

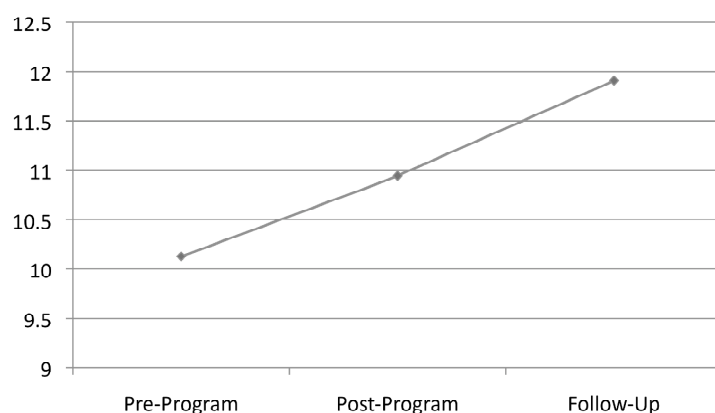


Figure 11. Self-efficacy RSCA sub-scale results over time.

The results of the RSCA self-efficacy subscale program evaluation case study data indicate that Leadership Bunk campers' self-reports of feeling of self-efficacy increased at camp and after, demonstrated by the group level means steady increases over time. As mentioned previously, based on the sample size, there is not enough power to examine beyond mean trends over time. These results, based on an N of 17 at pre- and post-program, and 11 respondents at follow-up indicate that self-efficacy, as measured as a mean of responses to the subscale of the RSCA, increased 8.06% between pre-program and post-program for Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers. Additionally, for the 11 camper who responded to follow-up efforts, results indicated an 8.77% increase from post-program to follow-up, compromising a total 17.5% increase from pre-program to post-program for these group means. It is relevant to note, that despite steady increases, each of these means of campers' RSCA self-efficacy subscale data falls in the average range as indicated by Prince-Embury (2007).

Camper surveys at post-program and follow-up also addressed whether "because of camp" campers felt more, less or the same as "capable of doing things." These data complement the results of the RSCA self-efficacy subscale, by providing a pilot examination of causation, versus pure correlation, of the RSCA increases demonstrated at post-program and follow-up. Of 17 campers at post-program, 82.4% noted that "because of camp" they felt "more capable of doing things," whereas the remainder (17.6%) said they felt the same in this regard. At follow-up, of 14 campers who responded, 92.9% reported feeling more capable of doing things because of camp, whereas the remaining 7.1% felt the same. Post-program surveys also included open-ended questions about the impact of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program. In these responses campers further suggested the program's

contribution to their improved self-efficacy, with one writing “I can be confident and go onstage,” and another noting “I can suckseed if I set my mind to it[*sic*]”

Taken together, quantitative and qualitative results from various sources measured across program participation and at follow-up indicate that the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Program is contributing to increases in camper participants self-esteem and self-efficacy, thus demonstrating achievement of its second goal.

### *Communication Skills*

In order to determine whether the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program is achieving its stated goals and objectives, the case study also evaluated changes in communication skills over the course of Leadership Bunk participation. Communication skills were understood as campers asserting themselves appropriately and effectively – including assertiveness on behalf of oneself and others, as well as the ability to effectively express oneself verbally as well as in other ways.

Multiple data sources informed this stream of the program evaluation case study. LeCroy and Daley’s (2001) Assertiveness Scale provided a quantitative measure with which to assess Leadership Bunk participants’ assertiveness. Camper surveys also include a variety of questions addressing communication skills (e.g., speaking up for oneself, speaking up for others, expressing oneself) that allowed for assessments of changes over the course of program participation and beyond. Counselor surveys about campers also inquired about changes observed in the camper’s level of assertiveness over the course of the camp session. Knowledge gained from the consultant’s participant-observations, camper interviews and focus groups and interviews with Leadership Bunk staff also supplemented this data.

### Assertiveness Scale.

The Assertiveness Scale includes seven items that probe for relational assertiveness skills with peers as well as comfort rejecting friends' offers to use substances of abuse (see Appendix A for a copy of this measure). Each item is scored from one to four and then added together with higher scores indicating greater assertiveness (LeCroy & Daley, 2001). The consultant's personal communication with LeCroy (March 30, 2008) indicates that the researchers have not generated enough appropriate norming data to support qualitative labels at this time. Thus, in this case study, changes in descriptive statistics provide benchmarks for evaluating changes in assertiveness over time.

This measure was chosen in order to replicate previous LeCroy and Daley (2001) program evaluation research that served as a partial analog for the Main Idea Leadership Bunk case study. Questions regarding alcohol, marijuana and crack cocaine use also provided data with which to potentially support applications for substance abuse prevention grants.

Notably, this measure was discarded from the follow-up assessment battery and was only administered to 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers at pre-program and post-program, based on post-program focus group discussions indicating that the campers felt alienated, specifically by the questions regarding substance use. One camper stated, "there's no crack at camp! Why are they asking us this?" The ability to adjust program evaluation measures going forward in the wake of such new information demonstrates the strength of using a model such as Maher's (2000). Program evaluation methods are constantly evolving, taking such live feedback into account to inform ongoing methods. This anecdote also points to the campers' increased assertiveness, enhanced communication skills and comfort with the participant-observing consultant as they were able to speak up and share this feedback so candidly and appropriately at the close of the 2008 session.

In line with such participant-observations, changes in the Assertiveness Scale mean scores indicated group level improvement in this domain over the course of the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk program. The group's mean score went from 26.18 to 26.59 on a 28-point scale. This reflected a 1.5% increase over the 10-day session. As noted above, there are no qualitative labels in which to couch these numbers, and the sample size precludes further statistical inference. While the baseline data was high, whether as a result of high levels of assertiveness in incoming campers or inflated responses based on irritation with the questions, improvement over time is still apparent.

#### Counselor surveys.

In order to provide an additional data source, post-program counselor surveys (see Appendix A) about each individual camper, included the probe "Do you think the camper is more assertive (asking for help, saying no) since the first day of camp?" Results indicated that of the 17 campers, counselors considered 10 (58.8%) more assertive and the remainder, 7 campers (41.2%) equally as assertive as when they first presented to camp. No campers were rated as less assertive over the course of the 10-day program.

Counselors' elaborations of these ratings clarified the quantitative picture. They noted that many campers for whom they did not rate an improvement presented to camp with assertiveness strengths. For those who improved, counselors emphasized increased abilities to "ask for help" or articulate needs. They also mentioned improvements in honesty and greater levels of connection with others for those whose assertiveness improved.

#### Camper surveys.

As with self-esteem, described above, camper surveys at pre-program, post-program and follow-up shed further light on changes in campers' self ratings of assertiveness and

communication skills, as well as the role of camp in the noted improvements in 2008 Leadership Bunk participants' assertiveness.

As with all survey results, pre- and post-program results are based on the entire sample of 17 campers, whereas follow-up results reflect the responses of 14 campers. At each point in time, campers rated the following statements "I speak up for myself" and "I speak up for others" on a Likert scale between never, rarely, sometimes, often and almost always. See Appendix A for a copy of the surveys.

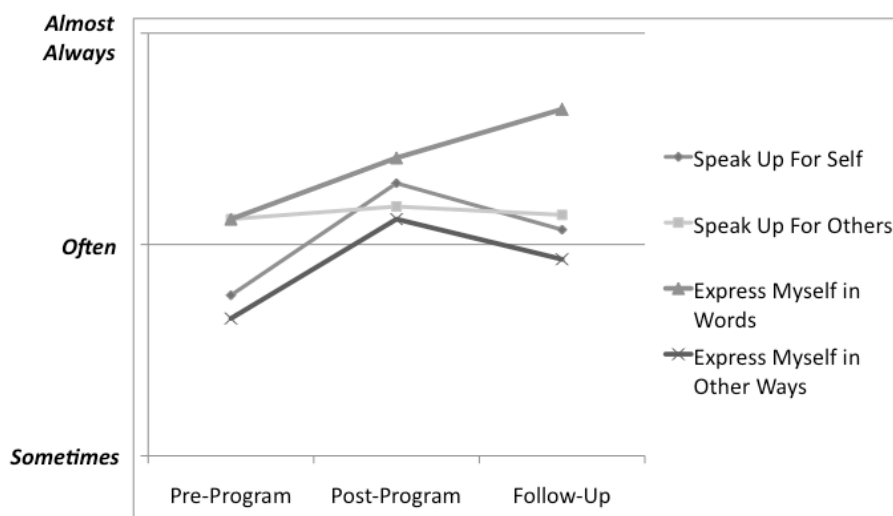


Figure 12. Mean communication skills changes over time.

Figure 12 portrays how camper survey responses indicated increasing levels of communication skills between the beginning and end of camp, and beyond at follow-up, despite a baseline hardy level of assertiveness. Taken together, this camper self-report data demonstrates Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers' improvements in communication and assertiveness skills over the course of time at camp, with some decreases, but still overall gains reflected at the time of follow-up within one year of completing the 2008 session. Between pre-program and post-program campers endorsed an increase of 14.06% in speaking up for themselves – a shift from "often" closer toward "almost often" than

“sometimes.” Post-program survey responses indicated campers’ improved abilities to “talk to people and understand them,” to “get my point across” as well as “I can tell the truth without being mean about it” and a sense of being able to disagree in a calm, respectful manner.

At follow-up, based on the smaller sample ( $N=14$ ), there was a 5.19% decrease that indicated decreases in gains for these campers, compared to the mean of 17 at post-program, but still demonstrated 8.15% growth from pre-program mean levels.

Camper responses for speaking up for others did not yield as marked results. Between the beginning and end of the 2008 Main Idea session campers’ survey responses indicated gains of 1.43% in speaking up for others. In a similar trend to speaking up for themselves, follow-up results also demonstrated a drop (-.80%), but this remained a .61% increase from pre-program levels.

While there was some confusion around the survey probe “I can express myself in other ways,” this mean level data shows a similar trajectory over time to campers’ reported abilities to speak up for themselves and others. Between pre-program and post-program there was a 12.9% increase, followed by a 4.81% decrease by follow-up, indicating an improvement of 7.72% between the beginning of camp and follow-up. Those campers who indicated improvements in expressing themselves in ways other than words, referred to using their artistic talents as well as expressing themselves through performance activities.

Campers’ reported abilities to express themselves verbally (i.e., “using words”) was an aspect of the communication abilities assessed that demonstrated gains over time that extended beyond camp. While between pre- and post-program the mean response to this probe indicated a 7.14% increase, at follow-up an additional increase of 5.24% was noted, yielding total gains of 12.76%. This was also the mean communication skill the campers

answered on average as closest to “almost always.” Follow-up interviews revealed campers were continuing to speak up for themselves and committed to doing so even more. One camper in particular noted how honing these skills at camp helped her manage “drama at a new school. Another camper mentioned how since camp she has been painting and writing poems more often as a way to express her feelings.

Data from campers surveys at post-program and follow-up inquiring whether “because of camp” campers speak up for themselves and others more, less or the same, and whether they can “express themselves using words” or “in other ways” better, the same or worse, provide further data with which to assess whether gains observed over time can be attributed to Main Idea participation. Percentages of campers’ responses are reflected in Table 7.

Table 7

“Because of camp” communication survey response percentages

	<u>More/ Better</u>	<u>Same</u>	<u>Less/ Worse</u>
<b><u>Post (N=17)</u></b>			
<i>Speak up for <u>myself</u> ...</i>	58.8%	35.3%	5.9%
<i>Speak up for <u>others</u> ...</i>	64.7%	35.3%	0.0%
<i>Can express myself <u>using my words</u></i>	82.4%	17.6%	0.0%
<i>Can express myself <u>in other ways</u></i>	41.2%	58.8%	0.0%
<b><u>Follow-up (N=14)</u></b>			
<i>Speak up for <u>myself</u> ...</i>	57.1%	42.9%	0.0%
<i>Speak up for <u>others</u> ...</i>	42.9%	57.1%	0.0%
<i>Can express myself <u>using my words</u></i>	71.4%	28.6%	0.0%
<i>Can express myself <u>in other ways</u></i>	35.7%	64.3%	0.0%



With regard to assertiveness, these results indicate that at post-program the majority of 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk participants felt they speak up for themselves and others more as a result of camp (58.8% and 64.7%, respectively). At follow-up, the majority (57.1%) continue to feel they speak up for themselves more as a result of camp, but there is a decrease to less than half of these 14 respondents endorsing speaking up for others more (42.9), whereas the majority (57.1%) feel they speak up for others the same amount “because of camp.”

In line with findings for assertiveness, survey questions probing whether campers attributed changes in their self-expression to camp participation indicated that the majority of 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk participants felt they could verbally express themselves “better” because of camp at post-program and follow-up (82.4% and 71.4%, respectively). With regard to “other,” nonverbal methods of self-expression, the majority of camper survey responses indicated no change in this regard over the course of program participation and beyond.

Participant-observation suggests that campers were confused as to the meaning of the question “I can express myself in other ways.” Therefore, these results have limited utility. This feedback will be taken into account in efforts to improve the program evaluation process, further addressed in the results of program evaluation Question 5.

These survey results provide preliminary data that the improvements in assertiveness and communication skills reflected in the data presented above can be, at least partially, attributed to participation in the Main Idea camping program. This data, based on the Assertiveness Scale, camper and counselor surveys, participant-observations and follow-up interviews, suggests that the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk program achieved its goal of improving campers’ communication skills as a hefty number of campers indicated their

ability to assert themselves and communicate more effectively over the course of their time at camp and maintain gains afterward, as documented at follow-up.

### *Teamwork*

The Main Idea Leadership Bunk also aims to promote campers' teamwork skills, as reflected in the program's objective statement and goals. The Main Idea defines teamwork as working collaboratively in order to complete a common task or reach a common goal. It is believed that the Main Idea provides campers an opportunity to hone their teamwork skills by working collaboratively with staff, peers and younger campers. As such, this program evaluation case study examined this via camper self-report surveys, focus groups and interviews, counselor surveys and interviews and the consultant's participant-observations.

#### Counselor surveys.

Post-program counselor surveys prompted staff to address observed changes in each camper's cooperation, participation, interaction with peers and staff over the course of the camp session. See Appendix A for a copy of the counselor survey.

Table 8  
Counselor ratings of campers' teamwork abilities

	<u>More*/Very</u>	<u>Same*/Somewhat</u>	<u>Less*/Not at All</u>
<b>Participation*</b> (compared to peers)	6 (35.3%)	10 (58.8%)	1 (5.9%)
<b>Cooperation</b> (with campers, staff)	15 (88.2%)	2 (11.8%)	0 (0.0%)
<b>Interaction</b> (with other campers)	6 (35.3%)	11 (64.7%)	0 (0.0%)
<b>Interaction</b> (with staff)	6 (35.3%)	10 (58.8%)	1 (5.9%)
<i><u>Change over Camp</u></i>	<u>More</u>	<u>No Change</u>	<u>Less</u>
<b>Participation</b>	5 (29.4%)	10 (58.8%)	2 (11.8%)
<b>Cooperation</b> (with campers, staff)	2 (11.8%)	14 (82.4%)	1 (5.9%)
<b>Interaction</b> (with other campers)	4 (23.5%)	13 (76.5%)	0 (0.0%)
<b>Interaction</b> (with staff)	7 (41.2%)	9 (52.9%)	1 (5.9%)

Counselor responses to end of camp surveys addressing teamwork in terms of participation, cooperation and interaction with staff and other campers were striking in comparison to the data discussed previously. These surveys asked counselors to rate campers in terms of these qualities and whether there was any change over the course of the camp program. The results are depicted in Table 8.

The few campers rated as lacking in participation or cooperation with staff can be considered outliers. The majority of campers were considered to participate the same

amount as their peers or to be somewhat interactive. Importantly, the majority of campers were rated as “very” cooperative with campers and staff. This provides support that campers are adopting aspects of the relational model the Main Idea espouses.

With regard to changes observed over the course of the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk program, participants who were generally deemed to demonstrate consistency over time in their participation, cooperation and interaction with others campers and staff. The most change over camp noted was with regard to increased interaction with staff, but this failed to constitute a majority of Leadership Bunk campers.

Counselors’ elaborations of their ratings provided some further clarity to these results. Counselor reports indicate that the scant observed decreases came along with such campers’ increased negative attitudes. For those whose participation and cooperation remained the same over time, counselors noted these campers did “not go above and beyond,” whereas those who showed improvements were “leaders not just campers” who exceeded expectations. In terms of interaction with campers, improvements were noted when campers were able to break out of their comfort zones and interact with girls from other bunks or other parts of the country, whereas girls who stayed similar to beginning of camp levels did not demonstrate a notable tendency to do this. As for increasing interaction with counselors, girls noted to improve were able to expand the universe of counselors with whom they interacted and tended to “open up” over the course of the week. Some data may not reflect the group as accurately as possible as some campers were noted to present to camp as strong in these areas and thus counselors believed they did not need to demonstrate growth.

Based on the counselors' reports the program evaluation case study can conclude that the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk only partially met its goal of improving campers' levels of teamwork through working collaboratively with other campers and staff as measured by counselor ratings of participation, cooperation and interaction.

Camper surveys.

Camper surveys complement counselor reports to evaluate whether the program met its objective and goal to improve campers' teamwork. At pre-program, post-program and follow-up, camper surveys consistently inquired about how much a camper feels "like a team player." Post-program and follow-up surveys probed whether camp participation impacts this variable, asking campers to rate whether "because of camp" they feel like more, less, or the same of a "team player." See Appendix A for copies of these surveys.

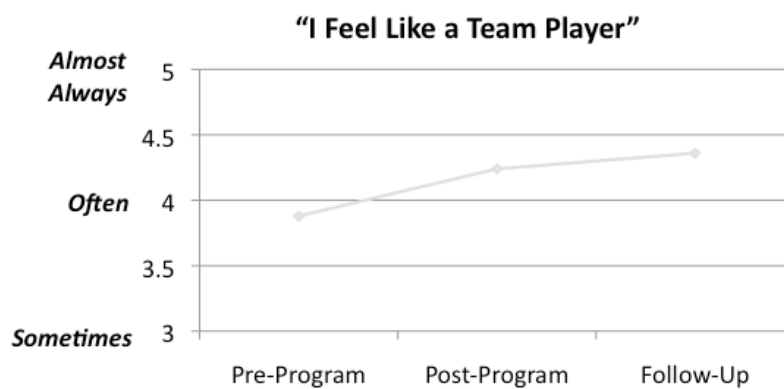


Figure 13. "I feel like a team player" results over time.

Camper survey responses indicate growing gains in self-perceptions of teamwork abilities over the course of Main Idea Leadership Bunk program – and beyond for the 14 follow-up survey respondents. Figure 13 depicts these gains, as the mean response increased 9.3% from the beginning to end of camp and another 2.8% at follow-up, totaling an overall increase of 12.4% between pre-program and follow-up. In line with counselor survey results,

as the question probed feeling like a “team player,” it is possible this question is tapping a similar construct as when counselors were asked about campers collaboration, to which the majority of campers were considered to be very cooperative and demonstrate modest improvements over the course of the camp program.

While these results cannot be completely attributed to Main Idea Leadership Bunk participation, they provide promising results and contrast counselor reports about the impact of the program on campers’ teamwork. Post-program and follow-up surveys provide more information whether such increases are at least partially attributed to camp, by asking campers whether “because of camp” they feel like more, less, or the same of a “team player.” No campers indicated feeling like “less” of a team player because of camp. At post-program, of the 17 respondents, 64.7% reported feeling like “more” of a team player, while 35.3% endorsed feeling “the same” in this regard. Of the 14 respondents to follow-up surveys, 78.6% indicated feeling like “more” of a team player while 21.4% felt “the same.” On follow-up interviews, campers reported feeling like more of a team player when “I let someone else lead,” “listen to other people’s opinions more” or behave in a “less pushy” manner. Campers attributed these enhancements to their teamwork skills to camp activities.

These results indicate that not only are camper self-reports demonstrating growth in teamwork self-concept, but these gains are maintained beyond camp and attributed to camp attendance. However, when camper survey results are combined with counselor reports, the program evaluation case study concludes that the objective and goal of improving campers’ teamwork abilities is only partially met.

The analysis of these results suggests the need for increased clarification of questions to counselors and campers that are more streamlined with Main Idea definitions of teamwork as well as the potential need to improve interventions working to target

improvements in campers' participation and interaction, however, the case study demonstrates that existing efforts toward cooperation are effective. Future program evaluation efforts would benefit from further clarification as to the Main Idea's definition of teamwork and subsequently, more reliable and valid measures of assessing such an operationalized understanding of this concept.

### *Coping Skills*

The Main Idea Leadership Bunk aims to enhance campers' coping skills, specifically their abilities to solve problems and resolve conflict without heated argument or violence. As such, the program's ability to achieve this goal was also evaluated in the course of the case study. Surveys inquired about campers' problem-solving self-beliefs in a manner that allowed for assessing the impact of camp program participation on these skills. Knowledge gained from the consultant's participant-observations, camper interviews and focus groups and interviews with Leadership Bunk staff also supplemented this data, when relevant.

Post-program and follow-up surveys asked campers whether "because of camp" they are "better," "worse" or "the same" of problem-solvers. See Appendix A for copies of these measures. No campers endorsed feeling like worse problem-solvers at either time. The entire sample of 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers responded to post-program surveys and 88.2% reported feeling like "better" problem solvers because of camp, whereas the remaining 11.8% indicated no change in this regard. At follow-up, of the 14 respondents to survey inquiries, 78.6% continued to endorse feeling like "better" problem solvers, while the remaining 21.4% reported feeling "the same." While these results are limited with no comparison over time of self-concept with regard to problem-solving or conflict resolution

skills, they provide support for the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program's attainment of the goal of increasing participants' coping skills, as currently defined.

Post-program surveys and follow-up interviews with campers yielded specific data about the impact of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk experience on their coping and conflict resolution skills. A theme that emerged was enhanced dedication to talking through issues in order to resolve them. In her interview, one camper stated that she learned to "talk it out, instead of just walking away, because that puts it on pause." Similarly, a different camp noted on her post-program survey how at camp she "learned to deal with certain people, how to stay mature and centered even if I was angry and wanted to give up." Another program participant mentioned in her interview how she learned to recognize "I couldn't always be the boss. I had to cooperate with others girls. If there was a disagreement we would sit down and talk to each other so no one went to bed with a bad impression or a bad day."

Counselor interviews and participant-observations also provided data that the Main Idea Leadership Bunk is enhancing campers' problem-solving and coping skills. In post-program interviews, multiple counselors mentioned the campers' improved abilities to take initiative, problem-solve, work together, help others and learn from mistakes. Counselor interviews also noted the campers' sense of maturity and that there was "no fighting." As addressed in the results of Question 1 addressing the Leadership Bunk campers' abilities to remain in good behavioral control, during the 2008 Main Idea session there were no physical altercations between campers. The consultant's participant-observations also support that the campers, with the help of staff, were generally able to resolve their conflicts effectively. There were no incidents of violence and when arguments became heated, campers were typically responsive to redirection and staff guidance. Campers also demonstrated growing abilities to independently solve problems with regard to managing younger campers. For



example, by helping staff to appropriately quiet campers and encourage focus and respect during camp-wide activities or announcements. These gains seemed to maintain over time, with campers indicating in their follow-up interviews that they continued to experience greater problem-solving abilities, such as “helping people if they have an emotional problem” or “sitting back and looking first, and then I act instead of acting on instinct.”

Thus, based on the available data, the goal of improving campers’ coping skills was attained by the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk. However, future program evaluation efforts would benefit from improving methods for examining changes in campers’ coping abilities – specifically problem-solving and conflict resolution skills – over the course of their camp participation and beyond. Camper surveys or another method of assessing camper self-perceptions of their problem solving and conflict resolution skills would be useful. Additionally, it would behoove the Leadership Bunk program evaluation efforts to incorporate an item to address campers’ problem-solving abilities, specifically without heated argument or violence, into the counselor surveys. This would allow for of whether this goal was attained, based on multiple methods of all campers, without relying as heavily on participant-observation and interview data.

#### *Advance to the Next Level of Leadership Bunk*

An additional concrete goal of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk is for campers to advance to its next level – as second year Leadership Bunk campers or as Junior Counselors if they have completed both Leadership Bunk years. Achieving this goal entails two things. Campers must behave in a manner during the Main Idea session that allows them to be invited back. Given that, campers must then choose to return to camp the following year. This program evaluation uses counselor surveys, participant-observation and follow-up camper interviews to examine the number of campers who were invited back and returned.

As addressed above, with regard to program evaluation results for Question 1, campers did demonstrate the need for behavioral correction at times, but all campers fulfilled the eligibility criteria and showed promise for the benefit of returning to continue in the Main Idea program. While not formalized, the general indications for a camper being asked to return was her ability to maintain the eligibility criteria, specifically her ability to remain in good behavioral control throughout the summer.

Participant-observations also found that the camp directors set a tone that particularly “kids on the fringe” – those who had demonstrated some difficulties at Main Idea – would particularly benefit from returning, as it was likely this behavior goes on in other places and the Main Idea’s psychosocial interventions could demonstrate effectiveness over time at camp and elsewhere. As one counselor stated with regard to the program only lasting 10 days, “its more what they take away and then bring back with them.”

Some counselors took pause over campers who demonstrated a less than stellar attitude or below average participation and cooperation, but inevitably counselors agreed with the camp directors, concluding that all 17 2008 Leadership Bunk campers should be invited to return for the 2009 Main Idea session. Of the 17 campers asked to return, 15 were possible to contact for follow-up interviews. Of these, all 15 indicated their intention to return to Main Idea in 2009.

In summary, the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk program attained its goal of campers advancing to the next level of the program as all participants were invited to do so and a majority (88.2%) planned to take advantage of this opportunity. However, future program evaluation efforts would benefit from greater understanding as to why follow-up non-respondents did not respond, how these Leadership Bunk participants compare to

respondents and whether relevant factors emerge that the Main Idea could consider to improve ongoing progress monitoring and retention rates.

*Success in the Main Idea Community and Elsewhere*

The Main Idea Leadership Bunk objective statement indicates the program's hope that campers will not only demonstrate gains in psychosocial functioning that are evident during the camp program, but those that transcend its temporal and spatial boundaries. While the results thus far indicate that the program is generally attaining its stated objective and goals reflected by success in the Main Idea community and elsewhere, in order to examine the attainment of this aspect of the program's objectives, data from camper surveys and interviews was also consulted to better understand how these gains are manifested at camp and beyond.

Campers' responses to post-program and follow-up surveys (see Appendix A for copies of surveys) indicated that campers strongly felt Leadership Bunk participation impacted their behavior at camp. At post-program, 70.6% agreed with this statement, whereas 29.4% disagreed. At follow-up, of the 14 respondents, 78.6% agreed with this and 21.4% disagreed. Notably, at post-program only 35.3% of campers anticipated that Leadership Bunk participation would impact their behavior outside of camp, with 47.1% expecting it not to have an effect and the remaining 17.6% stating they were unsure; however, at follow-up 71.4% of those who responded indicated that participating in the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk affected their behavior outside of camp, with the remaining 28.6% disagreeing. This indicated that campers are attributing ongoing influence to participation in the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program, thus providing further support that this aspect of the program's objective is being accomplished.

Camper follow-up interviews were also informative for the case study. Campers did not generally describe thinking about camp during rough spots throughout the year, but how thinking about friends at camp could provide comfort in moments of difficulty. Generally, campers described how their camp-based learning generalized in other ways. This included better coping and adaptation during transitions, such as from middle to high school or to boarding school; an improved self-concept as a role model; and better abilities relating to others and communicating, particularly with younger people. Campers noted being “friendlier” and “nicer to younger kids.” They noted speaking up more often in school and having more skills for resolving difficulties with friends. They also indicated greater involvement in their communities and schools, such as participating more – with greater confidence – in sports, performing arts, church and other extracurricular activities since returning from the 2008 session of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk. Campers reported that these increased opportunities often left them with greater confidence in their physical and interpersonal abilities.

Follow-up interviews also probed campers about their hopes and plans for the future. In line with the Main Idea’s aims, many campers indicated their desire to remain involved with and connected to the Main Idea, including “work there” and “finish the leadership program.” When asked where they saw themselves in 10 years, almost all campers mentioned attending college and eventually pursuing careers, such as in medicine, science, the performing arts or working with children. This reflects well on an additional implicit goal the Main Idea’s founder hoped participation in camp would facilitate for campers: commitment to attending college. No previous formal follow-up has been possible to measure levels of success in this regard. While these initial results of campers’ hopes and plans for the future reflect positively on progress toward this goal, recommendations for

future program evaluation efforts to monitor campers over longer periods of time, discussed in the results of program evaluation Question 5, will help the Main Idea measure future attainment of this goal.

### *Summary*

As elaborated above, over the course of the 10 day 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk program, the means of campers' available quantitative data indicate improvements with regard to resiliency, leadership, various dimensions of self-esteem and communication skills. Campers deemed their teamwork abilities as improved, but counselors were less convinced, and future program evaluation methods to assess this goal require fine-tuning. Coping skills were difficult to assess for changes over time, but preliminary data suggests they improved. At follow-up, for those who responded to inquiries, resiliency continued to show further gains, but vulnerability had again increased, although not to baseline levels. Leadership also slightly increased. Self-esteem continued to demonstrate gains in most dimensions, particularly with regard to peer relationships and global self-beliefs, but school self-esteem had declined, however, not below baseline levels. Communication skills also decreased slightly, but demonstrated gains over baseline and continued gains with regard to campers' abilities to express themselves verbally. Taken together these results indicate that the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program is attaining its stated objective and goals. The case study further addresses factors that may be associated with the attainment of these goals in answering program evaluation Question 3.

### QUESTION 3: WHAT FACTORS MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH PROGRAM OUTCOMES?

This line of inquiry uses qualitative methods to examine what aspects of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program's design may contribute to the changes in participants' feelings, thoughts and behaviors, documented and elaborated above in the results of program evaluation Question 2. This component of the case study goes beyond probing participants about whether "because of camp" they noticed various changes in themselves, to work toward a preliminary understanding of *how* the program achieves its goals and objectives. Inquiring about what components of the existing program design are associated with individual and group level changes and improvements provides pilot data toward understanding what facilitates attainment of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program's goals and objectives. The results presented are loose hypotheses that work to account for changes seen between pre, post and follow-up described in the results of program evaluation Question 2. Future research could test such hypotheses, but such inquiry is beyond the scope of this pilot evaluation project.

This program evaluation question is answered by synthesizing data from camper surveys, group discussions and individual interviews, counselor interviews and the consultant's participant-observations. Emphasis is placed on the words and opinions of the participants, with others' feedback supplementing this data. The qualitative data was analyzed based on the source of the information and then synthesized in order to present qualitative descriptions of themes that emerged.

#### *Camper Surveys*

As part of the 2008 post-program and follow-up surveys, Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers were presented with checklists to endorse as many items as applied in terms of what helped them learn at camp (see Appendix A for a copy of the full survey). Post-

program surveys are from all participants (N=17), while the follow-up surveys were completed by 14 participants. For the follow-up survey, an additional item was added regarding the impact of “making mistakes.”

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Table 9  
Things that helped me learn at camp

	<i>Post-Program</i>	<i>Follow-Up</i>
Having <u>role models</u>	71%	57%
Having <u>goals</u>	65%	71%
Having <u>responsibilities</u>	88%	93%
<u>Working with my bunkmates</u>	82%	79%
<u>Being part of a team</u>	71%	86%
<u>The play</u>	65%	71%
<u>Making mistakes</u>	-	71%
<u>Trying new activities</u>	76%	86%
<u>Planning evening activity</u>	94%	79%
<u>New friends</u>	71%	79%
<u>Old friends</u>	71%	79%
<u>Staff</u>	53%	64%
<u>Ropes course</u>	65%	64%

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As depicted in Table 9, results indicated that, on average, participants found all of these factors to impact their learning. Results were fairly consistent between post-program and follow-up. At post-program, the group of campers endorsed “planning evening activity,” “having responsibilities” and “working with my bunkmates” as the most influential components of the Leadership Bunk program on their learning. Notably, “staff” was rated as the lowest contributing component to their learning. This is in line with participant-observations and the psychological literature that indicate adolescents are more focused on their peer group and their evolving independence than on interacting with adults (Englund et al., 2000; Perl, 2008).

At post-program, of the 14 campers responding, “having responsibilities” was endorsed most frequently, followed by “being part of a team” and “trying new activities.” This demonstrated a shift that might indicate the more abstract nature of campers’ reflections once they were further integrating their learning at a greater distance (with regard to physical location and time) from camp. At follow-up, contrary to what camp directors and the psychological literature would suggest (Pipher, 1994), “having role models” was endorsed with the least frequency by this group of participants. Over half of respondents still acknowledged staff as helping them learn, but it can also be understood that in follow-up surveys and interviews campers tended to emphasize the importance of *their* opportunity to be role models, over their experience of looking up to staff.

Based on examining the results of this survey inquiry and the other data sources for emerging themes, five main factors were distilled as associated with positive program outcomes of the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk. These included the impact of being role models; having responsibilities; participating in specific activities; the model of camp that includes living, working and playing together; and empowerment. Each of these factors are addressed separately below.

#### *Role Models*

Abundant in the qualitative data from this program evaluation was the theme of Leadership Bunk campers attributing changes they experienced at camp to being role models for younger campers in this setting. This was such a notable finding, and such an integral aspect of campers’ and staff’s definition of leadership at Main Idea, that an additional program evaluation recommendation is to incorporate this into the goals and objectives of the program design.



Not all campers initially demonstrated confidence that they could be effective leaders or role models at Main Idea. During the pre-program group discussion, some campers voiced concerns about their short stature interfering with being taken seriously or respected by younger campers. While counselors tried to set the tone and plant the seed from initial discussions that campers could and would be leaders, the most effective tool for assuaging doubts seemed to come from within the group of participants' discussions with each other. More optimistic campers were able to encourage others and suggest that campers will take you more seriously if you "don't just treat them like you're they're friend," but instead to appropriately demonstrate your authority.

Campers described increasingly feeling like role models, at camp and afterward. In post-program surveys Leadership Bunk participants suggested that feelings like role models – as well as feeling more confident and like better leaders – helped them achieve their goals. They described the importance at Main Idea of behaving appropriately as younger campers are "looking up to us" so "we are not fooling around as much as younger girls are watching." They increasingly noted the pleasure they were taking in singing the younger campers to sleep at the end of the day or guiding large groups of youngsters to keep the overwhelming evening activity time organized, calm and fun for everyone. Individually, one camper noted always drinking her milk when at the table with younger campers as a way to influence them in a positive way. However, this was also balanced by the ability to still enjoy oneself when one camper stated "I learned to do the right thing no matter who's watching, for the younger girls, but to still have enough time to have fun and chill."

Over the course of the program, it became clear that campers were able to develop the skills that the Leadership Bunk program works to impart best by modeling them *in vivo* for younger campers. For example, the efficacy of discussions about effective conflict

resolution techniques were far outweighed by opportunities for the Leadership Bunk participants to work with a bunk of younger campers who were struggling to get along and develop cohesion within their group. After a brief preparatory discussion with staff to anticipate the situation and facilitate exploration of what would work to help the younger campers resolve their difficulties, the Leadership Bunk went to work with the younger group of campers in small groups. It was experiential rather than educational; they learned by doing, not listening or lecturing. This became a theme that would inform the entire program evaluation and captures the essence of what the Main Idea works to provide. Working with the younger campers to resolve conflicts seemed to be a more meaningful, digestible way for Leadership Bunk campers to practice and hone this skill for themselves. Staff later made sure to affirm the changes we all observed in the younger campers to the Leadership Bunk, in effort to promote some reflection and consolidation of their advancing relational skills.

When interviewed months after camp, and asked about what changes in themselves they attribute to the Leadership Bunk experience, participants continued to note the importance of being a role model for younger children, knowing that “others are watching and looking up to you,” and the experience of working with younger campers to “help them with their problems.” At follow-up, some campers also described how this sense of carrying themselves appropriately to act as role models continued into their school communities. One camper, initially noted to be quite shy at Main Idea, stated, “I encourage people to come out and do more afterschool things like sports, activities or just hanging out.”

### *Responsibilities*

Another related, but distinct theme that emerged in the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk program was the importance of participants’ having responsibilities at camp. This emerged as both contributing to camper improvements and as a point to consider and take

care with, given the developmental phase of adolescence and importance of individual differences amongst the group of campers.

“Having responsibilities” was one of the items campers attributed most highly to contributing to their learning at camp, based on post-program and follow-up surveys. When clarifying what was meant by responsibilities, campers included working with younger campers in various ways and planning activities.

Pre-program focus groups captured campers’ mixed reactions to Leadership Bunk responsibilities. Initially, some stated they would feel empowered by responsibilities, because at home they feel “babied.” Yet, others reported duties at home to include many responsibilities such as caring for younger siblings, doing chores, babysitting – and were relieved to not have to attend to those responsibilities during their time at camp. The latter reaction was in line with what the camp directors had described with regard to clarifying the target population of leadership bunk campers. The program evaluation case study demonstrated the variety within this group of adolescent girls, where at follow-up some campers continued to report finding camp less stressful than home due to fewer responsibilities in the camp setting, but also noted that at camp they have more independence and opportunities for different kinds of responsibility which they find appealing.

While providing Leadership Bunk campers with responsibilities was associated with promoting their psychosocial growth, some negative side effects were also observed. This was particularly when their blossoming roles or privileges at camp did not accelerate gradually, and when added responsibilities – or removal of them – were not linked as positive or negative reinforcement for other behaviors. Some counselors working with them observed Leadership Bunk campers to get “too big for their britches” or be “on a power

trip” at times during camp. While this is common given the fragile state of adolescent egos, such observations provided important program evaluation data that could already be applied during 2008, and will be even more entrenched in future sessions. It was clarified that the Leadership Bunk responsibilities should gradually increase over the course of the 10 day program, and that added opportunities and privileges should be presented as rewards “to be earned, not a given.” Thus, if campers did not earn or maintain their privileges, program design should allow for responsibilities to be removed. Staff began to incorporate such an approach during the session, and at least one camper recalled in her follow-up interview that one of the messages she learned at camp was “when I do stuff I think about how it will affect me later on.”

Upon follow-up, for those interviewed, feedback demonstrated campers’ appropriate sense of responsibility was integrated and generalized to their lives outside of camp. Multiple campers stated they felt “more responsible” and “more comfortable with responsibility.” Appropriately, they also recognized, as one said, “I’m not more important than anybody else. Just more responsible.” They reported taking “things seriously, not as a game” at school and elsewhere. As well as wanting “to complete things, take the lead and do it correctly.” Further, campers attributed their choices of future jobs to camp, with many noting enjoying the responsibility of working with younger campers and now seeking work babysitting or at other camps in their communities.

### *Specific Activities*

The Main Idea emphasizes “Challenge by Choice” where campers are encouraged to push themselves to take adaptive risks and transcend their comfort zones, while respecting that each individual sets her own risk level. Campers are asked to participate in a range of activities, but are given the option to not participate. Despite this principle, during the 2008

Main Idea Leadership Bunk session no campers opted not to participate in any of the core program activities. While individual preferences and reactions naturally emerged over the course of the program evaluation case study, specific activities were identified as integral components of the program associated with camper improvements and learning. Each is discussed, with descriptions and examples of the activity provided, as well as the documented impact on campers.

Planning and running evening activity: Birthday Night.

In line with the above-described findings about the importance of responsibilities in the Main Idea Leadership Bunk, campers and counselors emphasized the importance of participants taking responsibility for planning and running one of the evening activities as a key component of the program. This was an opportunity for Leadership Bunk campers to tap into their organizational skills, be role models, take responsibility, work together, hone their communication skills and enjoy themselves with the rest of the camp community joining them and looking on. It was another example of the campers “learning while doing” where the staff worked to first model and prepare them for the responsibility, but then allowed them to test out their new skills and take charge planning “Birthday Night,” an event where the camp divides into groups to play games that would be found at a birthday party and then compete in a cake decorating contest, grouped by seasons of the year. Interviews with campers highlighted this event as key to their growth at Main Idea, stating this event felt it defined their role at camp more clearly and provided “a chance to show people what we can do.” Counselors observed that the campers seemed “empowered” by leading this activity.

Participant-observations from this event also noted how such an event allows the youth to showcase their unique leadership styles. As the event was broken up into small

workgroups, each Leadership Bunk camper had a responsibility and a role, regardless of their leadership style. For some Leadership Bunk campers, this meant taking an active role, loudly and assertively directing large groups of people. For others, it was not trying to make a soft voice carry over one hundred people, but recognizing her ability to have an impact on small groups of cake decorators – and understanding this as leadership as well. This activity captures the flexibility of the definition of leadership Main Idea ascribes to and how the design of the Leadership Bunk program allows for mirroring of girls' varying understandings and demonstrations of this concept.

#### The play.

During the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk session, campers were also tasked with writing and performing their own play for the talent show in an opportunity to express themselves creatively. For some campers, this activity was clearly one they challenged themselves with, by choice. At post-program and follow-up, many campers attributed this activity to changes in themselves, noting it as an opportunity to “face my fears” with positive results. One camper, for example, stated “I learned I like being on stage even though I’m quiet sometimes.” Campers noted how the positive reactions from others in the camp community reinforced their pride in having taken part in the play.

#### Teamwork activities.

The play was one of many team activities the Leadership Bunk participants engaged in and attributed to gains, but a variety of physically-challenging communication and ropes course teambuilding activities were also noted by campers and staff as another way of allowing the campers to develop trust amongst one another, challenge themselves and improve their skills through active, rather than passive learning experiences. While not all

campers reporting enjoying these activities, multiple campers remarked that despite not caring for the activity, they learned from it nonetheless.

The brief reflective exercises following such activities often seemed to serve to provide an opportunity for campers to consolidate their learning. In post-program surveys and follow-up conversations, numerous campers pointed out the importance of opportunities to reflect at camp and “look deeper” in order to learn more about themselves.

*Camp: Living, Working and Playing Together*

Attending an overnight camp for 10 days means campers inevitably live, work and play together in a unique environment – one where they do not go home at the end of the day; are supervised by counselors, not parents; and – much to their chagrin – do not have constant access to their Facebook pages and text messages. This intense contact within the Main Idea Leadership Bunk provides opportunities for campers to bond with campers and staff; to learn about themselves; to try new behaviors; to improve teamwork, communication and conflict resolution skills; and to meet new, different people and develop new relationships with them. These factors were all identified within being “thrown in it” at camp, and subsequently associated with change for and by 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk participants. Campers also noted the intensive practice of being immersed in camp provides a consistency where “you get more from it” and learning can be further solidified. Campers reported feeling more mature and in control of themselves as a result of being away from home for their Main Idea Leadership Bunk experience.

Camper follow-up interviews noted various aspects of living and working together at camp that they attributed to changes they saw in themselves subsequent to participating in the Leadership Bunk. These included things from cleaning the bunks together, to “because we are living together, we had to work to get along.” This work included “dealing with

various personalities” and “people showing their true colors” or compromising, “being more respectful of people and their things,” and “putting differences aside.” Another camper captured the blend of camp experiences aptly on her post-program survey when she wrote, “we always had fun with everybody, even though we got mad at each other and resolved it.”

Campers and staff identified teamwork as key to understanding changes in Leadership Bunk campers. One camper described how the Leadership Bunk “made me feel that if we stick together we’ll accomplish more things. And I kind of learned that from doing all the teamwork we did in Leadership Bunk.” One counselor reflected a common sentiment when she noted the group’s ability to develop cohesion, stating “they were really good at coming together as a group.”

Improved communication and conflict resolution skills also emerged as a theme that could be attributed to the camp experience. One camper pointed out, “when you’re at camp and someone does something bad, you can’t hold it against them. You have to forgive and move past or you won’t have a good time.” Upon follow-up interviews, campers described the various ways they would “move past” disagreements, emphasizing direct verbal communication, compromise and cooperation, staying engaged and centered “even if you wanted to give up.” These recollections suggest that the camp experience and setting inevitably contained conflict and the Leadership Bunk provided adaptive options for resolving disagreements that campers recalled well after leaving camp. Some of these options including “talking it out,” “working it out on the ropes course,” facilitating conflict resolution in younger campers and consistently discouraging “going to bed angry.”

The overnight camp setting was also seen to facilitate bonding between campers as well as with staff. Campers noted the opportunity to spend time with new and old friends as a cardinal aspect of their camp experience and fondly remembering “the people” from Main



Idea. One camper linked this time with friends with having a “new outlook on relationships.”” Many campers reporting learning more about themselves at camp and attributed this to sharing ideas and feelings with peers. One camper described camp as a place “where you can be yourself, where people like you for who you are.” Camp relationships fostering such take away messages and affirming campers’ positive sense of self is an implicit goal of the Main Idea program, and for peer relationships to facilitate this goal is a developmentally-relevant need for these adolescent participants.

One Leadership Bunk counselor captured the opportunities camp provides for “natural bonding moments with staff,” recalling how as she persistently checked in on more shy girls over the course of the week they gradually “came out of their shells over time” and were able to develop stronger connections to her and their peers. Overnight camp provides an intensified setting in which to facilitate and examine these changes. Notably, the campers themselves did not tend to emphasize their relationships with the staff as central to their learning or growth at camp. As noted above, due to their developmental phase, these adolescents may be more likely to focus on their relationships with peers than older adults, regardless of the actual import or impact of relationships with counselors and staff. The staff’s role at the Main Idea is not to make the importance of their relationships with campers unnecessarily explicit, but rather to model effective leadership and relational skills while fostering an environment where campers can have fun and thrive. This may include creating opportunities for activities and relationships, as well as providing support or information when necessary (Hardy Girls, Healthy Women, 2009).

At the Main Idea, counselors worked to provide campers opportunities to get to know fellow participants they did not know as well, mixing groups up, encouraging campers to get to know others outside their geographical or cultural affiliations. These types of

facilitator interventions are recommended when working with adolescent girls (Hardy Girls, Healthy Women, 2009). While initially the campers complained and grumbled about being separated from friends, eventually positive effects were seen. For example, following an overnight canoeing and camping trip, counselors reported observing changes develop over time as relationships enhanced after the girls were pushed further out of their comfort zones and encouraged to spend more time in their canoes and sleeping tents with those peers they did not know as well. When the Leadership Bunk returned, moods had shifted – some of the quieter girls were more enlivened and the group demonstrated and reported increased cohesion. Follow-up interviews continued to capture the benefits campers felt they experienced from getting to know others who they would not have otherwise had the opportunity to meet.

### *Empowerment*

A final factor that was associated with changes seen in Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers was the concept of empowering participants and working to ensure campers' voices are heard. While this was not something that campers noted in their reflections on their experience, it was noted in counselor feedback and participant-observations. In line with the relational model informing it, the Main Idea consistently seeks campers' feedback and opinions and then works to take it into account and respond to appropriately expressed needs. Examples include providing choice as to what kind of activities campers engage in, giving them latitude in planning the evening activity they run, and taking program evaluation comments – such as those captured in this program evaluation case study – into account for future Leadership Bunk sessions. The data that emerged with regard to that aspect of the case study is discussed next in the results of Question 4.

#### QUESTION 4: HOW CAN THE PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION BE IMPROVED AND ENHANCED?

This question addresses works to determine specific ideas for the future of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk with regard to how it is structured, run and funded. While the question casts a wide net with regard to participants' satisfaction with the existing design and implementation of the Leadership Bunk, it also encompasses other needs determined in the initial consultation assessments, including the Main Idea stakeholders' need to ascertain potential funding sources for the Leadership Bunk program in order to expand their pool of resources and the consultant's interest in examining how diversity is addressed at the Main Idea. Given that results of the previous program evaluation questions indicate that the Main Idea Leadership Bunk's goals and objectives are generally being achieved and identify some preliminary factors that are associated with such outcomes, the data from this question can be used to make recommendations about additional program design and delivery changes to further enhance the program.

Five main variables were addressed in order to provide such recommendations and answer this program evaluation question. These included the Main Idea Leadership Bunk programs' design and components, program staff considerations, observed systemic issues within the Main Idea organization, the importance of addressing diversity at the Main Idea as well as existing and new potential funding resources for the Main Idea Leadership Bunk.

Standard qualitative methods of investigation were used to answer this program evaluation question. General feedback and program satisfaction data was collected throughout the case study via ongoing participant-observations and discussions with Main Idea staff, focus groups, post-program and follow-up surveys and post-program interviews with Leadership Bunk campers and staff. Ongoing consultation discussions and interviews

with Main Idea camp directors, participant-observations and use of the consultant's expert knowledge and further consultation with the psychological literature yielded information regarding additional funding resource opportunities. This qualitative data was reviewed, notable themes were compiled from the various sources and findings were grouped by relevant categories for presentation below.

### *Program Design and Components*

#### Goals and objectives.

Results of program evaluation Question 2 indicate that the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program's goals and objectives, as currently stated, are appropriate and being attained. Nevertheless, the program evaluation case study yielded recommendations for some additional refinements to this aspect of the program's design. Campers' feedback demonstrated that they see their position as role models at camp as an integral aspect of their definition of leadership. Because of this pronounced emphasis, it is recommended that being a role model is introduced as an official aspect of the program's goals and objectives in a manner that can be measured and evaluated over time. In effort to adhere to the ever-evolving model of program evaluation that informs program design, a question of "I feel like a role model" with five response options of "rarely" to "almost always" was included at follow-up. The mean score of that point in time for this group was between often and almost always, however there was no data with which to compare it to assess changes over time. Future surveys would benefit from including this and examining changes over time based on Leadership Bunk program participation.

Additionally, one counselor's observations, tapped by post-program interview, agreed that the existing goals are appropriate and resonated with her experience, stating that

they are appropriate, “they were intuitive” and they “all interlock;” however, she noted that they should also include “having fun!”

#### Activities.

Camper surveys, group discussions and individual interviews yielded core themes with regard to Main Idea Leadership Bunk program evaluation feedback that counselor comments and the consultant’s participant-observations also supported. These findings noted that much of the Leadership Bunk programming is effective as is; however, findings also included the importance of emphasizing active over passive activities, allowing the activities to be more naturally woven into with the standard Main Idea recreational camp activities and giving consideration to the amount of time spent at activities, the order and the pace of the planned activities and responsibilities given to the participants throughout the 10 day camp session. The program evaluation case study highlighted what Main Idea program directors have stated all along, what works best for the Leadership Bunk program to achieve its psychosocial, wellness-promoting goals are recreationally-oriented activities, as compared to “school-like” educational activities based around discussions.

Program evaluation feedback documented that the Leadership Bunk program should retain its core components, including participants writing and performing a play, planning evening activity and using ropes course activities to build their teamwork skills. Additionally, data reflected the essential nature of the messages Leadership Bunk staff work to send, including emphasizing Challenge by Choice and teamwork, setting a tone of respect for one another and each others’ differences, and acting as role models and encouraging participants to do the same within the camp community. While many campers’ post-program and follow-up feedback encouraged “keeping everything the same!” it is important to honor the

suggestions for change and frustrations voiced during the program and after, captured by participant-observations, surveys and discussions.

Based on post-program surveys, campers were generally dissatisfied with activities where they felt bored, uninterested, out of their “comfort zone” or overly challenged, or where they were “not good at them.” While Main Idea encourages campers to challenge themselves, with the caveat that they do not –and should not – push themselves beyond their comfort level, and that part of camp’s communal nature means being a good sport and participating in activities even when they are not your top choice, it was also clear that the 2008 program implementation struggled to keep the activity program as engaging and true to typical camp activities as it had been in previous years. This was in part due to a lack of communication between previous and current Leadership Coordinators, thus necessitating piecing together programming and “reinventing the wheel.” This was a general theme at Main Idea in 2008 that will be further addressed below with regard to suggestions for the future and how they were implemented during the time period of the case study.

As a result of the newly developed program activities, in post-program discussions campers expressed that the 2008 session felt more “forced” than in previous years where they experienced the programming as more true to camp form and thus the relationships and bonds they formed felt more natural. They noted that in previous years they felt the teambuilding activities where they were “doing not talking” were optimal for achieving the program’s goals. Later counselor and camper interviews also supported this finding.

What this program evaluation data provided for future implementation of the Leadership Bunk, was guidance to emphasize hands-on activities that provided opportunities for participants to experience increased responsibilities (e.g, tucking in younger campers at night) and a greater emphasis on hands-on teambuilding activities (e.g., utilizing a zipline or

additional ropes course activities that build in intensity over the course of the camp session as trust and bonds between campers increase) as compared to more abstract discussions about such psychosocial constructs which often backfired, resulting in participants feeling alienated or experienced by the Leadership Coordinator as “talking heads.”

In addition to utilizing more teambuilding activities, campers and counselors were excited about future sessions relying on more “natural camp-ish” activities that are interspersed with other programming throughout the day, instead of designating an entire afternoon or morning session to spend in one place assigned to “Leadership Bunk” as an activity. For example, the Leadership Bunk could travel together to Arts & Crafts to create a mural reflecting a leadership-oriented theme. It was suggested that such a model would meet the expressed need of Leadership Bunk activities being “more fun!,” active and in line with adolescent summertime attention spans, while fostering bonding and imparting lessons in a more organic manner and mitigating the risk of campers missing out on their desired activities at camp to substitute them for “Leadership.” van Linden and Fertman (1998) caution program developers designing adolescent-targeting leadership-promotion efforts against such approaches, warning that they can promote resentment and subsequent resistance to “doing leadership.”

An example of one activity that seemed in line with such feedback – and could provide a model for future programming – was a ropes course activity where the campers were asked to engage in a variety of nonverbal teambuilding exercises. After the time limit was reached, the group sat down to debrief in a format where each camper could only state one word for what had went well or helped the team’s process and one word for what had not or had worked against the group. This provided an opportunity for reflection that seemed to facilitate the consolidation of learning from the activity, however did not belabor

the messages staff were trying to impart in a manner that alienated the Leadership Bunk campers, as other Leadership Bunk discussions were observed as prone to do.

The program evaluation case study provided additional recommendations in order to maintain the valued component of reflection within the program's design, without impinging on recreational activity time. First, use existing downtime at camp, such as the "rest hour" period after lunch as a time where campers can complete surveys or other reflective exercises, instead of during activity periods. Second, center pre-program and post-program group discussions around a special meal away from the rest of camp, such as a pizza party or picnic lunch. For the 2008 Leadership Bunk post-program focus group this format was used, and it encouraged a less stilted conversation with feedback from the campers that, unlike other instances, they did not feel they were "just sitting around and talking."

When discussions are warranted, facilitators should maintain a clear, crisp focus (Hardy Girls, Healthy Women, 2009). In the case of the Leadership Bunk, natural, brief discussions early in the camp session should aim to explore the meaning of leadership to participants. At that time Leadership Coordinators can present notions of positive and negative leadership. Such discussions can address various ways to lead such as empowering or inspiring others, as well as note the risks of abusing leadership and acting in a coercive manner. In order to keep the discussion less abstract, an activity could be designed where campers discuss leaders they have observed – such as public figures, or individuals from their communities, families, friends, schools – and act out skits of effective and ineffective leadership styles. In the early stages of the Leadership Bunk, the staff should also work to facilitate exploration of varying leadership styles that depend on one's personality and comfort, such as how leading and following can both be demonstrations of leadership. At



the end of the camp session, as was done in 2008, discussions would be more focused on program satisfaction, goal achievement and ideas for the future.

One counselor with much experiencing working with youth in camp settings also provided valuable feedback about the role of discussions at camp. In line with Englund and colleagues' (2000) writing in the psychological literature about adolescents, she noted that a more effective way to measure whether campers' are absorbing the messages the Main Idea Leadership Bunk works to impart is through observations of their actions, not their statements. In a post-program interview the counselor stated, "I think the things they learned they don't think they learned. Like when asked, they won't say 'I learned how to communicate well.' But, they did learn and deal with things more maturely and honestly over time." Upon follow-up interview, many campers were able to articulate such gains they attributed to the Main Idea that were more nuanced and specific than at post-program.

This program evaluation data helped demonstrate that, as the camp directors and other key stakeholder believe, the natural activities and opportunities in a camp setting promote the psychosocial growth in line with the Leadership Bunk's objectives and goals. Future iterations of Leadership Bunk programming can now be less self-conscious about the need to "hammer in" points, having seen that more natural camp activities with related subtle, brief discussions are more effective with this target population.

In order to receive the most gains from these recommendations in future implementations, the Leadership Bunk should work to manualize its curriculum. By capturing the general structure of the program, as well as its nuances, such as notes of successful and less successful activities future staff will be able to avoid the difficulty with technology transfer, and need to "reinvent the wheel," that arises when new staff frequently take over the Leadership Coordinator roles between annual Main Idea sessions.

### Responsibilities.

In providing program evaluation feedback during and after the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk session, many campers stated their desire for greater responsibilities at camp. While this is consistent with their developmental phase which includes desire for greater autonomy – and the Main Idea’s efforts to prepare them to function as staff members in the camp setting – it highlights an additional notable theme in the program evaluation case study: the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk program implementation at times struggled to convey increased responsibilities as earned, not a given, thus at times losing the opportunity to reward appropriate behavior and at other times use a loss of, or failure to earn, privileges as a teachable moment. Future Leadership Bunk implementations will benefit from the feedback of staff and campers alike who noted the importance of Leadership Bunk campers earning their privileges over time as they show greater responsibility and leadership. In follow-up interviews many campers noted their desire to have increasing independence and responsibility, but only to “have a taste of where we’re headed,” not to be already treated “like staff.” During the 2008 session, much concern was expressed on the part of staff that without rewards being linked with good behavior the adolescents got “too big for their britches” and would “be on power trips.” This resulted in campers failing to act as positive role models and, instead, resort to less effective leadership styles such as coercing other campers.

The 2008 program evaluation also identified the importance of immediate feedback for campers, whether to reflect something positive or negative. During the 2008 Main Idea session there was a systemic general lack of clarity around disciplinary processes. As such, teachable moments were missed out of staff’s concern that they did not have the authority to take away privileges in reaction to misbehavior. Similarly, with regard to more immediate

positive feedback, the 2008 participants were eager to know at the end of the camp session whether they would be invited to return as second year Leadership Bunk campers or junior staff for the 2009 session. Unfortunately, the decisions were not able to be finalized before the campers departed and the only option was for staff to validate and empathize with the campers' frustrations and work to make it an empowering experience by taking their feedback into account for future sessions. Instead of waiting until Spring to send letters to the campers being invited back, as had been the norm previously, a new plan was developed to send letters to campers, their parents and their case managers within the month after the 2008 session ended – and to be able to provide campers with this feedback before they left Main Idea in the future.

A final theme with regard to responsibility in the Leadership Bunk that the program evaluation case study documented was the potential need to distinguish the two years of the Leadership Bunk program. The feedback was not unanimous, but multiple sources encouraged a greater distinction between the campers in the first and second years of the Leadership Bunk in order to reduce redundancy in repeated activities and allow second year campers to have more responsibilities, perhaps training and teaching their first year counterparts in some aspects of leadership, while working to maintain group cohesion and bonding between the two subgroups. If the Main Idea Leadership Bunk decides to make such distinctions, they would benefit from considering grouping campers by grade they are entering, as a notable theme that emerged in follow-up data collection was the impact of entering high school for many Leadership Bunk campers. If grouped together, programming could address this upcoming transition directly and eligibility criteria for Leadership Bunk subgroups would need to be updated.

### *Staff*

Dedicated Leadership department staff.

The program evaluation case study also provided valuable data to inform the optimal qualities and roles of the staff working with the Leadership Bunk. The experience of the consultant being a participant-observer during the 2008 session of the Main Idea demonstrated that one person acting as Leadership Coordinator and developing, coordinating and implementing the planning was not feasible in the future. As such, the consultant was often pulled into the role of serving as a co-coordinator. This experience will be further addressed in Chapter V, but at this time supports the recommendation that in future Leadership Bunk sessions, two Leadership Coordinators are hired to work together to develop, coordinate and implement Leadership Bunk programming. These coordinators would work with additional Main Idea staff to implement the leadership activities that would take place in various departments throughout the camp session and would be manualized to make procedures more clear to future new staff.

Case study data also suggested key qualities to seek when hiring Leadership Coordinators. This was not a reflection on the abilities or characteristics of the 2008 Coordinator – in fact, many campers noted in follow-up interviews “they did a great job last year” when asked about staff attributes – but rather an effort to formulate and clearly articulate the ideal candidate for future hiring, as this is the type of position with high amounts of turnover due to the flux of the lives of camp counselors (i.e., young adults whose lives often change from year to year and are unable to commit to spending two weeks away from their other life responsibilities). Optimal Leadership Coordinators possess good organizational abilities, knowledge about leadership skills and other psychosocial development. They have experience working in a camp setting and, optimally, have

previously worked with this target population (i.e., geographically diverse 12 to 14 year-old low-income female campers). College-aged students and young adults seem best equipped due to their age where they are both young enough to connect with campers and old enough to have more sophistication or life experience, thus giving them some distance to be most effective. A Leadership Coordinator in such a camp setting must also be able to balance being structured as well as flexible as the program evolves, both over the 10-day session and year-to-year, as mid-course corrections and consideration of details as well as “the big picture” are often necessary. Follow-up interviews with campers emphasized the importance of staff being relatable (i.e., “easy to talk to”), patient, fun, open-minded, available (i.e., “easy to find,” “listens to kids”) and supportive. In line with previously discussed findings, campers noted that optimal Leadership staff “doesn’t force us to do things,” recognizes that “we don’t like being told what to do,” and allows campers to take greater responsibility, such as “when younger girls are having problems.”

In addition to further clarifying the role of Leadership Coordinators and their optimal traits, program evaluation data from the 2008 session indicated that the Leadership staff department should also include one counselor with experience working with youth in drama activities. This individual would be the third member of the Leadership Department staff and his or her exclusive responsibilities would include managing the process of the Leadership Bunk campers writing, rehearsing and performing their play.

Weaving in leadership.

As there was only technically one Leadership Coordinator during the 2008 Leadership Bunk session, but two cabins of campers, it was determined that the Leadership Coordinator would not be housed with the campers during this session. However, the program evaluation case study demonstrated that in the future, particularly with the logistical

concerns alleviated by having two Leadership Coordinators, the program would benefit from the coordinators living in the bunk. Post-program staff interviews particularly supported this, suggesting that this would allow the Leadership staff to relate to campers more naturally and authentically during “non-leadership time.” The structure of 2008 tended to promote more of an artificial dichotomy between leadership and non-leadership time that did not seem as conducive to providing the campers a more cohesive and organic experience of acting as leaders in the camp setting, rather it felt more structured and like a stilted “teacher-student” relationship during Leadership Bunk structured activities; whereas live-in bunk counselors reported more genuine conversations with Leadership Bunk campers. On follow-up interview, many campers supported the idea of Leadership staff residing in the bunks with campers.

Additionally, in order to weave leadership more naturally into Leadership Bunk participants’ overall camp experience as well as to generalize effective leadership programming to the rest of other campers, camp directors determined that the entire Main Idea staff should be more aware of concepts of leadership development and related camp-based activities. In order to accomplish this, they suggest that future pre-camp counselor training will review the Leadership Bunk concepts, goals and objective with the idea that these can be encouraged in all Main Idea campers. Such thoughtful discussion would optimally set the tone for fostering psychosocial growth in the camp setting, promote a sense of shared purpose and enhance communication between all who will be working with the Leadership Bunk – either primarily or when facilitating typical camp or specific leadership-oriented activities. During such a staff-wide discussion, each department will be encouraged to brainstorm creatively about leadership-promoting activities they could offer to all campers – Leadership Bunk and otherwise.

### Staff support.

The program evaluation case study also yielded relevant participant-observations findings about Main Idea staff's need for support. It is clear that camp counseling work is intense as well as emotionally and psychologically demanding. As such, staff would benefit from additional space to process their experience, vent and feel contained. At the Main Idea, junior staff has daily meetings with a senior staff member that works to provide such a space. In 2008, the consultant facilitated this daily group for the younger group of junior staff. Such participant-observations suggest that this would be an effective model to utilize for all staff, perhaps offering such a meeting every other day to regular counselors during the 10 day camp session. Additionally, this would minimize frustration and flow into the camp directors' office and facilitate more fluid and consistent communication between staff and directors. Such efforts prevent burnout – a common issue in such personally demanding work.

### *Systemic Issues*

The program evaluation case study and the consultant's role as a participant-observer highlighted some notable systemic issues the Main Idea would benefit from further addressing. As noted above, the 2008 session demonstrated a commitment to clarifying procedures and responsibilities as such formalizing operations had not been previously undertaken by the Main Idea organization. This was a product of an organization that was previously run like a family business transitioning to more standard nonprofit operations with the sudden death of the camp owner in the spring of 2008. This gave the camp directors, one of whom was hired shortly before the Main Idea program began, minimal time to plan and left them feeling they were often "flying by the seat of our pants" and that things were "falling through the cracks." As such, they were dedicated in 2008 and beyond to make

sure programming was systematically documented in a more formative, manualized state. They particularly emphasized clarifying roles, responsibilities and procedures for the future, in response to the lack of clarity and role diffusion present during 2008. One example is the confusion about disciplining and reporting the inevitable behavioral incidents that arise when working with youth, yet without clear concepts of which staff are responsible for disciplinary efforts, swift communication with camp directors and direct response to campers, teachable moments were lost and information went unreported or documented for future planning and decisions about which campers to invite back to camp.

This also demonstrated that the timing was appropriate for program evaluation efforts and that future programs would benefit from continuing to incorporate program evaluation measures to assess the impact of changes made as programming and systemic structures evolve.

### *Diversity Issues*

An additional theme that emerged in the course of the program evaluation case study was the need for the Main Idea to remain aware of bubbling tensions surrounding difference (i.e., cultural, racial, geographic). Such awareness would enable staff to be prepared to employ various conflict resolution activities in the face of related behavioral incidents and would promote an opportunity for psychosocial growth in making this – often taboo – topic of cultural difference one that can be safely addressed within the diverse camp environment.

How this issue came more to the forefront during the case study was an example of participant-observation influences at work: as a participant-observer, the consultant's values and beliefs inevitably intermingled with existing Main Idea systemic factors to create a unique situation. In initial consultations with camp directors, they had stated that at camp differences are not emphasized or broached as important topics for discussion, but rather



there is an understanding that “at Main Idea we’re all campers.” However, the consultant was skeptical and curious how such disparate cultural identity groups would merge within the camp setting and how differences would play out in overt and subtle forms. During pre-camp training, for example, the lack of recognition of cultural difference was striking when discussing camper hygiene expectations that counselors were expected to implement, such as daily hair washing. Internally, the consultant noted that with the diverse cultural groups represented by the Main Idea campers, it was likely that many did not typically wash their hair daily at home. Later, in casual conversation with former campers, now counselors, the consultant mentioned this. The former campers seemed relieved that there was a new opening and recognition of a topic that previously was important, but went unmentioned at Main Idea. They confirmed this shift in later discussions with the consultant.

Racially charged incidents during the 2008 session brought the importance of considering difference and similarity to the fore. These same former campers participated in conversations about geographic and other differences within the Leadership Bunk group in a manner that was noted to promote more inclusion of others, curiosity about similarity and differences and fewer geographically-bound cliques over the course of the remaining days at camp. During post-program interviews, a counselor noted how around one of these conversations a black camper from a Northeastern city had noted to the counselor, “I have tons of white friends, but I don’t understand people from Maine.” Notably, at follow-up campers were continuing to keep in touch across geographic and cultural lines.

While in the future counselors would benefit from being prepared to address issues of difference as they emerge, activities could be planned that proactively address this topic and facilitate the opportunity for Leadership Bunk campers to transcend barriers of difference to further connect and take advantage of exposure to such a diverse group of

campers. Counselors could acknowledge the convenience and ease individuals often find in similarities, but also encourage the value of learning more deeply about others who might be different from oneself at camp. Other comparable programming targeting adolescent females describe specific naturalistic “ice breaker” camp activity, such as “The Wind Blows,” that can highlight differences and similarities and provide an avenue for further discussion (Hardy Girls, Healthy Women, 2009). Leadership Bunk programming would benefit from including this and providing further brief post-activity discussions about camp as an opportunity to learn about each other in all sorts of ways.

Post-program interviews with Leadership Bunk staff also indicated the importance of cultural considerations with regard to some of the psychosocial constructs under investigation. One counselor noted how the “yelling” that the (predominantly white) counselors often worked to correct in Leadership Bunk campers (who were predominantly youth of color), might not be considered “yelling” or “impolite to quiet people down that way.” The counselor captured the Main Idea’s need to continue to consider issues of difference, as urban vs. rural distinctions can bring accompanying social norms that extend beyond race, such as speech patterns and the kinds of things campers have been exposed to in their home communities. Such cultural nuances are beyond the scope of this dissertation, but are addressed in the psychological literature and relevant to consider in future Leadership Bunk program implementation and evaluation efforts.

### *Resources*

Consultation procedures and review of relevant psychological literature yielded a list of potential Main Idea Leadership Bunk funding sources and additional non-funding resources that would likely add value to the program’s current design. A summary sketch of the resources and organizations is provided.

Funding resources for the Main Idea program.

Another key contribution this program evaluation case study provides to the Main Idea organization is recommendations for future fundraising efforts and other beneficial resources. Chapter I noted the value this would provide to Main Idea stakeholders, particularly currently, when accountability and evidence-based practice serve as keys in the locks of fundraising efforts and as the Main Idea transitions from the loss of the Camp Walden owner who was a large source of Main Idea funds and fundraising efforts. When she was responsible for the Main Idea, the line was blurred between where Camp Walden ends and the Main Idea begins. Presently, the Main Idea organization and stakeholders demonstrate foresight as they would like to continue to leverage their relationships with Camp Walden and its alumni, but not be completely as dependent on the other camp's resources as they have been in the past.

In this spirit, the data from this program evaluation will inform presentations and marketing materials to go beyond the individual Camp Walden alumnae and alumnae parent donations that have previously funded the majority of the Main Idea's operations. Camp Walden relationships are leveraged to solicit Walden alumnae family charitable foundations or businesses that would consider donating at a higher level when presented with more formalized marketing materials and metrics demonstrating the Main Idea's success. It is anticipated that any funding providers would welcome such materials that demonstrate the Main Idea's diligence and commitment to measuring success by collecting program evaluation data.

Grant sources.

In addition to Camp Walden relationships, the data this program evaluation provides can inform future grant-seeking efforts. The Main Idea board is prepared to dedicate human

resources to efforts to secure such funding, particularly for its Leadership Bunk programming.

The Foundation Center (<http://foundationcenter.org>) is a nonprofit service organization that provides tools and search engines of databases to connect grant-seeking organizations with grant-makers. For a small fee, access to this database would provide information about potential funding sources that are well-matched with the Main Idea Leadership Bunk's goals and objectives. Additionally, this organization provides training seminars to nonprofits developing their grant-seeking strategies and skills. Some of these are available for scholarships if, like the Main Idea, the nonprofit's operating budget is under \$1 million dollars annually.

A prime grant source for future program evaluation research at the Main Idea would be the William T. Grant Foundation ([www.wtgrantfoundation.org](http://www.wtgrantfoundation.org)). This organization primarily funds research relevant to youth in the United States between ages eight and 25. Most of the foundation's supported projects include non-experimental work, utilizing such methods as this program evaluation case study. The William T. Grant Foundation's current research interests center on better understanding how everyday youth settings work, how they affect youth development and how they can be improved. The organization defines youth settings as the social environments where youth experience their daily life and optimally engage in meaningful activities and relationships with adults and peers alongside opportunities for academic, social, emotional and/or identity development. The foundation is interested in projects that inquire about important youth development outcomes, such as those related to schooling, employment, health, social and emotional well-being and identity. A camp setting, and particularly the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program, would definitely

fall into this setting domain and the Leadership Bunk's program evaluation outcome domains of interest are also quite relevant to the foundation's focus.

Funds Net Services ([www.fundsnetservices.com](http://www.fundsnetservices.com)) also provides a directory of fundraising and grant opportunities, free of charge. A search of grants focused on youth development on this site yielded numerous viable options for the Main Idea to pursue that demonstrate the balance between family foundations and socially responsible corporate philanthropic efforts the Main Idea would benefit from petitioning.

These included the Eckerd Family Foundation, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, the Finish Line Youth Foundation and the Limited, Inc. Foundation. The Eckerd Family Foundation (<http://www.eckerdfamilyfoundation.org/youth-dev.asp>) supports preventative programs for youth development that promote social, moral, emotional, physical and cognitive competencies. The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation (<http://www.emcf.org/>) emphasizes programs that serve youth ages nine to 24 from low-income backgrounds with quality programming during out-of-school time. While the foundation does not accept unsolicited applications (as many do not), the Main Idea would benefit from completing the "Youth Organizations Survey" on the foundation's website to garner more information and develop a relationship.

In terms of corporate-based fundraising resources, the athletic apparel store The Finish Line's Youth Foundation ([www.finishline.com/store/youthfoundation/guidelines.jsp](http://www.finishline.com/store/youthfoundation/guidelines.jsp)) supports community-based programs that encourage an active lifestyle and teambuilding skills. They particularly emphasize camp programs serving "disadvantaged" children and provide funding that supports scholarships to individual campers or funds general programming. This would be particularly convenient, given the Main Idea's existing fundraising strategy and marketing

materials group donations by what they would provide for a given camper (e.g., \$1000 funds one camper's Main Idea session). Additionally, the women and girls' clothing store, The Limited, Inc. ([www.limitedbrands.com/social\\_responsibility/community/index.jsp](http://www.limitedbrands.com/social_responsibility/community/index.jsp)) also touts itself as a source of support for community-based efforts that nurture and mentor children and empower women. Each of these organizations demonstrates clear synergies with the Main Idea Leadership Bunk's structure, goals and objectives.

The Main Idea could also consider pursuing funding via the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) which promote efforts to prevent youth substance abuse behavior. However, in order to be competitive for such funding, the program would have to position and demonstrate itself as an effort to reduce substance use/abuse in its participants. This would require questioning campers regarding substance use-related behavior and documenting positive results. Yet, this program evaluation case study's use of the Assertiveness Scale (LeCroy & Daley, 2001), which included questions about drug and alcohol-involving scenarios, demonstrated that such questions were problematic and alienating to Leadership Bunk participants.

Additionally, the Dove Self-Esteem Fund has demonstrated a track record of promoting positive self-esteem and body image for adolescent girls via funding partnerships with such organizations as Girl Scouts, Boys & Girls Clubs of America and Girls, Inc. The Main Idea would benefit from contacting this foundation to investigate potential partnerships, in the form of donated funds or materials.

Non-funding recommended resources and organizational partnerships.

In addition to funding sources, this program evaluation case study yielded recommendations for non-funding resources and other organizations that would likely synergize well with the Main Idea.

Hardy Girls, Healthy Women (HGHW) ([www.hardygirlshealthywomen.org](http://www.hardygirlshealthywomen.org)) is a Maine-based organization committed to empowering female youth through relationally-oriented programming efforts. Their target population overlaps with Main Idea campers. Many of HGHW's resources were consulted in reviewing the literature for this case study. HGHW offers written materials and training workshops (e.g., Strength-Based Work with Girls, Cultivating Hardiness Zones) that future Leadership Coordinators would benefit from attending. In addition to such training resources, collaboration with HGHW stakeholders would be beneficial for pooling ideas as well as recruiting Main Idea and Leadership Bunk staff from their active local college student and young adult membership.

Additionally, the Phoenix Foundation is a Portland, Maine-based nonprofit organization that develops values-based, team-leadership programs for young adults based on empathetic listening, trust and respect. Other nonprofit organizations similar to the Main Idea have benefited from participating in teambuilding activities through the Phoenix Foundation. The Main Idea could gain from reaching out to this neighboring resource regarding the potential for collaboration.

Leadership library: educational resources

The thorough literature review conducted for this program evaluation case study provided a range of relevant resources. Below, the core texts are highlighted and suggested as materials that comprise the Main Idea's "Leadership Library" for future Leadership Coordinator training and Leadership Bunk programming efforts.

van Linden and Fertman's (1998) *Youth Leadership: A Guide to Understanding Leadership Development in Adolescents* provided user-friendly frameworks for defining and teaching leadership concepts with adolescents. Their book conveys their vast experience in easily digestible concepts of what works, does not work and things leadership programmers are wise to consider when developing and implementing leadership programs with youth.

While Carol Gilligan and her colleagues have written extensively on female adolescent development and their related qualitative research studies (Gilligan, 1982; Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Brown, 2003), Taylor, Gilligan and Sullivan's (1995) *Between Voice and Silence: Women and Girls, Race and Relationship* relays the essence of the relational model and research findings while bringing the topic of race and class into the dialogue about female adolescent relationships with each other and older adults. This is quite relevant to understanding both the Main Idea target population and the dynamics that emerge in counselor-camper relationships.

In 2009, Hardy Girls, Healthy Women published *A Facilitator's Guide to Becoming a Muse*. This booklet, available for purchase through their website, consolidates the findings of their effective programming and lists considerations for adults working with adolescent girls as well as specific activities that would be useful in the camp setting. This user-friendly, easily digestible resource provides a quick snapshot that would benefit future Leadership Bunk program implementers.



## QUESTION 5: HOW CAN FUTURE PROGRAM EVALUATION EFFORTS BE IMPROVED AND ENHANCED?

In the process of this case study consulting project, the Main Idea program demonstrated an overall increased commitment to program evaluation. One can hypothesize that this can be attributed to both new directorship who value such efforts and are committed to the ongoing integrity of programming, as well as a spirit of program evaluation instilled by this consultant's commitment and presence as a participant-observer. Given that program evaluation will be an ongoing component of future Leadership Bunk implementation, as well as Main Idea operations in general, this question addresses suggested improvements for such procedures.

Program evaluation procedures are a human services programming endeavor, thus principles of program evaluation must be applied to evaluate evaluation activities themselves. Such procedures facilitate the program evaluation plan's ongoing evolution into a useful, practical, relevant and technically defensible procedure that meets the needs of the pertinent parties – in this case, those of Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers, the consultant, Main Idea staff and key stakeholders (Maher, 2000). Inquiring how future program evaluation efforts can be improved and enhanced provided the Main Idea with ideas for what could be done differently in future efforts to evaluate the Leadership Bunk program.

This line of program evaluation inquiry also addresses the Main Idea stakeholders' original desire for the consultant to guide them as to optimal methods for maintaining contact with campers after participation in the Main Idea, in order to understand the longer-term impact of the program. Without consistent methods for keeping in touch with past and present campers, a long-term effort to institutionalize wide-scale program evaluation will be seriously compromised. In addition to a method for evaluators to collect follow-up data, the development of progress monitoring methods will also allow the participants, staff and key

stakeholders to maintain contact and communication with present and future participants over time. Thus, this program evaluation pilots particular methods, based upon a needs assessment of the Leadership Bunk campers, in order to provide data about what methods for maintaining contact are most effective and can be expanded to target the entire Main Idea population.

The consultant compiled data regarding evaluation of the program evaluation from numerous sources throughout the case study as data steadily emerged. These data sources included camper surveys, discussions with Main Idea directors and staff, post-program interviews with counselors, post-program focus groups with campers and participant-observations.

Pre-program and post-program camper surveys and focus groups provided a venue to conduct a needs assessment to inform the design of the camper progress monitoring methods, determining optimal ways to maintain contact with and between campers after the 2008 Main Idea Leadership Bunk session ended. Further data was collected on this variable through the consultant's efforts to garner follow-up data from campers via interviews and surveys.

The data collected to answer this program evaluation question was qualitative in nature, thus compiled over the course of the case study and then analyzed for themes. Resulting recommendations for future evaluation and camper progress monitoring activities are presented.

#### *Evaluation of the Program Evaluation*

General feedback was positive about the program evaluation activities involved in this case study, indicated by campers' positive or neutral reactions. There were no reports that campers or staff found such efforts as overly intrusive on normal program activities.

Participant-observations captured some campers' suspicion and guardedness around the surveys, demonstrated by statements that "some questions are worded negatively," or they found them "depressing" or "hard to answer." Further discussion during the post-program focus group clarified that, for some campers, "depressing" questions were upsetting, such as considering "whether we are trouble to our parents. We're at camp – not to think about that!" While this did not support removing particular questions, it emphasized the importance of staff to engage in preparatory discussions with campers regarding survey content and to reassure them that individuals respond in a range of ways – all of which are "the right answer."

Overall, the existing program evaluation methods were encouraged for continuation in the future, with adjustments. For instance, as discussed when answering Question 4, surveys could be completed during already designed "down time" during rest hour and focus group discussions at the beginning and end of camp would be better if centered around a special meal away from the rest of camp, in order to assuage campers' resistance and not take away from their time at other activities. Some specific suggestions for improvements to future evaluation efforts are detailed further here.

#### Measures.

The feedback for future program evaluation enhancements mainly centered on camper and counselor surveys. In post-program discussions, campers stated that they found the surveys the consultant developed for the program evaluation case study to be the most appropriate and interesting to them, although they encouraged that, if possible, "shorter would be better." Additional findings from the case study provided other recommendations for improvements to these measures.

As indicated previously, in the results of Question 2, future program evaluation efforts will require other methods for assessing changes in assertiveness, rather than the Assertiveness Scale. This measure was used for this case study at pre-program and post-program and pulled from follow-up data collection as it was found to be offensive and alienating to campers. In order to find these types of assessment tools, the Main Idea would benefit from continuing to consult the literature regarding program evaluation of human services for adolescents, particularly low-income females, to see if there are additional measures that would better assess this construct.

Some additions or clarifications to the surveys developed specifically for the Main Idea (see Appendix A for copies of these measures) would benefit future iterations of Leadership Bunk program evaluation. In order to better clarify the target population, surveys should probe whether campers have other opportunities to attend camp programs. Some interviews indicated that campers were attending additional camps and this may have implications for recruitment efforts and target population descriptions. Amending counselor rating scales to include a probe as to whether the camper was able to remain in good behavioral control (with regard to physical and verbal behavior, as well as including space for narrative descriptions of any incidents) would streamline processes for determining whether campers met eligibility criteria and should be invited to return the following year. Likewise, in order to better assess change over the course of the Leadership Bunk program, counselor rating scales should not only rate campers for whether the camper demonstrated change or improvement in the competency area, but how strong they were with regard to a construct (e.g., assertiveness) when they presented to the Main Idea. This would mitigate the lack of clarity within the existing measures where counselors noted frequently that campers did not

demonstrate a change over the camp session because they already demonstrated excellence at baseline.

Additionally, some terms such as “express myself in other ways” were confusing to campers and should be clarified for future evaluation procedures. This case study also demonstrated that the construct of teamwork, as understood by the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program, could be better operationalized. By further clarifying this definition, campers surveys and counselor rating scales could be improved, thus enhancing program evaluation efforts with regard to this outcome. Likewise, problem-solving and conflict resolution skills could be better tapped by improvements to measures. The camper survey could include self-ratings of these abilities that could be measured over time, in addition to the existing “because of camp I am a better problem-solver” type of questions. Counselor rating scales would also benefit from rating campers on these constructs and assessing changes over the time at Main Idea.

#### *Ongoing Monitoring of Campers' Progress*

As the consultant's ability to conduct the follow-up surveying and interviewing was unique to the program evaluation case study project, thought must be given to how future follow-up can be most effectively and efficiently conducted in order for the Main Idea to stay in long-term contact with campers to track their progress and remain as a continuing resource. The program evaluation case study incorporated a needs assessment and pilot implementation to clarify optimal methods for maintaining such contact with campers.

Camper surveys provided a range of data to inform ongoing progress monitoring follow-up data collection efforts. As Table 10 displays, survey responses at pre-program, post-program and follow-up indicated that, in line with the Main Idea's aim, campers planned to keep in touch after camp ends. Most of all, campers responded anticipating and

actually keeping in touch with each other, whereas fewer stated as such regarding plans to remain in contact with staff and directors. Follow-up efforts found that all who responded to these measures were keeping in touch with some of their Main Idea peers, including both those from their neighborhoods and farther geographic proximity.

Table 10

Who do you plan to keep in touch with/keep in touch with after/since camp?

	<i>Pre-Program</i> (N=17)	<i>Post-Program</i> (N=17)	<i>Follow-Up</i> (N=14)
Bunkmates	94%	100%	86%
Other campers	76%	82%	50%
Counselors	41%	65%	21%
Staff	24%	24%	0%
Directors	23%	12%	7%
No one*	6%	0%	0%

As displayed in Table 11, campers planned to remain in contact using a variety of methods, ranging from more technologically advanced methods, such as cell phones and social networking internet resources, to more old-fashioned letters and neighborhood visits.

Table 11

How do you plan to keep in touch/keep in touch since camp?

	<i>Pre-Program</i> (N=17)	<i>Post-Program</i> (N=17)	<i>Follow-Up</i> (N=14)
MySpace/Facebook	88%	88%	71%
Email	65%	65%	36%
AIM/Online chat	24%	88%	57%
Text	12%	82%	29%
Phone	71%	76%	21%
Mail	59%	47%	21%
In person	35%	35%	43%
Camp*	6%	71%	7%

\*Not included in pre-program survey, but indicated as methods by campers in those reports and subsequently added to later surveys

In addition to inquiring how campers planned to remain connected with one another, the case study inquired as to best methods for the Main Idea to remain in contact with campers after the 2008 summer session ended. Data at post-program and follow-up (displayed in Table 12) demonstrated that email, phone and mail would all be viable ways to conduct follow-up data collection with campers. However, when the process was actually undertaken – and campers were queried to optimal methods of remaining in contact with the Main Idea after the program ends – social networking sites, particularly Facebook, as well as mail and telephone emerged as the best ways to connect with campers.

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Table 12

What is the best way for the Main Idea to reach you after camp?

	<i>Post-Program</i> (N=17)	<i>Follow-Up</i> (N=14)
MySpace/Facebook*	-	79%
Email	88%	36%
AIM/Online chat	12%	24%
Text*	-	7%
Phone	53%	43%
Mail	59%	50%
In person*	-	21%
Camp*	-	29%

\*Not included in post-program survey, but added to later surveys

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The Main Idea Leadership Bunk program evaluation case study follow-up data collection efforts yielded a suggested protocol for remaining in contact with campers and monitoring their progress. This recommendation takes into account the most fruitful methods of connecting with campers during the pilot program evaluation while respecting the Main Idea's limited financial and human resources.

The pilot follow-up data collection indicated that emailing documents to be returned via email is not a viable method. Campers' email addresses are often changing, particularly if they change schools when entering high school, and technological challenges emerged for those who were contacted via email. As such, the first line of communication with Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers should be through the social networking website, Facebook. The consultant was able to make contact with 11 campers (65%) through Facebook. If contact through Facebook can be made, the Main Idea can then utilize Google.com's Google Docs feature as a medium for campers to complete follow-up surveys. This prevents the cumbersome process of contacting campers via Facebook in order to obtain a working email address that can receive a Microsoft Word survey document, as this program evaluation pilot relied on. Additionally, Google Docs are free of charge and the multiple responses will automatically tabulate, preventing a need for human resources to collate the survey data. As a second line of communication, for campers not on Facebook or not receptive to entreaties via this method, the Main Idea can send hard copies of the surveys, enclosing an addressed, stamped return envelope. This program evaluation case study found good response rates with such a model (9 of 14 respondents, 57% of the entire sample). This recommendation also answers the Main Idea's request for the consultant to suggest a protocol that will be effective with both future waves of program evaluation of the Leadership Bunk program, as well as more general efforts of the Main Idea to remain in contact with their former campers, regardless of Leadership Bunk participation.

While the order suggested above is the most efficient in terms of the resources utilized, given the program's limited budget, the telephone follow-up interviews are worthy of continuing as well in further program evaluation efforts. This is a time-intensive procedure, but was demonstrated to yield richer response data and provide campers with a



greater connection to Main Idea. This method also seemed to provide an optimal distance, given the time elapsed since camp, as well as the medium, for adolescent participants to be most honest. Camp directors emphasized the importance of the phone call. As such, it is recommended that Leadership Coordinators be encouraged to continue such personalized efforts to remain in contact with campers, particularly between the first and second year of the Leadership Bunk. If this is beyond the scope of the coordinators' efforts, the Main Idea board should seek individuals willing to donate their time who would be interested in conducting such phone interviews. Effort should be made to contact both campers who do and do not respond to survey entreaties. The interviews can be based on the existing interview guide questions (see Appendix A), but some probes could be more specific, such as asking whether campers think about things they learned at camp when they run into challenges at home or at school. This would replace more general "when you run into challenges," as it is currently worded, that did not tend to yield much during the program evaluation case study follow-up efforts.

#### *Suggestions for Future Program Evaluation Investigations*

This program evaluation's strength comes in the pilot quantitative and qualitative data it yields. However, the sample size is limited by the target population of 17 campers, which provides limited power for statistical inference. Future research would benefit from continuing to build the database of Leadership Bunk campers by tracking across multiple annual sessions to garner adequate power for more refined statistical analysis. Additionally, as program evaluation tools – such as the RSCA – are applicable to the entire Main Idea camper population, a larger-scale program evaluation of the entire camp target population would be a worthy future endeavor.

Additionally, the breadth of qualitative data this program evaluation case study yielded offered an opportunity to examine this material for themes that emerged. However, this was limited by the researcher/consultant acting as participant-observer and the only individual conducting the qualitative data analysis. Thus, it is subject to bias as the researcher has a vested interest in the program's success, but the results are not deemed invalid due to this factor. However, future endeavors would benefit from building on the existing data collection methods to include more rigorous qualitative research methods that take such concerns about validity into account.

Future program evaluation efforts that have greater power in their sample size might also further examine the role of cultural differences within the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program. This could include further addressing optimal ways to address difference within the camp setting. Additionally, the program could benefit from understanding whether varying cultural and geographic groups demonstrate differences at baseline as well as whether different trajectories emerge for these groups on key variables (e.g., resiliency, leadership, self-esteem, communication skills) in response to the camp-based Leadership Bunk intervention, as measured by quantitative measures and surveys. If such differences do emerge, such findings would inform program design and implementation improvements and enhancements.

*Conclusion*

This chapter documented the results of the case study of a program evaluation of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program based on a range of qualitative and quantitative data sources. Overall, the findings were promising, indicating that the program is serving the target population it intends to, generally achieving its goals and objectives and that particular elements of the program's existing design are likely to account for some of the changes observed in Leadership Bunk campers between pre-program, post-program and follow-up. Additionally, the results enable the consultant to propose alterations and improvements to the program's future design, implementation, evaluation, funding and camper progress monitoring, based on the quantitative and qualitative data, participant-observations and review of relevant literature. While the results are focused on the Leadership Bunk program, many are applicable to the Main Idea camp program as a whole.

Next, Chapter V concludes the dissertation by addressing how the consulting project and subsequent dissertation contributed to the graduate student consultant's knowledge and the broader field of psychology's literature about the value of recreational camp-based wellness promotion programs.

## CHAPTER V

### Conclusion

#### *Abstract*

This chapter summarizes the key findings of the case study and then addresses how the consulting project and surrounding case study contributed to the broader field of psychology's literature about the use of recreational camp-based programs. It also notes the contribution the dissertation research makes to the graduate student consultant's knowledge of program evaluation consultation procedures as well as youth development and wellness promotion programs.

#### *Introduction*

This chapter initially provides a summary of the key findings of the case study, notes suggestions for future research, and acknowledges how the project has contributed to the existing psychological literature about camp-based wellness promoting youth development programs. The discussion then moves on to examining how the consultant's role shifted throughout the consultation, using Lippitt and Lippitt's (1986) descriptions of various consulting roles to ground the discussion in both a theoretical framework as well as the consultant's self-reflections, in order to better understand the evolving consultation process and its impact on the consultant's professional development.

#### *Summary of Key Findings*

The case study was centered around five core program evaluation questions. The results were detailed in full in Chapter IV and are summarized here. The first question

addressed whether the program is, indeed, serving the target population it believes it is serving. Evaluating this component entailed delineating the program eligibility criteria and determining whether these criteria were met. It also involved examining Main Idea Leadership Bunk campers' baseline levels of risk and resiliency via the Resiliency Scale for Children & Adolescents (RSCA). Findings indicated that the campers do meet the program eligibility criteria. The research also demonstrated that within the group there were varying levels of baseline risk and resiliency that should be examined individually, but that at group level RSCA scores indicate baseline hardiness; however, the group could still benefit from resiliency-enhancing interventions. This line of inquiry also provided feedback to the Main Idea about honing their descriptions of campers from those "at-risk" or other similar language to "girls who would not otherwise have the chance to attend camp." Such a shift suggested that future program evaluations contain measures to assess whether campers do have the opportunity to attend other camps or not.

The second line of program evaluation inquiry used quantitative and qualitative data to examine the Main Idea Leadership Bunk's revamped objective and goal statements to measure to what extent the program was achieving its stated goals and objectives. The findings were positive, suggesting that the program is generally meeting its goals, including fostering resiliency, leadership, self-esteem, communication skills, problem-solving abilities, teamwork and promoting girls to the next level of Leadership Bunk programming all in ways that generalize within and outside of the camp setting. Additionally, with regard to these findings, the case study pointed out adjustments that could be made in future evaluations, particularly around assessing assertiveness, problem-solving and teamwork in order to better understand campers' trajectories of growth in these domains over the course of participation in the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program and at follow-up.

The third program evaluation question examined what factors of the camp-based program might be associated with the changes demonstrated by the program's ability to meet its goals and objectives. This identified components such as participants acting as role models for younger campers and gaining increasing responsibilities in the camp setting, specific activities that are core components of the program (e.g., writing and performing a play, planning and executing an evening activity, and engaging in teambuilding activities) as well as the value of the camp environment which fosters a positive relational atmosphere and places an emphasis on empowering the campers.

The fourth and fifth questions addressed core program evaluation topics including recommendations for changes to the design of the program for future implementations and suggestions for future rounds of program evaluation. Suggested changes for the program design centered around activities, camper responsibilities, staff recruitment and roles, how cultural diversity is addressed at the Main Idea and systemic recommendations for the camp's general operations. These results also provided suggestions for financial and other types of resources that the Main Idea would benefit from exploring, such as synergies with other like-minded organizations and potential funding sources – both in broad strokes as well as noting specific grants to pursue in the future. Answering the fifth question meant conducting an evaluation of this program evaluation. The results yielded recommendations regarding what was effective and what would benefit from improvements based on the consultant's experience engaging in this case study. These results also informed the Main Idea of optimal methods for maintaining contact with current and former campers in order to monitor their progress and maintain connection and ongoing communication.

### *Suggested Directions for Future Research*

While the evaluation of the program evaluation results detailed in Chapter IV make concrete suggestions for future evaluations of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk, there are specific suggestions for the Main Idea's ongoing research as the organization's key stakeholders (i.e., directors, board members) continue to ascribe to the value of program evaluation within the organization and to assert a desire to collect further metrics that will bolster ongoing fundraising efforts. The Main Idea Leadership Bunk would benefit from continuing to collect similar data in future program implementations that can be pooled together, resulting in greater statistical power with which the significance of changes over time could be more rigorously examined and, eventually, would allow for examination of hypotheses about associations between the program's goals and objectives being achieved and particular components of the program's design. Additionally, on a broader scale of program evaluation for the Main Idea, now that the most effective methods for maintaining contact have been determined, longer-term follow-up of all Main Idea campers (not just those who participate in the Leadership Bunk program) is possible and would be quite useful in order to better understand the impact of the program on their development – for both those who continue to return to the Main Idea annually as well as those who do not.

### *Contribution to the Psychological Literature on Camp-Based Programs*

As the literature review in Chapter II noted, psychological literature describing the role and impact of camping programs on youth development is extant, yet limited. This case study contributes to the research by thoroughly describing a specific camp-based program intended to promote low-income adolescent girls' psychosocial growth with regard to resiliency, leadership, self-esteem, assertiveness, communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills. By detailing the program design as well as the consultation processes utilized

to evaluate the Main Idea Leadership Bunk, the case study provides both results about the impact of a specific program and guidance to others for engaging in similar efforts to implement and evaluate youth development programs.

*Contribution to the Consultant: on Consultation Procedures and Roles*

Lippitt and Lippitt (1986) outline a variety of roles a consultant can assume throughout the course of a project, such as the program evaluation of the Main Idea Leadership Bunk on which this case study is focused. They note that these roles are neither mutually exclusive, nor does the consultant's behavior typically remain constrained to one. Rather, there is commonly fluidity between various roles throughout the consultation, with certain emphases predominating at a given moment based on the evolving nature of the task (i.e., a focus on tasks or process) and the characteristics of the client/organization and consultant. Here, the varying roles that the consultant played during this case study are presented nested within a selection of Lippitt and Lippitt's (1986) role descriptions, including the consultant as advocate, information specialist, fact finder, joint problem solver and trainer/educator.

Consultant as advocate.

When a consultant is in the role of advocate they are seen to have strong beliefs about what is useful to an organization and to provide that information from a stance and background of expertise. There are positions of being both a process advocate and a content advocate, although typical consultation will involve shifts between both. While a content advocate influences the client to choose particular courses of action and ascribe to specific goals or values, a process advocate works to influence the client's problem-solving methods without backing specific solutions. My initial engagement with the Main Idea was from the position of process advocate where my goals were more broad and flexible. My interest –



not expertise – was in the role of camp in youth wellness enhancement and prevention programming and my personal connection with the camp brought me to this organization. Therefore, I positioned myself as bringing an expertise in program evaluation research. Together the camp directors and I discussed the various options for which program I could help them evaluate for my dissertation project research. I briefly shifted into a content advocate position when guiding us toward the most psychosocially-oriented of the program options (i.e., leadership versus trip programming). Inherently, engaging in the system as a consultant places one in the position of advocate, but, as in this case, the consultant must be thoughtful about how that advocacy is carried out (Lippitt & Lippitt, 1986). I initially emphasized the importance of program evaluation and came from a position of process advocate to use my influence to pave the way for what I thought would be the most effective methods of carrying out the research. Once I was integrated into the system as a participant-observer during the 2008 summer session, I was also able to engage as an advocate of content in ad hoc discussions with the Main Idea directors to make ongoing tweaks to all levels of programming, at the end of the 2008 session when I met with the board to present general recommendations and when I documented my specific recommendations based on analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data, as presented in Chapter IV.

A consultant in the role of advocate is viewed as someone with influence and a modicum of power that inherently imposes her ideas and values (Lippitt & Lippitt, 1986). This was demonstrated when I both influenced the system's increased shift toward program evaluation and when my power differential was observed by and affected the 2008 Leadership Coordinator.

Over the course of my dealings with the Main Idea I witnessed a shift in their attitudes toward program evaluation and manualizing their operations. This was particularly notable as it was a “transition summer” between directors. The new directors demonstrated less of a “that’s how we doing things here” and more willingness to examine what has or has not worked and to make changes in order to improve operations. I saw a shift from the system ascribing to program evaluation values theoretically, as something that should be done in the future, to taking action in both engaging me to conduct Leadership Bunk program evaluation and then conducting their own similar efforts, including a general program evaluation survey the directors created and had all counselors complete at the program’s end.

My power and influence as an advocating consultant was also apparent in the relationships I cultivated with the Main Idea directors. I was interpreted as “on their level” of the organizational hierarchy by campers and staff throughout the program, likely by my physical proximity to them in office space and our observable rapport as well as by my age and the responsibilities I took on in assisting them over the course of the 2008 session. For example, being positioned in the main office in a setting such as a camp meant “putting out fires” or trying to problem solve when counselors came in with issues and funneling them to the directors when need be. This experience taught me about the inner-workings and realities of nonprofit work where the approach takes after the motto “all hands on deck.” Additionally, out of both hiccups in initially implementing the 2008 Leadership Bunk program without a clear sense of what activities had been included in years past and some misperceptions by the existing Leadership Coordinator about my role in the organization, for the initial days of the Leadership Bunk program implementation I was pulled in as a “co-coordinator.” I worked with her to develop and facilitate the activities. While this gave me

more credibility with the participants and a valuable vantage point for participant-observation, I soon realized I needed to distance myself and reassert my role as a participant-observer, not co-coordinator. The process of my being seen by the coordinator as a peer colleague highlighted our power differential what benefits my consultant advocate position afforded me. My proximity and influence to the director served as a point of contention: the Leadership Coordinator saw herself and me as colleagues, but voiced her frustration that I had a more direct line to the directors' ears and attention. Her perception of my relationship with the directors was accurate, and at this point I worked to take more space from the direct implementation of the program in order to act in more realistic accordance with our roles in the system.

#### Consultant as information specialist.

When a consultant is acting as an information specialist they are seen to have special knowledge, skill and professional experience that they bring to the task at hand, as it is defined by the consultant and client during initial consultations (Lippitt & Lippitt, 1986). In this role, the consultant's actual or perceived expertise is often emphasized – and the consultant must be aware of this and not maintain an exclusive position of expert. This is where an emphasis on one's expertise in a given process (i.e., program evaluation) must be maintained rather than a content emphasis (i.e., implementation of camp programs). However, one can maintain her process advocacy role even when making content recommendations. In this case study, I presented to the consultation with my expertise in program evaluation and once I was more integrated into the system was able to provide content recommendations about optimal camp program implementation based on the program evaluation process I had engaged carried out.

Consultant as fact finder.

In its most pure form, my primary role during this consultation was as a fact finder. This meant using my expertise to develop a plan to research the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program through interviewing, questionnaires, observations, analysis of records and documents and administration and analysis of appropriate tests in way that was least disruptive to the camp's normative procedures in order to understand the organization's processes, guide it to meeting its stated goals and objectives and evaluate how well processes aimed to contribute to change are working (Lippitt & Lippitt, 1986). A key component of this role was also my plan to provide the data feedback in the form of this dissertation case study.

In hindsight, I see that I came into the situation expecting these responsibilities to be the limits of my role. Intellectually, I knew that I would have an influence on the camp system – that I would be a *participant*-observer, not simply an observer. I understood that I would lean on my psychologist-in-training experience to read the impact of the added research procedures, note the nuances of “cross talk” in group interviews that could be most useful and gauge how much direct intervention of program evaluation measures the Main Idea system could tolerate – and be willing to make real time changes as that feedback revealed itself (Lippitt & Lippitt, 1986). However, over time I was surprised when my role transcended into such a fully engaged participant, both in the form of my responsibilities such as co-facilitating some of the Leadership Bunk activities and helping manage main office issues as described above, as well as my emotional involvement.

Consultant as joint problem solver.

As described above, given my proximity to and relationships with the camp directors, during the course of my consultation I was pulled into the system quickly in a role

that was beyond a fact finder or observer. Lippitt and Lippitt (1986) describe the joint problem solver consultant's role as "collaborating with the client in all of the perceptual, cognitive, emotional and action processes" (p. 36). Indeed, during the summer 2008 session of the Main Idea my role as a participant-observer enabled me to work so closely with the directors, campers and other staff that I was able think, act and feel as they did. I was engaged with the system intellectually and emotionally as I lived and breathed the camp experience, what at times felt like riding a roller coaster of commitment, excitement, confusion, frustration and gratification. I would feel invigorated by certain discussions with campers or observations of their growth, only to hear "through the grapevine" about their disappointment with certain aspects of the programming, and then experience the subtle rewards of watching a typically shy camper take charge or receiving a sweet anonymous note from a Leadership Bunk camper about how she felt thankful to have the opportunity to lead.

My emotional engagement with the campers and the directors provided essential data and allowed me, in line with Lippitt and Lippitt's description of this role, to be involved in analysis and decision making as a peer. From this vantage point I could perceive the situation accurately, as it truly is; help define goals more clearly; brainstorm and test alternatives for programming with the Leadership Coordinator; link the organization to existing internal and external resources; catalyze action; and reduce a problem into manageable parts – all aspects of the program evaluation case study described in Chapter IV.

Within the role of joint problem solver, my participant-observation position was most important. As a participant-observer, I learned the most about leadership, and subsequently how to optimally impart it in this target population, by being pulled into a position of leader, albeit temporarily as a co-coordinator of the Leadership Bunk program. Much like the Main Idea Leadership Bunk participants working with their younger camper

counterparts, my most meaningful learning came from being pulled emotionally, personally and experientially into the process. This not only taught me about the content of this program and how to foster such related psychosocial development in adolescent girls, but about the importance when consulting of appropriately weaving oneself into the fabric of the organization – even if temporarily – to gain an optimal sense of the context, in order to tailor consultation, intervention and recommendations appropriately.

This continued as I engaged in the follow-up interviews and data interpretation. While I saw firsthand how time intensive such efforts were and witnessed the challenges of working to maintain contact with the campers, I also experienced the meaningful connections – with the Main Idea, with fellow Leadership Bunk campers, and with me – that the telephone interviews highlighted in a different manner than any of the other program evaluation methods.

Consultant as trainer/educator.

An additional common role of the consultant is as an educator or trainer within the client system (Lippitt & Lippitt, 1986). Commonly, this is an aspect of the continuing, long-term consulting relationship. This was demonstrated in the evolution of my role within the Main Idea organization. While I did not engage in training activities during my 2008 consultation with the Main Idea, the directors asked that I conduct a brief training about the Leadership Bunk programming at the Main Idea during the 2009 session's pre-camp staff training. Specifically, they were interested in me outlining the highlights of the Main Idea's relational model that emphasizes leadership and empowerment and working with the staff to brainstorm creative ways to engage in naturalistic camp activities that could promote leadership for both Leadership Bunk and general Main Idea campers during the 2009 session. In line with Lippitt and Lippitt's (1986) descriptions, here I functioned as a group

trainer and took into account the learning and change process. My research on the 2008 session had identified key points that we wanted to make clear to the staff, but it had also demonstrated that the best way of learning at camp is experiential under conditions of feeling empowered. Thus, the training included having the counselors engage in some leadership-promoting activities together and empowered them to use their creativity to brainstorm novel activities that they could facilitate with campers during the 2009 session.

#### Shifting roles.

As should be evident, neither Lippitt and Lippitt (1986), nor others prescribe an optimal role for a consultant, but rather emphasize a flexibility that allows for the consultant to be most effective in working with the organization and meeting the goals of the consultation project. Typically, the most appropriate roles at given times during consultation are the ones where the consultant feels most useful and comfortable. In line with my experience, Lippitt and Lippitt note that the choice of a role at a given time is based less on deliberate decisions than on experiential responses and instincts – few of which can be easily explained. As such, these descriptions of my being pulled into and shifting between roles at various times throughout the case study demonstrates a natural and normative aspect of consultation procedures, particularly when the consultant is functioning as a participant-observer and is well-integrated into the system.

#### *Contributions to the Consultant's Professional Development*

The following documents the epilogue of the consultant's experience working with the Main Idea, describing her ongoing involvement with the organization and how the process of engaging in the program evaluation case study contributed to a general trajectory of learning and professional development.

The consultant's ongoing involvement with the Main Idea.

As mentioned above, I was asked to return to work with the Main Idea for the summer 2009 session. At that time we determined that an appropriate role would be to facilitate continued program evaluation data collection and to transfer information about previous implementations of the Leadership Bunk to this year's Leadership Co-Coordinators in order to prevent them needing to re-create the program as had happened often in years past when the program's leadership changed. Prior to the camp session, I worked closely with the camp directors to develop a Leadership Co-Coordinator job description and engage in recruitment and selection of these staff. I then was present for parts of the 2009 session to engage in general training with the entire Main Idea staff about leadership programming and to train and initially supervise the new Leadership Co-Coordinators. I oversaw the pre-program and post-program data collection and made recommendations for future follow-up data collection procedures, as documented in Chapter IV.

At the end of the 2009 session, I recognized that my life circumstances (i.e., going on internship, graduating) would not facilitate such a continued hands-on role. Additionally, it was evident that the Leadership Bunk at this point was in a distinctly more formative state, with a new crop of dedicated coordinators taking ownership of its design, evolution and evaluation. Conversations with the directors and select board members suggested that my interest in staying involved with the organization might be best leveraged if I joined the board or one of its associated committees. We determined over the course of the next few months that given my interest in remaining involved with the camp program in a program evaluation and strategic capacity that I would be best-suited to join the organization's program development and fundraising committee where I could work with other volunteers to translate the existing and forthcoming program evaluation data into grant applications and



other data-driven fundraising materials. This clarity about the my optimal ongoing role in the larger organization came with the better understanding my skill sets, likes and desires that this case study project fostered. In this new role I will ideally be able to bring to fruition some of the recommendations for fundraising and organizational synergies described in Chapter IV while continuing to receive gratification from ongoing involvement with an organization that is quite meaningful to me.

Contributions to the consultant: on program planning and evaluation efforts

My experience engaging in this case study reified my dedication to pursuing consultation activities using Maher's (2000) model for designing and evaluating human services programming as part of my career, with the Main Idea and elsewhere. The case study itself further demonstrated the utility of the framework. From this experience, I learned – for future similar consultation work with the Main Idea or any other human services program – to keep things as simple as possible, particularly to try to avoid such redundancies as this project, in its design, included. My experience drafting the program evaluation and plan and implementing it was yet another opportunity for experiential learning where I saw firsthand that in the future I must consider practicality and feasibility first and then build efforts up over time. Specifically, in the future I would design measures, such as the surveys I created for this project, in a more streamlined manner that emphasized the target outcomes under evaluation. While this case study's design did this with regard to self-esteem, leadership, resiliency and assertiveness, it was more of a struggle to clearly assess teamwork, communication and problem-solving outcomes as doing so entailed wading through a mass of qualitative data. Additionally, I will better familiarize myself with methods of qualitative data analysis to better guide similar future efforts.

Contribution to the consultant: on youth development and wellness promotion programs.

While my initial stance as a consultant to the Main Idea entailed advocating my process-oriented abilities in conducting a program evaluation, my experience acting as a participant-observer and then analyzing the range of data for the case study transformed me into someone who can also advocate from a foundation of content expertise to understand and consult regarding effective camp-based youth development and wellness promotion programming.

While I was able to provide recommendations to the Main Idea about the optimal structured activities the Leadership Bunk programming should include to contribute to campers' growth, particularly those that are "short and sweet" and organic within typical camp activities, the main message I took away from this case study is that camp's essential benefit is the environment it provides where the youth have an opportunity to appropriately assert their autonomy and take on responsibilities with and for younger campers that contribute resiliency and related youth development.

Hardy Girls, Healthy Women's (2009) notion of a "Muse" is particularly apt to my understanding. They contrast a Muse with a role model – using metaphor particularly apt to the pine-filled camp setting: they note that adults benefit youth most when they do not assume that they are role models, whose responsibility is to show or tell youth what to do, but rather to serve as "Muses" by cultivating the fertile soil in an environment that can foster adaptive youth development. This means not simply modeling good behavior or teaching skills, but being "someone who inspires girls, who recognizes and draws out their strengths and potential" (p. 4, Hardy Girls, Healthy Women, 2009).

This case study also highlighted to me the importance of observations and multiple data sources when evaluating outcomes of programs targeting youth populations. While the self-reports and campers' feedback during the 2008 session provided important data, the ability to understand the program's complex impact was complemented by the counselors' opinions and the campers' reports at follow-up. The contrast was particularly striking between the youth's feedback in the heat of the moment when they were feeling frustrated or challenged, and at the end of the program and at follow-up. The counselors' feedback at program's end was quite predictive of the types of responses campers provided at follow-up.

Contributions to the consultant's professional identity as a psychologist.

I continue to believe firmly in the value of camps as wellness promoting environments that promote adaptive youth development. In addition to contributing to my desire to continue pursuing program planning and evaluation consulting efforts, particularly with regard to camp-based programs and prevention efforts targeting adolescents and young adults, my experience with the Main Idea also influenced to my abilities as a psychologist-in-training when engaging in direct clinical work with clients.

Working with adolescents in this setting particularly influenced my learning as a psychologist about how while we generally strive to make the implicit explicit with clients, adolescents are easily self conscious and prone to being guarded, thus not everything implicit must or should be made explicit in this type of a setting. In fact, I observed that some learning is most influential when it remains in the symbolic realm, such as the teambuilding activities which represented new skills and concepts the participants were taking on, but then such gains were mitigated by more elaborate follow-up conversations that were seen to provoke vulnerability and subsequently trigger the participants' defenses.

While my role at camp was strikingly different in many ways from my work as a psychodynamic clinician, acting as a participant and an observer of a process was fully in line with my interpersonal-relational theoretical orientation. I was consistently mindful that my presence influenced the process and that my experience as part of that process influenced me – in ways that were and are both apparent as well as not conscious, nor obvious.

### *Conclusion*

This case study has worked to capture the process of engaging with and consulting to the Main Idea camp organization in order to evaluate the 2008 session of their Leadership Bunk program. While earlier chapters introduce the program and the case study objectives, outline relevant psychological literature, describe the methods for engaging in the program evaluation and detail the subsequent findings, this chapter has worked to summarize the findings, the contribution the case study makes to the psychological literature and to document the consultant's self-reflection about the meaning of the consultation experience to her growth as a professional psychologist in both consultation and clinical endeavors.

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## APPENDIX A

**INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS***Pre-program Staff Interview Guide*

- 1) What do you see as the current program evaluation needs?
- 2) What questions would you like this program evaluation project to answer?
- 3) What do you hope to gain from this project?
- 4) What are the program's stated goals?
- 5) How do you define leadership, assertiveness, team-building, self-esteem, self-confidence and other key words within the stated goals?
- 6) What value do you think the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program has with respect to participants?
- 7) What is your theory for how the Main Idea Leadership Bunk benefits participants?
- 8) How do you think the Main Idea program addresses difference?
- 9) What important issues of difference are important to consider with relevance to the Main Idea Leadership Bunk program?

*Post-program Staff Interview Guide*

- 1) What do you believe the campers gained from their experience in this program?
- 2) How effective do you believe the program was in achieving its stated goals?
- 3) What feedback can you provide about this program evaluation project to inform future similar efforts? What would you keep the same, change, remove?
- 4) How was difference addressed? What role did it play? (e.g., geographic, cultural, 1<sup>st</sup> vs. second year in program, age)
- 5) What shifts did you see on individual and group levels in campers' leadership, assertiveness (includes asking for help), self-esteem, teamwork, problem-solving, coping skills and resiliency? Anecdotes would be helpful.
- 6) What mechanisms of change do you attribute to these shifts? Or, why do you think these changes occurred (perhaps activities, experiences, etc.)?

*Program Participant Follow-up Interview Guide*

- 1) How has participating in the Leadership Bunk at the Main Idea in the summer of 2008 impacted you since you left camp?
- 2) What are your memories from the summer?
- 3) What lessons did you learn this summer?
- 4) What was how you expected it to be at camp? What was different?
- 5) Do you think you act or do things differently because of coming to camp this summer? How so?
- 6) Do you feel differently about yourself? How so?
- 7) Do you see yourself as more of a leader, less of one, the same amount of one since before you came to camp this summer?
- 8) Do you feel you are able to speak up for yourself? Is this more, less or the same as before coming to camp this summer?
- 9) Have there been other behaviors, thoughts or feelings about yourself that you notice have changed since coming to camp this summer?
- 10) If there is a change, do you think that has to do with anything in the Leadership Bunk? Can you tell me more about that?
- 11) Which activities and experiences in the Leadership Bunk do you think had to do with these changes you notice about yourself?
- 12) Did you ever feel different at camp? What about when you got home? Did you feel this was addressed at camp?
- 13) What would have been different about the Leadership Bunk if you were not away from home for 10 days?
- 14) Have you moved or changed contact information since being at camp? If so, what is your new information?
- 15) Are you keeping in touch with any of your friends from camp? If so, how do you guys keep in touch?
- 16) Are you hoping and/or planning on coming back to camp next summer? If so, what are your hopes for that experience?

- 17) What challenges have you faced since leaving the Main Idea? How did you cope with them? Did this feel different than before camp? Did you think about anything you learned at camp during these situations?
- 18) What are your plans for the future? Do you hope and/or plan to go to college?

## **FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOLS**

### ***Pre-program Program Participant Discussion Guide***

1. What do you hope to gain from participating in the program?
2. What are your concerns about participating?
3. Are they different than your concerns about being at camp in general? How so?
4. What does leadership mean to you?
5. Do you feel like leaders? How so? When?
6. What things could you learn to make you feel more like a leader?
7. How do you feel about yourselves in general?
8. Are you glad to be away from home?
9. Do you think you will miss home while at camp?
10. At home do you feel like you have to take care of people? Like you can't be as much of "a kid" as you want to be?
11. If so, do you hope that feels different at camp?
12. Do you find places generally feel safe? Secure? Accepting?
13. Do you think you will want to keep in touch with your Leadership bunkmates after the summer is over?
14. If you want to keep in touch with them, how do you think you will? Some ideas might be email, MySpace or Facebook, phone calls, mailed letters or hanging out in person.
15. Do you think any of these would be good ways for me or the camp directors to get in touch with you in the future?

*Informed by van Linden & Fertman (1998)*

*Post-program Program Participant Discussion Guide*

1. What does leadership mean to you?
2. Do you feel like leaders? How so? When?
3. Does that feel different than when you came to camp?
4. How does leadership make you feel about yourself?
5. Do you feel different in general than when you came to camp? How so?
6. What skills have you learned and/or used during the leadership activities?
7. What things could you learn to make you feel more like a leader?
8. How much input have you had in developing and carrying out leadership activities?
9. Did you learn things this summer that make you feel more like a leader?
10. What do you think you gained by participating in the program? What helped you?
11. Did the program meet your hopes and expectations? How so or how not? What was as you expected? What was different?
12. What changes would you suggest to make the Leadership Bunk experience better? What would you keep the same? What would you do differently? What would you get rid of?
13. Did you feel there were important differences between you and your bunkmates (geographic, cultural, age, years in Leadership Bunk). If so, did you feel the program addressed these differences? How so? What could be done differently in the future?
14. Are you glad you completed the leadership bunk summer? Did you ever wonder or not care if you wouldn't? What kept you going?
15. Do you feel like you accomplished something by finishing?
16. Were you glad to be away from home?
17. Did you miss home while at camp?
18. At home do you feel like you have to take care of people? Like you can't be as much of "a kid" as you want to be?
19. If so, did that feel different at camp?
20. Do you find places generally feel safe? Secure? Accepting?

21. Did you find camp to be safe, secure and/or accepting?

22. Follow-up on questionnaires:

- Inquiring because of camp feeling better, worse or same about self, body and friendships and the WHY
- If self-concept as leader has changed/stayed same at camp, why
- If self-concept as team player has changed/stayed same at camp, why
- If self-concept as problem-solver has changed/stayed same at camp (in general, with friends/peers), why
- If self-concept about assertiveness (speaking up for self or others) has changed/stayed same at camp, why
  - Do you feel like speaking up for yourself is easier when you feel good about yourself?:
  - Has your ability to express self using words changed?
  - What about self-expression in other ways?

23. Do you stay focused on the positive more than before camp?

24. Do you put up with frustration any better than before camp?

25. Do feel more comfortable trying something new than before camp?

26. Do feel more confident in your abilities than before camp? Which abilities?

27. Why do you think any of these changes happened?

28. Did you feel your bunkmates were there for you (in general, emotionally, physically)?  
Is this any different than how you feel in general (at home, school, etc.)?

29. What activities did you like? Why? What did you learn? Did any scare you at first?  
What changed over time in how you felt about different activities?

30. What activities did you not like? Why?

31. Were your leadership bunk goals met? What was similar/different? What you're your suggestions for the future?

32. Will you keep in touch with your Leadership bunkmates after you leave camp?

33. If so, how do? MySpace or Facebook, email, phone calls or mailed letters, etc.?



34. Which of these are good ways for me or the camp directors to get in touch with you in the future?

*Informed by van Linden & Fertman (1998)*

## STAFF RATING SCALES/CHECKLISTS

### *Post-Leadership Counselor Evaluation of Camper*

Camper Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please evaluate the Leadership Camper on the following criteria:**

How do you think the camper **feels about herself** since the first day of camp?

(Circle):                      Better                      No Change                      Worse

*Please describe:*

How has the camper's **leadership qualities** changed since the first day of camp?

(Circle):                      Better leader                      No Change                      Worse leader

*Please describe:*

Do you think the camper is **more assertive** (asking for help, saying no) since the first day of camp?

(Circle):                      More Assertive                      No Change                      Less Assertive

*Please describe:*

Do you think the camper is has **gained new abilities** since the first day of camp?

(Circle):                      Yes                      No

*Please describe:*

How was the camper's **overall attitude** this summer?

(Circle):                      Good                      Fine                      Bad

Did you see a **change in the camper's attitude** over the 10 day period?

(Circle):                      Better attitude                      No change                      Worse attitude

*Additional comments:*

How much did the camper **participate** this summer **compared to other campers**?

(Circle):                      More                      Same                      Less

Did you see a **change in the camper's participation** over the 10 day period?

(Circle):                      More participation                      No change                      Less participation

*Additional comments:*

How **cooperative** was the camper (with fellow campers, staff)?

(Circle):                      Very                      Somewhat                      Not at all

Did you see a **change in the camper's cooperation** over the 10 day period?

(Circle):                      More cooperation                      No change                      Less cooperation

*Additional comments:*

How **interactive** was the camper **with fellow campers**? (circle):

(Circle):                      Very                      Somewhat                      Not at all

Did you see a **change in how interactive the camper was with fellow campers** during camp?

(Circle):                      More interactive                      No change                      Less interactive

*Additional comments:*

How **interactive** was the camper **with staff**? (circle):

(Circle):                      Very                      Somewhat                      Not at all

Did you see a **change in how interactive the camper was with peers** during camp?

(Circle):                      More interactive                      No change                      Less interactive

*Additional comments:*

Please feel free to leave any other feedback:

## QUESTIONNAIRES

### PRE-PROGRAM PROGRAM LEADERSHIP BUNK SURVEY

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By the end of camp, I would like to...

In the past, I wish I had been able to...

I get really frustrated when ...

I want to participate in the Leadership Program because ...

Sometimes, I have a hard time achieving my goals because ...

In ten years, I would like to be able to say that I have ...

What do you hope to learn about yourself at camp?

Do you think camp this summer will influence	<u>how you act</u>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
--	--------------------	------------	-----------

Do you think camp this summer will influence	<u>how you think</u>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
--	----------------------	------------	-----------

Do you think camp this summer will influence	<u>how you feel</u>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
--	---------------------	------------	-----------

If you answered yes to any of the above three questions, how so?

**CIRCLE ONE ANSWER FOR EACH STATEMENT**

I feel like a leader                      Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Almost Always

I feel like a team player                      Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Almost Always

I speak up for myself                      Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Almost Always

I can express myself  
using my words                      Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Almost Always

I can express myself  
in other ways                      Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Almost Always

I speak up for others                      Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Almost Always

I am comfortable  
trying new things                      Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Almost Always

Things I **am excited** about at camp are (check all that apply):

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New activities & opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Working as a group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New friends                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Being challenged   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being away from home           | <input type="checkbox"/> Having goals       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ropes course                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Crafts    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning activities            | <input type="checkbox"/> Horseback riding   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Performance                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spending time with friends     | <input type="checkbox"/> Camping trips      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming/Watersports           | <input type="checkbox"/> Singing            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landsports                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____       |

Are you scared of any of these?

Yes                      No

Which ones? Why or why not?

Things I **am not excited** about camp are (check all that apply):

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New activities & opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Working as a group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New friends                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Being challenged   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being away from home           | <input type="checkbox"/> Having goals       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ropes course                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Crafts    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning activities            | <input type="checkbox"/> Horseback riding   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Performance                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spending time with friends     | <input type="checkbox"/> Camping trips      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming/Watersports           | <input type="checkbox"/> Singing            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landsports                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____       |

Other things I would like to do at camp are:

After camp I plan to keep in touch with:

\_\_\_\_\_ **Bunkmates**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Other campers**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Counselors**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Staff**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Directors**

I could see myself keeping in touch with them using (check all that apply):

\_\_\_\_\_ **MySpace/Facebook**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Email**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Phone**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Mail**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **In person**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

**POST-PROGRAM LEADERSHIP BUNK SURVEY**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think camp helped you learn about yourself?                      **Yes    No**

What did you learn?

Do you think camp influenced              how you act                      **Yes    No**

Do you think camp influenced              how you think                      **Yes    No**

Do you think camp influenced              how you feel                      **Yes    No**

If you answered yes to any of the above three questions, how so?

Did being in the leadership bunk change how you act at camp                      **Yes    No**

Why or why not? How?

Did it change how you will act outside of camp                      **Yes    No**

Why or why not? How?

**CIRCLE ONE ANSWER FOR EACH STATEMENT**

I feel like a leader                      **Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Almost Always**

I feel like a team player                      **Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Almost Always**

I feel like a role model                      **Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Almost Always**

I speak up for myself                      **Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Almost Always**

I can express myself  
using my words                      **Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Almost Always**

I can express myself  
in other ways                      **Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Almost Always**

I speak up for others                      **Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Almost Always**

I am comfortable trying  
new things                      **Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Almost Always**

Because of camp (check one):

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel **better** about myself

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel **worse** about myself

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel **the same** about myself

Because of camp (check one):

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel **better** about my body

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel **worse** about my body

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel **the same** about my body

Because of camp (check one):

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel **better** about my friendships

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel **worse** about my friendships

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel **the same** about my friendships

Because of camp (check one):

\_\_\_\_\_ I am **more capable** of doing things

\_\_\_\_\_ I am **less capable** of doing things

\_\_\_\_\_ I am **as capable** of doing things

Because of camp (check one):

\_\_\_\_\_ I am **more of a leader**

\_\_\_\_\_ I am **less of a leader**

\_\_\_\_\_ I am **the same of a leader**

Because of camp (check one):

\_\_\_\_\_ I am **more of a team player**

\_\_\_\_\_ I am **less of a team player**

\_\_\_\_\_ I am **the same of a team player**

Because of camp (check one):

\_\_\_\_\_ I am a **better problem-solver**

\_\_\_\_\_ I am a **worse problem-solver**

\_\_\_\_\_ I am **the same of a problem-solver**

Because of camp (check one):

\_\_\_\_\_ I **speak up** for myself more

\_\_\_\_\_ I **speak up** for myself less

\_\_\_\_\_ I **speak up** for myself the same

Because of camp, I feel like I can express myself using my words:

(Circle):      **Better**              **Worse**              **Same**

Because of camp, I feel like I speak up for others:

(Circle):      **More**              **Same**              **Less**



Because of camp, I feel like I can express myself in other ways:

(Circle):      **Better**      **Worse**      **Same**

Like how?

Things I **liked** about camp were (check all that apply):

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New activities & opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Working as a group    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New friends                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Being challenged      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being away from home           | <input type="checkbox"/> Having goals          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ropes course                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Horseback riding      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning activities            | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Performing (play, talent show) | <input type="checkbox"/> Camping trips         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spending time with friends     | <input type="checkbox"/> Singing               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming/Watersports           | <input type="checkbox"/> Campfire/Peace Circle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landsports                     | <input type="checkbox"/> The Food              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Crafts                | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____          |

What did you like about these activities?

Were any of these things you were scared of at first?      **Yes**      **No**

Which ones?

What changed that made you like them?

Things I **did not like** about camp were (check all that apply):

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New activities & opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Working as a group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New friends                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Being challenged   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being away from home           | <input type="checkbox"/> Having goals       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ropes course                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Crafts    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning activities            | <input type="checkbox"/> Horseback riding   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Performance/Leadership Play    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spending time with friends     | <input type="checkbox"/> Camping trips      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming/Watersports           | <input type="checkbox"/> Singing            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landsports                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____       |

Why didn't you like these things?

Things I **learned** at camp were: (check all that apply)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>New activities</b>                   | <input type="checkbox"/> How to <b>be more independent</b>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How to <b>apologize</b>                 | <input type="checkbox"/> How to <b>rely better on others</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How to <b>act when I make a mistake</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> How to <b>have faith in myself</b>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>New ways to communicate</b>          | <input type="checkbox"/> How to <b>be better at sharing</b>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How to <b>be more flexible</b>          | <b>Other:</b> _____  |

Things that **helped me learn** at camp were: (check all that apply)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having <b>role models</b>        | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Trying new activities</b>     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having <b>goals</b>              | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Planning evening activity</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having <b>responsibilities</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>New friends</b>               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Working with my bunkmates</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Old friends</b>               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Being part of a team</b>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Staff</b>                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>The play</b>                  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Ropes course</b>              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Making mistakes</b>           | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other:</b> _____              |

Did you feel your goals for the Leadership Bunk were met?

**Yes**

**No**

Why or why not?

What was similar to what you expected from the Leadership Bunk?

What was different?

What would you suggest we do differently in the future?

After camp, I plan to keep in touch with: (check all that apply)

- ☐ Bunkmates
- ☐ Other campers
- ☐ Counselors
- ☐ Staff
- ☐ Directors
- ☐ No one

How do you plan to keep in touch with: (check all that apply)

- ☐ MySpace/Facebook
- ☐ Email
- ☐ IM/online chat
- ☐ Text
- ☐ Phone
- ☐ Mail
- ☐ In person
- ☐ Camp
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the best way for Laura to contact you? (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Email address:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Phone number:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Mailing address:</b>	<input type="text"/>
		<input type="text"/>

### FOLLOW-UP LEADERSHIP BUNK SURVEY

Directions: Please **click on the appropriate check box** for each answer. For answers that you write something **type your answer in the gray area.**

Name:

Date:

	Yes	No
Did camp help you <u>learn about yourself?</u> (Check yes or no)  <u>What did you learn?</u> (type your answer)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did camp influence <u>how you act</u>  Did camp influence <u>how you think</u>  Did camp influence <u>how you feel</u>  <u>If you answered yes to any of the above questions, how so?</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>
Did being in the leadership bunk <u>change how you act at camp</u>  <u>Why or why not? How?</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did it <u>change how you act outside of camp</u>  Why or why not? How?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Directions: Click to make an X in the box that best describes you (Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Almost Always).

	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Almost Always</i>
I feel like a <u>leader</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel like a <u>team player</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel like a <u>role model</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I speak up <u>for myself</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can express myself <u>using my words</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can express myself <u>in other ways</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I speak up <u>for others</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am <u>comfortable trying new things</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Directions: Click to make an X in the box next to the statement that best describes you.

Because of camp (check one):

- ☐ I feel **better** about myself  
☐ I feel **worse** about myself  
☐ I feel **the same** about myself

Because of camp (check one):

- ☐ I feel **better** about my body  
☐ I feel **worse** about my body  
☐ I feel **the same** about my body

Because of camp (check one):

- ☐ I feel **better** about my friendships  
☐ I feel **worse** about my friendships  
☐ I feel **the same** about my friendships

Because of camp (check one):

- ☐ I am **more capable** of doing things  
☐ I am **less capable** of doing things  
☐ I am **as capable** of doing things

Directions: Click to make an X in the box next to the statement that best describes you.

Because of camp (check one):

- ☐ I am **more** of a leader  
☐ I am **less** of a leader  
☐ I am the **same** of a leader

Because of camp (check one):

- ☐ I am **more** of a team player  
☐ I am **less** of a team player  
☐ I am the **same** of a team player

Because of camp (check one):

- ☐ I am a **better** problem-solver  
☐ I am a **worse** problem-solver  
☐ I am the **same** of a problem-solver

Because of camp (check one):

- ☐ I speak up for myself **more**  
☐ I speak up for myself **less**  
☐ I speak up for myself **the same**

Because of camp (check one):

- ☐ I speak up for others **more**  
☐ I speak up for others **less**  
☐ I speak up for others **the same**

Because of camp (check one):

- ☐ I express myself using words **more**  
☐ I express myself using words **less**  
☐ I express myself using words **the same**

Because of camp (check one):

- ☐ I express myself in others ways **more**  
☐ I express myself in others ways **less**  
☐ I express myself in others ways **the same**

Like how?:

Things I **learned** at camp were: (check all that apply)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New activities                     | <input type="checkbox"/> How to be more independent   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How to apologize                   | <input type="checkbox"/> How to rely better on others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ways to act after I make a mistake | <input type="checkbox"/> How to have faith in myself  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New ways to communicate            | <input type="checkbox"/> How to be better at sharing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How to be more flexible            | <input type="checkbox"/> How to be more responsible   |

Other:

Things that **helped me learn** at camp were: (check all that apply)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having role models        | <input type="checkbox"/> Trying new activities     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having goals              | <input type="checkbox"/> Planning evening activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having responsibilities   | <input type="checkbox"/> New friends               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working with my bunkmates | <input type="checkbox"/> Old friends               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being part of a team      | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The play                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Ropes course              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Making mistakes           | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:                    |

Directions: Please **click on the appropriate check box** for each answer. For answers that you write something **type your answer in the gray area.**

Did you feel your goals for the Leadership Bunk were met? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Why or why not?

What was similar to what you expected from the Leadership Bunk?

What was different?

What would you suggest we do differently in the future?

Since camp, I keep in touch with: (check all that apply)

- ☐ Bunkmates
- ☐ Other campers
- ☐ Counselors
- ☐ Staff
- ☐ Directors
- ☐ No one
- ☐ Other:

We keep in touch using: (check all that apply)

- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Email
- ☐ IM/online chat
- ☐ Text
- ☐ Phone
- ☐ Mail
- ☐ In person
- ☐ Camp
- ☐ Other:

What is the best way for Main Idea to contact you? :

- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Email
- ☐ IM/online chat
- ☐ Text
- ☐ Phone
- ☐ Mail
- ☐ In person
- ☐ Camp
- ☐ Other:

Please provide your current contact information:

**Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing address:** \_\_\_\_\_

Are you coming back to camp for summer 2009 (August 21-30)?

☐ Yes

☐ No



### **SELF-ESTEEM QUESTIONNAIRE\***

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#### *How Do I Feel about Myself?*

**Instructions:** These questions ask how you feel about yourself. For each question, **click the box** of the one answer that best describes how YOU feel about yourself (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree). There are no right or wrong answers – just give your HONEST opinion.

		<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
1	I am as popular with kids my own age as I want to be.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I am as good a student as I would like to be.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I am happy about how much my family likes me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I am happy with the way I look.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I am as good at sports/physical activities as I want to be.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	I am happy with the way I can do most things.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	I am as good as I want to be at making new friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	I am doing as well on school work as I would like to.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	I am too much trouble to my family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	I like my body just the way it is.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	I wish I was better at sports/physical activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	I sometimes think I am a failure (a “loser”).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	I have as many close friends as I would like to have.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	I am good enough at math.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	I get in trouble too much at home.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	I feel good about my height and weight.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	I feel OK about how well I do when I participate in sports/physical activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	I am happy with myself as a person.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

		<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
19	I am as well liked by other kids as I want to be.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	I am as good at reading and writing as I want to be.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	I feel OK about how important I am to my family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	I wish I looked a lot different.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	I am happy about how many different kinds of sports/physical activities I am good at.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24	I am the kind of person I want to be.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25	I feel good about how well I get along with other kids.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26	I get grades that are good enough for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27	I get along as well as I would like to with my family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28	I wish it were easier for me to learn new kinds of sports/physical activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29	I often feel ashamed of myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30	I wish my friends liked me more than they do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31	I feel OK about how good of a student I am.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32	My family pays enough attention to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33	I participate in as many different kinds of sports/physical activities as I want to.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34	I like being just the way I am.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35	I feel good about how much my friends like my ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36	I do as well on tests in school as I want to.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37	I am happy with how much my family loves me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38	I am as good a person as I want to be.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39	I feel OK about how much other kids like doing things with me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40	I get too many bad grades on my report cards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41	I feel good about how much my family cares about my ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42	I wish I had more to be proud of.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### ASSERTIVENESS SCALE\*

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#### *What Would You Do?*

	Definitely could not	Probably could not	Probably could	Definitely could
1. <u>I could go up to someone my age and start talking to that person.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. <u>If a friend wants me to do something that I don't want to do, I could tell my friend that I don't want to do it.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. <u>If a friend wanted to give me alcohol, I could say no.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. <u>If a friend wanted to give me marijuana, I could tell my friend that I didn't want any.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. <u>If friends did something that I didn't like, I could ask them to change what they were doing.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. <u>If some of my friends are playing a game, I could ask them if I could join.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. <u>If a friend wanted to give me some cocaine or crack, I could say no.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>