

**YOUTH VOICES IN POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT:  
A CASE STUDY**

A thesis submitted by  
Krysti N. Turnquest

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the joint degree of

Master of Arts in  
Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning  
&  
Child Study and Human Development

Tufts University

August 2015

Mary E. Davis, Ph.D., Adviser  
Francine Jacobs, Ph.D., Reader  
Sonja Spears, JD, Reader

## **ABSTRACT**

Positive Youth Development (PYD) is an approach to programming designed to better engage disconnected youth who face greater workforce related challenges than their counterparts with stronger positive ties to family, community and peers. PYD represents a strengths-based approach to youth development that capitalizes on youth as assets instead of problems.

This thesis utilizes a survey and informant interviews to assess youth participation, relationship quality and formation, and youth perceived benefit as indicators of perceived effectiveness at the United Teen Equality Center in Lowell, MA. In addition, youth were analyzed by subgroups in order to determine *who* perceives benefit in comparison to their peers.

The study found that generally youth do feel benefitted by UTEC's PYD programming, although this perception differed somewhat by subgroups. Additionally, youth perception of benefit was not found to be an indicator of utilization of UTEC personnel as resources when a youth was having a personal problem.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This thesis would not have been possible without the time, participation and commitment to their organization of the young people at the United Teen Equality Center. To them, thank you for sharing your hopes, dreams, talents, and passion with me over the years. You've inspired me more than you'll ever know. To my committee members, Dr. Mary Davis, Dr. Francine Jacobs and Sonja Spears, thank you for your time and commitment to this thesis. I know the process hasn't always been easy, but I hope that you feel, as I do, that the final product has been worth the journey. I would like to give a very special thank you to my friends, co-workers, classmates and colleagues who throughout this process have provided me with advice, perspective, focus and peace. Finally, I would like to thank my family, without whom I truly would not have been able to complete this thesis. Thank you for continually encouraging and supporting me.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Tables and Figures.....	v
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Positive Youth Development.....	6
Positive Youth Development Programs.....	9
Important Aspects of Youth Programming.....	13
Summary of the Literature.....	15
<b>CHAPTER 3: CASE STUDY SITE DESCRIPTION.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>CHAPTER 4: METHODS.....</b>	<b>23</b>
Research Questions.....	23
Evaluation Approach.....	25
Data Collection.....	28
Data Analysis.....	34
IRB Considerations.....	38
<b>CHAPTER 5: RESULTS.....</b>	<b>39</b>
Youth Participation.....	39
Formation and Quality of Relationships.....	45
Youth Perception of Benefit.....	50
Summary of Findings.....	58
<b>CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>59</b>
Recommendations.....	62
Limitations.....	65
<b>CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>68</b>
Appendices.....	70
References.....	84

## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

### TABLES

<b>Table 1</b>	
Working Definitions of 6 C's of Positive Youth Development.....	10
<b>Table 2</b>	
Overview of the Five-Tiered Approach to Program Evaluation.....	26
<b>Table 3</b>	
Summary of Tier Three: Quality Review and Program Clarification...	27
<b>Table 4</b>	
Description by Subgroup of Interview Participants.....	30
<b>Table 5</b>	
Description by Subgroup of Interview Participants.....	31
<b>Table 6</b>	
Description of Survey Participants by Individual.....	40-41
<b>Table 7</b>	
Description of Interview Participants by Individual.....	42
<b>Table 8</b>	
Active Participation in a UTEC Activity.....	44
<b>Table 9</b>	
Relationship Formation & Quality.....	47
<b>Table 10</b>	
Youth Perception of Benefit.....	53
<b>Table 11</b>	
How Well Each Department Meets the Needs of Survey Respondents.....	54

### FIGURES

<b>Figure 1</b>	
UTEC Departmental Model.....	22

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Disengaged, disconnected, disaffected, at-risk, delinquent, marginalized, disadvantaged, pushed-out and left-behind are just a few terms often used to describe youth who are not achieving their full academic and social potential. No matter the terminology, and despite the efforts of numerous interventions, youth presenting one or multiple risk factors still face numerous barriers to achieving success. For youth of color, these risk factors are compounded by the social marginalization they face on a daily basis (Borden et al., 2006).

The youth unemployment rate in the United States was 16.3% in July 2013, although this rises to 28.2% for black or African American youth (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). In 2010, there were 4,857 arrests per 100,000 youth ages 10-17 in the US (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2012). High school drop out rates declined from 12 percent in 1990 to 7 percent in 2011; however, drop out rates for black and Hispanic students remain higher than the national average (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). Additionally, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) estimated in 2011 that there were 29,900 active youth gangs in the United States (Egley & Howell, 2013). The prevalence of youth unemployment, academic failure, high poverty rates, contact with the justice system and gang activity without adequate social and emotional

support are risk factors associated with youth disaffection (Kraft & Wheeler, 2003).

In the context of this thesis, disconnection connotes a young person's lack of human and social capital. Human capital resides in the individual, and can be defined as the set of useful skills and knowledge that a person possesses (Schultz, 1961), while social capital reflects the larger context, representing the "features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (Putnam, 1995, p. 67). Without sufficient social and human capital, disconnected youth are forced to enter the workforce "at a distinct disadvantage, if they enter the workforce at all" (Crime and Justice Institute, 2006, p. 7). In order to help youth achieve economic success, programming targeted at workforce development is crucial so that they gain the skills necessary to compete in today's job market.

Despite numerous intervention methods attempted, the persistent existence of disconnected youth remains a source of frustration for researchers and practitioners. Understanding that the removal of all risk factors is impossible, child development theorists designed new, alternative approaches to managing youth problem behaviors. One such approach that is the focus of this thesis is Positive Youth Development (PYD) (Lerner et al., 2005). Instead of viewing youth problem behaviors as issues to be managed, Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003) write that PYD

views youth as resources that require development. Schwartz (2001) suggests that the PYD approach is not necessarily a new one. However, prior to the coining of the term, practitioners did not have the language and foundational research to support their methods. The PYD approach may be particularly important for youth of color in the United States as it allows for a more contextualized understanding of development (Rogoff, 2003). Community standards and social norms for non-white youth have historically been compared to European Americans as a model of what is normal and acceptable behavior (Rogoff, 2003). This often leads to misleading conclusions and misconceptions about positive development in young people of color (Rogoff, 2003).

Program evaluations are often undertaken in order to report how well the program meets its stated outcomes and to rationalize program growth (Weiss, 1998). However, a program providing services based on PYD, or on any other compelling theory of human development, is not helpful if youth do not utilize this service. Therefore, this research focuses on the voices that are often heard last, if at all, but are arguably the most important stakeholders in PYD programming—the youth themselves. When youth voice is valued within contexts that affect them, positive youth development opportunities emerge (Perkins & Borden, 2006).

A foundational assumption in the economic field is that all human beings are rational (Sen, 1995). Here, rationality means that people make decisions based on a personal scale of cost versus benefit (Sen, 1995). If



a person believes a particular action's benefit outweighs the cost, they will perform the action (Sen, 1995). Individuals' perceptions of cost and benefit are personal and unique, making them difficult to measure absolutely (Sen, 1995). This thesis represents a "perceived effectiveness" study that attempts to shed light on the youth participant perspective of the benefits gained by participating in PYD intervention at the United Teen Equality Center (UTEC), which is located in Lowell, Massachusetts. The findings from this study are meant to elicit youth's perceptions of the effectiveness of a PYD-oriented program. UTEC is a youth program that combines multiple aspects of PYD theory into its programming under one roof, providing wrap-around services for youth who have not obtained their high school diploma or GED, are criminally involved, gang-involved, and/or are young parents. This study focuses on assessing whether youth feel the program is meeting its defined goals, and the ways in which perceived effectiveness translates into participation and relationship formation across various sub-groups of the UTEC population. Specifically, this thesis is interested in how participants reap benefits from programming based on their own perspectives.

As UTEC has never had an evaluation of this type performed before, my contributions can be used to help UTEC understand what groups of young people perceive to be the most and least beneficial from their program, and by extension, the program's PYD orientation. Additionally, I hope that this research better equips advocates of these

types of programs to reach out to the community and funders about the ways in which PYD interventions positively affect the youth they serve.

## **CHAPTER 2: Literature Review**

This chapter will provide a brief overview of PYD theory and important topics related to this thesis. Particularly, this literature review examines PYD and its relation to contextual developmental theories, risk and resiliency research, and the value of youth voice; how these elements translate into PYD programming; evaluations of those programs; and finally, how youth participation, relationship formation and perceived benefit are utilized as measures in studying PYD programs. Existing literature was important to draw from to make meaningful conclusions based on the data recovered during this thesis process.

### **Positive Youth Development**

Some of the earliest interventions in the United States to address youth problem behaviors often called for a deficit model approach (Lerner et al., 2005a) which focuses on a youth's shortcomings and problem behaviors as areas that need fixing. The deficit model attempts to remedy or eliminate existing barriers within a youth's life to help them achieve success. For youth of color, as explained by Cauce and Gonzales (1993), deficit models are particularly problematic:

Children and adolescents of color have often been portrayed as "problems" which we dissect and analyze using the purportedly objective and dispassionate tools of our trade... With a white sample serving as the "control," [the research] proceeds to conducting comparative analyses... Beginning with the assumption of a

problem, we search for differences, which, when found, serve as proof that the problem exists. (Cauce & Gonzales, 1993, p.8)

Alternatively, the main goals of Positive Youth Development (PYD) theory are to “[1] promote health development to foster positive youth outcomes; [2] focus ‘non-categorically’ on the whole child; [3] focus on the achievement of developmental tasks; and [4] focus on interactions with family, school, neighborhood, societal, and cultural contexts” (Catalano et al., 2002, p. 12).

A major foundational theory in PYD is found in ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Bronfenbrenner suggests through his introduction of exosystems that human development cannot be separated from its contextual environments. He articulated that:

The nature and requirements of the parents’ work, characteristics of the neighborhood, health and welfare services, government agencies, the relations between school and community, informal social networks, transportation systems, law enforcement practices, shopping facilities, means of communication, patterns of recreation and social life... determine with whom and how people spend their time (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, p. 526).

The interaction between adults and the child as well as between the child and their peers are all layered together to impact the developmental trajectory of a child (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Lerner (1998) further expands on this idea with his introduction of Developmental

Contextualism. He posits that children are not only experiencing the effects of multiple systems on their lives but that they are in fact producing their own development by interacting with those systems and entities.

Lerner (1998) states that children primarily produce development through interactions with “significant people in their context, for example, family members, caregivers, teachers, and peers” (p. 90). Positive Youth Development capitalizes on this interdependency of systems within a young person’s life by drawing out the strengths in one area to fortify others.

Disconnected youth are at a particularly high risk for negative life outcomes due to a number of factors (Ungar, 2004). Despite these risks, many youth who face adversity display resiliency— the ability to overcome negative circumstances and produce positive life outcomes (Rolf, 1999). Researchers have yet to identify the exact element that creates resiliency within an individual, however, it is largely believed to be contextual in nature (Ungar, 2004). Through a contextual lens, multiple and reciprocal interactions occur between youth and their environment which amplify or moderate the effects of certain risk factors (Edwards, Mumford & Serra-Roldan, 2007). Alternatively, some researchers within the field of risk and resilience have found that positive or “protective” factors can produce healthy outcomes regardless of what risk factors may exist (Cowley & Billings, 1999).

## **Positive Youth Development Programs**

Programs operating within a PYD framework differ from other strategies in that they reject a deficit approach to serving their populations (Lerner et al., 2005a). Rather, these PYD- based focus on promoting and fostering the assets youth already possess through their normal developmental processes (Lerner et al., 2005a). PYD programs are those that institutionalize what leading researchers in the PYD field have defined as Five Cs of Positive Youth Development (Lerner et al., 2005b).

1. Competence
2. Confidence
3. Connection
4. Character
5. Caring and Compassion

Additionally, researchers have found that when youth develop all five Cs of PYD, they are more likely to become contributing members to their surrounding communities (Lerner, 2005b). This led to the addition of a sixth C of PYD—Contribution. Operational definitions of the Six Cs of PYD are provided in Table 1.

The definition and institutionalization of the Six Cs of PYD have been important in the field because until recently, standardized language to describe the developmental approach had not been established (Lerner et al., 2005b). The use of these principles to understand a PYD program's goals and outcomes is critical to be able to effectively evaluate their progress (Lerner et al., 2005b).

**Table 1** Working Definitions of the Six Cs of Positive Youth Development

Six Cs	Definition
<i>Competence</i>	Positive view of one's actions in domain specific areas including social, academic, cognitive, and vocational. Social competence pertains to interpersonal skills (e.g., conflict resolution). Cognitive competence pertains to cognitive abilities (e.g., decision making). School grades, attendance, and test scores are part of academic competence. Vocational competence involves work habits and career choice explorations.
<i>Confidence</i>	An internal sense of overall positive self-worth and self-efficacy; one's global self-regard, as opposed to domain specific beliefs.
<i>Connection</i>	Positive bonds with people and institutions that are reflected in bidirectional exchanges between the individual and peers, family, school, and community in which both parties contribute to the relationship.
<i>Character</i>	Respect for societal and cultural rules, possession of standards for correct behaviors, a sense of right and wrong (morality), and integrity.
<i>Caring and Compassion</i>	A sense of sympathy and empathy for others.
<i>Contribution</i>	Displays competency in the Five Cs and thereby contributes to larger society.

*Adapted from:* Lerner et al. (2005) and Bowers et al. (2010)

One element of programming that many PYD programs share is the inclusion of some type of workforce training, vocational learning or other activities to increase employability (Catalano et al., 2002). This fits well into the Six Cs of PYD by bolstering the competence of young people as they master a trade or enhance a skill that increases their future chances of successful employment.

Bloom et al. (2010) conducted a meta-analysis of 11 programs that contained at least one PYD component and reported their outcomes. The National Supported Work Demonstration (1976-1981), the Youth Incentive Entitlement Pilot Projects (1977-81), and the American Conservation and Youth Service Corps (1993-96) programs feature paid work and work training as the central component and were evaluated for outcome effectiveness. All three evaluations found that there were short-term positive impacts for youth employment as a result of the programs.

Programs such as JOBSTART (1985-93), New Chance (1989-92), Job Corps (1994-2003) and the Teen Parent Demonstration (1987-1991) center first around education and secondarily, around job training, life skills training and family services. Evaluations were performed on these programs as well and found that they were effective in increasing the number of GEDs obtained by the participant youth but lacked much long-term success in employment attainment post-program (Bloom et al., 2010).



Catalano et al. (2002) also conducted a meta-analysis of PYD programs. The study examined a number of programs across the United States to determine the success of each program and for whom the program provided the largest positive effects (Catalano et al., 2002). Two of the programs studied, Big Brothers/Big Sisters and Bicultural Competence Skills (BCS) share similar elements with the case site studied in this thesis. Big Brothers/Big Sisters' main intervention strategy was to establish positive relationships with prosocial adults in their community. The analysis found that within this program, increased peer emotional support was highest for minority males (Catalano et al., 2002). BCS's main goal was to help youth develop positive cultural identities and provide strategies and coping mechanisms for youth to deal with bicultural conflicts within their own lives. In the evaluation of the BCS program, youth reported lower alcohol, marijuana and smokeless tobacco use.

All other programs studied in this meta-analysis also showed that participants showed either positive developmental changes or no net change due to their involvement with the programming (Catalano et al., 2002). None of the evaluated programs showed negative outcomes due to programming (Catalano et al., 2002). Based on the results of this meta-analysis, Catalano et al. (2002) urged for the institution of more programs based in PYD and for more evidence-based research to support the proliferation of these programs.

## **Important Aspects of Youth Programming**

This thesis aims to study the perceived effectiveness of a program based in PYD principles. Three main areas of focus were determined to be the most informative for the purposes of ascertaining perceived effectiveness: youth participation, relationship quality and formation and direct views from youth's perception of benefit.

**Youth participation.** Borden et al. (2006) found that "time spent in youth programs is the most consistent predictor of youth thriving" (p. 188). Participation in youth programs has been found to contribute to a number of factors including enhanced self-esteem, the ability to overcome adversity in life, willingness to engage in efforts to help others, the development of leadership skills and involvement in political and social activities in young adulthood (Borden et al., 2006).

Anderson-Butcher, Newsome, and Ferrari (2003) posit that youth express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with activities by "voting with their feet" (p. 40). They also explain that a youth development program requires long-term participation and youth must participate with sufficient frequency and duration to achieve the program's desired outcomes. Gould (1987) points out that retaining participants gets increasingly difficult as youth get older.

Research has also found that gender can be predictive of the ways that girls and boys participate in activities. Eccles and Barber (1999) found

that girls tend to prefer to participate in prosocial, performance-based activities while boys were more likely to report participation in sports.

**Relationship formation.** An important aspect in youth-adult relationships is a strong positive foundation built on trust (Rhodes, Spencer, Keller, Liang, & Noam, 2006). Additionally, a strong youth worker to youth relationship is important because it can provide a “corrective experience” for youth who may have experienced unsatisfactory relationships with their parents or with other parent-figure adults (Olds, Kitzman, Cole, & Robinson, 1997). A study by Halpern, Barker, and Mollard (2000) found that one of the most frequent reasons for participation by Latino youth attending youth programs in Chicago was valued relationships with program staff. Scales, Benson, and Mannes (2006) found that positive interactions with non-familial adults helps young people to acquire skills important skills for adulthood.

Chung, Bemak and Talleyrand (2007) suggest that there may be cultural differences among youth of various racial and ethnic backgrounds that influence the perception of relationship quality in mentoring and counseling. They caution that different values (trust, respect, loyalty, family-orientation, etc.) play a large part in how one might relate to their mentor or counselor in similar situations.

Rhodes, Spencer, Keller, Liang, and Noam (2006) suggest that close relationships with adults foster positive youth outcomes by promoting identity development. Erik Erikson addressed ego identity

development theory in his 1968 book, *Identity: Youth and Crisis*. In this work, Erikson argued that sound identity formation allows for the building of a strong moral compass within a child. This identity formation happens most critically during the adolescent period (Erikson, 1968).

**Youth perception of benefit.** Lerner (1998) notes that perceived effectiveness is an important program attribute to consider in evaluations of youth programs. Youth, in essence, create their own development by making use of opportunities around them (Lerner, 1998). Dworkin, Larson and Hansen (2003) argue that activity participation is a context of self-directed development and therefore a youth perspective on participation in these activities and how it impacts them is critical to research about the program's effectiveness. Jacobs and Kapuscik (2000) agree, however they caution that perceived effectiveness does not necessarily equal program effectiveness.

### **Summary of the Literature**

PYD draws from a number of different theories and perspectives to create a lens from which to view youth development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Lerner, 1998; Ungar, 2004, Catalano et al., 2002). The layering together of these various positive elements into practice is the basis of PYD programming and the Six Cs of PYD.

To some extent, research has shown that youth participation and the formation and quality of relationships within programming between youth, staff and their peers are indicators of perceived effectiveness of the

program by youth (Borden et al., 2006; Anderson-Butcher, Newsome & Ferrari, 2003; Halpern, Barker & Mollard, 2000). Additionally, Serido, Borden and Perkins (2011) found that strong relationships between staff and youth promoted the inclusion of youth voice, leading to more perceived benefits of program participation. For those programs that utilize PYD principles, evidence from evaluations of PYD programs is promising.

### **CHAPTER 3: Case Study Site Description**

The *United Teen Equality Center (UTEK)*, the site of this thesis case study, is a youth-serving agency located in downtown Lowell, Massachusetts. Another risk to disconnected youth is teenage parenthood. Its target population is youth ages 17-24 who are not currently enrolled in school and have not received a high school diploma or GED; youth who are gang involved or court involved; and/or are pregnant or parenting.

Teenage parenthood further contributes to difficulties for disconnected youth when entering the workforce. According to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (2010), Lowell has the 8<sup>th</sup> highest teen birth rate in the Commonwealth with 44.7 births by teen mothers per 1,000 teenage females. Lower graduation rates and higher instances of homelessness are seen in young parents, which can have lasting negative health and educational impacts (Crime and Justice Institute, 2006).

UTEK provides positive youth development programming for these disconnected youth to help them trade poverty and violence for social and economic success. They attempt to help youth do this through

- Reduced recidivism and criminal activity,
- Increased employability,
- And increased educational attainment (United Teen Equality Center, 2015).

UTEC was initially founded in 1999 by a group of young people seeking to create a safe space for Lowell's youth from gang violence that was rampant in the city at that time. UTEC's original tagline was "by teens, for teens" which demonstrated their commitment to incorporating youth leadership into every aspect of UTEC's model. Since that time, UTEC has been through many iterations of its existence, but the essence of UTEC's core values – peace, positivity and empowerment – still run through its veins.

On occasion, young people are referred to UTEC through word of mouth or through outside agencies. More often, UTEC's Streetworker Department facilitates a young person's enrollment in the program. Streetworkers build relationships with proven-risk youth through outreach in the streets and "in-reach" at correctional facilities, conduct gang peacemaking, and recruit youth to engage in UTEC's programs (United Teen Equality Center, 2015).

The UTEC model reflects all of the Six Cs of Positive Youth Development as defined by Lerner et al. (2005b; see Table 1). Specifically, UTEC promotes *character building*, one of five Cs of PYD, by providing staff that are trained in youth work and specialize in guiding these youth through obstacles in their lives. All UTEC youth determined to be in the target population are assigned a Transitional Coach (TC). Each youth can work with a TC for up to three years post-enrollment. Each TC coordinates and schedules youth screenings for education level,

substance abuse, and mental health issues; creates an individual service plan with that youth; maintains weekly one-on-one contact with that youth; provides wraparound services for that youth such as court advocacy, housing advocacy, family mediation, etc.; conducts home visits with that youth and their family; coordinates counseling as needed; coordinates driver's education if the youth does not have a driver's license; and obtains the youth's Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) and helps the youth understand what is on it. The relationship between the TC and the youth is crucial to the youth's success at UTEC.

UTECE's model works to build *competency skills*, a second C of PYD, for each youth through their Workforce Development (WFD) program, their GED program, and the Alternative Diploma Program (ADP). Once screened for education level, UTEC youth are entered into one of two pathways: ADP or WFD. ADP works in collaboration with Lowell High School to allow students who obtained a specified minimum of credits before leaving school to achieve their Lowell High School diploma. Youth in the WFD program typically attend GED classes through UTEC to help them prepare to take the exam. Both ADP and the GED classes are a part of UTEC's Open School. The WFD program divides youth into groups or "crews" where youth receive paid job experiences and training through one of UTEC's social enterprises. UTEC runs three businesses staffed by WFD enrollees: mattress recycling, furniture design and culinary arts. Initially, all youth who are enrolled in WFD enter a crew called



Transformational Beginnings (TB) that serves as an “orientation and acclimation period for all enrollees” (United Teen Equality Center, 2015, p. 2). UTEC’s mattress recycling enterprise is comprised solely of TB crewmembers. Once a young person has progressed past this introductory period, they opt to join one of the other two crews.

UTEC’s model institutionalizes *connection, confidence building, caring and compassion*, three Cs of PYD, across its programming. To aid in the purposeful building of relationships between youth and staff and youth with their peers, UTEC hosts a Drop In period from three to six PM for any youth in the Lowell area ages 16-24 to participate in enrichment activities, including dance, art or poetry classes, organized basketball and other sports, movie marathons. This Drop In period also provides a general space for young people to meet with friends and hang out. During this time, staff members make their schedules available to any youth who may need mentorship and build new relationships with youth from the community.

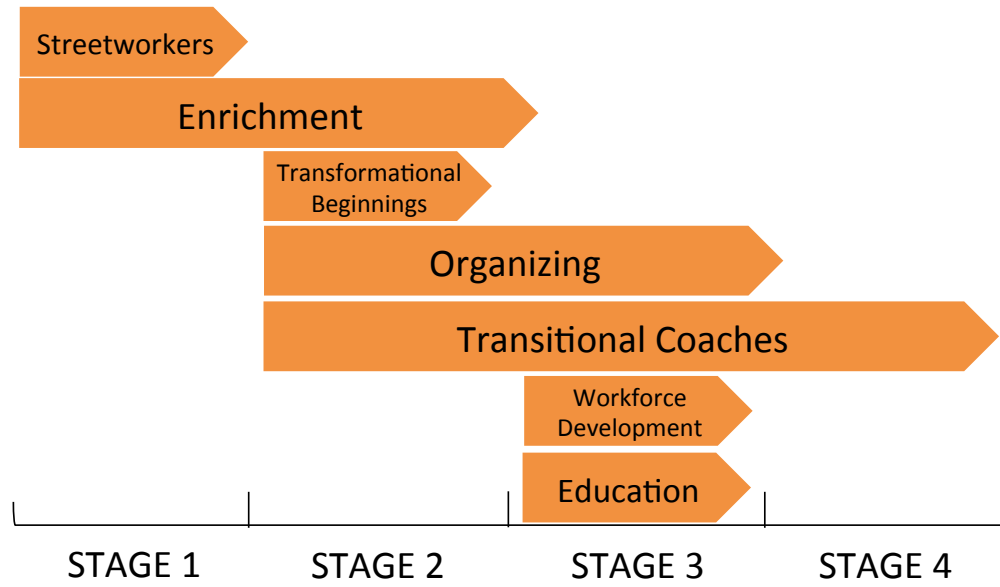
The sixth C is also demonstrated within UTEC’s model through its Organizing Department. This department exposes youth to principles of social justice and *community organizing* as well as teaches them skills to address inequities in their communities (United Teen Equality Center, 2015). In addition to the Organizing department, when available, UTEC offers youth opportunities to represent the organization at community events and to engage in public speaking.

UTEC identifies four stages of development that youth must go through in order to reach successful outcomes from its program:

- Stage 1: Outreach;
- Stage 2: Engagement;
- Stage 3: Transformation; and
- Stage 4: Independence (United Teen Equality Center, 2015).

Accordingly, UTEC's departments cater to each of these levels of development. In their 2014 Outcomes Snapshot (2015), UTEC explains that the Streetworker department serves youth through outreach, the enrichment department serves youth in the first three stages. UTEC has designated the organizing department as being most able to serve youth in stages two and three while the education department primarily serves youth in stage three (United Teen Equality Center, 2015). Transitional coaches serve youth in every stage as they navigate through UTEC's programming (United Teen Equality Center, 2015). See Figure 1 for additional UTEC departmental clarification.

**Figure 1** UTEC Departmental Model



## CHAPTER 4: Methods

Traditional program evaluations are driven by the imperative to establish the achievement, or lack of achievement, of the program's stated goals – in other words, outcome evaluation. In this case, a standard evaluation would focus on assessing UTEC with respect to objectively meeting its stated outcomes: reducing recidivism, increasing employability, and increasing educational attainment. However, the focus of this evaluation is on participants' *perceptions* of their progress, program effectiveness and overall benefit they derive. This is particularly important because it allows UTEC to understand whether youth feel that the services provided are appropriate and helpful (Jacobs & Kapuscik, 2000), whether or not the program achieves its formal goals. This study utilizes a youth survey as well as key informant interviews to gain insight into youth perception.

UTEC was chosen as the case site for this study because of my pre-existing relationship as a former employee of the organization. This established communication channel along with the organization's willingness to participate allowed me unique access to UTEC and the youth they serve.

### Research Questions

Stemming from the literature review, the domains of *activity participation, relationship formation and the quality of these relationships, and youth perception of benefit* were chosen as the most important to

measure. Anderson-Butcher, Newsome and Ferrari (2003) argue that youth provide a measure of benefit by voluntarily involving themselves in an activity. The literature also shows that strong ties between youth and non-family adults and peers is important to positive development and contributes to positive program outcomes (Rhodes, Spencer, Keller, Liang, & Noam, 2006; Olds, Kitzman, Cole, & Robinson, 1997; Scales, Benson, & Mannes, 2006). Jacobs and Kapuscik (2000) propose that perceived benefit analysis is crucial to programmatic evaluation in order to determine the program's actual effectiveness. Additionally, they describe that measures of perceived effectiveness require subgroup categorization in order to utilize the data gathered most effectively.

Based on this literature, three research questions emerged:

- (1) Who participates in *non-compulsory* activities and to what extent do they participate?
- (2) To what extent do participants report that they have formed quality relationships with UTEC staff, AmeriCorps and with their peers and how does this vary across subgroups?
- (3) What aspects of PYD programming are participants reporting to be the most beneficial and how do these perceptions vary across subgroups?

## Evaluation Approach

The evaluation outlined in this thesis follows Jacobs' Five-tiered Approach (FTA); the FTA validates both process-oriented and outcome-oriented program investigations (Jacobs, 1988; Jacobs & Kapuscik, 2000). It employs a developmental framework for thinking about evaluation, moving from studies of program operations, through considerations of perceived program effects to traditional outcome investigations. Five different levels, or tiers, of assessment are identified, each distinguished from the others by its purpose and audience, as well as differing in the tasks associated with that tier and the types of data that are required (Jacobs, 1988). These five tiers can be found in Table 2.

The study in this thesis draws much of its design from Tier Three of the Five-Tiered evaluation approach, "quality review and program clarification," which focuses on the program participants' perceptions about programming. Tier Three is an important step in the evaluation process because it assesses and compares how well the program meets its own performance standards while the program is still in progress (Jacobs, 2003). Tier Three calls for Management Information Systems (MIS) data as well as quantitative and qualitative data to be compiled and analyzed to gain a clearer picture of perceived effectiveness (Jacobs & Kapuscik, 2000). See Table 3 for a summary of purposes, audiences, tasks, and types of data involved in a Tier Three evaluation.

**Table 2** Overview of the Five-tiered Approach to Program Evaluation

Tier	Description
<i>Tier One:</i> Needs Assessment	Typically performed before program formation, the needs assessment identifies and measures the problems to be addressed by the program and sets a baseline to measure against in the future.
<i>Tier Two:</i> Monitoring and Accountability	In this tier of evaluation, programs are measured to ensure that the processes they are using are effective and are building capacity for continued program work.
<i>Tier Three:</i> Quality Review and Program Clarification	This level of evaluation helps describe the activities of the program and allows for staff, clients and other stakeholders to clearly understand the workings of the program.
<i>Tier Four:</i> Achieving Outcomes	This tier of evaluation measures how well a program has done what it has said it will do.
<i>Tier Five:</i> Establishing Impact	Typically performed after the program has proven effective in reaching its outcomes, this tier looks at long-range effects of programming as well as duplicability.

**Source:** Jacobs, F. H. (1988). The five-tiered approach to evaluation: Context and implementation. *Evaluating family programs*, 37-68.

**Table 3** Summary of Tier Three: Quality Review and Program Clarification

<i>Purposes of Evaluation</i>	<i>Audiences</i>	<i>Tasks</i>	<i>Types of Data to Collect/Analyze</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To develop a more detailed picture of the program as it is being implemented</li> <li>2. To assess the quality and consistency of the intervention</li> <li>3. To provide information to staff for program improvement</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Program staff and administrators</li> <li>2. Policymakers</li> <li>3. Community stakeholders</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review monitoring data</li> <li>2. Expand on program description using information about participants' views</li> <li>3. Compare program with standards and expectations</li> <li>4. Examine participants' perceptions about effects of program</li> <li>5. Clarify program goals and design</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. MIS monitoring data</li> <li>2. Case material</li> <li>3. Other qualitative and quantitative data on program operations, customer satisfaction, and perceived effects; obtained using questionnaires, interviews, observations, and focus groups</li> </ol>

**Source:** Jacobs, F. H., Kapuscik, J. L., Williams, P. H., & Kates, E. (2000). *Making It Count: Evaluating Family Preservation Services: A Guide for State Administrators*. Family Preservation Evaluation Project, Department of Child Development, Tufts University.



Because one of the goals of this thesis is to view UTEC's effectiveness through a youth participant lens, benefits will be defined as *any positive outcome or result youth perceive they are receiving, or have already received, through their involvement with UTEC's programming*. For example, if a youth describes some positive result that would not be considered a "benefit" by traditional standards, I intend to privilege the youth perspective and categorize their perception as a benefit. Perceived effectiveness by participants is an important piece of a program's evaluation process as it allows the program to evaluate their methods and fine-tune components to best serve their clients (Jacobs, 1988).

UTEK served about 130 youth over the course 2014, though the number of active participants in any give week was fewer for a number of reasons: participants graduate from UTEK programming and leave, youth drop out of the program altogether, etc. Unduplicated surveys were completed by 36 individuals over two days of data collection, three months apart to account for seasonal variation.

### **Data Collection**

This thesis research utilizes two primary sources: youth surveys and individual youth interviews. Each source contributed an additional piece to the perceived effectiveness puzzle. This data was collected a case site, the United Teen Equality Center using the procedures outlined in this section.

**Sample.** The population UTEC served in 2014 was comprised of youth ages 17-24 with 17% being ages 17-18, 26% were 19-20 years old, 34% were 21-22 years old and 23% was 23 and 24 years old (United Teen Equality Center, 2015). Seventy-seven percent of the UTEC population entered with a criminal history, 50% had been charged with a felony, 49% of the target population was pregnant or parenting, and 43% reported gang involvement (United Teen Equality Center, 2015).

Although the instruments were not identical, the survey and interview questions followed a similar structure. In that sense, the sample of respondents reporting on many of the topics of importance presented is 45. The survey consisted of 36 youth participants. Of these survey participants, 81% were male and 9% were female, ages ranged from 18-24, and 19 were enrolled in WFD. See Table 4 for a summary of characteristics of the survey population. Nine youth were interviewed and represented a variety of backgrounds and subgroups found in UTEC's target population. Five males and one female were interviewed, their ages spanned 18-24 years old and seven of the interviewees were enrolled in WFD. See Table 5 for a summary of the characteristics of the interview population.

**Table 4** Description by Subgroup of Survey Participants

		<b>Freq.</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>n</b>
<b>Age</b>	18	7	19%	
	19	8	22%	
	20	8	22%	
	21	6	17%	
	22	3	8%	
	23	3	8%	
	24	1	3%	<i>n=36</i>
<b>Gender</b>	<i>Male</i>	29	81%	
	<i>Female</i>	7	19%	<i>n=36</i>
<b>Grade Completion Level</b>	<i>&lt; 8th grade</i>	6	17%	
	<i>9th grade</i>	3	8%	
	<i>10th grade</i>	7	19%	
	<i>11th grade</i>	14	39%	
	<i>12th grade</i>	6	17%	<i>n=36</i>
<b>Race/ Ethnicity</b>	<i>White</i>	12	33%	
	<i>Black</i>	7	19%	
	<i>Hispanic</i>	13	36%	
	<i>Asian</i>	9	25%	
	<i>Native American</i>	3	8%	
	<i>Other</i>	1	3%	<i>n=36</i>
<b>Program</b>	<i>TB</i>	4	11%	
	<i>ADP</i>	13	36%	
	<i>WFD, working towards GED</i>	13	36%	
	<i>WFD, received GED</i>	6	17%	<i>n=36</i>
<b>Crew</b>	<i>Mattress Recycling</i>	10	50%	
	<i>Furniture Design</i>	6	30%	
	<i>Culinary Arts</i>	4	20%	<i>n=20</i>

**Table 5** Description by Subgroup of Interview Participants

		<b>Freq.</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Age</b>	18	2	22%	
	19	2	22%	
	20	0	0%	
	21	2	22%	
	22	1	11%	
	23	1	11%	
	24	1	11%	<i>n=9</i>
<b>Gender</b>	<i>Male</i>	5	44%	
	<i>Female</i>	4	56%	<i>n=9</i>
<b>Race/ Ethnicity</b>	<i>White</i>	1	11%	
	<i>Black</i>	4	44%	
	<i>Hispanic</i>	6	67%	<i>n=9</i>
<b>Program</b>	<i>TB</i>	2	22%	
	<i>ADP</i>	2	22%	
	<i>WFD, working towards GED</i>	3	33%	
	<i>WFD, received GED</i>	2	22%	<i>n=9</i>
<b>Crew</b>	<i>Mattress Recycling</i>	2	28%	
	<i>Furniture Design</i>	3	42%	
	<i>Culinary Arts</i>	2	28%	<i>n=7</i>

**Procedures.** The survey was distributed to all youth enrolled in Workforce Development who were in attendance during Workforce Circle following Fresh Inspirations on the first day of survey distribution. ADP youth, who are not required to attend Fresh Inspirations, were given surveys during Common Block on a Monday. Once the survey was administered, the young people completed the survey on their own in order to obtain maximum comfort in answering the questions truthfully. To this end, youth were given the option to turn in the survey directly to their TC, to myself, or to place them in a secure location for anonymous pick-up. The surveys were completed on the same day they were administered. On the first day that surveys were distributed, 12 youth completed and returned surveys. Due to an unexpectedly low number of surveys obtained during the initial data collection period, a separate collection period was organized approximately three months after the first attempt to capture the youth not present on the initial survey day.

Two youth from each of the three WFD crews were recommended by their program manager to participate in the interviews. Youth were selected for key informant interviews based on their willingness to participate and their ability to articulate their thoughts and feelings clearly as determined by their TC and UTEC's program staff. None of the interviewed youth participated in the surveys for this study. This yielded a total of six interviews. Additionally, two youth from ADP and two from GED were recommended by their teachers to participate in the interviews. This

brought the total number of interviews to ten. This number of interviews was considered feasible within the resource constraints of this thesis, and sufficient to capture a variety of youth perceptions. Many of the survey questions were close-ended in nature. The interviews helped to provide a narrative to offer further explanation of some of the survey responses, which is one of the main advantages of in-depth interviews (Boyce & Neale, 2006).

**Youth survey.** The survey asked youth to provide responses to a range of questions regarding participation, relationship quality and formation, and the perceived benefit of UTEC programming. A copy of the full survey is provided in *Appendix A*.

The survey was piloted with three members of UTEC's case management staff. Each person was asked to have a particular youth in mind as he or she answered the survey questions. These case managers were also asked to provide feedback on the survey. Once the survey was piloted, changes were made according to feedback and full survey distribution commenced. Piloting was done in this manner because of the relatively small sample size of UTEC's target population. Using the recommended 10% of the population to pilot would have drawn too many youth away from the test pool (Hertzog, 2008).

**Individual youth interviews.** The questions asked during the informant interviews were similar in topic to those asked during the youth survey. The main difference was that the interviewees were asked to

elaborate further on their experiences and to explain their responses with specific anecdotes. For example, in the survey, youth were asked several standard demographic questions and questions about their involvement at UTEC. In the interview, youth were asked to make self-identifications about the groups to which they feel they belong. In the survey, youth were asked whether or not they felt comfortable asking for help from UTEC staff or AmeriCorps members. In the interview, youth were asked to elaborate on this and use specific examples of ways in which they are or are not supported. A copy of the interview protocol and questionnaire is provided in *Appendix B*. Case managers at UTEC piloted the interview questions over the phone with a select group of participants, who were then asked to provide feedback regarding clarity and ease of understanding.

### **Data Analysis**

There are two main components to the data gathered for this thesis research: a youth survey and youth interviews. These data were further broken down into subgroup categorizations, which included: Age; Gender; Race/Ethnicity; Program, including Workforce Development (WFD), the Alternative Diploma Program (ADP), and Transformational Beginnings (TB). The WFD program was further broken down in two ways: those participants with and without GEDs and the crew within WFD to which participants belonged. Subgroup categorization was an important aspect of this research. All youth in UTEC's programming are offered the same program components to relatively the same extent. However, it might not

be the case that all youth take equal advantage of these services.

Categorizing various subgroups of youth was an extremely useful tool in analyzing the differences between their responses.

Respondents choosing more than one race or ethnicity were included within each category that they identified with. For this reason, responses in the race/ethnicity category do not add up to 100%. A simple “multi-racial” category would have significantly reduced the number of respondents within each category, particularly the black respondents. Interestingly, the only reported racial homogenous group was Asian respondents.

One survey respondent (a 19-year-old, Asian male in TB who last completed the 9<sup>th</sup> grade before enrolling at UTEC) elected not to respond to many of the survey questions; his non-response was not calculated in any of the tabulations described in the results section.

Although no particularly sensitive information was collected during the interview process, the names of the interviewees have been redacted from this report. Herein, the interviewees shall be referred to as “Interviewee 1,” “Interviewee 2,” etc.

Quantitative data from the survey was coded using a pre-determined scale and the responses for each question were aggregated across participants to result in an overall score for each question. Qualitative data collected during the interviews were coded for themes using grouping by keywords and tone. It was important for variation to



exist among key informant interviewees in terms of their subgroups in order to provide a more complete narrative to the evaluation results.

Youth participation was measured by a series of questions asking survey respondents how often they participated in particular *non-compulsory* activities at UTEC. The specific activities measured were: (1) Sports; (2) Fine Arts; (3) Dance; (4) UTEC and Community Events; (5) Organizing; (6) Talking Circles; (7) Community Council; and (8) Youth Opportunity Program (YOP) Trips. For each of these activities, youth identified whether they participated in each “Never,” “Less than once a week,” “Once or twice a week,” or “Three or four times a week.” To provide an indicator of how often respondents were participating in UTEC activities, the percentage of respondents reporting that they participated in any of the listed activities “once or twice a week” or “three or four times a week” was considered active participation.

Relationship quality and formation were measured in the survey through a series of questions with possible responses to all questions, except for two, falling on a Likert scale. Participants were asked whether or not they had formed at least one new friendship since enrolling at UTEC and if they had a staff member whom they trusted completely. Possible responses to these two questions were binary. The survey asked respondents to rate on a five-point scale how strongly they agreed or disagreed with several statements (“I get along very well with other UTEC youth”; “UTEC has been helpful in forming friendships with other youth in

the program”; “I am very comfortable interacting with at least one UTEC staff that is not my teacher, TC or program manager”). To determine that a participant agreed with the statement, a response of “agree” or “strongly agree” was counted. Participants were also asked how often they turn to a TC or other staff member for help with personal problems, respectively. Possible responses to these questions also fell along a five-point scale. In addition, respondents were able to report that they had not had a personal problem. Responses of “sometimes,” “frequently,” and “almost always” are reported in the results as positive responses.

To determine youth perception of benefit, surveyed participants were asked to determine how well seven of UTEC’s departments met their needs. The response options for these questions were: “very poorly”, “poorly”, “average”, “well”, “very well” or “not enrolled”. In order to decide whether a department met their needs, a response of “well” or “very well” was required. Participants that responded “not enrolled” were not counted in the tabulations described in the results section.

Youth were also asked to rate how strongly they agreed or disagreed that UTEC had been helpful in forming friendships with other youth. Response options were “strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “neutral”, “agree” and “strongly agree”. In order to determine that UTEC had been helpful, respondents must have answered “agree” or “strongly agree”. Next, youth were asked how well they felt UTEC supported a sense of community and if they felt that UTEC was accomplishing its mission.

Response options were “very poorly”, “poorly, average”, “well” and “very well”. Participants were also asked to respond how likely they were to recommend UTEC to a friend. The final survey questions asked youth to rate their overall experience at UTEC on a scale of one to ten with one being the lowest and ten being the highest rating.

### **IRB Considerations**

The Tufts University IRB requires that any research involving children under 18 years old must include written consent from the minor’s parent or guardian. In many cases with the target population at UTEC, obtaining this consent from said parent or guardian is difficult. Therefore, the decision to exclude UTEC’s 16-17 year olds within the target populations was made due to the difficulties in obtaining informed consent. This decision restricted the sample to older participants; therefore, the analysis and results described in this thesis are specific to the older (18+) participant group.

## Chapter 5: Results

In this chapter, the most revealing findings from analyzing data collected from the youth survey and interview are presented. The discussion is divided into three core areas in which this study was most interested: youth participation, relationship quality and formation, and youth perception of benefit. See Table 6 for a more elaborated person-centered description of the survey respondents and Table 7 for a person-centered description of interview participants.

### Youth Participation

In total, 83% of survey respondents reported that active participation in at least one of UTEC's activities. By contrast, only four of the nine interview participants reported the same. Interestingly, all four of these interview participants identified as Hispanic.

Subgroup analyses of survey data revealed two interesting differences. Gender did not appear to matter in participation frequency. Young men and women reported to participate in roughly the same proportions. Age and program, however, did seem to have differences between responses. See Table 8 for these results.

**Age.** Participation by 22 year olds appeared substantially lower than participation at other levels. There seems to be a dip in participation levels between respondents ages 19-22 and then a recovery beginning with 23 year olds.

**Table 6** Description of Survey Participants by Individual

Case #	Age	Gender	Race/ Ethnicity	Last Grade	Program	WFD Crew
1	18	F	Hispanic	11	ADP	-
2	18	M	Hispanic	11	ADP	Culinary
3	18	M	White, Black	< 8	TB	-
4	18	M	Hispanic	11	WFD, no GED	Mattress Recycling
5	18	M	Hispanic	9	WFD, no GED	Furniture Design
6	18	F	Asian	11	ADP	-
7	18	F	White	10	WFD, no GED	Mattress Recycling
8	19	M	Black	11	WFD, no GED	Furniture Design
9	19	M	White	11	ADP	-
10	19	M	White, other	12	ADP	-
11	19	M	Black, Native American	12	ADP	-
12	19	M	Asian	10	WFD, has GED	Mattress Recycling
13	19	M	Asian	10	TB	-
14	19	M	Hispanic	11	ADP	-
15	19	M	White	< 8	WFD, no GED	Mattress Recycling
16	20	M	White, Native American	9	WFD, has GED	Mattress Recycling
17	20	M	Hispanic	10	WFD, no GED	Furniture Design
18	20	M	White, Black	< 8	WFD, no GED	Furniture Design
19	20	M	Hispanic	11	ADP	-
20	20	F	Asian	10	WFD, has GED	Furniture Design
21	20	M	Black	9	WFD, no GED	Culinary
22	20	M	Black	11	ADP	-

**Table 6** Description of Survey Participants by Individual (Continued)

Case #	Age	Gender	Race/ Ethnicity	Last Grade	Program	WFD Crew
23	20	F	White	11	ADP	-
24	21	M	Hispanic, Native American	11	WFD, no GED	Furniture Design
25	21	M	Hispanic	11	WFD, no GED	Mattress Recycling
26	21	M	Asian	10	WFD, no GED	Culinary
27	21	M	White, Hispanic	12	ADP	-
28	21	M	Hispanic	< 8	TB	-
29	21	F	Asian	11	ADP	-
30	22	M	Asian	< 8	TB	Mattress Recycling
31	22	M	White	10	WFD, no GED	Mattress Recycling
32	22	M	Asian	12	ADP	-
33	23	M	White, Hispanic	12	WFD, has GED	Mattress Recycling
34	23	F	Hispanic	11	WFD, no GED	Mattress Recycling
35	23	M	Asian	< 8	WFD, has GED	Culinary
36	24	M	Black, Hispanic	12	WFD, has GED	Furniture Design

**Table 7** Description of Interview Participants by Individual

Case #	Age	Gender	Race/Ethnicity	Program	WFD Crew
1	23	F	Hispanic	WFD, GED	Culinary
2	24	M	Hispanic	WFD, GED	Culinary
3	21	M	Black, Hispanic	WFD, no GED	Furniture Design
4	22	M	Black, Hispanic	WFD, no GED	Furniture Design
5	18	F	White	ADP	-
6	21	F	Hispanic	TB	Mattress
7	19	M	Black	WFD, no GED	Furniture Design
8	19	M	Black	TB	Mattress
9	18	F	Hispanic	ADP	-

**Program.** The lowest number of active survey participants belonged to the WFD program that had not yet received their GEDs (69%). Comparatively, the ADP program had the same number of sampled survey respondents however, they reported to active participation at a higher rate than did the WFD without GED group.



**Table 8**  
**Active Participation in a UTEC Activity**

	Percent Active	Total Sample
<i>Age</i>		
18	100%	7
19	75%	7
20	75%	8
21	83%	6
22	33%	3
23	100%	3
24	100%	1
<i>Program</i>		
Transitional	100%	3
Beginnings		
ADP	85%	13
WFD without a GED	69%	13
WFD with a GED	100%	6

## **Formation and Quality of Relationships**

The formation and quality of relationships at UTEC were measured through a specific set of questions on the survey intended to gauge the respondents' trust and comfort level with their Transitional Coach (TC), with other staff members at UTEC, and the formation of friendships with other youth at UTEC.

All but one respondent agreed that they had formed at least one new friendship with another youth member since enrolling at UTEC (97%). Slightly fewer of the survey participants (92%) reported that they get along very well with other UTEC youth. Six of the nine interview participants specifically described UTEC as a "family." Each of the interviewees reported that they had made friends at UTEC since they first enrolled although to different extents.

By far the lowest amount of positive responses to a question about relationships was, "When you are having a personal problem, how often do you go to other UTEC staff (not your TC) for help?" (39%). Despite the low number of youth reporting to turn to non-TC staff members for help with a personal problem, when asked about ways that they had felt supported by any staff member, AmeriCorps member or other youth, each interviewee reported that more than anyone, their TC had been their main source of support at UTEC. Interviewee 7 said of his TC,

“My TC, my home girl... Yeah, that’s my home girl right there. She’s been there more than anybody could be for me at UTEC... She was there for me when I really needed it.”

When pressed for ways in which their TC had supported them, many interview respondents answered that they had received both emotional and physical support from their TC by supplying them with rides to work, helping to secure stable housing, attending court appearances, assisting in financial and legal paperwork and giving advice in peer matters. While TCs were reported to be the main source of support for interviewees, Interviewee 9, a Hispanic female, mentioned that she goes to a variety of staff members at UTEC with her personal problems because, “I always have support here... Even if they don’t have time, they’ll make time to talk to you.”

Subgroup analysis revealed interesting differences in relationship quality and formation by age, gender and program. See Table 9 for a breakdown of these results.

**Table 9**  
Relationship Quality and Formation

	Formed at Least One New Friendship	Get Along Very Well with Other UTEC Youth	Met with a Staff Member Other Than Their TC	Comfortable Interacting with at Least One UTEC Staff That is Not TC, Teacher or Program Manager	Go to TC for Help With Personal Problems	Go to Another Staff Member for Help with Personal Problems	Sample
<b>Age</b>							
18	100%	86%	86%	100%	57%	29%	7
19	100%	63%	88%	100%	38%	25%	8
20	100%	63%	88%	63%	63%	38%	8
21	83%	50%	100%	83%	80%	60%	6
22	100%	33%	100%	67%	33%	33%	3
23	100%	67%	100%	67%	67%	33%	3
24	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	1
<b>Gender</b>							
Male	97%	69%	93%	83%	52%	34%	29
Female	100%	57%	86%	86%	71%	43%	7
<b>Program</b>							
TB	100%	100%	100%	100%	25%	50%	4
ADP	100%	38%	77%	77%	46%	31%	13
WFD without a GED	92%	69%	100%	77%	62%	31%	13
WFD with a GED	100%	100%	100%	100%	83%	50%	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>39%</b>	

**Age.** All survey participants ages 21 and older agreed that they got along very well with other youth in the program. Interviewee 6 also agreed with that statement. She elaborated:

“I feel like it’s a family here. We’re all here for each other, you know? It’s not like high school where there’s little cliques here and there where you don’t get along with these people or these people. You might not be as close to some people as you are to others but it’s like a family. Like when one person is going through something, I feel like all the youth are there for that person. They’ll try to do anything to, like, support them.”

Eighteen-year-old survey respondents were the second most likely age category to respond that they had at least one staff member at UTEC that they trusted completely. However, only 57% and 29% of the 18-year-old respondents reported that they seek out their TC or another staff member for help with personal problems.

More than half of all survey respondents in each age category reported that they were comfortable interacting with a staff member who was not their TC, teacher or program manager. However, all age groups reported that they went to a staff member who was not their TC for help with a personal problem in much smaller numbers. Table A in *Appendix E* provides all of the survey data broken down by age.

**Gender.** Both male and female respondents reported to have formed new friendships since enrolling at UTEC in similar numbers (97%

and 100%, respectively), however, females were less likely than males to respond that they “[got] along very well with other UTEC youth” (86% compared to 93%). Interviewee 5, a female ADP student, exclusively spends time with youth enrolled in ADP and reported that she preferred not to hang out with youth from other programs because she felt they were more juvenile. The rest of the interview participants reported feeling very comfortable with youth from any program.

More male respondents than female respondents reported that they had at least one staff member at UTEC that they trusted completely (69% compared to 57%). However, more female respondents reported that they go to their TC (71% compared to 52%) or another staff member (43% compared to 34%) for help when they are having a personal problem.

**Program.** One would expect that youth enrolled in the Transformational Beginnings (TB) program at UTEC would have the weakest connections with other youth and staff members because they have spent the least amount of time at UTEC. This however was not the case amongst survey respondents. One hundred percent of TB youth respondents reported that they had at least one staff member at UTEC that they trusted completely, yet only 25% reported to go to their TC for help with a personal problems. This was the lowest reported percentage of youth to turn to their TC for help in any subgroup analysis. However, 50% of TB survey respondents reported that they did go to another staff member other than their TC for help with personal problems. This is the

only subgroup categorization of any kind that reported to turn to non-TC staff members more than TCs for help.

Survey respondents enrolled in ADP were the least likely group to respond that they had at least one staff member that they trusted completely (38%). One ADP interviewee said, “My TC, he supports me with everything in and outside of school... Not really any other staff, cause I don’t feel comfortable talking to any other staff other than [him].” ADP survey respondents were also the least likely to report that they got along very well with other UTEC youth (77%). One hundred percent of surveyed respondents on every WFD crew reported that they get along very well with other UTEC youth.

### **Youth Perception of Benefit**

Overall, survey respondents reported that the Streetworker department at UTEC met their needs more than any other department (79%). Meanwhile, the Organizing department least met the needs of any UTEC department (52%). While only 61% of respondents felt that UTEC actually helped in friendship formation with other youth, 81% reported that UTEC successfully supported a sense of community among its members. After reading UTEC’s official mission statement, 75% of respondents reported that they felt UTEC was accomplishing its mission and most reported that they would recommend UTEC to a friend (83%). When asked to rate their overall experience at UTEC on a scale of one to 10,

with 10 being the most satisfied, respondents reported a group average of 8.2 out of 10.

All of the youth interviewed agreed that they benefit from attending UTEC. Interview participants were asked about their future goals, their confidence level in achieving those goals and UTEC's potential involvement in helping them to achieve their goals. All but one youth, Interviewee 5, felt that they were not only well on their way to reaching their goals, but that UTEC played a big role in helping them along that path. Interviewee 8 said, "A year from now... nah, a month from now, I want to get my own apartment. That's like my month goal... and I'm depending on UTEC to help me." Other youth had similar goals of securing their own housing, owning cars, finding stable jobs, enrolling in college, and popularly, "having [their] life together."

Seven out of the nine interviewees reported that their overall experience at UTEC had many highs and lows but all were quick to point out that there had been more positive moments than negative ones. The other two interview respondents expressed that their entire UTEC experience had been completely positive. When asked about what types of lows they had experienced at UTEC, responses fell into two categories: poor personal decision-making, and failure to follow UTEC's somewhat rigid rules. Interviewee 3 explained,

"When I first got here, sometimes it would be real easy for other youth to bring me down to their level and get into trouble at



work or just hanging around UTEC. I won't lie, I got into a few altercations in the beginning with other youth." Many youth expressed their frustration with being sent home from WFD for not following the rules. When asked what types of things you can get sent home for, Interviewee 8 said, "... not doing what you're supposed to do. But I don't mind though... I know it's on me 'cause they're not going to send me home for working hard." Interviewee 4 explained that warnings were a big negative for him. He has struggled with receiving warnings for being "even one minute late [for work]."

When comparing subgroups, interesting differences were found between various age groups, between genders and programs. These results can be found in Table 10 and Table 11.

The least likely racial group surveyed to report that UTEC had been helpful in forming friendships with other youth were black respondents (43%). Meanwhile, 85% of surveyed Hispanic respondents reported that UTEC had been helpful in the same regard. One black interviewee felt that UTEC allowed young people who might not have gotten along on the street to come together within programming. He described UTEC as a place to set aside outside differences from other youth and recognize their commonalities, "...we got a mixture of gangs in here and I gang bang so it's like, I meet people from other sides that I would automatically beef with but I get to know them and it's like a different side, you know?"

**Table 10**  
Youth Perception of Benefit

	UTEC Has Been Helpful in Forming New Friendships	UTEC Supports a Sense of Community	UTEC is Accomplishing its Mission	Likely to Recommend UTEC to a Friend	Overall Rating of UTEC Experience	Sample
Age						
18	86%	86%	86%	86%	8.43	7
19	38%	50%	63%	88%	8.00	8
20	63%	100%	75%	88%	8.75	8
21	83%	67%	83%	67%	8.67	6
22	33%	100%	33%	67%	7.00	3
23	33%	100%	100%	100%	7.30	3
24	100%	100%	100%	100%	7.00	1
Gender						
Male	55%	79%	76%	79%	8.18	29
Female	86%	86%	71%	100%	8.29	7
Program						
TB	100%	50%	50%	50%	7.50	4
ADP	54%	77%	85%	100%	8.77	13
WFD						
WFD without a GED	62%	85%	69%	69%	8.00	13
WFD with a GED	50%	100%	100%	100%	7.80	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>8.20</b>	

**Table 11**  
**How Well Each Department Meets the Needs of Survey Respondents**

	WFD	GED	ADP	TC	Streetworker	Organizing	Drop In
Age							
18	75% (4)	75% (4)	60% (5)	100% (6)	100% (5)	50% (4)	100% (7)
19	67% (3)	25% (4)	80% (5)	40%	75% (4)	25% (4)	67% (6)
20	83% (3)	60% (5)	100% (6)	75% (5)	100% (7)	71% (7)	63% (8)
21	80% (5)	75% (4)	80% (5)	67% (6)	60% (5)	60% (5)	83% (6)
22	0% (2)	0% (2)	0% (1)	67% (3)	33% (3)	50% (2)	33% (3)
23	100% (3)	100% (3)	-	100% (3)	100% (3)	0% (3)	67% (3)
24	100% (1)	100% (1)	0% (1)	100% (1)	0% (3)	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>75% (21)</b>	<b>59% (23)</b>	<b>70% (23)</b>	<b>75% (32)</b>	<b>79% (28)</b>	<b>52% (25)</b>	<b>73% (33)</b>
Gender							
Male	75% (20)	56% (18)	63% (16)	73% (26)	74% (23)	55% (20)	69% (26)
Female	75% (4)	75% (4)	100% (4)	83% (6)	100% (5)	40% (5)	86% (7)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>67% (24)</b>	<b>59% (22)</b>	<b>70% (20)</b>	<b>75% (32)</b>	<b>79% (28)</b>	<b>52% (25)</b>	<b>73% (33)</b>
Program							
TB	33% (3)	33% (3)	-	50% (4)	33% (3)	100% (2)	67% (3)
ADP	-	-	85% (13)	82% (11)	88% (8)	78% (9)	92% (13)
WFD without a GED	77% (13)	54% (13)	-	67% (12)	83% (12)	33% (12)	62% (13)
WFD with a GED	80% (5)	67% (3)	-	100% (5)	80% (5)	0% (2)	50% (4)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>71% (21)</b>	<b>53% (19)</b>	<b>85% (13)</b>	<b>75% (32)</b>	<b>79% (28)</b>	<b>52% (25)</b>	<b>73% (33)</b>

\*\*Note: Numbers appearing within parentheses ( ) represent observations

**Age.** One hundred percent of eighteen-year-old respondents reported that the TC, Streetworkers, and Drop In departments met their needs. This is in contrast to the Organizing department that only 50% of respondents felt met the same standard. The Streetworker department consistently had one of the highest percentages of respondents feeling the program served them across all age groups except in the 22 and 24-year-old categories. No 22-year-old respondents reported that the WFD, GED or ADP departments met their needs.

The 22-year-old respondents gave consistently low responses to questions about perceived benefit. They were among the least likely to feel UTEC was helpful in forming friendships (33%), to feel that UTEC was accomplishing its mission (33%), to be likely to recommend UTEC to a friend (67%) and along with the 24-year-old respondent, gave the lowest rating of their overall experience at UTEC (7 out of 10).

“Hardcore,” “angry,” “wilder,” “negative,” and “mad” are all words interviewees used to describe their former selves before entering UTEC. Despite the lack of positive responses from 22-year-old survey participants, Interviewee 4, the 22-year-old, felt that UTEC did an excellent job at fostering a sense of community among its members. He said, “I wasn’t really respectful to a lot of people. I never used to greet people... At UTEC they treat you with respect and teach you how to give respect.”

**Gender.** The top two departments that served male survey respondents were WFD (75%) and Streetworkers (74%). The top two departments serving female respondents were ADP (100%) and Streetworkers (100%). The Organizing department was the least likely to have male or female respondents report that it was serving their needs (55% and 40%, respectively). More female respondents (100%) would recommend UTEC to a friend than male respondents (79%). Overall, males and females had a very similar rating of their entire experience at UTEC (8.18 and 8.29, respectively).

Interviewee 5, a female, was the only respondent who felt that UTEC was not helping her reach her goal of preparing for college. When asked if she would recommend UTEC to a friend, she responded, "Probably not. It's too easy. You don't really learn. If I go to college, I don't think I'm going to be ready." Another female interviewee, Interviewee 6, expressed that she felt she was "somewhat" on track to reaching her goals of having a good job, a car and a nice apartment. She said, "I feel like I'm on track, but I don't know... maybe I need help more." Despite these feelings, Interviewee 6 stated that she would and had recommended UTEC to friends.

**Program.** Survey respondents enrolled in TB were the least likely to report that the WFD department was meeting their needs (33%). Similarly, they were also the least likely to feel that the GED and TC departments were meeting their needs (33% and 50%, respectively). In

each of these departments, participants enrolled in WFD who had already received their GED were the most likely to respond that these programs met their needs.

One hundred percent of respondents enrolled in the TB program felt that UTEC had been helpful in forming friendships with other youth in the program while only 50% of respondents in WFD with a GED felt the same way. Conversely, 50% of TB respondents felt that UTEC supports a sense of community among its members, while 100% of respondents enrolled in WFD with a GED felt the same.

Students in the ADP department were most likely to respond that UTEC is accomplishing its mission (85%) followed by those respondents in WFD with a GED (83%), WFD without a GED (69%) and finally TB (50%). These responses are reflected in the overall ratings given to their experience at UTEC. ADP survey participants gave the highest average rating of 8.77, while TB respondents gave the lowest with 7.5 out of 10.

When asked about where she sees herself in five years, one interviewee enrolled in WFD that has already received her GED replied, "I'd be a police officer... I feel like with me having a say in things I can probably make a difference with youth." She says that UTEC has helped her realize her goals because, "before coming [to UTEC] I didn't know my passion. I didn't have goals. No dreams. Coming here and hearing everyone speak... they push you."

Participants enrolled in Culinary Arts were least report that UTEC had been helpful in forming friendships with other youth in the program (25%); however, they were the most likely crew to respond that UTEC supports a sense of community among its members (100%).

Interviewee 2, a member of the Culinary Arts crew, stated that his least favorite thing about UTEC was the lack of hours he is able to work. He expressed that he wished UTEC allowed more working hours so that he could make more money and move closer to reaching his goals of being financially stable and owning a car.

### **Summary of Findings**

Analyses revealed both common responses and differences between survey respondents and interview participants. Interviewees, in particular, spoke about strong, positive relationships and sense of support both between UTEC youth and between youth and staff members. Survey respondents were also likely to report that they had formed strong relationships with youth and staff at UTEC. Additionally, activity participation was high between both survey respondents and interview participants who identify as Hispanic. One major point of difference between survey and interview participants was responses to how often respondents turned to their TC for help. All interview participants reported to turn to their TC for help with personal problems; however, responses were generally low to the same question for survey respondents. Most survey and interview respondents reported to feel benefitted by UTEC.

## CHAPTER 6: DISUCSSION

This chapter discusses the survey and interview results within the context of the existing literature on PYD theory. This study found that youth at UTEC participate at relatively high levels in non-compulsory activities across all groups. Foundational to PYD theory, the length of time spent participating in activities represents an important contributing factor in determining successful youth outcomes (Borden et al., 2006; Anderson-Butcher, Newsome & Ferrari, 2003). However, Gould (1987) found that as youth get older, their level of participation decreases due to increased external responsibilities and peer pressure, among other factors. Contrary to this, participation does not appear to decline with age at UTEC. While participation did seem to decline somewhat for survey participants between the ages of 19 and 22, the 23 and 24-year old respondents participated in equal levels to 18-year-olds. The older interview participants were also more engaged in activities at UTEC than younger interviewees. Perhaps UTEC's array of activities that span various developmental stages help to fulfill youth needs as they progress through their development of needs. In this way, as a young person's needs are met at one stage, there is an activity available at UTEC that is able to fulfill the next level of need. To further support this hypothesis, the 23 and 24-year old interview participants both reported to be most involved in the Organizing department. This activity occupies a higher stage in youth development according to UTEC's program model.



Another possible explanation for the dip in active participation for 19-22 year olds and resurgence in activity for 23 year olds could be that around age 22, youth who were not active participators in UTEC's non-compulsory activities leave the program. This would bolster the percentage of active participation in the older age categories. If this is the case, Gould's (1987) argument that keeping youth involved in activities is increasingly difficult with age might be spot on. In comparing the population that UTEC served in 2014, 19-22 year olds comprise the largest age group. This could be an indicator that around age 22 youth are leaving the program.

Eccles and Barber (1999) described differences in the ways that boys and girls choose to participate in activities. However, this study found that boys and girls participated in activities at UTEC to relatively similar extents. Perhaps a clue to this finding could be that overall, interviewed and surveyed youth felt that UTEC supports a strong sense of community. The gender stereotyped activities (i.e., sports for boys, dance for girls, etc.) might be more amenable to all youth if they are feeling supported by their peers and programming staff.

Halpern, Barker and Mollard (2000) found in a case study that an important factor in participation for Latino youth was valuable relationships with program staff. This can prove useful to a program such as UTEC who serves a large number of Hispanic and other non-white youth.

One of the most interesting findings of this thesis regarded the relationship between trust, comfort level and their impact on utilization of staff members as resources during personal crisis. Across the entire survey sample and within each subgroup, comfort level with staff members was consistently reported to be high—often 100% of participants reported that they were comfortable with at least one staff member who was not their TC. Chung, Bemak and Talleyrand's (2007) proposition that racial and ethnic culture and values play a part in mentoring relationships may be helpful in understanding the apparent disconnect between trust, comfort and confidence level. They suggest that concepts of family and interpersonal relationships are strongly evident factors in Latino culture. Three quarters of youth interviewed (n=6) for this research reported that UTEC was "like a family" and six of these respondents identified as Hispanic. Additionally, Hispanic youth surveyed were most likely to report that they had a staff member that they trusted completely. These findings could suggest a connection between family-like relationships and Hispanic youth's perceptions of relationship quality at UTEC.

To varying degrees, all youth studied in both surveys and interviews agreed that they received some benefit from being enrolled in UTEC's programming. As noted by Dworkin, Larson and Hansen (2003), youth can and should be treated as experts in the subject of their own development. To this end, UTEC can measure some success by these results.

Surveyed youth enrolled in the TB program were often least likely to report that departments like WFD or GED were meeting their needs while they were most likely to report that UTEC had been helpful in building relationships with other youth. This could be easily explained by their having been enrolled at UTEC the least amount of time compared to other groups. Additionally, UTEC places a strong emphasis on relationship formation as youth enter the program in order to build a solid foundation from which to build developmental skills with youth.

### **Recommendations**

UTEC may be able to draw some implications from this study on ways to attain higher participation levels, form stronger relationships between youth and staff and youth and their peers, and promote a greater sense of perceived benefit. As is the obstacle with many case studies, specificity of the research at one site makes generalizability difficult. However, there are opportunities for research and exploration by UTEC or other PYD programs that could help further the data collected in this thesis. This section outlines some recommendations for UTEC to take advantage of these opportunities.

Due to a limited sample size, this study chose to combine all activities into one variable. However, an interesting area of research for UTEC might be to uncover in which specific activities youth chose to participate. This could help further differentiate *who* participates in which activities. While survey respondents reported relatively high levels of

participation across all groups, some groups were more active than others. Given that participation in youth development programs is associated with positive youth outcomes (Anderson-Butcher, Newsome & Ferrari, 2003), it would be important for UTEC to explore ways in which less active groups might become more involved. These groups included respondents who reported to last complete the 11<sup>th</sup> grade before enrolling at UTEC, Asian respondents and participants enrolled in the WFD who had not yet received their GEDs.

According to the youth involved in this study, UTEC has been successful at meeting its organizational mission. Of the youth interviewed, most felt that they had grown in a positive way since entering the program and understood that there was great benefit to them by being enrolled. When a program has this much perceived success it makes sense to continue to look for ways to expand the number of youth that can be served and how they can be served better. Borden et al. (2006) tells us that time spent in programming is an important indicator of youth achieving positive life outcomes. One interviewee expressed his frustration that he was limited in hours available to work and therefore was not earning enough money to fulfill all of his goals. It would be worthwhile for UTEC to explore ways to increase the amount of available work hours for youth in the most cost-effective manner for the organization. Ultimately, more hours worked by youth is also more hours they spend in contact with the program and more chances at improved outcomes

The data generated by this thesis research were interesting and informative, however, it might serve UTEC well to continue to utilize and refine the data collection tools in order to gather even more specific data. Additionally, replication of the research process used in the present study can help to produce more generalizable results that can be used to add more reliability to the data.

The only consistently low finding within this thesis was that despite high levels of trust and comfort, youth were not turning to UTEC staff or AmeriCorps for help with personal problems. Adding a youth-driven evaluation component aimed at this problem could prove extremely useful in boosting the utilization of UTEC personnel as resources for youth in their personal lives. Given that youth are experts in their own experience, it would be important for UTEC to find out from the source what exactly motivates youth to turn to staff members for help. Using staff members in this way would be helpful for UTEC because it would allow staff to gain new perspective into the lives of their clients and to better understand the obstacles they are facing. Understanding these obstacles is critical in developing programming that allows positive youth development to occur.

The interviews used for this study allowed interviewees to respond to questions as much or as little as they pleased. During this interview phase, it was clear to this researcher that many of the young people had strong, positive connections to their experience at UTEC. It is important for UTEC and other PYD programs to capitalize on this passion for the

program by young people and include them in programmatic change considerations. This is important not only to help the program become stronger and help more youth feel benefitted, but also as an opportunity for PYD to occur by promoting contribution, one of the Six Cs of PYD, among youth members.

### **Limitations**

This thesis was limited by the small sample size available in the UTEC participant population. Although surveys and interviews were gathered across multiple days, variation in attendance on a daily basis made gathering more data points difficult. In addition, one respondent skipped a large portion of the survey, further reducing the sample size of most questions.

The proportions of youth surveyed in the research do not parallel the target population at UTEC. Due to time and programmatic constraints, the survey was handed out to all available youth as opposed to carefully selecting the sampled pool to mirror the larger population. The WFD population is made up predominantly of male enrollees. The ADP program has more evenly matched numbers of male and female participants. However, far more youth were available to survey within the WFD population during the times the survey was being administered. For this reason, the sampled population has a disproportionately large amount of male respondents as opposed to female.

As stated before, the race and ethnicity subgroup categorization was adjusted to best represent the survey and interview populations' backgrounds. By creating a multi-racial category, or by creating specific race/ethnicity categories for each combination, the sample size became far too small to be able to have any meaningful discussion about their results. Therefore, each youth was included in every racial or ethnic category that they claimed to belong. The Asian survey participants were the only group that was racially homogenous; however due to the limited interview methods, no Asian youth were interviewed. While there were some interesting findings by categorizing youth in this way, no true results could be reported by race/ethnicity categorization because there were no groups comparable to one another.

Another subcategorized group analysis that was limited due to survey question confusion, was the level of grade completion reported by respondents. The survey question asked respondents to state the last grade they *completed* before leaving school and enrolling at UTEC. Six survey participants responded that they last completed the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. However, one of the requirements to be included within the target population—and to participate in UTEC's designated programs—is to not have completed high school. This means that none of the respondents should have reported that they last completed the 12<sup>th</sup> grade or they would not be enrolled at UTEC. This could be the result of a general misunderstanding of the question, or alternatively to social desirability

bias—the tendency to give a more socially desirable answer when asked a question that could be interpreted in more than one way (Arnold & Feldman, 1981). Due to this miscommunication, subcategorizing youth by grade completion could not be used to report any real findings within the survey results.

Additionally, because interviewees were first nominated by their TCs and teachers to engage in this research, the interview results may suffer from selection bias. During the course of the interviews, it was clear that the majority of the interviewees had some element of rehearsed responses, which is not surprising since these participants were selected for interview by program staff. Unfortunately, incentives were not able to be provided through the organization or by the thesis monetarily or in-kind. Access to the young people was also limited due to time constraints, program structure and distance. Due to the voluntary nature of the interviews, this self-selection problem was difficult to avoid.



## CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

This thesis focused on three main research questions: (1) who participates in non-compulsory activities and to what extent do they participate?; (2) to what extent do participants report that they have formed quality relationships with UTEC staff, AmeriCorps and with their peers and how does this vary across subgroups?; and (3) what aspects of PYD programming are participants reporting to be the most beneficial and how do these perceptions vary across subgroups? These questions are all closely intertwined to begin to tell a story of perceived effectiveness at the case site. Reported participation and reported formation and quality of relationships are, in fact, measures of perceived benefit (Anderston-Butcher, Newsome & Ferrari, 2003; Halpern, Barker & Mollard, 2000).

Overall, UTEC was found to have overall high levels of active participation in their activities. However, based on the frequencies recorded in this thesis, it did not appear that participation was equal within some subgroups. This is a good indicator for UTEC about the success of their planned activities and an encouraging finding as they continue to grow their program. Relationship quality and formation was strong across all of the subgroups surveyed and interviewed in this thesis. These foundational relationships may prove to be an important breeding ground for successful programmatic outcomes. Finally, youth interviewed and surveyed for this thesis perceived high levels of benefit across the board by participating in UTEC programming. However, this perceived benefit

did not translate directly into utilization of staff and AmeriCorps members for help with personal problems.

Present research on perceived effectiveness within a PYD program is scarce and studies such as the one conducted for this thesis are important elements in guiding the refinement of UTEC programs. Tier Three of the FTA expounds on the importance of programs to account for customer satisfaction as they seek to improve upon their own performance standards (Jacobs, 2003).

As producers of their own development, youth have a wide variety of opinions, suggestions and ideas to help improve their own outcomes and those of their peers. It would be important for UTEC, or any other PYD program, to continue to engage young people in discussions about what is working for them within the program and what is not. In this way, programs can help to hone in on what aspects of their programming to focus their attentions, what factors are important to young people and ultimately, what can help improve upon their existing program model.

## APPENDIX A

### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Krysti Turnquest

**CONTACT DETAILS:**

Tufts University  
c/o Krysti Turnquest  
97 Talbot Avenue  
Medford, MA 02115

Tel: (281) 635-9199

Email: [krysti.turnquest@tufts.edu](mailto:krysti.turnquest@tufts.edu)

***What is this study about?*** I am a graduate student at Tufts University and I am writing my master's thesis. I want to understand how youth at UTEC feel that they benefit from UTEC's programming.

***What will you do in the study?*** First, surveys will be passed out to you during Workforce Circle if you are in Workforce or during Common Block if you are in ADP. If you refuse to do the survey, it will not affect anything having to do with you, or your relationship to UTEC. There is no penalty for not participating. In the survey, I will ask you questions about your thoughts and feelings on UTEC. You will be encouraged to give your honest opinions. Surveys will likely take less than 30 minutes.

***How will my privacy be protected?*** You will not be asked to put your name on this survey so all of your responses will remain confidential. I will not be sharing your name or any identifying information about you or your responses. No one employed by UTEC will see your responses. The responses you give in the survey may be included in my thesis. Once this thesis process is complete, The Internal Review Board (IRB) at Tufts University, which makes sure this research is safe for you to participate in, requires that I keep your responses for three years in a locked place. After that time, I will destroy the data.

***Could anything bad happen to me?*** Nothing bad will happen if you decide you do not want to participate in the survey. Saying no will not affect your time at UTEC at all. Also, if you do want to participate in the survey, there are no right or wrong answers that will affect services provided to you. There may be some questions that you think are hard or you do not want to answer. This is okay. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to. Also, if you begin the survey and you decide you would like to stop, you can do so at any time. Choosing to stop the survey is perfectly fine and will not affect services provided to you at UTEC.

## APPENDIX A

***Do I get anything from the project?*** You will not get anything for participating in the survey. However, by participating, you can help me learn how programming at UTEC and other youth organizations can better serve youth like yourself.

***What should I do if I have questions?*** If you have any questions about this study or the survey, you or anyone concerned with your well being may contact me. My email address is [krysti.turnquest@tufts.edu](mailto:krysti.turnquest@tufts.edu). Also, if you or someone at home or UTEC has questions about your rights in helping out in this study, you can call Lara Sloboda at the IRB Office at (617) 627-3417 or email her at [lara.sloboda@tufts.edu](mailto:lara.sloboda@tufts.edu).

**SIGNATURE:** I understand what this research is about and what I am asked to do if I decide I want to participate in the survey. I know that I can ask any questions that I have at any time. I also understand that I can stop participating at any time that I want. I am signing my name below after I have been read information about the study and have agreed to be a participant.

---

Participant Signature

Date

---

Printed Name of Participant

---

Researcher Signature

Date

---

Printed Name of Researcher

## APPENDIX A

### United Teen Equality Center: Youth Participant Survey

*Thanks for helping us out with this survey. It is important to learn what you think about UTEC programming. Remember that the information you provide is confidential, which means that every effort will be made to ensure your answers are seen only by the researchers. If you don't want to answer a particular questions, that's fine. Just go ahead to the next one. Thanks again!*

#### Section 1: About You

*In this section, we would like to know a bit about who you are and which UTEC programs you use.*

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Gender? *Please select one.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Male

\_\_\_\_\_ Female

\_\_\_\_\_ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your race/ethnicity? *Please select all that apply.*

\_\_\_\_\_ White

\_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic or Latino

\_\_\_\_\_ Black or African American

\_\_\_\_\_ Native American or American Indian

\_\_\_\_\_ Asian or Pacific Islander

\_\_\_\_\_ Other, please specify:

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Think back to when you first entered UTEC. What was the last grade that you completed in any school before you came to UTEC? *Please select one.*

\_\_\_\_\_ 8<sup>th</sup> grade or less

\_\_\_\_\_ 9<sup>th</sup> grade

\_\_\_\_\_ 10<sup>th</sup> grade

\_\_\_\_\_ 11<sup>th</sup> grade

\_\_\_\_\_ 12<sup>th</sup> grade

## APPENDIX A

5. Please indicate what program you are enrolled in at UTEC. *Please select one.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Workforce Development (WFD) and graduated from high school

\_\_\_\_\_ Workforce Development (WFD) and

\_\_\_\_\_ Workforce Development (WFD) and working toward GED

\_\_\_\_\_ Alternative Diploma Program (ADP)

6. If you are in Workforce Development, which work crew have you spent the majority of your time at UTEC? *If you are not in WFD, go directly to question 7.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Mattress recycling

\_\_\_\_\_ Furniture design

\_\_\_\_\_ Culinary

## APPENDIX A

### Section 2: UTEC Activities

Now we would like some more information about the specific activities you choose in which you participate.

7. Sometimes you are required to participate in certain activities at UTEC. Sometimes you choose to do them on your own. In the last month, how many times would you say you participated in these activities at UTEC and were NOT required to do so? *Please check one box for each activity.*

	Never	Less than once a week	Once or twice a week	Three or four times a week
<b>Met with any UTEC staff member other than your TC</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Sports</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Fine Arts (poetry, art, etc.)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Dance Class or Breakdance</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>UTEC and Community Events</b> (Ex: Take Back the Night, Candidate's Forum, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Organizing</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Talking Circles</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Community Council</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>YOP Trip</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## APPENDIX A

### Section 3: Quality of UTEC Experience

Now we'd like to know whether you think that UTEC has helped you in a number of parts of your daily life.

Please choose the answer that you feel is most appropriate by checking "YES" or "NO" in the box next to your choice. Please only select one answer per question.

	YES	NO
8. Have you formed at least one NEW friendship with another youth at UTEC since starting here?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Do you have at least one staff member at UTEC that you trust completely?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Check the box that seems most appropriate.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
10. I get along very well with other UTEC youth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. UTEC has been helpful in forming friendships with other youth in the program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. I am very comfortable interacting with at least one UTEC staff that is not my teacher, TC or program manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## APPENDIX A

*For the next set of responses, please mark an "X" in the space next to your answer for each question.*

13. When you are having a personal problem, how often do you go to your TC for help?

- Almost always
- Frequently
- Sometimes
- Hardly ever
- Never
- Haven't had a personal problem

14. When you are having a personal problem, how often do you go to OTHER UTEC staff (NOT your TC) for help?

- Almost always
- Frequently
- Sometimes
- Hardly ever
- Never
- Haven't had a personal problem

15. How well do you feel that UTEC supports a sense of community among its members?

- Very poorly
- Poorly
- Average
- Well
- Very well

### Section 4: Benefits of UTEC

*One of the reasons you may participate at UTEC is to help you reach your goals. This section asks you about these goals.*

16. What is the biggest goal you hope to accomplish in the **next year**?

---

---

## APPENDIX A

17. What are the biggest goals you hope to accomplish in the **next FIVE years**?

---

---

18. Now think about your short-term goals. How confident are you that you can reach these goals?

- Not at all confident
- Somewhat not confident
- Fairly confident
- Somewhat confident
- Very confident

19. Now think about your long-term goals. How confident are you that you can reach these goals?

- Not at all confident
- Somewhat not confident
- Fairly confident
- Somewhat confident
- Very confident

20. Please take a moment to read UTEC's mission statement:

*UTEC's promise is to ignite and nurture the ambition of the most disconnected young people to trade violence and poverty for social and economic success.*

After reading this statement, how well do you think UTEC is accomplishing this mission?

- Very poorly
- Poorly
- Average
- Well
- Very well

**APPENDIX A**

21. For each of the following programs, please indicate how well you feel that that program meets your needs by **checking the** corresponding box. If you are not enrolled in a particular program, please mark “Not Enrolled” for that program.

	Very Poorly	Poorly	Average	Well	Very Well	Not Enrolled
<b>Workforce Development</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>GED Class</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>ADP</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TC Department</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Streetworker Department</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Organizing Department</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Drop-In &amp; Afternoon Activities</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

22. Please list in order of importance the top three reasons you attend UTEC programming: *You may continue your answer on the back of this page if you need more space.*

(1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

(3) \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX A**

23. How likely would you be to recommend UTEC to your friends and family members who qualify for membership?

- Not at all likely
- Somewhat likely
- Likely
- Very likely

24. On a scale of 1-10 with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, how would you rate your overall experience at UTEC thus far?

*Please circle one.*

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

*Thank you for participating in this survey. Your time is greatly appreciated and you are really helping out my research! The following last questions are completely optional.*

Do you have any suggestions for how UTEC could be improved for you?

---

---

---

---

---

---

Do you have any final comments you would like to leave for me? Is there anything else you want to say? This space is for you to do that:

---

---

---

---

---

---

**THANK YOU!**

## APPENDIX B

### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Krysti Turnquest

**CONTACT DETAILS:**

Tufts University  
c/o Krysti Turnquest  
97 Talbot Avenue  
Medford, MA 02115

Tel: (281) 635-9199

Email: [krysti.turnquest@tufts.edu](mailto:krysti.turnquest@tufts.edu)

***What is this study about?*** I am a graduate student at Tufts University and I am writing my master's thesis. I want to understand how youth at UTEC feel that they benefit from UTEC's programming.

***What will you do in the study?*** First, I will ask you to participate in a one-on-one interview with me. If you refuse to do the interview, it will not affect anything having to do with you, or your relationship to UTEC. There is no penalty for not participating. In the interview, I will ask you questions about your thoughts and feelings on UTEC. You will be encouraged to give your honest opinions. Interviews will last up to 30 minutes.

***How will my privacy be protected?*** This interview will be confidential between you and me. I will not be sharing your name or any identifying information about you or your responses. The interview may be audio recorded for my own benefit if you give me permission. The recording will ensure that I hear every part of your answer and accurately transcribe your responses. No one employed by UTEC will see or hear your responses. The responses you give in the interview may be included in my thesis, however, all names will be changed to protect your identity. Once this thesis process is complete, The Internal Review Board (IRB) at Tufts University, which makes sure this research is safe for you to participate in, requires that I keep your responses and the audio recordings for three years in a locked place. After that time, I will destroy the data.

***Could anything bad happen to me?*** Nothing bad will happen if you decide you do not want to participate in the interview. Saying no will not affect your time at UTEC at all. Also, if you do want to participate in the interview, there are no right or wrong answers that will affect services provided to you. There may be some questions that you think are hard or you do not want to answer. This is okay. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to. Also, if we begin the interview and you decide you would like to stop, you can do so at any time. Choosing to stop

## APPENDIX B

the interview is perfectly fine and will not affect services provided to you at UTEC.

***Do I get anything from the project?*** You will not get anything for participating in the interview. However, by participating, you can help me learn how programming at UTEC and other youth organizations can better serve youth like yourself.

***What should I do if I have questions?*** If you have any questions about this study or the interview, either you or someone at home or UTEC can contact me. My email address is [krysti.turnquest@tufts.edu](mailto:krysti.turnquest@tufts.edu). Also, if you or someone at home or UTEC has questions about your rights in helping out in this study, you can call Lara Sloboda at the IRB Office at (617) 627-3417 or email her at [lara.sloboda@tufts.edu](mailto:lara.sloboda@tufts.edu).

**SIGNATURE:** I understand what this research is about and what I am asked to do if I decide I want to participate in the interview. I know that I can ask any questions that I have at any time. I also understand that I can stop participating at any time that I want. I am signing my name below after I have been read information about the study and have agreed to be a participant.

- This interview may be audio recorded
- This interview may NOT be audio recorded

---

Participant Signature

Date

---

Printed Name of Participant

---

Researcher Signature

Date

---

Printed Name of Researcher

## APPENDIX B

### KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. Demographics are categories that are used to classify people into various groups. For example, race is one demographic characteristic. There are other kinds of classifications that we can use to group people that are not demographic. For example, “BBoys” at UTEC can be used to describe a particular group.

What group(s) would you say that you are a part of?

2. How long have you been enrolled at UTEC?
  - How did you find out about UTEC?
3. What activities or programs are you involved in at UTEC?
4. Tell me about your time at UTEC. Would you say it has been overall positive? Overall negative? About 50/50?
5. Tell me about a time when you felt supported at UTEC by either a staff or AmeriCorps member or by other youth.
6. Tell me about your future goals. Where do you see yourself one year from now? In 5 years?
  - Do you feel like you’re on track to reaching those goals?
  - Do you think UTEC is helping you reach those goals? How?
  - What do you think will be some challenges you will face in trying to reach those goals?
  - Can UTEC help you overcome any of these setbacks?
7. Have you faced any personal challenges since you’ve enrolled at UTEC? You do not have to be specific if you do not want to be.
  - How did you move past those challenges?
  - Did UTEC help you face those challenges? If so, describe how.
8. Describe your relationship with other youth at UTEC.
  - Would you say you spend most of your down time here with people in the same program as you?

## APPENDIX B

- Did you know many other enrolled youth before joining UTEC?
9. Why do you come to UTEC?
10. Think back to when you first started at UTEC. Do you think you're generally the same as a person?
- How so?
  - If no to Q10, has UTEC had anything to do with this change?
11. Think about a typical day at UTEC. How often would you say someone gives you praise?
- When someone does praise you, what kinds of things is it usually for?
  - Does this praise matter to you?
12. Would you recommend UTEC to a friend?
- If you had to tell someone the top 3 most important things they should know before starting at UTEC, what would they be?
13. Do you feel like most of the youth at UTEC have an experience pretty similar to yours?
- How so?
14. What is your least favorite thing about UTEC?
15. What is the best thing about UTEC?



## References

- Acre, C. (1981). A reconsideration of Chicano culture and identity. *Daedalus*, 110(2), 177-192.
- Ainsworth, M.D., Blehar, M.C., Waters, E., Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the strange situation*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Anderson-Butcher, D., Newsome, W.S., & Ferrari, T.M. (2003). Participation in Boys and Girls Clubs and relationship to youth outcomes. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 31(1), 39-55.
- Arnold, H. J., & Feldman, D. C. (1981). Social desirability response bias in self-report choice situations. *Academy of Management Journal*, 24(2), 377-385.
- Arthur, M.W., Hawkins, J.D., Pollard, J., Catalano, R.F., Baglioni, A.J. (2002). Measuring risk and protective factors for substance use, delinquency, and other adolescent behaviors: The communities that care youth survey, *Evaluation Review*, 26(6), 575-601.
- Atkinson, D., Morten, G., & Sue, D. (1983). *Counseling American minorities*. Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown.
- Bloom, D., Thompson, S. L., & Ivry, R. (2010). *Building a learning agenda around disconnected youth*. MDRC. MDRC.
- Borden, L. M., Perkins, D. F., Villaruel, F. A., Carleton-Hug, A.,

- Stone, M. R., & Keith, J. G. (2006). Challenges and opportunities to Latino youth development: Increasing meaningful participation in youth development programs. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 28*(2), 187-208.
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss, Vol. 1: Attachment*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Boyce, C. & Neale, P. (2006). *Conducting in-depth interviews: A guide for designing and conducting in-depth interviews for evaluation input*. Watertown, MA: Pathfinder International.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychologist, 32* (7), 513-531.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2013). *Employment and Unemployment Among Youth- Summer 2013*. Retrieved January 26, 2014, from Bureau of Labor Statistics:  
<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/youth.pdf>.
- Butts, J., Mayer, S., & Ruth, G. (2005). *Focusing juvenile justice on positive youth development*. Chicago: Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago.
- Catalano, R. F., Berglund, M. L., Ryan, J. A., Lonczak, H. S., & Hawkins, J. D. (2002). Positive youth development in the United States: research findings on evaluations of positive youth development programs. *Prevention & Treatment, 5*(1),

15a.

Cauce, A. M., & Gonzales, N. (1993). Slouching towards culturally competent research: Adolescents and families of color in context. *Focus*, 7, 8-9.

Chung, R. C. Y., Bemak, F., & Talleyrand, R. M. (2007). Mentoring within the field of counseling: A preliminary study of multicultural perspectives. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 29(1), 21-32.

Cowley, S., & Billings, J. R. (1999). Resources revisited: Salutogenesis from a lay perspective. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 29, 994-1004.

Crime and Justice Institute. (2006). *Interventions for high-risk youth: Applying evidence-based theory and practice to the work of Roca*. Crime and Justice Institute. Boston: Crime and Justice Institute.

Cross, W. (1978). The Thomas and Cross models of psychological nigrescence: A literature review. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 4, 13-31.

Dworkin, J.B., Larson, R., & Hansen, D. (2003). Adolescents' accounts of growth experiences in youth activities. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, (32)1, 17-26.

Eccles, J.S., & Barber, B.L. (1999). Student council, volunteering, basketball, or marching band: what kind of extracurricular

involvement matters? *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 14, 10-43.

Edwards, O.W., Mumford, E.W., Serra-Roldan, R. (2007). A positive youth development model for students considered at-risk. *School Psychology International*, 28(1), 29-45.

Egley Jr, A., & Howell, J. C. (2013). Highlights of the 2011 National Youth Gang Survey. *Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention*. Retrieved from <http://www.ojjdp.gov/pubs/242884.pdf>.

Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and Crisis*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative inquiry*, 12(2), 219-245.

Gould, D. (1987). Understanding attrition in youth sport: In D. Gould & M.R. Weiss (Eds.), *Advances in pediatric sport sciences*, vol. 2: Behavioral issues (pp. 61-85). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Halpern, R., Barker, G., & Mollard, W. (2000). Youth programs as alternative spaces to be: A study of neighborhood youth programs in Chicago's West town. *Youth and Society*, 31, 469-506.

Hertzog, M. A. (2008). Considerations in determining sample size for pilot studies. *Research in nursing & health*, 31(2), 180-

191.

Jacobs, F. H. (1988). The five-tiered approach to evaluation: Context and implementation. *Evaluating family programs*, 37-68.

Jacobs, F. H. (2003). Child and family program evaluation: Learning to enjoy complexity. *Applied developmental science*, 7(2), 62-75.

Jacobs, F., & Kapuscik, J. (2000). Making it count: Evaluating family preservation services. Medford, MA: Family Preservation Evaluation Project, Department of Child Development, Tufts University.

Kim, J. (1981). *The process of Asian-American identity development: A study of Japanese American women's perceptions of their struggle to achieve positive identities*. Doctor dissertation, University of Massachusetts.

Kraft, N., & Wheeler, J. (2003). Service-learning and resilience in disaffected youth: A research study. *Advances in service-learning research*, 3, 213-238.

Krate, R., Leventhal, G., & Silverstein, B. (1974). Self-perceived transformation of Negro-to-Black identity. *Psychology Reports*, 35, 1071-1075.

Lerner, R.M. (1998). Developmental Contextualism. In G. Greenberg & M. H. Haraway (Eds.), *Comparative*

- Psychology: A Handbook*. New York, NY, 88-97.
- Lerner, R. M., Almerigi, J. B., Theokas, C., & Lerner, J. V. (2005a). Positive youth development: A view of the issues. *Journal of early adolescence*, 25(1), 10-16.
- Lerner, R. M., Lerner, J. V., Almerigi, J. B., Theokas, C., Phelps, E., Gestsdottir, S., ... & von Eye, A. (2005b). Positive Youth Development, participation in community youth development programs, and community contributions of fifth-grade adolescents: Findings from the first wave of the 4-H study of Positive Youth Development. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 25(1), 17-71.
- Maldonado, D. Jr. (1975). Ethnic self-identity and self-understanding. *Social Casework*, 56, 618-622.
- Marcia, J. (1980). Identity in adolescence. In J. Adelson (Ed.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology*, New York: Wiley, 159-187.
- Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological review*, 50(4), 370.
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. (2012). *Juvenile arrest rate trends*. Washington, DC: OJJDP Statistical Briefing Book.
- Olds, D., Kitzman, H., Cole, R., & Robinson, J. (1997). Theoretical foundation of a program of home visitation for pregnant women and parents of young children. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 25, 9-25.

- Perkins, D.F., Borden, L.M. (2006). Youth development and sports.  
In F.A. Villarruel & T. Luster (Eds.), *Crisis in mental health: Critical issues and effective programs: Vol. 2: Issues during adolescence*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- Phinney, J.S. (1989). Stages of ethnic identity development in minority group adolescents. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 9(1-2), 34-49.
- Putnam, R. D. (1995). Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. *Journal of Democracy* , 6 (1), 65-78.
- Rhodes, J. E., Spencer, R., Keller, T.E., Liang, B., & Noam, G. (2006). A model for the influence of mentoring relationships on youth development. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 34(6), 691-707.
- Rogoff, B. (2003). *The Cultural Nature of Human Development*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, Inc.
- Rolf, J. E. (1999). Resilience: An interview with Norman Garmezy. In M. D. Glantz & J. L. Johnson (Eds.), *Resilience and Development: Positive Life Adaptations* (pp.5-14). New York, NY: Kluwer Academic/Plenum.
- Roth, J. L., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2003). What exactly is a youth development program? Answers from research and practice. *Applied Developmental Science*, 7, 94-111.
- Scales, P.C., Benson, P.L., & Mannes, M. (2006). The contribution

- to adolescent well-being made by non-family adults: An examination of developmental assets as contexts and processes. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 34, 410-413.
- Schultz, T. W. (1961). Investment in human capital. *The American Economic Review*, 51 (1), 1-17.
- Schwartz, R. G. (2001). Juvenile justice and positive youth development. In *Trends in Youth Development* (pp. 231-267). Springer US.
- Sen, A. (1995). Rationality and social choice. *The American Economic Review*, 85(1), 1-24.
- Ungar, M. (2004). A constructionist discourse on resiliency: Multiple contexts, multiple realities among at-risk children and youth. *Youth & Society*, 35(3), 341-365.
- U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2013). *The condition of education 2013, Status dropout rates*. Retrieved January 26, 2014, from National Center for Education Statistics:  
<https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=16>;
- United Teen Equality Center. (2015). *2014 Outcomes and Impact Snapshot*. Lowell: UTEC.
- United Teen Equality Center. (2012). *Prospectus 2012*. Lowell: UTEC.
- Waters, E., Wippman, J., & Sroufe, A. (1979). Attachment, positive



affect, and competence in the peer group: Two studies in construct validation. *Child Development*, 50(3), 821-829.

Weiss, C. H. (1998). *Evaluation: Methods for studying programs and policies*. Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Yin, R. K. (2013). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Sage publications.