STROUD, SUZANNE MALYNDA, M.S. The Effects of Team Building Activities on Group Climate and Cohesion. (2006)
Directed by Dr. Nancy J. Gladwell. 92 pp.

This study investigated the effects of team building activities on group climate and cohesion. Eleven undergraduate university students comprised the sample. Pre- and post-questionnaires were administered to examine group climate and cohesion. The control group volunteered for two hours over a five week period and the experimental group participated in team building activities and volunteered for two hours over a five week period. The subscales of engagement, avoidance, and conflict were explored with regards to group climate. The results suggest that team building activities are effective in increasing group climate, cohesion, and development of newly formed groups. More specifically, the results showed a significant increase in group engagement, a significant decrease in group conflict, and a significant increase in group cohesion when team building activities were used. Group climate and cohesion also affect group development, which was further examined in this study through focus groups and individual interviews after completion of the program. The positive group climate and high level of cohesion of the experimental group allowed them to reach a higher level of group development than the control group.

EFFECTS OF TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES ON GROUP CLIMATE AND COHESION

by

Suzanne Malynda Stroud

A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of The Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science

Greensboro
2006

Approved by

_____
Committee Chair

APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Committee Chair _____

Committee Members _____

_____

_____
Date of Acceptance by Committee

_____
Date of Final Oral Examination

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to recognize my committee members, Dr. Nancy Gladwell, Dr. Leandra Bedini, and Marin Burton, for challenging my ideas, sharing their insight, and providing encouragement. I would like to thank Dr. Gladwell for keeping me on track and always having my best interest in mind. I would like to thank Dr. Bedini for sharing her expertise in research methods, especially the quantitative data. I am thankful to Ms. Burton for teaching me so much about experiential education and leading team building activities.

In addition to my committee members, I would also like to thank Kimberly Miller for offering me an amazing opportunity to work with her on Partnership F.I.V.E. during my first year of graduate school. Without that assistantship, this thesis never would have happened. I learned a lot about running successful programs for people of all ability levels, and plan to take all that I have learned from her with me throughout my career. I would like to thank J. Scott Glass for allowing me to use his Group Cohesion Evaluation Questionnaire and Roy MacKenzie for the use of the Group Climate Questionnaire – Short Form.

Finally, I would like to thank all of the university and high school students who volunteered for my program. They were all very committed and this research would not have happened without them. All of these individuals have supported me in one way or another through the challenges of graduate school. They have all gone well beyond what was necessary to help me during this process. For that, I thank all of you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES

Page

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Groups are everywhere. People are members of groups at school, work, church, athletic leagues, volunteer agencies, and their own homes, to name a few. Individuals are often members and may be managers of many different groups at the same time. All of these groups exist in part because individuals feel they can best achieve their goals by working as part of a group (Shivers, 1980). Not all of these groups are created equal. Each group has its own rules, whether spoken or unspoken, and its own goals and reasons for existence. Since each group is different, group management is often challenging. Managers of groups cannot follow the same exact pattern to lead every single group. But, managers can utilize various group development activities with each group to effectively lead them. Private for-profit businesses, non-profit organizations, and the public sector could all benefit by enhancing group cohesion, group climate, and group development through the use of such activities**.**

Theories state that groups go through a series of life-cycle stages as their group climate and level of cohesion change. Knowledge of group development models can aid in the understanding and management of groups because the models give the facilitator a framework and possible guidelines to follow. Though many different models of group development have been proposed, most are fairly similar (Ephros & Vassil, 2005). Garland, Jones, and Kolodny's (1965) framework for group development offers a good

model for establishing group cohesion and working toward positive group climate using experiential education. This model suggests that newly formed groups have the potential to move through various stages: (a) forming, (b) struggling for control and power, (c) becoming a cohesive group, (d) developing into a well-functioning group, and finally (e) terminating the group. It is important to note that groups do not always move through these processes in a linear order (Ephros & Vassil, 2005).

Where a group is in the development model depends in part on the group's climate. Group climate is the participant's perception of the group's atmosphere (Kivlighan & Angelone, 1992). Group climate is further described as the movement of a group through a series of interactional dimensions (MacKenzie, 1983). The group's interactional dimensions include how engaged the members are, whether or not they are avoiding personal topics, and whether or not they are experiencing any conflict with other group members (MacKenzie & Livesley, 1983). Each group has a different climate and level of group effectiveness (Lodahl & Porter, 1961; Rose, 1998), which can change over time. Individual group member perceptions' of group climate is one of the most important links between group process and outcome (Liebermann, Yalom, & Miles, 1973). Members of groups who feel that they have a great group climate will have more positive outcomes than groups whose members feel like there is a negative group climate.

Group climate can be affected by the group's cohesiveness. Group cohesion has at least three different meanings associated with it, such as: "(1) attraction to the group, including resistance to leaving it, (2) morale, or the level of motivation evidenced by group members, and (3) coordination of efforts of group members" (Shaw, 1981, p. 213).

Studies reveal that groups that are highly cohesive have a greater amount of social interactions, engage in more positive interactions, exert greater influence over their members, are more effective at accomplishing their goals, and have more satisfied members (Valore, 2002). Therefore, cohesive groups also have a more positive group climate.

Little is known about how to create cohesive groups with positive group climate. One way that has been suggested to manage groups is experiential training and team building activities. Training groups experientially can help group members to become aware, explore, establish, or create their rules and goals as a whole. Team building activities are a type of experiential education which requires groups to solve problems in a new setting where participants cannot rely on their previous experience to deal with the new situations (Wagner & Campbell, 1994), which then promotes team development (Hatch & McCarthy, 2005).

Objectives for experiential training include improving leadership, team building, problem-solving, trust, and communication skills (Williams, Graham, & Baker, 2002). Leadership skills are enhanced by offering challenges that require decision making and risk taking. Team building occurs when challenges require that the entire group works together in order to accomplish the task. Problem-solving is increased when the number and type of challenges presented to the group vary. The group will increase trust when the barriers are presented and the group is encouraged to move past the barriers. Additionally, activities that require and demonstrate the importance of effective listening can improve communication (Williams, Graham, & Baker, 2002).

Research in the outdoor education field, of which team building activities are a part, have often focused on the individual's personal growth (McAvoy, Mitten, Stringer, Steckart, & Sproles, 1996) instead of the affects on the group as a whole. It is very important to understand how team building activities affect the group's climate, cohesiveness, and development because group's growth affects group effectiveness. Although there has been a push to examine the effects of experiential education on group management (Sibthorp, 2004), there is still a lack of literature in the experiential education field examining group climate and cohesion. If team building activities affect group development, then groups that experience team building activities will move through the stages at a different rate than groups that do not go through a team building experience. Understanding whether team building activities can impact a group's development using Garland et al.'s (1965) five stages may help experiential educators to manage groups in different stages of development. If, for example, team building activities do increase the rate at which groups move through the stages of development, then facilitators may be more inclined to use team building activities during the early stages of development.

Statement of the Problem

Despite experiential educators' claims to the numerous group benefits from participating in team building activities, there has been a lack research on the topic. Most of the research has explored individual growth, not group growth in level of cohesion or climate (McAvoy et al., 1996). Little research has been done on how experiential programs affect group development (McAvoy et al., 1996), of which group climate and

group cohesion are parts. Of the research that has been done on group cohesion and climate in the experiential education field, control and experimental groups have not been used. Instead, researchers have examined the change in a group on high challenge courses (Glass & Benshoff, 2002; Neill & Richards, 1998) or on programs of multi-day trips in the wilderness (Ewert & Heywood, 1991; Glass & Benshoff, 2002). Additionally, the research has often been conducted on half-day or full-day challenge course programs, not on multi-day programs.

Researchers in other fields, such as group therapy and social work, have done extensive research on group development, climate, and cohesion (Johnson, burlingame, Olsen, Davies, & Gleave, 2005; Kivligham & Angelone, 1992). Facilitators in the experiential education field have long believed that experiential training can have a positive impact on group development, but there is a lack of research to support this presumption (McAvoy et al., 1996). Therefore, Understanding whether team building activities do in fact affect group climate and cohesion is the first step. If there is a link, then experiential educators can then begin to examine how team building activities affect group climate and cohesion. Understanding the connection between group climate, cohesion, and team building activities would enable experiential educators to understand how to best facilitate groups in different stages of development.

Rationale

To understand the relevance of this research for experiential educators, group development theories and models are first explored. Next, group climate and cohesion are examined. Individual group member perceptions' of group climate is very important. In

fact, it is one of the most important links between group process and outcome (Liebermann et al., 1973). Finally, experiential education is explored to understand how team building activities might have an impact group climate, cohesion, and development because many of the goals of team building activities have to do with improving group processes, and therefore their development.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of team building activities on group climate and cohesion of undergraduate students who participated in an inclusive volunteer program. Specifically, the following questions were addressed:

1. What influence do team building activities have on group climate?
2. What influence do team building activities have on group cohesion?

Operational Definitions

Group development: "the pattern of growth and change that occur in groups throughout their lives from formation to dissolution" (McAvoy et al., 1996, p. 4).

Group climate: "a participant's perception of the group atmosphere" (Kivlighan & Angelone, 1992, p. 469). Group climate is further categorized by engagement, avoidance, and conflict. Engagement addresses whether members want to be a part of the group, contribute to the group goals, and share personal details about their lives. Avoidance occurs when members refuse to examine important issues and depend on the facilitator for direction. Conflict occurs when members begin to recognize their differences, feel anxious, distrustful, and distant and withdrawn (MacKenzie, 1983).

Cohesion: the degree to which group members want to stay in the group (Shivers, 1980). Group cohesion is defined as "the strengths of the bonds linking group members to the group, the unity (or we-ness) of a group, feelings of attraction for specific group members and the group itself, and the degree to which the group members coordinate their efforts to achieve goals" (Forsyth, 1999, p. 9).

Experiential education: a philosophy and methodology which sees that learning is multi-dimensional, involving a four-stage cycle; going from concrete experience to observation and reflection, then to formation of abstract concepts and generalizations and, finally, to testing implications of concepts in new situations" (Denise & Harris, 1989, p. 10).

Team building activities: "a general label for a wide variety of interventions designed to assess current level of group development, clarify and prioritize goals, increase group cohesiveness, and increase productivity in groups" (Forsyth, 1999, p. 165).

Delimitations

A number of delimitations were set by the researcher in the design of this study. These included:

1. Students were not chosen randomly for the control and experimental groups. Instead, students with interest in inclusive volunteering signed up for a group depending upon their availability. Once they were in a group, they were told either that the experimental group would be participating in team building activities in addition to volunteering or that the control group would only be volunteering. Therefore, students were not randomly assigned to the control and experimental groups.

2. The feelings and opinions of entire group were not researched. Instead, only the university student's opinions on group climate and cohesion were taken into consideration. This is because the high school students had various disabilities, which would have required two different instruments and sets of questions for the focus group.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of team building activities on group climate and cohesion of undergraduate students who participated in an inclusive volunteer program. It is important for experiential educators to understand how team building activities affect groups as a whole since team building activities are always completed by groups, not individuals. Understanding how team building activities affect groups is important for both experiential educators and individual group members because it will impact what the participants gain from the experience. If facilitators understand how team building activities affect group development, then facilitators will be better able to design programs to meet group development needs, and the participants in return will be more likely to satisfy their group needs. Garland, Jones, and Kolodny's (1965) five-stage model of group development will be used to help understand how team building activities affect group climate and cohesion. A review of the literature on group development, group climate, cohesion, and experiential education is presented.

Group Development

During the past half century, hundreds of research investigations have been conducted on developmental patterns in groups (Wheelan, 2005) and various stages of group development have been proposed (Ephross & Vassil, 2005; Garland et al. 1965). Group development can be defined as the pattern of growth and change that groups go

through from their formation to their separation (McAvoy et al., 1996). Group development and team building activities can be used to affect change among individuals within the group, to impact the group as a whole, or to simply give the group a shared, fun experience. Interactions among group members change when the group progresses through developmental stages. As groups develop, they will move from secondary relationships, which have indirect, impersonal, and non-intimate communication patterns, to primary relationships, which include warmth, familiarity, and closeness (Ewert & Heywood, 1991).

Ashby and DeGraaf (1998) categorized group development models as progressive models, cyclical models, and non-sequential models. Progressive models claim that a group's maturity and performance increase over time. They can also be classified as linear models. Cyclical models have a linear sequence that occurs over and over again. Group members will constantly deal with the same issues. Non-sequential models do not have any specific pattern of stages. Instead, the group's development has constantly intertwining activities related to tasks, relationships, and group goals. All of the stages could be happening at the same time, instead of following a specific order.

Typically, group development models have formulations which generally range from highly cohesive and task-oriented groups to a collection of individuals concerned with meeting their own needs without concern for other group members (Garland et al. 1965). There are many similarities among the models. Kerr and Gass (1987) suggested that Garland et al.'s (1965) framework for group development offered the most assistance for adventure education, which is one form of experiential education, because it is a

progressive model applicable to different types of groups and because it provides useful information for the facilitator about group progress.

Conceptual Framework

In Garland et al.'s (1965) model, the five stages of group development are pre-affiliation, power and control, intimacy, differentiation, and separation. This model is a progressive model based on two assumptions. The first assumption is that personal relationships and closeness are important in the process and development of groups. The second assumption is that common themes that members perceive can be identified, and these themes change as the group experiences changes. This model was based on observations of formed club groups with members who did not know each other well before the group was formed. Closeness is the central theme of all the stages and the authors have recognized cooperation, communication, and group identity as other significant themes (Garland et al., 1965). While this model is a linear model, it must be noted that groups do not always move through the developmental stages in a linear fashion. They can skip stages and return to stages they have experienced previously. For example, if a group has a new member join, they may return to the first stage of development even though they had already reached stage two previously.

In the pre-affiliation stage group members are trying to become familiar with one another and their environment. They have not formed close ties with one another and relationships are usually non-intimate. Stereotypic activity, or doing what they think is expected of them, may be used to get to know one another, while members continue to keep a certain emotional distance from the others to protect themselves. Members are

typically ambivalent to involvement in group tasks, while they constantly change their minds on whether to accept or not accept a task. It is also common that group members fluctuate between responsibility and avoidance in the planning of group tasks. As the group members are depending upon the facilitator for structure, the facilitator should provide individuals with both an opportunity to explore and work on their involvement at a self-chosen pace. The facilitator should allow distance among group members at this stage. The facilitator allows distance by providing information about the operation of the group, encouraging exploration of the physical setting, and enhancing opportunities for the group participants to develop trust through the organization and completion of group tasks (Garland et al., 1965). Since the facilitator takes more of a leadership role in the group and the tasks of the group, the members do not feel personal pressure and uneasiness to lead.

In the power and control stage, members feel the group is relatively safe and worth emotional investment. Members also begin to test group power and control issues such as status, ranking, communication, choice making, and influence. There is an attempt to create a status hierarchy, as well as exclude individuals from membership. This is a traditional stage where "traditional value systems and familiar frames of reference do not prove adequate or useful as guides for evaluating the group situation" (Garland et al., 1965, p. 31). The facilitator should help the group clarify the existence and nature of the power-control issue to help them successfully resolve it. The resolution of the power-control issue will help group members trust themselves and one another

(Garland et al., 1965). The facilitator directs the group to resolve the power-control issue through communication, which then helps the group move to the next stage.

During the intimacy stage, members are more interested in the group. Therefore, the group has greater proficiency in planning and conducting projects. Individual group members are more personally involved and willing to express their feelings about other members. For example, if one group member has a conflict about how another member is completing a task, they are able to express those feelings to that individual. Individuals become aware of how significant the group is to their personal growth and development. The facilitator of the group must decide how much and what kind of structure to provide at this stage (Garland et al., 1965). The facilitator will observe the group while they are working on a task. If everything is going well, then the facilitator will not intervene. If something is not going smoothly, the facilitator will give the group members time to work it out on their own before intervening, if necessary.

In the differentiation stage, individual differences and personal needs are accepted more freely. The group becomes more functionally autonomous from the facilitator(s) and is seen as cohesive. The group and its experiences are viewed as unique. Group members can now evaluate group relationships and events based on reality rather than stereotypical behavior. The group is more organized for work and play, while the status hierarchies are less rigid. Constant activity is no longer necessary for interaction to occur. The facilitator may take on more of a resource-person role. At this point, it is also important for the facilitator to get feedback from the group to discuss how the group has

grown and how that growth can be applied to future group situations (Garland et al., 1965).

In the separation stage, members must find new ways to meet their needs. The group experience is complete, and members must move apart and find new ways to meet their social, recreational, and vocational needs. Group members may experience some anxiety of the separation and desire to repeat earlier program activities. The facilitator must help the members express their concerns and come to terms with the termination process, which will increase the likelihood of a positive learning experience that can then be transferred to new situations (Garland et al., 1965).

Garland et al. (1965) believed that their model provides practical guidelines to help facilitators provide program tools, clarification, protection, and support to groups with regard to developmental tasks. This model is appropriate for experiential education because of the applicability to different groups and because of its ability to provide useful information on group progress for the facilitator (Kerr & Gass, 1987).

Identifying and understanding the stages of group development can help group leaders and facilitators recognize what stage a group is in and how to manage a group at the different stages. Knowledge of group cycles can help to speed up development, maintain a highly functioning team, and also help determine when a group has accomplished everything possible and should be terminated (Garland et al., 1965). Knowing the goals of a group and understanding where a group is developmentally can help facilitators to pick activities and other interventions that will help move the group toward their goals.

Group Climate

Group climate is similar to group dynamics, which is a general term for group processes (Forsyth, 1999) and an application of techniques and principles to accomplish group goals (Sessoms & Stevenson, 1981). Group climate is more concerned, however, with how the participants perceive a group (Kivligham & Angelone, 1992). Group dynamics examines how leaders and researchers view a group, regardless if the participants are aware of the group's dynamics (Sessoms & Stevenson, 1981). How individuals perceive group climate is one of the most important links between group process and outcome (Liebermann et al., 1973). Both the degree and type of interpersonal problems that members experience can play a role in their perception of group climate (Kivlighan & Angelone, 1992).

More specifically, group climate can be described by three independent dimensions: engagement, avoidance, and conflict (MacKenzie & Livesley, 1983). Newly formed groups must address the issue of engagement of its members. The issues of engagement deal with whether its members want to be a part of the group and contribute to the group goals. The accomplishment of this task means that a group identity has been established. The group finds some universality among members in order to help the group achieve cohesive interaction. Group members try to belong to the group and try to avoid being isolated and detached. The self-disclosures, interpersonal challenges, and introspective understandings are relatively superficial. Group members in the early development of a group must disclose personal information and agree to be committed to the group (MacKenzie & Livesley, 1983).

As group members try to move past the superficial beginnings, a climate of conflict and confrontation may occur. Members start to recognize their differences. The conflicts produced may make the individual group members feel anxious. As the group confronts and successfully manages conflict, they begin to appreciate the individual differences in their group. Conflict may abruptly stop and self-disclosures of important issues may increase. If cooperation is not reached, then the group may become fragmented and remain competitive (MacKenzie & Livesley, 1983). A certain amount of competitiveness can positively affect the group, but too much competitiveness between individual members can hurt the group's progress and effectiveness. As groups continue to grow and share, the group climate continues to show high engagement and low conflict, but also reveals an avoidance of the deeper implications of the relationships. The self-disclosures are less superficial than when the group first formed, but there is still avoidance of forming truly personal and deep relationships. The climate in the early formation of the group where there is a lot of superficial interaction and conflict is necessary. Working past the conflict and getting to know each other on a more personal level increase the benefits to the individual group members to impact them positively once they are no longer a member of that group (MacKenzie & Livesley, 1983).

Numerous things can influence a group's climate. The behaviors that help to determine group climate are shaped by group norms for expected behaviors, which can be influenced by the context in which the group is meeting, verbal and nonverbal cues from the leader, and personal characteristics of group members (MacKenzie, 1983). Additionally, providing structure for a group early on in its formation can help to increase

engagement of members and decrease avoidance over the group's life because the group members are given a focal point and do not have to worry as much about the act of getting to know one another (Stockton, Rohde, & Haughey, 1992). The group will get to know one another through the tasks, which can help to increase their engagement with group members when they are working on future tasks.

Group Cohesion

Group cohesion is a broad concept which affects many notions of group membership. It is commonly believed that cohesion is a desired quality in groups, as cohesive groups can be characterized by interdependence of members, stability of membership, a sense of responsibility for the group's outcomes, reduced absenteeism, and resistance to disruptions (Widmeyer, Brawley, & Carron, 1985). Group cohesion can also reflect the degree to which members wish to remain in a group (Shivers, 1980). Group processes can be influenced by group cohesion, such as achievement of established group goals (Lodahl & Porter, 1961; Rose, 1998), whether members conform to group norms (Back, 1951; O'Keefe, Kernaghan, & Rubenstein, 1975), and behavior change (Grotjahn, 1981; Yalom, 1995). Members of cohesive groups are also able to share their feelings and inner thoughts more freely because of the sense of acceptance (Valore, 2002). Highly cohesive groups have higher levels of empathy, acceptance, self-disclosure, and trust among group members (Roarck & Sharah, 1989) than less cohesive groups. In addition, cohesiveness directly affects group maintenance and indirectly affects group development (Carron, Widmeyer, & Brawley, 1985; Griffin & Pennscott,

1991). This is partly because group cohesion assists in the development of cooperation, which then increases productivity (Wheelan, 2005).

There are, however, some drawbacks to cohesiveness. With cohesion comes intensity, or increased emotional involvement, for the group. The intensity then affects the members, the group's dynamics, and the group's performance in both positive and negative ways (Forsyth, 1999). For example, cohesive groups may be more concerned with solving personal issues than with completing the group's tasks and accomplishing the group's goals. While this may be positive for the individual, it may have negative impacts on the group as a whole.

It is important to engage new or low cohesive groups in planning meetings before activities begin so that the probability of their success can be heightened by offering opportunities for them to practice their group skills (Valore, 2002) such as problem-solving and interpersonal communication. Setting the group up in a way that is democratic in nature can help to promote membership participation in the decision-making process and will make the group more attractive to the group members (Shivers, 1980). The facilitator must also be aware that the level of group cohesion can affect how they should facilitate the group. For example, less cohesive groups require the leader be very engaged in guiding the group, while highly cohesive groups may require the leader to be less active and purposefully quiet (Valore, 2002).

Experiential Education

Many groups often chose to go to experiential education programs in order to enhance their group or individual behaviors (Wagner & Campbell, 1994). Some

examples include outdoor education, adventure education, challenge course programs, and/or group development activities. All of these types of programs follow a similar philosophy of experiential education, which involves learning by doing. They are typically based outside of the classroom or workplace and involve a variety of physical and/or mental exercises for groups of participants (Wagner, Baldwin, & Roland, 1991). The exercises are typically related metaphorically to a setting and environment that the group is involved in outside of the training (Williams et al., 2002). Experiential learning is a cyclical process where individuals or groups have a concrete experience, observe and reflect upon the experience, relate the experience to other aspects of their lives, conceptualize and generalize the experience, and test the generalization in new situations which then lead to a new concrete experience (Kolb, 1981). Experiential programs have been increasingly used by school campuses, corporations, inpatient facilities, and correctional institutions (Hatch & McCarthy, 2005) for training their members to work together more efficiently and to give them a shared common experience. Such programs can last anywhere from a few hours to multiple days.

Team Building Activities

Team building activities are a type of experiential education and are a general label for a wide variety of challenges designed to assess current level of group developmental stage, clarify and rank goals, increase group cohesion, and increase productivity (Forsyth, 1999). It is important for groups to clarify their goals because, in general, groups can function more effectively when group goals are known and members

understand their roles (Forsyth, 1999). Team building helps to strengthen group morale by encouraging trust, cooperation, and group identity (Forsyth, 1999).

Experiential educators typically attempt to design team building programs according to the specific needs of the group. Some of the many different objectives that can be targeted by groups are improving problem-solving skills, increasing trust, enhancing leadership skills, and improving communication (Mazany, Francis, & Sumich, 1995; Williams et al., 2002). Programs also provide structured activities which are designed to develop group cohesion (one of the key factors in the development of a group) by having group members work towards accomplishing specific tasks together (Glass & Benshoff, 2002; Stockton et al., 1992). The activities that focus on group cohesion typically encourage participants to share responsibility and solve problems as a group (Glass & Benshoff, 2002). A cohesive group that has gone through effective team development can speed through the stages of group development to become a high-performing team (Mazany et al., 1995).

While the predicted outcomes for experiential education programs are many, they are often difficult to prove beyond participant testimonials (Neill & Richards, 1998). Through meta-analyses to combine outcome statistics from multiple studies into a single study, Neill and Richards (1998) determined that 65% of adventure program participants saw benefits that those who did not participate did not see, and that this improvement lasts once they return to their home environments. While the meta-analyses of previous research is important, most of it focused on individual and personal growth outcomes rather than group dynamics and development, even though such programs can be

powerful when it comes to group development. Group development and group dynamics have not been heavily researched in experiential education, and more research on the different group models is needed (McAvoy et al., 1996). Determining if experiential education positively benefits group development is the first step to understanding how experiential education affects group development.

Benefits of Team Building Activities for Groups

Incorporating structured activities, such as team building activities, in the early stages of a group's development can help shift responsibility from the group members to the group facilitator, which then allows group members to take more risks, such as disclosing personal information (Glass & Benshoff, 2002; Stockton et al., 1992). The facilitator takes the responsibility for structuring the group development process so that group members can focus on their group processes, tasks, and getting to know one another. Crews and Melnick (1976) found that members in structured groups made more self-disclosures than members in groups without structure. Additionally, the group members gained trust and cohesiveness through participation in challenge courses (Glass & Benshoff, 2002).

Bednar and Battersby (1976) found that individuals in groups who receive specific behavioral instructions felt more positively about their experience, had higher task-oriented behaviors, and had higher perceptions of cohesiveness. "Providing group members with structured exercises specifically designed to address the developmental task to be accomplished at each stage should enable the members to master the developmental tasks in the preliminary stages more effectively" (Stockton et al., 1992, p.

157). Exercises designed to help a group master certain tasks during the early developmental stages seem to help increase the likelihood of movement into the working stages (Stockton et al., 1992). Moving into the working stages is important because the group as a whole will accomplish tasks more efficiently and individual group members will benefit more from the experience.

Experiential education programs are often focused on outcomes which affect a group's development, such as cohesiveness, trust, and communication. Extensive research has been done on the effects of these programs on individual group members, yet little research has been done to explore how experiential education programs affect the entire group's development. Research has been done on the effects of structured activities on group development but not sufficiently in the experiential education field.

Therefore, the purpose of the study was to examine the effects of team building activities on group climate and cohesion. Team building activities that use the experiential education philosophy have the potential to build a positive group climate and high levels of group cohesion within a group. Both group climate and group cohesion are important for a group to move through the early stages of group development. Once a group has moved through the early stages, then the members benefit more from the group and the group accomplishes more. Managing groups is very important and very difficult to do, as no one group is similar to any other group. Yet, groups are very important because often more can be accomplished by a group than by individuals alone.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

Subjects were recruited from undergraduate students taking courses at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro during the spring 2006 semester. A total of 11 subjects worked in one of two inclusive park programs with high school students with disabilities. Both the control and experimental groups met for two hours each week for five weeks. The Thursday control group volunteered for the entire two hours, while the Friday experimental group participated in team building activities and volunteered for two hour periods. Five subjects were from Recreation and Parks Management 314, Recreation Services for Underrepresented Groups; three were from Specialized Education Services 250, Introduction to Professions in Special Education; two were North Carolina Teaching Fellows, which are students who are given scholarships and required to teach in North Carolina for four years following graduation; and one was from Communication Studies 200, Communication and Society.

The subjects were permitted to choose which group to participate in depending upon their availability. Four subjects volunteered for the control group and seven subjects volunteered for the experimental group. The subjects were not informed which group was the control group and which group was the experimental group until the first meeting.

Each course, from which the subjects were recruited, required students to volunteer within the local community. The amount of volunteer time varied, however the number of hours required for the subjects ranged from six to twenty hours over the course of the semester.

The high school students only participated in the program, while the undergraduate students participated in both the program and the research. The university students were informed that part of the participation in the inclusive park program involved participation in this research study. Each subject signed a consent form at the first meeting stating that they were free to refuse to participate and withdraw their consent at any time without penalty or prejudice (see Appendix A). Refusal to participate in the research part of the program did not affect their participation in the volunteer part of the program. The subjects were also given a packet with information about the logistics of the program, what was expected of them, and methods for working with individuals with disabilities (see Appendix B).

Instrumentation

The subjects completed a questionnaire which was chosen by the researcher to elicit the subjects' expectations regarding group climate and group cohesion. The questionnaire comprised four reliable and valid scales measuring group's engagement, avoidance, conflict, and cohesion. Group climate was measured by MacKenzie's Group Climate Questionnaire – Short Form (GCQ-S) (1983) (see Appendixes C and D for the pre and post participation questionnaires). The GCQ-S includes 12 items changed from a 7-point to a 4-point Likert scale indicating degree of agreement rated from strongly

disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). The scale was modified so that the subjects would not have the option to choose a neutral answer and also to keep the scale consistent with the second questionnaire, which used a 4-point Likert scale. In addition to the Likert scale being modified, the pre-questionnaire items were put into future tense. The 12 items represented three dimensions: engaged (five items measuring the degree of self-disclosure, cognitive understanding, and confrontation); avoiding (three items indicating the degree of how much group members avoid responsibility); and conflict (four items describing the amount of interpersonal conflict and distrust) (MacKenzie, 1983). The GCQ-S is the most commonly used measure of group climate in addition to being brief and easy to administer (Johnson et al., 2005). The GCQ-S has been used to assess climate differences in groups (Kanas & Barr, 1986; MacKenzie, Dies, Coche, Rutan, & Stone, 1987), and these studies have supported the questionnaire's construct validity (Kivlighan & Angelone, 1992). According to Johnson et al. (2005), the Cronbach's alphas for the three subscales were .70 for engagement, .36 for avoidance, and .69 for conflict. Johnson et al. (2005) studied subjects from university counseling centers, average age of 24, and training groups at the American Group Psychotherapy Association annual meeting, average age of 49.5.

Group cohesion was measured using Glass and Benshoff's (2002) Group Cohesion Evaluation Questionnaire (GCEQ) (see Appendixes C and D for the pre- and post-questionnaires). The GCEQ was designed to measure how well the individuals within a group of adolescents were able to work together on a challenge course and whether or not those activities helped to foster a sense of cohesion. The GCEQ includes

nine items on a 4-point Likert scale (not at all like me/my group (1) to exactly like me/my group (4)). For the purpose of this study, the scale was changed to (1) strongly disagree to (4) strongly agree to be consistent with the GCQ-S. The pre-questionnaire items were changed to future tense. Additionally, the word "challenges" in questions 4, 6, 8, and 9 were changed to "volunteer tasks." Reliability of the GCEQ was determined to be .91, using Cronbach's alpha (Glass & Benshoff, 2002). Glass and Benshoff (2002) studied adolescent subjects between the ages of 11 and 14.

Data Collection

Questionnaires were distributed by the researcher in person to each subject prior to the start of the program at the end of the initial meeting with the subjects. The purpose of the initial meeting was to explain the expectations and goals for the program, as well as provide disability awareness training. The same questionnaire, with wording changed from future to present tense, was also given by the researcher in person at the focus group or individual interview after completion of the program.

The focus groups and individual interviews held after the completion of the inclusive park program helped to collect additional insights on the subjects of group climate and cohesion (see Appendix E). Specifically, the focus groups and individual interviews further explored subjects' perceptions of group transformations, conflict, group accomplishments, trust, and commitment. The interview guide was designed to specifically gather further information on group climate, cohesion, and development from the questionnaires. The focus groups took place one week after completion of volunteering for both the control and the experimental groups. The students who were not

able to attend the focus group meeting were met with individually one and a half to two weeks following the originally scheduled focus group and asked the same series of questions. The focus group and interview sessions were tape-recorded. Additionally, an assistant moderator took notes on the focus group meetings.

Program Treatment and Design

This research was designed around an inclusive volunteer program. Inclusive volunteering involves pairing up individuals with and without disabilities to work together on volunteer tasks. The individuals with disabilities are given the opportunity to give back to their community and form social bonds with their volunteer partners. The partners without disabilities are given the opportunity to learn about the abilities of their partners with disabilities.

The subjects participated in a five-week long program which met for two hours each week. The subjects were divided into a control group and a treatment group. The goal of both groups was to beautify local Greensboro, North Carolina, parks and non-profit organizations. Both groups consisted of high school students with disabilities and undergraduate students. The high school students were included to provide the undergraduate students with a diverse group of people to work with. The high school teachers chose students to attend the program based upon their interest to volunteer with the group. Only the undergraduate students completed the questionnaires and participated in the focus groups because the high school student's disabilities would have required two different instruments.

The experimental group participated in team building activities throughout the entire program in addition to their volunteering. The first meeting for the experimental group consisted of team building for the entire two hours. The group completed a name game where they were given the opportunity to learn each other's names. Next, they played a tag game in order to share a fun, common experience together. Third, they were put into groups of three to five and given the task of writing down as many items as possible that they all had in common. This activity allowed the group members to discover their similarities. Fourth, the group came up with a contract for how they were going treat one another during the program in order to accomplish their goal of beautifying the parks. The contract assisted with everybody having the same expectations of the program and of each other. In order to sign the contract, the group had to form a circle and sit on one another's laps to work on physically trusting one another. Fifth, the group was given the task of passing a hula hoop around the circle without breaking the circle in the shortest amount of time possible. This allowed the group to work on goal-setting and problem-solving together. Sixth, the group played another energizer, which like the tag game, allowed the group members to have a common experience together. Finally, the group was split into pairs and each pair was given a pen and a piece of paper. One member of the pair drew anything they wanted on the sheet without their partner seeing it. Then, their partner had to close their eyes and draw the same thing from the description of the person who drew it. This activity worked on interpersonal communication.

The second meeting consisted of team building for one hour. The first activity, "Have You Ever?" was designed to help remember names from the previous week and find more things in common. Second, the group was shown that competition does not always lead to the most results. They were told to get into an arm-wrestling position with their partner and see how many times they could push their partner's arm down. The partners could get the most wins not by competing, but instead by alternating sides. Third, the group split into pairs again for a trust walk. One person was blindfolded and the other was told to lead them safely in a single file line with the facilitator picking the route for the group. After a short amount of time, the partners switched to have a new person blindfolded and a new leader. This helped the group members to deepen their level of trust with each other. The group raked leaves for the remaining hour together.

The third meeting consisted of team building for 45 minutes. First, the group was split into two groups. They were asked to stand in a tight circle, hold their hands out in front of them, and grab the hands of two different people. They were then instructed to untangle the knot that was formed without letting go of their group members' hands. This activity focused on group problem-solving. Remaining in the same groups, the next activity consisted of one person from each group being blindfolded and looking for an object. They took direction from another member who was facing away from them and did not know where the object was. The direction person was getting information on where the object was from the rest of the group members who had to use non-verbal communication to tell that person how to give directions. This activity allowed the group to work on trust, non verbal and verbal communication, and group problem-solving. The

remaining hour and fifteen minutes was spent clearing a stream of trash and raking leaves off of porches.

The fourth meeting consisted of team building for 30 minutes. The group was given the task of moving a tennis ball on a small ring from a hula hoop to a small container. They each had to hold onto a string about six feet away from the ball which was tied onto the ring. If the ball dropped, they were assessed a penalty. This activity allowed the group to work on group problem-solving. The remaining hour and a half was spent picking up trash and moving compost from a pile onto a small garden.

The final meeting consisted of team building for 15 minutes. The group stained a fence for an hour and forty-five minutes before participating in the team building activity. The group was asked to name something that they were going to miss about the volunteer program. Once they named it, they stepped onto a tarp. Once everybody was on the tarp, they had to flip the tarp over without anybody stepping onto the grass. Once the tarp was flipped, they then had to name something that they were going to take with them that they learned from volunteering in the program. This activity allowed the group members to have some sort of closure on the volunteer experience and help them to recognize what they had learned from each other during the program.

The control group spent two hours a week with the high school students with disabilities volunteering in various Greensboro parks and non-profit organizations as a group. On the first day, the control group stood in a circle and stated their names to the rest of the group. The group also completed a contract similar to the experimental group. They wrote down the behaviors necessary to accomplish the goal of beautifying the parks

and non-profit organization. Instead of sitting on each other's laps to sign the contract, they simply signed their names on poster board where the contract was written. The control group picked up trash around a lake and trails, mulched a playground, weeded grass out of a golf course sand pit, picked up trash around a creek, and cleared brush and leaves from a stream and cleared patios of leaves.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data from the questionnaires were entered into SPSS 14.0 for analysis. Descriptive and nonparametric statistics were used to analyze the data for the group climate and cohesion questionnaires due to the small number of subjects in the study. The non-parametric Wilcoxon Test was used to determine the statistical significance between the pre- and post-questionnaires for the control and experimental groups' engagement, avoidance, conflict, and cohesion means. The non-parametric Mann-Whitney *U* Test was used to determine the differences in the total mean difference scores with regard to engagement, avoidance, conflict, and cohesion between the post tests for the control and experimental groups.

Data collected at the focus group sessions and individual interviews was initially transcribed verbatim with the help of the notes taken by the assistant moderator. Next, the contents of the transcriptions were marked and coded by two different individuals separately in an effort to discover themes in the subject's comments. From emerged themes, the data were checked for hypotheses and theories.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of team building activities on group climate, cohesion, and development. More specifically, the first research question asked what influence do team building activities have on group climate. The second question asked what influence do team building activities have on group cohesion. This chapter is divided into four main sections. The first section states the results of the quantitative questionnaires. The second section explores the results of the qualitative focus groups and individual interviews. The third section examines the effects of team building activities on group development. The final section explains other themes of fun and impact of the program which emerged from the qualitative focus group and interviews. The themes of fun and impact of the program did not fit into the categories of group climate, cohesion, or development.

Of the 11 subjects who volunteered for the program, four of them missed one volunteer day each. One subject who missed a volunteer day was from the control group and three subjects were from the experimental group. From the control group, one of the high school students missed three of the meetings and another student missed one meeting. From the experimental group, three of the high school students each missed one meeting. The teacher and teacher aides who came out with the students also varied from week to week. Additionally, four subjects missed the focus group for various reasons, one

from the control group and three from the experimental group. Make-up interviews were scheduled where the subjects also completed the post-questionnaire. The same interview guide was used at the make-up interviews as the focus groups. One interview was given the day before the experimental focus group. The rest of the make-up interviews were given one and a half to two weeks following the scheduled focus groups.

Quantitative Data

The Wilcoxon test is a nonparametric test which was used to determine whether the pre- and post-questionnaires for the control and experimental groups were significantly different with concern to engagement, avoidance, conflict, and cohesion. The Wilcoxon test is the nonparametric alternative to the paired *t*-test. The control and experimental groups were examined independent of each other. The Mann Whitney *U* is a nonparametric test used to determine whether or not the pre- or post-questionnaires of the control and experimental groups were from the same distribution with regards to engagement, avoidance, conflict, and cohesion. The Mann Whitney *U* test is the nonparametric equivalent of the independent *t*-test and uses the rankings of the data to calculate mean ranks. The control and experimental groups were compared with each other.

Group Climate

Engagement

The subjects' pre-questionnaire scores on the Group Climate Questionnaire – Short Form (GCQ-S) were compared to their post-questionnaire scores to determine the mean difference of the group engagement scores (see Table 1). A Wilcoxon test

examined this difference and a significant difference was found between pre- and post-engagement for the experimental group (T = -2.388, p = .017). The experimental subjects were more engaged after completing the volunteer experience (m = 3.485) than they were before (m = 2.971) the volunteer experience began. No significant difference was found for the control group with regards to engagement scores (T = -1.473, p = .141). The control subjects were not significantly more engaged after (m = 2.80) completing the volunteer experience than they were before (m = 3.10) the volunteer experience began.

The Mann-Whitney U Test was used to determine the total engagement mean difference on the pre- and post-questionnaires of the GCQ-S between the control and experimental groups. No significant difference was found for engagement of the pre-test (U = 9.50, p = .371). A significant difference was found for engagement of the post-test (U = .000, p = .007). The control group scored significantly lower (m = 2.5) than the experimental group (m = 8.0) on engagement after completion of the program.

Avoidance

The subjects' pre-test scores on the GCQ-S were compared to their post-test scores on the GCQ-S to determine the mean difference for group avoidance scores (see Table 1). A Wilcoxon test examined this difference and no significant difference was found for the experimental group (T = -1.225, p = .221). The experimental subjects had no significant difference in avoidance before and after the volunteer experience. No significant difference was found for the control group with regards to avoidance scores (T = -1.000, p = .317). The control subjects had no difference in avoidance before or after the volunteer experience.

The Mann-Whitney *U* Test was used to examine the difference in avoidance between the control and experimental groups. No significant difference in the avoidance scale was found for the pre-test ($U = 13.50$, $p = .913$) or the post-test ($U = 10.50$, p = .493). The experimental group had a mean rank of 6.07 and the control group had a mean rank of 5.88 for the pre-test. The experimental group had a mean rank of 6.50 and the control group had a mean rank of 5.13 for the post-test.

Conflict

The subjects' pre-test scores on the GCQ-S were compared to their post-test scores on the GCQ-S to determine the mean difference in group conflict scores (see Table 1). A Wilcoxon test examined this difference and found there to be a significant difference for the experimental group ($T = -2.379$, $p = .017$). The experimental subjects had a lower level of conflict after the volunteer experience than prior to the volunteer experience. The control subjects saw no significant difference in the results with regards to conflict ($T = -.272$, $p = .785$). The control subjects had no significant differences in the level of conflict before or after the volunteer experience.

The Mann-Whitney *U* Test was used to determine the difference in conflict between the control and experimental groups on the pre- and post-tests. There was no significant difference for the control and experimental groups on the pre-test ($U = 6.00$, $p = .097$). Subjects in the experimental group scored significantly lower for conflict ($m = 4.21$) than the control group ($m = 9.13$; $U = 1.50$, $p = .013$). The experimental group reported lower levels of conflict than the control group.

Table 1
Pre-test/Post-test GCQ-S Means and Differences for Control and Experimental Groups

Control Group (n = 4)

Subscale	Pre	Post	Difference	Z	*p*
Engaged	3.10	2.80	-0.30	-1.47	.14
Avoidance	2.67	2.75	+0.08	-1.00	.32
Conflict	1.75	1.81	+0.06	-0.27	.14

Experimental Group (n = 7)

Subscale	Pre	Post	Difference	Z	*p*
Engaged	2.97	3.49	+0.52	-2.39	.02
Avoidance	2.71	2.95	+0.24	-1.23	.22
Conflict	2.04	1.21	-0.83	-2.38	.02

Cohesion

The subjects' pre-test scores on the Group Cohesion Evaluation Questionnaire (GCEQ) were compared to their post-test scores to determine the difference in group cohesion scores (see Table 2). A Wilcoxon test examined this difference and found no significant difference for the experimental group (T = -1.778, p = .075) or for the control group (T = .000, p = 1.0). Neither the experimental nor the control groups had statistically significant difference in cohesion before or after the volunteer experience.

The Mann-Whitney *U* Test was used to determine the difference in cohesion between the GCEQ pre- and post-test of the control and experimental groups. There was no significant difference in the pre-test scores of the control and experimental groups ($U = 8.00$, $p = .252$). Subjects in the experimental group scored significantly higher for cohesion ($m = 7.29$) than the control group ($m = 3.75$; $U = 5.00$, $p = .049$) in the post-test. The experimental group reported higher levels of cohesion than the control group in the post-test.

Table 2
Pre-test/Post-test GCEQ Means and Differences for Control and Experimental Groups

Control Group (n = 4)

Subscale	Pre	Post	Difference	Z	*p*
Cohesion	3.19	3.28	+0.09	0.00	1.00

Experimental Group (n = 7)

Subscale	Pre	Post	Difference	Z	*p*
Cohesion	3.43	3.75	+0.32	-1.78	.08

Qualitative Data

Group Climate

The purpose of the first research question was to understand the impact that team building activities had on group climate. More specifically, group climate dealt with group members' perceptions of engagement, avoidance, and conflict. The focus groups

and individual interviews were coded and common themes emerged across both groups related to group climate. For confidentiality purposes, pseudonyms were used for the subjects and high school students.

Engagement

Engagement refers to whether members want to be a part of the group, contribute to group goals, and disclose personal information. Perceptions of engagement appeared to be very different for the control and experimental groups. The control group members repeatedly noted that they did not have personal relationships with the high school students. For example, one subject stated:

> I had a hard time figuring out what they wanted to do, you know, because, you know, even the last day like it started off Sylvia and Jason were sweeping and I was holding the dustpan. And then it looked like maybe Sylvia got bored. So, we traded and she picked up the bricks and I swept with Jason. And I would ask them, you know, do you want to trade? Would you rather, you know, do something different? But no one would say anything, so it was hard to know what are, you know, what are their strengths, what is it that they would like to do. Because Jason, if I didn't just give him a task, then he would just stand like looking at me waiting for me to give him a task. And, so I don't, I don't, I still don't know what, what he likes to do. He seemed to, he seemed eager to do whatever it was that I, you know, told him to do. But I don't know what it was the he would have rather done.

The same respondent questioned whether any of the high school students were interested in volunteering with the program when she commented:

> Well, like coming back from week to week I'm wondering, you know, do you guys want to be here? Or is it like we're all just coming out here picking up this trash every week but no one really wanted to go.

Another subject stated that she "didn't really get to know the people that well," referring to the high school students. All of the subjects agreed that they did not get to know the other group members very well. The group's thoughts on engagement were summed up by the comment, "We really didn't talk too much. We really focused on uh picking up trash and stuff like that. You know we got to know each other a little bit, but, you know, it wasn't anything too personal." The subjects did not have an understanding of what the high school students preferred doing or if they even enjoyed the volunteer experience at all. The control subjects felt like there was minimal interaction with the rest of their group and that they were mostly making "small talk." Respondents reported that neither the high school students nor the subjects were engaged enough to reveal personal information about themselves. For instance, a subject stated his reason for not asking personal questions of the rest of the group was that "they didn't seem like they wanted me to ask." The control group reported difficultly in sharing personal information, and thus did not report a sense of engagement.

On the other hand, the comments of the experimental subjects were very different with regards to engagement. They had a strong sense of how excited the high school students were to attend each week, and they discussed the personal information that they learned throughout the program. They did not avoid personal conversations and reported having strong motivation to learn more about one another as the program progressed. When asked about what affected their level of commitment, one group member replied:

> Um, I was surprised at how um excited the students were to actually be able to volunteer. And I just thought that, I don't know, I guess I didn't really know what

> to expect at first, so. I like the fact that it kind of like made me want to go even more, the fact that they really liked it.

Many subjects commented about the joking atmosphere of the group. For instance, the comment was made that "we would cut up, like I don't know, not bad, but, you know, tell jokes or pick on people, but they could take it… Like we had a really good rapport with everyone." The group was also described as a "really dedicated group of people that just really like to have fun and just kind of hang out." The energy and excitement of the group members, along with the light atmosphere, helped the students share personal details with each other.

Another subject, for example, talked about the personal conversations she had with one high school student in particular. She felt like she had the opportunity to learn about his likes and dislikes:

> I know I had a really good conversation with Andrew when we were doing the patios because it was kind of like we were working together as partners. And um he was talking about like what he was going to do over the weekend…He talked for like five minutes about like all of this stuff he was going to do…So, that was really good. I got to, I feel like I got to know him a little bit better. Like stuff he liked to do and his interests.

One subject in particular talked about how she and one of the high school students learned that they both had older brothers who had died. She thought this had a big impact on herself. It made her feel like somebody else understood what she had experienced:

> When I was with John and he, he told me about his brother. Um and then I said so did mine. And we were talking about it a little bit and he said, how did your brother die? And I kind of looked at him. And he goes, I know, I hate when people say that, don't you? And we both started laughing because we shared that.

> Like, you know, if you say my grandma died, nobody ever goes, how did she die? Because you assume you know. But when you say brother died, everybody wants to know how and, and it's just so, so like, it's hard to, like it's not as easy when it's a sibling. Um, and I said um he committed suicide. And, and he, and the look on John's face like most of the time I get, why? Or people saying that, but he had this look of just he wasn't judgmental. And he wasn't going to be um, you poor thing, I pity you. But like, this like empathy, like that he, he felt it. And he wasn't going to like you know, do me any favors. Just like poor little Diane. Not anything like that. It's just this feeling, and it's all of the sudden I just felt that vulnerability and that feeling of like, oh, great, oh like memories are going in my head and people don't understand how hard this is. All of the sudden, I just felt like protected. Like I just felt like people, not everybody doesn't get it or not everybody's going to keep prying with questions until they get it.

While the control group talked about a lack of personal interaction and excitement from the high school students, the experimental group talked about a high level of excitement and personal information that they learned about the other volunteers.

Avoidance

Avoidance of group members has to do with them depending on the facilitator to solve problems and for direction, not looking at important issues, and doing what is acceptable to the rest of the group. Again, the focus groups and interviews demonstrated a difference between the control and experimental groups. The control group repeatedly mentioned that the facilitator helped to direct the group. When asked how the work got done, for example, one respondent stated, "the facilitator making sure that everyone was still working, everyone's doing okay, checking on all of the, you know, the little groups." The facilitator also gave time limits to the group, which was stated as something that helped the group members to see how much longer they would be working on tasks. Here is an example of how time limits given by the facilitator was thought to be helpful for the group:

> Even something as simple as, in five minutes we're going to start going back in the other direction. Just something that simple, you can just see, you can almost see it in their faces. They're like oh, if we're turning around now, oh, we'll be done soon.

The control group also expressed opinions of wanting the teacher's aide to have done more to control her students. In an incident where one of the high school students put sand in one of the subject's hair, she commented:

> I felt like the teacher should have taken more initiative to be in control of the group. Like, when we were at the golf course and one of the kids put sand in my hair. That upset me. Like, I was mad. And you know, I don't want to, you know, be ugly to, you know, somebody. I felt like someone should, I felt like she should have been the one to be like this is not acceptable behavior. I don't think that was our job to do that and I don't think it was your job. The teacher, it was like she was one of the kids, too. And she'd just sit there.

The subjects were looking to have the facilitator and teacher's aide handle the important issues so that they would not have to address them. The experimental group members did not make any comments regarding their dependence on the facilitator or the teacher's aide.

For the control group, time limits given by the facilitator assured them that the volunteer tasks were almost complete for the day. For the experimental group, the time limits encouraged them to work harder to complete the volunteer tasks. One respondent talked about the facilitator giving direction about how much time was left and how that encouraged everybody to work harder to accomplish the task:

> Then when you would go, alright, you have ten more minutes and then we're going to head over here. It would um help kind of like measure out how quickly

> people should be doing stuff. Or, if you had you know more time, you know, to keep it balanced so that everything ended up getting done.

Conflict

Conflict occurs when group members start to recognize their differences, feel anxious, distrust one another, and are distant and withdrawn. With regard to conflict, there was also a difference between the control and experimental groups. The control group talked about conflict occurring at the beginning and middle of the program between two of the high school students, as well as conflict between a high school student and a subject. On the first day, one of the subjects noticed that two of the high school students had an argument and commented on how that made him feel. The high school students had:

> …their own little mini argument about someone dating the other one's sibling or something. I'm not sure, but they got into a heated little argument, um conversation, and I was beginning to worry a little bit until they're like, walked away from each other. That was one that I can think of.

One subject described a situation where a high school student put sand in her hair during the third week of volunteering:

> When we were at the golf course and one of the kids put sand in my hair, that upset me like I was mad… I told him to not put sand in my hair. And, but he thinks I'm kidding, you know, because we're not like authority figures to them. So, he still thinks it's funny, but I'm still mad that I have sand in my hair, you know.

The experimental group, on the other hand, did not notice any conflict during their volunteer experience. Even when the subjects were told by the teacher that two

particular students had a conflict at school, it did not impact their volunteer experience. One subject explained what happened at the volunteer program after she had heard that two high school students had a conflict at school, “so, it was kind of like as soon as they got to the marina, it was cut aside and they were ready to work. They just needed, they needed to keep their distance that day.” The students did not continue to argue once they got to the program. They put their feelings aside and got to work. Another comment on the same incident was:

> So, even if you have a dispute, um, I know there was a dispute between John and Andrew on the last day, and I guess, I guess they just have to put it aside and know that they are good hearted and they’re nice because they’re all in on this together.

Other than the conflict they heard had happened at school, nobody in the experimental group could name a conflict that had occurred at the program. Even if a conflict had occurred at the high school before the program began, it did not interfere with the work of the group.

Cohesion

The purpose of the second research question was to understand the impact that team building activities had on group cohesion. More specifically, group cohesion was broken down into themes of commitment, trust, working habits, and goal accomplishment. The focus groups and individual interviews were coded and common themes emerged across both groups having to do with the sub-themes of group cohesion.

Commitment

Commitment is related to whether or not the individual group members would look forward to volunteering each week and whether or not they would want the volunteer program to continue. Perceptions of group commitment differed between the control and experimental groups. The level of commitment and willingness for members to stay in the group differed, especially during the first few meetings. The control group did not look forward to coming to volunteer. One individual stated that, “sometimes I get up and I’m like, well, another week of volunteering.” Another subject reiterated that comment, “especially the beginning and towards the middle I was like, I’ve just got to get a few more hours for my volunteer hours to be done.”

After the conflict the third week where sand was put in on subject’s hair, there was talk that the control group was becoming more enjoyable. For example, one subject stated, “I felt like the last two weeks were really good. I think it was just kind of starting to build up that if it was going to go on for another five weeks or whatever, that I would want to, I would want to keep coming back.” Another stated that, “especially the last time I was there, and just like the group camaraderie actually made me want to keep going. I don’t know how long, but it, it made me wish it was continuing.” When asked what had an impact on the improvements of commitment and what made them want to continue, it was stated that time allowed them to get to know each other better. One subject commented on getting to know the students better:

> I just think it was familiarity with the people. It seemed that when we first met them, they all bunched together with themselves and we did it with ourselves. We like made two halves of a circle. And as time went on, you’d start talking to

> people, and I noticed every time we made a little circle, it got more and more, I don't know meshed.

The control group looked forward to the end of each day so that they could return to their respective schools. For instance, one subject stated:

> I thought it was helpful that you would say, okay, we only have like a half more hour, we only have this much longer because then they have something to look forward to. Because, you know, picking up trash is not the most exciting thing. So, just to give like them little small goals to work to. Okay, soon, soon then we can go to the playground or soon we were going to be able to do this. So, which is you know, keep going. I thought that was helpful.

The experimental group members stated that they were always excited and willing to come to the program. One group member in particular stated:

> I think that I feel so committed to this group simply because of the fact I drove around for an hour in the wrong direction, in the wrong direction, and still came to the group. I wanted to come to the group that bad. I was that committed and I think everyone else was, too. Because there were very few days that um people were missing.

Another subject talked about how excited she was to volunteer each time, "yeah, I wanted to come every time. Like, I would be excited, like, yeah, I get to go volunteer in the morning." Another talked about not needing required volunteer hours to do this program again:

> I know this was required for my class, but now that I've gone through something like this, it wouldn't take a requirement just to make me get out there and do that. And so, I really enjoyed it so much that I really want to do it again.

Another subject stated that she was so committed because she treated the group members like they were her friends and felt the same level of commitment from them:

> It's that sense of like you wouldn't, you know, stand up a friend if you said you were going to meet them somewhere. And you wouldn't, you know, not call your mom back if you told her you were going to do it. Not because you think about it like you're committed to them, but it's like out of respect, you just have respect for these people and you start to feel like they're you're friends and they're helping you and you're helping them and it's just whatever you wouldn't, you wouldn't leave them stood up if it was at all in your power, you wouldn't, you wouldn't do it.

All of the subjects in the experimental group showed desire to go to the classroom to continue working with the high school students even though the program ended. Two of the subjects actually went to the classroom two weeks after the program ended. There were also many questions concerning whether this program was going to continue in the future because they wanted to keep interacting with their fellow group members.

Trust

In addition to different levels of commitment between the two groups, there was also a difference in the level of trust. The control group members stated that they did not distrust their group members, but that they also did not trust them. They had not given any thought to whether or not they trusted each other. One subject commented:

> I don't know. I guess I hadn't really thought about it, if I trusted them. It's not like I shared any personal details about myself or that they really shared any personal details with me. I don't have any reason to not trust them, but I don't, you know.

Another subject stated:

> There's that middle ground between the trust and the distrust is where you just don't know. I think that the group as a whole, that's about where I, where I feel. Because they gave me no reason to distrust them. And I think trust is something that takes longer than a couple of hours for five weeks to build.

The control group felt like five weeks was not long enough to build trust. One subject stated, "I trust them, I mean. Nobody ever gave me a reason to distrust them." They did not have a strong sense of distrust for their group members, but they had not built a base level of trust with them. They felt they "had a good start" in building trust, but could not say that they trusted their group members.

Both high school members and their fellow university students from the experimental group, on the other hand, felt an "extremely high" sense of trust with their group members. They felt like the team building activities helped to develop the trust that they felt towards one another:

> Oh, I completely trust them. After all of those team building activities, after the, after you know all of these weeks of being together and talking to each other, um, I definitely trust them. I don't think that you know any of us would do anything to put the other one in danger.

They felt that the team building activities allowed them to trust one another. One subject described one activity in particular, the Trust Walk, "and trust, like the one where we were blindfolded. I think that helped a lot because you had to put your trust in another person that you wouldn't fall down the stairs. I think that helped." Another subject described her level of trust not only with the team building activities, but also with the volunteer tasks as:

> …Extremely high…Very, very high because, you know, not only was, when with the blindfolded activity like to make sure I didn't walk into a wall. Not only that, but also just like my level of, of trust with knowing, you know, I'm not going to have to get that entire pile of dirt by myself over here. I trusted that, oh, this can get done. My attitude's not going to go, what? You think we're going to be able to do this? My attitude was so high because I trusted that everybody was going to do what they were capable of doing and stay on it and, and have a, a good attitude about it…I just always trusted that everybody was going to come with a positive attitude and good work ethic and they always did.

While the control group only mentioned time as something that helped them to start to gain trust, the experimental group felt that the team building activities assisted to move the trust building process along. Even though both groups only met for five weeks, the experimental group had no doubt that they trusted one another.

Working Habits

There was a noticeable difference in the working habits of the control and experimental groups. Not everyone in the control group was working towards accomplishing the tasks set out for the group. One subject stated, "well, I guess most of the group wanted to work. There was just a few people that didn't really want to. It's like they were testing you, how far can I, what can I do this week?" Another subject found the same individuals distracted him from working on the tasks:

> To me it just seemed like they were, they just wanted to be a distraction. I mean even if they weren't trying to be disruptive, they were still talking to people and the other individuals were distracted, including ourselves. I found myself always thinking, I need to do work. Okay, I wonder what they're doing. Find them, look at them, see what they're doing, making sure they're not breaking anything, and then go back to work.

Some of the individuals were anxious to get work done, but others hindered the group by being a distraction. It was not until the last day that one subject felt everybody was really working together to get the tasks accomplished. He stated:

> The last day we were there at the Hospice place and even though, you know, every, some people would make random comments or what not, everybody was working. And you know, that was one of the first, you know, everybody was working at the same time. And everybody was having fun doing it.

The experimental group, on the other hand, was impressed at how much work they accomplished each and every week and how cooperative and excited the entire group was to work together on tasks such as picking up trash. One subject made the following comment about the excitement of her partner as they were clearing a stream bed of trash:

> And he loved just like, he's like, he wanted to jump on the other side of the stream and get all that trash with that little thing. And he's trying to get all of stuff. He's like, this one's really stuck in there. He's pulling bags out of the dirt.

The experimental group constantly spoke of how fun the group was, which they felt contributed to their hard work and accomplishing the team building and volunteer tasks. Getting to know the other group members helped them to see how everyone was contributing to the group. One subject, for example, stated:

> There was always a lot of fun, a lot of playing around. You know, it was, it was all smiles. I don't think there was ever a dull moment or a tense moment...It was, it was just easy riding all of the way through. And so, yeah, I think that the people really contributed to the group a lot. Everybody's individual personality. They all contributed something to the group as a whole.

Part of getting the work done and having fun while doing it was attributed to the conversations that the group members had while volunteering. Tasks that would not normally be enjoyable kept their interest because of the group members who were volunteering with them. The interactions during the tasks were what kept their motivation levels high. For example, one participant indicated:

> I wasn't just doing it by myself. Everybody was contributing to, ah, whatever we were doing. I mean, painting the fence and in the cold. Who would ever think that would be fun? And it was. Just having conversations with people and stuff.

The control group members did not feel like they were accomplishing their tasks and that certain members were distracting them. On the other hand, the experimental group had an enjoyable experience accomplishing the volunteer tasks together.

Goal Accomplishment

Subjects were also asked to reexamine previously developed group goals and whether or not those group goals were met. Both control and experimental groups agreed that the major goal was to bond and get to know each other better. The control group felt that the goal was not met. "I feel like maybe it was met half way. If we were there longer, I think we would have bonded more. But, I think we had a good start." Another subject agreed and stated:

> I think there were days where we did, it was accomplished that we were bonding. But then other days it just seemed that there was a mindset of the assignment is more important, and we were more focused on the assignment and getting all of the trash picked up or whatever done more than we were about talking, bonding, having fun. And those were the days where it was kind of, maybe this isn't the best idea for me to do.

The experimental group indicated that they met their goal of getting to know each other. They attributed the team building activities as assisting in meeting their goal of bonding. One subject stated:

> Well, we used team building activities to help us to get more familiar with each other and learn how to work as a group as a whole to, um, get the project done. So, I think that was a big part to reaching our goal.

Another felt that the team building activities helped in "allowing everybody to come together and just work together." As mentioned earlier, the experimental group shared personal details about their own lives and learned personal details about their group members' lives, which helped them to reach their goal.

One other goal mentioned by the subjects was to work together to complete the volunteer tasks. When asked what the group goals were, one subject from the control group replied:

> Ah, it ended up just being doing work and having fun. Because everyone, I, I like to think everyone was having fun. It looked like everyone was having fun. And, ah, we did a lot of good work for the community in different places. So, I guess that's always good.

The experimental group also mentioned working on the volunteer tasks together as a group goal. When asked about the group goals, a member of the experimental group offered this opinion:

> I think it was just to work as a group pretty much, not be individual. Be involved and participate. It's not like we ever had to push anybody or ask somebody can you come over here and do this? It's just like everybody wanted to participate.

Group Development

The first stage of Garland et al.'s (1965) model of group development is the pre-affiliation stage, where members become familiar with one another and their environment. A contract was established by both groups to insure that group members were working towards the same goals and had the same expectations. It is important to note that both the control and experimental groups established their own contracts by being asked "what will it take for this group to accomplish the group goals?" Their responses were written on a poster board by a group member and were brought out at the start of the first few sessions and re-read aloud. Stockton et al. (1992) theorized that setting goals and behaviors, like a contract, can help in the early stages of group development. In the focus groups and interviews, the contract was mentioned by both the control and experimental groups as something that aided them in working toward the same goals with the other group members. When asked what helped the group accomplish the volunteer tasks, one control group member mentioned the contract. He stated:

> Well, we originally had the um, the contract that, ah, you know, we had to bring out the second time, but ah, after that we really didn't have to bring it out anymore. Everybody knew what was expected of them and knew what to do, so.

The experimental group also mentioned the contract as something that helped to accomplish the volunteer tasks:

> I think making the contract at the beginning, the first day, like what we wanted, what we expected, and how we should act and treat other group members. I think

> that was consistent throughout. I think we, um, continued doing that throughout, to the last day.

Both groups appeared to move beyond the pre-affiliation stage. During the control focus group, the subjects mentioned that they were getting used to working together and were becoming familiar with the behaviors of the other group members. Their responses indicated that they were starting to get to know the group members by the final meeting and that they were beginning to develop trust. Additionally, the experimental group reported that they were unsure of each other the first meeting, but became good friends. They even mentioned that the group felt like a family by the end of the program.

Differences appeared between the two groups in the second stage of group development, the power and control stage. The control group noticed conflict between group members and looked to the teacher assistant to moderate the conflict. They became discouraged when they did not feel the teacher assistant was doing enough to resolve the conflict. The conflict was brought to the attention of the students after the third meeting when the facilitator asked if they were abiding by their contract. There were mixed responses by the group members about how well they were doing with regard to the contract. The contract was then brought out at the beginning of the fourth meeting to remind the students of what they had all agreed.

The experimental group did not experience the power and conflict stage, as no subjects reported seeing any conflict during the program. The facilitator did not have to bring the contract out at any point and remind the group how they had agreed to treat

each other. They reported that treated each other how they had agreed to do in their contract throughout the entire program.

The control group did not appear to reach the intimacy stage, which is characterized by an interest in the group and a proficiency in planning and conducting projects. They reported not getting personal with one another, and not really desiring to do so. They reported a lack of ability to work on projects cooperatively. Some of the group members would work hard and others would distract the rest of the group from working. The group members were not sure the program was significant in their lives or the lives of the high school students. The facilitator had to intervene to assure the students were not bothering one another and were working on their tasks.

On the other hand, the experimental group appeared to reach the intimacy stage. Subjects reported that they learned personal details about each other and had good conversations while they were working. They talked about the group being significant to them, the high school students, and the community, as well as their wish that it had not ended. The facilitator provided some direction as to the nature of the task, but did not have to intervene to get the group to work together to get the task accomplished.

The differentiation stage was also reached by the experimental group, but not the control group. Experimental group members talked about accommodating to the different needs of individual group members. They viewed themselves as a cohesive unit and mentioned that they thought of the other members as their “friends,” “brothers,” and “family.” One subject mentioned how everybody was treated equally and that different people led at different times, “I kind of feel like there was instructions and coaching

going both ways. You know, them telling us you know, it's easier if you do it like this or that. And it really put everybody on the same level." They spoke of how different and enjoyable this experience was from any other volunteering they had ever participated in before. They were organized and accomplished their tasks. Both the high school students and the subjects took leadership roles during the team building activities. During the debriefing periods, the facilitator asked the group members to think how their experience in the group could be applied to their work in future groups. The experimental group also discussed the impact that this group had on them, the high school students, and the community. One subject mentioned that she enjoyed, "helping the community and gaining that openness towards other people." Another subject mentioned the impact he had on the high school students and the impact they had on him:

> And I got to know a bunch of new kids and got a different experience working with kids. And make friends there, too. Um, and I think that we had an impact on their lives. I think that they really enjoyed it. And I know they, they taught me a lot about, you know, just sticking with it and just taking things as they come.

Both groups went through the separation stage, as their five weeks together ended. On the last day, the control group had one member who went around and gave other members hugs. The experimental group ended their time together taking pictures. There was even mention that one of the high school students had asked for the phone numbers of the subjects so that they could continue to get together. While both the control and experimental subjects expressed some interest in the group continuing, only the experimental subjects mentioned any interest in going to the high school to continue to

see the students, and actually had three group members go to the high school after the program ended to continue to interact with their high school group members.

Other Themes

There were additional themes that emerged in the experimental focus group and individual interviews which could not be categorized in group climate, cohesion, or development and were not mentioned by the control group. These themes were the impact of the program and fun. Impact of the program involved how participation in the program influenced the attitudes of the individual subjects regarding their high school group members and the community as a whole. Fun addressed the enjoyment that the subjects received from participating in the volunteer program.

Impact of the Program

Many of the experimental subjects mentioned how the program impacted them as individuals. A subject described her feelings about the program:

> I just want to say that I think that it was a great experience. It was a great learning opportunity for me, you know, getting to work with, um, individuals, just different individuals, um, in a situation. And we did a lot of different, um, a lot of different community service projects like with, from the raking leaves to the painting of the fences to, well, we were going to build the birdhouses, but we didn't get to it. The team building activities, it was all a great experience in my eyes. And, um, I think that it's something that I'll remember and something that I can take, you know, teamwork from and how to cooperate and apply that to other aspects of my life.

One subject mentioned the impact that he felt the university students had on the high school students:

> I know, I mean going into it, I know we wanted to you know provide them with positive role models and show them, you know the right way to do things and how to interact. I think we did pretty well about that and I think that it kind of, I think I saw it in the Page students more and more like all of the way up until the very end of them getting along better and them talking to us more. So, I think we established those relationships and did a pretty good job.

As mentioned earlier, one of the goals of the program was to complete volunteer tasks in the community. Yet, only the experimental subjects mentioned having any impact on the community in their focus group and individual interviews, "um, well I think the pros were obviously, you know, helping the community and gaining that openness, um, towards other people." Another subject stated, "I think it was a lot of fun and, um, it made you feel good about yourself because you were helping out with, um, the community and make an impact on maybe some of those kids lives."

Fun

Another theme that emerged in the experimental group, but not the control group, was how fun and enjoyable participating in the volunteer program was. Many members of the experimental group mentioned how fun the program was, which motivated them to continue their involvement throughout the study period. One subject described the enjoyment derived from their group:

> I think that we had a great group, really and truly we did. I mean we weren't too shy. There was always a lot of fun, a lot of playing around. You know, it was, it was all smiles. I don't think there was ever a dull moment or a tense moment when everyone was kind of like you know, ooh, got to get out of here. It was, it was just easy riding all of the way through.

Even picking trash out of a stream, something which would not usually be considered enjoyable, was described as fun, “I would describe it as really fun. Like it was just, even though, you know you, I was, you know, picking up like decaying things out of like the creek. You know, like, that was still, you know, fun.”

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of team building activities on group climate and cohesion. Group climate was divided into subscales of engagement, avoidance, and conflict (MacKenzie, 1983). Cohesion was examined in terms of commitment, trust, working habits, and goal accomplishment (Forsyth, 1999). This study also sought to use Garland, Jones, and Kolodny's (1965) group development model to understand the effects of team building activities on group development. This model examines group development in terms of five stages consisting of pre-affiliation, power and conflict, intimacy, differentiation, and separation. Since group climate and cohesion are important aspects of group development, the results demonstrated that increases in positive group climate and higher levels of cohesion also led to the experimental group experiencing more stages of group development than the control group. The use of team building activities by the experimental group increased positive group climate, levels of cohesion, and stages of group development during their five weeks together.

Discussion of the findings of this study are presented in four sections. The first section discusses the conclusions of the study in terms of group climate, cohesion, and development. Next, limitations of the study are identified and discussed. Third, implications for practice are suggested. Finally, recommendations for future research are proposed.

Conclusions

Group Climate, Cohesion, and Development

The experimental and control groups progressed through the stages of Garland et al.'s (1965) group development model differently because of differences in group climate and levels of cohesion. The control group experienced the pre-affiliation stage, power and control stage, and separation stage. The experimental group, on the other hand, experienced the pre-affiliation stage, intimacy stage, differentiation stage, and separation stage. Both groups met for the same amount of time and participated in similar volunteer activities, but the presence of the team building activities changed the group climate, cohesion, and development for the experimental group.

The Pre-affiliation Stage and Avoidance

The first stage of group development, pre-affiliation, was experienced by both the control and experimental groups. The contract developed and agreed upon by both groups during the first meeting helped to provide the groups' members with structure to progress to another stage of the Garland et al.'s (1965) group development model. This progression supports Stockton et al.'s (1992) findings that providing structure aids groups in their development. Having the group members develop the contract, by asking what they needed to do to accomplish their goals, was very important. Empowering the group members to write their respective contracts allowed them to be more committed to each other and the program. The development of the contracts also assisted both groups' members to progress beyond the pre-affiliation stage.

According to the model, in the pre-affiliation stage, group members usually avoid sharing personal information and depend upon the facilitator for direction. The quantitative and qualitative data indicated conflicting results regarding the avoidance of personal information for the control and experimental groups. The quantitative data showed no significant differences between the pre- and post-questionnaires for both groups. The focus group and individual interviews, however, indicated the control group experienced more avoidance of sharing personal information than the experimental group. The contradictory results could, in part, be due to the low reliability of the results found by Johnson et al. (2005) on the Group Climate Questionnaire – Short Form avoidance scale (MacKenzie, 1983). The small sample size and the avoidance scale, which only consisted of three items, could also have affected the results. The mixed evidence on whether team building activities had any impact on avoidance of sharing personal information may require further study with regards to team building activities and group climate.

The Power and Control Stage and Conflict

It is interesting to note that the experimental group did not experience the second stage of group development, the power and control stage. The experimental group did not test group power and control issues, which typically result in conflict. The group climate questionnaire results showed that the experimental group experienced significantly less conflict than the control group, which was also supported by the qualitative data. Other than a small conflict that happened one day before the high school students reached the

site, no conflict occurred between any of the experimental group members during the team building activities or volunteer experiences.

There were a number of possible reasons why conflict did not occur within the experimental group. No conflict occurred in part because the experimental group did not appear to be overly committed to the volunteer tasks they were assigned. If the experimental group had actually been given a choice in their volunteer tasks each week, conflict may have arisen (Jehn & Mannix, 2001). As it was, the group was given the same volunteer task to work on together, which lowered the chance for task conflict among group members.

Another reason that conflict may have been low for the experimental group was because the subjects were interested in being role models for the high school students. Since part of being a role model is setting a good example and not getting into arguments, the subjects may have experienced less conflict than if they had not viewed themselves as role models. Finally, the team building activities that the experimental group participated in each week allowed them an enjoyable opportunity to get to know one another and reminded them of the importance of working together cooperatively on the volunteer tasks.

The control group did not experience task conflict, either. What the control group members did experience was relationship conflict, which is defined by Jehn and Mannix (2001) as involving personal issues and feelings of annoyance, frustration, and irritation, tension, and friction. The control group stayed in the power and control stage until their final meeting. The control group mentioned a few incidents of conflict during the

volunteer program where a subject had sand put in a member's hair, two high school students argued over their siblings dating, and a time where the contract was brought out after an unproductive day to remind the group as to what they had agreed upon their first meeting together. All of the relationship conflict incidents were initiated by the high school students. The control group did not have the team building activities to help them get to know one another or remind them of the importance of working together cooperatively on the volunteer tasks.

The Intimacy Stage, Engagement, Working Habits, and Goal Accomplishment

Only the experimental group experienced the intimacy stage characterized by engagement, positive working habits, and accomplishing their goals. The experimental group shared personal information and had increased proficiency in accomplishing their volunteer tasks. Because the experimental group members were more personally involved with their group members, they had more fun interacting with one another during the volunteer tasks, and thus accomplished more during their time together. Again, the team building activities provided a way for the group members to become better acquainted with one another and contributed to them enjoying their work on the volunteer tasks. The experimental group members learned more about one another with the aid of the team building activities than volunteering alone allowed for the control group; the activities also helped the experimental group to reach their goals of bonding and accomplishing their volunteer tasks. Without the team building activities, the control group did not share personal information, did not enjoy working on the volunteer tasks together, and did not accomplish their goals of bonding or accomplishing the volunteer tasks. Since the control

group did not participate in team-building activities, they did not have the opportunity to learn personal information about each other which would have aided in their progression beyond power and control stage.

The Differentiation Stage, Trust, and Commitment

The high levels of trust and commitment experienced by the experimental group allowed them to experience the differentiation stage by recognizing and accepting each individual's differences and personal needs. Some of the team building activities were specifically designed to enhance both physical and emotional trust of group members, so it was not surprising that the experimental group had higher levels of trust than the control group. Once the experimental group members gained each other's trust, they became more committed to the group. As the group members became better acquainted and looked beyond stereotypical behaviors, they viewed each other as unique, contributing individuals. The team building activities helped the experimental group to become very organized in the accomplishment of their volunteer tasks.

The control group, conversely, had low levels of trust and commitment and did not reach the differentiation stage. This group did not experience any activities which could have enhanced their group commitment or trust. Increasing trust and commitment was the sole responsibility of the control group members. Since no group member took the initiative to increase trust and share personal information, the control subjects did not report high levels of trust. Due to a lack of trust amongst group members, commitment levels were low.

The Separation Stage

Due to the high levels of cohesion, positive group climate, and experiencing the differentiation stage, the experimental group had a more difficult time with the separation stage than the control group. As was mentioned earlier, all of the experimental subjects inquired if the program would continue and whether or not they could continue their interaction with the high school group members. After completion of the program, three of the experimental group subjects actually went to the high school to continue to interact with the high school group members. The experimental group members mentioned they would remember the fun team building activities, joking around with group, and would miss "hanging out" with each other. The control group did not seem to have as much trouble with the separation stage. They had just started to feel as if their group membership was worthwhile. The control group mentioned that they were going to remember working with their partners and finally sharing something in common on the last day.

Limitations

The researcher identified possible limitations to the findings. One limitation relates to group size. The number of participants in the control group was less than in the experimental group. Because recruiting volunteers is often difficult and unpredictable, the control group only consisted of four subjects while the experimental group consisted of seven subjects. For research purposes, it would have been desirable to have had at least 12 participants in each group. As a result of the small sample size, nonparametric

statistics were used to analyze the data. Nonparametric statistics cannot be as easily generalized to the population because they are based on a small sample size.

Additionally, even with the mention and the reminder to send a different group of high school students to each of the two programs, the high school teachers sent one student to both the experimental and control groups. This student questioned why the two groups did things differently. It is unclear what effect this student had on the dynamics of the two groups.

Furthermore, not every high school student or university subject was able to attend every volunteer meeting or focus group. As group dynamics and development change when different group members are present, it is hard to determine what impact this had on each group's development. Not only did the students and subjects miss from time to time, but different teacher's aides came with the high school students. The aides were not required to work with the group, but they did seem to have an effect on certain group members, as was mentioned by the lack of one aide to take control of a conflict situation within the control group.

Moreover, the focus groups and interviews were held at different times. Some of the subjects participated in the focus groups and interviews one week following their volunteer experience. For other subjects, the interviews were completed two and a half weeks after completion of the volunteer experience due to scheduling conflicts. The subjects who were interviewed later may have given different information than if they had been interviewed sooner and vice versa. In addition, the subjects who participated in the focus groups had their group members to remind them of information, while the

individuals who were interviewed did not. This could have also affected the information that was shared.

Finally, not all of the college students were altruistic in their volunteering. All of them were getting class credit for their participation in the program. While they did have a choice to do this volunteer experience instead of other course options, they all had a minimum number of hours to complete for their volunteer experience. Some of the subjects exceeded their volunteer hours, and some of them just met the required number of volunteer hours.

Implications for Practice

The results of this study indicate that team building activities have a positive effect on group climate, cohesion, and development. All types of groups can benefit from team building activities, such as corporate work groups, non-profit organizations, sport teams, summer camp staff, and volunteer groups, just to name a few. Team building activities are appropriate for newly formed groups and groups that are only together for a relatively short amount of time. In addition, groups that have been together for a long time can use team building activities to reenergize the group climate and reinforce cohesion. Practitioners should specifically include team building activities that focus on group trust, problem solving, and cooperation.

Additionally, it appears that having a group formulate a contract at the beginning of their time together can help the individual members to understand what the group goals are and how they are going to work together to accomplish them. Even though the experimental group adhered more to their contract, the control group's contract also

seemed to be useful. The team building activities reinforced the contract for the experimental group, while simply bringing the contract out from week to week was reported to have a positive impact on the work of the control group by reminding the members of their initial agreement on how to accomplish their goals. Even if a practitioner does not have the time or skills to facilitate team building activities, then simply having a newly formed group define its goal(s) together and determine which methods they plan to use to accomplish them, may have a positive impact the group's accomplishment of those goal(s).

Team building activities are often conducted away from the workplace, at a challenge course or a structured experiential education program locale, but can also be effective if they are done on-site prior to the beginning of the group's work. The activities establish equality for all group members and permit everyone to be a contributing member by providing members the opportunity to lead, as well as the chance to follow. Team building activities can provide group members a chance to work together and to experience success while cooperatively accomplishing a task. The task accomplishments may then be transferred to tasks within the workplace.

A good group climate and high levels of cohesion, which were in part due to the team building activities, appeared to have a positive impact on group members' work habits and achieving group goals. Team building activities can be used by groups to positively impact their work ethic and goal achievement. Practitioners should choose team building activities which focus on group problem solving, establishing and

accomplishing group goals, and improving group productivity in order to increase group work habits and goal achievements.

It appears that having groups participate in a minimal number of team building activities can help them to form a more positive group climate and higher levels of cohesion. Any group of people working together could benefit from team building activities if improving both group climate and group cohesion are listed as group goals. The activities are not complicated and do not involve an abundance of materials to facilitate. More groups should begin to use team building activities, as they are currently not widely used outside of the experiential education field.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study enriched the knowledge of how team building activities affect group climate and cohesion, which in turn affect group development. It is recommended that if this study were to be duplicated, that the perceptions of all group members be studied. For the purpose of this study, the high school students were not asked about their perceptions of group climate or cohesion. Since they were important members of the group, and in both cases, the majority of the group, future researchers should elicit input from all group members.

It is also recommended that this study be conducted on a larger scale. Even if the high school students were to be asked about group climate and cohesion, the group sizes in this study were still limiting. Researchers attempting to get further information about group climate and cohesion should use groups of 12 to 15 subjects, which are good

numbers of participants for team building activities. In addition, it is recommended that multiple control and experimental groups of 12 to 15 be studied simultaneously.

The effects of team building activities can also be studied using many different populations, such as corporate work groups, non-profit organizations, sports teams, and other volunteer groups, to name a few. Subjects of various backgrounds should be studied in order to determine if demographics effect group development when team building activities are used.

Future research should also examine the effects of using different team building activities on group climate, cohesion, and development. It would be interesting to examine the effect of using different team building activities at different stages of a group development. For example, it may be important to work on trust at one stage of a group's development, but not at another stage. The timing of the team building activities may also influence group climate, cohesion, and development. Whether the group participates in team building activities before, in the middle, or after their "real" work may influence the effectiveness of the activities. The experimental subjects in this study completed all of their team building activities before the volunteer experience, except for the last day when the team building activity was used as a closure to the entire experience.

Additionally, it is recommended that this study be conducted for longer than a five week period. Many of the subjects of both the control and experimental groups made comments about wishing the program was longer. The control group members noted that they wished the volunteer program was longer because they had just started to bond. The experimental group members indicated that they desired that the program would continue

because they had made a lot of new friends and were sorry to see the experience end. It would be interesting to see if a longer program would even out the differences between the control and experimental groups or further expand their differences.

In summary, the team building activities had a positive effect on group climate, cohesion, and development. Having a group participate in team building activities allowed group members to accomplish more than volunteering alone allowed them to accomplish. Team building activities can also aid in the management of groups. The limited use of team building activities now needs to be expanded to include varied groups because all groups could possibly benefit from their use. Furthermore, working together as a group allowed both the control and experimental groups to accomplish more than the individuals alone would have accomplished. Corporate groups, non-profit organizations, sports teams, and volunteer groups, to name just a few, are all formed in order to accomplish a common goal(s). Groups can often accomplish more than individuals. Groups have been and will continue to be a part of human existence.

REFERENCES

Ashby, J., & DeGraaf, D. (1998). Re-examining group development in adventure therapy groups. *Journal of Experiential Education, 21*(3), 162-167.

Association for Experiential Education. (n.d.). *What is experiential education?* Retrieved November 24, 2005, from http://www.aee.org

Back, K. W. (1951). Influence through social communication. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 46,* 9-23.

Bednar, K. L., & Battersby, C. P. (1976). The effects of specific cognitive structure on early group development. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 12,* 513-522.

Carron, A. V., Widmeyer, W. N., & Brawley, L. R. (1985). The development of an instrument to assess cohesion in sports teams: The Group Environment Questionnaire. *Journal of Sport Psychology, 7,* 244-266.

Crews, C. Y., & Melnick, J. (1976). Use of initial and delayed structure in facilitating group development. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 23,* 92-98.

Denise, P. S., & Harris, I. M. (Eds.). (1989). *Experiential education for community development.* New York: Greenwood Press.

Ephross, P. H., & Vassil, T. V. (2005). *Groups that work: Structure and process.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Ewert, A., & Heywood, J. (1991). Group development in the natural environment: Expectations, outcomes, and techniques. *Environment and Behavior, 23*(5), 592-615.

Forsyth, D. R. (1999). *Group dynamics* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Brooks/Cole.

Garland, J. A., Jones, H. E., & Kolodny, R. L. (1965). A model for stages of development in social work groups. In S. Bernstein (Ed.), *Explorations in group work: Essays in theory and practice* (pp. 12-53). Boston, MA: Boston University School of Social Work.

Glass, J. S., & Benshoff, J. M. (2002). Facilitating group cohesion among adolescents through challenge course experiences. *Journal of Experiential Education, 25*(2), 268-277.

Griffin, B., & Pennscott, W. (1991). The development of cohesiveness and self-esteem in an experientially oriented training group. *TACD Journal, 19,* 53-58.

Grotjahn, M. (1981). Group cohesion as a factor in the therapeutic process. In H. Kellerman (Ed.), *Group Cohesion* (pp. 247-253). New York: Grune & Startton.

Hatch, K. D., & McCarthy, C. J. (2005). Exploration of challenge courses' long-term effects on members of college student organizations. *Journal of Experiential Education, 27*(3), 245-264.

Hoyle, R. H., & Crawford, A. M. (1994). Use of individual-level data to investigate group phenomena: Issues and strategies. *Small Group Research, 25,* 464-485.

Jehn, K. A., & Mannix, E. A. (2001). The dynamic nature of conflict: A longitudinal study of intragroup conflict and group performance. *Academy of Management Journal, 44*(2), 238-251.

Johnson, J. E., Burlingame, G. M., Olsen, J. A., Davies, R. D., & Gleave, R. L. (2005). Group climate, cohesion, alliance, and empathy in group psychotherapy:

Multilevel structural equation models. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 52*(3), 310-321.

Kanas, N., & Barr, M. A. (1986). Process and content in a short-term inpatient schizophrenic group. *Small Group Behavior, 17,* 355-363.

Kerr, P. J., & Gass, M. A. (1987). A group development model for adventure education. *Journal of Experiential Education, 10,* 39-45.

Kivlighan, D. M., & Angelone, E. O. (1992). Interpersonal problems: Variables influencing participants' perception of group climate. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 39*(4), 468-472.

Kolb, D. H. (1981). *Learning style inventory*. Boston, MA: McBer and Company.

Liebermann, M., Yalom, I. D., & Miles, M. (1973). *Encounter groups: First facts.* New York: Basic Books.

Lodahl, T. M., & Porter, L. W. (1961). Psychometric score patterns, social characteristics, and productivity of small industrial work groups. *Journal of Applied Psychotherapy, 45*(2), 73-79.

MacKenzie, K. R. (1983). The clinical application of a group climate measure. In R. R. Dies & K. R. MacKenzie (Eds.), *Advances in group psychotherapy: Integrating research and practice* (pp. 159-170). New York: International Universities Press, Inc.

MacKenzie, K. R., Dies, R., Coche, E., Rutan, J. S., & Stone, W. N. (1987). An analysis of AGPA Institute groups. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, 37,* 55-74.

MacKenzie, K. R., & Livesley, W. J. (1983). A developmental model for brief group therapy. In R. R. Dies & K. R. MacKenzie (Eds.), *Advances in group psychotherapy: Integrating research and practice* (pp. 159-170). New York: International Universities Press, Inc.

Mazany, P., Francis, S., & Sumich, P. (1995). Evaluating the effectiveness of an outdoor workshop for team building in an MBA programme. *Journal of Management Development, 14*(3), 50-68.

McAvoy, L. H., Mitten, D. S., Stringer, L. A., Sceckart, J, P., & Sprole, K. (1996, January). Group development and group dynamics in outdoor education. In *Coalition for Education in the Outdoors Research Symposium Proceedings.* Symposium conducted at the meeting of the Coalition for Education in the Outdoors, Bradford Wood, IN.

Neill, J. T., & Richards, G. E. (1998). Does outdoor education really work? A summary of recent meta-analyses. *Australian Journal of Outdoor Education, 3*(1), 1-9.

O'Keefe, R. D., Kernaghan, J. A., & Rubenstein, A. H. (1975). Group cohesiveness: A factor in the adoption of innovations among scientific work groups. *Small Group Behavior, 6,* 282-292.

Roarck, A. E. & Sharah, H. S. (1989). Factors related to group cohesiveness. *Small Group Behavior, 20,* 62-69.

Rose, S. D. (1998). *Group therapy with troubled youth.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sessoms, H. D., & Stevenson, J. L. (1981). *Leadership & group dynamics in recreation services*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.

Shaw, M. E. (1981). *Group Dynamics* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Shivers, J. S. (1980). *Recreational leadership: Group dynamics and interpersonal behavior.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton Book Company.

Stockton, R., Rohde, R. I., & Haughey, J. (1992). The effects of structured group exercises on cohesion, engagement, avoidance, and conflict. *Small Group Research, 23*(2), 155-168.

Valore, T. G. (2002). Sharing adventure: The group is important! *Reclaiming Children and Youth, 11*(2), 90-94.

Wagner, R. J., Baldwin, T. T., & Roland, C. C. (1991). Outdoor training: Revolution or fad? *Training and Development Journal, 45*(3), 139-145.

Wagner, R. J., & Campell, J. (1994). Outdoor-based experiential training: Improving transfer of training using virtual reality. *Journal of Management Development, 13*(7), 4-11.

Wheelan, S. A. (2005). *Group processes: A developmental perspective* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Widmeyer, W. N., Brawley, L. R., & Carron, A. V. (1985). The development of an instrument to assess cohesion in sport teams: The Group Environment Questionnaire. *Journal of Sport Psychology, 7*, 244-266.

Williams, S. D., Graham, T. S., & Baker, B. (2002). Evaluating outdoor experiential training for leadership and team building. *Journal of Management Development, 22*(1), 45-59.

Yalom, I. D. (1995). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (4th ed.). New York: Basic Books.

APPENDIX A. CONSENT FORM

Partnership F.I.V.E.
(Fostering Inclusive Volunteer Efforts)

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Consent Form

Participant Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

DESCRIPTION

This project, "Partnership F.I.V.E.," is bringing together community nonprofit agencies, advocacy organizations, self-advocates, the Volunteer Center, and the Department of Recreation, Parks, and Tourism of UNCG to foster inclusive volunteering opportunities, those in which volunteers with and without disabilities work side-by-side in a cooperative manner, within the community. Partnership F.I.V.E. will prepare individuals and agencies for inclusive volunteering. Individuals with and without disabilities will be matched to volunteer opportunities in community nonprofit agencies and supported in their efforts to work as cooperative teams in their volunteer work. Approximately every six months, individuals will be required to complete a one-page evaluation that will take 10-minutes or less to complete. In addition, individuals will be asked if they would like to voluntarily participate in a focus group that will last approximately one hour. Only project staff will have access to the information gathered during this program and all information will be destroyed at the end of five years.

All volunteers will be covered by the existing policies of agencies in which they volunteer. Partnership F.I.V.E. will not be responsible for the volunteer services performed by the participants, but only the design, preparation, and evaluation of inclusive volunteering. Partnership F.I.V.E. does not take responsibility for the transportation of volunteers to and from volunteer sites. If you choose to share transportation with another volunteer, you do so at your own discretion. Partnership F.I.V.E. is not responsible for any activities outside of the scheduled volunteer activities. If you choose to meet with another volunteer outside of your scheduled volunteer activities, you do so at your own discretion.

Benefits that have been associated with inclusive volunteering include, but are not limited to, increased self-esteem, socialization, life skills, leadership skills, and enjoyment. There

are some physical, social, and psychological risks inherent in volunteering. Physical risks include the potential for injuries associated with volunteering for agencies in the community. Social and psychological risks include anxiety associated with meeting new people and potential frustration of having to learn new tasks during the volunteer placement. Partnership F.I.V.E. will provide technical assistance to ensure the greatest possible physical, psychological, and emotional safety of all participants.

CONSENT

By signing this consent form you agree that you understand the project and any risks and benefits involved in this program. You are free to refuse to participate or to withdraw your consent to participate in this project at any time without penalty or prejudice; your participation is entirely voluntary. Your privacy will be protected and no personal information will be disclosed. You voluntarily and knowingly waive, release, discharge and indemnify Partnership F.I.V.E, its members, and their trustees, officers, agents and employees from all claims, demands, actions, judgments and executions which you now have or may have, including those of your heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, for negligence, all personal injuries, known or unknown, and any damage to property caused by, or arising out of, your participation in Partnership F.I.V.E. activities. You hereby agree to accept any and all risks and costs associated with your participation.

This project and consent form have been approved by The University of North Carolina at Greensboro Institutional Review Board, which insures that research involving people follows federal regulations. Questions regarding your rights as a participant in this project can be answered by calling Dr. Beverly Maddox-Britt at (336) 334-5878. Questions regarding the project itself will be answered by Kimberly Miller or Dr. Stuart J. Schleien. These individuals may be reached by telephone at (336) 334-5327. Any new information that develops during the project will be provided to you if the information might affect your willingness to continue participation in the project.

I, _____, agree to participate in Partnership F.I.V.E.

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Media Release

I hereby authorize and give my consent to **Partnership F.I.V.E.** to take photos and/or videos of me as well as to quote me for promotional, educational, and/or reporting purposes, and do hereby waive any rights to compensation therefrom. I understand that any photographs, videotape, or quotes may be edited as deemed necessary and that photos or video footage may be maintained for possible use in the future for same said purpose. I also release **Partnership F.I.V.E.** from any claim, which may accrue against them in connection with said use.

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX B. INFORMATION SHEET

Inclusive Volunteer Parks Program

EXPECTATIONS

- Be on time. You are expected to be there at 10:00 am.
- Be there every Thursday or Friday unless extenuating situations arise, in which case you will need to inform Suzanne as soon as possible at 919-741-0067 or smstroud@uncg.edu. The program will be every Thursday or Friday starting January 19 and ending March 3. If a make-up day is necessary due to inclement weather, that date will be Thursday, March 16 or Friday, March 17.
- In case of bad weather, we will do our best to meet at Page High School and work on indoor volunteer work if available. I will contact you ahead of time to let you know of the location change.
- Understand that cooperative efforts (i.e., including your partners from Page High School in everything) rank higher in importance than productivity. You will be amazed at how productive you can still be.
- Understand that your partners from Page High School are really counting on you being there.
- Work. This is a fun experience that is made more enjoyable by getting to know your partners. The best way to get to know your partners is by working with them.

TYPICAL DAY

- Arrive at park at 10:00 am.
- Greet the Page High School Students.
- Participate in team building exercises (Thursdays) or start volunteering (Fridays).
- Somebody from Greensboro Parks will discuss the day's plan.
- Decide as a group how to accomplish the day's tasks.
- Volunteer together until 11:45 am.
- Group debriefing.
- Page High School students depart 12:00 noon.
- Brief debriefing of UNCG students, if necessary.

SUGGESTED DRESS

This is outside work. Be dressed for it because there are times when you are going to get dirty. If you have work gloves, we suggest that you bring them with you. You will need to wear close-toed shoes – no flip flops. Please dress appropriately and remember that you are a role model to the high school students.

DEBRIEFING

At the end of each volunteer session, we will conduct a debriefing. UNCG students will be encouraged to get the Page High School students involved in the discussion about their experience that day. You are encouraged to ask them how they felt the day went and to use such questions as:

What did you like about volunteering today?

What would you like to see more of?

What did you help the group accomplish today?

FLEXIBILITY

We often take for granted the number of choices that we are presented with every day. Many of the youth that you will partner with are rarely given choices in their life. Please be flexible in your choices of volunteer tasks each day and empower your partner(s) to make choices about what they want to do that day. By allowing them the choice to do what they want, you are teaching them how to make decisions and how to handle choices. If for some reason you cannot agree on a volunteer task due to your own personal interests, we may need to look at partnering you with another student. Please communicate this with Suzanne immediately.

Volunteer Partner Training

I. What is inclusive volunteering about?

Inclusive volunteering efforts ensure that individuals with disabilities are recognized as valuable assets to their community and afforded their right to full community participation. Many individuals with disabilities in our communities, given the proper support, could make valuable contributions to their community. Having a volunteer partner allows those individuals with disabilities who need extra support in their volunteer efforts demonstrate their gifts and talents to their community through volunteerism. This is why the Volunteer Partner program was developed. Volunteer Partners are "experienced" volunteers who are paired with less experienced volunteers. The "experienced" volunteers help support their partners as they become accustomed to the volunteer experience and their roles and responsibilities. The volunteer partners work cooperatively in their volunteer role, each contributing to their maximum ability.

II. What is the role of a Volunteer Partner?

A volunteer partner is first, and foremost, a *companion* to an individual that is less experienced at volunteering. You are there to help this new volunteer feel more at ease with their new role and help him/her connect with staff and other volunteers in the agency. You will also be available to assist your partner with tasks that he/she may need some assistance in completing. You are to consider yourself as *part of a volunteer team*, working cooperatively to complete your volunteer tasks. You may also find that you are a *tutor* at times as your partner learns new skills while you are volunteering together.

III. What can I do to help my partner become comfortable and to feel welcome?

- Welcome your partner when they arrive, introduce them to others, and stay near your partner during your volunteer time.
- Be warm and friendly and make eye contact when talking.
- Don't help too soon or too much. Allow your partner to demonstrate his or her abilities first, then ask if he/she would like assistance.
- Encourage your partner to be involved by dividing the volunteer task(s). Ask your partner what part of the task they can do independently. Remember that each person learns how to do new things in different ways. Here are some things to try when assisting your partner to learn a new skill.

    - If he/she appears confused, frustrated, or is losing interest, describe, in simple step-by-step directions, how to do the task. Then invite him/her to do it.

    - Show him/her how to do the task, step-by-step, as you explain how to do it. Then invite him/her to do it like you do.
    - Physically guide him/her through the task by actually moving your partner's hand to perform the task while continuing to explain how to do it. Then invite him/her to do it.
    - Once you have determined what parts of the task he/she can do independently, either continue to physically guide him/her through the steps they need assistance with or fill in the gaps.
    - If they can do the task independently, work side-by-side on the task, working as a team to get the job done more effectively and efficiently.

- Focus on your partner's abilities and interests and how these can be tapped to make your volunteer efforts stronger and more enjoyable.
- Make the activity enjoyable and let your partner know that you are having a good time.
- Encourage others to speak directly to your partner instead of through you or around your partner. Encourage others to include your partner in any group conversations.
- Say something pleasant about your time together as the activity ends.

IV. What does it mean to be an advocate?

Unfortunately, some individuals in the general public are not understanding of individuals who are different than them. While volunteering, you may encounter one of these individuals. As a Volunteer Partner, you may have many opportunities to educate such individuals by being and advocate for your volunteer partner. As an advocate, you will work to ensure that your partner is fully included in the volunteer program and agency in which you serve. You will also work to ensure that your partner is treated like every other volunteer, with dignity and respect. In most cases, advocacy will take the form of educating others about your partner - your partner's strengths, interests, accommodation needs, and disability etiquette. Being and advocate also means empowering your partner to speak for himself/herself. An individual with a disability who speaks for himself/herself has a more powerful impact than our advocacy efforts could ever have.

Disability etiquette and "people-first" language

The following tips will help you interact with your partner and other individuals with disabilities in a natural and enjoyable way. You can use these tips to help others interact with your partner as well.

- Forget about stereotypes and labels. Enjoy a person for who he/she is, not the category into which he/she "fits."
- Emphasize abilities, not limitations. Focus on similarities, not differences.
- Don't give excessive praise or attention. People with disabilities do not want to be patronized.
- Avoid treating people with disabilities as if they want to be the recipients of charity or pity. They want to participate equally with the rest of the community, not to be pitied.
- Don't assume that an individual with a disability needs help. Offer assistance, but wait until your offer is accepted before you help.
- Let the person do or speak for her or himself as much as possible.
- When talking with someone who has a disability, speak directly to that person rather than through a companion who may be present.
- Treat adults as adults.
- Use "people-first" language. "People-first" language is about more than political correctness. It is about recognizing the many wonderful characteristics than an individual possesses. When we speak of the disability first, we negate all of these wonderful characteristics and instead put focus on an individual's one limitation. The chart below will help you to use and understand "people-first" language.

Say	**Instead of**
A person with a disability	a disabled (or handicapped) person
Person with cerebral palsy	palsied, CP, or spastic
Person with mental retardation	retarded
Person who has…	afflicted with, suffers from, victim of…
Uses a wheelchair	confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair bound
Has a physical disability	crippled
Person with a hearing impairment	deaf and dumb
Has a mental disability	crazy, lunatic, mental patient
Person who is manic depressive	psycho or manic depressive person
Nondisabled	normal or healthy
Has a physical disability	crippled
Accessible parking	handicapped parking

APPENDIX C. PRE-QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

Use the following scale to indicate how accurately each statement describes you and your opinions about your EXPECTATIONS for the inclusive parks program group. Please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking the appropriate box (**SA** = strongly agree, **A** = agree, **D** = disagree, **SD** = strongly disagree).

The following measures expectations of GROUP CLIMATE.

I expect that:	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**
1. The members will like and care about each other.	4	3	2	1
2. The members will try to understand why they do the things they do, try to reason it out.	4	3	2	1
3. The members will avoid looking at important issues going on between themselves.	4	3	2	1
4. The members will feel what will happen is important and there will be a sense of participation.	4	3	2	1
5. The members will depend on the facilitator for direction.	4	3	2	1
6. There will be friction and anger between the members.	4	3	2	1
7. The members will be distant and withdrawn from each other.	4	3	2	1
8. The members will challenge and confront each other in their efforts to sort things out.	4	3	2	1
9. The members will do things the way they think will be acceptable to the group.	4	3	2	1
10. The members will distrust and reject each other.	4	3	2	1
11. The members will reveal sensitive personal information or feelings.	4	3	2	1
12. The members will appear tense and anxious.	4	3	2	1

The following measures expectations of GROUP COHESION.

I expect that:	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**
13. We will get along well together.	4	3	2	1
14. We will feel good about our team.	4	3	2	1
15. We will enjoy helping each other.	4	3	2	1
16. We will stick together during the volunteer tasks.	4	3	2	1
17. I feel my group will keep me safe.	4	3	2	1
18. We will encourage each other in the volunteer tasks.	4	3	2	1
19. I feel like I will fit in with my group.	4	3	2	1
20. I will want to work on more volunteer tasks with my group.	4	3	2	1
21. We will help each other on the volunteer tasks.	4	3	2	1

APPENDIX D. POST-QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

Use the following scale to indicate how accurately each statement describes you and your opinions about your experiences with the inclusive parks program group. Please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking the appropriate box (**SA** = strongly agree, **A** = agree, **D** = disagree, **SD** = strongly disagree).

The following measures GROUP CLIMATE. I experiences that:	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**
1. The members liked and cared about each other.	4	3	2	1
2. The members tried to understand why they do the things they do, tried to reason it out.	4	3	2	1
3. The members avoided looking at important issues going on between themselves.	4	3	2	1
4. The members felt what was happening was important and there was a sense of participation.	4	3	2	1
5. The members depended on the facilitator for direction.	4	3	2	1
6. There was friction and anger between the members.	4	3	2	1
7. The members were distant and withdrawn from each other.	4	3	2	1
8. The members challenged and confronted each other in their efforts to sort things out.	4	3	2	1
9. The members appeared to do things the way they thought would be acceptable to the group.	4	3	2	1
10. The members distrusted and rejected each other.	4	3	2	1
11. The members revealed sensitive personal information or feelings.	4	3	2	1
12. The members appeared tense and anxious.	4	3	2	1

The following measures GROUP COHESION.

I experienced that:	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**
13. We get along well together.	4	3	2	1
14. We feel good about our team.	4	3	2	1
15. We enjoy helping each other.	4	3	2	1
16. We stick together during the volunteer tasks.	4	3	2	1
17. I feel my group will keep me safe.	4	3	2	1
18. We encourage each other in the volunteer tasks.	4	3	2	1
19. I feel like I fit in my group.	4	3	2	1
20. I want to work on more volunteer tasks with my group.	4	3	2	1
21. We can help each other on the volunteer tasks.	4	3	2	1

APPENDIX E. INTERVIEW GUIDE ITEMS

1. Think back to the training session where I went over the goals and expectations for the program. How did you feel about volunteering with the parks program before the first meeting with the entire group?

2. Now that you have spent 6 weeks together, do you feel differently about volunteering with the inclusive volunteer program?
- If yes, then how?
- If no, then why not?

3. What did you talk about with the other group members?

4. Did you see your group go through any transformations?
- If yes, what were the transformations, and when did you see them occur?
- What do you feel had an impact on your group's transformations?
- If no, why do you think your group did not go through any transformations?

5. How would you describe your group to your friends who don't know anything about it?
- What would you say were the pros and cons of being a member of this group?

6. Can you tell me some of the things you've learned about yourself from participating within your group?

7. Did you encounter any problems or conflicts during the program?
- Conflicts with individuals in your group? (not get along with anyone? Somebody too dominant? Somebody too submissive?)
- Did you see anybody else experience conflict? Describe the situation.

8. What actions were taken to ensure that the group accomplished the volunteer tasks each week?

9. How would you describe your level of trust with members of your group?
- What affected your level of trust?

10. How would you describe your level of commitment to the group?
- What affected your commitment?
- What affected your lack of commitment?

11. How well did you feel each individual's strengths were used to accomplish the tasks at hand?

12. If goals were met, what contributed to tasks being accomplished?

13. If goals were not met, what contributed to tasks not being met?