A Qualitative Investigation of the Creation and Use of Social Capital among Street Children in Bucharest, Romania

Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation documents the creation and use of social capital among 282 street children in Romania. Their social capital enabled them to meet their needs and face many challenges of street life. Historically, research on child welfare in Romania has focused on institutionalized children, foster care and adoption; street children are an understudied group. The research into the lives of Romanian street children that had been conducted was facilitated by large international or governmental organizations and was descriptive in nature. A lack of empirical knowledge on the lives of this vulnerable group leaves policy makers and practitioners without a clear foundation from which to base their work. Most social capital research on children has conceptualized their social capital as embedded in families and parents’ ability to invest in their children’s well-being or future; my research focused on children as actors who create social capital. How street children accessed and used resources embedded in social networks and how they maintained social capital as a collective resource explored the agency of children in the creation and use of social capital and provided insights important for the development of more appropriate policies and intervention strategies geared to this population.

Fieldwork relied on qualitative research methodologies, including participant observation on the streets of Bucharest and in-depth interviews over a 10-month period. Sixteen individual and four group semi-structured interviews were conducted.
(N=28). The individual interviews allowed for the exploration of personal stories and individual strategies, while group interviews were important for gaining access to collective representations. A stratified purposeful sampling strategy was utilized in soliciting interview respondents.

Research findings demonstrate that, to varying degrees and in varying ways, street children do create and use informal networks that build opportunities for survival. Some youth formed and lived in groups leading to strong bonding social capital, affording those within the group access to a range of benefits. Furthermore, some youth were able to create robust networks of association with their formal and informal environments (bridging social capital), associations that could be leveraged to meet critical needs and open doors for opportunities. Other youth were unable to create bonding and bridging capital; their positions of exclusion left them challenged to meet basic needs and vulnerable to exploitation. These findings are significant not only for understanding how and under what circumstances children create and leverage social capital, but also highlight a need to rethink social capital theories in light of research on children.
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to:

- The remarkable street children of Bucharest, Romania
  
  You are all-inspiring. Through your lives you taught me so much about courage, strength and resilience.

- My extraordinary parents, Claude and Janet Nicholas
  
  You brought the world to me as a child and ignited in me a curiosity and love for faraway places and people. You are models of God’s love, personal sacrifice and hospitality.

In loving memory of:

- My beloved grandparents, Palmer and Lucille Severance - - Papa and Geegee
  
  You enabled me to pursue my passions. Your love for the Lord, compassion for others and dedication to family were unmatched.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Not to us, oh LORD… to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.

Psalms 115:1

His compassions fail not, they are new every morning: great is Thy faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:22, 23

I first want to acknowledge God’s goodness and provision throughout this project. This dissertation and all those who contributed to it is a great testament to His unfailing love and faithfulness in my life.

This research endeavor has been my mission far more than just an academic requirement for a doctoral degree. As with any meaningful mission, it takes a collective effort of people who believe deeply in it to bring it to pass. This dissertation is truly the product of a group of gifted and compassionate people. I greatly appreciate everyone -- friends, colleagues, advisors, mentors and family members -- who worked with me and walked beside throughout this project. I have been exceedingly fortunate to be supported by such amazing people.

To my committee: I sincerely appreciate each of you for working patiently and diligently with me as I completed this project. I will be forever grateful for your leadership, expertise, wisdom and encouragement! Dr. Theresa Early, thank you for stepping in and stepping up. I deeply appreciate your willingness to join my committee.
as my advisor mid-stream. Your patience, listening ear and persistence in bringing this project to fruition were invaluable! I wish to express my deep appreciation to Dr. Maria Julia for igniting in me a passion for international social work. Thank you for being such a wonderful example of a compassionate scholar! Your real-time guidance and support on the ground in Romania forever left its fingerprints on me and this project. Dr. Cathy Rakowski I thank you for all the time you invested in me. Your personal and professional insight, confidence in my abilities and willingness to push my intellect were instrumental; your influence took my dissertation to the next level. I am extremely fortunate to have been able to share ideas and work with you on this project! Finally, I wish to thank Dr. Denise Bronson for your willingness to join my committee in the final stretch. You are a true champion of student success! I have been so blessed to know and work with each of you. As a collective group, your wisdom is only exceeded by your compassion and commitment.

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To the street children: This manuscript would not exist without the assistance of the young people living on the streets of Bucharest. To you, the co-researchers of this study, I wish to express my deep admiration for and appreciation of you. Thank you for allowing me to bear witness to your lives; thank you for allowing me to listen to your stories. I feel blessed and honored by our time together.

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appreciation to my extended family. My aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents have
been true champions of prayer and encouragement. I am very fortunate to have such a
wonderful heritage -- the sky has no limits when one is the recipient of unconditional love such as I have received. I am so blessed. I love and appreciate each of you!
VITA

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Nicholas, B. & Wright, R. (2010). “If my hand hurts, he feels my pain too”: Attachment
states of mind and conceptualizations of friendship among street children in

Fields of Study

Major Field: Social Work
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract ......................................................................................................................... ii
Dedication ....................................................................................................................... iv
Acknowledgements ......................................................................................................... v
Vita ................................................................................................................................. x
List of Tables ................................................................................................................. xviii
List of Figures ................................................................................................................. xx
Acronyms ......................................................................................................................... xxi

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION
The beginning of a journey .............................................................................................. 1
Emergence of the Street Youth Population ................................................................... 3
Purpose of the Study ......................................................................................................... 7
Research Questions ......................................................................................................... 11
Significance of the Research ......................................................................................... 12
Dissertation Overview .................................................................................................... 14
A Final Word .................................................................................................................... 15

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW
Exploring social capital theory and framing the Inquiry ............................................. 17
History of an Idea ............................................................................................................. 20
Social Capital Theory in Contemporary Thought and Usage ..................................... 22
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Research Site</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Research Team</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Research Participants</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Considerations</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaining Access</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection Strategies</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Observation</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Depth Conversations</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exiting the Field</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis Strategies</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale for the use of Grounded Theory Techniques</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of Theory throughout the Inquiry</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing the Data</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHAPTER 4: DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS**

*Who are the street children in Bucharest Romania?* .......... 165

The Demographic Landscape of Bucharest’s Street Children .......... 168

Pathways to the Street ............................................. 177

Life on the Streets .................................................. 182

Health Concerns ...................................................... 182

Violence ............................................................... 186

Substance Use ........................................................ 193

Criminality ............................................................ 198

Coping Strategies ................................................... 202

Recreation ............................................................. 207
### Resource Generating Activities

Transition to Theoretical Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHAPTER 5: INTERPRETIVE ANALYSIS**

*The creation and use of social capital: The role of the group*..... 227

The Emergence of Typologies

Setting Dimension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Formation Dimension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Substance Dimension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Integrated Discussion Related to Social Capital Theory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Capital</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Bonding Social Capital - Typologies B and C</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Bonding Social Capital - Typology D</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Different Kind of Capital - Typology A</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Creating and Leveraging Relationships beyond the Group .......................... 351

CHAPTER 6:  INTERPRETIVE ANALYSIS

The creation and use of social capital: Connecting to the informal and formal environments .......................... 353

The Broader Network Web in which Street Children Operate ................... 355

Creating and Leveraging Relationships in the Informal and Formal Environments .......................................................... 359

Typology A ............................................................... 359
Typology B ............................................................... 385
Typology C ............................................................... 410
Typology D ............................................................... 430

Integrated Discussion of Social Capital Theory .................................. 458

Strong Bridges to Broad Networks - Typologies A and C ...................... 459
Limited Bridges with Diminished Returns - Typology B ....................... 468
The Socially Excluded - Typology D ........................................... 475

The Potential Difference Makers ................................................... 485

Network Size Mattered ...................................................... 487
Upper Reachability Mattered ................................................... 489
Other Forms of Capital Mattered ................................................. 490
Other Factors Potentially Mattered .............................................. 494

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Creating bonds and building bridges: Study implications, limitations, areas for future investigation and reflexive comments ................................................. 498

Theoretical Implications of the Study .............................................. 501

Children Have Agency .......................................................... 502

xv
Bonding - Bridging Network Ties.......................................................... 504
The Bonding-Bridging Debate and Role of Linking Capital ............... 512
Binding Network Ties ........................................................................ 514
Convertibility: The Interactions of Capitals ....................................... 519
Practice and Policy Implications of the Study ...................................... 525
Action Needed to Strengthen and Support Families and Communities .... 525
Action Needed to Address Unmet Needs ............................................. 527
Action Needed to Address the Macro Context ................................. 534
Implications for the Social Work Profession ........................................ 545
Social Work Practice ........................................................................ 545
Social Work Education ..................................................................... 548
Limitations of the Study ................................................................... 550
Sampling and the Generalizability of Findings ..................................... 550
Under-representation of Female Voices ............................................. 552
Lack of Systematic Information from the Informal and Formal Environments .................................................................................. 553
Limited Access to Youth from Typology A ......................................... 553
Use of Translator ............................................................................. 555
Suggestions for Future Research ......................................................... 556
Life Trajectory of Females on the Street ............................................. 557
Dynamics of Binding Social Capital ................................................... 558
Influence of Background Factors as Precursors to Social Capital ........ 559
Perspectives from the Informal and Formal Environments .................. 559
Reflexive Comments - Lessons from the Process ............................... 560

xvi
Pragmatically Messy ................................................................. 560
Emotionally Messy ................................................................. 564
Analytically Messy ................................................................. 568

Bibliography ............................................................................. 573
Appendix A: Coleman Inspired Research ....................................... 604
Appendix B: Agreement to Maintain Confidentiality - Translator .......... 626
Appendix C: Agreement to Maintain Confidentiality - Transcriber .......... 628
Appendix D: Informed Consent Witness Form - Interviews ..................... 630
Appendix E: Oral Script - English Version ....................................... 632
Appendix F: Oral Script - Romanian Version ..................................... 637
Appendix G: Excerpt from Field Notes/Reflective Journal ....................... 641
Appendix H: Interview Schedule .................................................. 660
Appendix I: Codes and Descriptions ............................................. 663
Appendix J: Typology Dimensions ................................................. 672
Appendix K: Cast of Participants by Typology ................................... 675
Appendix L: Material Resources by Typology .................................... 682
Appendix M: Foundations Mentioned by Youth during In-depth Conversations .... 685
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 2.1</td>
<td>Historical Roots of Social Capital in Classical Sociological Traditions</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2.2</td>
<td>Indicators Included by Coleman as Measures of Social Capital</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2.3</td>
<td>Patterns of Interaction in Response to Pro-social and Antisocial Youth Behavior</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2.4</td>
<td>Proposed Heuristic Framework for Exploring Social Capital</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3.1</td>
<td>Street Youth Demographics as Reported in Research Study by Save the Children Romania and UNICEF (1999)</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3.2</td>
<td>Demographic Profile of the Core Street Youth Sample</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3.3</td>
<td>Types and Degrees of Participant Observation</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3.4</td>
<td>Proposed Structure of Documenting Field Notes</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3.5</td>
<td>Parallel Processes between Grounded Theory and Social Work Practice</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.1</td>
<td>Facets of Past Trajectory</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5.1</td>
<td>Selected Codes and Descriptions</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5.2</td>
<td>Selected Key Categories and Associated Codes</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5.3</td>
<td>Research Sites and Participants Included in Analysis by Typology</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5.4</td>
<td>Setting Dimension by Typology</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5.5</td>
<td>Formation Dimension by Typology</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5.6</td>
<td>Substance Dimension by Typology</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5.7</td>
<td>Past Trajectory by Typology</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1  Reported Age of some Participants by Gender .................. 172
Figure 4.2  Average Time a Street Child Lived on the Street (1999) ........ 174
Figure 4.3  Average Number of Years Living on the Street by Gender and Age .......................................................... 175
Figure 4.4  Type of Family Relationship by Gender .......................... 176
Figure 4.5  Percentage of Youth who used Aurolac by Age Range .......... 194
Figure 4.6  Types of Criminal Behavior by Gender ........................... 198
Figure 4.7  Resource Generating Strategies .......................... 211
Figure 4.8  Educational Level and Skills of Street Children in Bucharest (2002) .......................................................... 220
## ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANPCA</td>
<td>Autoritatea Naționale pentru Protecția Consumatorilor și Adoptarea (National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASIS</td>
<td>Asociatia Sprijinirea Integrarii Sociale (Support for Social Integration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFR</td>
<td>Căile Ferate Române (Romanian Railways)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FONCP</td>
<td>Federation of Nongovernmental Organizations Active in Child Protection</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Office</td>
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<td>IPEC</td>
<td>The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour</td>
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<td>IRB</td>
<td>Institutional Review Board for the Study of Human Subjects</td>
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<td>MSW</td>
<td>Master of Social Work</td>
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<td>NASW</td>
<td>National Association of Social Workers</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>National Institute on Drug Abuse</td>
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<td>United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

*The beginning of a journey*

> Sentimentality towards children...is no substitute for the recognition of a child’s entitlement to the right to equal concern and respect. This does not mean the treatment of children as adults. It requires, however, respect for the competencies of children. It argues for children to be seen as persons, not cases. It demands that children’s capacities be acknowledged, that they be given a say in the decision-making processes concerning them...and they are capable of participating meaningfully. It expects that the interests of children will be taken into account.  

(Freeman, 1983, p. 3)

It was 1996. I had just been whisked from the Oetopeni Airport to the *Gara de Nord*. After an exhausting flight from New York City to Bucharest my bleary eyesight could barely discern these words through the icy air of a dark November night. They were etched on the cement façade of the tired looking building identified as the capital city’s North Train Station. I did not know any Romanian in 1996. I thus could not read this sign any more than I could understand the cacophony of tiny mouths around me. In the brisk night air I fumbled around with my bags, trying to maneuver a way to carry them all from the van to the train station platform. Immediately I was aware of this swarm of children around me chanting something in a sing-song tone over and over again. The Romanian chaperone quickly informed us they were *shmeckers* (tricky ones); they were *buschatari* (bushes).
He swished them away like pigeons, as train station attendants took our luggage and led us through the mass of small, outstretched hands onto the platform. Instructed to ignore them, I looked straight ahead, but kept aware of them out of my periphery. As we made our way to the platform, the children continued to press along side us. Finally, as if on cue, they gave up. In twos and threes they began to fall away until our entourage was walking alone. But my attention stayed with the youth. I could see a group of them gathering on some steps outside a large sliding door across the tracks.

Once we arrived at the platform, we had several minutes to wait for the train. I continued to fixate on the youth littered across the granite steps outside the sliding door. Through the hazy lighting of the train station, the scene seemed to emerge in black and white. For a moment my mind was taken back to some of the characters from the writings of Charles Dickens. Many of his late works (e.g., *Bleak House*, *Hard Times*, *Little Dorrit*, etc.) focused on the plight of children living in extreme conditions. Through his pen Dickens created an image of street children as dirty, tattered, poor and living in extremely impoverished circumstances. These images came alive as I watched. Youth in tattered clothes darkened with wear interacted with each other. They shared a piece of bread . . . a cigarette. Among some, an altercation broke out with a crescendo into full symphony and then seemed to diminish as quickly as it swelled. Some laughed, some scanned the station and some lay on the stairs with their arms covering their faces. But all of the youth jumped to the ready as travelers bearing many bags made their way through the train station. They were seldom acknowledged; they were seldom hired. There before my eyes it seemed these “bushes” were forging their own survival. I wondered who they were, where they
came from, how they ended up here, how they managed to survive, and why they were allowed to endure their circumstances. It was in those few sobering minutes on the platform that I first soaked in deeply the bleak condition and yet vibrant presence of these “tricky ones”, these “bushes”, these children.

I was in Romania to explore cross-cultural learning opportunities as a social work educator: the first of many trips to come. Like many in the West, I had been fed a steady diet of the popular media’s presentations about the horrors experienced by Romania’s children. In my first train station experience it was easy to see that these youth did indeed live in difficult circumstances and faced multiple challenges on a day by day - no, a moment by moment - basis. Also, like many in the West, I held a number of misconceptions about conditions in that country, particularly for its children. However, as I spent more time there through several visits over the years, I found myself confronted not only with the harsh realities of a country in transition, but the capacity, creativity and richness of the nation. This was reflected across the country in budding entrepreneurs, village farmers, through non-governmental organizations working to address myriad social problems, and, perhaps most captivating, the street youth themselves. Through many spontaneous conversations with street children, my early train station interface with them was both reinforced and confronted. Although they lived within challenging circumstances, I witnessed determined strength, resilience and a kind of informal (non-institutional) social networks that supported their survival.

Emergence of the Street Youth Population

December 1989 was a tumultuous month of powerful, rapid change for Romania. For approximately 25 years, Romania had suffered under the communist
dictatorship of Nicolae Ceaușescu (1991). The fall of Ceaușescu and Communism in the 1989 Romanian revolution ushered in a new sense of freedom and opportunity for the diverse peoples and cultures. The nation welcomed the new genesis of freedom in many respects, and yet it was difficult for a people so long oppressed to recover. The impact of the Ceaușescu years, the resulting destabilization and lack of infrastructure left the Romanian people with multiple social problems and insufficient systems and programs to respond to them. Thus, the Ceaușescu legacy provides a foundation to understand the nation’s current struggles and challenges. Although Ceaușescu intended to build a strong nation from within, he went about it through the development of several “bizarre” projects (Johnson, Edwards, & Puwak, 1993). In fact, his primary legacy lies in the many grandiose and ill-conceived projects he initiated, which came together to impact child welfare and the emergence of the street youth population in Romania.

Under Ceaușescu, Romania’s state economy was centrally planned and controlled. Although the employment rate was high, poverty was rampant. Stanley (1991) estimated that no more than 5% of the active population was able to live above the level of survival and the meeting of basic needs. To its credit, Ceaușescu’s dictatorship did succeed in eliminating Romanian national debt. However, it did so by exporting the very agricultural products necessary to sustain its population. In fact, Ceaușescu’s agricultural policy involved exporting most of the country’s harvest to pay off the national debt, which thereby resulted in a rationing of the remaining food to feed its own population (Johnson, et al., 1993), and starving Romania of badly needed inputs (European Union, 1997). Thus, although the nation was debt-free, the people were enslaved to hunger. In the wake of the revolution, the transition from a state to
a market economy was challenging for Romania. Many Romanian families struggled to support their children. As Volpi (2002) observed, “The transition from state to market-dominated society temporarily weakens communities’ capacity to protect their young members [due to]. . . family isolation and the weakening of social capital” (p. 5).

The massive relocation program that Ceaușescu initiated and referred to as *systematization* eliminated historic city centers and rural villages replacing them with high-rise commercial and apartment complexes (Johnson et al., 1993). Once the land was transformed, industrialization was rapid, which led to a substantial shift from rural to urban living. The Romanians had long relied on extended families to care for their young. Breaking up the traditional family care-giving structure, as with the transition to a market economy, the massive relocation program had a devastating effect on family systems. It was “enormously disruptive in social terms, as it tore families from their natural networks of support” (Telgarsky & Struyk, 1990, cited in Johnson et al., 1993, p. 492).

Ceaușescu’s plan for rapid industrial growth required more workers, thus he initiated a plan to double the population and increase production (Rosapepe, 2001). In 1966, two years into his reign as dictator, Ceaușescu established a series of *pronatalist policies* to increase child births and to establish Romania as “an economic and cultural power amidst a sea of Slavs” (Groza & Johnson, 1995, p. 3; Johnson, et al., 1993). Opposed to utilizing positive pronatal incentives as many European countries did, Ceaușescu employed negative constraints. Under his pronatalist policy, the government took a decidedly anti-contraceptive stand. As a result, he outlawed abortions and imprisoned physicians who performed them (Johnson, et al., 1993). Moreover, he taxed (up to 30%) the income of childless couples, single women over 25
and infertile couples (Groza & Johnson, 1995; Haupt, 1987; Johnson, et al., 1993). This too had a destabilizing effect on Romanian families and contributed to the child welfare crisis. The strategies introduced in the 1970s in an attempt to boost the population growth were not accompanied by the requisite infrastructure and resources to help birth families. As a result, many children were forced to the street to beg for their families, sometimes leading to their permanency on the streets. Others were released to the care of the state orphanage system (Commission on Romania’s Progress toward Accession, 1999), which often served as a gateway to the street.

Ceaușescu promoted this institutional care for children with “incurables” as well as those who were abandoned due to the many variables impacting Romanian families (Triseliotis, 1994). According to a 1970 law, orphans and abandoned children, including those for whom families were unable to provide, would be taken into state care. “The state considered putting children in institutions as a much easier solution to the problem of poverty and family disorganization than helping natural families with resources and services” (Zamfir, 1999, p.12). With no civil society involvement or community-based childcare alternatives, doctors advised struggling families to place children in institutions (Rosapepe, 2001). This “group care” or “communal care” often led to the under-care of children due to limited resources (Johnson et al., 1993). By 1989, there were over 700 institutions housing more than 170,000 children across the country (Rosapepe, 2001). Some children fled the state institutions to a life on the street. Furthermore, once children turned 18, they were no longer permitted to stay in state care. With no societal reintegration programs in place, they too found themselves on the street. Zamfir (1999) noted that the years of encouraging the institutional care of children has generated a confusing relationship between families.
and the state concerning their responsibility toward children that has persisted to the present day. Although Romania has made tremendous progress in developing a child welfare system with alternatives (e.g., foster care, etc.) and shutting down many state orphanages, families still entrust their children to the state for care. State institutions continue to be a gateway for youth coming to the street.

The Ceauşescu regime relocated people, removed their support systems, razed their homes and eliminated choices; families thereby were left to cope with significant needs from detached and isolated positions. Pronatalist policies forced people to have large families, yet there was inadequate support. Systematization led to disrupted support networks and families became detached and isolated. The vast majority of the nation was in poverty, most living only at the level of meeting their own basic needs. Accordingly, post-totalitarian Romania faced rapid growth of the number of street children (Zamfir, 1999). While the exact scope of the problem is unknown, estimates range from 1,500-10,000 street children in Romania (Alexandrescu, 1996; UNICEF, 1997).

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to identify the strategies employed by street children that enabled them to meet their needs in face of the multifaceted challenges of street life. The children of Romania who worked and lived on the street became exposed to all its social, economic and environmental hazards. Despite this context much of their daily life was a display of endurance, resiliency and adaptation. Standing at the intersection of human strength and vulnerability, street children were forced to focus their energy and attention on the urgency and immediacy of daily survival. Their ability to survive (even thrive) under these circumstances showed
intelligence and competency. Given all that street children have gone through, how have they managed to survive?

Romanian policy makers and practitioners from governmental and non-governmental agencies have expressed a critical need for the development of programs to meet the needs of Romania’s street children (UNICEF, 1999; Zamfir & Zamfir, 1997). Social work practice should be based on solid empirical findings. To date, much of the inquiry related to child welfare in Romania has focused on institutionalized children, foster care and adoption (Carlson & Earls, 1997; Groza, 1998; Groza & Ileana, 1996; Groza & Johnson, 1995; Johnson, et al., 1993; Triseliotis, 1994). The only research into the lives of street children has been facilitated through large international or governmental organizations (Ministry of Labor, 1993; Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999). These studies were purely descriptive in nature and geared towards identifying the magnitude of the complex social phenomena, offering background demographics and a brief description of life on the streets. A lack of empirical knowledge on the lives of street children in Romania leaves policy makers and practitioners without a clear foundation from which to base their work. There is a need for systematic research to explore deeper issues regarding the lives and discourses of children living and/or working on the streets.

Globally, inquiry into the lives of street children is predominantly associated with developing countries. The overwhelming majority of studies conducted on street children tended to focus on the variables that led to children being on the street (cf., Buckner & Bassuk, 1997; Dybcz, 2005; Rizzini, 1998; Ringwalt, Greene, Robertson, & McPheeters, 1998), their delinquent behaviors (cf., Beazley, 2003; Felsman, 1981; Greene, Ennett, & Ringwalt, 1999; Hagan & McCarthy, 1997; Le Roux & Smith, 1998a;
Lusk, 1989), and the ways they were exploited (cf., Baron & Hartnagel, 1997, 1998; Hagan & McCarthy, 1997; Ribeiro, 2008; Ribeiro & Ciampone, 2001; Whitbeck & Simons, 1990). While this information offers important insight into the contexts encountered by street children, they tended to portray children as passive, failing to recognize capacities. “Most writing about children and young people living on urban streets in developing countries assumes, or event insists, that they live in disorganized, illegal misery. They are described as psychologically and irretrievably damaged, unable to form relationships as the children that they are, and definitely destined for emotional, social, and economic failures as the adults they will become” (Ennew, 1994a, pp. 409-410).

As noted by Stephensen (2001), these ideas are being challenged by looking at the attempts of children to reconstruct their lost families and to create self-supportive networks (cf., Aptekar, 1988; Ennew, 1994a; Lucchini, 1993; Lucchini, 1996; Swart, 1990a), and from the perspective of children as economic actors often vital to the survival of families (Bar-On, 1997). Furthermore, various studies conducted around the world (cf., Aiden 1997; Campos, Raffaulli, Ude, Greco, Ruff, Rolf, Antunes, Halsey, & Greco, 1994; D'Abreu, Mullis, & Cook, 1999; Felsman, 1989; Tyler, Tyler, Echeverry, & Zea, 1991; Verma, 1999) have identified cases in which street children demonstrated remarkable survival instincts and courage in their daily struggle with the virulent environment of the street. There is a need for further exploration of the strengths and capacities embodied by street youths.

Social capital theory served as the heuristic framework for this inquiry. Building on a reconceptualization of the work of social capital theorist Nan Lin (Lin, 2001a; see also Lin, 2001b), I used a model for examining the needs, resiliencies and need-
meeting networks among street children in Romania. Social capital focuses attention on how the quality, content and structure of social relationships affect the transmission of resources (capital). Social capital’s sources lie in the social structure within which the actor is located. Actors engage in networking and interaction in order to produce benefit. Street children are often conceptualized as a disaffiliated group; they do not have access to wider social networks that are needed. Social capital depends on an actor’s ability to participate actively in relevant spheres of social life. There is a need for further research into what constrains or enables Romanian street children’s access to broader social networks and attempts made to draw on naturally occurring networks and address the barriers to acquisition of embedded resources.

The predominance of social capital research regarding children has conceptualized social capital for children as embedded in families and focused on parents’ ability to invest in their children’s well-being or future, rather than to focus on the creative and active response of children (cf., Amato, 1998; Coleman, 1988; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Furstenberg & Hughes, 1995; Wright, Cullen & Miller, 2001; Yan, 1999). This conceptualization minimizes the agency of children, emphasizing the influence of parents on children’s lives. Children’s integration into society is portrayed, in effect, as a one-way process in which adults give and children are beneficiaries. For many street children, the family is not the primary source for meeting the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, nurturance and socialization. Others have shown that complex systems of social relations among street children emerge on the street that supply or connect them to resources necessary for survival (Agnelli, 1986; Alexandrescu, 1996; Aptekar, 1989; Baardson, 1993; Lalor, 1997;
Stephensen, 2001). There is a need for further research focusing on the agency of children, seeing children as potential actors.

Coming from a social capital perspective builds on the networks and strengths already being utilized by street children. The identification of how individual children access and use resources embedded in social networks and how groups of children maintain social capital as a collective asset provides important insight for the development of policies and intervention strategies geared to address the complex needs of street children. Lin’s (2001a; see also Lin, 2001b) model was specifically selected because it provided a holistic, integrative view of social capital, incorporating many of the diverse perspectives regarding the structure and content of social capital. A study with street children necessitated a broad scope to enable as many possible realities of children to be taken into consideration. Finally, the use of Lin’s model allowed for the exploration of the socio-cultural context of street children and the conceptualization of children as agents.

**Research Questions**

Inspired by my early encounters with Romanian street children and compelling questions emerging from the literature, the purpose of this study was to identify the strategies employed by street children that enabled them to meet their needs in face of the multifaceted challenges of street life. Given all that street children have gone through - how have they managed to survive? Specifically, the three overarching questions that guided this study were:

1. Who are the children (e.g., age, gender, past trajectory, etc.) living and working on the streets of Bucharest, Romania?
2. Under what circumstances, conditions, or processes are the children on the street able to meet their needs in the face of adversity?

3. Are there informal and formal networks created and used by street children in an effort to build opportunities for survival? If so, what are they and how do they operate?

**Significance of the Research**

This exploratory study holds practical and theoretical significance. This inquiry further illuminates the lives of young people living and working on the street; it builds on the global landscape of knowledge with a focus on the strengths and resiliencies of street youth. Looking at capacities characterizes a possibility-focused paradigm.

Results from the present study suggest many Romanian street youth were entrepreneurial about their daily lives, using their skills and knowledge to create a host of opportunities to work in exchange for money, demonstrating strong abilities to be self-reliant. Although they faced many difficulties, the youth also created and engaged in times of play and relied on a host of healthy coping strategies to manage the challenges of street life (e.g., music, spirituality, friendships, etc.) A full descriptive analysis of the data is provided in Chapter 4.

Theoretically, insights gained from this study contribute to the understanding of how children, as agents of their own lives create and use social capital. Results from the present study suggests that to varying degrees, and in varying ways the Romanian street children did create and use informal networks that built opportunities for survival. For some, their investment in relationships with each other created embedded relational resources (i.e., clear norms and effective sanctions, the expectation of trust, sturdy norms of reciprocity and collection action). These
relational resources afforded those within the network access to a range of benefits, including emotional support, guidance and information, protection and access to a range of material goods. Other youth were challenged to create such relationships. As such, they did not have access to needed resources and faced increased vulnerabilities (see Chapter 5).

Although the street children phenomenon represents an important challenge around the world, the situation in Romania is aggravated by the lack of significant research on the phenomenon. The insights gained from this study have implications for policy and program development for the street children in Romania. For example, many street youth faced significant barriers unique to the Romanian context (e.g., the obtainment of official identification papers, lack of access to education once one is more than two years behind, etc.) to improving their circumstances. Romanian policy makers should work to create efficient ways for street youth to obtain official identity papers with or without a birth certificate and reassess the developmental goals and models of school education to improve access and relevance for street children.

Finally, the study contributes to the knowledge base of the social work profession in Romania. Communism held a fundamental position with respect to social problems; they could be solved or prevented through a centrally planned and carefully managed economy. It was the expressed ideology under communism that “social problems would somehow be solved automatically by administrative and political mechanisms based on the ‘humanistic nature’ of the system” (Zamfir & Ionescu, 1994, p. 6). Ideally, the social net (planned and managed by governmental structures) underlying society either would eliminate need altogether or provide for existing need through “shared-responsibility” (Johnson, Ourvan, & Young, 1995). Thus, from the
government’s perspective, there was no need for a profession of social work. In 1969 the social work program, which had been established for 40 years, was abolished from the university curricula (Rosapepe, 2001). It followed that the university departments of sociology and psychology also became “useless”, or “perceived as threats” to a communistic ideology, and thus in 1978, they too were eliminated (Zamfir, 1999). In the aftermath, bureaucrats who knew nothing of how to address human need in a way that promoted social and economic justice replaced social work specialists. Consequently, “The absence of a core of professional social workers had a great impact on the way children were treated in orphanages and the kind of alternatives families could be offered” (Rosapepe, 2001, p. 9).

**Dissertation Overview**

This dissertation is organized in the following manner. Chapter 2 explores social capital theory from its early conceptualizations to its application to children generally and how it has been used to explore issues related to street children specifically. It also offers a critique of the theory and articulates how the theory was utilized as a heuristic framework for this investigation. Chapter 3 provides a rationale for the selected research methodology and identifies the methods used to establish the trustworthiness of the data. This is followed by an overview of the preliminary steps of the study, an examination of ethical considerations, and a discussion of the data collection strategies and analysis procedures. Chapter 4 provides a descriptive analysis including a description of the demographic landscape of the street children in Bucharest and an exploration of the youths’ past trajectories that led them to be on the street, as well as an examination of their lives on the street (e.g., experiences with violence, criminality, health concerns, resource generating activities, etc.).
Findings from the present study are compared to other national reports and situated within an international context. *Chapter 5* facilitates a transition from a focus on the more micro description of street children to a more abstract investigation of how the street youth organized (or failed to organize) and how their groups contributed (or failed to contribute) to their survival. *Chapter 6* continues the more abstract investigation of the youths’ networks and need-meeting strategies moving beyond the group to explore the role of their relationships with their informal and formal environments. Finally, *Chapter 7* summarizes the major findings, offers a discussion of the policy and practice implications and recommendations, and identifies the limitations of the study and areas for future research and exploration.

**A Final Word**

“Human agency refers to the capacity of human beings to be active and resourceful rather than passive pawns of social forces” (Padgett, 1998, p. 121). Padgett stressed the importance of highlighting human agency in the context of presenting qualitative research, or telling the story. “In qualitative social work research, a concern for human agency is manifested in the way we observe human actions, in the questions we ask, and the way we frame and present our findings” (Padgett, 1998, p. 121, emphasis added). The notion of agency as been central to this study from conceptualization through data collection and analysis, and will continue to be so through the presentation of the findings. To keep the youths’ voice in front of the reader, many chapters begin with a passage from the data, and data excerpts are spread throughout the data analysis chapters. Though some data selections are lengthy, the thick description afforded in the field notes allows for an examination of specific behaviors and the settings in which they occurred. Excerpts from field notes
and direct quotations from participants also allow the reader to read first-hand from the participants and their perspectives on their lives.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

*Exploring social capital theory and framing the Inquiry*

Because I was raised on the streets by the pickpockets... nobody... no one even if they was big or smaller did not have the guts to take me on. They couldn’t beat me. And him (pointing to Ion), being little, was begging for another one, who was bigger (older) and sent him to beg, to produce (make money). I felt sorry for him and I said, “If you want to get rid of this hard life, come with me. I can take you by me and I promise that no one will take on you. He then came with my group and he saw that no one was taking on him and no one was bothering him. And he was doing very well. He didn’t need any money, because we were buying food and everything he needed. And we helped one another. And since then we have stayed very good friends. Just as I am with Florin and with this little one, Judy Monkey. It matters the friendship and partnership. We were going together, we were doing together, we were eating together and we were sleeping together. Even if the police was beating us, we did not separate from each other. I do not like to stay with too many fellow partners, only with the fellows whom I know they trust me and I trust them. As I told you, that if something is hurting my fellow partners (motioning to those sitting around him), we feel each other’s pain... we know our troubles... we know the streets... we advise each other... we help each other so we can recuperate from the things done to us.

Interview with Radu age 16

How do people survive hardships like tornadoes and floods? How do they find and secure employment? How do they meet their day-to-day needs and address emergencies as they arise? They do so by connecting with others. Accomplishing these tasks often does not depend on how much one knows, but rather on whom one knows. Social capital focuses attention not on individual variables (e.g., personality, education, etc.) but on how the quality, content and structure of social relationships - one’s connections - affect the transmission of resources (capital) that shape
opportunities and life trajectories. Intuitively there is a collective wisdom regarding the use in life of one’s connection to family, friends, neighbors and community as an important asset, an asset that can be enjoyed in and of itself, called upon in a moment of need, or even leveraged for material gain. We have all heard that it is good to have friends in high places. How those with strong connections to family and friends have more support in times of crisis or how some favorite things to do often involve just being with one’s “people”, whether with friends or a network based on shared interests, ethnic membership or common goals.

As simple as it sounds, this seemingly conventional wisdom only scratches the surface of the modern understanding of these relationships as described in social capital theory. Social capital is a complex and often contested concept. What exactly is social capital? Who is more likely to gain access to social capital and why? Although the social capital theory literature reflects multiple perspectives on what constitutes social capital and the benefits accruing to individuals who have access to it, there is a convergence on the notion that social capital is a metaphor about advantage (Burt, 2001).

In the “marketplace” of society people engage in a variety of investments and exchanges in pursuit of their interests. Within this marketplace, some people do better than others; some people have better returns on their investments. An economic or material (physical) capital explanation is that people who do better are better resourced; they have access to economic resources like income and physical resources like housing. Through the lens of a human capital explanation, the people who do better are better equipped; they are more knowledgeable, more skilled and more proficient. Social capital represents a contextual compliment to these other
forms of capital and makes visible the productive capacity of the social sphere. The social capital explanation of advantage is that the people who do better are better connected. The central thesis of social capital theory is that relationships matter; networks are valuable assets. Social capital exists in the relationships among people. Through their connections to networks, people are enabled to secure advantages, benefits and resources.

Social capital is possibly one of the most successful exports from sociology to public dialogue and other social sciences during the last two decades (Portes, 2000). Empirical research links social capital to increased access to a variety of human and material resources (Coleman, 1988; Cox, 1995; Granovetter, 1974, 2005; Putnam, 2000), to the differential success of housing programs (Briggs, 1998; Lang & Hornburg, 1998), to safer communities (Jacobs, 1961), to improved health outcomes for people living in disadvantaged communities (Cattell, 2001), and to the government efficiency and economic development of cities and even nations (Putnam, 1993a; Schiff, 1992). The World Bank has recognized the concept of social capital as a useful organizing idea. Members of the World Bank have argued that “[i]ncreasing evidence shows that social cohesion is critical for societies to prosper economically and for development to be sustainable” (World Bank, nd). Social capital has also been used to explain a range of outcomes for children, including educational achievement (Coleman, 1988; Furstenberg & Hughes, 1995) and decreased delinquent involvement (Wright, et al., 2001), as well as mediate adverse family circumstances (e.g., poverty, violence, etc.) in the behavioral and physical development among preschool children (Runyan, Hunter, Socolar, Amaya-Jackson, English, Landsverk, Dubowitz, Browne, Bangdiwala,
& Mathew, 1998). This extent of application has ushered in a great deal of confusion concerning the actual meaning of social capital (Portes, 2000).

The following chapter begins with contextualizing social capital theory in historical sociological thought and introduces three of the primary thinkers behind social capital theory. The next section unpacks the application of social capital theory to children generally and how it has been used to explore issues related to street children specifically. A critique of social capital theory follows culminating with the articulation of a model of social capital including a discussion of its components and how it was used as a heuristic framework for the investigation of the creation and use of social capital among Romanian street children.

**History of an Idea**

Many have been identified for being first to coin the term social capital. Candidates extend as far back as Hanifan (1920), who specified that “Social capital. . . refer[s] to. . . those tangible assets [that] count for most in the daily lives of people: namely, goodwill, fellowship, sympathy, and social intercourse among the individuals and families who make up a social unit” (cited in Woolcock, 1998, p. 13; see also Hanifan, 1916). Most scholars concur that the term social capital was first used in its current form by American urban planner Jane Jacobs in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, in which Jacobs (1961) argued that social capital provides important insights into why some city areas have lower crime rates and are more enjoyable and enriching places to live than others. Its refinement in recent years is generally credited to Loury (1977), Bourdieu (1984, 1986), Coleman (1988), Burt (1992), Putnam (1993a) and Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993; see also Portes, 1995).
The overarching idea of social capital reflects well-established ideas in the social sciences. The historical roots of social capital are captured in Table 2.1. Although a review of sociology's major nineteenth century thinkers is beyond the scope of this discussion, it is important to situate social capital theory within its theoretical history. As Portes stated, “Despite its current popularity, the term (social capital) does not embody any idea really new to sociologists” (Portes, 1998, p. 2). Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993, see also Furstenberg, 2005; Kilby, 2002; Woolcock, 1998) traced the roots of social capital theory back to classical sociological traditions, identifying various themes of social capital theory in the works of Durkheim, Simmel, Weber, de Tocqueville and Marx. “Part of its [social capital's] appeal undoubtedly lies in its connection to well-established sociological concepts and theories while, at the same time, promising a new and potentially fruitful linkage to other disciplines that use the idea of capital” (Wall, Ferrazzi, & Schryer, 1998, p. 318).

Table 2.1. Historical Roots of Social Capital in Classical Sociological Traditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theorist</th>
<th>Historical Root</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marx</td>
<td>Notion of Capital - an investment of resources for the production of profit</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bounded Solidarity - Adverse circumstances can act as a source of social cohesion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Durkeim</td>
<td>Emphasis on group life as a remedy to anomie and self destruction</td>
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<td></td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>de Tocqueville</td>
<td>Mediating institutions and social trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simmel</td>
<td>Reciprocity Transaction - obligations between individuals based on self-interest (see also Homans 1950; Blau 1964)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max Weber</td>
<td>Enforceable Trust - the agreed upon rules of conduct for compliance within a group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social Capital Theory in Contemporary Thought and Usage

The 1980s and ‘90s saw the materialization of growing research and an increasing literature base on social capital theory. Specifically, social capital theory can be sourced to three key thinkers, including Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman and Robert Putnam. French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu is credited with the first contemporary analysis of social capital (Portes, 1998). In the 1980s Bourdieu conceptualized social capital as an asset of the individual that draws its worth from the power and influence of the social connections an individual has access to and used social capital to explain the reproduction of the class structure and inequality. About the same time Bourdieu was developing the notion of a social form of capital, American sociologist James Coleman, building from economist Glen Loury (1977), offered an analysis regarding the role of social capital in the creation of human capital. His research demonstrated that a nurturing family and supportive community bonds are associated with a child’s educational success. Finally, in the 1990s, political scientist Robert Putnam broadened the discussion of social capital by reconceptualizing it as a key characteristic of communities rather than individuals. Putnam’s research in Italy and the United States demonstrated links between social capital and the effectiveness and efficiency of governments. Each theorist approached social capital somewhat uniquely and contributed various theoretical dimensions to the conceptualization of social capital. In the following section, the work of each of these contemporary contributors will be briefly considered.

Bourdieu on Social Capital

French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1984, 1986) articulated the first contemporary analysis of social capital. Bourdieu argued that just as access to
economic capital extends certain privileges, social capital provides the connections and networks which facilitate enduring and future access to privilege. Bourdieu defined social capital as,

[T]he aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition - or in other words, to membership of a group - which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a “credential” which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word. (Bourdieu 1986, p. 248)

In defining social capital, Bourdieu focused on how individuals gain access to resources, advantage and privileges because of their connection to certain groups that are situated in a larger system of social relationships and networks that support the group’s benefits.

Consistent with Marx, Bourdieu (1986) broadly defined capital as “accumulated, human labour” which has the potential to produce different forms of profit or advantage (p. 241). He noted that building capital requires investment; one must invest time to build and subsequently profit from accumulated capital. Bourdieu’s handling of social capital highlighted human agency (although ultimately constrained), noting that people intentionally build relationships for the benefits that they would bring now or later (Bourdieu, 1986). Through ongoing mutual exchanges, recognition and boundaries reinforce group solidarity (thus maintaining their position in the broader social structure) and reaffirm the collectivity of the capital and a group member’s claim to it. The outcome of this social capital is ultimately economic reward collected through ongoing participation in the network as mutual benefits accrue.
Social capital is therefore a means, through social connections, to resources that are sought in capitalist societies.

For Bourdieu, the notion of *convertibility* was a key characteristic of social capital; social capital can be converted to other kinds of capital. Bourdieu (1986) challenged economic theory for narrowly focusing only on economic capital (capital that is directly convertible into money). He called for a more complex and contextualized account of different forms of capital by proposing the examination of capital (understood as power) in all its forms.

Capital can present itself in three fundamental guises: as *economic capital*, which is immediately convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights; as *cultural capital*, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications; and as *social capital*, made up of social obligations (“connections”), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility.

(Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243, emphasis added)

The advantages conferred by one’s position in a social network can be converted to economic or other advantage. People gain access to social capital through membership in interpersonal networks and social institutions and then convert it into other forms of capital to improve or maintain their position in society (Bourdieu, 1986). As with other forms of capital, social capital can either be a substitute for or can complement other resources (Adler & Kwon, 2002). As a substitute, actors can sometimes compensate for a lack of economic or human capital by other superior connections. More often, however, social capital complements other forms of capital (Lazerson,
Bourdieu was interested in understanding how one can draw on social capital to improve their economic standing. For Bourdieu, “[e]conomic capital is at the root of all other types of capital” (1986, p. 252). He was primarily concerned with how economic capital underpins these other forms, and how forms of capital interact with wider structures to reproduce social inequalities (Jenkins, 1992; Willis, 1977). Bourdieu’s work on the convertibility of capital, and how this process plays a role in ensuring the reproduction of capital, was grounded on the notion that understanding the structure and functioning of the social world involves looking at capital in its multiple forms.

Bourdieu’s (1977, 1986) conceptualization of social capital and its interaction with other forms of capital came from studies on the inequity of scholastic achievement among different social classes. Consistent with the Marxian tradition, he focused on differential access to capital (i.e., economic, cultural and social) by class-based formal and informal groups and individuals within such groups. Bourdieu (1977) argued that cultural capital was as important as economic capital in reproducing unequal social relations and the inequality of opportunity that ultimately produces unequal outcomes. He used the example of how class differences among children manifest in school performance, based not on intelligence, but on habitus, “[a] set of dispositions, reflexes and forms of behavior people acquire through acting in society. It reflects the different positions people have in society, for example, whether they are brought up in a middle-class environment or in a working-class suburb” (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 19). The concept can be understood as a set of mediating schemas, which regulates one’s mental activity (often unconsciously) and ultimately shapes one’s
actions. Bourdieu argued that middle class habitus in the home facilitates a more
effective adaptation to the expectations and culture of school.

The same academic qualifications receive very variable values and functions
according to the economic and social capital (particularly the capital of
relationships inherited from the family) which those who hold these
qualifications have at their disposal and according to the markets in which they
use them. . . . [I]t is because those who possess the most prestigious
qualifications also have at their disposal an inherited capital of relationships
and skills which enable them to obtain such qualifications; this capital is made
up of such things as the practice of the games and sports of the high society or
the manners and tastes resulting from good breeding, which in certain careers
(not to mention matrimonial exchanges which are opportunities for increasing
the social capital of honourability and relationships) constitute the condition, if
not the principal factor, of success. The habitus inculcated by upperclass
families gives rise to practices which, even if they are without selfish motives,
such as cultural activities, are extremely profitable to the extent that they
make possible the acquisition of the maximum yield of academic qualifications
whenever recruitment or advancement is based upon co-operation or on such
diffuse and total criteria as “the right presentation”, “general culture” etc.
(Bourdieu, 1977, p. 506)

Another concept formulated by Bourdieu is that of fields. A field is “[d]efined
as a network, or a configuration of objective relations between positions” (Bourdieu &
Wacquant, 1992, pp. 96-97). Specifically, various social arenas are envisaged as fields
of forces. A particular field (e.g., education, etc.) is made up of economic, cultural,
symbolic and social resources with differential possession of and access to said resources positioning those within the field. According to Bourdieu, as certain people (endowed with the right appropriation of capitals) enter a particular field, they are more aware of the rules of the game and thus have a greater capacity to play the game or manipulate the rules. In this way, fields are also sites of struggle, with “[s]trategic emplacements, fortresses to be defended and captured in a field of struggles” (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 244).

For Bourdieu, social capital is hierarchically differentiated, where a person’s volume of social capital “[d]epends on the size of the network connections that he [sic] can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his [sic] own right or by each of those to whom he [sic] is connected” (Bourdieu, 1997, p. 47). Bourdieu (1986) argued that dominant social classes can use their privileged access to the various forms of capital to make strategic conversion of one kind of capital to another in order to solidify further their class position. Group memberships creating social capital have a “multiplication effect” on the influence of other forms of capital (Bourdieu 1986; see also Joppke, 1987). Likewise, he argued, such capital conversion can be used to transfer strategic advantage from one generation to the next (Bourdieu, 1986; see also Duncan 1992, 1996). Based within a historical socio-cultural context, Bourdieu’s theory of social capital offers an explanation of why marginalized groups often remain excluded. Although Bourdieu had a micro perspective of social capital (i.e., benefits that accrue to an individual or family by virtue of their ties to or connection with others), he was keenly aware of the role of the broader macro environment helping to facilitate or serving as a barrier to one’s ability to create and use social capital.
Coleman on Social Capital

Building on the work of economist Glen Loury (1977), American sociologist James Coleman (1988, 1990) further developed the conceptual foundations of social capital, especially the role of social capital in the creation of human capital. Coleman presented a view of social capital as the social-structural resources that exist as assets that inhere in relationships. “Unlike other forms of capital, social capital inhere in the structure of relations between actors and among actors” (Coleman, 1988, p. 98). That is, social capital is a resource derived from people’s social ties; it is an embedded resource in social networks. Like Bourdieu, Coleman held a micro perspective of social capital focusing on the benefits that accrue to an individual or family by virtue of network ties. Coleman argued that social capital can be seen as a resource to individuals in the same way as human and economic capital. In this way, social capital, like other forms of capital, is “appropriable” (Coleman, 1988). For example, social capital is appropriable in the sense that an actor’s friendship ties can be used for other purposes, such as information gathering or advice. However, unlike Bourdieu who studied how social capital accumulates and is used by the privileged to reproduce their class status, Coleman focused on the benefits of social capital to the disadvantaged and marginalized.

Coleman defined social capital, not by what it is, but by what it does, or by its function. “Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity, but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors” (Coleman, 1988, p. 98). The “aspects of social structure” that serve as a resource one can draw on to achieve their interests include obligations and expectations (norms of trust and
reciprocity), information channels in social relations (networks), and norms and effective sanctions that constrain and/or encourage certain kinds of behavior. What each aspect of social structure holds in common is the investment in relationships that produce social capital as a potential resource that may be drawn on to improve opportunities.

Coleman described obligations and expectations as a form of social capital with the following example:

If A does something for B and trusts B to reciprocate in the future, this establishes an expectation in A and an obligation on the part of B. This obligation can be conceived as a credit slip held by A for performance by B. If A holds a large number of these credits slips, for a number of persons with whom A has relations, then the analogy to economic capital is direct. These credits slips constitute a large body of credit that A can call in if necessary - unless, of course, the placement of trust has been unwise, and these are bad debts that will not be repaid. (Coleman, 1988, p. 102)

According to Coleman (1988), obligations and expectations depend on the trustworthiness of the social environment (e.g., will the obligations be repaid, etc.) and the extent of “credit slips” (obligations) held by a given person. Individuals differ on the amount of outstanding obligations at a given time. Those with a large quantity of obligations have more social capital on which they can draw at a given time.

Coleman (1988) used the example of the rotating-credit association of Southeast Asia as illustrative of the importance of a trustworthy environment in facilitating obligations and expectations. Within the rotating-credit association, membership is comprised of friends and neighbors who contribute monthly to a
common fund. Once a month one of the members receives a payout, continuing monthly until everyone has received a disbursement. Coleman asserted that this system could not exit with low stocks of social capital. If the members did not have high levels of trust that members receiving an early payout will meet their obligations to the association via monthly contributions, the association could not exit.

The flow of information inherent in social relationships that helps to facilitate action is another form of social capital. For Coleman (1988), information provides a basis for action. Connections to others - one’s relationships - are valuable for the information one has access to that may inform future action. In this way, one does not have to be responsible for personally identifying and ascertaining knowledge relevant to various spheres of life, but may draw on the strengths and interests of others. For example, opposed to investing time and energy in understanding the process of selling a house or paying the money to hire a realtor, an individual may contact a friend who is a realtor or recently went through the process of selling her or his home as a source of information. Or, opposed to listing an ad in the newspaper to sell a car, one shares that a car is for sale and asks others to pass the word along. Both of these constitute examples of social relationships that represent a form of social capital that supplies information that facilitates action. The relationships are not valuable for the obligations and expectations that emerge in the exchange of favors, but for the information they provide.

Finally, Coleman noted that norms and effective sanctions constitute an influential form of social capital that can be used to facilitate or constrain action (Coleman, 1988). Effective norms that encourage watchfulness in a neighborhood and communication among neighbors make it possible for people to leave their doors
unlocked during the day or lawn equipment and toys in the front yard without fear of them being stolen. Coleman asserted “A prescriptive norm within the collectivity that constitutes an especially important form of social capital is the norm that one should forgo self-interest and act in the interests of the collectivity” (1988, p. 104). For example, a community that fosters norms related to the importance of education and children’s ability to engage in extra-curricular activities should have no problem passing a school levy that would, in effect, come at an economic cost to community members. Coleman (1988) noted that in some cases, these norms are internalized. In other cases, they are sustained via external rewards (e.g., recognition, status, respect, etc.) for selfless actions and disapproval for selfish actions (e.g., tarnished reputation, etc.).

Exchanges and obligations, information flow, and shared norms and effective sanctions are all social processes dependent on interpersonal relationships. These specific forms of social capital are embedded constructs. Embeddedness is crucial for generating trust, creating information channels, establishing expectations, and forming and enforcing the norms that determine the way economic and social systems work (Coleman, 1988; see also Fukuyama, 1995a; Granovetter, 1985). A characteristic of social structures identified by Coleman as important to the generation of social capital is closure or sufficient ties among members of a group (dense networks). Coleman (1988; see also Coleman & Hoffer, 1987) concluded that closure enables social norms to impose more external pressures on individuals. Within dense networks, there is greater opportunity to reinforce norms and carry out sanctions through the exchange of information and mutually held values. An environment of reinforced norms and effective collective sanctions builds and ensures trustworthiness thus
allowing for the creation of obligations and expectations. Closure builds trust, which increases the effectiveness of social capital.

Coleman’s primary application of social capital was concerned with understanding the role of norms and sanctions within family and community networks that facilitate the attainment of human capital (primarily education) in children. Coleman suggested that a connectedness between a child and her or his family and that family with the broader community could convert to higher academic achievement. This connectedness (an outcome of social relationships and engagement) creates social capital.

Coleman distinguished between social capital within the family and social capital beyond the family. Coleman pointed out that individuals and families build up their stock of social capital by investing in others in the family. He noted that social capital within the family that affords children access to their parents’ human capital relies both on the parents’ presence in the household and their investment in their children through providing attention to them and connections with other family members. Conversely he argued, “The physical absence of adults may be described as a structural deficiency in family social capital. The most prominent element of structural deficiency in modern families is the single-parent family” (Coleman, 1988, p. 111). Coleman believed that there was also capital beyond the family that has value for a child’s development; children are also influenced by social capital outside the family. Parents’ social capital, as evidenced by their membership in cohesive community groups, leads to a kind of shared parenting (which Coleman referred to as intergenerational closure) by the community, which embraces similar norms and values as the parents (e.g., Catholic school, etc.). The more integration with this kind
of extra-familial social capital, the more parents can rely on help from the community system and the greater probability the children will fare well in traditional areas of success such as school completion and low rates of delinquency. The idea that effective socialization relies in part on what happens outside the family, “[h]elps to bridge the current gap between the overly narrow purview of psychology and the overly broad purview of sociology” (Furstenberg & Hughes, 1995, p. 589).

Coleman’s empirical evidence is based on a series of studies in American schools (1988, 1990). Coleman was asked to conduct a study exploring the equality of educational opportunity. In conducting this research Coleman used a large-scale data set of over 600,000 students in over 3,000 elementary and secondary schools. He examined a number of indicators he believed conferred, or served as proxies of, social capital (see Table 2.2). In his study, these indicators (e.g., family structure, quality of parent-child relationship, etc.) distinguished between adolescents who stayed in school and those who dropped out, with an additive effect noted when variables were examined in combination. Coleman argued that the variations in educational outcomes (attainment versus drop-out rates) did not reflect the economic class background of students or resource differences between schools. Rather these variations reflect differences in family structure, level of parental attention and family stability, parental engagement in the community and the quality of shared norms and values, demonstrating that human capital (e.g. skills, knowledge, capabilities, etc.) was made more effective by the presence of social capital. “If human capital possessed by parents is not complemented by social capital embodied in family relations, it is irrelevant to the child’s educational growth that the parent has a great deal, or a small amount, of human capital” (Coleman, 1988, p. 110). In other
words, social capital represents a filter through which the economic and human capital of parents is transmitted to and used by children.

**Table 2.2. Indicators Included by Coleman as Measures of Social Capital**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Social Capital</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Operational Definition</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within Family</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family Structure</td>
<td>The presence of one versus both parents in the household.</td>
<td>Two-parent households afford increased parental resources to invest in children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parental Attention</td>
<td>The presence of two versus five siblings.</td>
<td>Fewer children represented greater concentration of parental attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quality of Parent-child Relationship</td>
<td>Frequency of discussion with parents about personal matters.</td>
<td>Represented an investment on the part of parents in their children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parental Norms/Expectations</td>
<td>Mother’s expectation for child’s educational attainment (college vs. no college).</td>
<td>Reflecting family norms and parental investment in children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beyond the Family</strong></td>
<td>Residential Stability; Intergenerational Closure</td>
<td>Number of changes in school due to family residential move since the 5th grade.</td>
<td>Social relations are disrupted with each move, thus decreasing the potential for intergenerational closure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Engagement; Intergenerational Closure</td>
<td>Regular attendance at religious services.</td>
<td>Community involvement is considered an important component of social capital with religious affiliation the most common group membership among Americans.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Putnam on Social Capital

A third key theorist in social capital debates is political scientist, Robert Putnam. In setting up his discussion of social capital in his article entitled *The Prosperous Community*, Putnam (1993b) cites Hume’s Parable:

Your corn is ripe today; mine will be so tomorrow. ‘Tis profitable for us both, that I should labour with you today, and that you should aid me tomorrow. I have no kindness for you, and know you have as little for me. I will not, therefore, take any pains upon your account; and should I labour with you upon my own account, in expectation of a return, I know I should be disappointed, and that I should in vain depend upon your gratitude. Here then I leave you to labour alone; you treat me in the same manner. The seasons change; and both of us lose our harvests for want of mutual confidence and security.

Putnam pointed out that social scientists have long analyzed the predicament of collective action under various “guises” (e.g., the tragedy of the commons, the prisoners’ dilemma, etc.). Putnam’s answer to the question of how dilemmas of collective action can be overcome is social capital.

By analogy with notions of physical capital and human capital - tools and training that enhance individual productivity - “social capital” refers to features of social organization, such as networks, norms, and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. . . . Working together is easier in a community blessed with a substantial stock of social capital. (Putnam, 1993b, p. 2)
Putnam’s definition of social capital was drawn directly from Coleman employing the notion of norms and sanctions related to trust and reciprocity facilitating collective action within social networks. However, Putnam operationalized the concept of social capital at a different system level than either Bourdieu or Coleman. Putnam brought social capital to macrosociological theory aggregating the social capital of individuals to offer a representation of the “collective social capital” of a population.

For Putnam, social capital consisted of the following components. Fundamental to the development and maintenance of social capital are networks of civic engagement, or the connections people have with community life (e.g., memberships in associations and voluntary organizations, newspaper readership, etc.). Putnam argued that networks of civic engagement foster sturdy norms of generalized reciprocity and trust. For Putnam, networks and norms are empirically related and this association has important political and economic implications. As discussed by Amin (1997), a politically successful and economically productive community is one with “[a] vigorous network of indigenous grassroots associations [representing] the capillaries of community life” (p. 133). These networks lay the groundwork for reciprocity and participation, which in turn reinforce communal sentiments of trust and improve the effectiveness of communication between individuals and institutions. According to Putnam (1993a), networks of civic engagement “increase the potential costs to a defector in any individual transaction. . . foster robust norms of reciprocity. . . [and]. . . facilitate communication and improve the flow of information about the trustworthiness of individuals. . . [which allows]. . . reputations to be transmitted and refined” (pp. 173-174).
Finally, Putnam believed that networks of civic engagement set the stage for future collective activity. “[N]etworks of civic engagement embody past success at collaboration, which can serve as a cultural template for future collaboration” (Putnam, 1993b, p. 4). A history of civic traditions provides a “repertoire of forms of cooperation” which was successful in the past that citizens can drawn on to address emergent challenges of collective action. Putnam (1993a) identified levels of social capital as a causative factor in explaining economic growth (or decline). Communities that enjoy economic prosperity and effective government are those with strong norms and networks of civic engagement. Through his research, Putnam identified a direct relationship between levels of civic engagement and governmental effectiveness and efficiency (1993a), as well as a community’s capacity to address a range of economic and social problems (1995, 2000).

Putnam’s ideas are reflected in his two major works, Making Democracy Work (1993a) and Bowling Alone (1995, 2000). In Making Democracy Work (1993a), Putnam based his argument on a comparative study that he conducted over a 19-year period in Italy. A nationwide set of regional governments (20 total) was established throughout Italy starting in 1970. The institutions were nearly identical in conception, but the contexts (e.g., economic, political, social, etc.) in which they were placed differed significantly. In time, some of the new governments experienced remarkable success, while others failed. The main question for Putnam was: “What are the preconditions for the development of strong, effective government and a prosperous economy?” In exploring what could account for such differences, Putnam (1993b) noted that obvious answers (e.g., party politics, affluence, social stability, etc.) were irrelevant. The best predictor of effective government was strong traditions of civic engagement.
(operationalized as levels of voter participation, newspaper reading and a number of civic associations).

Putnam found that the regions that prospered had inherited high levels of social capital through traditions of civic participation. He concluded that northern Italy, “did not become civic simply because they were rich. The historical record strongly suggests precisely the opposite: They had become rich because they were civic. The social capital embodied in norms and networks of civic engagement seems to be a precondition for economic development, as well as for effective government” (1993a, p. 379). In the regions of northern Italy (e.g., Tuscany, Emilia-Romagna, etc.), associational life flourished increasing mutual trust among citizens. Conversely, the regions in the south (e.g., Sicily, Calabria, etc.), which generally had restricted political and civic involvement, fared worse economically for lack of this social capital. Of the civic regions of northern Italy, Putnam stated that, “[t]rust lubricates social life” (1993a, p. 37). Whereas regions in northern Italy have been successful in sustaining stocks of social capital such as trust, norms and networks, southern Italy has fallen prey to a culture in which individualism and family loyalty take precedence over wider civic responsibility. In the uncivic regions of southern Italy, there is not much trust; southern Italy is afflicted with criminality and corruption.

Putnam also noted that differences in vertical and horizontal ways of organizing made a difference. He suggested that the power structure (whether the relationships are horizontal or vertical in nature) of a society - or network - affect the nature of trust and reciprocity that inhere within the network.

In the north the crucial social, political and even religious allegiances and alignments are horizontal, while those in the south for vertical. Collaboration,
mutual assistance, civic obligation, and even trust were the distinguishing features in the north. The chief virtue in the south, by contrast, was the imposition of hierarchy and order on latent anarchy. (Putnam, 1993a, p. 130)

Horizontal networks are the crux of co-operation for Putnam, “The denser such networks in a community, the more likely that its citizens will be able to co-operate for mutual benefit” (Putnam, 1993a, p. 173).

In *Bowling Alone* (1995, 2000), Putnam turned his analytical eye toward exploring the relationship between civic engagement and social capital in the United States. His initial work relied on exploring how levels of social capital (i.e., formal membership and participation in a variety of informal networks) impacted a number of factors (e.g., educational performance, child welfare, etc.). Putnam used what he termed “market share measures” (2001), which looked at what fraction of the population belonged to an array of civic organizations in American life (e.g., Knights of Columbus, 4-H, Lion’s Club, Parent Teacher Association, etc.). The average membership rates for the over 30 national chapter-based voluntary associations measured steadily rose for the first two-thirds of the century with a sudden dip during the Great Depression. Membership rates then experienced a steady rebound through the 40s and 50s. Then, as Putnam, articulated, “[s]uddenly, silently, mysteriously, inexplicably, all of those organisations began to experience levelling market shares and then decline in market shares, and gradually the decline in market shares became so great. . . by 1997. . . the average organisation was back to Depression levels” (2001, p. 42).

In the wake of *Bowling Alone*, a number of criticisms were leveled at Putnam’s treatment of social capital (Harriss & de Renzio 1997; Putzel 1997). At the heart of
these perspectives lay the demand that social capital not be quantified as a singular concrete variable (membership in associations), but rather that its identity and usefulness require the recognition of interrelationship with other variables and potentiality within its resources.

In his subsequent work Putnam (2000) expanded his measurements to include two new archives of data collected in the United States including, the Roper survey and the data collected by DDB Needham, a commercial marketing firm in Chicago. The Roper survey is based on national samples of Americans surveyed monthly for over 25 years and continuing. The survey includes questions like “In the course of the last year, did you do any of the following things: sign a petition, write a letter to your congressman, attend a local meeting, serve on a committee of any local organisation, work for a political party,” and so on. Putnam noted that all 12 kinds of connectedness measured in the survey demonstrated the same decline as the 32 voluntary associations.

Similar to the Roper survey, DDB Needham surveyed large samples of Americans monthly also for more than 25 years. Although the main focus of the questions related to consumer behaviors, they also asked a broader range of questions to better understand the respondents. The survey includes questions like: “How many times in the course of the last year did you go to church, go to a club meeting, volunteer, have friends over to the house, go on a picnic,” and so on. Once again, these trends of engagement mirrored those of the voluntary associations and the Roper survey.

Other indirect indicators or measures of social capital included social trust and altruism. Social trust was measured by asking respondents the question: “Basically, do you trust other people.” Putnam found a 40-year steady decline in social trust.
Related to altruism, Putnam believed the best information came from data on philanthropy over time. Putnam looked at what fraction of income Americans gave to all forms of charity. Altruism had the same trend over time, as did the other indices; it rose until 1964, and then dropped off.

Putnam’s social capital index (a composite score of the above items) was positively associated with other outcomes, including a composite measure of educational performance (i.e., SAT scores, test scores, high school drop out rate), a composite measure of child welfare (e.g., teen pregnancy, infant mortality, etc.) and better perceived health. The evidence was sound not only in American states, but also in Japan, Finland and other countries. Putnam’s research also pointed to the role of social capital in decreasing crime (i.e, murder rates are lower, people are generally less pugnacious) and explaining the variance in interstate tax evasion. In his discussion of tax evasion, Putnam linked the features of social life - networks, norms and trust - that enable participants to work toward collective goals. “[W]here people are connected by dense networks of engagement and reciprocity, they are more likely to comply with the law, very probably because they are more confident that others will, too, so they will not be ‘suckers’ in this dilemma of collective action” (Putnam, 2000, p. 12). In Putnam’s writing, there is a sense of pessimism about the future, since the decline in membership of certain institutions such as churches and bowling clubs is seen as indicative of a wider decline in civic commitment.

Application to Children

The existing literature on social capital as applied to children demonstrates that this social resource can facilitate a range of pro-social outcomes (e.g., academic success, occupational status, psychological adjustment, etc.), as well as protect
against multiple social concerns (e.g., delinquency, child maltreatment, crime, etc.). Ferguson (2006) conducted a systematic review of the extant research exploring the impact of social capital on the well-being of children. In her final analysis she asserted, “Regarding the final trend, social capital - after poverty - is the best predictor of children’s welfare” (p. 8). The most systematic research and application of social capital theory to children emerges from the theoretical camp of Coleman. Most studies focused on the outcomes of children related to the social capital within the family and beyond the family, emphasizing the role of adult social capital in facilitating positive and mediating negative outcomes for children (cf., Amato, 1998; Furstenberg & Hughes, 1995; Schlee, Mullis, & Shriner, 2008; Wright, et al., 2001). A complete analysis of Coleman’s work is provided in Appendix A (Coleman Inspired Research). Few operationalized social capital beyond Coleman’s indicators and little attention was paid to the agency of children in creating and using their own social capital.

Morrow (1999) argued that the social capital research as applied to children needed to move beyond adult-centered perspectives and preoccupations to explore how children as autonomous social actors are able to shape and influence their own environments. In her critique of social capital theory she called for a more “active” conceptualization of children that would investigate how children themselves actively generate, draw on, or negotiate their own social capital. She further argued that Bourdieu’s conceptualization of social capital would provide a more fruitful framework. In subsequent research, it appears as though Morrow’s (1999) critique and suggestions were implemented. More recent studies though few (cf., Hampshire & Matthijsse, 2010; Leonard, 2005), have utilized Bourdieu as a heuristic framework and
have explored the agency of children; how youth create and use their own networks. The following section begins with a critique of Coleman-inspired research and moves into a review of the research beyond Coleman that explored the reconceptualization of social capital for children, which respects their role in the generation and use of their own networks. The section ends with a review of the literature of how social capital theory has been used to investigate the lives of street children specifically.

Critique of Coleman-Inspired Work

In the wake of the mounting research conducted applying Coleman’s conceptualization of social capital to the exploration of a range of outcomes for children, others have issued a rallying critique (cf., Morrow, 1999; Leonard, 2005). Concerns raised include the “crudeness” of measures, the treatment of gender (e.g., failing to explore gender beyond the consequences of women’s work outside the home, etc.), the failure to ground arguments within a broader social and economic context and their narrow conceptualization of childhood not recognizing children as having agency to create and use their own social capital. They called for researchers to begin exploring social capital and its application to children through a Bourdieu-inspired lens, noting his analysis resulted in a more complex and dynamic view of social capital as situated within a broader context and left room for conceptualizing children as agents.

Need for Broader Context. Much of the Coleman-inspired research failed to ground arguments in the broader context of people’s lives and falls short of capturing the complexity of how social capital interacts with the other forms of capital. For example, Morrow (1999) asserted that in the context of poor neighborhoods, dropping out of school may be the reasonable response when systematic disadvantage fails to
provide long-term benefits to school achievement. Portes and Landolt (1996) noted (for USA):

There is considerable social capital in ghetto areas, but the assets obtainable through it seldom allow participants to rise above their poverty. For all their negative connotations, inner-city youth gangs are also social networks that provide access to resources and enforce conformity. . . For a ghetto teenager, membership in a gang may be the only way to obtain self-respect and material goods. (pp. 20-21; as cited in Morrow, 1999, p. 750)

At the core of Bourdieu’s analysis is recognition that the *routines reflected in the every day lives of people* serves to reproduce inequality. For Bourdieu (1986), social capital as an asset draws its worth from the power and influences of the social connections an individual can access. While Bourdieu had a micro perspective of social capital (i.e., benefits that accrue to an individual or family by virtue of their ties to or connection with others), he was keenly aware of the role of the broader macro environment facilitating or serving as a barrier to one’s ability to create and use social capital. Along this vein, Jenkins (1992) noted that Bourdieu is “good to think with,” as he is concerned with:

The manner in which the routine practices of individual actors are determined, at least in part, by the history and objective structure of their existing social world, and how. . . those practices contribute - without this being their intention - to the maintenance of its existing hierarchical structure. (p. 141; cited in Morrow, 1999, p. 756)

Bourdieu’s (1984) discussion of fields (made up of economic, cultural, symbolic and social capital with differential possession and access to said resources positioning
those within the field) placed the routines of everyday life within a historical socio-cultural context. Thus he offered an explanation of why marginalized groups often remained excluded. Bourdieu (1986) argued that dominant social classes could use their privileged access to the various forms of capital to make strategic conversion of one kind of capital to another in order to solidify further class position. As Leonard (2005) asserted, Bourdieu’s work stands in contrast to Coleman’s “simplistic link” between social capital and the other forms of capital. Leonard suggested that converting social capital to other forms is not straightforward per the constraints imposed by the wider environment. She argued, “Convertibility may be particularly problematic for actors with low stocks of cultural and economic capital, or those positioned as inferior relative to other societal members. In particular, children’s weaker position vis-à-vis the adults in society” (2005, p. 606). Leonard encouraged a focus on the unique actions of children noting that the process of convertibility may look different for them.

**Recognizing Children as Having Agency.** The research and application of social capital theory to children emerging from the theoretical camp of Coleman also tends to ignore the agency of children. The focus tends to be on how parents create connections within and beyond the family and how those connections impact future outcomes for the children. In her critique of social capital research, Leonard noted:

Social capital in the lives of children is generally seen as a byproduct of their parent’s relationships with others and as a result their own social capital networks are rendered invisible. Moreover, social capital is often regarded as an asset that children can draw on and benefit from in their future lives rather than in their lives in the present. This reflects a recurrent tendency to view
children as “human becomings” rather than human beings. (Leonard, 2005, p. 607; see also Qvortrup, 1994)

Leonard (2005) pointed out the traditionally limited attention paid to childhood and children in sociology leaving “many areas of children’s lives invisible to the sociological gaze” (2005, pp. 606-607).

One example of the adult-centric perspective in Coleman’s conceptualization of social capital and the research inspired by his work is intergenerational closure. Intergenerational closure addresses the ways adults connect and create networks. With intergenerational closure, Coleman noted:

The adults are able to observe the child’s actions in different circumstances, talk to each other about the child, compare notes, and establish norms. The closure of the network can provide the child with support and rewards from additional adults that reinforce those received from the first and can bring about norms and sanctions that could not be instituted by a single adult alone. (1990, p. 593, emphasis added)

Leonard (2005) critiqued Coleman’s conceptualization of intergenerational closure, noting that the relationships between parents (and other adults) and children is cast in terms of the effectiveness of socialization, where “[s]ocialization [is conceptualized] as a one-way process that works when children accept it or is faulty when children reject it.” She then argued that “[t]he family is likely to be an arena where adults and children negotiate and renegotiate norms and expectations and where on occasion adults individually and collectively may have to modify their ‘standards’ and ‘sanctions’” (p. 607). In Coleman inspired research, children tended to be cast as “future citizens” focusing on how adults transfer capital through investing in their
children, stocks they were able to “cash in” as they grew up. Overall, the research
did not tap into how children invested in and created their own networks, storing up
their own stock of social capital, which may be leveraged to facilitate their own
actions.

Drawing on the new sociology of childhood (cf., James & Prout, 1990), Morrow
While Bourdieu did not specifically include the agency of children in his analysis of
social capital, Morrow (1999) suggests the “[c]oupling [of] Bourdieu’s original
formulation of social capital as in relation with other forms of capital and as rooted in
the practices of everyday life, with a view of children as having agency (albeit
constrained); thus linking micro-social and macro social structural factors” (p. 757). A
Bourdieu inspired examination of social capital could provide an important lens
through which to explore the creation and use of social capital in the everyday lives of
children.

**Moving Beyond Coleman**

Few researchers have accepted the challenge of engaging in Bourdieu-inspired
research. However, the findings of those researchers render promising results. Leonard
(2005) explored how children as agents created and utilized their own stocks of social
capital and explored the issue of convertibility, or the transformation of social capital
into other forms of capital. The data for her study was based on two projects in
working class communities in Ireland. Spanning a 10-year period, the projects were
focused on exploring how people managed poverty and the strategies employed to
alleviate or cope with their circumstances. The two communities (Project A and
Project B) from which the data was gathered experienced varying levels of poverty;
participants were either unemployed or under-employed. Interviews were conducted with adults and teens (ages 14-16).

The data indicated that children did engage in the creation of social capital that they drew on to facilitate future action. However, their actions appeared constrained by the broader community context. Leonard asserted that Project A and Project B were embedded in very different community contexts per their unique histories (see pp. 614-615). Households in Project A appeared to have strong connections with their neighbors exhibited by norms of trust and reciprocity, whereas households in Project B appeared to be isolated and distrustful of their neighbors. Referencing Winter (2000) Leonard stated, “It may be particular places rather than particular families that foster social capital at the community level” (Leonard, 2005, p. 615). The differential network characteristics played out in the lives of children as well. Children from households in Project A were more likely to engage in regular volunteer activity (e.g., through church, helping those in the neighborhood, etc.). While sometimes these connections led to reciprocal relationships, others appeared to reflect more altruistic giving. Leonard pointed to examples of young people doing favors for the elderly and refusing to accept payment pointing out how the relationship differed from Coleman’s idea of reciprocal exchange as “credit slips”.

These differences were also reflected in job search strategies and employment. Fifty percent of the youth from Project A had been engaged in formal employment compared to only 14% from Project B. Youth from Project A secured employment through connections to neighbors, family members and peer groups, whereas youth from Project B did not use their social ties, but more individualized approaches. In discussing employment experiences, Leonard pointed out that youth from both
projects ultimately formed their own connections with adults not associated with their parents. Sometimes these independent connections led to other employment opportunities.

As Leonard unpacked her findings she consistently called into question Coleman’s assertions regarding what kinds of families possess social capital. As was outlined earlier in this chapter and in Appendix A, Coleman suggested that a connectedness between a child and the family and that family with the broader community could convert to higher academic achievement. He noted that social capital within the family that affords children access to their parents’ human capital relies both on the parents’ presence in the household and their investment in children through providing attention to them and strong norms. Therefore, two-parent families with few children and quality relationships between parents and children provided the most favorable environment for the transmission of social capital. Coleman even argued that one-earner families are better than dual-earner families (even though they ostensibly would have more economic capital) per the lack of time parents would have in the home to invest in their children. For Coleman (1988), social capital represented a filter through which the economic and human capital of parents was transmitted to and used by children.

Leonard pointed out that in Project A most children came from two-parent, “no-earner” families where neither parent was employed (primarily due to the lack of human capital) and in Project B most children came from single-parent homes where mother’s lack of human capital served as a barrier to formal employment thus impacting the level of economic capital available to the family. While quality relationships between parents and children and positive perceptions of education
(seen as a way to rise above poverty) were hallmarks of both projects, the lack of the other forms of capital impeded educational opportunities. As Leonard summarized:

By itself, however, social capital was a poor asset in terms of its ability to be transformed into other types of capital. Parent’s own lack of economic capital impacted negatively on the educational opportunities available to their children despite their enthusiasm for education. In many households parents could not afford the costs of schooling. Some households found it difficult to buy the child’s school uniform. . . These examples suggest that the complementary relationship that Coleman envisaged between social capital and other forms may be much more complicated than he implied. The families that he highlights as lacking in social capital may be more afflicted by a lack of economic and human capital and hence unable to move effortlessly among different forms. (Leonard, 2005, p. 611)

Leonard noted that Bourdieu acknowledged this lack of convertibility. For Bourdieu (1986), social capital as an asset drew its worth from the power and influences of the social connections an individual possessed. The dominant social classes use their privileged access to the various forms of capital to make strategic conversion of one kind of capital to another; convertibility is not automatic. It is constrained by the broader context.

While Coleman discussed the importance of beyond family social capital, little attention was afforded to the ways children themselves connect to their community. Even in Putnam’s discourse, community engagement was often cast in ways that excluded children (e.g., voter participation, etc.). However, one of Putnam’s indicators of active engagement centered on organized leisure (e.g., bowling leagues
versus television, etc.), which was potentially relevant to children. Leonard (2005) found that the lack of available opportunities in the community and the lack of economic capital of families served as a barrier to youth engagement in leisure activities. The majority of children from both projects discussed the lack of opportunities available to them in their neighborhoods:

- Both areas were characterized by almost non-existent leisure facilities for teenagers and younger children in terms of playgrounds or other play areas.
- Access to organized leisure necessitated traveling. . . and traveling costs further increased the cost of organized leisure preventing many children from being regular participants and enhancing the attractiveness of television as an affordable leisure pursuit. (2005, pp. 613-614)

Throughout the interviews children often differentiated between what they did and what they would do if money were not an object. Once the barrier of finances was removed, youth identified a range of activities they would engage in. Leonard asserted that this pointed to the importance of economic capital in the creation of social capital for children.

The research of Hampshire and Matthijsse (2010) afforded a chance to explore the impact of creating opportunities for children to engage organized activities. Utilizing a mixed-method design (i.e., participant observation, individual and focus group interviews, questionnaires), Hampshire and Matthijsse explored the development of social capital for children participating in the United Kingdom government funded SingUp program and its impact on their emotional and social well-being. They pulled both from Putnam and his distinction between bonding and bridging social capital, as well as Bourdieu and his understanding of social inequality and power.
relationships in framing their study. The high turnover of children within the program prohibited the use of questionnaire data. Therefore, the main analysis was based on their qualitative approaches. Participant observation and interview data reflected that the SingUp program enjoyed widespread success with many children identifying they had fun, developed friendships that extended outside of the SingUp program, enhanced their relationships with their parents and experienced increased self-confidence. All of these outcomes are reflective of improved social and emotional well-being.

However, Hampshire and Matthijsse (2010) noted that all participants did not enjoy these benefits across the board. Their analysis revealed that the children participating in the SingUp program were disproportionately girls with previous music ability and affluent backgrounds. The authors pointed to Putnam’s conceptualization of bonding and bridging social capital for explanation. The data revealed that the “constraining” nature of bonding ties created social risk for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. They found it was a challenge to recruit children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, noting that children reported they feared their friends would find out they had joined the program and faced the risk of becoming disconnected from their current network of friends. Therefore, strong bonding capital served as a barrier to the possibility to build bridging social capital for many would-be participants in the SingUp program.

Hampshire and Matthijsse (2010) also observed that there were inherent power imbalances in bridging capital requiring those with less power to buy into the values and tastes of those with more power. When children joined the SingUp program, they brought different sets of economic, cultural, symbolic and social capital to the
What constituted “proper music” in the experiences and repertoires of some children and the leaders “clashed” with the musical reference points of the children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Hampshire and Matthijsse shared the example of a leader wincing at the suggestion of singing songs from *High School Musical*, thus devaluing the child’s musical tastes.

The mismatch of cultural traditions and repertoires is not socially neutral; rather it represents a hierarchy of forms of cultural capital (in this case, privileging certain kinds of tradition and forms of music as indicating superior taste) which is both emblematic and constitutive of social inequalities.

(Hampshire & Matthijsse, 2010, p. 712)

This issue directly links to Bourdieu’s (1986) notion of the convertibility of capitals. Hampshire and Matthijsse (2010) asserted that “[t]hose children whose parents have enough money and possess appropriate cultural capital are in a better position to realize some of the new hopes and ambitions that SingUp might offer: taking private singing lessons, for example” (p. 713).

Basso, Graham, Pelech, DeYoung and Cardey (2004) explored the agency of children in their investigation of the relationships children build within their environments and the benefits that accrued through those relationships. Data were collected through field observations on a ten-block stretch identified by professionals as a high service area in an Ontario city (population about 1,000,000). The timeframe of observations was during after school hours (3:30-5:30 PM). To provide more depth to their data, researchers also spoke to 38 adults observed interacting with the youth. While Basso and colleagues do not couch their findings in social capital theory, their research shed light on how children interacted in their after school social
environments and how they personally navigated and negotiated relationships independent of their parents. Two of their guiding research questions of particular interest included: *Whom do the children interact with on the street? Are there social supports, monitoring and bonding opportunities for children on the street after school?* (p. 191).

Their findings revealed that children interacted with a range of people on the street, including other children, shop owners and municipal workers (e.g., police constables, bus drivers, etc.). The data also indicated that the children’s most frequent interactions are with each other. Basso et al. noted that the sidewalks were like an extension of a playground. The interactions of children with each other ranged from playful exchanges (e.g., drawing with sidewalk chalk, roller blading, etc.) to conflict (sometimes involving physical violence) and bullying. Children also, although to a lesser extent, consistently interacted with shop owners and municipal workers, invoking a range of relational responses and interactions. Basso and colleagues identified a pattern of communication relating to this range of interactions that provided support, monitoring and bonding opportunities for children (see Table 2.3). Their model of communication is seen as interactive in which the environment responds in positive or negative (often corrective) ways depending on youths’ behavior.

*Table 2.3. Patterns of Interaction in Response to Pro-social and Antisocial Youth Behavior*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pro-social behavior of youth</th>
<th>Antisocial behavior of youth</th>
<th>Child to Child</th>
<th>Child to Merchant</th>
<th>Child to Authority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharing</td>
<td>Fighting</td>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>Rebuke</td>
<td>Praise + Rewards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Correction + Steering</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The main source of adult interactions for children were with store owners, who often responded to children out a sense of shared responsibility, as captured in the statement made by one shop owner: “My grand-kids are out there too. I expect they’ll get into small trouble, not big trouble, and I hope somebody takes the time to talk to them, to straighten them out” (Basso et al., 2004, p. 197). Basso and colleagues also identified a three-layer model of intervention reflecting how adults and children co-create relationships. They placed the behavior of children at the core, with the adults in the environment responding as outlined in Table 2.3. The next layer related to the communication of values and beliefs as a way of mentoring and guidance, sometimes independently sought by children. Finally, there was the street culture; by their actions and interactions, everyone was involved in creating what life was like on the street. For example, there were places to obtain snacks (e.g., cookies, potato chips, etc.), places to use the restroom or get a drink, and places to receive support (e.g., escape from a bully, etc.). Children were aware of these places and accessed them as needs arose. Although the study was not explicitly tied to social capital theory, the youths’ connections to adults provided an important resource as reflected in the summary statement of the results:

Merchants effectively functioned as community-based guides or mentors for children. . . They provided support to children feeling endangered, isolated, or lonely. Some furnished rewards to those who did well. They sometimes corrected inappropriate behaviours and offered mentoring or values guidance. (Bossa, et al., 2004, p. 199)
Application of Social Capital Theory to Street Children

A few studies have been conducted applying social capital theory to the street youth population ranging from understanding the role of social capital in children becoming homeless to how children created and used their own networks to meet a range of needs and protect against violence. Most studies reflected the agency of children and sought to understand the notion of social capital as applied to children beyond the narrow conceptions proposed by Coleman.

Hagen and McCarthy (1997) combined the approaches of two social capital theorists in their exploration of the past trajectories by which young people in Canada came to the streets and the role of social relationships in the path their lives took while on the street. They utilized Coleman’s conceptualization of social capital to explain the emergence of street youth, linking a lack of social capital in the family to the youth becoming homeless. They also linked this to their participation in criminal conduct while on the street, noting that certain forms of capital may actually facilitate criminal involvement such as having antisocial values or delinquent peers. In defining social capital, Bourdieu (1986) focused on how individuals gain access to resources, advantage, and/or privileges because of their connection to certain groups that were situated in a larger system of social relationships and networks that supported the group. Hagen and McCarthy drew on Bourdieu’s conceptualization of social capital in their discussion of how individuals became embedded in criminal communities and “recapitalized” their diminished social capital.

More recently, Stephenson (2001) explored the creation and use of social capital among street children in Moscow. Through the use of a survey questionnaire (n=123) and qualitative interviews (n=20), Stephenson explored the social and
economic networks created and used among street children to meet their immediate survival needs and enable them to invest in potential social mobility. Although Bourdieu (1986) explicitly discussed the role of social capital in the transmission of privileged positions, Stephenson utilized his approach in relation to the strategic use of sociability by people with extremely limited economic and cultural resources. “For such people the mobilisation of personal relations, cultivation of relationships with others in strategic position, creation of obligations and trust can achieve what was initially physically lacking - such as a roof over one’s head, security and food, plus an opportunity for social mobility” (Stephenson, 2001, p. 534). Her study revealed that a complex system of social relations emerged on the street, which she referred to as the “Arbat System” (or System). The System, which included a mix of subcultural groups (i.e., punks, skinheads, Satanists) of all ages, was a complex structure of networks with a system of mutual obligations and trust. Through the development of quasi-families, the System provided access to food, shelter, emotional support and mobility.

Stephenson discussed how street children attempted to enter this specific community through their use of social skills and knowledge of cultural symbols with the aspirations of being members of adult organized crime when they grow up. She stressed the importance of their ability to replicate the jargon and norms of behavior and “acquiring a name”. “In order to obtain entry into the adult criminal world, the young candidates have to... acquire a *name*. . . The name can be *earned* by deeds - i.e., criminal acts - which would testify to the person’s intelligence and capacity to take risks” (Stephenson, 2001 p. 542). Once in the System, the group helped facilitate survival through a set of governing norms and sanctions. In the System, young people created:
Ingenious ad hoc structures that enable their members to pool their resources and through which they impose normative codes ensuring a minimal conflict with the law. At the same time the pressures on this System from outsiders attempting to use its resources make it develop social closure mechanisms, which enable it to exclude newcomers, especially children with insufficient cultural capital and undeveloped sociability. (Stephenson, 2001 p. 540)

Exploring the networks created by children has been a point of interest for many investigating the lives of street youth. Although not directly utilizing social capital theory, Ayuku, Kaplan, Baars and de Vries (2004) employed a cross-sectional, multiple case group (i.e., children on the street, children of the street) and control group (i.e., children in a shelter, school children) design to explore the characteristics and personal networks of children in Kenya. The case groups were based on the UNICEF (1986) definition of street children and included children on the street (children who have inadequate or sporadic family support) and children of the street (children who are functionally without parents). Ayuku and colleagues used the Revised Version of the Maastricht Social Networks Analysis instrument to measure the network characteristics of children identifying who was in the network (i.e., family members, friends, social service personnel), the nature of the ties (e.g., frequency of contact, length of contact, etc.) and the extent to which the network met needs along four categories (i.e., need for affection, need for connection, need for stability, need for material resources). Participants were solicited using a combination of strategies including spot observation, social mapping and snowball sampling.

Ayuku et al. (2004) found that children of and on the street had smaller networks overall. They also found that the case groups’ networks had a higher
concentration of friends and a lower concentration of family and service sector personnel than those in the control groups. Overall the control groups had more balanced networks with people spanning friends, family and support persons. Not surprisingly, children of the street had lower amounts of contact with their mothers and fathers and experienced lower amounts of need fulfillment across the board than any of the other three groups. Unfortunately, the researchers did not share the data related to need fulfillment and friends, the major source of relationships occurring in the networks of children of the street. While their research provided important insights related to who is in the networks of street children, the researchers did not take the next step to explore benefits that may accrue through these networks.

A number of other researchers highlighted the important resources embedded in the group for street children. One resource identified in the literature was the fulfillment of primary familial needs such as protection, sustenance and nurture (cf., Agnelli, 1986; Connolly, 1990; Lusk, Glaser, Prior, & Inwood, 1989). The gang “provides the protection and comradeship of a substitute family, status, excitement, and a code of ‘honor’ - rules to which, unlike those of conventional society, the youngster can conform. It also meets the need, in particular, for a sense of identity, which is sometimes reinforced by esoteric slang” (Agnelli, 1986, p. 39). Aptekar (1989) attributed the adequate mental health of street children, in spite of their lifestyles, to the intense friendships they formed within their groups. These intense “chumships” bordered on love and ameliorated the effects of past emotional trauma. Alexandrescu (1996) identified that the street children in Romania had a tendency to associate in groups and engage in “self-protective reciprocity. . . they realize that it is only in a group that they can survive” (p. 268). Baardson (1993) reported that groups of juvenile
prostitutes supported each other economically and emotionally. “For the vast majority of the girls in the survey, the network among the girls was the only security system they had” (p 34). He further highlighted that the group was particularly important for those street children who had lost all contact with their families.

Street children are vulnerable to abuse and victimization from the police, from other street children and from customers and passers-by on the street. Another resource available to street children in a group identified in the literature is protection from victimization and exploitation. This is especially true among girls. In her study of Ethiopian street children (n=69), Lalor (1997) reported that all but two of her sample of female street children were found to belong to a specific group. According to her findings, most of the girls’ activities (i.e., sleeping, working, eating, and recreation) were carried out within a group. Friends were an important source of protection and companionship. Particularly in the event of becoming sick or of being attacked on the streets, the group played an important protective, nurturing role without which many girls would find street life untenable.

More recently, McCarthy, Hagan and Martin (2002) used social capital theory explicitly to explore the nature and role of relationships among children living on the streets in Canada (Toronto and Vancouver) in generating social capital resources. The data for their study were collected via a short-term panel design conducted in 1992 using qualitative interviews and survey research. Data collection occurred in three waves. There was an initial data collection point where information was sought about street relationships, their role in meeting needs and experiences with violence on the street. One and two months later, researchers followed up with respondents conducting interviews and facilitating questionnaires. There were two eligibility
requirements for inclusion in the study, including the lack of a permanent residence off the street and the need for respondents to fall within 12-24 years of age.

Analysis of the data revealed different types of relationships operating on the street and that street relationships did afford access to varying levels of intangible resources (e.g., trust, etc.), needed material assets and protection. One type of relationship emerging from the data reflected the adoption of familial identities among a group of youth; as McCarthy and colleagues pointed out, relationships similar to the “fictive kin” associated with inner-city life. One youth described the emotional connection felt toward these relationships this way:

My street family gave me more support on the streets and stuff: people loving and caring for you. You know, being there for you. It feels better, you know, than just being, you know, alone when you don’t know what to do. (McCarthy et al., 2002, p. 845)

The youth described their fictive street family relationships as trustworthy, reciprocal (a desire to return help received) and dependable, noting the challenge of building these kinds of relationships on the street. In contrast, other relationships did not take on a family orientation but were considered friendships or associations. One youth in the study commented:

I don’t consider them street families; I just consider them a group of friends. We watch over each other to a degree, but it’s like, if my friend got into a fight with somebody, it’s his battle. (McCarthy et al., 2002, p. 850)

The data revealed a clear distinction between the levels of assistance provided through relationships in fictive street families versus other street associations. Relationships within fictive street families significantly increased access to shelter and
assistance with panhandling, money and food, while the relationships of other street associations significantly increased receiving assistance with food only. The relationships within fictive street families also appeared to serve as a protective factor against violence. McCarthy and colleagues reported that street family relationships had a statistically significant negative effect on victimization; other street associations did not. Conversely, other street associations had a statistically significant positive effect on victimizing behavior, whereas no such effect was present related to street family relationships. In summary, McCarthy and colleagues asserted:

Fictive street families provide the social capital resources associated with more conventional relationships, whereas nonfamilial street ties fail to generate them. . . . Our research suggests that a social capital approach provides important insights into the variable nature of relationships, the resources they provide, and the outcomes they influence. (2002, pp. 858-859)

**Weighing the Merits of Social Capital Theory**

Social capital theory has emerged as one of the most salient concepts in the social sciences (Lin, 1999). The empirical work on social capital theory demonstrates that benefits are mediated through social relationships and can explain a variety of individual and collective behaviors, ranging from political involvement to educational outcomes. It highlights the important notion that, to a significant extent, an individual’s actions are dependent on the social context in which actions are embedded. However, there are concerns about the one-sided interpretations and empirical exploration of social capital that deserve mentioning.
The “Dark Side” of Social Capital

Interpretations of social capital have tended to treat social capital as a positive factor. However, it is important to note social capital may have negative effects for some parties - what is referred to in the literature as the “dark side” of social capital (Putzel 1997). The notion that the outcomes of social capital can have a dark side is especially important to the original formulation of social capital by Bourdieu and Coleman. They focused upon how social capital enabled individuals to gain a competitive advantage, either in economic or human capital terms. However, it can be argued that a gain for some through the use of social capital is a potential loss for others (Portes & Landolt, 1996).

Portes and Landolt (1996) described four significant problems that could be associated with strong social capital: social exclusion, restrictions on individual freedom, downward leveling pressures, and anti social groups (“public goods”). The first negative product of strong social capital is social exclusion that can be understood as strong ties that enables members of a group to exclude outsiders. This can be seen in the common development of any “us versus them” mentality, either drawn around ethnic lines, class differences and religious beliefs or against newcomers. The exclusion of newcomers was seen operating in the Arbat System among Russian street children (Stephenson, 2001).

Second, one of the trade-offs of these strong bonds for a member of a group is that the need for conformity encroaches on the individual’s personal freedoms. An example of this is that membership in an overly tight family can influence a person’s business initiative by stifling the entrepreneur with obligations to the family that lead to neglect of his or her own business obligations. The strong connections reflective of
bonding social capital served as a barrier to participation of children from disadvantaged backgrounds in the SingUp program in the United Kingdom (Hampshire & Matthijsse, 2010).

Third, there can be cases where sociability is high but leads nowhere due to a lack of resources. Portes and Landolt (1996) referred to this as “downward leveling pressures”. They pointed out that while Putnam (1995) echoed the common view that the inner city is short on sociability, other studies show the opposite. Inner cities often show high levels of cooperation and reliance on kinship networks for survival, but because assets are scarce allegiance to these networks proved to be a handicap. In their loyalty to local networks residents failed to open new avenues for resource development that would require an extension of those networks beyond the already tightly knit local groups (Portes & Landolt, 1996).

Finally, high levels of social capital can develop in negative directions as in the case of “public bads” (Portes & Landolt, 1996), such as organized crime families, street gangs and prostitution operations. These groups all rely on closed membership with strong bonds of allegiance, but result in socially non-productive, “negative capital” for society as a whole. Putnam’s (1993a) work on Italian regions has provided us the oft-cited example of the mafia as a “family” that draws heavily on particular forms of social capital to produce positive outcomes for those in the family but potentially dark side outcomes for those outside the family. This issue was highlighted in the work of McCarthy et al. (2002) in their exploration of the role of social capital in violence and victimization of children living on the street in Canada. “Although social capital may increase access to an array of normatively valued outcomes, it may also create inroads to disreputable or deviant ends” (McCarthy et al., 2002, p. 834).
The Overuse of Secondary Data

Beyond this dark side of social capital, there are theoretical and empirical limitations (Portes & Landolt, 1996; Stone & Hughes, 2000; Winter, 2000). Much social capital research to date is based on secondary analysis, and, as such, is inherently limited. Many studies are based on large-scale quantitative analysis of big national datasets not specifically designed to measure social capital. Therefore, the focus is on the quantity of (a proxy of) social capital, not the quality. Data gathered originally for purposes other than the study of social capital are unlikely to provide conceptually thorough measures.

As Winter (2000) demonstrated, an example of this concern can be found in Coleman’s (1988) research on family based social capital. Coleman argued that social capital within the family is vital to children’s educational outcomes and thereby their future economic capital. However, Coleman’s (1988) measures were only proximate indicators of networks and norms, the two key components of social capital. As a measure of the strength of norms of cooperation within the family Coleman used a quantitative measure, the frequency of discussions parents have with children about personal matters. This quantitative measure revealed nothing about the qualities - trust or reciprocity - of the interaction. His assertion that parent-child relationships were not related to dropout rates in high school may be erroneous. It was not known if the parent-child interactions took the form of support or argument. As a measure of the family network, Coleman used the ratio of parents to children in the household. While his analysis of parent-child ratios demonstrated a strong association with dropping out of high school, Coleman used the extremes of this variable in his analysis. He compared high school dropout rates of children from two parent-two child families
with those from one parent-five child families. In a discussion of his findings, Coleman stated, “The most prominent element of structural deficiency in modern families is the single-parent family” (1988, p. 111). Coleman confounded measurement of the parent-child ratio with all the associated characteristics of sole parenthood, such as lower education levels and poverty (Winter, 2000). These problems with Coleman’s (1988) measures of social capital have been replicated in the work of other researchers who followed him (Amato, 1998; Furstenburg & Hughes, 1995).

**Tautological Cycles**

Social capital measurement is further complicated by the fact that social capital research has frequently relied upon measures of the outcomes of social capital as indicators of social capital itself. A measure of a norm of trust (i.e., the extent to which the family culture is trusting) is different from behavioral outcomes of that norm (the extent to which family members would trust one another to care of an important need). As Newton (1997) stated, social capital “may indeed generate valuable goods and services. . . but we should not assume that it does, and we should not include such goods and benefits as part of the definition” (p. 578; see also Paxton, 1999). It is necessary to recognize empirically that understanding whether or not a social process is at work is different from understanding the consequences of such a process. This raises the further tautological problem that research reliant upon an outcome of social capital as an indicator of it, will necessarily find social capital to be related to that outcome. As Portes and Landolt (1996) suggested, there is a danger that the concept of social capital produces a series of “[t]autologies, truisms and stereotypes. . . [when] social capital and the benefits from it are confused, the term
merely says that the successful succeed” (p. 22). Social capital becomes tautologically present whenever an outcome is observed (Portes, 1998; Durlauf 1999).

A number of studies presented social capital as an independent variable and asked questions about how social capital influenced other variables (e.g., educational attainment, child well-being, etc.). Other studies aimed to determine what it is that led to the decline or growth of social capital as a dependent variable. Still others adopt measurement designs that saw social capital as both dependent and independent in their models. Separating the measure of social capital from its outcomes enables social capital to be positioned unambiguously within any research design, and be understood clearly in relation to its predictors and/or outcomes (Stone & Hughes, 2000).

**Multidimensional Nature**

A third problem with the empirical testing of social capital as a theoretical construct is the failure to treat social capital as a multidimensional concept. As previously noted, networks, norms of trust and norms of reciprocity represent the key components of social capital. Identifying each of these empirically is essential because social capital is a multidimensional concept. Despite this, social capital studies relied upon uni-dimensional measures of the concept, often with little regard to the relationship between that dimension and other key elements. Most notable among these are studies that used a single item measure of trust, most often drawn from the World Values Survey, as indicative of social capital as a whole (Putnam, 1995; see also Knack & Keefer 1997). While trust lies at the core of social capital, it is also important to know how that trust inheres within networks and its relationship to the norm of reciprocity. Newton (1997) suggested that to fail to conceptualize social capital’s
dimensions in separate terms is ultimately likely to “muddle empirical questions” (p. 575). Unless the separate dimensions are identified, researchers are unable to ask questions about how these dimensions operate and interact empirically. Inability to pose empirical questions about the nature of the interaction between the separate dimensions of social capital severely limits the understanding of the concept as a whole.

**Implications for Street Children**

As previously noted the predominance of research regarding children has conceptualized social capital for children as embedded in families and focused on parents’ ability to invest in their children’s well-being or future. This conceptualization minimizes the agency of children, emphasizing the influence of parents on children’s lives. In other words, children’s integration into society is portrayed, in effect, as a one-way process in which adults give and children are beneficiaries. For many street children, the family is not the primary source for meeting basic needs - food, clothing, shelter, nurturance and socialization. Several researchers have shown that complex systems of social relations among street children emerged on the street, which supplied or connected them to resources necessary for survival (Agnelli, 1986; Alexandrescu, 1996; Aptekar, 1989; Baardson, 1993; Lalor, 1997; Stephensen, 2001; McCarthy et al., 2002).

Another concern regarding the application of social capital theory to the street children population is that Coleman’s arguments are not situated socio-culturally (Morrow, 1999). The focus is often on the impact of social capital, mediated through families and their connections, on adolescent pro-social outcomes such as employment success, academic competence and lack of deviant behavior (Furstenberg & Hughes,
In poor areas (in the USA), many people rely on their social and family ties for economic survival. . . There is considerable social capital in ghetto areas, but the assets obtainable through it seldom allow participants to rise above their poverty. For all their negative connotations, inner-city youth gangs are also social networks that provide access to resources and enforce conformity. . . . For a ghetto teenager, membership in a gang may be the only way to obtain self-respect and material goods. (pp. 20-21)

Many researchers may point to this scenario to demonstrate the outcomes of a lack of social capital, or as the dark side of social capital. But one cannot ignore the socio-cultural factors that create the environments in which children function. For example, in areas of socio-economic disadvantage, there may be no effective long-term rewards for school achievement. Children may be aware of this lack of benefit. Therefore, their responses (e.g., dropping out, turning to crime, etc.) might be reasonable and logical, given their circumstances. In order to gain insight into the determinants of well-being for street children it is necessary to employ an approach that would contextualize street childrens’ everyday lives within a socio-cultural framework more reflective of the work of Leonard (2005) and Hampshire and Matthijsse (2010).

However, controlling for some of the above-mentioned concerns, social capital theory has tremendous applicability to the framing of an exploration of the strategies employed by the street children of Romania that enable them to meet their needs in the face of the multifaceted challenges of street life. A reconceptualization of social capital theory that views children as having agency and considers the socio-cultural
context from which street children emerge could facilitate the identification of factors and processes that lead to their survival. Coming from a social capital perspective builds on the networks and strengths already being utilized by street children. The identification of how individual children access and use resources embedded in social networks and how groups of children maintain social capital as a collective asset can provide important insight to be incorporated into program and intervention policies geared to address the many needs of street children. Supporting children’s agency requires an acknowledgement that they have valid insights into their well-being, valid solutions to their problems and a valid role in implementing those solutions.

Building on a conceptual framework proposed by social capital theorist Nan Lin (Lin, 2001a, see also Lin, 2001b), I proposed and utilized a model for examining the networks, resiliencies and needs among street children in Romania. There were many unanswered questions about the mechanisms through which social capital produced better returns and which types of social capital was needed. Lin’s model was selected because it incorporates many of the diverse perspectives regarding the structure and content of social capital allowing for the exploration of homogeneous forms of social capital based on common ties and heterogeneous forms that create broader linkages across boundaries. A qualitative study of social capital with street children necessitated a heuristic framework with a broad scope to enable as many possible realities of children to be taken into consideration. Finally, the use of Lin’s model allowed for the exploration of the socio-cultural context of street children and the conceptualization of children as agents.
Modeling Social Capital: Creating a Heuristic Framework

Lin defined social capital as, “an investment in social relations by individuals through which they gain access to embedded resources to enhance expected returns of instrumental or expressive actions” (2001a, pp. 17-18). Lin’s definition identified three processes that were important in framing the examination of the need-meeting strategies employed by the street children of Romania:

1. investment in social capital;
2. access to and mobilization (use) of social capital; and
3. returns of social capital.

These processes will be presented in the three groupings that were utilized in the initial framing of the qualitative inquiry into the lives of Romanian street children (see Table 2.4).

Table 2.4. Proposed Heuristic Framework for Exploring Social Capital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Precursors or Preconditions</th>
<th>Acquisition and Mobilization of Social Capital</th>
<th>Returns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Individual Actor</td>
<td>• Embedded Resources</td>
<td>• Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Position</td>
<td>• Action</td>
<td>• Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Social Markers</td>
<td>- Instrumental (bridging)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Network Ties</td>
<td>- Expressive (bonding)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Nature</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Location</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The first grouping represented the pre-conditions or precursors that may constrain or enable investment in and access to social capital. Lin (2001a, 2001b)
noted that these might include factors in the social structure and each individual’s position in the social structure. Lin highlighted three specific factors that may impact one’s access to social capital that merited exploration:

1. the *position* of an actor within a hierarchical structure;
2. the *nature* of the tie between actors; and
3. the *location* of the ties within a network.

The individual child’s position in the social structure and the nature and location of their network ties constituted precursors exogenous to the process of accessing or mobilizing social capital. Related to the *position* of an actor within a hierarchical structure, Lin proposed that, “The better the position of origin, the more likely the actor will access and use better social capital” (Lin, 2001b, p. 64). An actor who occupies a higher position in the structure of society is at an advantage since she or he is in a better position to access and mobilize social ties with better resources. He referred to this as the Strength-of-Position Proposition.

Modell (1994) noted, “[a]ny meaningful notion of social capital must be situated in a larger set of social and cultural relations that surround the way children grow up in any given society” (p. 51). There were subtle but crucially important economic, ethnic and class differences between groups of children on the street. These differences have been found to define life chances (Stephenson, 2001). Writing about street children in the international context, Ennew and Milne (1997) pointed out that the labor market in which street children operate, “is distinguished by divisions of age as well as gender (and) ethnicity. . . street children have careers or work histories, although these are seldom studied” (p. xi; cited in Stephenson, 2001, p. 71).
These individual characteristics (social markers) may be precursors exogenous to accessing and mobilizing social capital.

As previously noted in the critique of social capital theory, social capital is almost always defined as an aggregate variable: the norms and networks of a particular family, group, or community. However, decisions to invest in and act on social capital are made by individual actors. A model of social capital that did not begin with the exploration of individual background factors, or social markers, as precursors exogenous to the process of accessing or mobilizing social capital could not fully understand its formation. Therefore, it was proposed that the exploration of social markers be incorporated in Lin’s model under pre-conditions and precursors of social capital. These social markers and how they interrelate with one’s position in the network structure provided a broader understanding of the socio-cultural environment from which street children emerged. Some of the potential social markers were identified as gender, ethnicity (i.e., Are the children roma?) and age. Other markers considered included past trajectories (e.g., What conditions resulted in them being on the street? Did they come to the street alone? With siblings? Do they maintain any contact with their family or a member of it?, etc.), physical size, level of attractiveness (it is proposed that once engaged in street life, these markers - size and attractiveness - determine one’s “career”; see Lusk, 199), and others that emerged throughout the study.

Regarding the nature of the tie between actors, Lin proposed that, “The stronger the tie, the more likely that the social capital accessed will positively affect the success of expressive action” (Lin, 2001b, p. 65). He referred to this as the Strength-of-Strong-Tie Proposition. This proposition follows from Coleman’s closure
argument (1988; see also Coleman and Hoffer, 1987). Social capital originates with people forming social connections and networks through informal face-to-face associations based on principles of trust, mutual reciprocity and norms of action. Closure enables social norms to impose more external effects on individuals through the exchange of information and mutually held values and behavioral norms. Collective sanctions build and ensure trustworthiness, nurturing the presence of borrowing and favors, which knits people together because of existing expectations and obligations. Therefore, accessible resources may be positively related to social ties with whom actors share stronger sentiment.

Lin proposed an alternative perspective to the nature of the tie between actors, the Strength-of-Weak-Ties Proposition. “The weaker the tie, the more likely ego (the actor) will have access to better social capital for instrumental action” (Lin, 2001b, p. 67; see also Granovetter, 1973, 1974). Weaker ties characterized by less intimacy, frequency of contact, fewer obligations and weaker reciprocal exchanges may be associated with more dissimilar resources. Relatedly, Burt (1992) argued that a sparse network with few redundant ties often provided greater social capital benefits. He conceptualized social capital as a resource that inheres in the social network tying a focal actor to other actors and included the presence and quality of relationships between group members and their environments and their connection to groups, organizations, and institutions - formal and informal.

Finally, a child’s location in the network may constrain or facilitate one’s investment in and access to social capital. Lin (2001b) proposed that, “[t]he closer individuals are to the bridge in a network, the better the social capital to which they will have access” (p. 72). Network bridges allow for the flow of information from one
social network to another. Burt (1992) referred to these as structural holes and argued that social capital is created when actors can broker connections between otherwise disconnected networks. Lin’s Strength-of-Location Proposition argument reflects the belief that actors closest to those individuals facilitating the bridge may have better access to the social capital mobilized through the bridge.

It should be noted that it was not the purpose of the present study to test Lin’s propositions regarding his model (i.e., strong ties being positively associated with successful expressive actions and weak ties being positively associated with successful instrumental actions). Awareness that preconditions may exist that constrain or facilitate access to social capital provided a framework of exploration that was useful in understanding how children were enabled or disabled to meet their needs in the environment of the street. Alexandrescu (1996) identified that street children form groups that appeared important to their survival and encouraged further exploration into the role of the group in the lives of street children. In the present study, I looked within the street culture to identify how children were ordered and where the street children population as a whole intersected with the larger society (position of an actor within the hierarchical structure). The following broad questions served to frame the initial exploration. Do the Romanian street children form and live in groups? If so, do the groups (networks) that street children in Romania develop and connect with contribute to their survival? If so, in what ways? What is the nature of relationships between street children and external systems? What resources (e.g., networks, money, housing, relationships, etc.) are available to children? How do they find out about them? What explains the differences between children’s information about and access to resources? What are the characteristics of children who are more or less
likely to know about and/or access resources? Which street children are able to gain access to more resource-laden forms of social capital? Why in a given collective do certain individuals have better access to embedded resources than others? These questions allowed for a beginning exploration of issues related to social markers, a child’s position in a network, the nature of the tie between children (within the group and external networks) and the location of the ties within a network.

The second grouping represented the acquisition and mobilization of social capital or the resources embedded in social networks. Resources embedded in the social networks may include social contacts’ material resources (i.e., money, food) or social resources (i.e., information, influence, service; Lin, 2001a). Lin argued that an actor engages in instrumental action (linking to other social networks; bridging social capital) to obtain resources that are lacking in one’s social circle or not possessed by an actor. What he termed expressive action (investing within the network; bonding social capital) is taken to reap the benefits of the consolidation of resources within a group with shared interests to preserve resources and defend against possible resource loss. Again it was not the purpose of the present research to test these propositions but to explore the nature and processes of accessing and mobilizing the resources embedded in social networks. Some areas of exploration regarding the acquisition and mobilization of resources included the following. Under what conditions do children consolidate their resources? What norms govern such actions? What social networks do children access and what facilitates that? For what needs does a child attempt to bridge a larger gap? How does that impact the future range of options? What social networks do children not access and what explains that? Given that there is unequal
access to social capital how would an individual be enabled or disabled to mobilize such capital for specific benefits?

The third grouping represented the returns on the investment in social ties. As Lin (2001a, 2001b) noted, this is where social capital demonstrates that it is capital. Actors engage in networking (interaction) in order to produce benefit. The present study explored the type of benefit (e.g., material, social, etc.) accrued and at what level (i.e., individual or collective) the benefit was experienced. Some areas of exploration regarding the returns on investment included the following. What benefits were accrued through the children’s investments in varying social relationships? What type of benefit did they experience? At what level did the benefit occur? Was it an individual benefit or a group benefit?

Concluding Remarks

As one reads through the literature review I have prepared, one can get lost in theories, propositions and models. I used social capital theory and the reconceptualization of Lin’s model as a heuristic framework through which to explore the lives of street children. While areas for exploration were presented in groupings, it was not my intention to assume categories or causal relationships. Taking an inductive approach, a framework for conceptualizing the need-meeting strategies employed by street children emerged from the data throughout the research process that sometimes did and sometimes did not fit within the landscape of research into social capital. Lin’s model was selected because it provided a holistic, integrative view of social capital. It provided a starting point through which to explore the observed phenomenon, not a strict filter seeking certain outcomes.
The insights gained from this study have implications for policy and program development for the street children in Romania. In essence, I was engaged in a development endeavor. As I entered the field to facilitate this study it was my hope that my “knowledge” did not become a chasm between the street children, a little understood and much underserved population group, and me as “the researcher”. As noted by Chambers (1986), professionals need to move from attitudes and positions as teachers and experts to learners and consultants, and from viewing indigenous persons as inferiors and beneficiaries to collaborators and colleagues. Throughout the research process I endeavored to maintain an “actor-centered” approach. “Actor” implies that the children are active, choosing agents, capable of making significant decisions about the nature and course of their own lives. “Centered” implies that research efforts should, in every aspect, be designed and carried out with the lives of indigenous actors as the central, guiding awareness (Cernea, 1991).
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY
Planning and facilitating the inquiry

This study sought to explore the creation and use of social capital among street children in Romania that enabled them to meet their needs in face of the multifaceted challenges of street life. Given all that street children have gone through, how do they manage to survive? A philosophical debate has been underway for many years regarding the best methods science can use to research the social world. This debate typically focuses on which of two methodologies - quantitative or qualitative - is the most recognized and reaps the most value (Patton, 1990). However, it is not necessary to place these approaches in opposition to each other. Patton (1990) advocated a “paradigm of choices” that seeks “methodological appropriateness as the primary criterion for judging methodological quality” (p. 39). In selecting the most appropriate research method, one must consider the research subject and research questions. Questions should drive method, not the other way around. This allows for “situational responsiveness that strict adherence to one paradigm or another will not” (Patton, 1990, p. 39). Strauss and Corbin (1990) suggested that qualitative methods can be used to understand better any phenomenon about which little is yet known and the grounded theory approach, specifically, is most suitable for theory development. As set forth in Chapter 2, there is a need for knowledge of the street youth population in
Romania and, from a theory-building standpoint, their creation and use of social capital. The three overarching questions that guided this study were:

1. Who are the children (e.g., age, gender, past trajectory, etc.) living and working on the streets of Bucharest, Romania?
2. Under what circumstances, conditions, or processes are the children on the street able to meet their needs in the face of adversity?
3. Are there informal and formal networks created and used by street children in an effort to build opportunities for survival? If so, what are they and how do they operate?

Given the complex, multifaceted, contextual and dynamic nature of the questions posed, qualitative methodologies were the most appropriate choice for this inquiry.

The first section of this chapter provides a fully articulated rationale for the selected research methodology and describes the characteristics of qualitative research that made it the most appropriate choice for this study. The next section identifies the methods used to establish the trustworthiness of the data, followed by an exploration of the preliminary steps of the study (i.e., selecting the research site, research team and research participants; examining the ethical considerations of the study; identifying methods to gain access to the population). The fourth section outlines the data collection strategies (i.e., participant observation, in-depth conversations) and the final section of this chapter explores the data analysis procedures.

Rationale for Research Methodology

Past research studies into the lives of street children have been primarily quantitative in nature. Although these studies provided important insights, in recent
years they have come under critique (Baker, Panter-Brick, & Todd, 1996; Grover, 2004; Kefyalew, 1996; Panter-Brick, 2002; Van Beers, 1996; Young & Barrett, 2001).

Questionnaires are among the least accurate research methods, and can provide only a superficial idea about the situation of the children involved. . . . They (the children) are objects of research rather than active participants. They may be measured, weighed, interrogated and tested. . . but qualitative research is seldom undertaken. (Van Beers, 1996, pp.198, 199)

Data produced through the use of quantitative methods certainly are valuable, but vital information regarding the lives and discourses of youths who live on the street often is overlooked.

More recent inquiries into the lives of street children have employed qualitative research methods (Beazley, 2002; Karabanow, 2003; Saad Awad, 2002) some exploring social capital specifically (Sandberg, 2008; Stephenson, 2001). These researchers have stressed the value of prolonged engagement in the field, the importance of seeking to understand children’s lives from their perspectives, and the incorporation of a process-oriented, multi-level perspective of street children that seeks a contextual understanding beyond mere description. Panter-Brick (2002) encouraged researchers to move away from a uni-dimensional account of street children’s lives, which does not do justice to children’s wider social networks (see also Connolly & Ennew, 1996; Johnson, Ivan-Smith, Gordon, Pridmore, & Scott, 1998). Qualitative data provides a vehicle for understanding underlying processes, which are difficult to gauge through quantitative means alone.

Several scholars, often cited in the qualitative research literature, have identified what they consider to be the prominent characteristics of qualitative
research (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Eisner, 1991; Janesick, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988; Patton, 1990). The following list synthesizes these authors’ descriptions of qualitative research. Each point represents a different characteristic of qualitative research and serves to articulate why the selection of qualitative methods represented the most appropriate choice for this study.

1. **Qualitative research is aimed at discovering meaning.** One of the central philosophies of qualitative research is that “reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world” (Merriam, 1988, p. 6). The qualitative epistemology centers upon the participant’s perspectives and experiences rather than the researcher’s imposed incorporations on participants. People are participants, not objects. They contribute not only the meaning of ideas and words but also the words themselves. Qualitative researchers are interested in how people make sense of their lives and their experiences. “They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 8).

Many authors stress the importance of this in the context of researching with children (Grover, 2004; Panter-Brick, 2002; Qvortrup, 1990). A review of the academic study of children reveals that most researchers virtually excluded the voice of children in the research process. Rather, they are treated as objects of study (Grover, 2004). James (1993) discussed the separate reality that emerges when children are given voice, allowing them to discuss themselves within their unique situation, as opposed to being analyzed in terms of adult theoretical categories that serve adult agendas. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN-CRC) emphasized this right
to be heard in its opening text where respect for children is highlighted. “The Convention on the Rights of the Child confirms that children have a right to express their views and to have their views taken seriously and given due weight” (UNDP, 1991). This right is articulated in Article 12. “States Parties shall assure to the child that is capable for forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child” (UNDP, 1991).

2. The researcher is concerned with process rather than simply the outcomes or products (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Qualitative research is a tool for understanding how things occur (Merriam, 1988), focusing on the process that is occurring as well as the product or outcome. An examination of process provides a dynamic, holistic view of the phenomena of study. Considering the interactions of all influences in the situation, it reveals how an event or situation evolves. Beazley (2002) successfully maximized on this approach. By utilizing observational and interview methods and focusing on the interaction of multiple influences, she gained a deep understanding of Indonesian street girls’ experiences of discrimination and how they negotiated their social position relative to street boys.

As previously noted, social capital theory served as the heuristic framework for this investigation. Social capital is understood as an asset inherent in social relations, which potentially make resources, opportunities, and/or advantages available to individuals. It is said to accumulate through numerous repeated and varied interactions, both formal and informal, in which stocks of trust, norms (e.g., of reciprocity, etc.), and networks develop that people can draw upon to solve problems. This framework is process-oriented and facilitates the exploration of multi-level
variables and the determinants of well-being operating through the individual child, group context and social structures. Furthermore, Glaser and Strauss (1967) asserted the ultimate outcome of grounded theory (theory development) requires qualitative data as such data are ideal for discerning aspects a theory (e.g., structural conditions, norms, patterns, etc.) holds to be important for explaining social interaction.

3. **Qualitative research uses the natural setting as the source of data.** No matter what tools the researcher uses to obtain data, the study is conducted in a particular setting because the context itself is a salient part of the study (Bogdan & Bilken, 1992; see also Merriam, 1988; Patton, 1990). The emphasis of the research is not the objective analysis or statistical measurement of experimental variables. Rather, the emphasis is an overall understanding of the unique characteristics of the participants in their environment. Baker, et al. (1996) noted that most of the research work with street children has relied heavily on survey methods with researchers engaging in minimal field contact. Divorced from context, this leads to a superficial understanding of street youth. “Currently there is a demand for methods that relate directly to children’s various life experiences and to the wider social context of peers, family, community and larger societal problems” (Baker et al., 1996, p. 172).

This study was conducted on the streets of Bucharest, the natural setting for street youth. Social capital theory calls for an approach that contextualizes street children’s everyday lives and discourses within the informal and formal environment in which they are situated.

4. **Qualitative researchers predominately use inductive data analysis** (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). “The process of qualitative research is inductive in that the researcher builds abstractions, concepts, hypotheses and theories from details” (Merriam, 1988,
pp. 19-20). As previously noted, the qualitative research approach employed in the present study draws on grounded theory techniques (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Within this approach of data collection and analysis, the results and conclusions are grounded inductively in real-world observations, rather than deducted from *a priori* theories or the theorist’s organizational constructs. The grounded theory methodology stresses discovery and theory development (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The qualitative researcher constructs theories from a combination of direct observation, participant interaction and analysis, which in turn is checked through direct observation, participant interaction and further analysis. This process is referred to as constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

In the wake of transitions in Romania, policymakers and practitioners are seeking ways to address the wide-range of concerns of street children. A lack of empirical knowledge on the lives of street children in Romania leaves policymakers and practitioners without a clear theoretical foundation from which to base their work. It becomes increasingly important for theory to emerge inductively from real-world contexts when such theory will be used to guide policy and intervention strategies having practical implications (Gilgun, 1994). “The findings of grounded theory research fit the realities of practice because they are steeped in the natural world” (p. 115).

5. *Qualitative research reports are descriptive* (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Merriam, 1988). Qualitative methods allow the development of “thick description,” which Geertz (1973) described as a detailed examination of specific behaviors and the settings in which they occur. Direct quotations from participants in the study allow the researcher to capture perspectives from the lives of the participants. But tracking
conversations are not enough. This is especially true in the present study as an aspect if investigation relates to norms (e.g. trust, reciprocity, etc.) and sanctions that emerge that may be unspoken and identifiable through the behaviors of the street children rather than spoken accounts. Thorough field notes provide details such as gestures, behaviors, environmental responses, atmosphere, interactions and conversations happening in the setting. The participants’ world must be so vivid that readers “can almost literally see and hear its people” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 228). These details deepen one’s understanding of the phenomenon and ultimately allow for an adequate assessment and verification of the theoretical framework emergent in the analysis.

6. The researcher acts as the human instrument of data collection. To produce the thick description that characterizes qualitative research, the researcher must enter into and spend time in the real world setting under investigation. Lincoln and Guba (1985) noted, “Such a contextual inquiry demands a human instrument, one fully adaptive to the indeterminate situation that will be encountered” (p. 189; see also Janesick, 2000).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified the characteristics that make human beings the instrument of choice for naturalistic inquiry. People are responsive to environmental cues and can interact with the situation. Human beings as the instrument of inquiry also can perceive situations holistically, collect information at multiple levels simultaneously, and process data as soon as it becomes available. Finally, they can provide immediate feedback, request verification of data and explore atypical or unexpected responses. All of these processes proved critical in gaining a deep, contextual understanding of the lives of street youth.
7. **Qualitative research has an emergent (as opposed to predetermined) design.**

It is important to emphasize the emergent nature of qualitative research design. Within this phenomenological, holistic, and process-oriented context, the research process - from preliminary fieldwork to analysis and writing decisions - has been a highly “situated” endeavor. “Methods become a situated response specific to the culture, problem, and dynamics of the particular context” (Hermes, 1997; cited in Lather, 2001, p. 6). Because qualitative researchers seek to observe and interpret meaning in context, it is neither possible nor appropriate to finalize research strategies before data collection has begun (Patton, 1990). Methods always should be open to change as context dictates. “Since ethnographic research designs and techniques of data collection are responsive to the immediate context, any suggestion that there should be rigid guidelines structuring the design and conduct of research are at odds with the bounded nature of this approach to inquiry” (Proweller, 1998, p. 212).

Researching with street children necessitates maintaining flexibility in research design (Bemak, 1996; Lusk, 1992). The emergent nature of design is also consistent with constant comparative methods, a hallmark of the grounded theory approach. In the present study, the simultaneous collection and analysis of data increased my sensitivity to the environment and allowed my methods to adapt and reflect context. For example, the sampling strategy for the in-depth conversations and the questions asked were based on emerging theory. While preliminary design decisions for this study were made *a priori*, the research process was grounded in and responsive to the research context. Methodological changes made as the project emerged are articulated throughout this chapter.
Establishing the Trustworthiness of Data

“The subject pool, street children, is generally unreliable, sometimes dishonest, frequently distorts the hurts of the past, often neither remembers nor cares about details that may be important to street researchers and frankly is not concerned with whether or not the researcher’s work is going well” (Bemak, 1996, p. 149). Presenting untrue, well-rehearsed stories about experiences, family background, their current situation, age and why they left home may be well integrated into the behavior patterns of street children (Aptekar, 1994; Felsman, 1989; Leite & Esteves, 1991; Mufune, 2000; Punch, 2002). Aptekar (1994) noted this misrepresentation of self may be fundamental to survival. Given the difficulties associated with accessing credible accounts from street children, it is important to build in rigorous, systematic steps towards increasing the likelihood of obtaining trustworthy data.

Lincoln (1990) noted that while, “conventional criteria for judging the rigor of inquiries [typically] include internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity” (p. 234), naturalistic inquiry brings legitimacy to its approach by developing its own set of criteria for judging the rigor of its inquiries. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985; see also Miles & Hubberman, 1994), for each quantitative methodological procedure of establishing trustworthiness, qualitative inquiries have aligning and parallel procedures. These procedures involve examining the credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability of the data obtained, and were used in establishing the trustworthiness of the data for the present study. What follows is a description of each procedure and how it was used to ensure the trustworthiness of data in this project. Additional concrete examples are highlighted throughout the remainder of this chapter as appropriate to the discussion on the specific methods.
**Credibility**

The parallel procedure for ensuring internal validity, the extent to which the findings accurately reflect the construct of investigation, is credibility. Credibility criteria involve establishing that the results of qualitative research are credible or believable from the perspective of the participant in the research. Miles and Hubberman (1994) suggested the following list of questions for the researcher when establishing credibility:

- Did the participants deem the findings of the study accurate? If not, was a reasonable explanation provided?
- Are the findings internally consistent and systematically connected (across methodologies and respondents)? If not, was a reasonable explanation provided?
- Are the conceptual themes linked to *a priori* theory or the emerging theoretical model?
- Were alternative hypotheses explored?

Patton (1990) encouraged researchers to make explicit the strategies they use to ensure the integrity, validity and accuracy of the findings. The techniques employed to increase the likelihood of producing credible findings for this particular study were prolonged engagement, persistent observation, methodological triangulation, peer debriefing and member checking in-depth conversation transcripts. A summary of each technique follows.

*Prolonged engagement* involves the “investment of sufficient time to achieve certain purposes, learning the culture, testing for misinformation introduced by distortions either of self or other respondents, and building trust” (Lincoln & Guba,
This intensive involvement in the field served to challenge my “preconceptions and misinformation and test[ed] working propositions about the issue at hand” (James-Brown, 1995, p. 81). It also contributed to the establishment of trust between the participants and me. “Lies and evasions are less likely when a researcher has built up a relationship of trust with children” (Ennew, 1994b, p. 57). As discussed in detail below, I engaged in participant observation from November 2002 through August 2003, spanning every day of the week and all four seasons. I did not commence the in-depth conversations until May, allowing for a substantial amount of time for relationship-building and adapting to the street culture.

Persistent observation involves identifying “those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the problem or issue being pursued and focusing on them in detail” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 304). Being on the street at multiple times for several days, I repeatedly observed the street children in the context of their culture, the streets. In doing so, I identified, examined, and assessed what Eisner (1975) termed “pervasive elements - those things that really count” (p. 304). I spent many hours observing street life and engaging in dialogue with street children. I engaged in a back and forth journey of engagement and reflection. Through my detailed field notes I revisited my observations and early premises, sought deeper meaning and checked out discrepancies between various sites and among youth in the field, returning with emerging insights for further reflection. My efforts to review field notes on a regular basis and later reconsider in-depth conversation transcripts with participants enhanced this process.

Triangulation involves the use of multiple data methods and multiple data sources from which to obtain information. In his article regarding research
methodologies with street children, Lucchini (1996) noted, “Triangulation of methods, repetitious observation, comparison of points of view and accounts . . . make it possible to improve the quality of the research results” (p. 169). This study’s primary sources of information were participant observation on the streets and in-depth conversations with street children. When data from field notes and in-depth conversations converged and supported each other, as a researcher I could be more confident in the findings and study conclusions (Padgett, 1998). I also had rich opportunities for interaction with the informal environment and persons from formal institutions (e.g., NGOs, hospitals, law enforcement, etc.) interfacing with the youth, providing unique perspectives and a further depth of insight, which at times were inconsistent and even contradicted the youth. But as Padgett (1998) noted, “Just as negative case analysis may reveal cases that disconfirm our interpretations, disagreement among data sources may open our eyes to different perspectives” (p. 98). Therefore, the researcher must remember that triangulation is a process directed “at a judgment of the accuracy of specific data items as opposed to. . . seeking a universal truth” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316).

Peer debriefing is a procedure whereby the researcher “confides in trusted and knowledgeable colleagues and uses them as a sounding board” (Schwandt, 1997, p. 113). For the present study, I engaged two peer debriefers: Catalin Ganea and Dorothy Tarrant (their backgrounds and the selection process is detailed later in this chapter). At the beginning of the study, I met with each peer debriefer separately once a month. One of the main purposes of peer debriefing during the initial phase of research was to challenge my suppositions that led to interpretations. Peer debriefers probed my biases, sought meaning and pursued clarity of interpretation. “Debriefing is
a useful - if sobering - experience to which to subject oneself; its utility, when properly engaged, is unquestionable” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 309).

As the study progressed, I maintained monthly contact with both peer debriefers, and their roles began to expand. They assisted me in thinking “with” the data emerging from participant observation. As Lincoln and Guba (1985) noted, peer debriefing is the “process of exposing oneself to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling an analytic session and for the purpose of exploring aspects of inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit with the inquirer’s mind” (p. 308). Initial themes were sought to begin sketching a conceptual scaffold to frame continuing inquiry. This exchange also allowed for on-going, immediate dissemination of data and kept the research relevant to the social and cultural context from which it emerged. In the transition from sole participant observation to the in-depth conversation phase of the study, the peer debriefers met with the broader research team and assisted in developing the questions and format for the in-depth conversations. During the last few months of the study, I maintained monthly contact with at least one peer debriefer.

Member checking, in Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) view, is “the most crucial technique for establishing credibility” (p. 314). Member checking is the method of providing data and data interpretations to the participants (Patton, 1990). Performing a member check allows the researcher to obtain participants’ reactions to the data they provided and played an important role in establishing credibility as it allowed the researcher to seek feedback regarding interpretations and conclusions with the stakeholders from whom the data were collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Throughout the in-depth conversations phase of the research, I conducted 15 member-checking
sessions. I returned to the interviewee for an informal meeting to discuss verbally my interpretations and sought clarification regarding their comments. This process put research participants in the center of the analysis as active contributors, a value important from the conception of this research project. Member checking “involves placing the research participants in a key role: that of either confirming or negating the researchers’ interpretations and conclusions” (James-Brown, 1995, p. 85). Notes from the member checking sessions became a part of the data set.

Transferability

The parallel procedure for external validity, the ability to generalize findings across different settings, is transferability. Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings. In qualitative research transferability is primarily the responsibility of the one doing the generalizing. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the degree of transferability is a direct function of the similarity between two contexts. They defined this similarity or “fittingness” as the degree of congruence between the sending and receiving contexts, noting the following: “If Context A and Context B are sufficiently congruent, then working hypotheses from the sending originating context may be applicable in the receiving context” (p. 124). The researcher is charged with ensuring the sampling procedures, data collection process and data analysis are explicated and documented with sufficient detail providing a rich resource from which to make that judgment. Miles and Hubberman (1994) suggested the following list of questions for researchers to consider in enhancing the transferability judgments of others:
• Are the characteristics of the original sample of persons, settings, processes etc. fully described enough to permit adequate comparisons with other samples?

• Do the findings include enough “thick description” for readers to assess the potential transferability appropriateness for their own setting?

• Are the findings congruent with, connected to, or confirmatory of prior theory?

• Are the processes and outcomes described in the conclusion generic enough to be made applicable in other settings?

I sought to provide as complete a data set as possible to facilitate transferability judgments on the part of others. I used thick description in recording the observational data obtained in this study, being careful to bracket personal thoughts and reflections, as well as feedback from translators, transcribers and peer debriefers. I further enhanced the transferability judgments of others by providing extensive and careful descriptions of the research methods, context, setting, sample and the assumptions that were central to the research. I was transparent regarding my use of theory and made explicit throughout analysis how a priori theory interacted with the emerging model.

Confirmability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed that the qualitative research term confirmability parallels that of objectivity used in quantitative research. Research that relies on quantitative measures is said to be objective. Qualitative research relies on interpretation and is admittedly value-bound, and thus subjective. To achieve confirmability, the qualitative researcher must take steps to ensure that the data
secured from participants, along with the interpretations and findings emanating from the data, are “grounded in events rather than the inquirer’s personal constructions” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 324). Miles and Hubberman (1994) suggested the following list of questions for the researcher to consider when establishing confirmability:

- Are the study’s general methods and procedures described explicitly and in detail?
- Can an observer follow the actual sequence of how data were collected, processed, condensed, transformed and displayed for specific conclusion drawing?
- Is there a record of the study’s methods and procedures detailed enough to be followed as an audit trail?
- Has the researcher been as explicit and self-aware as possible about personal assumptions, values, biases and affective states?
- Are the study data retained and available for reanalysis by others?

Several techniques to ensure confirmability were used in the present study. First, the data were triangulated through the compilation of multiple sources - observation field notes and verbatim, in-depth conversation transcripts. The data and all related documentation relevant to the study were organized, labeled, and filed to allow for the evaluation of the sources of data. The files included observational field notes with reflections and verbatim, in-depth conversation audiotapes and transcripts. The files also contained notes taken during peer-debriefing meetings and member-checking sessions. Notes reflecting data reconstruction and showing patterns of emerging themes within and across transcripts also are part of the files, as are the notes from my reflective journal.
I used the journaling process as a “check-and-balance vehicle”. In the reflective journal, I recorded what Lincoln and Guba (1985) referred to as the essential aspects of participation - that is, “a variety of information about self and the method” (p. 327). In doing so, I was able to check my own attitudes and beliefs, compare them to the data obtained from the context as voiced by the participants, and record “methodological decisions and accompanying rationales” (p. 327). Systematic record keeping and journaling enabled me to articulate, document and assess theoretical perspectives. The process also enabled me to track my affective responses and be aware of how I was interacting with the study context.

**Dependability**

The parallel procedure for reliability, the stability of measurement over time, is dependability. Dependability criteria involve establishing that the process of the study was stable over time. Miles and Hubberman (1994) suggested the following list of questions for a researcher to consider when establishing dependability:

- Are basic paradigms and analytic constructs clearly specified?
- Were data collected across a full range of appropriate settings, times and respondents?
- Were any forms of peer review in place?

As noted, I was transparent regarding the role of theory in this study, as well as the emergent theoretical model and how decisions regarding themes and categories were made. The comparison of data from multiple methods (observation, in-depth conversations), across multiple respondents, multiple times in multiple settings also provided depth and rigor. Peer debriefing played an important role in ensuring the dependability of the research. Thorough notes of the peer debriefing sessions were
maintained, which allow a reader to follow the sequence of how data were processed, condensed and transformed (Miles & Hubberman, 1994).

Kirk and Miller (1986) warned against what has been termed “quixotic” reliability: what happens when multiple respondents give party-line answers. This is especially a concern with the street children population. Many street researchers (Aptekar, 1994; Felsman, 1989; Leite & Esteves, 1991; Mufune, 2000; Punch, 2002) have noted this as a concern because street children have been socialized to “be” certain ways and “say” certain things depending upon the context and person with whom they are interacting. Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Miles and Hubberman (1994) stressed the importance of prolonged engagement in the field. Establishing relationships and building rapport with respondents helps to control for issues related to quixotic reliability. Street researchers also note the importance of prolonged engagement and the use of key informants. As will be described in detail below, I was engaged in field observation for six and one-half months before engaging in the in-depth conversation phase of the study. Observations also continued throughout the in-depth conversation phase so that constant comparative methods could be maintained.

**Preliminary Steps in the Research Process**

The following section details early decisions related to the selection of a research site, research team and the research participants, as well as the ethical considerations for the study and how I gained access to the study population. The preliminary steps are discussed below in detail to enhance transferability (Miles & Hubberman, 1994).
Selection of Research Site

City. Two factors were considered originally in selecting the most appropriate city for this research. The first factor was feasibility. Before developing a proposal for this study I had visited Romania on four occasions in various roles as a social work educator, a practitioner and a researcher. Therefore, I had opportunities to interact with administrators and front-line staff from support service agencies throughout Romania who worked with street children in multilateral international agencies (i.e., International Labor Organization, United Nations Children’s Fund), international non-governmental charitable organizations (i.e., International Orthodox Christian Charities, Save the Children, Romania), and local non-governmental organizations (NGO). I developed collaborative relationships with two NGOs from Cluj (i.e., Orthodox Christian Mission Charities, St. Basil the Great Social Mission Center - CHRISTIANA School) and one from Sighișoara (i.e., Veritas). These connections not only provided important insight into the street youth population, but also could assist in facilitating access to the population and providing me with important support services throughout the research project.

As the study’s primary objective was to seek a deeper understanding of the lives of street children, I also considered what cities in Romania had the highest concentration of street youth. During my visits to Romania I gained access to NGO agency reports regarding street children programs and the findings of international and governmental organizations’ research projects related to street children (cf., Ministry of Labor, 1993; Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999; UNICEF, 1999). The highest concentrations of street children in Romania were in Brașov, Cluj, Constanța and the nation’s capital, Bucharest.
I originally selected Cluj as the site for the study. It was one of the cities in Romania with the highest concentration of street children and I had developed relationships with service providers who could assist with obtaining access to the population and providing support services. As I delved further into the scholarly literature related to social capital theory and street children, and sought clarity from Romanian practitioners surrounding specific research questions, a third factor emerged for consideration; the concentration of support services for street children. It would be important for the study to take place in a context where street youth had the most support service options, because some of the research questions centered on issues related to the street youths’ knowledge and use of formal resources. Given this third factor, Bucharest emerged as the most appropriate site for the study. Most resources and programs available to children were located in Bucharest. According to the 2001-2002 Cine și Unde, în Domeniul Protecției Copilului (Who is Where in the Field of Child Protection) directory produced by the Federația Organizațiilor Neguvernamentale pentru Protecția Copilului (Federation of Nongovernmental Organizations Active in Child Protection, hereinafter referred to as FONPC), there were 668 NGOs active in child protection throughout 38 județ (counties) (FONPC, 2001). Almost 25% (146) of the agencies were located in Bucharest. Furthermore, the majority of street children in Romania made their home in Bucharest. According to a report produced by Elena Zamfir (1997), the total number of street children is estimated at somewhere between 2,500 and 3,500, with over half residing in Bucharest (see also, The Street Children, a report prepared by the Romanian League for Mental Health, 1993). The remaining issue was feasibility: identifying a
collaborative agency that could facilitate entrée and provide support (discussed below).

**The Natural Setting.** The importance of immersing oneself within the socio-politico-cultural context of the research has been well articulated (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Proweller, 1998), especially when researching with indigenous peoples (Errante, 2000; Smith, 1999; Swisher, 1998; Van Maanen, 1988). Because the primary focus of the research was child-centered and context specific, data collection took place in the natural environment of the youth: the street. In her discussion on researching with street children, Punch (2002) noted the importance of this natural context as opposed to the artificial setting of an agency. “It needs to be recognized that many research environments are adult spaces where children have less control. Participant observation with children in their own spaces can enable them to feel more comfortable” (p. 328). In the present study, utilizing social capital theory as a heuristic framework calls for an exploration of the determinants of well-being operating through micro, mezzo and macro contexts and structures. The natural setting itself is a crucial aspect of the investigation. The street would allow for the observation of the street youth themselves, their relationships with each other, their relationships with the immediate environment and their relationship to broader societal structures.

**Selection of Research Team**

**Collaborative Agencies.** During preliminary fieldwork in March 2002, I identified *Foundation X* as the agency with the personnel most appropriate to facilitate entrée into the field. *Foundation X* had a long history of service to Romanian street children, operating a day program, transitional housing program and active
street intervention programs. It was the only agency in Romania to train and utilize former street children as street workers (a title used in Romania for an individual who engages in community-based/street-based social work). As insiders/outiders, it was thought that these street workers would have a great deal of insight in and understanding about the street children population and the environment and cultural context in which they lived. The organization’s assistant director recommended that these street workers be utilized to introduce me to the street context.

Upon arrival in country, I discovered that the assistant director of Foundation X had left the agency. Preliminary field observation also brought into question the use of street workers as key informants. Some of the current street children spoke of the street workers from Foundation X in a negative light. Some spoke of specific accounts of abuse and exploitation. In gaining access to hard-to-reach populations, several authors (Berg, 1995; Fetterman, 1989; Hutz & Koller, 1999; Lofland & Lofland, 1984) stressed that the informant or guide be someone known and trusted by the population. In light of this, I met with the field education director for the social work program at the University of Bucharest, the program coordinator of FONPC, and several nongovernmental organizations working with children seeking recommendations for an alternative agency appropriate for collaboration in the present research study. Based on strong recommendation from multiple sources, Asociatia Sprijinirea Integrarii Sociale (Association for the Support of Social Rehabilitation, hereinafter referred to as ASIS) was selected as the primary collaborative agency for this research project. ASIS presented many attractive characteristics: a continuum of care offered to street youth, presence on the street via a team of street social workers, connections to youth on the street, positive reputation in and linkages to the social service system for
youth, and, most importantly, its value stance towards youth. ASIS’s guiding principle is, “ownership of self and livelihood” (ASIS Annual Report, 2001). Much of its work focused on building self-esteem of children, respecting their rights and desires and fostering empowerment.

ASIS is a registered Romanian NGO established in 1994 with the support of Equilibre, a large French humanitarian relief agency. ASIS was conceptualized and developed in response to the absence of social care for older children living on the street or for those leaving orphanages without plans for their future needs. This filled an important gap in the services for young people in Romania, because the majority of services available for street youth, both governmental and nongovernmental, catered to younger children. ASIS’s main project, ASISTA, provided several services for street youth. “The range of services is designed to meet the basic needs of young people living on the street, but also provides a series of steps to enable young people to leave this lifestyle if they are able and wished [sic] to do so, claiming their basic rights to protection, shelter and sustenance” (ASIS Annual Report, 2001). The services provided by the ASIS project ASISTA followed along a continuum of care moving through seven progressive stages, ranging from Stage 1, Contact with Street Youth (via the street team), through Stage 7, Aftercare Contact.

Street work was an essential component of the ASISTA project as it provided an important link between those living on the streets and safe adults. The ASISTA street team focused its attention on the areas throughout Bucharest where street children congregated and lived. On the street ASISTA offered assistance with accessing medical care or facilitating the attainment of a carte de identitate (identification card). For those youth who desired support in finding a safe place to stay, the street team
provided an essential point of first contact. If a street youth expressed a desire to leave the streets, the street team progressed to Stages 2 and 3 (Selection of Youth for Residential Placement and Initial Evaluation).

As an agency, ASIS was well known in the child welfare arena. It worked collaboratively with both governmental and nongovernmental agencies to assist youth in meeting their needs on the street or helping facilitate leaving the street. Although ASIS played an essential role in providing entrée into the street youth population, it should be noted that I had the opportunity to observe the work of and interact with many foundations throughout my time in the field.

**Translator and Transcriber.** My need to be responsive to the culture and dynamics of the Romanian context mandated that I surround myself with a research team steeped in experience within this context. This was especially true as I was researching from the “outside”. Smith (1999) noted that being a Western knower raised in a Western academy impacts conceptualizations of the individual and society: what it means to be human. The greatest danger for social work - a field so close to the living culture of a country - is that the use of a foreign model of human understanding may lead to a misinterpretation, thereby causing potential harm to persons “under study” (cf., Billups & Juliá, 1996; Juliá, 1997). Therefore, it was necessary to take steps to keep the work grounded (situated) in the context of Romania.

Although I spoke and understood the Romanian language, translators assisted throughout the observation and in-depth conversation phases of the research design to prevent gaps or misinterpretations of the data. Three translators were selected based upon their command of the Romanian and English languages, expertise and experience
with verbal translation and an understanding of the Romanian context. As an additional precaution, I provided individualized training for all translators. The training included a thorough discussion of the translator’s role within the research context. Emphasis was given to the importance of translating verbatim what was being said (including affective intonation), identifying words or phrases difficult to translate for later in-depth discussion, and the acknowledgement of uncertainty around an exact translation. Translators also received instruction on appropriate dress and demeanor in the field, the rules governing the research (i.e., no giving) and the ethical issues involved in research (i.e., confidentiality). All translators further signed a confidentiality agreement (Appendix B) stipulating that payment for their services would be contingent upon them adhering to the guidelines outlined in the agreement. The lead translator, a social work major from the University of Bucharest, served during the majority of observation periods and translated the entirety of in-depth conversations. Due to her responsibilities as a student, it was difficult for her to be available for all time periods desired for field study. Therefore, one of two alternate translators substituted when the lead translator was unavailable. The translator for a given observation period was always present during the dictation of field notes. This enabled me to gain further clarification of dialogue and allowed for a deeper understanding of context. These post-observation clarifications and discussions were bracketed as reflections in the field notes.

Due to the time and emotional demands of being in the field and the volume of dictation generated, a transcriber assisted with the typing of field notes. The transcriber also typed all in-depth conversations and translated them from Romanian to English. The transcriber was selected based upon her command of the Romanian
and English languages, expertise and experience in translation, typing skills, and an understanding of the Romanian context. I provided the transcriber with all the necessary equipment (e.g., tape recorder, etc.) and the transcriber received training. Emphasis was given to the importance of translating verbatim what was dictated (being sure to bracket affective intonation), identifying words or phrases difficult to translate for later in-depth discussion, and the acknowledgement of uncertainty around an exact translation. The transcriber’s training also included the ethical issues involved in research (i.e., confidentiality). She too signed a confidentiality agreement (Appendix C) stipulating that payment for her services would be contingent upon her adherence to the guidelines outlined in the agreement. At my request, the transcriber often added italicized comments throughout the transcription notes providing context for a Romanian custom, holiday or phrase. These were bracketed as reflections in the field notes and in-depth conversation transcripts.

**Peer Debriefers.** For the present study, peer debriefers were selected based upon their understanding of Romanian culture, experience with the social service sector of Romania and knowledge of street children. Cătălin Ganea, a Romanian, had worked 13 years with the street youth population through both governmental and nongovernmental organizations. His work has linked him with many systems relevant to street youth. His experience included work with street youth as a child welfare counselor, a street social worker, a social worker in residential settings, a mediator with the court and penal system, and most recently as a coordinator for centers of restorative justice, pilot centers for juvenile offender reintegration. Mr. Ganea’s knowledge of the history of street youth, the service delivery system, the court system, and Romanian society assisted in keeping the researcher’s study grounded in
and relevant to the Romanian context. As a member of the International Association for Juvenile Justice, Geneva, Mr. Ganea was also able to speak to the emerging concern for children’s rights internationally and in Romania.

Dorothy Tarrant, a British national, has a Master of Foreign Languages and Literature degree from Glasgow, a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree from Boston University and a post-graduate diploma in marriage and family therapy from the University of London. She served on faculty at Eastern Nazarene College 1972-2001 where she taught German, European literature, cross-cultural communication and social work courses. In 1993 she directed a pilot project semester abroad program for Eastern Nazarene College students in Bucharest, and from 1994 has lived in Romania as the Director of the Romania Studies Program in Sighișoara, Romania. More than 400 students have participated in the program, including about 60 social work majors completing their field experience (BSW and MSW). For social work majors, Ms. Tarrant teaches the integrative seminar where she orients students to the cultural context, helps students develop cultural sensitivity/approach social work from a Romanian framework, and monitors cultural adjustment. Ms. Tarrant was also the founding director of the Veritas Foundation, a multifaceted NGO providing educational and social services to the community of Sighişoara. Programs include working with street and at-risk children and families, special needs adults, the elderly and victims of domestic violence. All Veritas programs are accredited by Romanian authorities. Her work in foreign language, cross-cultural communication and international social work, as well as her knowledge of and experience in negotiating culture proved invaluable throughout the research process. Having earned her MSW in the United States and her extensive work as an educator and practitioner in Romania enabled Ms. Tarrant to...
directly confront Western notions and assist the researcher in maintaining a Romanian framework in understanding behavior and systems.

Throughout the remainder of this work, these professionals (i.e., ASISTA street team, translators, transcriber, peer debriefers) will be referred to as the research team. This work represents a collaborative effort of many talented professionals. The team reference validates and confirms the positive results of all members’ synergistic efforts.

Selection of Research Participants

Participant Observation. During the preliminary observation period of the study, I visited 29 different sites throughout Bucharest where street youth resided or congregated. Initial observational data were collected from all 29 sites. Throughout the course of the study, nine sites were disrupted (e.g., the server opening was sealed by government officials, law enforcement intervened and forced the youth to move, etc.). As the primary research questions centered on the creation and use of social capital among street children, I was interested in a range of variation in the youths’ experiences. As the project progressed, 10 of the remaining 20 sites were identified for concentrated fieldwork. These 10 sites exhibited differences in the street youths’ range of needs, level of personal hygiene, ownership of material items, degree of organization, nature of relationships with each other, nature of relationships with street youth from other sites, and their connection to and the nature of relationships with the informal environment (e.g., persons living and working in neighborhood, etc.) and formal environment (e.g., NGO staff, police officers, etc.).

In-depth Conversations. In studying street children, Hutz and Koller (1999) suggested that researchers become familiar with the streets, work with community
agencies and get to know the street children and adolescents who would be included in the study to ensure that samples were representative. My knowledge of past reports regarding the street children in Romania, as well as my growing understanding about the current landscape of the street youth gained through field work enabled me to develop a relevant list of “selection criteria” in relation to sampling decisions. The most recent study regarding the street children population was funded by UNICEF and conducted by Save the Children, Romania in 1999.

UNICEF categorized street children into four groups (Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999):

1. Children who spend their days on the streets (working, begging, or stealing) but typically return home at the end of the day to spend the night with their families.

2. Children who spend their days on the streets (working, begging, or stealing) and most nights, returning home only periodically.

3. Children who spend their days on the streets (working, begging, or stealing) and all nights. They live and make their lives on the street, some for several years.

4. Children who live on the street with their parents/families.

This classification system was consistent with that of the Romania government. Table 3.1 provides other information revealed about the street youth population (Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999).
Table 3.1. Street Youth Demographics as Reported in Research Study by Save the Children Romania and UNICEF (1999)

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<th>Gender</th>
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<tr>
<td>Escape from their families due to poverty</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escape from families due to DV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run away from an institution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were chased from families and abandoned</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turned 18 and released from an institution</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Findings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not have the ability to read and write</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had identity papers (birth certificate)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced sexual abuse in their family of origin</td>
<td>6*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicated they have sex for money</td>
<td></td>
<td>6**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 94% chose not to answer the question.

** 22% responded "no" to the inquiry and almost 72% chose not to answer the question.

The sample for in-depth conversations for the present study included only youth who met four criteria. First, the youth had to fall within category 2, 3 or 4 (i.e., children who spend their days and most nights on the street, only returning home periodically; children who live and make their lives on the street; children who live on the street with their parents or families) of the classification system of Romanian street youth (Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999). I originally planned to
include youth in categories 2 and 3 only. However, after being on the street for several months and gaining a better understanding of the street culture, I became aware that some of the youth had babies while on the street and lived together on the street with their young children, some youth came to the street with a sibling and some lived on the street with a parent. Therefore, youth falling within the fourth category of the classification system were also included.

The second criterion for inclusion was *length of time*. The youth had to have been on the street for at least one year. Since one purpose of the study was to explore the informal and formal networks created and used by street children in an effort to build opportunities for survival, potential respondents had to have some experience being on the street; had opportunities to invest in relationships with other youth, their informal environment and formal institutions.

The third criterion was *age*. Potential respondents had to be at least seven years of age. The ages of five to seven are milestone years for children. According to Piaget (1952) it is during this time that children develop the capacity for reason and have developed more complexity and flexibility in their thinking. For example, children at this age can see things from another person’s point of view, and they can view and examine situations and events in terms of many variables. Additionally, children develop their use of symbols to represent events in the real world, to express themselves through language and their memories become sharper.

Scholars in a variety of fields and with different interests have found that children, as young as three years old, can give graphic descriptions and have excellent recall of experiences related to such adverse events as illness (Alex & Ritchie, 1992; Bearison, 1991; Woodgate & Kristjanson, 1996; Yoos & McMullen, 1996) and violence.
(Farver & Frosch, 1996; Miller, 1996). Between the ages of two and three years, children begin to narrate events and experiences in relation to themselves that have been organized autobiographically in their memory (Howe, Courage, & Peterson, 1994). Autobiographical recall of children three to six years old has been shown to be very accurate and stable over time (Fivush, 1993; Fivush, Hammond, Harsch, Singer, & Wolf, 1991; Steward & Steward, 1996). The findings concerning autobiographical memory have extended earlier work on interviewing children, which indicated children six years of age and older have the cognitive and language capabilities to be interviewed (Rich, 1968; Yarrow, 1960).

I originally planned to interview youth between the ages of seven and 18. After being immersed in the street culture, however, a consistent finding was that many individuals over the age of 18 self-identified as street children. This is consistent with street youth from other countries (Beazley, 2002; Dube, Kamvura, & Bourdillion, 1996; Maphalala, 1996; Mufune, 2000; Tacon, 1991). Referring to her work in Indonesia, Beazley (2002) reported, “Street children referred to each other as ‘child’ well into their early twenties, and it is not uncommon for someone in their late twenties, particularly unmarried girls, to be referred to as child” (p. 1667). Furthermore, the service provision context and Romanian government utilizes the label of “street kid” in referring to youth who live on the street and are over the age of 18. The study conducted by Save the Children Romania and UNICEF (1999), included an age category of 18 and over (representing 29% of the street youth population). It is estimated that the percentage of youth that fall into this 18 and over category has increased. In the 1999 report 17% of the street youth population was ages 16 to 17. During the present study (2002-2003), those youth would fall into the 18 and over category as well.
Therefore, to stay responsive to the research environment, there was no maximum age. However, the youth had to self-identify as a street “child” during the participant observation period. Furthermore, many of the youth had been on the street for a long time and appeared to be in a leadership position within the group. Since I was interested in information rich cases, hearing from street youth who had gained a position of power within the network structure was important to a comprehensive understanding of how youth created and used social capital to meet the challenges of street life - how they gained resources, opportunity and advantage.

The fourth criterion was gender. I desired to obtain a proportional representation of street youth related to gender. Therefore, every attempt was made to obtain a 70% male, 30% female sample to reflect the proportion in the study conducted by Save the Children Romania and UNICEF (1999).

Since the street children population represents a highly mobile sub-culture in Romanian society, it would be extremely difficult to obtain a random or systematic sample. “Because street children are not found in fixed settings but instead are dispersed around the street environment, obtaining a truly representative sample is extremely challenging” (Hutz & Koller, 1999, p. 61). Therefore, sampling strategies need to be consistent with the contextual bounds of the study (Errante, 2000; Janesick, 2000; Proweller, 1998). According to Patton (1990), qualitative investigations are characterized by purposeful sampling strategies. The logic underlying purposeful sampling is different from that of probability sampling associated with quantitative approaches. Probability sampling depends on selecting statistically representative samples that permit generalization to a larger population. With these conventional methods there is an assumption that the sample can be
located through official sources such as census data, telephone directories, government records or agency lists. The power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting *information-rich cases*: cases whose in-depth study illuminates the particular questions under consideration. It is the most appropriate strategy to use when the population is difficult to reach and prefers to remain out of sight (Patton, 1990). This approach falls under the guise of what Glaser and Strauss (1967) referred to as *theoretical sampling* and recommended it for the development of grounded theory.

Patton (1990) identified and described 16 types of purposeful sampling, including convenience sampling, snowball sampling, and stratified purposeful sampling. Before commencing the study, I intended to employ a two-stage purposeful sampling procedure. To gain entrée into the population, I planned to solicit respondents utilizing a *convenience sample* (Patton, 1990), selecting from youth I had met and had easy access to. Consistent with social capital theory, in stage two, I planned to utilize *snowball sampling* (Patton, 1990), a self-generating sample in which respondents at stage one identify and introduce me to other participants for inclusion in the sample. However, my prolonged engagement with the street youth population did not require a convenience sample but enabled me to make informed decisions about participant selection for in-depth conversations.

Remaining responsive to context and desiring a sample that would best capture the information relevant to the study, I employed a *stratified purposeful sampling* strategy in soliciting respondents for in-depth conversations (Patton, 1990). The strength of the stratified purposeful sampling strategy is the ability to capture major variations, as well as common patterns that may emerge within and between individual youth and sites. Youth from the aforementioned ten sites who met the
selection criterion (i.e., categorization, age, gender, length of time on the street) were identified for inclusion in the in-depth conversation portion of the study.

When engaging in sampling, one continues until one has reached what Glaser and Strauss (1967; see also Strauss & Corbin, 1998) referred to as theoretical saturation. “This term denotes that during analysis, no new properties and dimensions emerge from the data, and the analysis has accounted for much of the possible variability” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 158). However, as Gilgun (1994) noted, “In actuality, researchers may never reach an absolute theoretical saturation. The findings of grounded theory research are forever open ended, open to the possibility that the next case will challenge the existing constructs” (p. 118). This is especially true when one is researching such a complex and multifaceted population as street youth. Patton (1990) asserted that, “There are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry. Sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what’s at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources” (p. 184). As the present study was focused on exploring the creation and use of social capital among street youth, it was important to capture cases that would tap into a range of experiences. The youth selected for in-depth conversations exhibited variation in the nature and range of needs, ownership of material items, degree of organization, position within their group/network, nature of relationships with street youth from other sites, and their connection to and the nature of relationships with the informal environment (i.e., persons living and working in neighborhood) and formal environment (i.e., NGO staff, police officers).

Other variables impacting sample size were available time and the ebb and flow of the street. I was delayed six weeks in commencing the in-depth conversations.
while waiting for The Ohio State University's Institutional Review Board for the Study of Human Subjects (IRB) to approve changes to my recruitment script (discussed later in this chapter). Some youth were not able to talk during their scheduled time and I was unable to reconnect with them for an in-depth conversation before the end of my funding period and need to return to the United States.

The final sample consisted of 28 youth. Table 3.2 provides demographic data concerning the core sample of youth who engaged in an in-depth conversation for this study.

Table 3.2. Demographic Profile of the Core Street Youth Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Sample: 28</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 and under</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time on the Street:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-4 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-8 years</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13+ years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location*:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*It should be noted that throughout the field research, some youth lived in multiple sites. The site recorder here reflects where the youth lived at the time of the in-depth conversation.
Ethical Considerations

The Ohio State University’s IRB granted approval for this study. Researching the lives of children raises a number of ethical issues related to research methods and conduct, which become even more significant when one is studying marginalized groups such as street children. In a discussion of ethical research practices of children on the margins, Earls and Carlson (1999) suggested the adoption of a code of ethics conditioned by respect for the dignity of all children. First and foremost, they stressed the importance of a deep understanding and increased sensitivity towards the experiences of children living on the streets, allowing those experiences to dictate methodological decisions. Discussions about research with children have tended to focus on the issues of informed consent and confidentiality (Alderson, 1995; Glaser, 1996; Lewis & Lindsay, 2000; Lynch, Glaser, Prior, & Inwood, 1999; Morrow & Richards, 1996; Stanley & Sieber, 1992; Thomas & O’Kane, 1998; Van Den Hoonaar, 2001). Important ethical questions concerning power dynamics in research (e.g., adults researching children; cross-cultural research, etc.) (Boyden & Ennew, 1997; Morrow & Richards, 1996; Panter-Brick, 2002; Thomas & O’Kane, 1998) and the effect of the research on the participant (Mauthner, 1997; Morrow & Richards, 1996) are also discussed in the professional literature. Informed by the aforementioned scholars, the following is a brief discussion of the main ethical considerations of the present study.

Informed Consent. In the United States, ethical codes for research with children require that consent to participate in research be given on their behalf by a parent or guardian. Charbonneau (1984) described the process of informed consent of an individual as the “cornerstone of all Western ethical codes” (p. 21 Charbonneau, emphasis added), pointing to its strict blind application as inapplicable to some
contexts. The street children of Romania represent a unique population that makes adherence to traditional ethical guidelines regarding informed consent procedures difficult, at the very least, and potentially undesirable.

The system developed by UNICEF of categorizing street children in Romania does so by means of a single variable, “degree of family contact”. Every child has basic needs (e.g., food, shelter, security, etc.) for which the family or accepted substitute is seen as the most appropriate provider. However, in category 2 and 3 of UNICEF’s classification (previously outlined), children must rely on their own ingenuity, resources and relationships to meet these needs. Chronologically, they are minors and would be dependents in the United States, whose parents would need to provide the required informed consent. However, according to the most recent study on street children conducted in Romania, 63% of the street children have made their home on the street for more than a year (Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999). In their world on the street they are, in effect, emancipated. Furthermore, in some cases it may not be possible to locate a youth’s parents to obtain consent. Nine percent of Romania’s street children reported being chased from their families and abandoned, and approximately 15% came to the streets from an institution. In other situations, it may be detrimental to the youth to locate their parents to secure consent. Nearly 20% of the street children reported that they “escaped” from their families due to domestic violence (Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999).

Previous research has addressed such situations with similar populations in which the parents were unavailable to the minors, or, to a large extent, the youth were on their own (Hutz & Koller, 1999; Kidd, 2003). In such circumstances, the researcher would be
justified in waiving parental permission, but would bear greater responsibility in ensuring no harm came to participants (Hutz & Koller, 1999).

The Ohio State University’s IRB reviewed my proposal to ensure that the safety, integrity and rights of the study’s human participants would not be undermined. Understandably, the IRB exercised caution with my request to waive parental consent. Upon IRB recommendations, the translator served as a witness to the informed consent process and signed the informed consent form (see Appendix D) to verify I followed the protocol and the youth agreed to participate. Informed consent was viewed as an ongoing process in which participants voluntarily gave their verbal agreement to participate or continue participating in research activities. The process began when a child was invited to participate in an in-depth conversation with me and continued until all data had been collected. A copy of the recruitment script (approved by the IRB) is presented in Appendix E. The recruitment script was systematically designed in collaboration with a Romanian social worker of Roma descent that had worked extensively with at-risk youth and was familiar with street language. Great care was taken to choose language and a Romanian translation that would be understandable to the population group and sensitive to the street “dialect” of the Romanian language. See Appendix F for the Romanian translation.

The recruitment script contained three sections: the purpose of the research, the process of the research and confidentiality. The purpose section of the recruitment script identified me as a student from America and explained the overall objective of the research. The process section provided information about the estimated length of the in-depth conversation, what would happen to the information, a request for a follow-up meeting to review the information gathered (member
check), and a request to tape-record the conversation. I emphasized that the youth may choose not to be recorded or to stop the conversation at any time. I acknowledged their schedules and potential need to end the conversation to attend to something else. I also made it clear that the youth could choose not to respond to a question, request that recording cease at any point in time or terminate the conversation at will with no negative consequences.

Finally, the third section of the recruitment script covered confidentiality, including who would have access to the raw data, the option of using pseudonyms or initials during the conversation and how the tapes and transcripts would be stored. The limits to confidentiality also were outlined. Youth were informed that if they shared that they had a plan to end their own life or they had a plan to end someone else’s life, I would take steps to keep them and others safe by contacting a member of the ASISTA team that would connect them with appropriate support services. I stressed that it was important for them to know this information before they talked so they could choose whether or not to share that type of information with me.

At the end of each section, I asked the youth if he or she was still willing to engage in a conversation with me about living on the street. Throughout all three sections, potential participants were provided opportunities to ask questions. All questions were answered openly and honestly and to the satisfaction of the youth before proceeding through the remainder of the recruitment script. I was prepared to provide youth with information, if they requested it, regarding sources of assistance about which they may be unaware. Finally, I was prepared to put a youth in touch with the ASISTA team if I observed a participant in emotional distress or at an immediate risk, though I would respect his or her wishes to forgo assistance.
The informed consent process took place at a different time than the in-depth conversation to allow the participant to identify the most convenient time and place for the conversation to occur. Prior to commencing the conversation, I again asked the participating youth if they had any questions about the project and once more sought consent to be tape-recorded.

**Overt versus Covert Stance.** A thorough exploration of ethics must include a discussion of covert versus overt stances when conducting ethnographic research. There are some serious ethical questions that arise when covert research is conducted on human participants (Berg, 1995). Although it may minimize reactive effects due to the presence of the researcher, a covert stance abuses the right to privacy of participants (Berg, Ksander, Loughlin, & Johnson, 1983). It also has been suggested that entering the field overtly may assist researchers in locating the guides and informants necessary for gaining entrée into a difficult-to-access group and assisting them in gaining rapport with research participants (Berg et al., 1983).

I decided *a priori* to take an overt stance in the field concerning my identity and purpose for being on the streets in Bucharest. Potential participants were informed about what I was trying to accomplish and how the information would be used. Berg (1995) noted that when researchers explain their presence in the field they should not elaborate on the technical details of the study. He suggested that participants are interested only in a cursory answer to the questions, “Who are you?” and “What are you doing here?” For the present study, in consultation with the research team, I introduced myself as a student from America interested in learning more about what it was like for the youth who lived on the street. I indicated that I would ultimately write a paper that would be shared with my professors and others
interested in learning more about what it is like to live on the street in Bucharest. No
details about the specific focus of the study were shared.

**Disparities in Power.** The ethics of research with children are not limited to
securing consent. There are disparities in power and status that need to be
acknowledged and addressed (Morrow & Richards, 1996; Panter-Brick, 2002).
Historically, research has been intimately connected with issues of power (Grover,
2004; Esterberg, 2002). “Researchers need to address the power relationships that are
embedded in research. Researchers . . . often tend to be of a higher social class than
the research participants[,] . . . determine how the research is conducted[,] and . . .
set the agenda and determine what is important” (Esterberg, 2002, pp. 48-49). These
unequal power relations can develop based on the personal characteristics of the
researcher, such as gender, age, language use and class (Howard, 1995).

As a white, foreign, English-speaking, female adult, I needed to acknowledge
and address disparities of power. I took important steps to decrease the social
distance between the street children and myself. In a discussion of the difficulties a
Brazilian psychiatrist was having in gathering information from street children, Sue
and Zane (1987) noted that the street children found it harder to relate to a formally
dressed individual who demanded ascribed credibility as a professional psychiatrist,
rather than achieved or earned credibility. Researchers must consider things like how
to dress, whether or not to wear jewelry, and how much money they should carry
(Bemak, 1996; Günther, 1992; Hutz & Koller, 1999). “Efforts such as these aim to
decrease unnecessary distractions and barriers” (Bemak, 1996, p. 150). I, therefore,
made decisions *a priori* about my physical presentation on the street.
I attempted to minimize my impact on the research environment by attending to both my personal appearance and stance as the researcher. As Denzin (1970) suggested, “Reactive effects of observation are the most perplexing feature of participant observation, since the presence of an observer in any setting is often a ‘foreign object’” (pp. 203-204). I selected two casual outfits to wear on the street: long dark pants, dark sweater and a coat and hat in the winter and sweats cut off below the knee and a t-shirt in the summer. The same two outfits were worn throughout the entire project. Taking my cues from the ASISTA street team, I did not wear gloves in the winter. The street team indicated that they chose not to wear gloves so there would not be a barrier between them and the street youth when they shook hands. They also noted that many street youth did not have gloves themselves and would ask the street workers for their gloves if they wore them. In inclement weather I also did not carry an umbrella, since most street children did not have access to that material resource either. I did not wear jewelry or makeup and took no money with me on the street. Although I carried a cell phone for safety purposes, I ensured that the ringer was turned off while I was on the street.

While these external markers should not be taken lightly, perhaps it is the internal stance of the researcher that is of utmost importance. Bemak (1996) encouraged researchers to assume a student role and accept the street children as teachers. This is consistent with much of the development literature related to researching from the outside. Throughout the project, I purposefully took the stance of student and learner while on the street, looking to the street youth as the teachers or experts. “If the street researcher is successful in entering this world it will be through the guidance of street children, who will not only be the research subjects,
but at times assume the responsibility of teachers” (Bemak, 1996, p. 151). I followed their cues related to how to interact within the context of the neighborhood (e.g., how to act in order to be “allowed” to sit on the stoop outside a store, etc.) and formal environment (e.g., what one should do when the police come, etc.), sought clarification on national holidays (e.g., Marțișor, etc.) and traditions (e.g., pomana, etc.) and pursued their insights related to life on the street.

Some advocate for a child-centered approach to research in equalizing power in the researcher-participant relationship (Barron, 2000; Bemak, 1996; Grover, 2004; Thomas & O’Kane, 2000). Such an approach requires a deep respect for the lives of street children, their knowledge and their self-directed contributions. “We tried as much as we could to give power to the children, for instance by entrusting them with control of the tape recorder. . . . We also engaged children in review and analysis of the research data” (Thomas & O’Kane, 2000, p. 827). The youth controlled the time and context for the in-depth conversation, the interview schedule was structured in a way that valued their expert knowledge and solicited their stories (discussed later) and I sought their insights during the analysis of the data through member checking.

**Expectations.** Another ethical issue relates to the children’s expectations regarding the benefits they personally would experience as a result of the research. “With respect to the ethics of conducting research with street children, we were consistently reminded that, despite the clearest explanations, our research created expectations among the children” (Baker, et al., 1996, p. 191). In his study of street children from Bangalore, Reddy (1992) reported:

> Many of the street children in our study expressed concern regarding the actual benefits this study would bring them. Their wariness of the promises made to
them by so many people in the past and their lack of faith in the government was revealed by statements such as: “how will this study help us?” “So many people have come and talked to us, but what have they done for us?” (p. 14).

Other authors similarly observed, “Street children view the growing attention by researchers and organizations with mixed feelings” (Van Beers, 1996, p. 196). There is a desire to share their stories in hopes of realizing a better future, yet a realization that past sharing did not lead to positive change. Throughout the course of my time on the street, I was careful to be clear about my role as learner and not mislead the children or give them false hope about future change. On more than one occasion youth asked how talking with me would help them. I consistently responded that I could not guarantee any positive outcomes as a result of my work. I could only guarantee that I would do my best to represent their lives and stories as accurately as possible.

**Inducements.** The use of inducements is another important ethical consideration in conducting research with street children. Although it is common practice for North American researchers to pay study participants or give them something for participating in a study, Hutz and Koller (1999) argued that this practice is not appropriate in research with street children for both methodological and ethical reasons; using inducements with street children is ethically questionable. Often street children need money to buy food or other material items, to pay for protection, or to take home to their family. Under such conditions, the use of inducements unintentionally may coerce a child to participate in a research study. If researchers want to ensure that street children participate in the study because they want to, not
for material gain or because they “need” to, no material inducements should be used (Hutz & Koller, 1999; Hutz, Koller, Bandeira, & Forster, 1995).

Using inducements with street children also may be methodologically questionable. In their discussion on methodological and ethical issues in research with street children, Hutz and Koller (1999) reflected, “If inducements are distributed (money, clothing, or anything else of value), street children will often attempt to be interviewed several times by different teams in order to receive the inducement each time” (p. 60). They also noted that the street children may say something they think the interviewer wants to hear, therefore jeopardizing the quality of the data.

Even with these concerns, the fact that there is no direct material benefit for participating in the research needs to be carefully calculated when considering the time obligations of participation. To some extent, research is obtrusive; researchers “invade” the life of participants (Spradley, 1980). Therefore, researchers have an obligation to respect the rights, values, needs and desires of research participants. The nature of the data collection process requires the investment of time from participants, time that may be needed to engage in income-generating activities (Hutz & Koller, 1999; Padgett, 1998, Punch, 2002). It therefore is important for researchers to assess how much time the potential research participants have available and be sensitive to their needs.

For the present study, the research team extensively discussed the possibility of material inducements for research participants. The research team recognized that whenever a street youth participated in an in-depth conversation he or she forfeited time during which money might be obtained by begging or working. On the other hand, as previously noted, paying participants has both ethical and methodological
implications. My experiences with the youth on the street helped to inform the
decision. Many times throughout the participant observation stage of the research,
youth made comments about telling foreigners “what they wanted to hear” to invoke
pity so that they would give them money or food. I also witnessed the youth
participating in interviews with the media and other foundations. Some youth later
shared they participated in the interviews to get fed (most interviewers came on
location with food). Other youth laughed with each other about their “made up”
stories after the interviewer left. Based upon these experiences, the prospect of
payment seemed coercive (ethical issue) and might incline the youth to say what they
thought I wanted to hear (methodological issue).

Therefore, for the purposes of this study, no inducements were used. Other
researchers have elected not to use inducements and found that it did not have a
negative impact on the youth’s willingness to participate. In his study of Brazilian
street children, Günther (1992) noted that during his pilot study respondents were not
paid. He indicated that, “Even so, the children exhibited great interest in being
interviewed. The opportunity to speak with an adult about their difficult situation
appeared to be an award in itself” (p. 361).

Urgent Situations. In researching street children, a researcher often is
confronted with a child who is in need of assistance, such as food, shelter, medical
treatment or even protection from situations of physical or sexual abuse. There clearly
is an overriding ethical question about how best to respond to a street youth when a
researcher sees a problem that could be addressed if the youth received appropriate
and available resources. Under such circumstances, Bemak (1996) stated, “It is my
belief that the street researcher must assume an expanded role as an information
resource” (p. 154). It has been suggested that information and referrals for social services are important to street children and may be more appropriate than the researcher offering material aid (Hutz & Koller, 1999).

In the present study, I was clear and consistent concerning my role on the street as a student/learner, and honest about my capabilities (e.g., no direct access to resources, etc.). However, in preparing for the realities of the children’s lives and situations, I made a series of decisions prior to the study to protect the integrity of the research process while at the same time responding to critical humanitarian needs. For example, if a youth asked for assistance I would assume the role of broker and share information about foundations and the type of assistance they offer. I also decided a prior that if I were to observe a child in critical condition, I would contact my collaborative agency (ASIS) for immediate intervention. In both contexts the youths’ relationships with me becomes part of their social capital. As opposed to being detrimental to the research process it enabled me to gain firsthand insight regarding the circumstances under which youth leveraged our relationship to meet various needs.

Exiting the Field. Finally, I needed to consider how to leave the field with sensitivity. Although there is extant literature on the subject of knowing when to exit the field per adequate data, little exists regarding practical strategies for terminating relationships and leaving the field with compassion and causing the least amount of harm. “Outsiders doing research should consider the impact of leaving the field on those with whom they have close links and play an important role in their lives” (Baker, et al., 1996, p. 187). Utilizing the literature in social work practice on terminating clinical relationships, I developed an exit strategy that was process-
oriented (i.e., discussed from the beginning and throughout the research process), sensitive to the youths’ (and my) experience in the research context and celebratory. A thorough discussion of how I exited the field is articulated below (see Exiting the Field).

**Gaining Access**

There are several barriers to gaining access to hard-to-reach populations, including knowledge of how to locate the population and the establishment of enough trust to approach and build relationships with the population. Without access to informants, no study is possible. Hutz and Koller (1999) suggested that a researcher’s success in obtaining reliable responses from street children is proportional to the researcher’s knowledge and understanding of the population.

While research in restricted settings or groups may involve more work initially, the directions for this work can be found by reviewing the literature on such settings and groups . . . . As a starting point, then, it is wise to begin in the library and to locate as much information about a group as possible before attempting to gain entry. (Berg, 1995, pp. 89, 94)

Knowledge acquisition should not be limited to street children, but also include the broader context in which street children lived. Learning as much as possible about the people one wishes to study not only facilitates entrée, but also helps to establish rapport once entrée has been gained (Berg, 1995).

As previously noted, before undertaking this investigation, I had visited Romania on four occasions in multiple roles (i.e., social work educator, practitioner and researcher). Through interactions and exchanges with personnel from multilateral international agencies, international NGOs, local NGOs and the university system, I
gained access to reports regarding street children programs and the findings of research projects related to street children. This information afforded me important insight into the unique lives of Romanian street children, including their broader social and historical context. Much of this knowledge was synthesized and articulated in the first chapters of this work.

However, gaining entrée into a population group moves far beyond knowledge acquisition. Proweller (1998) noted that access is a social process that requires ongoing negotiation between principle investigators and research participants. Whether or not researchers gain access, both physical and interpersonal, to a setting is largely determined by how they establish contact and present themselves (Bartunek & Louis, 1996). When the street children do not know the researcher, the first challenge is to develop trust (Hutz & Koller, 1999). “To collect high-quality data, the researcher must establish a proper working relationship with street children . . . . If researchers fail to overcome the distrust and suspicion they will not get useful information or reliable data” (pp. 65-66). Several authors suggested the use of key informants or guides (i.e., someone known and trusted by the street children) to gain access to a research setting (Berg, 1995; Fetterman, 1989; Lofland & Lofland, 1984).

Walking into a community cold can have a chilling effect on ethnographic research. . . . An intermediary or go-between can open doors otherwise locked to outsiders. The facilitator. . . should have some credibility with the group - either as a member or as an acknowledged friend or associate. (Fetterman, 1989, pp. 43-44)

Regarding street children specifically, Hutz and Koller (1999) suggested the utilization of an agency that provides assistance to street children. Such agencies have
knowledge regarding the location of street children and have the potential of having
credibility in the eyes of street children.

As previously noted, the ASISTA street team facilitated entrée into the street youth community. Beginning in November 2002, I shadowed the ASISTA street team as it went about its work on the streets of Bucharest. Towards the beginning of each interaction with the street youth, a member of the ASISTA street team introduced me as a student from America interested in learning more about what it was like to live on the street. I intentionally took the role of passive participant (Spradley, 1980), present at the scene but only as a “bystander”. As a bystander, I had an opportunity to familiarize myself with the various sites throughout Bucharest where youth congregate and live. I observed how the ASISTA street team engaged youth in conversation, listened to the topics discussed, observed the interaction among the street youth and between the street youth and their environment (e.g., the ASISTA street team, shop workers, passers-by, etc.) and gained a preliminary understanding about their personal physical condition (e.g., dress, hygiene, health, etc.) and the conditions in which they lived. I also gained important exposure to the street lingo used by the youth, since it is important for the street researcher to discover how to speak the language of the street children (Bemak, 1996). Previously, I only had formal Romanian language training. Each observation experience also afforded me with an opportunity to learn important contextual and historical information regarding the street youth situation in Romania. I immediately dictated field notes following the departure from a site. At least one member of the ASISTA street team was present during the dictation of field notes. This enabled me to clarify the dialogue and thereby provide a deeper
understanding of context. These post-observation clarifications and discussions were bracketed as reflections in the field notes.

**Data Collection Strategies**

The data collection period spanned the months of November 2002 through August 2003. The process involved two primary methods: participant observation and semi-structured, in-depth conversations (interviews). The strategies are discussed below in detail to enhance transferability (Miles & Hubberman, 1994). It should be noted that, consistent with grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) the processes of data collection and analysis happened concurrently and informed each other. Although, for clarity, data collection and data analysis will be discussed separately, the reader should keep in mind that they were highly integrative processes.

**Participant Observation**

Marshall and Rossman (1989) defined observation as the “systematic description of events, behaviors and artifacts in the social setting chosen for the study” (p. 79). Participant observation is a method used for intensive fieldwork in which the researcher is immersed in the culture under study (Patton, 1990). The importance of immersing oneself within the socio-politico-cultural context of the research has been well articulated (cf., Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Proweller, 1998), especially when researching with indigenous peoples (Errante, 2000; Smith, 1999; Swisher, 1998; Van Maanen, 1988). Ethnographers recognize that the raw material of their research “lies out there in the daily activities of the people [the researcher is] . . . interested in, and the only way to access those activities is to establish relationships with people, participate with them in what they do, and observe what is going on” (Agar, 1996, p. 31). Observation facilitates the discovery of the here and now through
looking, listening, feeling and smelling. Immersion into the context of respondents affords the opportunity for in-depth systematic study and documentation of a particular group or activity.

Observational methods are highly recommended for investigating the lives of street children (Andrade, 1995; Hutz & Koller, 1999; Lambert & Wiebel, 1990), and accordingly were a significant part of the present study. Observational data are used to describe settings, activities, people, and the meaning of what is observed from the perspective of the participants and can lead to a deeper understanding than the use of interviews alone, because it provides a knowledge of the context in which events occur and may enable the researcher to see things that participants themselves are not aware of, or that they are unwilling to discuss (Patton, 1990). This methodology required me to immerse myself fully in the children’s local reality; to “penetrate the internally structured ‘common sense’ of the young people being observed [and] . . . to accept and to respect . . . the internal logic of the street children’s culture and behavior” (Andrade, 1995, p. 71). Matza (1969) noted that a researcher must enter the field appreciating the situations she or he encounters rather than intending to correct them. This posture helps a researcher understand what is occurring rather than criticizing the events witnessed or advocating for change.

My initial plan was for observations in the field to proceed through three phases:

1. Intensive Observation (six weeks);
2. Moderate Observation (second six weeks); and
3. Persistent Observation (third six weeks).
During the *intensive observation* period I planned to spend four days a week observing in the field, immersing myself fully in data collection. During the *moderate observation* period I planned to spend three days a week in field observation allowing time for initial analysis while maintaining significant contact with the field. Finally, during the *persistent observation* period I planned to spend two days a week observing in the field. This would allow even more time for analysis while maintaining a relationship with the field. An observation day was defined as an eight-hour period of time within a twenty-four hour period. However, once I was on site, the realities of the field required significant revision to this plan.

The revised plan emerged from the context of the research as indicated. First, because the ASISTA street team served as the point of entrée to the street youth community, I needed to work with the team’s schedule. The ASISTA street team went to the street four days a week, spending only three hours or less a day in direct youth contact. To work around ASISTA’s limited schedule, I considered going to the street alone. The Executive Director of ASIS and the ASISTA street team disabused me of this proposal. The ASISTA street team warned of the unpredictable, often dangerous street environment, and suggested that I spend more time familiarizing myself with the street culture prior to breaking from the team. The literature also addresses this concern. Bemak (1996) discussed the risks to researchers when they enter “the middle of this [street] world. Simply being a professional does not guarantee protection from the hostile environmental elements of this world, which rather requires ‘savvy’ and a sense of street wit akin to the survival strategies of street children” (p. 151). Thus it is important for a street researcher to spend much time learning and understanding the ways of the street.
The second issue that required deviation from the plan arose from the ebb and flow of street life. During initial observations, I observed that the street youth did not engage in prolonged discussions with the ASISTA street team. Youth indicated their need to leave, became distracted and disengaged from the conversation and sometimes abruptly departed. Previous studies emphasized the importance of flexibility and versatility of methods in researching the lives of street children (Aptekar, 1994; Bemak, 1996; Lusk, 1992). “Research is not precise on the streets - time is fluid, conversations are frequently interrupted. . . . It demands . . . respect for the rhythm of the street life and sensitivity about how one’s research can accommodate the pulse of this environment” (Bemak, 1996, p. 153). Therefore, I revised my initial observation plan to respect the limits set by the youth to accommodate them and not pose an imposition.

Responding to the guidance from the ASIS foundation and the research context, the phases for observation took on a new form. The original three phases occurred, but in a different order and not in a linear fashion. Furthermore, I stayed linked to the ASISTA street team throughout the entirety of the study; however, its role changed as the project progressed.

Throughout the months of November and December 2002, the ASISTA street team alone facilitated connection to the street. I averaged four days a week and approximately two hours a day on the street, typically before noon. This period was reflective of moderate observation. Towards the end of December, the street youth started to pay more attention to me, asking more probing questions and sharing things with me without prompting (e.g., stories, pictures, etc.). This self-initiated interest
and willingness to engage in conversation signified the preliminary development of rapport.

Based upon this positive development, I evaluated and shifted my role in the field. From January through March 2003, the primary translator joined the field observation experience to assist me in developing a relationship with the youth, independent from the ASISTA street team. Breaking from ASISTA would permit contact with the street youth on weekends and during afternoon and evening hours, thereby facilitating longer field observation periods. Nonetheless, I continued to rely on the ASISTA street team to gain access to sites thought to be more dangerous and to the groups of youth with whom I had yet to develop an independent relationship. I averaged five days a week for approximately three hours a day on the street. This period of time was reflective of intensive observation. I rotated days of the week and the time of day to gain exposure to many different aspects of the street children’s lives. The time of day ranged from eight o’clock in the morning to eight o’clock at night. I remained sensitive to the limits imposed by the street youth, such as leaving when the youth indicated they had work to do or were not in the mood to talk.

Starting in April, I went almost exclusively to the street independently with my translator. Observation time increased in length as I developed closer relationships with the youth from every site. This period of time continued to be reflective of intensive observation. I was on the street on the average of five days a week and for approximately five hours a day. I continued to rotate days of the week and the time of day. The time of day ranged from seven o’clock in the morning to ten o’clock at night. Eventually I had relationships with youth from all sites and quit going with the ASISTA
street team entirely, although they continued to serve as a resource when confronted with urgent situations.

Persistent observations continued throughout the in-depth conversation phase (beginning in May) of the study to maintain contact with the research context and for observance of phenomenon throughout the summer months. Prolonged engagement is necessary to overcome distortions due to researcher impact on the culture, researcher bias, and the effect of unusual or seasonal events. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), prolonged engagement involves the “investment of sufficient time to achieve certain purposes: learning the ‘culture,’ testing for misinformation introduced by distortions either of self or the respondents, and building trust” (p. 301). Furthermore, persistent observation/prolonged engagement helped to establish the credibility and dependability of the data (Miles & Hubberman, 1994).

According to Spradley (1980), there are differences in the degree of involvement of the researcher (see Table 3.3). A researcher varies in his or her level of involvement with the people and activities under investigation, ranging from nonparticipation to complete participation.

Table 3.3. Types and Degrees of Participant Observation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Participation</th>
<th>Degree of Involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonparticipation</td>
<td>No Involvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 3.3, Spradley placed nonparticipation at the bottom of the scale. The nonparticipant avoids involvement and collects data only through observing at a distance. The next level up, passive participant, involves being present at the scene of action, but not participating with the people who are there. Passive participants act as “bystanders”, although their presence is known. In moderate participation the participant observer maintains a “balance between being an insider and outsider” (p. 60). They participate in the activities around them when invited, but do not self-initiate participation. The fourth level of involvement, active participation, is one in which the participant observer engages and does what other people are doing to learn the “cultural rules for behavior” (p. 60). In this context, one may initiate participation. Finally, the highest level of involvement is complete participation. A participant observer who is completely involved is one who studies the situation in which he or she is already an “ordinary participant” (p. 61).

My degree of involvement in the context of this study intentionally progressed from that of passive participation to moderate participation and, to the extent possible, active participation. As previously noted, I was overt about my identity and reasons for being there. I did not attempt to observe from afar but engaged in progressive interaction with the population group and immersed myself, to the extent possible, into the street children environment.

Many street youth have had very negative experiences with societal institutions and adults appearing concerned with their well-being. Street children develop barriers of mistrust to protect themselves from outsiders (Aptekar, 1994; Andrade, 1995). Throughout the participant observation phase of the research, a large part of my interaction with the youth involved trying to build rapport and reduce the power
differential inherent in such interaction. Developing relationships of confidence and trust with the respondents was vital, especially in the context of in-depth conversations on personal topics.

Throughout the research process I maintained extensive field notes and kept a reflective journal to record my observations and reflections. “The central component of ethnographic research is the ethnographic account. Providing such narrative accounts of what goes on in the lives of study subjects derives from having maintained complete, accurate, and detailed field notes” (Berg, 1995, p. 107). For the purposes of this study, I captured the elements proposed by Merriam (1988) in documenting her experiences in the field (pp. 91-98), as outlined in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4. Proposed Structure of Documenting Field Notes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of Field Observation</th>
<th>Things to Consider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Setting</td>
<td>What is the physical environment like? What is the context? What kinds of behavior does the setting promote or prevent?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Participants</td>
<td>Describe who is in the scene, how many people there are and what are their roles. What brings these people together? What is allowed here?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities and Interactions</td>
<td>What is happening? Is there a definable sequence of activities? How do people interact with the activity and with one another? How are people and activities connected or interrelated?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency and Duration</td>
<td>When does the situation begin? How long does it last? Is it a recurring type of situation or is it unique? If it recurs, how frequently?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtle Factors</td>
<td>What are the informal or unplanned activities? What are the symbolic and connotative meanings of words? What is the nonverbal communication such as dress and physical space? What does not happen - especially if it should have?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The importance of taking field notes immediately following time spent in the field (cf., Berg, 1995; Burgess, 1991) and suggestions for note taking (cf., Berg, 1995) are prevalent in the literature. Because field notes represent an attempt to record everything about an observation, it is crucial that note production is as close to verbatim as possible. The notes must include details of the physical appearance of those involved, the time and duration of the field observation period, times at which conversations, events or activities occurred, and the researcher’s opinions, preconceived notions and feelings about certain observed situations. Berg (1995) made the following suggestions regarding note taking in the field:

- Record key words and key phrases while in the field;
- Make notes about the sequence of events, being sure to track duration;
- Limit the time that you remain in the setting;
- Write the full notes immediately after exiting the field;
- Bracket analytic ideas/inferences (e.g., ideas about the social meaning of a particular event, patterns that you notice/how what you observe relates to what is already known on the topic, etc.); and
- Track your own reflexive thinking; your active consideration of your place in the research.

Merriam (1988) and Berg (1995) informed my method of note taking. While in the field, I dictated observations into a small tape recorder, being careful to bracket my thoughts and interpretations. As previously noted, during initial observations, dictation took place in the presence of the ASISTA street team. I encouraged members of the street team to correct any of my comments and provide a historical or cultural context if appropriate. Their direct comments often were included in the text of the
field notes. When I was on the streets independently with my translator, the
translator assisted with contextual clarification during dictation sessions. For a sample
excerpt of field notes see Appendix G. Initially, I listened to the tapes and drafted
field notes immediately following an observation day. Eventually, the time and
emotional demands of being in the field increased. To keep up with the volume of
dictation generated, a transcriber was hired to type some of the field notes.

Burgess (1991) also suggested documenting any chance meeting with a research
participant outside the boundaries of the study setting. Although the boundary Burgess
discussed referred to geographic location, the premise applies in the present context.
The boundaries of the present study were oriented more towards time than geographic
location. Because I lived in downtown Bucharest, I often encountered the youth on the
streets outside of set observation times. Although I was not officially in the field, I
took advantage of every opportunity to interact with the youth. As situations
presented, I documented discussions and observations relevant to the research
questions in my field notes.

As seen in Appendix G, field notes were divided into two sections. Down the
left-hand side of the page I recorded my concrete observations (Berg, 1995; Merriam,
1988). Down the right-hand side of the page I recorded personal reflections and
memos. The field notes contained as much detail as possible (thick description) to
provide the reader with a thorough description of the research setting, the
characteristics of the participants and dynamics of the observations. The thick
description of concrete observations and the inclusion of personal reflections and
memos alongside the data also allow a reader to follow the sequence of data
collection, thus establishing the confirmability of the data (Miles & Hubberman, 1994).
In-Depth Conversations

Participant observation is essential, but “there are, of course, no observers of the internal events of thought and feeling except those to whom they occur. Most of the significant events of people’s lives can become known to others only through interview(s)” (Weiss, 1994, p. 2). For the present study, in-depth conversations allowed a deeper exploration of the research questions in terms of the meanings the youth themselves brought to them. To incorporate this practice into the present study, throughout the final 11 weeks of the research project (May 20 – August 6, 2003) semi-structured in-depth conversations were conducted. What follows is a discussion of decisions regarding how to format the conversations with the youth, an articulation of how the in-depth conversation questions were formulated, a summary of the informed consent process and pragmatics surrounding the in-depth conversations. Finally, the section concludes with a discussion of adaptations.

Format. The format for the in-depth conversations emerged out of recommendations from the literature and my relationship with the street youth. Once I began going to the street without the assistance of the ASISTA street team, a theme of concern for my well-being while on the street emerged within my interaction with the street youth. The youths’ expressed concerns for me ranged from cleanliness (e.g., offering me a blanket to sit on so my pants would not get dirty, etc.) to concerns related to the safety of different street locations or other street youth who might take advantage of or hurt me. In consultation with the research team and two members of my dissertation committee who were on-site in Romania, the possibility of my staying overnight on the street was discussed. In the context of this possibility, as well as the street youths’ consistent expression of concern for me, for the in-depth
conversations I took the position of a newcomer to the street seeking advice from the street youth. This approach is consistent with the “participant-empowering” approach to research discussed by Massat and Lundy (1997). “By giving the role of teacher to research participants, researchers reduce the imbalance in power between researchers and participants” (pp. 45-46). Reflecting this stance, the opening prompt for the in-depth conversation was: *If I were to come and stay with you on the street, in preparation, what would be some of the most important things for me to know?* In Mauthner’s (1997) article on exploring methodological issues related to collecting data from children, she stressed the importance of encouraging children to describe events from their daily lives through storytelling. Therefore, throughout the interview, I encouraged storytelling by soliciting personal stories and accounts.

The overall strategy for the in-depth conversations was to place a large part of the control of the conversation in the hands of the participants. For example, conversations took place at times and places that were convenient for the youth. On most occasions, the time for the in-depth conversation had been pre-arranged. When I arrived to engage in an in-depth conversation with a youth, I first confirmed that the time was still convenient. If not, I asked the youth to suggest an alternative time. If the youth agreed that it was a convenient time to engage in an in-depth conversation, I asked where he or she would like to sit to have the conversation. Giving the youth complete control over the time and location of the conversation allowed for discussion in an informal, non-threatening manner and context.

Although I spoke and understood the Romanian language I used a translator to facilitate the interviews to avoid data loss or misinterpretation. As previously noted, in January of the observation phase the primary translator joined the research
environment and from that time served as translator throughout the majority of the field observation experiences. This prolonged engagement in the field allowed the translator and me to become comfortable working together and to finesse the flow of translation. More importantly, it allowed the translator to establish rapport with the youth and the youth to gain experience in communicating with me via a translator. Therefore, when it came time to engage in an in-depth conversation, the youth were accustomed to communicating with me through and had established a relationship with the translator.

**Questions.** The development of the in-depth conversation questions emerged both from sensitizing concepts derived from social capital theory and the issues and language emerging from the observational data. As previously noted, the opening prompt was:

*If I were to come and stay with you on the street, in preparation, what would be some of the most important things for me to know?*

Related to social capital theory, questions were asked around various resources and how the person would access those resources. This series of questions would typically start with a closed-ended question (e.g., *Would I be able to eat every day?*) to ascertain whether or not the child perceived the resource as available and then probe for the process of acquiring the resource (e.g., *What would I need to do to get food?*) being careful to note how the child interfaced with the other street children, the informal environment (e.g., neighborhood, etc.) and formal intuitions (e.g., NGOs, etc.). The specific resource domains (i.e., money, food, sleeping location and stability, health and wellness, school) were identified from the observational data. As youth from different sites had very distinct relationships with the police, a specific
question related to law enforcement was also included (i.e., *What should I do if the police come?*). Questions were also asked to get a better sense for how trust (*Who will I be able to count on the most? The least?*) and reciprocity (e.g., *Would others share their things with me? Would it be important for me to share anything with others?*) operated, as well as the norms and sanctions that govern behavior (e.g., *If someone new were to come to the street and want to stay with you and your group, how would that decision get made?*). The in-depth conversation concluded with broad summary questions (e.g., *What are the best things about staying on the street? What are the biggest challenges?*), as well as an opportunity to ask questions of me. I used my knowledge from field observations throughout the interview to tailor probing questions, solicit stories and seek deeper understanding. A complete interview schedule is included in Appendix H.

The conversations were conducted in a semi-structured format (Smith, 1995); the questions were predetermined, but the ordering of questions and the length of time spent discussing each question varied depending on the youths’ responses to previously-asked questions. The format of the in-depth conversation allowed the participant to provide additional information and an opportunity for me to ask additional questions or solicit clarification of responses (Errante, 2000). Toward this end, questions were written to be maximally open ended and thereby allow opportunities for novel information to emerge. This format is specifically recommended for use with street children, with an emphasis on the importance of allowing children to digress or tell stories when they wished (Baker, et al., 1996).

**Informed Consent.** As previously articulated (see Ethical Considerations), informed consent was viewed as an ongoing process in which participants voluntarily
gave their verbal agreement to participate or continue participating in the research activity. The translator served as the witness to the informed consent process. The process began when a child was invited to participate in a conversation and continued until all data had been collected. A copy of the informed consent witness form and the recruitment script is located in Appendix D and E respectively.

On most occasions, the informed consent process took place on a different day prior to the in-depth conversation to allow the participant to identify the most convenient time and place for the conversation to occur. As will be discussed under adaptations below, I made modifications to this format to stay responsive to the research environment.

**In-depth Conversation Participants.** I engaged 28 youth in in-depth conversations. Each conversation averaged one hour in length, ranging from 25 minutes to about 90 minutes. While participants were given the option of using initials or pseudonyms during the interview so that their real names would not be tape-recorded, all youth interviewed chose to use their real names. However, to protect the confidentiality of participants, the transcripts were coded before being shared with peer-debriefers. Although the circumstance did not present itself in the context of this study, I was prepared to provide youth with information regarding sources of assistance. Following the interview, participants were asked if they would be willing to meet for a follow-up conversation (member check) to review the information they had shared. All the youth expressed a willingness to meet with me again. Following preliminary data analysis of the in-depth conversations, I facilitated a member check with 15 (54%) youth.
One hundred percent of the youth consented to be tape-recorded. After each in-depth conversation, I delivered the tape(s) to my transcriber, who transcribed the conversations and translated them into English. Once the transcriptions were completed, the primary translator and I listened to the in-depth conversation again while reading through the translation to ensure accuracy and bracket non-text items (e.g., nonverbal gestures, tone of voice, things happening in the environment, etc.).

Adaptations. Many street researchers stress the need for tremendous flexibility in researching with street children (Bemak, 1996, Lusk, 1992). Throughout the present study, I maintained an open stance towards the research methodology to be responsive and respectful of context. Within this stance, I adapted the wording of the recruitment script, my sampling strategy and in-depth conversation format. Each is discussed briefly below.

In the recruitment script, I used the wording “in depth conversations” rather than the word “interview” because it better captured the essence of what transpired within the Romanian context. In Romania, the word “interview” is a journalist term of art implying compensation to the interviewee and publication of the interview substance. Also, as previously noted, the youth often associated the word interview with compensation. Therefore, I chose the Romanian phrase “stam de vorba” which means, “to stay together in conversation”. It implies more than mere talking and reflects a lengthier dialogue. Also, the recruitment script included an opening paragraph of introduction. As I was well known to the youth, this systematic introduction seemed inappropriate. Therefore, I proposed dropping the introduction from the script. With the proposed changes to the recruitment script, I sent the
revisions along with a rationale back through The Ohio State University’s IRB for review, subsequently receiving IRB approval.

Before beginning the in-depth conversations, I identified a target group of youth who met the established sampling criteria. The original list consisted of 28 youth. I visited the street in search of these youth and sought their consent to engage in in-depth conversations. There were 10 females on the original list; I facilitated the recruitment script with seven of the females I was able to locate. Although all seven consented to participate in an in-depth conversation, circumstances arose that inhibited three females from participating. Therefore, four females from the original sample engaged in an in-depth conversation. There were 18 males on the original list. Again, per my ability to locate, I facilitated the recruitment script with 16 of the males. Although all 16 consented, again circumstances arose that inhibited some from participating; 13 males from the original list engaged in an in-depth conversation.

Committed to flexibility, I engaged several additional youth who were not pre-selected for in-depth conversations and included these youth in the sample. On three occasions, while facilitating the recruitment script with a pre-identified youth, the youth suggested that I speak with a friend(s) who also lived on the street. In all three cases, I facilitated the recruitment script, and the youth (five total; two single youth and a group of three brothers) consented to and participated in an in-depth conversation. On three occasions, when I arrived at a site to engage in an in-depth conversation, the youth inquired if a friend or sibling could participate in the conversation with them. In all three cases I facilitated the recruitment script with the youth (four total) and they consented to and participated in the in-depth conversation. On yet another occasion, a young man passed by where the in-depth
conversation was taking place. The youth participating in the conversation invited the young man to join. Following the conversation, I facilitated the recruitment script with this young man, and he consented to participate in the project. In all cases I sought to stay responsive to the street youths’ environment and take full advantage of opportunities as they arose. Furthermore, allowing the youth to self-identify others to participate (snowball sampling) and allowing them to participate in groups (opposed to one-on-one) are consistent with social capital theory.

On one occasion, I recruited a youth who was not on the pre-identified list to engage in an in-depth conversation. The youth was from Constanța (coastal city on the Black Sea) and had arrived in Bucharest by a train a few days prior to our initial meeting. The youth engaged openly in conversation and seemed interested in why I was in Bucharest. Being new in Bucharest, but not to the streets, the youth was actively engaging in many of the processes under investigation. I believed the youth would provide a unique perspective. I facilitated the recruitment script with this youth, and the youth consented to and participated in an in-depth conversation. The final sample consisted of 28 youth. The demographic characteristics of the core sample were provided in Table 3.2 earlier in this chapter.

Bemak (1996) suggested that, “The idealized research design, which controls the environmental variables such as noise, distracting events or friends interrupting the interview, is not applicable for research with this population” (p. 150). As such, I decided to allow the natural flow of the street youth environment to be incorporated in the in-depth conversations. For example, if a youth expressed a desire to include one of their friends in the in-depth conversation, I consented. In some situations, a youth from the street or other individual (e.g., shopkeeper, person from the
neighborhood, etc.) passing by intervened in the conversation to ask the youth a question. “Research is not precise on the streets. . . . [Conducting interviews] demands. . . respect for the rhythm of the street life and sensitivity about how one’s research can accommodate the pulse of this environment” (Bemak, 1996, p. 149, 153). Therefore, these occurrences were not observed as a nuisance or interruption, but rather an opportunity to capture dynamic interactions as they occurred in their natural environments. Allowing the in-depth conversation to ebb and flow also showed great respect for the youth and their context.

In their research with street children from Kampala, Young and Barrett (2001) encouraged researchers to minimize their input into the research process and increase the participation of children. One way to accomplish was to allow interviews to be child-led and child-facilitated. Panter-Brick (2002) also supported this methodological approach. She encouraged the participation of children in the research, not just as informants but also in the research process itself. For example, she allowed children to conduct interviews. On one occasion, when I arrived at a site for a scheduled conversation with a group of three brothers, a female who previously engaged in a conversation spontaneously began to ask questions (similar to what I had asked her) of the brothers. I sought permission to record the interaction and allowed the young lady to serve as the interviewer. This provided a unique glimpse into how the youth perceived the topic of investigation and how a child from the street would approach the questions and probe for detail. I facilitated a member check with two of the three brothers to address gaps and seek clarification as necessary.

Allowing youth to be self-directed and make decisions related to the research helped decrease the unequal distribution of power between the researcher
participants and me (discussed under ethical considerations). Furthermore, to have refused to interview a friend or denied a friend’s participation in the in-depth conversation would have been disrespectful to the youth’s relationships and desires, as well as potentially disruptive to the environment. Finally, having an opportunity to speak with youth as a group and observe their interaction with their environment afforded a unique opportunity to observe their networks and connections (social capital) in action.

Exiting the Field

“Because relationships are virtually the stock and trade of a good ethnographer, care must be taken when leaving the field. Exiting any field setting involves at least two separate operations: first, the physical removal of the researcher from the research setting and second, emotional disengagement from the relationships developed during the field experience” (Berg, 1995, p. 115). If not handled carefully, how a researcher exits the field may have negative repercussions on the street youth themselves or their reception of future field researchers (Chadwick, Bahr, & Albrecht, 1984; Shaffir, Stebbins, & Turowetz, 1980). Therefore, I carefully considered my exit strategy; leaving the field was a planned component in this research project. Since there is a dearth of pragmatic information in the qualitative research methodology literature regarding how best to exit the field, I consulted the social work literature on termination with clients and discussed exiting the field extensively with my research team. The following served as guiding principles in leaving the field with care and respect.

As previously noted, I was overt about who I was and why I was in Romania. I was also overt about the time-limited nature of my stay in Bucharest. Consistent with
the social work literature, I ensured discussions related to how long I would be in Bucharest permeated my time in the field. Early on I disclosed that I would be in Romania for about a year. Throughout my interactions with the youth the time frame of my visit often emerged, which afforded me an opportunity to repeat the time parameters. Furthermore, when the time for leaving the field approached, I reminded the youth of when my “last month”, “last week” and “last day” on the streets would be.

This on-going dialogue about the time-limited nature of our relationship also afforded many opportunities for the youth and me to process our feelings about saying goodbye. The need for awareness of a range of feelings related to the end of a relationship and an opportunity to process those feelings is well articulated in the social work practice literature (cf., McMahon, 1990; Sheafor, Horejsi, & Horejsi, 1994; Stream, 1985). Times of reflection often included reminiscing about first interactions, the youths’ impressions of me, what it has been like to know each other and to be known by each other and expressions of hope that they will be remembered. Emotions ranged from enjoyment to a sense of loss to frustration and anger. I was authentic throughout these encounters and respectful of the youths’ emotional states.

As previously articulated, I had a no giving rule and did not directly provide resources to the youth. This decision was based on a desire to avoid any coercion within the research context, as well as to minimize my impact on the environment, including not creating dependency for meeting concrete needs (e.g., food, clothing, medical assistance, etc.). A basic tenant in social work practice is to empower rather than create dependency. My practice of sharing information about foundations and the
type of assistance they offer if a youth asked for assistance reflected this important value.

Social work literature (cf., Corlis & Rabe, 1969; Lantz, 1987) and Bailey (1996), a field researcher, highlights the important role of celebration in the context of termination. “One way of caring for [the] relationships [developed in the field] is to discuss and plan your leaving with the members... whether a party or some sort of ceremony would be enjoyed” (Bailey, 1996, p. 85). While discussing my departure with the youth, several asked if they could have a picture of me and the primary translator as a “remembrance”. Throughout my time in the field, I observed the significance of photographs; few youth had them and those that did often kept them on their person for safekeeping. I borrowed a Polaroid camera from the United States Embassy and the Veritas foundation donated several roles of Polaroid film. On the last day to visit a site I took the camera with me. I allowed each child to have a picture of what ever she or he wanted - of themselves, themselves with friends, their friends with me and/or the translator, the translator alone, or any variant of this. Allowing youth to take photographs of their lives was also highlighted as a way to facilitate their participation in the research process (Panter-Brick, 2002).

Goodbyes related to specific sites were further tailored based on the unique relationship developed with a specific group of youth. For example, youth from a couple of sites had consistently shared food during field observations and another group brought snacks and pop to share during the in-depth conversation. For these sites, the celebration reflected in-kind. Besides the gift of a photo, I brought snacks and pop to share with the youth on my last day in the field. At another site the youth had shared chocolate on many occasions. For this site, the celebration included
chocolate. At yet another site the youth often taught me Romanian songs. For this site, I brought my tape recorder and recorded us singing together and for each other. In each circumstance it was my goal to show deep respect for the relationships I had with the youth and appreciation for the time they had spent sharing their lives with me.

Data Analysis Strategies

How to begin to conceptualize with integrity the words, the stories and the glimpses of reality that have been entrusted to me? As I face the task ahead I reflect back on this journey. My mind is filled with an array of interactions; they break into my thoughts like clips from a movie. So animate; so vivid. Early introductions and conversations of who I was and what I was doing in Romanian, narratives of challenge and survival, meeting a new puppy, a confrontation by the police, the youth teaching me Romanian songs and how to dance “the right way” to Manele (a style of Roma music), witnessing an NGO worker intervene with a girl who had taken a piece of glass to her stomach out of desperation, watching a boy negotiate a comb and a haircut for guarding a man’s kiosk, encountering the broken heart of a girl who had been sexually “betrayed” by a “close friend”, sitting in a sewer sharing a loaf of bread... I can barely keep up as the reels fast forward through my mind. What appeared straightforward at the beginning materializes into something a lot more complicated. I sit among a sea of field observation notes and transcripts riddled with post-it notes of thoughts, observations and wonderings - - the bounty of a systematic line-by-line analysis of the data or the spurts of insight that would come during a time of reflection at the end of a cold day on the street, on a walk to the vegetable market through Cişmigiu park in an afternoon, while playing backgammon with friends, fuzzy thoughts becoming clear as I wake up to start a new day or the final jottings before I fall asleep at night. How to begin to conceptualize with integrity the words, the stories and the glimpses of reality that have been entrusted to me?

Reflective Journal Entry, August 7, 2003

Planning and facilitating data analysis is a daunting task for any qualitative researcher. My data set for the present study consists of over 700 pages of field notes compiled November 2002-August 2003 and 20 interview transcripts (over 400 pages). Grounded theory methodology is a qualitative research tool that provides a structure within which a researcher can approach a mass of unstructured data (Glaser & Strauss,
A full *raison d’être* for selecting qualitative methods was outlined at the beginning of this chapter. This section begins with a rationale for selecting to use grounded theory techniques specifically, followed by the role of theory in framing the study and the analysis of the data. The chapter ends with a description of each step in the data analysis process.

**Rationale for the use of Grounded Theory Techniques**

Although social capital theory was utilized as a heuristic framework in the present study, I relied on grounded theory techniques for three reasons: its usefulness as a theory-building tool, its value in creating knowledge that has relevant practical application and its consistency with social work values and practice. Each is discussed briefly below.

**Theoretical Grounds.** First articulated by Glaser and Strauss (1967), the process of grounded theory can be used in the development of knowledge. While studying the interactions of hospital personnel with dying patients, Glaser and Strauss (1965) sought to develop a research process that promoted the development of sociological theory. Glaser and Strauss believed that adequate theory could only emerge with intensive involvement with the phenomenon of study, and that theory development (ultimate outcome of grounded theory) requires qualitative data as such data are ideal for discerning the aspects of theory such as the structural conditions, norms, patterns, processes, etc. important for explaining social interaction (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). One overarching goal of this study was to move social capital theory *forward* in its conceptualization of children as agents in the creation and use of their own social capital, which makes the utilization of grounded theory techniques desirable.
Practical Grounds. It was also a goal for this research endeavor to have significant practical implications for the street children in Romania; the information would be used to develop intervention strategies and programs to meet the needs of youth. Through constant comparative methods, grounded theory allows for an emergent theoretical understanding to evolve. Thus the data collection strategies (field observation, in-depth conversations), analysis and findings are grounded in the lived experiences of the street children. Any program or intervention strategy should be respectful of the lives the youth have forged for themselves on the street, built on knowledge of their lives and drawn from their strengths and capabilities. Gilgun (1994) emphasized this point: “The findings of grounded theory research fit the realities of practice because they are steeped in the natural world, the world of multiple variables and multiple meanings” (p. 115).

Congruence with the Social Work Profession. Finally, grounded theory was selected as its processes parallel the processes of direct social work practice, embodying many of the profession’s core values, underlying assumptions and practice techniques. These parallels are outlined in Table 3.5.
**Table 3.5. Parallel Processes between Grounded Theory and Social Work Practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client/Research Participant - Centered</th>
<th>The focus on the perspectives of participants is congruent with the social work injunction of starting where the client is.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Centrality of Context</td>
<td>The emphasis on viewing participants as inextricably part of a wider context fits with the social work perspective of focus on the client-environment interface.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stance toward Client/Research Participant</td>
<td>Social work direct practice by definition involves direct engagement with a client. Social workers, like grounded theory researchers, strive for empathy characterized by a balance of being in tune with clients and maintaining an analytic stance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection Methods</td>
<td>The data collection methods of interviewing, observation, and document analysis are used by social workers as well as by grounded theorists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation Methods</td>
<td>The use of field notes, observer comments and memos is similar to process recording and problem-oriented case record keeping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inductive - Deductive Analysis</td>
<td>The combination of induction and deduction in grounded theory approaches parallels how a social worker thinks about cases. Social workers use previous research, theory and practice wisdom while attempting to avoid imposing preconceptions on clients.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stance toward Information</td>
<td>Social workers, like grounded theorists, come to conclusions about situations, after interacting with them and after gathering as much data as possible. The conclusions are tentative and open to modification as new information becomes available.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As previously noted, in qualitative methods the researcher acts as the human instrument of data collection and analysis. Therefore the researcher must enter into and spend time in the real world setting under investigation and have the value base and aptitude to build relationships, avoid imposing one’s own values and perspectives,
observe persons in context (e.g., attend to micro, mezzo and macro variables, etc.),
document thoroughly and view conclusions as fluid and open to change. I possess a
baccalaureate and masters degree in social work and was a social work practitioner for
five years and acquired the dispositions, knowledge base and experience to work
comfortably within this context.

Role of Theory throughout the Inquiry

Theory played an important role throughout this project; the literature review
was a process that continued all the way through the life of the study, from
conception through the final analysis. As already stated, one of grounded theory’s
guiding principles is the generation of theory from the data, and not from a priori
hypotheses. However, background assumptions sensitize researchers to look for
certain issues or processes. In the initial review of the literature, my goal was to
become familiar with the theoretical points made by previous researchers of social
capital. As articulated in Chapter 2, I used a heuristic framework drawn from the work
of sociologist Nan Lin (2001a; see also Lin, 2001b) since it incorporated many divergent
perspectives on what social capital is, how it is created and how it is mobilized to
solve problems and meet needs (cf., Bourdieu, 1986; Burt, 1992; Coleman, 1988;
Granovetter, 1973; Loury, 1992; Putnam, 1993a, 1995). Thus I approached this project
with a range of sensitizing concepts gleaned from the literature on social capital
theory. These concepts guided me in my initial observations and reading of field
notes, while I was careful not to allow the conclusions drawn by previous researchers
to unduly influence the analysis and interpretation of data. Peer debriefers played an
important role in this process as they probed biases, sought meaning and pursued
clarity of interpretation.
Consistent with the constant comparative approach, the process of data collection and data analysis co-occurred, each informing the other. As the analysis progressed and new concepts and ideas emerged, I allowed the literature and the emergent data to dialogue and ask questions of each other. For example, for many social capital theorists (Coleman, 1988, Furstenberg & Hughes, 1995; Johnson, 1999; Runyan, et al., 1998; Teachman, Paasch, & Carver, 1996), family is seen as playing an important role in facilitating the development of human capital in children. Coleman (1988) was among the first to suggest that social capital may exist within the family unit as in other social networks. He argued social capital within the family (which gives the child access to the adult human capital) depended both on the physical presence of adults in the family and on the attention given by the adults to the child. In his investigation he focused on parent-child relations, using measures of the physical presence of adults in a household and attention given by adults to children as empirical indicators of such relations. The “strength” of family relations is frequently measured by using a ratio of parents to children. The number of siblings in the household is used as a measure of “attention” (more siblings represent a dilution of adult attention). So, the theory asks the data if any of this bears out. There was evidence in the data that some youth created “families” on the street. Like conventional families, these street families generated social capital resources that provided greater access to an array of valued outcomes (e.g., food, shelter, companionship, protection, etc.). However, how those relationships operated was quite different. The quality and substance of relationship appeared more important than the quantity, and younger youth actually played a role in facilitating access to social capital for older youth.
Once the analysis was complete, I again reviewed the literature on social capital theory *through the lens of the data* to compare the emerging framework with the literature. “Overall, tying the emergent theory to existing literature enhances the validity, generalisability, and theoretical level of the theory building” (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 545). Some of what emerged from the data was consistent with general constructs set forth in the literature. In those cases, I identified and articulated the consistency, providing ample excerpts from the actual data to support assertions. In some cases the literature could not adequately answer the questions asked by the data. In regards to the above example, the data asks the theory if there is room for the *agency of children* in creating social capital and if inter-family relationships in terms of their *quality* play a role in the creation and use of social capital?

Building empirically grounded theory requires a reciprocal relationship between data and theory. Data must be allowed to generate propositions in a dialectical manner that permits use of *a priori* theoretical frameworks, but which keeps a particular framework from becoming the container in which the data must be poured. The search is for theory that grows out of context-embedded data, not in a way that automatically rejects *a priori* theory, but in a way that keeps preconceptions from distorting the logic of evidence. (Lather, 1986, p. 188) Where the literature on social capital theory failed to connect with or explain things seen in the data, I did not seek to force the data into any preconceived framework, but allowed the emergent framework to move the theory forward.

**Analyzing the Data**

The use of grounded theory techniques provided a structured way of analyzing the data in three phases - *open coding*, a synthesis of categories (*axial coding*) and
finally into meaningful interrelated constructs (selective coding) - that gave rise to an emergent theoretical model. Strauss and Corbin (1990) defined the process of coding as, “the operations by which data are broken down, conceptualised, and put back together in new ways. It is the central process by which theories are built from data” (p. 57). In utilizing grounded-theory techniques, I relied on this multi-step process to review, take apart and conceptualize the raw data. Although discussed in a linear capacity, it should be noted that these steps occurred in a back and forth process of constant comparative analysis as new data were collected.

Open Coding. The first phase of the analysis process is called substantive or open coding. “Open coding is the interpretive process by which data are broken down analytically” (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 12). As initial data was collected, I spent many hours “dwelling in the data”. Initially sensitzing questions were asked of the data, which helped me break down the data and narrow in on what might be happening (Strauss & Corbin, 1998):

- What is going on here (e.g., issues, problems, concerns, etc.)?
- Who are the actors involved?
- What are the various actors doing?
- How are they relating to each other?
- How do they define the situation?
- When, how and with what consequences are they acting, and how are these the same or different for various actors for various situations? (p. 77).

The open coding phase involved doing a line-by-line analysis of the data, with each paragraph taken apart incident by incident, and occurrence by occurrence. Sections of the data were broken down into “meaning units” or concepts. Since it is from the
conceptualization of data, not the data itself, that theory is developed, concepts are the basic unit of analysis.

Theories can’t be built with actual incidents or activities as observed or reported; that is, from “raw data”. The incidents, events, happenings are taken as, or analyzed as, potential indicators of phenomenon, which are thereby given conceptual labels. . . . Only by comparing incidents and naming like phenomenon with the same term can the theorist accumulate the basic units for theory. (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 7)

Each meaning unit was given a conceptual label (hereafter referred to as a code) ranging from a word or two, to full sentences.

As I continued to read through the data, a new code was established for every meaning unit that did not fit within a previously identified code. As the open coding analysis continued, I continued to reformulate and refine codes and subsequently tested the codes on new data. Open coding involves these constant comparisons:

Making comparisons assists the researcher in guarding against bias, for he or she is then challenging concepts with fresh data. Such comparisons also help to achieve greater precision (the grouping of like and only like phenomenon) and consistency (always grouping like with like). (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 9)

Early on, I coded data in the margins of my field notes. As the study progressed, to assist in managing the volume of text, data were analyzed using the qualitative data analysis software package ATLAS.ti. Originally, I selected ATLAS.ti for the two modes of analysis (i.e., textual, contextual) afforded through the software. The first mode of analysis is the “textual level” that allows a researcher to review the raw data, select segments of the data and assign a code to the data segment. The
software also facilitated the process of memoing. As I coded the data I attached a theoretical note or memo. These memos provide a glimpse of what I was thinking about or the questions that were generated throughout the open coding process. “Memos provide a firm base for reporting on the research and its implications. If a researcher omits the memoing and moves directly from coding to writing, a great deal of conceptual detail is lost or left undeveloped” (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 10).

**Axial Coding.** While open coding breaks down the data into concepts, axial coding brings the data together in new ways. Axial coding moves the analysis to the next level by examining the open codes for connections to and relationships between and within each other. In this phase, I engaged in two processes to move toward developing a conceptual organization of codes. I identified subcategories for a code that recognized important distinctions in how the code operated and I grouped together codes that were related to the same phenomenon to form categories. Corbin and Strauss (1990) differentiated concepts from categories, the second element of grounded theory. “Categories are higher in level and more abstract than the concepts they represent . . . . Categories are the ‘cornerstones’ of developing theory. They provide the means by which the theory can be integrated” (p. 7). The use of constant comparisons continued throughout this phase. “All hypothetical relationships proposed deductively during axial coding must be considered provisional until being verified repeatedly against incoming data” (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 13).

Within ATLAS.ti capabilities, I reviewed all data segments assigned to a specific code. The software generates a report pulling all segments related to one code together, including attached memos. Reviewing all data segments associated with one code together and reviewing theoretical memos provided an important foundation
from which to move into the axial coding phase of analysis. The second mode of analysis afforded by ATLAS.ti, which models the theory building process of grounded theory, focuses on a “contextual level” allowing a researcher to create subcategories for codes and connect codes to form theoretical networks.

The thinking, judging, deciding, interpreting, etc., are still done by the researcher. The computer does not make conceptual decisions, such as which words or themes are important to focus on, or which analytic step to take next. These analytical tasks are still left entirely to the researcher. (Tesch, 1991, pp. 25-26)

As I moved into this phase I quickly realized the drawback of computers highlighted by Agar (1991). Computers do not allow for “simultaneous visual access to materials that make ideas happen” (p.193). Or as Padgett (1988) stated, “There is no substitute for spreading out data on the dining room table to look for patterns. Computer screens cannot give us such a panoramic view” (p. 83). The main advantage to using the software package in the analysis process was found in the “textual level” of ATLAS.ti. It simplified the mechanical aspects of data analysis creating more time to reflect on the data. In this way, the software package was used as a tool for the human interpreter. I relied on pen and paper to identify and document subcategories for a code articulating the important distinctions in how they operated, and grouping related codes together under categories. The pen and paper strategy assisted in developing visual models and examination models simultaneously, thus enhancing the analysis.

**Selective Coding.** Selective coding involves the process of refining and integrating categories to form a larger theoretical scheme. Selective coding leads to
the emergence of the initial theoretical framework and involves the integration of all
the categories that have been developed. It “is the process by which all categories are
unified around a ‘core’ category” (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 14). In selective coding
the goal is to identify an overarching category with analytic power; the “ability to pull
the other categories together to form an explanatory whole” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998,
p. 146). As I utilized social capital theory as a heuristic framework in this exploration,
it served as the core category. In the selective coding process, I sought to further
define the unique aspects of how social capital operated in the data for the street
youth population (i.e., the emergence of binding capital, see Chapter 5). In
identifying unique dynamics at play in the data, I relied on an adaptation of the
probing questions suggested by Strauss and Corbin:

- What is the main analytic idea presented in this research (related to the
  unique dynamics at play)?
- If my findings (related to the unique dynamics) are to be conceptualized in
  a few sentences, what do I say?
- What does all the action/interaction (related to the unique dynamics) seem
to be about? (1998, p.146).
CHAPTER 4
DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Who are the street children in Bucharest Romania?

I have been on the street since I was 5½ years old. I just turned 18. When my father was alive, we used to laugh about the aurolacs (aurolac is combination of paint and glue huffed by street children). Look, the aurolacs...look how bad they talks...and I was laughing at them. And look (pause), I ended up on the street myself. (long pause) At night I stay... put drugs in my bag, I look like this at the moon (Flori looks up and gazes into the sky)... I look at the moon and I start to cry. I think of my mom. If my father was still living, he would beat my mother that she does not accepts me at home. She kicked me out when I was little because her second husband did not want me. She used to accept me... but she doesn't anymore. Now I survive on the street. Finding a place where to sleep can be hard. I stay at site2 but I don’t like it there, because Catalin is making fun of (sexually humiliating; raping) the girls. They rape them ... and I am afraid. If they take in girls at site2, they make fun of (rape) them. One girl came; she was 12 and when they saw her, that she had a bigger chest than mine, they left me alone and started making fun of (raping) her... and beating her. They were keeping her tied to the pipes. I tried to help her. (pause) I am afraid of things like this. I cannot stand it. I rather stay alone than stay with boys.

Flori, age 18, site2

The experiences of Flori are not unlike many children who made their lives on the streets of Bucharest. Lives marked by a struggle for scarce resources, myriad health challenges, violent encounters and attempts to forge an existence outside the normative structures of society. Yet, within this context, many street youth managed to survive; some youth managed to thrive. Given all that street children have gone through, how is this possible? The purpose of this study was to identify the strategies employed by street children that enabled them to meet their needs in the face of the
multifaceted challenges of street life. Three overarching questions guided the exploration of the lives of street children in Romania:

1. Who are the children (e.g., age, gender, past trajectory, etc.) living and working on the streets of Bucharest, Romania?

2. Under what circumstances, conditions, or processes are the children on the street able to meet their needs in the face of adversity?

3. Are there informal and formal networks created and used by street children in an effort to build opportunities for survival? If so, what are they and how do they operate?

This chapter speaks to the who question: Who are the children living and working on the streets of Bucharest, Romania? The exploration will move beyond the snapshot provided of the core sample in Chapter 3 to a deeper understanding of the youths’ past trajectories that led them to be on the street, experiences with violence (i.e., as victim and perpetrator), drug use, criminality, health concerns and recreational activities, as well as their resource generating and coping strategies. Findings from the present study will be compared to other national reports and situated within an international context. For 10 months I explored the varied facets and dimensions of their lives along with attempting to understand the larger issues faced by the youth who worked to create and sustain their lives on the street.

Knowing whom the street children are in terms of demographics, the challenges they faced and the strategies they employed to cope and create a life for themselves is a primary and critical step in designing programs and developing governmental policies that have a positive impact on these youth and their life circumstances.
This study was conducted in a particular setting (the streets of Bucharest) because the context itself was a salient part of the study with an emphasis on an overall understanding of the unique characteristics of the participants in their environment. Therefore, the participants' world must be so vivid that readers “can almost literally see and hear its people” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 228). To this end, my desire is to immerse the reader into the data by incorporating excerpts from my field notes and in-depth conversation transcripts. Although some data selections may be considered lengthy, the thick description afforded in the field notes allows for an examination of specific behaviors and the settings in which they occurred. Excerpts from field notes and direct quotations from participants also allow the reader to read first-hand from the participants and their perspectives on their lives. From the onset of this study, my desire has been for the children to be central. Their agency and the centrality of their voice were critical in the context of writing up this analysis; they were critical to telling their story. “In qualitative social work research, a concern for human agency is manifested in the way we observe human actions, in the questions we ask, and the way we frame and present our findings” (Padgett, 1998, p. 121, emphasis added). Furthermore, these details deepen one’s understanding of the phenomenon and ultimately allow for an adequate assessment and verification of the findings.

Before moving into the more theoretical analysis included in chapters 5 and 6, it is important to capture a glimpse of whom the youth were who made their lives on the streets of Bucharest. Since this was a qualitative study, systematic quantitative data was not collected for every youth encountered on the street. Therefore, one should use caution in making judgments based on any of the statistical information presented. The tables and figures included throughout the chapter represent the
experiences of some children. In all cases, the exact group of young people to which the information applied is clearly identified. Although non-representative, the information does begin to increase an understanding of the youth, including basic demographics, their pathways to the street and what life was like on the street. Furthermore, much of the information gathered appeared to be consistent with other national studies conducted at or around the time data were collected for this project.

**The Demographic Landscape of Bucharest’s Street Children**

Throughout this research study I encountered 282 young people who lived and worked on the streets of Bucharest in 2002-2003. In 2006 UNICEF Romania published *Children on the Brink: A Focused Situation Analysis of Vulnerable, Excluded and Discriminated Children in Romania*, a report analyzing a series of studies related to street and other at-risk children in Romania at or around the time of my research (e.g., ANPCA - National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption, 2001; Save the Children Romania for ILO/IPEC, 2002; Government of Romania & UNICEF, 2003). Many of these studies noted the challenge in identifying the exact number of youth on the streets. UNICEF (2006) estimated the total number of children living and/or working on the streets of Bucharest to be less than 2000, approximating that 65-75% return home in the evenings to their families. These numbers are based on data collected by Save the Children Romania (2002) and ASIS in partnership with The Consortium for Street Children (2004). UNICEF (2006) estimated that 1300-1500 young people came to the street to work returning home in the evening to their families, while 500-700 young people lived permanently on the streets (2006). This breakdown is vastly different from what I encountered; 92% (n = 259) of the young people I encountered indicated they live permanently on the street. Only 8% (n = 23) indicated they did not
stay on the street; they lived at home with their families and went to the street during the day to earn money. I gained access to the street children population through ASIS, an NGO that focused work on children who lived on a more permanent basis on the street. Therefore it is possible that I was not exposed to many of the young people who went to the street during the day to work returning home in the evenings.

Of the 282 young people I encountered 74% \((n = 208)\) were male and 26% \((n = 74)\) were female. This appears to be consistent with recent national reports. According to UNICEF (2006), about two-thirds of street children nationally are boys and one-third are girls. These estimates are also consistent with international trends. In Ethiopia, street boys and girls constitute, respectively, an estimated 75% and 25% proportion of the street child population (UNICEF, 1993). In Colombia the street child population is estimated at 75% male and 25% female (Aptekar, 1988; Felsman, 1981). Both cited the perception that girls who appear in the streets in Columbia are defined by the general population as prostitutes, not street children.

In the Romanian context a range of explanations for gender disparities were noted including a potential family preference to keep daughters at home over sons due to their higher level of vulnerability and the potential for girls themselves to be more reluctant to head for the streets and thus more likely to cope with dysfunctional families and poverty (UNICEF, 2006). This is consistent with international discussions. Connolly (1990) discussed this disparity in between the prevalence of street girls and street boys, reporting that in Latin America “girls are more needed within the family, as they are expected to perform household chores and care for younger siblings” (p.139). LeRoux and Smith (1988b) noted that Filipino girls are generally more protected and are used for domestic work around the house.
Throughout my time on the street I heard youth referencing females who used to be on the street but now lived with pimps and worked in the sex trade. I also encountered a young man who came to Bucharest to traffic young girls to other cities in the country. It is possible that the gender differentiation does not only reflect fewer girls coming to the street but that their life trajectory once they get to the street is quite different than that of street boys. The present study only provided a fractional glance of the underworld of human trafficking and organized prostitution. One such glimpse occurred on a late Saturday afternoon.

As we were talking, Rubina arrived at the site with another young lady that I had never met before. The two of them stood separate from the group over by a pillar. I asked the youth if any of them knew who the girl was with Rubina. Gigi indicated that she was his sister, Mariana. I asked him how old she was and he indicated that she was 16 years old. He went on to share that he did not see her very often because she stayed locked in a house with her pimp. Gigi indicated that his sister sleeps with people for money. As she stays mostly locked up in the day and she works at night they do not see each other very often. Gigi called Mariana over and made introductions. Rubina came over too. She shook my hand indicating she had met me before at site3. Mariana and Rubina both left after this brief greeting. Gigi ran after them and spoke privately to his sister for a minute or two. When he returned I asked if everything was ok. He indicated that it was, he just wanted to say goodbye as he was not sure when he would see her again.

Field Notes, February 8, 2003

I never saw Mariana again. On rare occasions other females I did not know appeared on the street and were identified as girls who “produce” (work as a prostitute). Probing led to limited information. Since I only engaged in participant observation between seven o’clock in the morning and ten o’clock at night, I did not interact with girls who are consistently under the control of pimps. Lalor (1999) noted that the true incidence of working girls may be hidden by the nature of their work, which tends to be less visible than the work of street boys. Perhaps the number of females on the street should not only include the seen. More information is needed about the lives and
issues of these invisible girls, those young people concealed by trafficking and the sex trade.

Of the 282 youth I had contact with I learned the ages of 141 (50%). Their age range spanned from under a year old to 30 years for females ($x = 16$) and 33 years for males ($x = 17.5$). There is great diversity in the age range of street children within the international landscape. Some literature reflects that the majority of street children worldwide are between 10 and 14 years (Aptekar, 1989; Chatterjee, 1992; Lalor, 1999; Veale, 1993). However, other studies noted that individuals over the age of 18 living on the street self-identified as street children (Beazley, 2002; Dube, et al., 1996; Maphalala, 1996; Mufune, 2000; Tacon, 1991). Referring to her work in Indonesia, Beazley (2002) reported, “Street children referred to each other as ‘child’ well into their early twenties, and it is not uncommon for someone in their late twenties, particularly unmarried girls, to be referred to as child” (p. 1667). The broader ranges encountered in the present study correspond to findings from other studies in Romania. The 1999 national study of street children included an age category of 18 and over representing 29% of the street youth population (Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999). The age spectrum included an under age seven category and an over age 18 category. A more recent study conducted by Save the Children Romania identified the average age of children living in the streets to be about 16 years (Save the Children Romania for ILO/IPEC, 2002). No information was provided in either study related to actual age ranges (i.e., the actual age of the youngest and oldest) and gender differentiation per age.

Article 1 of the UN-CRC defines “child” as an individual up to the age of 18 and age 18 is considered the age of majority in the country of Romania. As seen in Figure
4.1, approximately 50% of the youth from the present study fit within this international and national definition.

![Figure 4.1. Reported Age of some Participants by Gender (n = 141)](chart)

However, for statistical purposes, the United Nations defined “child” as an individual at or below the age of 14 and “youth” as an individual between the ages of 15 and 24 years, allowing for a broader conceptualization of young people. Endorsed by the General Assembly (resolution 36/28, 1981), this definition was created while planning for the International Youth Year (1985).

It may be that the nuances and operational definition of what it means to be a child/youth depend on the specific socio-cultural context. In the present study, the youth who were over 18 consistently referred to themselves as street children. Many Romanian nationals also spoke of older youth/younger adults living on the street as street children. When asked why they referred to someone over 18 as children they pointed to a lack of the first five years of education, which they deemed to be the most important. This first five years of education includes the time from birth to
entering school that a child spends in the context of her/his family. It is within this context a child learns how to walk, talk and think, learns to distinguish right from wrong and learns how to develop relationships and get along with others. Some young people who lived on the street did not experience this “education”, therefore some Romanians continued to envisage them as children.

Research on early childhood underscores this intuitive knowledge; the first five years of a child's life has a significant impact on ongoing and later development (cf., Catalano & Hawkins, 1996; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). It is within the first five years that children experience significant brain growth and development. Children develop and refine their basic motor skills, language blossoms and cognition starts to become more complex. Socio-emotional development enables a child to begin to understand her or his feelings, as well as the feelings of others and early attachment creates an internal working model for the development of future relationships. The lack of a solid developmental foundation may lead to myriad challenges as adults including, cognitive and mental health issues, poor literacy and numeracy and increased criminality (Irwin, Siddiqi, & Hertzman, 2007; World Health Organization, 1993). As will be discussed below under Pathways to the Street, many youth came from environments marked by deprivation and hostility, environments that were not conducive to facilitating a healthy developmental foundation. Many youth came from families impacted by poverty, domestic violence and drug use; some spent their early years in a state orphanage.

I learned the length of time they had lived on the street for about one-third of the youth I had contact with (n = 83), which ranged from under a year to 20 years for males (x = 7) and from under a year to 22 years for females (x = 8.4). The most recent
information related to time on the street was collected in the 1999 national study of street children (see Figure 4.2). At that time, the majority of youth (almost 40%) had lived on the street for less than three years and only about 7% for more than nine years.

![Figure 4.2. Average Time a Street Child Lived on the Street](image)


For almost one-third of those young people (32% of the males, 26% of the females) I also knew their ages. As seen in Figure 4.3, females and males under the age of 18 were on the street for an average of about five years. However, for the youth in the present study who were 18 years of age and older, females were on the street for a slightly longer duration than males, 12 and 10 years respectively.
An interesting finding emerged in the present study that was not identified in previous national studies. Many young people on the street lived with siblings and/or as blood-relative families (e.g., children living with a mother and/or father, etc.). Including only the youth who lived on a more permanent basis on the street (n = 259), 15% of the young people lived with a blood relative (23% of females and 12% of males). See Figure 4.4 for a breakdown of type of relationship (i.e., sibling, parent or child) by gender for this 15%. Almost one-third (33%) of these young people lived on the street with a sibling. While many of them came together, there were several instances where one sibling came to the street first with the other sibling(s) coming later. Nearly one-half (41%) of the young people who were on the street with a blood relative were with a parent; about one-quarter (26%) were the parent. As one generation of street youth give birth to another, a subgroup of second generation street children emerges. In some cases, these second generation street children have only known the street as their home.
In its 2006 analysis, UNICEF revised its categories in conceptualizing Romanian street children. Three categories remained the same. *Children of the street* include young people who work and live in the streets permanently, with little or no contact with their families. According to UNICEF (2006), 25-35% of street children live their lives on the streets in this way. *Children on the street* work in the streets by day and return home to their families in the evenings. National studies (cf., ASIS, 2004; Save the Children Romania for ILO/IPEC, 2002) identified this as the largest group of children in the current Romanian context. As already noted, my data was inconsistent with this finding. *Children who live with their parents on the streets*, captures part of my findings related to blood-relatives. This category includes the young people who have become parents themselves and their children, thus creating their own “street families”. UNICEF (2006) estimated that these children might represent 5-10% of all the street children. This category captured about 6% of the youth in the present study. To reflect changing trends, UNICEF (2006) eliminated one category (i.e., Children who spend their days on the streets and most nights, returning home only periodically), and
added another. The category of *Street Adults* was added to capture youth who have been living on the streets and exceeded the age of 18. UNICEF (2006) did not propose estimates regarding the percentage of “street adults” who fall within this category. However, as noted above, based on the youth included in the present study (n = 141), 47% of the youth were 18 years of age and older.

**Pathways to the Street**

The data from the present study revealed that the trajectories of children’s lives that led them to the street were complex and varied. Of the 259 young people I encountered who lived permanently on the streets, 76 (29%) shared details about what led them to be on the streets. As systematic quantitative data was not collected, it cannot be assumed that this data is representative. However, it provides a glimpse of the myriad issues faced by some youth. Table 4.1 highlights the various facets of the lives of these 76 young people that led them to the street. The sum of each column is greater than the number of youth as, for the majority of them, it was not a single factor but a combination of events that led them to be on the streets. Thirteen-year-old Nicu’s account of how he came to live on the street illustrates the multifaceted nature of past trajectory.

I left home when I was younger for the first time because my father died. He died when I was 6. After my father died, my mother got a second husband. I have a stepfather and he beats me... and I left home. (long pause) Rather than be beaten... I preferred to leave home. And after I saw how hard it was on the street, I went back home. But I was not accepted. My mother gave me to the orphanage in Craiova. It was not good there. Older ones were beating me up so I left that place. I met some older guys who taught me how I could live on the street and I came with them to Bucharest when I was 11.

Nicu age 13, site9
Table 4.1. Facets of Past Trajectory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facets of Past Trajectory</th>
<th>Males n = 58</th>
<th>Females n = 18</th>
<th>Combined n = 76</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abuse in Home</td>
<td>10 17%</td>
<td>2 11%</td>
<td>12 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neglect</td>
<td>0 -</td>
<td>1 5%</td>
<td>1 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>10 17%</td>
<td>4 16%</td>
<td>14 18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of Parent</td>
<td>10 17%</td>
<td>2 11%</td>
<td>12 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepparent Abuse</td>
<td>6 60%</td>
<td>0 -</td>
<td>6 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepparent Kicked Out</td>
<td>6 60%</td>
<td>1 50%</td>
<td>7 58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grew up in an Orphanage</td>
<td>14 24%</td>
<td>3 17%</td>
<td>17 22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turned 18</td>
<td>9 64%</td>
<td>1 33%</td>
<td>10 59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse in Camin</td>
<td>0 -</td>
<td>1 33%</td>
<td>1 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spent Time in an Orphanage</td>
<td>14 24%</td>
<td>3 17%</td>
<td>17 22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turned 18</td>
<td>2 14%</td>
<td>1 33%</td>
<td>3 18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse in Camin</td>
<td>7 50%</td>
<td>0 -</td>
<td>7 41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Alcoholic/Drinks</td>
<td>4 7%</td>
<td>2 11%</td>
<td>6 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent to Street to Beg/Steal</td>
<td>1 2%</td>
<td>3 17%</td>
<td>4 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Help Family</td>
<td>5 9%</td>
<td>1 5%</td>
<td>6 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be with Friends</td>
<td>4 7%</td>
<td>1 5%</td>
<td>5 7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born on the Street</td>
<td>2 3%</td>
<td>1 5%</td>
<td>3 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefers Life on Street</td>
<td>3 5%</td>
<td>1 5%</td>
<td>4 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abandoned on Street</td>
<td>1 2%</td>
<td>1 5%</td>
<td>2 3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several researchers investigating the lives of street children have pointed to diverse macro and micro dynamics that contribute to the migration of children to the streets. Fall (1986) was among the first to classify them into two categories he labeled “push” and “pull” factors. Push factors are considered the conditions that push or drive out children from their homes to the street, whereas pull factors are the conditions that pull or attract children to the street. The push factors identified in the present study included abuse in the home, neglect and poverty. Some youth encountered these issues as a direct result of the death of a parent. Pull factors included helping their family (e.g., youth believed that the family would be able to
better meet needs if there was one less child; they were not sent out but chose to leave), being with friends on the street and preferring life on the street (i.e., youth who believed life would be better on the street than at home). National studies in Romania predominantly point to push factors, including poverty and escape from hostile home environments (Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999), accounting for almost half of the youth (44%).

The international landscape also reflects push and pull factors, although push factors appeared to predominate. In a review of research in Indonesia, Silva (1991) pointed to poverty as the foremost cause of the emergence of street children. A study of Colombian street children found 36% of the children had left home due to extreme poverty, 27% due to family disintegration, 20% due to physical abuse and 10% due to a search for adventure (Pineda, de Munoz, Echeverry, & Arias, 1978). Aptekar (1988) recorded that 48% of his sample of street children in Cali, Colombia were on the street for “financial reasons” and 32% were there because of abuse in the home. According to Swart (1990b), street children in Guatemala left home because of poverty, sexual or physical abuse, or general parental neglect. Many street youth come from challenged families in which poverty, domestic violence, parental drug abuse and criminality is common place (Buckner & Bassuk, 1997; Dy bicz, 2005; Kerfoot, Koshyl, Roganov, Mikhailichenko, Gorbova, & Pottage, 2007; Plummer, Kudrati, & Yousif, 2007; Maclean, Embry & Cauce, 1999; Ring walt, et al., 1998; Rizzini, 1998).

Perhaps the socio-historical context of the street children in Romania leads to a unique combination of factors. As articulated in the introductory chapter, several dynamics led to the emergence of the street youth population in Romania. Under Ceauşescu, pronatalist policies forced people to have large families, yet there was
inadequate informal and formal support available to assist them. Systematization led
to disrupted informal support networks leaving families detached and isolated; the
requisite infrastructure and resources to help birth families did not accompany the
strategies introduced to boost the population growth. As a result, many children were
forced to the street to beg for their families, sometimes leading to their permanency
on the streets. Others were released to the care of the state orphanage system. A
study conducted in 1999 estimated that 10% of the street children were on the street
due to running away from an orphanage with an additional 4% on the street because
they aged out of the orphanage system (Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999).
Of the 76 youth who shared their past trajectory in the context of the present study,
11% indicated they had run away from an orphanage per abuse with 17% indicating
they had aged out. Although some spoke of abuse at the hands of orphanage
employees, most indicated that the other children in the orphanage were responsible.
Almost all indicated that they reported the abuse to no avail.

Me: Have you been to a camin before?
Viorel: Yes, only once. When the police took us from the street.
Cristi: Yes... once. But we didn’t stay because the food wasn’t much. In the
evening and the morning we had jam, tea and a slice of bread and we
weren’t full. That was it. And we didn’t stay, cause... we would rather earn
our bread on the street . . . all three of us brothers.
Viorel: Well, and we should tell you that a big part was that they were beating us
up.
Cristi: They were beating us for everything . . . when we had toys, they were
beating us and taking the toys, taking our food, beating us in the night . . .
Me: When you say they were beating you, who are you talking about?
Viorel: The older kids. It was the older kids.
Cristi: We were sleeping with them in the room and they were beating us at night and we couldn't scream anymore for the director to intervene and protect us . . . they were gone . . . it was only the guard downstairs and they didn't hear us. And in the morning if we would break a glass of milk they were beating us up . . . one time they took the cup of tea and the bread from us. They were not full and they were taking our bread.

Me: Did you ever tell the employees that something like this was happening?

Viorel: Yes

Cristi: We told them.

Viorel: And they said that they couldn't do anything to them. So they (the kids that were beating them up) were still doing what they wanted to us. They (employees) said they couldn't chase them away, so rather than endure the beating, we better leave.

Although push and pull factors offer some important insight into the varied paths of children's lives, perhaps a third category is needed in the present context. Within the push-pull conceptualization, though at times it may only be a modicum of control, there is an element of choice on behalf of the youth (e.g., leave to escape violence, leave to be with friends, etc.). However, for 26% (n = 21) of the 76 youth, choice was not an option; they were on the street by force. This factor was at play for those youth who aged out of the orphanage system. Other force factors included being kicked out of the home without the option of return, being born on the street and being abandoned by parents to the street. For the youth impacted by force factors, they were on the street because there was nowhere else to go. This element of force was identified in the 1999 national study of street children with 9% of the street youth population identified as being chased away or abandoned by families (Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999) and the 2006 situation analysis of children in Romania with 13% of the street youth population identified as having been driven out of their homes (UNICEF, 2006).
Life on the Streets

A number of other issues bear exploration in capturing a glimpse of what life is like for street children in Bucharest. The youth faced a number of health issues and experienced violence across a range of contexts. Some were also perpetrators of violence and engaged in criminal behavior and drug use. They also participated in a range of resource generating activities and employed various coping strategies in dealing with the challenges of living on the street. These facets of street life will be briefly explored below.

Health Concerns

The nature and continuous exposure of street life made the young people who lived on the streets more vulnerable to a host of health concerns. Street children around the world face myriad physical (e.g., malnutrition, skin diseases, respiratory problems, etc.), mental (e.g., depression, post traumatic stress disorder, etc.) and cognitive (e.g., learning disabilities, etc.) challenges (World Health Organization, 1993). The street children in Bucharest noted a range of health concerns. During the time of data collection for the present study, 27% of the youth who lived on the street (n = 70) encountered health concerns. By way of reminder, no systematic data was collected related to the health concerns of the youth, so it is quite possible that this number is much higher. Many suffered from skin diseases or rashes, lice, cuts or abrasions, burns, headaches, respiratory problems and cold and flu symptoms (e.g., sneezing, coughing, muscle aches, feverish, congestion, etc.). This is consistent with the findings of a 2002 assessment of street children (Save the Children Romania for ILO/IPEC, 2002) that also pointed to chronic malnutrition. During my time on the street some youth also complained of toothaches and some sought treatment for
broken bones and STDs (i.e., gonorrhea and syphilis). I also encountered youth living with a range of disabilities (e.g., amputated limb, hearing impairment, mute, etc.).

Perhaps one of the most striking statistics related to health concerns in the present study related to issues surrounding pregnancy. During the time of data collection, 29% of the females ($n = 22$) gave birth to a child, experienced a miscarriage, had an abortion or was pregnant (due date after I left the field). The young women facing the issue of pregnancy pursued various paths through a range of resources, or lack of resources. Some young women approached NGOs for assistance in having an abortion. At times NGO staff counseled women in this direction. All procedures took place in a hospital and most could be characterized as without incident. However, on one occasion, a physician performed a late stage abortion involving a 6-month fetus, which is illegal in Romania. A preliminary evaluation assessed the 17-year-old Octavia to be three months pregnant. When the physician started performing the abortion she discovered that Octavia was in actuality six months along. The procedure placed the baby in jeopardy resulting in a cesarean section to terminate the pregnancy. Some young women sought the assistance of NGOs to carry their baby full term and relinquish them for adoption or to state care upon birth. One young woman elected to keep her baby with her on the street. Two others went into premature labor on the street and lost their babies. One of them was 17-year-old Magdalena. Her “husband” Iulian shared their experience:

While we were talking, Iulian pulled us aside and shared that his baby had died a week ago tomorrow. He asked us to follow him and proceeded to take us a few blocks from the metro stop to a sidewalk and went on to share the details surrounding his loss. He indicated that his “wife” Magdalena told him that she had to go to the bathroom and went into the grass to go. Iulian stated that she was in a lot of pain when she peed and in actuality her water had broke. He indicated that he took her back to the sidewalk a few feet away, spread his coat on the ground and
had Magdalena lay down on it. He showed us the exact spot on the sidewalk. It should be noted that there was about a two by one foot area of what appeared to be dried blood. Iulian stated that he laid down another coat and delivered their baby. He explained that the baby's feet came out first and he was not sure what to do – but that eventually the baby came out. He stated that he called out for help but no one came right away. Iulian noted that he did not know how to cut the umbilical cord. Eventually an ambulance arrived and the medical people cut the cord and took Magdalena and their new baby to the hospital. Iulian shared that the baby died at 10 o'clock that night in the hospital. Iulian stated that this was their second child to die on the street. He indicated that last year they had a 7-month-old baby who died on the street from exposure; the baby froze to death.

Magdalena joined us where we were while Iulian shared what happened. She stood quietly. When he was finished Magdalena asked if we would be interested in seeing the ashes of their child. We asked Iulian and Magdalena if that was something they wanted to share with us. They indicated that they did. We stated that we would be honored to see their baby’s ashes. Iulian proceeded to give Magdalena very specific instructions as to where she could find them - at a construction site near to where they were staying hidden in a can under a table. Magdalena went to get the ashes returning a few moments later. The ashes appeared to be in a urine specimen container/plastic cup with a lid. Their names were written on the outside of the cup. Iulian took the cup from Magdalena, opened it and held it over to us so we could see. He indicated that they did not know for sure what to do with the ashes - if they should spread them on water or if they should bury them in a grave somewhere...

Field Notes, February 8, 2003

The young women facing reproductive issues on the street confront significant physical and mental challenges. The issue of reproductive health appears to be missing from national reports related to the street children in Romania.

Street youth globally are at risk for a broad spectrum of health problems, including poor nutrition (Antoniades & Tarasuk, 1998), a high occurrence of STDs (Booth, Zhang & Kwiatkowski, 1999), addiction to drugs (Slesnick & Prestopnik, 2005) and infectious diseases (Lugalla & Mbwambo, 1999). Although it was beyond the scope of the present project to explore the psychological suffering of street youths, other studies have identified that health concerns span beyond the physical to include mental health, most notably depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (Cauce,
Mortality rates for street youth have been found to be up to 40 times greater than that of the general population (Shaw & Dorling, 1998).

Some of the health concerns experienced by the young people who live on the street may be connected to their environments. For example, living in a sewer may lead to skin diseases and the infection of cuts and abrasions due to the lack of a sterile environment, and the inability to escape from extreme cold and heat may be associated with cold/flu symptoms. The lifestyle choices of youth may also be a contributing factor. For example, many of the youth huffed aurolac (a glue and paint mixture) to get high. Some youth suffered significant respiratory problems and even surgery due to the damaging effects of huffing. A third contributing factor may be a lack of knowledge and resources. For example, in conversation about sex and STDs, some youth appeared unaware of the risks associated with unprotected sex and most lacked the resource of condoms. Also, many lacked the ability to maintain good hygiene (e.g., access to soap, shampoo, a place to bathe, etc.) making it a challenge to keep themselves and wounds clean. The lack of accessibility of toilet and bathing facilities has been noted as a concern by street youth from other countries (e.g., Pakistan; see Ali, Shahab, Ushijima & de Muynck, 2004).

During my time on the street, an NGO initiated a program to raise the awareness of street youth regarding STDs. Once a month they provided training on how STDs are contracted and things that could be done to reduce risk (e.g., good hygiene, the use of condoms, etc.). They hired young people currently living on the street to distribute condoms and identify youth in need of testing for STDs and/or treatment. Investigating the scope of health concerns and identifying strategies to address the
issues should be a matter for future exploration, as should a concerted effort to create programs to address the needs of pregnant youth and their babies.

Violence

The widespread violence experienced by street children globally is well documented in the literature; street life increases a person’s risk of criminal victimization (Baron & Hartnagel, 1997, 1998; Hagan & McCarthy, 1997; Whitbeck & Simons, 1990). “These children experience abuse from nearly everyone: the community treats them with contempt, they are harassed and arrested by the police, and they are even brutalized by older street children” (Le Roux & Smith, 1998b, p. 687).

Consistent with Le Roux and Smith’s observation, in the present study, I witnessed and the young people reported the experience of widespread violence against them. Related to the formal environment, youth from across the city spoke of violence at the hands of law enforcement. Street children often found themselves in conflict with the police and other authorities and were harassed or physically assaulted by them. Some youth spoke of experiences when police officers rounded them up, drove them outside the city limits and left them there. Previous national studies support these findings. A 1999 study exploring the lives of street children found that about 16% of participants were often threatened by the police (Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999). A more recent study found that 50% of working street children interviewed had been beaten at least once, often by police (Save the Children Romania for ILO/IPEC, 2002). Police violence experienced by the youth in the present study primarily involved physical assault (e.g., hitting with hands, a club, kicking, setting on fire, etc.), though some incidences of sexual assault were also
reported. Police violence toward street children is well documented in the literature (cf., Kudrati, Plummer, & Yousif, 2008; Ribeiro, 2008; Ribeiro & Ciampone, 2001).

Although national studies into the lives of Romanian street children did not include information related to violence from other aspects of the formal environment, a variety of occurrences were noted in the present study. Some reported being assaulted by medical personnel while being treated in a hospital. This typically involved being physically hit or rough treatment during a medical procedure (e.g., not providing anesthetic when stitching a wound, etc.). Youth also reported being kicked and hit by transit personnel, as well as thrown from moving buses and trams. These encounters often resulted in injury (e.g., scrapes, bruises, broken bones, etc.). Finally, youth spoke of incidences of physical abuse at the hands of NGO workers. Some NGOs hired former street children to serve as liaisons between the NGO and the youth who lived on the street. Some youth reported that these individuals at times exploited their positions for material and economic gain at the expense of the youth living on the street; the youth were forced to give them money to avoid being physically assaulted.

How youth interfaced with their formal environments will be explored in more detail in the Chapter 6. As Romania continues to improve its services to street children and work toward reintegration, it will be important to address the abuses encountered in the context of the formal environment. On some occasions, those who are entrusted to protect the youth become the perpetrators of crimes against them. Throughout the study, various youth shared the challenges of said context indicating that their experience with abuse served as a barrier for them to access needed medical care and services from NGOs or to experience solace and justice from law enforcement when
they went to them for assistance (e.g., to report a sexual or physical assault, a robbery, etc.).

Several young people also spoke of being victims of violent acts perpetrated by people from their informal environments. These experiences of violence occurred at the hand of shopkeepers, informal employers (e.g., youth hired to complete a specific task like haul garbage or washing cars, etc.), neighborhood residents (adults and children) and strangers. Sometimes the youth indicated that people got aggressive with them because they did not want them around. This was the explanation given of an encounter I personally experienced with a group of youth.

When we arrived we found several of the youth sitting on the stoop out in front of the store. They invited us to come and sit with them. We did. A few minutes later, a woman walked out of the store with a broom. She raised the broom above her head and started hitting the youth on the head and shoulders. We immediately began scrambling to our feet. She hit Vasile, Radu and Claudiu and almost hit me before we got out of her way. She asked us what we were doing there. We indicated that we were just sitting there talking. She lowered the broom to her side and asked us to please go away as it’s was not good for business to have the “aurolacs” sitting in front. She went on to state her husband was a police officer and that he would be by soon.

Field Notes, July 2, 2003

Other encounters were far more threatening involving weapons (e.g. knives, etc.) and resulting in bodily injury (e.g., a female was pushed through a glass window for trying to sleep in an apartment lobby by someone living in the apartment, etc.). Perhaps the most terrorizing violence related to the informal environment came at the hands of strangers. Across genders, many youth pointed to their vulnerability physically and sexually related to strangers who came to the street, especially at night. This is consistent with a 2003 qualitative study conducted by UNICEF and ECHOSOC that showed how all youth, especially girls, were frequent victims of sexual
assault (Sima, Cace, Cace, 2003). As already noted, many youth believed they would not experience justice if they went to the police. Some of them identified the police as being responsible for some of the assaults.

Some youth were exploited by foreigners. In the context of the study I encountered two such individuals. With the promise of material resources, these foreign men exploited youth for their personal gain. A British man engaged street youth in a sex blackmail scheme, where youth would have sexual encounters with foreign men and the British man would use details of the encounters to extort money. A Spanish man lured youth to his apartment to pose for pornographic pictures. Youth consistently experienced these relationships as exploitative and felt a sense of powerlessness to break away from them. Although many desired to discontinue their involvement in these activities, fear of legal recourse served as a barrier to them seeking assistance from law enforcement (see discussion under Criminality below).

How youth interfaced with their informal environments is more fully explored in Chapter 6.

Many street children experienced violence at the hand of other street children. Sometimes these encounters came in the context of resolving conflict and involved pushing and shoving or throwing objects (e.g., bricks, rocks, bottles, etc.) at each other. Other times altercations between youth living on the street included violent assaults with weapons (e.g., knives, pieces of glass, metal pipes, bats, etc.) that at times led to serious injury and even hospitalization. Some youth also spoke of the sexual violence occurring among the young people who lived on the street. Although it was a more common experience for females, incidences of being sexually assaulted by a male who lived on the street were reported by both genders. Much of the violence I
personally witnessed fell under the umbrella of domestic abuse. It was common to witness a young man hitting or kicking his girlfriend or “wife”, sometimes resulting in bruises and lacerations. Partner violence may be engrained in cultural dynamics. Some incidences of violence occurred in the presence of NGO workers, who did not intervene. When asked about the decision to not intervene the worker indicated that conflict between a husband and wife was a private matter. There was also a phrase used by some street kids that points to a person’s right to be violent under certain circumstances. For example, in the context of my in-depth conversation with 18-year-old Adi, he expressed anger at being punched in the face for not sharing a cigarette, indicating that he asked the perpetrator, “Were you the person who fed me so you have the right to hit me?” He later explained that if someone were being taken care of (by a parent or a husband) physical discipline would be expected. Addressing issues of domestic violence is a more recent endeavor in the country of Romania. During a 12-month period in 2002-2003, 827,000 Romanian women described themselves as having been frequently subjected to some form of domestic violence, and over 340,000 children witnessed physical violence in the home (Center for Partnership and Equality, 2003). Only since this study has the issue of domestic violence been addressed nationally with the passage of legislation in May 2003 pertaining to family violence prevention and punishment.

The commission of violence by street youth went beyond other street children to perpetrating violence against those in the formal and informal environments. The incidences shared by the youth in the present study primarily included physical violence against people and animals sometimes involving a weapon (e.g., knife, rocks/bricks, bat/club, etc.). Sometimes youth violence against others was discussed
in the context of defense; a youth was violent in an attempt to defend her or himself against someone else. Other times youth spoke of using violence in the commission of a robbery (e.g., beating up an older man for his cell phone, hitting a man over the head with a pipe to steal his money, etc.). Some youth also shared incidences involving the formal environment (e.g., assaulting a police officer, transit personnel, NGO worker, etc.). Youth from several locations throughout Bucharest recounted an incident where a young man stabbed an NGO worker who came to bring food for not giving him a second helping. This incident appeared to be universally condemned by the youth living on the street. Many associated his actions with him being high on drugs; all of them pointed to the assault resulting in that NGO terminating services on the street. Sometimes the violence committed against people from the informal and formal environments resulted in the arrest and incarceration of the perpetrator.

Per the reports of the street youth who contributed information to the present study, they not only faced external threats of violence, but internal threats as well; youth reported self-inflicted violence. This included anything from cutting themselves with knives, razor blades or pieces of glass, to punching windows (often resulting in significant lacerations) and setting themselves on fire. As youth shared stories of self-inflicted violence, motivation appeared to fall into one of two categories. Some youth engaged in self-inflicted violence as a coping mechanism to help them deal with stress and intense feelings (e.g., anger, rejection, despair, etc.). The use of self-harm to relieve emotional pain and discomfort is well documented in the literature (Feigenbaum, 2010; Greydanus, 2011; Nock, Prinstein, & Sterba, 2009; Redley, 2010). However, the second category of motivations appeared to be unique to the specific context of street youth in Romania. The street youth who contributed information to
the present study indicated that sometimes they engaged in self-inflicted violence to protect themselves or escape from physical assaults. We glimpse one experience of this as I arrived to the street during the aftermath of one such occurrence.

When I arrived at site4, I noticed that a couple of windows on the metro awning had been broken.... Alina indicated that there were some problems with the police that day. She explained that the police came to site4 and started to beat them up because they were standing all together in a group. She stated that the police took some youth to the station to fine them; some police stayed behind and continued to beat the rest of them. Alina shared she had told the police officers that she was pregnant and asked them not to hit her, but the police officers continued. She stated that in order to get them to stop, she stuck her arms through the windows. When the police saw that she was bleeding, they backed off her and left. She showed me her arms. There were bandages on her right and her left arms, as well as her right foot.

Field Notes, May 20, 2003

The young people indicated that they believed this was an effective strategy to use with police as they thought the police viewed street children as having diseases, thus not wanting to come into contact with their blood. Youth indicated that violence against themselves was a last resort, pointing to their desperate state and identifying the long-term consequences of such actions. I glimpsed this in 18-year-old Ovidiu’s description of his experience of using self-inflicted violence to protect himself.

Ovidiu noted that there had only been one occasion when the police continued to beat him after he had cut himself. Most of the time the police stopped if they saw that they were bleeding. He identified decisions to cut himself as moments of despair. He noted that there is a lot of pain experienced by the cutting. The pain lasts a long time and leaves permanent reminders on his body. He indicated that, even with all the pain and damage, it is worth it because he gets relief from the beating by the police. As he was sharing this with me he pulled up his right sleeve and showed me some of his own scars.

Field Notes, May 10, 2003
It is not possible to make national or international comparisons of self-inflicted violence, as there is a dearth of research on the self-injurious behaviors of street children. This is an area in need of further exploration.

**Substance Use**

The use of some type of substance was widespread among the street youth in Bucharest, which is consistent with the experiences of youth from around the world (cf., Beazley, 2003; Fernandes & Vaughn, 2008; Pagare, Meena & Saha, 2004). The youth who contributed information for the present study tended to categorize substances into three groups with varying levels of acceptance and consequences. The first grouping, the use of alcohol and tobacco, was seen as normative. Cigarettes were often shared among the youth and exchanged with members of the informal and formal environments. For example, it was common for an NGO worker to offer a street youth a cigarette upon greeting. One street worker identified the sharing of cigarettes as a way to connect with the youth and build rapport. I also witnessed the sharing of cigarettes with police officers, transit personnel, individuals waiting for the bus and street vendors. At times, cigarettes were also used as a form of payment for informal work (see Resource Generating Activities below). It was common to see youth smoking at any time throughout the day. Alcohol was often shared among the youth as well and used as a way to celebrate (e.g., a new youth on the street, a friend getting released from jail, someone returning to the street after an absence, etc.). Alcohol was also consumed as a way to celebrate holidays. Several youth discussed their consumption of alcohol on New Year’s Eve and some attended the various beer festivals (e.g., Tuborg Beer Festival, etc.) held in front of the People’s Palace. As will be discussed below, alcohol was used as a way of coping with street life as well (see Coping
Strategies below). It was not common to see youth consuming alcohol throughout the day; this most frequently occurred in the evenings and at night.

The second category of substances included inhalants. The most common inhalant used was aurolac, a mixture of glue and a paint used to prevent rusting on cars or other metal surfaces. Although aurolac is considered illegal in Romania the ingredients to make it can be purchased at any hardware store throughout the city. The youth often mixed the aurolac in bulk and then poured it into abandoned water bottles. When they were ready to huff, they poured about a quarter cup of aurolac in a small plastic bag, placing the open end of the bag up to their mouths to inhale. It was not uncommon for the aurolac to leave residue (e.g., gray flecks, etc.) around their mouths. Of the 259 youth I encountered who identified themselves as living permanently on the street, I witnessed 118 (46%) huffing aurolac at one time or another. Inhalants have been identified as the drug of choice for street youth around the world, including the United States and Brazil (cf., Inciardi & Surratt, 1997; Kurtzman, Otsuka, & Whal, 2001). Since the ages of 72 of these youth were known, it was possible to get an idea of usage among age ranges (see Figure 4.5). The youngest individual I saw huffing was 7-years-old; the oldest was 30.

![Figure 4.5. Percentage of Youth who used Aurolac by Age Range (n = 72)](image)
Romanian youth described the high experienced from huffing as physically numbing, mentally euphoric and, if enough was inhaled, as having some hallucinogenic effects. The youth who provided information for this project indicated that they huffed out of boredom and, as will be discussed below, as a way of counteracting their rough life on the streets. It was not uncommon to see youth huffing at any hour of the day. On the street, the amount of aurolac used by a street kid and the context in which she or he huffed are among the factors that separated the “good” kids from the “bad”.

On our way to the next site we ran into three boys we had not met before. We stopped and introduced ourselves to them. Radu spoke first, introducing himself. Then Florin and Marius introduced themselves. We all shook hands. Radu and Florin did most of the talking after these initial introductions. Marius predominantly stood to the side and huffed aurolac. Several times Radu confronted him about huffing and asked him to please put the bag away – he commented to Dana and me that they were 3 good street kids and he did not want Marius huffing while they were talking to us. After 2 or 3 times of asking Marius to put the bag away, Radu took the bag from Marius and stated emphatically: “Stop huffing!” Radu handed the bag to Florin who tied it in a knot and put it back in Marius’s pocket. Radu explained that there were a lot of kids that lived in that area. He noted again that they were considered “good” street kids while others would be considered “bad” street kids. I asked what the difference between good and bad street kids was. Radu stated that the “bad” street kids huff all the time, steal and they destroy property.

Field Notes, February 1, 2003

The general population of Romania associated aurolac with street children, often referring to the youth as aurolaci (the plural form of aurolac). Because aurolac is illegal, many youth received fines or were taken to the police station.

The final category of substances included drugs that were not as easily accessible and often obtained through a third party. These drugs included heroin and cocaine. The use of these drugs appeared to be far less frequent among the youth. Only four females and twelve males shared incidences of using these drugs. However, since no data related to drug use was systematically collected for this project and

195
much of the acquisition and use of these drugs occurred out of the public eye, it was impossible to ascertain accessibility and prevalence of use.

The most recent national study exploring the prevalence of drug use among street children occurred in 1998-1999 at which time it was found that about 50% of street children were regular or occasional inhalant users; consumption of other drugs, such as marijuana, was found only occasionally (Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999). At that time researchers urged practitioners and policy makers to address the issue of huffing, citing long-term negative effects, including behavioral changes that further deteriorated the psychological and physical health of youth. For Romania, this issue extends beyond street children. According to a national report (European Steering Committee for Youth, 2000) evaluating the status of youth in Romania by an international group of experts appointed by the Council of Europe conducted as part of Romania’s European Union accession process, drug use among Romanian youth in general needs careful attention. The report noted that the number of youth hospitalizations at the National Pilot Centre for Drug Addicts had increased significantly. The number of hospitalizations in the first quarter of 1998 was 100% more than the average for any quarter in 1997.

In the present study, the number of youth who acknowledged the addictive nature and negative consequences of drugs and expressed a desire to “get off” drugs was compelling. During my time on the street I had multiple conversations with youth about their desire to quit huffing and/or using other drugs. Many spoke of aspirations that went unmet due to drug use. Their dreams were often interrupted by an acknowledgment of the insurmountable challenge of quitting on their own. Some even went as far as to research options for treatment programs. These issues were
highlighted in the context of my in-depth conversation with 22-year-old Nicolae. He came to be on the street when he was 12 and immediately began using aurolac to cope with street life. Later his drug of choice was heroin. He explained why he was huffing at the time.

Nicolae: I got this bag (aurolac), because I have not been able to buy heroin and am feeling sick. I am huffing to feel a bit better. It is hard. If I don’t have the heroin I take the bag. I have been using drugs for 10 years. I was young and didn’t know how I would end up... at this age and addicted to drugs. I wanna quit. I really do. But I have no way. There is no way for me to go through detox.

Me: Are there any foundations that can help you get off drugs?

Nicolae: No... but there should be. There should be a foundation opened like “Challenge” from America. I looked it up on the Internet. I would go there; I wouldn’t say no to trying. It is for my own good and if I want to change my life, to get rid of the drugs ... but alone, I can’t. I have tried. There should be a foundation for us... the ones who have courage and want to do something with our lives... to learn to read and write. To maybe get a job or have a family. But it is very hard to let go of this aurolac... of this heroin. But I would like to so I could be something in life... not like this... an aurolaci.

At the time of this project, there were no programs in place for street children to address issues of drug use. However, the issue of drug use, inhalants in particular, among young people has received some focused attention internationally. In 2005 the National Institute on Drug Abuse, an international program fostering collaborative training, research and exchange on drug abuse issues, sponsored a meeting of international scientists from 10 countries to discuss current research and explore intervention strategies. High and often increasing rates of inhalant use were reported for street children in Mexico, Peru, Venezuela, Cambodia and Turkey (NIIDA, 2005). “[D]espite differences in the underlying causes, abused substances, and patterns of use, inhalant abuse is a growing public health problem for rich and poor nations
worldwide that requires urgent action by the international drug abuse research community” (p. 5). Research in developing countries was primarily focused on epidemiology and prevalence of use. Most intervention research came from the developing world. There is a need nationally and internationally to develop and evaluate drug prevention and treatment programs geared toward street children.

Criminality

The world of street children was complex; street youth were victims and perpetrators of crime. As with other facets of street life, this project did not lend itself to collecting systematic data on criminal behavior. However, 10 months on the street interacting with youth and observing their activities, combined with the personal accounts shared by the youth who lived on the street, provided some awareness related to the types of criminal behavior engaged in by street youth. Of the youth who live on the street, 103 males (55%) and 41 females (57%) indicated they had engaged in some sort of criminal behavior (see Figure 4.6).

![Figure 4.6. Types of Criminal Behavior by Gender (n =144)](image-url)
Some of the criminal activity engaged in by the youth who provided information for the present study has already been touched on in other sections (e.g., drug use, assault, etc.). The most pervasive criminal act is illegal drug use, namely aurolac. As noted above when discussing drug use among street children, I witnessed nearly half of all youth huffing aurolac during the time of the study and youth across the lifespan engaged in this activity. The majority of youth associated their drug use with their attempts to cope with the challenges of street life. Because it is illegal to huff aurolac there were consequences for violations. However, how infractions for this crime were addressed appeared to be inconsistent. The youth indicated that at times police officers did not say anything about their huffing; at times they were verbally confronted and asked to stop and at other times they were taken to the station and fined. These accounts were consistent with my own observations.

Youth also engaged in crimes against property (e.g., theft, etc.) and crimes against persons (e.g., physical violence, sexual assault, etc.). The youth associated much of this behavior (i.e., theft, physical violence in the commission of theft) as necessary for survival. If caught, these infractions could lead to imprisonment. In my time on the street, 17 young people went to jail (one female and 16 males); 11 were incarcerated for theft and six for assault. In the present study, every case of sexual assault was perpetrated against a female living on the street. These females expressed that there was little recourse for such offenses. They did not feel as though they could go to the police and many times the behavior was not confronted by other youth who lived on the street. In the present study, younger children tended to use aurolac or engaged in theft while older youth tended to commit more violent crimes. The youth who exclusively huffed aurolac (i.e., did not engage in any other criminal behavior)
ranged in age from 7 to 26 ($x = 16$). The youth who engaged in crimes against property (i.e., theft) ranged in age from 13 to 27 ($x = 18$). The youth who engaged in physical and sexual assault or worked in the sex trade as a pimp of trafficker ranged in age from 17-30 ($x = 23$). Furthermore, the youth who committed more violent crimes almost without exception used some sort of drug. The connection between drug use and other criminal behavior has been established by other researchers (cf., Forster, Tannhauser, & Barros, 1996).

There is a dearth of national data available related to the criminal behavior of street children. Save the Children Romania collected the most recent and comprehensive data specific to street children in 1998-1999. This study found that 19% of street children had been arrested at least once (Save the Children & UNICEF, 1999), a figure corresponding to the 16% with a police record of 84 Bucharest street children surveyed in 2000 (CASPIS, 2002). That same 1998-1999 study on street children emphasized the challenges in obtaining information related to sexual crimes. About 6% of interviewed children acknowledged having been sexually assaulted, while the remaining 94% did not give any response. Authors pointed to the difficulties and stigma associated with sexual issues among street children. The more qualitative analysis carried out in 2003 by ECHOSOC-UNICEF showed how especially females, though not only, were frequent victims of sexual assault (Sima, et al., 2003). According to a study carried out by the Institute of Criminology in 2004, statistics including all children in Romania reflected that children committed crimes at an earlier age, that there was an increase in the number of offences committed by children organized in gangs, and that there was a rising trend of violence (Ministry of Justice & UNICEF, 2005).
Some youth entered the sex trade/industry (i.e., as pimps, prostitutes or as a link in the trafficking of females from Bucharest to other areas in Romania) or engaged in survival sex (e.g., sex for food, shelter, etc.). Street youth involvement in these activities has been documented by other researchers studying youth from around the world (cf., Hagan & McCarthy, 1997; Greene, et al., 1999). In the context of the present study, several youth across the city discussed the sex trade and the use of survival sex to earn money or food. However, the number of youth personally identifying with these activities was extremely small, including only five females and seven males. The researchers of the 1998-1999 study with street children also ran up against low numbers. Six percent of street children responded they had been engaged in prostitution, 22% responded negatively, and the rest provided no response.

A troubling aspect related to this group of youth is the potential to create dual-victim status. Six out the seven youth (male and female) I spoke with who were engaged in prostitution were obligated by pimps or other external forces and, without exception, expressed a desire to stop. Since one of my peer debriefers was involved with the juvenile justice system, I approached him about options for youth within this context. Prostitution is illegal in Romania. Based on guidelines put forth in international conventions (Article 40 of the UN-CRC, Beijing Rules) the Romania Penal Code outlines the age of criminal responsibility for children conceptualizing it at three levels based on age:

1. children under the age of 14 are below the age of criminal responsibility;
2. children aged 14-16 have criminal responsibility only if proven to have committed an offence in full responsibility; and
3. children 16-18 years of age are above the age of criminal responsibility (UNICEF, 2006, p. 66).

In every case but one, the young person was 16 years of age or older, which would make her or him criminally liable for the prostitution. Such a policy created dual-victims; the youth were sexually victimized by being forced into prostitution and legally victimized by being held criminally liable for their actions. The young people who wished to break free were challenged to find advocates. Although it is my belief that young people have agency, it is often constrained by power structures and circumstances. It will be important for policy-makers in Romania to develop avenues of restoration for trying to leave the sex trade without criminal liability, focusing on empowerment versus accountability and punishment (Goldstein, 2003; Hecht, 1998; Scheper-Hughes & Sargent, 1998; Stephens, 1995).

Much research has been conducted regarding the delinquency of street children. A consistent observation has been an increase in the severity of crime among street children (especially boys) as they progress through adolescence (Aptekar, 1988; Felsman, 1981; Lusk, 1989). In the present study, while petty theft such as stealing food from markets was mainly practiced by younger children, older youth tended to become involved in more confrontational crimes such as physical assault and robberies. Although it was a challenge to assess this trend in the context of a qualitative study with non-representative data, the findings of the present study appeared to be pointing in this direction.

Coping Strategies

As the street youth who participated in the present study narrated their life experiences, they identified a host of strategies employed to deal with the emotional
and physical challenges of living on the street. Two strategies have already been acknowledged, including the use of substances and engaging in self-injurious behavior. As noted above, some youth engaged in self-inflicted violence to help deal with stress and intense feelings (e.g., anger, rejection, despair, etc.). For example, one young girl cut her arm out of intense grief over a male friend trying to sexually assault her. A pregnant female took a piece of glass to her stomach out of despair when she was unable to get treated for her syphilis. Although most of the youth who spoke of self-inflicted violence as a way of coping with intense feelings were female, there were also incidences involving males. I encountered one such occurrence when I was on the street with a street worker from ASIS.

Florin turned his attention to Iulian and asked him what happened to his arm. Iulian pulled up his sleeve and revealed his arm had been cut in 2-3 places. The cuts looked pretty jagged and were noticeably infected (very swollen, red and pussy). Florin asked what happened. Iulian indicated that he was angry about Magdalena leaving. He stated that he got drunk and lost his ability to think straight; he just kept getting more and more sad and more and more angry until finally he punched a window and cut himself with a piece of glass.

Field Notes, June 18, 2003

The use of substances as a way of coping with life on the streets was also identified by the youth. The youth discussed their use of drugs as a way of numbing themselves against the hunger and cold and/or blocking out difficult emotions, memories and unpleasant realities. The youth shared a multitude of stories and I witnessed experiences throughout my time on the street.

Ramona (17 years old) indicated that she went into labor in the middle level of the metro area at site12. She shared that a police officer had called for some medical assistance and a doctor and a nurse came. Ramona indicated that her baby girl Steluta (little star) died in the metro shortly after she was born. While Ramona was sharing the story, her eyes welled up with tears and she started to cry. She indicated
that she huffs aurolac to forget about the little girl that she had lost. She reached into the pocket of her coat and took out a bottle of aurolac, poured it in her bag and started huffing.

Field Notes, January 23, 2003

Some of the youth initiated huffing in the context of our in-depth conversation when the dialogue turned to difficult information. In sharing the challenges of living on the street (e.g., finding a place to sleep, dealing with violence, etc.), 20-year-old Augustin started to huff from a bag of aurolac and began to explain why he used drugs:

Do you think that if we do drugs, aurolac or heroin, it is for pleasure? It is out of our sadness. (Augustin huffs again from his bag of aurolac). It is hard for us on the street. With aurolac, you dream about a better life... you have some hallucinations... (huffs again from the bag) ...you forget about hunger. You are not thirsty anymore. You forget about the beating you just had. I mean, in that moment, the beating doesn’t hurt you anymore. Too bad it doesn’t last. The next day your bones hurt. The aurolac is gone... no heroin.

Youth consistently pointed to the “cure all” impact of drug use, especially aurolac, identifying it as an inexpensive way to temporarily relive their current suffering. The National Institute on Drug Abuse identified the use of drugs as a coping strategy for street children worldwide. Whereas young people in developed nations may use inhalants recreationally or out of boredom, street children use inhalants to assist them in functioning on the street by suppressing physical (e.g., hunger, etc.) and emotional (e.g., sadness, fear, etc.) distress (NIDA, 2005).

Music was also identified as playing an important role in assisting the youth in coping with the challenges of street life. On numerous occasions the youth spoke of the comfort they experienced in listening to music. Although youth indicated that they enjoyed listening to a range of music (e.g., Romanian and American pop, religious, Romanian folk, etc.), perhaps their most favorite genre was Manele. Manele is a music
style generally associated with the Romani (Gypsy) minority. It is known for its use of faulty grammar, repetitive rhymes suitable for chanting, sometimes vulgar lyrics and stories of real-life challenges of those who possess little. The youth seemed to relate to all of these characteristics.

As we sat around listening to the tape (of Manele music), the youth started talking about the importance of music in their life. They referenced phrases being sung over and over again noting that the singers were not afraid to use gutter talk (e.g., profanity). They said that the words used in the Manele music touched them deeply because they talk about things they are facing in life — what it feels like to not have the things that everybody else does... how to face the tough challenges of life without having people to help them. They talked about the importance of this music to them and how it “lifted their soul” and brought comfort. I looked around. Several youth were lying on their backs or leaning up against the wall. All had their eyes closed. I too nestled into the peace of this space. We all listened to the music in silence for several minutes.

Field Notes, May 10, 2003

Although few had the resources to purchase radios or tape/compact disc players, it was not uncommon for someone to sing on her or his own or to huddle near to a place of business where music was spilling out into the street through an open window.

The youth who contributed information to the present study also spoke of the role of their spirituality in bringing comfort to them in difficult times. Their spirituality was manifested through forms of organized religion (e.g., attending church services, etc.), through the possession of religious symbols (e.g., icons, the Bible, etc.) and through a generalized sense that “God is up” or that there is a higher power that looked out for and cared about them. Some youth carried small icons in their pocket or Orthodox prayer cards. One young lady returned to the sewer to get her Bible before she would go to the hospital to receive treatment for lacerations on her arm. For some youth, spirituality was so integrated into who they were that it permeated their conversations. For example, in the context of my in-depth
conversation with 17-year-old Radu he referenced God and his dependence on God 16 times.

I believe and know that God is even now, at the present time, by us. He sees us... and our enemies, too. He sees the ones who want to hurt us and the ones whom we have hurt. God forgives them and us, too. God’s love is very big. Many times I noticed this. And even when I was sick, God saved me. And God can do very big and wonderful things, which no one else can do. As it says in the Bible: “God gave His only Son, so that all who believe in Him will not perish, but have everlasting life.” This would mean that if you believe in God, truly, you do not lack anything. You do not need anything when God is by you. He helps me deal with this life on the street. I couldn’t do it without God.

Only a handful of studies point to the potential role of spirituality in the lives of street children (Lindsay, Kurtz, Jarvis, Williams, & Nackerud, 2000; Rew & Horner, 2003).

Overall, this area of their lives remains invisible.

Finally, many youth speak of their networks of mutual support, or friendships, as playing an important role in helping them cope with the challenges of street life. For these youth, friendship was characterized by a deep sense of connection and solidarity. The sharing of feelings played a significant role in these relationships and acts of self-sacrifice for friends were described. Their relationships were a source of emotional comfort and protection, as well as conduits for material resources (e.g., food, etc.). A number of authors highlighted the important functions “the group” or “friendships” serve for street children. One function identified is to fulfill primary familial needs such as protection, sustenance and nurture (Agnelli, 1986; Connolly, 1990; Lalor, 1997; Lusk et al., 1989). Lugalla and Mbwambo (1999) pointed to the use of the group as a resource for coping for street children in Tanzania. Aptekar (1989) attributed the adequate mental health of street children, in spite of their lifestyles, to the intense friendships they form within their groups. Aptekar argued that these
intense “chumships” border on love and ameliorate the effects of past emotional trauma. How the networks Romanian street children developed and connected with contributed to their survival is the main focus of exploration in Chapter 5.

Recreation

Many articles published on the state of street children report on the challenges they face and the negative impact of street life (cf. Ayerst, 1999; Gaetz, 2004; Mathur, Rathore, & Mathur, 2009; Sherman, Plitt, ul Hassan, Cheng, & Zafar, 2005). It is true; youths who strive to create their lives on the street find their childhood truncated by the realities of street life. An idyllic childhood reflects a time of nurturance, safety and carefree play. Although challenges of street life make this image of childhood far too elusive, there is an unfortunate dearth of information related to the recreational activities that street children do engage in and the potential value of such activities. In the present study there were myriad examples of children creating and engaging in times of play and recreation. As previously noted under Coping Strategies the youth found great pleasure listening to and creating music, pointing to the ways music helped them cope with life on the street. Interactions surrounding music often included singing, dancing, whistling, playing instruments (e.g., harmonica, etc.) and a great deal of laughter. The following excerpt from my field notes provides a glimpse of the “festivities” that often emerged around music:

When we arrived at the site a group of youth were standing around talking about the new song that they had recently heard on the radio by the group Axis. They asked me if I wanted to learn it. I indicated that I would. Tanasse proceeded to sing the chorus of the song and attempted to teach it to me. He sang the chorus slowly line-by-line asking me to repeat after him. We then sang the chorus in real time. My attempt to sing in Romanian while keeping up with him was horrible. They laughed at my pronunciation and mimicked me. Then Tanasse started to sing the Backstreet Boys
song “Bye Bye Bye”. I immediately started singing along. All the youth started clapping their hands to the beat. When we got to the end of the chorus Claudia asked me to sing it again. While Tanasse and I sang the song several of the youth started to dance and attempted to teach Dana (my translator) and I some of their dance moves. Before long everyone was involved. Some were playing drums on their legs, some were dancing, one guy was whistling and at times various youth would recommend a dance move. There was a great deal of laughter throughout this entire time. At one point Cornel laughed so hard he grabbed his stomach indicating that he was getting a cramp.  

Field Notes, April 14, 2003

The themes of laughter and doing things together consistently emerged around recreation. In the summer months, many youth swam together in the Dombovița River and took turns jumping off a bridge. Youth would huddle together and engage in a dice game, share newspapers and engage in craft-oriented activities. Some youth used their own money to purchase pens, pencils, crayons and paper to draw and color. Their engagement in such activities seemed only limited by their resources. Multiple youth indicated that they wished foundations would provide more opportunities to engage in art-related activities.

Perhaps the themes of laughter and cooperative play were most clearly reflected in the context of soccer. In the spring and summer months, an NGO organized a weekly soccer game for street children. Youths who lived at various sites across Bucharest came together on Wednesdays to play soccer for two hours. Excerpts from two field notes along with an excerpt from my reflective journal help capture the rich dynamics surrounding a game of soccer.

When the youth arrived at the soccer field, they hunted for big stones to create the boundaries of the field and establish where the goals would be. After the field was created they discussed how they were going to pick teams. One youth suggested that they do tricks with the ball and the two individuals that could do it the longest would be team captains and would take turns selecting people for their teams. The other youth agreed and they proceeded to do tricks until the captains were identified.
and chose teams. Since it was an uneven number, one of the team captains suggested that Marian stand out until Augustin had missed two goals (he was playing the position of goalie). Marian agreed and came over and sat by us. The rest of them began playing soccer.

During the entire game the youth seemed quite supportive of each other. For example, when Audi scored a goal, everyone clapped and Cornel gave him a big hug. When Felicia missed a block and was scored on, other members of her team patted her on the back. Adrian gave her pointers. When things went well, there was celebration; when things did not go well there was support. There was no fighting; no lost tempers. After Augustin was scored on twice he came out of the game without being told and Marian went in.

Field Notes, March 1, 2003

When we arrived at the soccer field we sat down as the youth were organizing for the game. Right before the game started several youth asked if they could leave their stuff with us so it would not get lost during the game. One youth gave us his wallet, another a small plastic toy. Florin had a little nametag he had made. He took it off and handed it to me. Some of the youth got hot during the game and took off their shirts. They ran over to the sidelines and threw them to me. During the game we cheered on the youth as usual. We cheer whenever one of them would do something really good like have a really good block or goal; we offered encouragement if someone missed a block or goal. Many times the youth would run to the sidelines and ask me if I saw whatever they had done well. I would indicate that I did and I would cheer some more. When the game ended the youth came over to retrieve their things. They all seemed in good spirits. They were smiling and discussing plays from the game.

Field Notes, May 14, 2003

I LOVE street kid soccer!!! These kids who have a reputation of being incredibly violent, dishonest troublemakers week after week work together to create a field, organize themselves into teams, negotiate taking turns and playing soccer without a hitch. There is little to no fighting, disputing or disagreements. They are like a well-organized unit. The stronger players give tips to the weaker players and then celebrate when things go well. When a goal is scored everyone on the team applauds; some give hugs. When a teammate messes up – they are encouraging that he or she would for sure be able to get it next time. They look to the sidelines for affirmation and support and after the game find great pleasure in reliving each moment – the celebrations and the missed opportunities. It is almost surreal. In this two-hour block of time week after week, things feel “normal”. Like at any moment you expect someone’s mom to drive up in a minivan climbing out with lawn chairs and the after-the-game snacks for the team.

Reflective Journal Entry, May 14, 2003
On occasion a young person from the street purchased a soccer ball on her or his own and independently organized a game. Many conversations centered on what happened during the soccer game or what was happening nationally for the Romanian team.

Identifying and maximizing on the recreational activities of street youth may represent an important untapped resource. The opportunity to play soccer provided youth with a protected space that fostered problem-solving skills, team-building and constructive social skills and behaviors among the youth. In his proposal for a plan to create recreational opportunities for Nicaraguan street children, Gordon (2007) noted the pro-social benefits of recreation for youths that have been socialized within the street culture. “The abilities and expertise that they learn on the streets are only beneficial in that environment, but the expertise that can be gained from... athletic competition will assist them with more beneficial positions and walks of life” (p. 7).

Resource Generating Strategies

The use of healthy coping strategies (e.g., music, spirituality, friendships, etc.) reveals the tremendous resilience of the street youth as a compliment to extreme risk (e.g., challenging past trajectories, chronic exposure to violence, criminality, etc.). Resilience is also seen in how youth strived to meet their material needs on the street. The engagement in resource generating activities was a major element of life on the streets. Lusk (1992) identified a range of activities street children engaged in to make a living from begging, scavenging, shoe shining and guarding cards, to more exploitative activities such as drug dealing and prostitution. In the present study, I learned the resource generating strategies of 100 youth. These youth engaged in multifarious activities, which can be grouped into five categories (see Figure 4.7). Despite the popular perception of street children as petty thieves and delinquents it
appeared as though most of the youth who contributed information related to resource generating activities in the present study relied more heavily on other strategies. The majority of youth engaged in begging (71%) and informal work (36%), while 16% engaged in stealing and 12% in the sex trade/industry. Few youth (7%) enjoyed the luxury of formal employment. Once again, care is warranted in interpreting the data, since they were not collected in a systematic way and is therefore not representative of all youth who lived on the streets of Bucharest. However, the data do afford some understanding for how these 100 youth earned material resources necessary for survival. Since youth involvement in stealing and the sex industry were discussed above, the focus of this section will be on begging, informal work and formal work.

![Resource Generating Strategies (n = 100)](image)

*Figure 4.7. Resource Generating Strategies (n = 100)*

The majority of youth engaged in begging as a way to earn a living, with females (76%) relying more heavily on this strategy than males (69%). Begging typically entailed approaching an individual and asking for money, though at times there are petitions for other items depending on what the individual may have had with them.
(e.g., food, cigarettes, etc.). The youth generally approached cars stopped at traffic 
lights and people passing by on the sidewalk. Some youth held a sign indicating their 
histories (e.g., how they ended up on the street, etc.) or the extent of their needs 
(e.g., how long it had been since they had eaten, etc.). Others offered to do a small 
task in exchange for a contribution (e.g., approached cars with bottle of water and rag 
and offered to wash the windshields, etc.). If their desire was for food specifically, 
youth approached people buying from a pastry shop or coming out of a restaurant 
carrying leftovers. Some youth sang or played an instrument (e.g., harmonic, etc.) on 
the subway or performed acrobatic or juggling shows; many more used this strategy at 
Christmas. On most occasions, youth begged individually. However, during the 
Christmas season it was common to see a group of two-three young people together 
singing on the metro or putting on a show.

The amount earned by youth through begging appeared to vary. Some youth 
spoke of earning as little as 50,000 lei in a day (less than 2 U.S. dollars), while others 
earned between 100,000-200,000 lei a day (about 3-6 U.S. dollars). Still other youth 
spoke of earning substantially more, ranging anywhere between 300,000-400,000 lei a 
day (about 10-14 U.S. dollars). Youth identified a number of variables that impacted 
their earning, including the amount of time they invested in a day or week (e.g., most 
youth only begged for a few hours a day; some did not beg every day, etc.), the 
weather (e.g., when it was raining or very cold, fewer people were on the street, 
etc.) and the “quality of a person’s soul” (e.g., how giving a person was, etc.). The 
youth shared myriad strategies used to increase the potential amount given. Some 
youth targeted foreigner-rich environments (e.g., ticket booth of train station, high-
end hotels, etc.), and made their requests in another language (e.g., French, German,
Many youth engaged in what I have termed adaptive misrepresentation to increase potential payout. In adaptive misrepresentation the youth tried to paint themselves in the best light as someone who was needy and worthy of assistance. In my time on the street, several youth shared how they adaptively misrepresented themselves in some way to boost their earning prospects.

To earn money I beg. I say, “Please may I have some money.” If I see a foreigner like you (referring to the researcher), I talk in English or if they are Italian, I ask in Italian or whatever language and the person gives me money. In order to earn a bit better, you also need to pretend you are without a hand, without a leg... so you could make more money.

Reluca age 12

Gabriel (17 years old) shared that on two or three occasions he was able to borrow a baby from a girl he knew from the street. He took the baby with him when he went to beg noting that people give a lot more money when you have baby with you.

Field Notes, December 9, 2002

I receive soap, clothes... and I could wash after myself. But I don’t wash my clothes; I leave them dirty so I can make more money to get food. I have clean clothes. I even have shoes, but I don’t wear them. It is better to look dirty and like you don't have much.

Flori age 18

Their misrepresentations ranged from dressing as needy (e.g., dirty, few clothes, poor hygiene, etc.) and pretending they were injured or disabled in some way (e.g., did not have limb, wore a sling on an arm, etc.), to exaggerating their back-story (e.g., had not eaten in a week, etc.) and pretending to be on the street with a baby or small animal (e.g., puppy, etc.). Youth also engaged in adaptive misrepresentation with the formal environment. It was not uncommon for youth to remove layers of their clothes or wear their most worn clothes before going to an NGO to request resources. This notion of adaptive misrepresentation even emerged in the context of “play”.
While we were talking Ciobi took a baby doll that was missing a leg and arm and sat her on the sidewalk. He placed a sign that stated, “I am hungry and need money,” and a hat to collect money in front of her. As he was setting up his “props”, Ciobi commented that if people won’t give money to him, maybe they would to the baby doll. As people passed by most laughed and commented about how funny he or she thought it was. Some commented on the youths’ creativity; some put money in the hat. Every time they got money the youth laughed and clapped their hands. They seemed to really enjoy the “prank”. They would repeat to each other what someone had said/comment on how other people thought it was funny too. After about ½ hour Ciobi threw the baby doll and sign away, took the money from the hat and went into a store and bought some bread. He shared the bread with the other youth.

Field Notes, June 15, 2003

Over one-third of the youth (36%) engaged in informal work to generate resources, with males (39%) relying more heavily on this strategy than females (28%). The youth appeared to be entrepreneurial about their daily lives, using their skills and knowledge to create a host of opportunities to work in exchange for money. Some youths demonstrated strong abilities to be self-reliant. For example, some youth collected metals from around the city and sold them to a recycling business. Working together, the youth created a process by which they collected and prepared the metals for sale. On occasion my translator and I had an opportunity to work with them.

Daniel and Cornel invited us to sit down. We did and proceeded to assist them in untwisting the wires from the mechanical items (i.e., old speakers, radios). The wires were plastic coated; some had copper in them and some had aluminum. Cornel explained that they find the mechanical items in the trash and pick up discarded metal scraps from factories and constructions sites... Once all the wires were removed they built a fire and threw them in. The fire burnt off the plastic coating revealing whether the wires were copper or aluminum. They separated them into two separate piles and began to roll them into balls. Daniel pulled a magnet from his pocket and began to run the magnet over the balls of wire. He indicated that he was checking to see if there were any metal items inside. If there were they wouldn’t get any money for them because the people who they sold them to would think that they had tried to sneak in extra weight. When they were finished some began to clean up the area. Others took the balls of wire to sell them. Daniel indicated they
would receive approximately 40,000 lei per kilogram for the copper and about half that for the aluminum.

Field Notes, April 2, 2003

Most youth engaged in informal work by assisting people in the immediate informal environment (e.g., street vendors, people who live in the neighborhood, etc.) with a variety of odd jobs as needed. A handful of these opportunities seemed to emerge for youth throughout the week.

The lady at the kiosk hollered over for Placa. He went over to where she was. She handed him a pick with a wooden handle. He used the pick to break up the ice in front of the kiosk. When he returned he had 3 cigarettes, indicating that he received them for helping break up the ice. Placa shared that the same lady had given him some cigarettes yesterday when he helped her carry some water.

Placa age 17

To earn some money or a cigarette, I sweep the entrance of an apartment or a store. I mop the floor... Or at someone's apartment I shake a rug, dig in the garden... whatever is needed I help with. I help and they give me money, food... a cigarette.

María age 17

Other direct exchanges included guarding and/or washing automobiles in public parking lots, unloading trucks making a delivery to a store or kiosk and guarding a kiosk when the vendor needed to step out to use the restroom or run an errand. The young person completing the task was usually compensated immediately. As noted in the above examples, at times they were paid materially (e.g., cigarettes, food, etc.) and at times they were paid monetarily. Although youths typically benefited from these exchanges, they were vulnerable to exploitation. Since their work preceded payment, on occasion they were not compensated for their endeavors.

Sometimes the youth had opportunities to work informally for more formal entities engaging in what they referred to as “work by the day”. Unlike the odd jobs
performed for kiosk workers or people living in the neighborhood mentioned above, this type of work had the potential to last for several days making it a much more lucrative opportunity.

To earn money many (street youth) work by the day. For example, at a construction site they may need some to haul or clean. If you have a talent you can help with the tiles or nail boards. Sometimes you can work by the day for a week or so, or till the job is complete. For an hour of work you can earn 30,000 lei (about 1 U.S. dollar). It is more than enough to get your food for the day.

Consuela age 22

We hugged Gigi (age 15) when we saw him indicating that we had not seen him for a while. He shared he had been working for the carnival for the past week or two. He pointed to the circus sign hanging across the road, indicating that the carnival was in town and that he had been helping them set up and get ready. In return he stated that they pay him. He is also able to eat with them throughout the day and sometimes they give him leftover food.

Field Notes, June 16, 2003

The youth who “work by the day” indicated that they were able to earn up to 250,000 lei (about 9 U.S. dollars) a day with the potential for 1,250,000 lei (about 46 U.S. dollars) a week. Some were also fed while they were at work so the money they earn did not need to be used to meet immediate needs.

Many informal work activities relied on the youths’ ability to develop relationships with those in the informal and formal environments. For example, some youth were able to wash cars on the grounds of a gas station because of the relationships they built with the employees there. Others were challenged to do so even in public parking lots as it was considered illegal to work without a permit. While some police fined youth for washing cars in the public parking lots others hired youth to wash police cars at the station. What enabled some and disabled other youth to
develop such relationships and the advantages that came from being connected to these broader networks is more carefully analyzed and discussed in Chapter 6.

Regardless of the informal work engaged in by the street youth, what was consistent is that it failed to provide a steady stream of income. Much of the work was quite dependent on the needs of the environment and very sporadic. Many youth engaged in a variety of resource generating activates spending some of their time begging and making themselves available for informal work as opportunities arose. Although some youth reported their preference for begging as a way of generating resources, most youth reported that they preferred to earn money through work as opposed to begging, pointing to a sense of accomplishment and an increase in self-respect. As 21-year-old Cornel put it, “When we go to earn ourselves bread (opposed to begging), we feel much better... cause when we earn our bread, our soul rises up a little higher”.

As seen in Figure 4.7, only 7% of the youth (i.e., six males and one female) engaged in formal work as a resource generating activity. Formal work was official employment by a business, agency or organization. As the number of youth engaging in formal work was small, a brief summary of each job is included below:

- One male obtained a permit from city officials to be a street vendor. He owned and operated an electronics stand at a busy market in the heart of Bucharest.
- Two males worked for a construction company as carpenters and painters. One of these men formerly worked for an NGO as a part of a street education show and then for ADP a waste management company in Bucharest.
• One male worked for the Urban (a waste management company in Bucharest) collecting garbage and sweeping the streets. As part of his employment he was provided housing in a dormitory available for Urban employees.

• Two males and one female worked for NGOs. The males served as liaisons between an NGO and the youth living on the street. They were tasked with communicating the needs of street youth to the NGO and the resources available through NGOs to the street youth. The female worked for an NGO trying to raise the awareness of street youth regarding STDs. Once a month she provided training on how STDs are contracted and things that can be done to reduce risk (e.g., good hygiene, the use of condoms, etc.). She helped to distribute condoms on the street and to identify youth in need of testing for STDs and treatment.

Youth engaging in formal work were able to earn 250,000 lei a day (about 9 U.S. dollars a day). While this was similar to or at times less money than the daily wage of youth who generated resources through begging or informal work, those who had formal employment had a consistent stream of income producing up to about 180 U.S. dollars a month. This amount was slightly below the average monthly income of 5,600,000 lei (about 200 U.S. dollars) for Romanians in 2003.

In talking with these seven youth about how they were enabled to gain formal employment, two consistent themes emerged. First, every youth had a carte de identitate (identification card, similar to a social security card in the U.S.), which is issued to every Romanian citizen at birth or before 14 years of age. They are compulsory for official employment. In order to obtain a carte de identitate one must have a birth certificate. A birth certificate and official identity papers are two
resources many street children lacked. The 1998-1999 national study of street children found that about 32% of the surveyed children had no identity papers (Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999). It is possible that this number is even higher now. As noted earlier in this chapter (see Pathways to the Street), 25% of youth either grew up in an orphanage or came to the street through an orphanage; an additional 7% were either abandoned to the street by their parents or were born on the street. A 2002 study exploring the issues faced by children in institutional care revealed that less than half (46%) of the children in institutions over the age of 14 possessed a carte de identitate (ANPCA, Institute for Mother and Child Care Bucharest, International Foundation for Child, and Family & UNICEF, 2002). The study highlighted the challenges of tracking down parents and thus birth certificates as a key deterrent to addressing this issue.

UNICEF (2006) identified a more systematic study on birth registration services and the lack of identity documents as a top priority for children deprived of parental care, which includes the street children population. “In order for a child to avoid the risk of life-long discrimination, birth registration is of the utmost importance. A targeted study or rapid assessment to attempt to understand all the dimensions and mechanisms leading to a lack of birth certificates and/or identity documents should be of great use to address this weakness in a comprehensive manner” (p. 178). The absence of a legal identity excludes youth from formal employment and the minimum income guarantee scheme, as well as all public services (e.g., social assistance, social security, access to health care, etc.).

The second key theme for youth who engaged in formal work was education. Two youth completed nine grades and three youth completed ten. This is significant as
the obligatory education period is only eight grades in Romania (UNDP, 2002). Some youth even had additional vocational training (e.g., mechanical, carpentry, etc.). All seven could read and write. This stands in significant contrast to quantitative inquires conducted at or around the time of the present study. In 2002 Save the Children Romania and the International Labor Organization conducted a rapid assessment of the status of street children. As highlighted in Figure 4.8, almost 20% of the sample had never attended school and over 30% were illiterate (Save the Children Romania, 2002). These findings seem consistent with other research. The 1998-1999 study of street children found that about one-third of street children surveyed were illiterate and almost 75% did not attend school (Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999).

![Educational Level and Skills of Street Children in Bucharest]

*Figure 4.8. Educational Level and Skills of Street Children in Bucharest*


Although many youth I encountered completed some schooling while they lived at home or in a state orphanage, they could not persist once they came to the street; access to education was viewed as a significant challenge. Some of these challenges were external. As of 2003, in the Romanian educational system, any youth who fell
more than two years behind was not allowed to return to the public education system. There were no governmental programs and very few non-governmental programs in place to assist with the educational needs of street children. Most of the non-governmental programs were residential programs geared toward youth under the age of 18. This barrier to access often left youth with feeling as though they did not have options; there was no hope for change.

I would like to go to school so I can be something in life... so I won’t be on the street. I only have 5 grades and I want to go back to school, to get 10-12 grades, to manage to find a good job, to make money and not live from one day to the next. But now I am old. The years that I should have been in school are gone. The time is past and it is not possible for me to go back there. So I guess the street is my life.

Adi age 18

Many street youths knew the means by which their lives might be improved, yet they lacked the power to achieve those means. Finally, many street youth lacked knowledge of the resources available. Although they were aware of many programs that provided for a range of needs (e.g., assistance with obtaining official identity papers, addressing medical needs, the provision of food and clothing, etc.), very few youth were aware of educational programs. Most of the youth that were aware had participated in one. In part, this could be due to the fact that many NGOs did not publicize their educational programs; youth went through an informal and then formal screening process before they were invited to participate.

Some of the challenges related to access to educational programs were internal. Although youth who lacked education expressed a desire to return to school, many expressed that shame and embarrassment prevented them from doing so. One example of this was seen in the context of my in-depth conversation with 17-year-old Costin:
Me: Have you ever been to school?

Costin: No. I have never been.

Me: If you wanted to go to school, would that be possible?

Costin: Yes, I think. But just till I am 18. But I am ashamed to go to school at 17. (pause) I would be ashamed to go. What would they say “Oh my goodness, a 17 year old boy, how can we accept him?” I would learn, too, you know. But what could I do? I wouldn’t even know where to go.

The issue of shame consistently came up and was a factor for younger youth as well:

Me: Have you boys ever been to school?

(Both boys shake their heads no.)

Me: If you wanted to go to school, would it be possible?

Viorel: At my years... go to school? I am embarrassed. At 15 years of age...

Cristi: (interrupts) In the first grade to go to school at my age... shameful...

Investment in education in order to develop human capital is a way of strengthening and supporting the economic potential of street youth. As it stands, most youth engaged in begging and informal work to generate resources. Without education and the requisite government documents for formal employment, opportunity beyond this did not exist.

Youth who engaged in begging and informal work also ran the risk of harsh consequences (e.g., encounters with law enforcement, enormous fines, etc.). Begging is illegal in Romania (Article 367 of the Romania Penal Code). I chose not to include begging in the above statistics related to criminal behavior since it appeared to be a victimless crime. No one is harmed in the commission of begging; the law is in place as part of the public scandal law. In Romania the public scandal law (Article 321 of the Romania Penal Code) is used to regulate undesirable public behavior. For example,
street children sleeping on a bench or congregating in a group is undesirable so it would fall under the public scandal law. The law is also used to regulate the behavior of other marginalized groups (e.g., gay men and lesbian women holding hands in public, etc.). Although inconsistently enforced, if caught begging, youth had the potential of being penalized with large fines, or even going to jail. Many youth spoke of receiving a fine for begging and had shown me their tickets. I had the unique opportunity to be a part of a conversation between a young man and two police officers related to this issue.

The police officers got out of the van and walked over to where we are. Vatafu (age 18) approached the officers asking for a favor. Vatafu explained that he got a ticket yesterday for 1,000,000 lei (about 36 U.S. dollars). He handed the ticket to the policemen stating he was not guilty. An officer looked at the ticket and emphatically disagreed with him. He indicated that he was of course guilty and got a ticket because he was begging on the street, which is against the law. Vatafu asked, “What am I supposed to do?” The policeman asked Vatafu where he came from; Vatafu indicated he was from Sibiu. The policeman instructed him to go back to Sibiu. Vatafu indicated that he did go back a few months ago after he got kicked out of the orphanage, but the police from Sibiu sent him back to Bucharest. He does not know where his family is in Sibiu; he has lived longer in Bucharest. The policeman said he was sorry but Vatafu was not to beg and was not allowed to stay on the streets; he needed to find some place to stay. Vatfu asked, “Where should I stay? I have no place to stay.” The police nodded in affirmation and said, “I don’t know.” Then he asked Vatafu to go back over to the sewer and he turned to Dana and me asking, “What are we supposed to do?” The police officers shared that they feel at a loss. Part of their job is to not allow street children to be out in the open. If their bosses drive through their section and see street children they get a reduction in their salary, yet there is nowhere for them to go. They noted that they understand that the youth do not have options, but they too have families to feed. They commented that this is why they sometimes hit or kick the youth; they need them to leave the area so that they (the officers) do not get in trouble.

Field Notes, March 7, 2003

This was not my only encounter with law enforcement and not my only time to hear frustration about not knowing what to do with the street youth.
Not only did youth risk encounters with law enforcement and enormous fines for begging, but much of their informal work also put them at risk. In Romania there appeared to be a criminalization of survival. This phenomenon is not new to homeless populations around the world. Across the globe, men, women and children who engage in activities necessary to preserve their lives are confronted by law enforcement. In the Romanian context, there has been a host of informal work activities engaged in by street youth that were later deemed illegal. For example, youth formerly earned money by assisting travelers at the train station with their bags. The reader may recollect the story shared in the introduction. My first experience with street children in Romanian took place as they offered their assistance with my bags at the North Train Station. Since that time, Căile Ferate Române (CFR; translated Romanian Railways), the official state railway carrier for Romania, made it illegal to be in the train station without a ticket. A policy developed in part to deny street children access to the train station. Currently, CFR hires baggage assistants to greet passengers on the platform. To be hired as a baggage assistant, one must have official identity papers. As previously mentioned, some youth also attempted to earn resources by guarding and washing parked cars in public parking lots. This too is now illegal. The government created positions for parking attendants who are charged with ensuring the safety of vehicles parked in certain public lots. To be hired as a parking attendant, again, one must have official identity papers. Although inconsistently enforced, if caught engaging in any of these activities (i.e., helping passengers with their bags, guarding or washing cars), youth have the potential of being penalized with large fines. Iulian’s frustration is evident as he described the challenges he faced to “earn my bread”:
I told the police, if they don’t let me wash a car, if they don’t let me beg, than at least let me steal. If you don’t let me try to earn my bread by washing cars than what is good? Isn’t it good to wash a car? Is it not better to beg for money if don’t have food to eat than to steal? Or is it better to hit someone in the head and take it by force? I can’t get hired without means (official identity papers). If I want to wash a car, I get fined. If I beg, I get fined. I don’t have money to pay fines. If I steal they put me in jail for 7-8 years. So what should I do? I have no other way to survive. I could become capable of throwing myself in front of a car. I am serious!

Iulian age 23

Transition to Theoretical Analysis

This descriptive overview addressed the question: *Who are the children living and working on the streets of Bucharest Romania?* The exploration moved beyond the snapshot provided by the core sample in Chapter 3 to a deeper understanding of the youths’ past trajectories that led them to be on the street, experiences with violence (i.e., as victim and perpetrator), drug use, criminality, health concerns and recreational activities, as well as their resource generating and coping strategies. For 10 months I explored the varied facets and dimensions of their lives along with attempting to understand the larger issues faced by the youth who worked to create and sustain their lives on the street. Knowing who the street children are in terms of demographics, the challenges they faced and the strategies they employed to cope and create a life for themselves serves as an important foundation to understanding the overall landscape of their lives. Chapter 5 facilitates a transition from a focus on the more micro description of the characteristics of street children to a higher level, more abstract investigation of the youths’ networks and need-meeting strategies with a specific focus on the networks the young people established among each other and how those networks they developed and connected with contributed to their survival. Chapter 6 expands the analysis further to explore the youths’ connections to the
informal and formal environments and how those broader networks afforded access to a wider range of resources and opportunities.
CHAPTER 5

INTERPRETIVE ANALYSIS

The creation and use of social capital: The role of the group

This chapter facilitates a transition from a focus on the more micro description of the characteristics of street children to a higher level, more abstract investigation of the youths’ networks and need-meeting strategies. I will outline the analytic process employed to move from a focus on the individual street children and groups into the development of four typologies. Within the context of the four typologies, the subsequent sections begin to investigate the second and third overarching questions that guided this study: Under what circumstances, conditions, or processes are the children on the street able to meet their needs in the face of adversity? and What are the informal networks created and used by street children in an effort to build opportunities for survival? Specifically, did the street children live in groups, and if so, did the groups (networks) they developed and connected with contribute to their survival? In her descriptive study of Romanian street children, Alexandrescu (1996) identified that street children formed groups that appeared important to their survival and encouraged further exploration into the role of the group in their lives. The central thesis of social capital theory is that relationships matter; the networks people belong to are valuable assets. This chapter begins to explore the potentiality embedded in the relationships among street children.
The Emergence of Typologies

As fully articulated in Chapter 3 I engaged in a systematic analysis of the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998); this serves as summary. The open coding phase involved conducting a line-by-line analysis of the data where sections of the data were broken down into “meaning units” or concepts. Each meaning unit was given a conceptual code (label) ranging from a word or two to full sentences. As I read through the data, a new code was established for every meaning unit that did not fit within a previously identified code. Select examples of the codes used in the present analysis are included in Table 5.1. An exhaustive list and full description of all codes are found in Appendix I.

Table 5.1. Selected Codes and Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Code Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>Held to standards of behavior for actions or words. Could be related to youth, NGO, state institution (orphanage, hospital), police or government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Behavior</td>
<td>Any behavior identified as illegal in Romania.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire and Reality</td>
<td>Differentiation between what is desired by youth and what is possible due to the reality of circumstances (either youth identified or other identified).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruption</td>
<td>Internal (within group) or external (outside of group, e.g., police or government action) that brings about a change in living situations/relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>The mention of or reference to someone as a friend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Expressed concerns or conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Enforcement</td>
<td>References to or whenever involved in a situation/present during an interaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>Movement among and between sites, cities, countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Trajectory</td>
<td>Historical antecedents; how the youth came to the street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Perspectives</td>
<td>Youth’s overtly shared perceptions/opinions/thoughts (e.g., foundations, government, law enforcement, help/assistance, foreigners, other youth, etc.).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While open coding breaks down data, axial coding brings the data together in new ways by examining the open codes for connections to, as well as relationships between and within each other. To this end, I went back through the codes and identified subcategories for a code (recognizing important distinctions in how the code operated) and grouped codes together that were related to the same phenomenon to form categories. For example, in the open coding phase, every time a child requested a material resource (e.g., food, money, etc.) from someone (e.g., a passerby, a car window, etc.) I coded it “begging”. Every time a youth engaged in some sort of work to obtain material resources, I coded it “work”. Through axial coding, I developed subcategories for “work” (i.e., formal and informal) and grouped “work” and “begging”, along with other codes (i.e., stealing, sex industry, adaptive misrepresentation) together under the broader category of “resource generating activities”. A sample selection of the categories and associated codes used for the present analysis can be seen in Table 5.2. After the process of axial coding, I then went back to the data again to continue refining categories. This selective coding set the stage for the emergence of the present typologies.
### Table 5.2. Selected Key Categories and Associated Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Associated Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td>Geographic Characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregating/dwelling locale and</td>
<td>Living Conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attributes.</td>
<td>Disruption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formation</strong></td>
<td>Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The way in which street youth</td>
<td>Access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrange/order themselves.</td>
<td>Group Size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time on Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Durability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Substance</strong></td>
<td>Group Rules/Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The inherent properties that</td>
<td>Sanctions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>serve to characterize</td>
<td>Group Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationships and ways of relating.</td>
<td>Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Generating Activities</td>
<td>Begging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Way of gaining access to</td>
<td>Work (i.e., formal, informal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resources.</td>
<td>Stealing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sex Industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adaptive Misrepresentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bridging</strong></td>
<td>Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A unidirectional connecting or</td>
<td>Formal Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gaining access to resources that</td>
<td>Informal Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one does not have immediate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>access to.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Violence</strong></td>
<td>Perpetrator of/Target of Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occurrence of any aggression.</td>
<td>Victim of/Source of Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coping</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How youth indicate they deal with</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>issues faced on the street.</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Substance Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spirituality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the nature of qualitative research is a contextual inquiry, the researcher becomes the instrument of data collection by entering into and spending time in the real world setting under investigation. Throughout the participant observation phase of the research, a large part of my interaction with the youth involved trying to build rapport and reduce the power differential inherent in such interaction. With prolonged engagement in the field I grew close to the youth. Although developing relationships of...
trust was vital in gaining physical and interpersonal access to participants, those very relationships complicated my ability to step back for the purpose of analysis. The characteristics that make human beings the instrument of choice for naturalistic inquiry (e.g., ability to perceive situations holistically, interact directly with a situation, respond to environmental cues, etc.) are many of the same characteristics that pose a challenge to stepping back from the intimacy of the data into a more analytic posture. I found it difficult in the data analysis process to see beyond the lived individual experiences of each young person and group.

To assist with developing an analytic posture and viewing the data at a higher level of abstraction, I separated every data excerpt (i.e., from field notes and in-depth conversation transcripts) in a particular category (e.g., location, resource generating activities, coping, etc.) by sites where street children congregated or spent time. Returning to my previous example, every data excerpt from the category “resource generating activities” associated with youth from site1 were merged; every data excerpt from “resource generating activities” associated with youth from site2 were merged. All data excerpts associated with youth from site3 were merged, and so forth. I read through each category coalesced by site looking for similarities and differences within and between sites. Based on my experience in the field, I hypothesized that various sites shared characteristics related to “location”, so I started with that category. Four distinct types of “location” emerged, so I clustered sites accordingly. For example, site2 and site23 shared common characteristics related to location (e.g., permanent dwelling, secure), so they were clustered. Site4 and site12 shared common characteristics related to location (e.g., no dwelling, high visibility), so they were clustered. Next, I went back and analyzed the data clustered by sites
(based on location) through the lens of various categories one at a time. With each new category, there continued to be significant consistency between sites within clusters; the more consistency the more confidence I had that the sites within a cluster were all pointing to a typology.

The emergent typologies were constructed along three dimensions: setting, formation and substance. Setting reflects the geographic location and attributes associated with that type of location (e.g., level of visibility, protection/safety, control, etc.). Formation reflects if and how the street children within a particular site cluster organized themselves and includes the structure of their relationships with each other and how those structures were maintained. Substance reflects the relational dynamics of youth within a particular site cluster, including the emergence of norms, sanctions for norm violations, the nature of relationships between the youth, and the definition and actualization of trust, reciprocity and cooperation.

Based on these three dimensions, I derived a conceptual typology highlighted by four distinct types — Typology A, Typology B, Typology C and Typology D. A comprehensive table of typology dimensions is found in Appendix J. Each dimension is fully articulated throughout the next three sections of this chapter.

Throughout this research study I interacted with youth from 29 different sites across Bucharest. During the course of the study, nine sites were disrupted (e.g., the sewer opening was sealed by government officials, law enforcement intervened and forced the youth to move, etc.). As articulated in Chapter 3, 10 of the remaining 20 sites were selected for concentrated fieldwork; all in-depth conversation participants also came from one of these 10 sites. See Chapter 3 Selection of Research Participants for a full description of how sites and participants were identified and selected for
inclusion. As previously noted, triangulation is one way to enhance the credibility of research (parallel qualitative procedure for ensuring internal validity), or the extent to which the findings accurately reflect the construct of investigation. Therefore, in the final analysis I only used data obtained from in-depth conversation transcripts and the field notes related to the sites associated with these youth. A review of data from the 10 sites not represented in this analysis did not reveal anything that would contradict the four identified typologies.

To enhance the reader’s ability to make judgments regarding the transferability of findings, Table 5.3 identifies which sites were included in each typology and which youth contributed to the understanding of the various typology dimensions through extended conversations. Furthermore, a cast of participants is included in Appendix K, which presents a brief description of each youth (e.g., age, gender, past trajectory, key relationships within the site).

Table 5.3. Research Sites and Participants Included in Analysis by Typology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sites</td>
<td></td>
<td>Site 2</td>
<td>Site 9</td>
<td>Site 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Site 23</td>
<td>Site 16</td>
<td>Site 25</td>
<td>Site 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Site 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-depth Conversation Participants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iulian</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Radu</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reluca</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Alin</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flori</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Claudiu</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calu</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Adi</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adrian</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cornel</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nicu</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Setting Dimension

The data analysis revealed that the various geographic locations and the attributes associated with a type of location proffered varied benefits and/or vulnerabilities for the youth who resided or congregated there. The components of the setting dimension are summarized in Table 5.4 and are fully articulated below.

Table 5.4. Setting Dimension by Typology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Characteristic</td>
<td>Permanent physical dwelling embedded in neighborhoods</td>
<td>Semi-permanent physical dwelling near public transit sites</td>
<td>Permanent physical dwelling near public transit sites</td>
<td>Dispersion on streets at public transit sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attributes</td>
<td>Privacy, security and control over living space</td>
<td>Moderate visibility and minimal security and control over living space</td>
<td>Minimal visibility and moderate security and control over living space</td>
<td>High visibility and a lack of security and control over living space</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Typology A

We head up out of the metro and down the main thoroughfare. Florin explains that there is a group of 7-10 youth who live here together in a small brick utility building. I learn that the electricity for this particular sector of Bucharest flows through this building and is owned by the electric company. We take lots of twists and turns before arriving at the site. We arrive around 11:30AM. We climb through a broken fence and walk through a small field to get to the building that is tucked away behind several apartment complexes. As we approach the building, I see a set of stairs that run along the left-hand side of the building. There is a door at the bottom of the steps. I can see a padlock on the door. Florin stands at the top and hollers down, “Hello! It is Florin from ASIS”. When there was no answer we walked around to the right-hand side of the building climbing through another fence and walking through a muddied area. There was some garbage on the ground stacked against the wall of the building. There was a door on the far right and a small sidewalk leading from the
muddy area to the door. I did not see a lock on the door. We stood on the sidewalk several feet back and again Florin hollered out, “Hello! It is Florin from ASIS”. A young man (Ciobi) came through the door. It appeared as though he had just woke up. He was rubbing his eyes; his medium-length dark hair was tousled about his head. He was wearing a t-shirt and sweatpants with one pant leg pushed up to his knee. He was wearing socks. He said hello and asked us to wait just a minute. He went back in and closed the door. A few minutes later he came back out – he had put on a coat, hat and tennis shoes – all of which appeared clean and in good condition. He walked over to Florin and shook his hand.

Field Notes, November 5, 2002

This excerpt serves as a representative physical description of the location of sites within this typology. The geographic location of the youth within Typology A is characterized by physical embeddedness in neighborhoods affording privacy, security and control over their living space. They lived in physical dwellings that were fixed within a neighborhood/community away from the public eye; they were not located near to public transportation or a main street. One would not accidentally stumble on them in their comings and goings throughout the city, but would need to know how to specifically locate them. The youth from these sites lived in relatively independent structures that (for the most part) were not reliant on their surroundings. They had the ability to lock doors. The physical dwellings of the youth from these sites were segregated into two areas (e.g., upper and lower level of the electrical building, etc.), with one area considered more advantageous than the other. As will be discussed below under the Substance dimension, the availability of two separate living spaces added another layer of control as it was used to sanction group member behavior via exclusion from the group and blocking access to more advantageous resources.

Stepping inside the dwelling provided a more thorough perspective of the conditions in which the youth from Typology A lived.
We arrive at the site at around 3:10PM. No one was outside so Florin hollered out that we were there from ASIS. Patron opened the door and invited us in because it was too cold to come outside to talk. Florin and I stepped in and closed the door behind us. The warmth of the room immediately took the chill off my body. The smell of aurolac, body odor and stale deodorant filled my nostrils. We stood just a few feet inside the door. To the left was a bowl, probably 4-5 inches in diameter and about 2 inches tall, full of what appeared to be milk. A dog was lying down on the floor in front of my feet. From time to time the dog would drink from the bowl. The dog would also go to one of the youth; sometimes the youth would pet the dog, other times push the dog away or threaten to hit the dog (raise hand as if to hit). To the right was a small refrigerator with a TV on top. On the floor along the outside walls were what appeared to be small mattresses – two on the left and one on the right. Each mattress was stacked with folded blankets and pillows; probably about 6 inches high. Roman was asleep on the mattress to the far left and Calu was sitting on the one immediately inside the door on the left. Patron and Ionuti were sitting on the mattress to the right. There was a mug sitting on the floor in front of Patron and a glass sitting on the floor in front of Ionuti. There was also a bottle of ketchup sitting on the floor between the two cups. Against the back wall there is a metal cabinet adorned with pictures hung with magnets. At the top left, there was an icon of Mary holding baby Jesus and several CDs stuck in a metal flap. Down the middle there was a colored picture of Santa Claus from a coloring book. Beneath that was a picture from a magazine of a naked woman touching her vagina. The cabinet was painted blue – the same blue was on all four walls. Parts of the ceiling were painted bright purple. On top of the cabinet there were a couple rolls of toilet paper, some toothbrushes, a can of something that sprayed, and some things I could not make out (small boxes, papers). On the left-hand wall, there was a large picture of Santa Claus that said “Moș Craciun” (Merry Christmas) with the Coca-Cola symbol on it. There were coats hanging on hooks around the room and two large sprays of Christmas branches from a pine tree. There was a wire that strung from one end of the room to the other. On the wire hung a white shower buff, several Christmas tree car air fresheners, a small stuffed kangaroo and a balloon that had written on it “Merry Christmas from Tuborg Christmas brew”. There was also a single wire hanging from the middle of the ceiling. From this wire hung a picture of Jesus standing with his arms open in front of the cross.

Field Notes December 18, 2002

The dwelling spaces of youth within this typology were filled with many material items (e.g., shaving cream, razors, toothbrushes, food, clothes, bedding, etc.); some items would be considered luxury items for the average Romanian (e.g., cell phones, CD player, television, etc.). The spaces were characterized by structure and order; blankets folded on beds, coats on hooks, etc. They had material resources
to meet their basic needs, as well as for entertainment. The youth also had resources (e.g., metal cabinet, refrigerator, etc.) to structure and order things with. They appeared to have a sense of permanency in their space. For example, the youth at one site painted the inside of their space and in the spring they bought matching paint for the outside fence. At another site, the youth bought decorative cloth to hang. The youth at these sites also decorated in some way for the holidays. Separate from their dwelling space they had access to clean water and a designated place for bathing. Their dwelling space and resources enabled them to store and keep food in the refrigerator and they had the ability to prepare food (e.g., in pots over a fire, etc.). The youth spent time in their dwelling through all seasons.

Typology B

We arrived at site 9 at about 10:40AM. As we came up from the metro stop, I could see the sewer openings off to the right about 15 yards in the middle of a small field. We headed straight there. As we approached I could see two openings side by side, one was round and one was square. There was a big metal platform in between them, maybe 4-5 feet wide and about 5-6 feet long. It as slightly raised about 2-3 inches off the ground. The snow around the openings was worn down to the dirt with frozen footprints scattered about. The sewer openings sat about 10 yards from the sidewalk on a main street through Bucharest. There was a tram and bus stop a few yards down the road.

No one was outside when we got there. Florin and Dana hollered down into the round opening, “Good morning, this is ASIS. Is Elena there?” Though we could hear voices, there was no response. They hollered down again. A few moments later Elena came out. We greeted each other with handshakes. Elena was dressed in dark green corduroys and a green and white sweater that was relatively clean. Her hair appeared to have been recently brushed and pulled back in a ponytail. Florin immediately pulled her aside to talk about her medical concerns. Right behind her, came another young man (Vasile). He was wearing blue pants with a belt. You could tell that the pants were too big for him because there was space between the belt and the pants where the pants were gaping open. Vasile was not wearing a shirt. He had light brown hair, kind of short and he looked very thin. I could see the bone structure of his collar and his arms. Vasile stayed about ½ way out of the sewer opening. He would disappear for a few moments to allow others to come up, and then he would reappear staying about ½-way out. Gigi came out. He was wearing dark pants that
were tucked into rubber boots. He also had on a wool coat that zipped up the front and went down past his knees. Overtop of the wool coat he had on a cotton coat that zipped up the front. Gigi was wearing a hat on his head. I could see that he had fresh scratch marks (4-5 inches) on the right side of his neck. Gigi came up eating bread; he held a large loaf of bread in his hand, taking bites from time to time.

About this time, Ana came out. When she saw me she greeted me by name and came over immediately and shook my hand, asking me how I was doing. She was wearing blue jeans and a white short sleeve shirt. Her arms were very thin. There were 2-3 inch scars all in a row up both of her arms - it looked like lines had been drawn up and down her arms. I told her I was doing well and asked how she was doing. Ana stated she too was doing well – adding that it was good to see me. At the beginning of my conversation with Ana, several more individuals came out of the canal. There was Vali and a couple other young men I did not recognize. There was also another young woman (Geanine) – she joined Ana and myself. She stood about 5'3” and had shorter length/straight/brown hair, parted on the side. She was very thin. She was wearing a pair of blue jeans that didn't zip up quite to the top because they were tight on her. She had on a very thin gray sweater that had ¾ length sleeves. Gigi tore off and gave a piece of bread to Vasile, Vali and Geanine. Gigi then hollered down into the canal. I was too far away to hear what he was saying. I saw a hand coming out of the canal and he gave some bread to that person as well.

While we were talking, a very small child poked her head up from the square tunnel, looked around and then went back under. A few minutes later, the child came back up the opening to about her chest and hollered, “mama, mama”. Ana turned and looked at her and nudged Geanine. Geanine looked at the little girl and told her “Just a minute”. Geanine explained that the little girl was her daughter, Alexandra and that she was almost 4. Vali went over to Alexandra and pulled her out of the sewer. Alexandra had dark brown hair that hung just above her eyes and above the bottom of her ears and neck. She was wearing an oversize t-shirt. When Vali picked her up I could see that she was not wearing any underpants. Vali brought her over to us; Geanine said it was too cold for her to be out without her clothes on. Vali went over and handed the little girl to Vasile who handed her down into the sewer.

Field Notes, January 15, 2003

This excerpt serves as a representative physical description of site location within this typology. Youth from Typology B lived in semi-permanent structures, which afforded them a degree of security and control over their living space. They lived in structures that provided shelter from the elements and afforded them a place to store and keep their things, which offered the youth a modicum of protection. However, unlike sites from Typology A, they did not have the ability to lock or secure their
space. Therefore, youth from sites in Typology B experienced increased vulnerability to incursion by others. Some sites had lost their home and others faced the threat of losing their home (e.g., government sealed the sewer openings where a group of youth resided, construction was continued on a building where youth were living, they were discovered by law enforcement and forced to leave, etc.). In these cases, the groups were disrupted, forcing them to find another dwelling. Therefore, they were not afforded the security and control experienced by youth in Typology A. Furthermore, all sites within this typology were located near to main thoroughfares and metro stops; there was significant foot traffic within yards of where they lived. It was easy to see the youth coming and going or congregating in the area.

Stepping inside the dwelling provided a more comprehensive viewpoint of the conditions in which youth from Typology B lived.

We arrived around noon. No one was above ground. Florin hollered down into the sewer. Geanine and Vasile came up. They invited us down to talk, as it was too cold outside.

I climbed into the round opening and down a small rusty ladder. Each rung was wet and muddy from the feet of the person who had gone down before me. As I descended further and further into the sewer, the smell of garbage and human waste got stronger and stronger and the temperature got warmer. I also found it to be more and more difficult to see. When I reached the bottom I could not see anything, as it was very dark. It took a few moments for my eyes to adjust. I followed Florin across to the other side of the room and sat down next to him on one of the beds. As my eyes adjusted, I could see that it was one of three beds. If one were to stand facing the room from the bottom of the ladder, there would be one bed immediately to the right (Daniel was sitting on this bed) and one bed immediately to the left (between the round and square opening). There was an individual (Cornel) lying catty-corner across this bed sleeping fully clothed - not covered with any blankets. Geanine was sitting next to him. There was a third bed parallel to the first on the other side of the room. It was this third bed I sat on with Florin. All three beds sat about a foot off the ground and were covered by 2-3 blankets.

As my eyes got better adjusted, I was able to look around the area. The room was about 7 by 11 feet. There were clothes stacked along all four walls. Across the ceiling there were long thick pipes that ran through the entire area. These pipes hung down
requiring one to duck as they walked through the middle of the room. I learned that some of the pipes carried hot water, which is why it is so warm in the sewer. Garbage was stacked on the ground to my left about 3 feet high and appeared to extend a ways under the pipes. Behind me, on top of the stack of clothes, there was a board that had several items on it — a clock, some plates and some cups. One of the cups held silverware. There were also old cans. They were not labeled. Though most of the garbage was stacked to my left, there was some garbage on the floor. It was a dirt floor. I also noticed several small candles on the floor that had been burned down to the nub. Alexandra was sitting on the floor playing with an old magazine looking at it and talking about the various pictures.

After a few moments of being underground, Vasile lit a couple of candles. This made it easier to see. I realized there were several bugs in the sewer, mostly cockroaches. They were a dark red in color 2-3 inches in length. I could see them crawling across the ground, up the wall, and often times up the legs of the youth. They did not seem concerned with the cockroaches; they would just flick them off their legs.

As reflected in the above field note, there was an element of structure and order to things inside the living space of the youth from sites within Typology B. Clothes were organized in one area; plates, cups silverware in another; garbage allocated to one side, etc. The youth had some material things (e.g., plates, cups, magazines, etc.), but unlike Typology A, they did not have luxury items. They also did not have access to clean water. If they wanted to bathe, some did so in the Dombokita River; others used water from a public fountain when the fountains were active in the spring and summer. The youth bought some food in bulk (e.g., canned items, etc.) and ate it throughout the week. They acquired other food (e.g., meat, bread, etc.) for the moment and ate it immediately. They did not have the capacity to store perishable food but did have the resources to cook and prepare food with the use of pots over a fire. The youth from these sites did not appear to demonstrate a sense of permanency in their space by decorating or personalizing it. They did keep personal items in the space, often within plastic bags tucked between clothes. However, they were not
displayed in any way. The youth directly linked this to their inability to secure their dwelling. Those things most valuable to them (e.g., identification cards, photos for those who had them, etc.) were kept on their person. As it was too hot in the canal, those who lived in the sewer did not spend much time there in the summer months; they only went there to rest or to lie down if they were sick.

Typology C

Dana (my translator) and I arrived at the site around 5:15PM via the metro. As soon as we came up the escalator, vendors selling an array of items from socks to CDs greeted us. The metro stop was bustling with people. We are at the crossing of two main thoroughfares through Bucharest. Several busses and trams stopped within the first couple of minutes of our arrival. There are apartment buildings in three of the four directions. We walked a short ways through the vendors to the front entrance of what appeared to be a small amusement park. There were various rides, games and stands for selling things. It appeared to be closed; nothing was running/there was no activity. About 10 yards down the sidewalk on the left I noticed three sewer openings. As we approached the sewer area I could see two small poles sticking into the ground near two of the openings. When I got closer I realized they had ropes attached to them that went down into the sewer. Near to the third opening was a stack of wood and four bricks. Two openings had covers pulled over them. No youth were around the area.

I decided to holler hello down into one of the openings. I hollered hello and shared my name. A young man (Catalin) came to the bottom of the ladder and looked up, inquiring who we were. I indicated who I was and that I was here with Dana to visit Rubina. Catalin came up and shook our hands. It appeared as though he had just taken a shower or cleaned up in some capacity. His hair was wet, his face looked newly shaven and he had the smell of soap. He was dressed in a pair of blue jeans, button-up shirt and jacket that all appeared to be very clean.

He asked us who it was that we wanted to see, indicating that he was having a difficult time hearing us. I told him we had stopped by to visit Rubina and asked if she was there. Catalin indicated that she had gone over to the train station to buy something. He did not offer any more information; I did not ask for clarification. He stated that he needed to go to work, but that he would be happy to let Rubina know that we had been there. We thanked him, told him that it was good to see him and said goodbye with handshakes. We left the site at 5:25PM.

Field Notes, April 8, 2003
This excerpt serves as a representative physical description of the location of sites within this typology. Youth from Typology C lived in permanent structures (e.g., sewer, abandoned building, etc.), which afforded moderate security and control over their living space. Although they lived near to public transit sites and in similar-type structures as those sites in Typology B, the exact location of the structure afforded some seclusion. As noted in the excerpt above, one site was a sewer inside an amusement park. I later learned that the amusement park had been closed down for quite some time, so the immediate area around the sewer did not get much foot traffic. One had to intentionally walk back into the area to see the youth coming and going or congregating. Youth from another site within Typology C lived in one of the abandoned buildings the street youth referred to as the Circle of Famine. When Ceaușescu was in power, he started building a series of communal cafeterias in a circle around the city, but was executed before they were completed. Therefore, as the youth explained, large half-built structures hovered around the city as a reminder of Ceaușescu's broken promises; thus, the Circle of Famine. Ceaușescu chose the sites for their central locations in the city, so this group too lived in a very busy area of Bucharest. However, as there are many ways in and out of the building, one might not be aware the youth were there. Although groups within this typology did not have the ability to lock their dwellings, their lower level of visibility afforded some safety. Therefore they were less vulnerable to the incursion of others. Some sites were also able to block or cover their entrances. Throughout the time of data collection, none of the groups had lost or faced the threat of losing their spaces. This lack of disruption afforded more stability than experienced by youth from Typology B.
Hearing a youth describe his dwelling provides a more detailed look at the living conditions in which the youth from Typology C resided.

As we were talking Mihiaela a young man approached. Mihiaela pointed at him and said that he was her “husband”. When Dana and I turned around, I recognized him as Laurențiu, the young man I had met last week when I was here. He had played some music for us, talked about his favorite music and told us all about his “wife”. When he got close I could see he was carrying three bags of groceries, including bread, meat, cheese, eggs, yogurt and vegetables. He came over and shook our hands. I said hello to him and asked him how he was doing. He said that he was doing well and told us it was nice to see us again. We told him we had an opportunity to meet his “wife” – the one he had told us all about last time we were together - and how much we enjoyed meeting her. He smiled, shifted the groceries to one hand and put his arm around her. He then handed the bags to Mihiaela and asked her if she would take the stuff down into the sewer. She did. Laurențiu asked us if we had ever been in a sewer before. I told him that I had been in other sewers but not this particular one. He indicated that theirs was very unique and was unlike any other I had ever been in. I asked him what made it unique. He stated it was unique because the sewer was extremely clean and well organized. He stated that they have beds, sheets, blankets and pillows on which they sleep. They have a place where they bathe, and they clean the sewer on a regular basis; they clean out all the garbage and no one ever uses the restroom inside. They wash their sheets and clothes, and they each take showers on a regular basis. I commented how it was nice to have the opportunity to do that. Laurențiu shared that they figured out a way to tap into a pipe underground carrying hot water and created a shower they can turn on and off. He indicated that they use the water for bathing, washing dishes, laundry and cooking.

Field Notes May 8, 2003

The youth living at sites within this typology had many material resources (e.g., bedding, food, laundry detergent, dish soap, etc.) at their disposal, some of which might be considered luxury items for the average Romanian (e.g., walkmans and radios, CDs, cell phones, etc.). The youth prided themselves in how they structured and ordered things (e.g., their material goods, etc.), as well as the system they had to ensure certain responsibilities were completed (e.g., doing laundry, grocery shopping, etc.). They had a designated place for bathing (e.g., shower, basin, etc.) within their living spaces and ensured that their persons and spaces were kept clean. They
appeared to have a sense of permanency in their spaces. As noted above, one group accessed a pipe and created a shower. In another group, which included three brothers, the youth had their mother mail letters to the local grocer so they could stay in contact. It appeared as though most groups within this typology did not have the capacity to refrigerate food (although I was never invited down into the sewer at site3. The youth from these sites did have the resources (e.g., pots, pans, foil, etc.) and capacity (e.g., open fire with wire tray, grill, etc.) to cook food. The majority of youth from sites within this typology spent most of their day away from their spaces; they were in their dwelling mostly in the evenings regardless of the season.

Typology D

We arrived at the site around 3:25PM. Taxis were lined up across the front of the building. Scads of people were coming and going. Florin spotted Mihai from site8. He was wearing a black and blue winter coat. It appeared to be new. As I got a better look I could see he was wearing two coats. The second coat had a hood he was wearing over his head, along with a knit cap. He was also wearing blue jeans and tennis shoes. The shoes looked quite worn and did not have shoelaces. There was a small piece of shoestring that was connecting the top of each tennis shoe. His fingernails were painted with purple fingernail polish. Florin greeted him with a handshake and introduced me. Florin asked why he was here and not at site8. Mihai told Florin he was no longer staying at site8; he had been living at site4 for two months. Florin asked if he knew the other kids that stayed at site4. He stated that he knew who they were but that he stayed on the street alone. Florin asked him if he wanted to join us in looking for the other kids. Mihai agreed. We walked around the front and down the side of the building looking for other youth. Mihai walked with us a few feet. However, when we passed the escalator to the metro, he went down. He didn’t say goodbye.

Around the backside of the site we spotted another youth. He was standing by a bus stop huffing from a bag (of aurolac). He was wearing a man’s long wool dress jacket that looked fairly worn and had what appeared to be aurolac splashed down the front. All the buttons on his jacket were missing; the coat was held together by safety pins. He wore a knit cap on his head, his black hair hung down from the hat into his eyes. Florin greeted him and told him that he was from the ASIS Foundation. The young man responded that he did not want to go to an orphanage – that he did not want to be taken by us. He spoke loudly, his speech was quite slurred and he was very difficult to understand. Florin asked him who he thought we were; the young
man indicated the police. Florin reiterated he was from ASIS and proceeded to explain ASIS helps kids on the street get their IDs made or provide assistance with medical needs. Following this explanation, he shook our hands and told us that he was from Blaj (outside Bucharest). Florin took out his notebook and pen and asked him what his name was. He asked Florin if he could write it down himself. Florin handed him his notebook and pen; the young man proceeded to write something down. As he was writing he shared he would like some help getting an ID; he did not have an ID or birth certificate. When he finished writing he held unto Florin’s notebook and pen and continued to share his story. He stated that he had left home when he was 7 because his parents beat him when they got drunk. He indicated that when he gets older he wants to find them and beat them… and maybe kill them. All of a sudden he ripped the page he had written on out of Florin's notebook, threw the notebook at Florin, crumpled up the paper he had written on and put it in his pocket. He shouted that we were making money off of him and we should leave. I could not help but notice that several pedestrians had walked by during our interaction. They may steal a quick glance our direction, but for the most part kept their heads down and their distance.

It should be noted that about 3 other youth had made their way to where we were during this interaction. Florin did not talk with them; when the young man threw the notebook at Florin, Florin indicated it was time to go. As we were walking away Florin began to speak to me in English. One of the boys who had just arrived on the scene overheard him. He ran up and grabbed my arm, asking in English, “Are you American?” Florin told him to leave me alone - we were leaving. He grabbed my arm with both hands and swung me around. He asked me in Romanian to give him something. He pointed at a fruit stand and asked me to get him an orange. I told him I was not able to get him anything. Florin again asked him to let me go. The commotion caught the attention of several (about 5) other youth who made their way to where we were. It also caught the attention of the metro guards who were standing nearby. They too made their way over. As they approached, most of the youth immediately dispersed. Florin walked between the boy and I, prying the boy’s hands off my arm. He stood between us and told me to keep walking and the boy to leave me alone – he did. The metro guards asked Florin if there was a problem. He indicated that he was from the ASIS foundation and that we were leaving. We left the site shortly after 4:00PM. I gazed back as we walked away. The metro guards had a few of the youth lined up against the wall. The pedestrians walking through the area continued to keep their heads down and their distance.

Field Notes, December 6, 2002

This excerpt serves as a representative physical description of site location within this typology. The geographic locations of youth from Typology D were characterized by dispersion throughout their locale resulting in high visibility and a

Page 245
lack of protection and control. All the sites within this typology were located at major transit areas for people coming and going from and through the city. Therefore, there was a significant amount of foot traffic in the area. There was also a higher concentration of Romanians from outside of Bucharest and foreigners in the area. Unlike the other three typologies, youth from sites within Typology D did not have a specific dwelling in which they lived. “Home” was everywhere in the area; they lived in the public arena and were highly visible. This high level of visibility made them vulnerable to incursion, as is seen as Doru shared of the difficulty in getting through a night without disruption.

Me: Where do you stay at night?
Doru: In the metro, if you don’t get caught, in open area… places on the grass or in the entrance of a block (apartment). Anywhere. But you cannot stay in one place all night. And when the people shake you awake, if the people beat you up, or tell you “go away from here”, you go somewhere else to sleep. Wherever you find.

Me: Who are the people?
Doru: The one who sweeps the area… the metro guards… the ones who live in the block. Anyone.

Me: How often does this happen?
Doru: All the time. For example, if I sleep on the grass, the lady who cleans the grass shakes me and tells me to go away from here… I go to the other side in the metro and I go to sleep… then the metro guards take me… Then I come here on the grass… they beat me up again. I go in the block, the people swish me away… and that’s how it happens all night.

Doru, age 15

As Doru explained, the main structures that provide shelter from the elements were also public spaces, primarily the metro stops that encircled the area. The metro line employed guards to circulate throughout the metro stops. Among other things, the metro guards were tasked with prohibiting the street youth from congregating in the
metro area and defacing property (e.g., urinating/defecating in the metro area, littering, etc.). Although youth were at times able to access and use these spaces (e.g., for warmth, an enclosed space to sleep, etc.), typically the guards stationed throughout the metro stop prohibited the youth from entering. If they were able to get past the guards and were caught, they were fined. Since the youth from these sites were unable to seek cover outside the public arena, they were quite vulnerable and lacked control over their environment.

We are not able to take a specific look inside the dwelling of youth from sites within this typology, since there was no place where they all stayed. However, from time to time youth were able to unseal a sewer that had been sealed by the government or create a makeshift dwelling out of cardboard and discarded items (e.g., tarps, old car seats, etc.). This provided a temporary space to be. For example, a young man from site 12 was able to inhabit a small construction site outside the National Theater.

We arrived at site 12 at 10:00PM. Placa shared he had a new place to sleep and asked if we wanted to see it; it was across the street by a national building that celebrated the arts. Placa took us up the front steps. To the left-hand side there was a very large piece of plywood leaning up against the windows. Placa indicated that they had been sleeping behind that piece of plywood. He stated that the wood blocked the wind and helped them to stay warmer. He then squeezed through the opening between the plywood and windows. He invited us back. Liviu, Dana, Doru and I followed him. Behind the plywood were two blankets laying on a piece of cardboard. There were also a couple of plastic bags that were full of stuff tied at the top. I'm not sure what was inside. I could also see that the plywood was attached to the metal frame of the window by a piece of wire on both sides of the board. Placa referred to the space as his home and asked us if we wanted to sit down. We did.

Field Notes, March 23, 2003

Although this makeshift structure did afford a modicum of privacy and relief from the elements, unfortunately, Placa endured “beatings” from the security guards at the
national building that celebrated the arts and when the construction was over in a
couple of weeks, their “home” disappeared. This disruption was commonplace for
youth who lived at sites within this typology. When the youth were discovered in the
sewers the sewers were resealed; their makeshift homes were eventually dismantled.
Across the board, youth talked about the challenge of finding a safe place to sleep,
identifying it as an every night occurrence. As we have already glimpsed, the young
people who lived at sites within Typology D slept anywhere from a grassy patch off the
sidewalk or under bushes, to the entrance of an apartment building or a temporary
makeshift shelter. Whether male or female, young or old, when locating a place to
sleep, they identified safety as a chief concern.

Me: How do you find a place to sleep?
Eugene: I would make a house of cling film (plastic tarp) like they made over there.
Me: How do you find a place to build your cling film house?
Eugene: Somewhere where it is safe... where there are no cars, where it was quite,
not too many aurolacs... not too many boschetari... (bushes; many refer to
street children as bushes).

Eugene, age 12

Me: How do you find a place to sleep?
Sandu: I don’t know. You just find a place where to sleep.
Me: Is there something that makes one place better than another?
Sandu: Yes, you need to be safe. It is better where no one is. There are a lot who
come here. They see you and steal from you. They are many.
Me: Who does this? Who comes?
Sandu: Who? Well, if you don’t catch them, how can you know? You never know.

Sandu, age 18

Me: How do you find a place to sleep?
Alina: How should I explain to you? In the evening I have to stay away from the street people, because evenings are most dangerous. To find a place, a specific place, where I know I am safe at night. There are people who want women... Some challenge you to sleep with them (in a sexual way) and if you don’t want to, they curse you. Sometimes they beat you... they cuss you out, talk badly to you. I need to know that nobody will harm me. You need to be very, very careful, especially at night as a girl... but less as a boy.

Alina, age 26, site4

Because of a lack of place, youth who lived in sites within this typology had nowhere to keep material resources; they had only what they could carry with them. On rare occasions, they were able to strike a deal with someone in their environment (e.g., a kiosk worker, etc.) to store their things in exchange for something (discussed in detail in Chapter 6 under Informal Environment). As they had no place to store or prepare food, they ate what they were able to acquire within the day.

**Formation Dimension**

Much of social capital theory addresses how actors use associations and emergent networks in creating advantage. One salient feature in understanding the creation and use of social capital among Romanian street children is what I have termed formation. The *formation* dimension includes attributes such as the way street children structure themselves (i.e., patterns of relations between and among social actors), how they maintain those structures, access to and the boundary permeability of the structures. Social capital theorists agree that all network structures are not homogenous. This is certainly reflected in the lives of Romania’s street children. As the data demonstrates, the social ties among the street children of Bucharest take on a range of forms. An underlying assumption of social capital theory is that formation (network structure) influences the relational dynamics (substance) among individuals just as relational dynamics can influence formation. In order to fully appreciate the
way these two aspects of social capital work together to affect the transmission of resources (capital) that shape opportunities we must first unpack each aspect separately. The components of the formation dimension are summarized in Table 5.5 and are fully articulated below.

Table 5.5. Formation Dimension by Typology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>Network organized via a vertical structure</td>
<td>Network organized via a vertical structure</td>
<td>Network organized via a horizontal structure</td>
<td>No network; youth are unstructured and do not form and live in groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maintenance</strong></td>
<td>Boss achieved and maintains position through coercive power</td>
<td>Leader achieved position through expert power; maintains through legitimate authority</td>
<td>Relationships among equals maintained through mutuality and cooperation</td>
<td>No structure to maintain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boundary Permeability</strong></td>
<td>Rigid boundaries</td>
<td>Semi-permeable boundaries</td>
<td>Semi-permeable boundaries</td>
<td>Open boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Durability</strong></td>
<td>Some group members together 10+ years</td>
<td>Some group members together 6 years</td>
<td>Some group members together 10+ years</td>
<td>Individual time ranges from a couple of days to 15+ years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Typology A**

The youth from Typology A have formed and lived in groups organized by a *vertical structure*. There was a distinct person in charge, who was male. He achieved and maintained his position through the use of *coercive power*. The group boss used
coercive power to control the environment and the behavior of other group members in many ways. For example, the group boss controlled the physical space in which the group resided (e.g., locking door with limited access to the key, etc.), thus controlling when someone could be in the space and have access to the resources in the space.

The group boss also controlled the flow of resources. Group members were expected to “earn their keep” by generating resources and turning them over to the group boss who controlled and managed all the material capital, often dispersing it unequally. The boss and those privileged in the group hierarchy were attended to first; with position in the group came access to superior resources. How this hierarchy operated within one group is reflected in the following excerpt from an extended conversation I had with Reluca.

Me: When I first met you, you were staying at site12. Now you stay at Iulian’s barrack. What led you to move from one place to another?

Reluca: I didn’t want to come because Iulian and my aunt (Iulian’s mother) is very mean. They are very bad. They are making a difference with the food.

Me: What do you mean by making a difference?

Reluca: Iulian is eating first and then his mother... and maybe Magdalena (Iulian’s “wife”) and then she (aunt) is giving more to her kids... she is eating more... there is an order. I eat very little. If I complain, she (aunt) beats me up so it doesn’t reach Iulian’s ear... (pause) She is making my life miserable.

Me: It sounds like things are really difficult here. Why did you leave Site12 and come to stay here?

Reluca: Well, if they come and take me by force, what can I do? My mother is in jail now... (Reluca looks at the watch on her wrist) ... at 6 (o’clock) she (aunt) will be back. I need to disappear from this area if I have not made money.

Me: Does something happen if you come home from the street and didn’t make any money?

Reluca: She (aunt) starts swearing at me about death (a Romanian curse)... (pause) ‘cause Iulian will expect. She beats me... (pause) When I make
money, they take it. If they wants, they is getting me a sandal, a slipper, an outfit…. But not to be expected…. (pause) Are you coming tomorrow?

Me: I don’t know about tomorrow, but I will for sure be back next week.

Reluca: Next week maybe we talk again, to …I need to go make some money to give to the group, otherwise Iulian and my aunt will beat me and… I am sorry, but…

Me: No, do not be sorry. I appreciate you taking the time to talk to me. I do not want to interrupt what you need to do.

Reluca: I was going to stay to finish the questions… all the words, but they beats me…

Me: I do not want to interfere with your work. If you want, we can talk again another time… if not, no problem.

Reluca age 12, site23

Within this typology one earned status in the group by providing resources, helping to maintain order and doing favors for the group boss. This was reflected in my interaction with Reluca as she discussed how her aunt intervened with her to avoid bothering Iulian and ensured she was contributing resources to the group. Group members also tried to be in the good graces of the boss as he played a determining role in resolving conflict within the group; it was advantageous to be close to the boss. An example of this is captured in the following interaction among the youth at site2:

We arrived at site2 around 11:20 AM. We didn’t see anyone outside and the doors to the utility building were closed, but not locked. Florin stood at the top of the stairs and hollered down for Romica and Gabriel, stating it was Florin from ASIS. He had to holler several times before Romica and Catalin finally came out. When they opened the door, a strong smell of aurolac came up the stairs. They walked out rubbing their eyes and laughing a bit. They swaggered quite a bit. Someone from the room yelled out for them to close the door. Catalin went back and closed it. Florin asked Romica where his brother, Gabriel was. Romica motioned with his head (to the top room of the electrical building) and said he was up sleeping. Florin asked Romica to go and get Gabriel, as they needed to meet some ASIS workers to get their IDs made. Romica went to get his brother and Catalin went back into the lower level room and Daniel came out and shut the door.
Daniel came up the stairs stating that he really wanted to talk with Florin about his ID. Romica comes back out and stands at the bottom of the stairs. During Florin’s conversation with Daniel, Ciobi comes around the corner from the direction of the upper level. The dog was with him. Ciobi squatted down at the top of the stairs and began to play with the dog. Ciobi commented to Florin that when he was done talking to Daniel that he and Octavia wanted to talk with him. Ciobi began digging/picking through the dog’s fur around its ears. He pulled something out, looked at it, indicated it was a flea and threw it on the ground. A few minutes later Ciobi stood up and walked over to Daniel. Ciobi picked something off Daniel’s face. He held it in his hand for Daniel to see, indicating it was a flea. Daniel took it from Ciobi and threw it on the ground… Romica started laughing and walked back into the lower level. Ciobi then whispered something in Florin’s ear and left…

Post-observation Discussion: I asked Florin if he could share his perceptions of the dynamics of the group at site2. What follows is a transcript of his comments and responses to my follow-up questions:

Florin: When he whispered in my ear, Ciobi told me that Romica and Catalin are full of fleas. But they are not… You saw that at the end of our meeting that he (Ciobi) picked up something off Daniel. Daniel is a very influential person in that group and if he (Ciobi) will make him an ally, Ciobi becomes stronger. He (Daniel) will force Catalin to leave or he will beat him. I think Ciobi has a strategy. He is trying to make the group boss to come on his side. It is a conflict.

A conflict between…?

Florin: Among Ciobi, Octavia and Catalin. Ciobi and Octavia are a couple and they have a problem with Catalin. Catalin has tried to rape Octavia… it’s more tragic. And they have a conflict because of that. Because of this conflict, Daniel has made some of the group stay in the upper level. Ciobi has tried to take on his side more people from the group, especially Daniel.

Field Notes November 26, 2002

Another way the boss controlled the behavior of group members was through sanctioning and exclusion. The physical dwellings of these groups were segregated into two parts, one of which was more resource-rich (e.g., heated, has more resources like a television and refrigerator, etc.). The group boss regulated who was permitted in the nicer area and who was relegated to the other space. The dynamics of this are further discussed below in the *substance* dimension.
The group boss also maintained his authority and controlled the behavior of group members through the use of physical restraint and violence. Weaker members (e.g., younger, female, etc.) were exploited for the benefit of the leader. This could take the guise of anything from being forced to beg to generate more resources for the group to something insidious like physical and sexual assault. Many times, the boss saw this as normal conduct; a behavior that is expected. This was captured in my in-depth conversation with Iulian and his discussion of his “wife” Magdalena:

Me: You were saying that having Magdalena helps you a lot.

Iulian: Yes. I may not love her and care for her as much as I feel sorry for her and got used to her. I told her “Magdalena, as long as you are with me, no matter if we have what to eat or not... where I sleep, you sleep.” And Magdalena understood, she saw that I am not stupid, like this. Do you understand? And maybe the truth is that she stays because she got used to me... and because of the beating. She saw that I am not a man who would not hit her all the time. I...if I beat her up, I only do it because of this kind of problems. For example, I tell her now “Magdalena, wash my t-shirt. Haven’t you washed it, yet?” I get her, slap her once, twice, or even one or two kicks in the head, I beat her up until the pee and shit are coming out of her. I tell her... “I only took you to fuck you? What about washing and these? What are we doing? Are we only good for sex? Put your hand at work... sweep, wash, cook a meal...” (pause)

Iulian (group boss) age 23, site23

The groups within this typology ranged from 5-10 members and tended to be quite durable, with a core of youth being affiliated with the group for over a decade. In most cases, the boss and those close to the boss had been there the longest. The boundaries around the group were clear and appeared rigid. Access to the group was regulated by the group boss and contingent on knowing someone in the group. As will be discussed below under the substance dimension, the clear and rigid boundary characteristics were also reflected in the norm structure and the sanctioning of norm violations. The group make-up consisted of a mix of blood relatives and other
relationships within the group. However, being a blood relative did not insulate one from exploitation and/or abuse. The group was predominantly male; females in the group were typically either blood relatives (e.g., sister, cousin, etc.) or were in a relationship with a group member. Females did not endure in the group.

Typology B

Across sites, the youth from Typology B formed and lived in groups. As noted in Table 5.5, groups within Typology B were also characterized by a vertical structure. Although there was a power differential within the structure, the hierarchy was not about power and control as found in Typology A, but about provision and responsibility. Each group had a distinct leader, who was male. He achieved his position through expert power and maintained his position through legitimate authority. The leaders from these sites did not locate themselves in a position of power. The leader had time and experience on the street; the other youth described him as having expertise related to the street, respected him and saw him as out for their good. The youth in the group who had been on the street longer pointed to the leader’s competence, knowledge and goodness. Because of the leader’s demonstrated attributes, his role as leader was legitimized in the eyes of the group.

The leader maintained the safety of group members and oversaw and managed the group’s resources, ensuring that they were equitably distributed among the group. Weaker members were protected and cared for by, and at times at the expense of, the group. An example of this was seen in the context of an extended conversation with three males that lived as part of the group at site9. This conversation was quite emotional with each of the youth crying at different times throughout the interaction:
Me: Nicu, I have a question for you. The older boys have been talking a lot. I didn’t want you to feel I wasn’t interested in hearing from you. Would you be comfortable sharing with me how you came to be on the street?

Nicu: When I came to the street, for the first time... I was 6 and I left home because my father died. I have a stepfather... my mother stays with my brother there. My stepfather... he beats me... and I left home. (pause) Rather than be beaten... I better left home. At first I was over there in Craiova. The older ones were putting me to beg... I left Craiova and came here in Bucharest. It is nicer here. No one is putting me to beg... Cornel, Adrian and the others take care of me... no one beats me over here... and that’s all.

Me: When you first came to Bucharest, how did you find a place to stay?

Nicu: The first time when I came to Bucharest, I met some guys, Vali and Marius, the gypsy... they put me to beg too... Cornel was staying here, on the other side, in Site9 and he saw that Marius, the gypsy, was putting me to beg and took me by him. Cornel took care of me. I stay with him since I was 10.

Adrian: He (referring to Cornel) was sorry for him (referring to Nicu) and he took him under his care. Still...he is a child and we need to protect him. Others cannot take on him, as little as he is... to put him to beg. We do not put him to beg, but we work and give to him, everything he wants we buy him... from the little we have. (pause) Whatever his soul desires, we try to please him (Adrian starts crying).

Nicu age13, Adrian age 20, and Cornel (group leader) age 21, Site9

Groups within this typology ranged from 5-10 members. However, they associated with a much broader range of youth, including youth from other typologies (especially Typology D). They made a distinction between who was a part of or stayed in their group and whom they interacted or just hung out with. This distinction was captured in the context of my extended conversation with Radu and Alin as Radu explained that he did not “stay” with everyone he hung out with on the street:

Radu: Well, first of all, I am friends with others on the street, but I do not stay with them... I do not eat with them or sleep with them... I stay with this little one (he points to Judy Monkey), us 2 (referring to himself and Alin), and 2 other fellow partners Petronel and Roxana.
Me: And Florin, Chiorcea, Maria, Claudiu and other people I see you with?

Radu: Yes, we are friends with them, but we are not together. We meet, “give 1,000 lei”, “take 1,000 lei” or “give me a cigarette”, “take a cigarette”... “Hi, how are you”, “Fine”... This is it... all the discussion without too much fellowship.

Me: Are there particular reasons you don't have a stronger relationship with them?

Radu: Hmm... yes. For example, with Chiorcea, the reason is that when he drinks he takes on my fellow comrades. And if I know what I have been through with my fellow comrades, I cannot look at Chiorcea and see how he hits them. Or I can't look at him when he comes and sticks his hand in the pocket and takes money, or takes off their shoes, or when he does something else to them. I can't watch. I do everything possible so that this will not happen. Rather than this to happen, I would give these people up. Yes.

Radu (group leader) age 17, Alin age 17, site 25

The majority of the group members were male. Some female members who were a part of the group were in a relationship with a group member, some were not. There were no blood relationships within the group but group members used familial language to describe each other (e.g., brother, sister, etc.). Many had lived in the vicinity of their current dwelling for more than five years. Some started on the street at different sites (all associated with Typology D) and eventually moved to where they were. The networks associated with this typology could be described as durable. Over half of the members of the groups had been together for up to five years; younger ones had joined the group more recently. We return to my conversation with Radu and Alin to witness this use of familial language and the durability of the group:

Me: How long have you been together?

Alin: For 4 – 4 ½ years.

Radu: Yes, he was 12 ½ or 13 years old. We are friends here like brothers... We help each other... We take the same risk together.
Alin: The 2 of us are more than brothers. Even if we fight with each other, we do not fight for good. For 5 minutes or 10 minutes... like any family. We have been together for a long time.

Radu (group leader) age 17, Alin age 17, site 25

There appeared to be clear semi-permeable boundaries around the group as youth were allowed to come and go from the group. Group membership was based on a tiered decision-making process. If someone new wanted to be a part of the group, group members spent a few days observing him or her “to see what he has in his head”. At the end of this screening period, group members gave input and tried to reach a consensus. If there was disagreement, the group leader made the decision. Furthermore, he accepted responsibility for the new person. As will be discussed under the *substance* dimension, there were norms associated with being in the group; however, they were communicated more like guidelines or expectations. Learning the rules and redress when rules were broken occurred more like a process opposed to the cut and dried nature of Typology A.

**Typology C**

Across sites, the youth from Typology C formed and lived in groups. Or perhaps it is better described as a network of groups. As noted in Table 5.5, in contrast to the group structures of Typologies A and B, the groups in Typology C were characterized by a *horizontal* structure maintained through *mutuality* and *cooperation*. Group members appeared to have equal authority. No distinct boss or leader was identified among the youth nor did I witness any youth acting or being treated as if they held power in the groups. This shared authority was evident in the decision-making process regarding new group members. The entire group made decisions that affected the group as a whole. When a new person came and wanted to stay with a group from...
Typology C they underwent a testing or screening process with one’s ability and willingness to follow group norms as requisite for initial and ongoing group membership (discussed in more detail below under the substance dimension). How this process worked is captured in the following excerpt of my in-depth conversation with Edi:

Me: If someone new were to come to the street and want to stay at site3, who decides?

Edi: Everybody.

Me: Can you tell me more about that? Can you give me an example when something like this has happened?

Edi: I don't know...with us, there really is no boss. If someone moves to the street and wants to stay here ... they were coming in advance, 2-3 days, a week-2... we were seeing what kind of person he is... to not steal among us. This is the thing that we don't like... to steal from us. And if he didn't steal from us... doesn't cause scandals with the police... We talk with each other: “Dude, is it possible for him to stay?” And we agree or not...

Edi age 25, site3

As reflected in their willingness to allow new members, the groups within Typology C appeared to have clear semi-permeable boundaries. As will be discussed below under the substance dimension, the testing and refining process continued once inside the group within a more tolerant rule structure and sanctioning system.

Groups tended to range from 5-15 members. However, within the larger network there were smaller groups. For example, at the time of data collection 15 youth live at site3. Within this larger group, youth identified with smaller groups, including Mihiaela and her “husband” Laurenţiu, Edi and his brother Vlad, close friends Consuela, Rubina, Florenţa and Claudia, and so forth. Some sites included blood relatives (i.e., brothers); all sites used familial language to describe each other (e.g.,
wife, brother, etc.). Although the majority of youth from this typology were male, there were more females than in Typology A or B. Some female members who were a part of the group were in a relationship with a group member, some were not.

There was a sense of personal responsibility that permeated the group with the youth in each subunit being responsible for themselves. However, as with the equal authority inherent in the horizontal structure a sense of mutual cooperation and responsibility pervaded the larger group. Therefore, if someone in the larger group was lacking a resource, members shared to ensure everyone’s needs were met. This aspect was captured in my in-depth conversation with Edi as he described how meals were negotiated at his site:

Edi: Some eat together; others eat separately. I told you, as it is here, some have “wives” and they eat with them. Others are friends and they eat together. And each of them from wherever they make money, they put it for food. That’s how it happens. (pause) But, for example, if I don’t have what to eat and I go to them and ask to eat, they don’t say they are not giving to me, or something. They give me. Many times when I have food I give to the little ones (referring to younger children in the group).

Edi age 25, site3

As reflected in Edi’s final comment, the group cared for weaker members (e.g., younger children, etc.). This obligation to those who were more defenseless even carried over to youth at nearby sites (who also fell within this typology). For example, the boys who lived at the Circle of Famine (site5) were watched over by Edi (site3). He got to know them and ensured that they were safe; that no one bothered them.

In most cases, the groups within Typology C tended to be quite durable, with a core of youth being affiliated with the group for over a decade. These ties appeared to span circumstances. For example, although some youth had been able to move off the street, they maintained their sense of identity as a group member and came back
multiple times a week to visit. After living on the street for 13 ½ years, a foundation assisted Consuela in getting an apartment and moving off the street. The close connection she continued to feel toward the group she stayed with is captured in our in-depth conversation when Consuela reflected on how different her relationships were with people who did not live on the street and the friendships she established with those living on the street:

Consuela: I have more trust in the friends I made who live on the street than in the ones I made in the neighborhood at the apartment... Because that’s how I saw.

Me: So, based on your personal experience, that is how it is.

Consuela: Yes, because when I had a problem in my neighborhood at the apartment – some gypsies wanted to beat me up – I went to one that I knew and I told him to help me get away from the ones who wanted to beat me up. He didn’t intervene for me. And I think if I had gone to a friend who lives on the street ... if I would have asked one of them to help me with the gypsies, they would have. It would be more likely for one of my friends from the street to help me pass by the gypsies than a friend from the apartment.

Me: I see you here often. How often do you come to site3 now that you...

Consuela: (Consuela interrupts) Oh... every day. Every day.

Me: And what keeps bringing you back?

Consuela: Because I cannot stay more than 2-3 days at home, I miss them (referring to her friends on the street). I miss them and ... to be honest, I come to huff from the bag, too (laughs). Why should I lie about that? But more for them, because I stayed with them for too long... and you can't forget them immediately. And it is not good to forget where you left from.

Consuela age 22, site3

In other sites, the youth had been living together for three-five years. However, the age range of youth within these groups (9-15 years old) was less than that of groups
whose members were older (up into their 20s). So, in relationship to the amount of
time they had been on the street, the networks they established persisted.

Typology D

Across sites, the youth from Typology D did not form or live in groups. As
reflected in the youths’ discussion above about finding a place to sleep (see Setting
dimension), youth from these sites tended to emphasize separateness from others who
lived on the street and often found they competed for scarce resources. Youth
clustered in a geographic location did interact with each other to address emergent
circumstances (e.g., youth injured in a fight, etc.). However, the connections they
made with each other were fragile; they did not persist into the next day. These
dynamics will be discussed more thoroughly below under the substance dimension.

As youth were dispersed throughout a locale and not organized into groups, the
boundaries were open; there appeared to be nothing requisite for “membership”. This
lack of a structure was consistently evident when youth from Typology D were asked
who made the decision of whether or not a new person could stay at a particular site.
The following excerpt from my in-depth conversation with Augustin serves as an
example:

Me: If someone new would come to the street and want to stay here at site4, who would make the decision if that person could stay or not?

Augustin: I would allow him, but others...? They takes his money, they rob him, they takes his shoes and after that he becomes a partner with them. They pour him some aurolac and that's it... they are partners.

Me: Would a new person have to talk with somebody specific to stay here, or...?

Augustin: Well, it is the biggest boss. Whoever is the biggest boss in the moment...if he wants to take him in, because another one from here could come and steal from him you know... (Augustin starts huffing) And this is the problem.
Me: Who is the biggest boss in the site4 area?

Augustin: Everyone is the biggest boss. All. Cause there are many who stay here... whoever speaks loudest on that day.

Augustin age 20, site4

No distinct boss or leader was identified among the youth living on the street nor did I witness any youth consistently acting or being treated as if they held power among the youth from a particular site. In fact, the youth from these sites could be characterized by a lack of power; power seemed to lie outside the collection of youth living on the street. At times, the youth from sites within Typology D identified “bosses” and “pimps” who they must answer to. These individuals did not live on the street, but wielded power over the youth who did. An example of the dynamics surrounding these individuals is captured in my member check with Alina when I asked her to clarify the “rules of the street”:

Alina: When there is a new person, the other kids come and take his aurolac. If they don’t resist they become friends. The old ones take on the little ones. Sandu, when I was sleeping, poured sand on me. He takes on every one. But if Sandu has money he gives it to the Foundation Liaison at Foundation X to protect him.

Me: What does the Foundation Liaison do to protect Sandu?

Alina: He takes on the ones who take on Sandu. He tells others to leave Sandu alone. If they do not listen he beats them, cusses them, threatens them.

Me: Do the people from Foundation X know that the Foundation Liaison does this?

Alina: No. They care for him.

Me: What do you think they would do if they found out?

Alina: The ones from Foundation X would ask other kids and they would say it wasn’t true out of fear... and the Foundation Liaison would take us on. If he would find out that someone told he would beat us up.

Member Check with Alina (age 24), site4, July 14, 2003
Street “bosses” and “pimps” sought to control the behavior of the youth living in the area through the use of coercive power, including violence and/or withholding resources. These attempts may or may not have been effective; sometimes the youth did what was expected to avoid a beating, other times they took the beating. In some cases the street “bosses” formerly lived on the street and currently worked for NGOs as liaisons between an NGO and the street youth as was the case in the example shared by Alina (see above). These power brokers at times exploited their position for material and economic gain at the expense of the youth living on the street. This relationship is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6 under *Formal Environment*.

A consistent theme for youth who lived at the sites within Typology D was that they were highly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation by individuals who did not live on the street. Placa shared the horrors of what occurred on the street at night for “many children”:

Me: Placa, earlier you mentioned that you go to the people in the apartments for help so that no one would have sex with you in the butt.

Placa: Yes, I was going into the apartment, so... (long pause)

Me: Is this something that happens?

Placa: Yes, it does.

Me: Can you tell me more about it?

Placa: Down in the metro... he comes to you and fucks you in the ass. Comes to the metro and fucks someone in the ass. It happens to another friend of mine too.... they fuck him... this happens to the children who are... (long pause, starts huffing)

Me: That sounds very scary. (pause) Does someone that you know do this?

Placa: Yes, but they doesn't live on the street. (Placa continues to huff) They come... they fucks you, they fucks you. They asks you to suck the dick, they beats you, they fucks you, they sticks the dick in your mouth. If one says to you stay like this to fuck you in the ass the other one quickly sticks the dick in
your mouth. Other ones tie me to a big tree, with a rope... from my hands and legs. To many children who are on the street... this happens.

Placa age 17, site12

The youth from this typology often found themselves vulnerable to each other as well. Although there was not a distinct boss or leader among the youth who lived on the street, there was a hierarchy of exploitation among the youth from sites within Typology D. Consistently my interactions with youth from this typology were riddled with examples of violence and exploitation; it was a consistent theme of their reality and cut across a multitude of relationships. In the context of my in-depth conversation with Placa, over 10 experiences of violence and exploitation emerged when discussing a range issues (e.g., finding a place to sleep, friendship, law enforcement, people from the neighborhood, etc.). No specific questions were asked about exploitation and violence; most of these stories emerged as examples or tangents. For instance, when discussing what a street kid did if she or he needed medical assistance, the following dialogue ensued:

Placa: Look here... on my head... I have a booboo (Placa points to large lump and bruise on his forehead). Doru! Doru! (Placa jumps up and goes to get Doru)... When did this one knocked my head to the cement? (Placa points to his head)

Doru: How am I to know?

Placa: You know. You know very well, one evening, when I was pulled by Bisdaru the...

Doru: (interrupts) the bigger fat one. Three days ago (Doru walks away).

Placa: Yes, then. Three days ago. Here (pointing to the steps of the national building for the arts). And Bisdaru did this to me for what? Because I didn’t give him food.

Placa age 17, site12
As reflected in the above excerpt, bigger or older youth exploited the smaller or younger youth. The hierarchy of exploitation cut across a range of characteristics. Males exploited females; street-wise youth exploited less savvy kids, and so on. At times, weaker members “paid” for protection with resources (e.g., aurolac, food, money, etc.), favors and sex. These dynamics will be further explored under the substance dimension below.

There were no blood relationships among the youth from Typology D and they did not use familial language to describe each other. Unlike other typologies, there was variation related to the number of youth living at each site within Typology D. One site included 10-15 while another included over 30 youth at any given time. It should be noted that the exact number of youth living at each site was difficult to determine. Since there was not a clear-cut group, anyone could be at or around the locale and youth came and went from the sites frequently (e.g., to other areas in Bucharest, to other cities in Romania, etc.). Of the 282 kids I had contact with during this project, I met over 100 youth (35%) from Typology D. Perhaps due to their location near major transit areas, many of the sites within this typology were considered gateway sites. Youth often spent time at a site within Typology D when they first came to the streets. Length of time at a particular locale ranged from a couple of days to over a decade. However, length of time did not reflect durability. The connections among the youth from Typology D could be characterized as fragile and unstable. There was a collection of youth that have been there for many years, but one cannot identify a core group. They did not organize themselves into groups and they seemed to be the most vulnerable and disaffiliated.
Substance Dimension

As previously noted, social capital comprises both structural and relational components. While having a network of individuals plays a critical role in developing social capital, equally as important are the interpersonal dynamics between and among individuals within the network. In addition to understanding the formation and structure of associations, it is helpful to realize that each network can also be described by other components, which refer to the qualities of the network’s internal relations, or substance. Substance reflects the relational dynamics of youth within a particular site cluster, including the emergence of norms, sanctions for norm violations, the nature of relationships between the youth and the definition and actualization of trust, reciprocity and cooperation. These relational dynamics (substance) among street children varied across typologies, which reflected their differing structures. The components of the Substance dimension are summarized in Table 5.6 and are fully articulated below.
Table 5.6. Substance Dimension by Typology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Norms</td>
<td>Rigid norms strictly enforced</td>
<td>Embedded norms modeled</td>
<td>Manifest norms taught</td>
<td>Impuissan norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule Structure</td>
<td>Rigid structure</td>
<td>Tolerant structure</td>
<td>Developmental structure</td>
<td>Impaired structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of Relationships</td>
<td>Value determined extrinsically; relationships are instrumental</td>
<td>Value determined intrinsically; relationships are symbiotic</td>
<td>Value determined intrinsically and extrinsically; relationships are discriminating</td>
<td>Value determined extrinsically; relationships are unsustainable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Disabled trust</td>
<td>Responsive trust</td>
<td>Acquired trust</td>
<td>Reactive trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocity and Cooperation</td>
<td>Obligated reciprocity and cooperation</td>
<td>Communal reciprocity and cooperation</td>
<td>Mutual reciprocity and cooperation</td>
<td>Utilitarian reciprocity and cooperation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Typology A

Groups within Typology A could be characterized as having rigid norms strictly enforced that appeared to be oriented toward maintaining the group’s position. The importance of the group, as well as the norms and expectations of group members was clearly evident throughout observations and in the context of in-depth conversations. The group valued the image members had of not looking like someone who lived on the street (e.g., they were clean, well dressed, had cell phones, etc.) and worked to maintain that image. The most important group norms included earning and contributing materially to the group, not jeopardizing the group’s relationships (and the benefits that came from those relationships) with the formal environment (e.g.,
the police, NGOs, etc.) and not being a “sifonara” (a megaphone or gossiper, sharing what the group did with outsiders). Roman and his brother Calu articulated the importance of the group and the behavioral expectations associated with being a part of the group:

Me: If someone found themselves living on the street for the first time, what do you think would be the most important things for them to know about the street?

Roman: (pause) Hmmm. For me... what can I say? The first time you come you need to know how to...

Calu: (talks over Roman) ... to be based, to have someone in Bucharest, here... You need to know how to talk to cops ... and you need to be careful not to get caught stealing.

Roman: How to integrate yourself in a group like this, such as ours... like this.

Me: You said that it’s important to find a group to integrate into, kind of like the one that you have here, at site2.

Roman: Yes.

Me: How does somebody find a place to stay when they first come to the street?

Roman: (pause) It depends. We... we grouped ourselves for the first time through our friends. When others wanted to stay here, it happened the same way. We bring them through us... (pause) it is hard to get through us (to be able to stay here).

Me: Can just anyone stay here?

Roman: No. You first need to know how to manage with money and to contribute... You need to find somewhere to work, to do small jobs... some beg. You need money so you can buy yourself clothes and shoes, cause other wise, dirty like this... it is not good. Someone will see you dirty and know you are a street kid.

Me: Who all stays here?

Roman: I stay, my brother (referring to Calu) and 2 more guys, Romica and ... Daniel.

Me: When I first met you guys, there were more people staying here: Gabriel, Ciobi, Octavia, Flori ...
Roman: Yes. Many left because we didn’t let them stay anymore...

Calu: They were not doing their part. For example, they didn’t give money for the group... and they thought they were going to stay with us? We got upset. When they have money in their pocket they didn’t agree to give it for the group... We chased them away. Some were also hurting our connection to the police. They were doing drugs out in the open... and the cops told us that if people see and complain that we are doing drugs here, in site2, they will kick us all out. And my brother helped take care of all the ones who refused with the money and were doing these kinds of gestures (Calu starts laughing).

Roman age 18 and Calu age 20, site2

The rule structure was rigid. When general conflict arose in the group the boss often resolved it by relegating the “guilty” party to a separate part of the dwelling. This pseudo-exile cut members off from the group and many of the group’s resources. The culpable members stayed disconnected until they reestablished themselves with the group or the decision was made to cut them off from the group permanently. As seen in the above dialogue, related to norm violations, expectations and standards were explicit and non-negotiable with no tolerance for error. Although the entire group played a role in “policing”, the leader or designee carried out the sanction. Insight about this dynamic came from Flori who used to be a part of the group at site2 and was recently excluded by sanctions:

Me: If a new person would come to the street and want to stay at site2 who would decide?

Flori: Daniel. You know, if they take in girls at site2, they make fun of (rape; sexually humiliate) them. I tried to help. Finally, I went to the police and said everything that was happening to the girls there... to protect them. (pause) Daniel does not allow me to come back because I told they were making fun of girls (rape; sexually humiliating). He says I am a gossiper for the cops. But don’t tell Romica that I told you, cause then they will come to beat me up.

Me: Oh no. Whatever we talk about is private between us.
Flori: I lost a place to stay for telling what I know and causing them to explain to the cops. I don’t want to lose Romica or for him to get kicked out because of me.

Flori age 18, site2

Groups within Typology A maintained clear boundaries that could be difficult to permeate. Boundary rigidity was reflected in access to the group, the norms and sanctioning of violations and the flow of information from the group to those outside the group. The member’s guardedness related to sharing information was seen in their interactions with NGO staff, the police and with me as a researcher. In the context of my in-depth conversations with typology members, they often answered questions in a measured way, answering without providing significant detail. Using knowledge gained through field observations to clarify and probe often led to the youth diverting attention away from the conversation or ultimately shutting me down. One example of this is reflected in the following interaction when I attempted to clarify relational dynamics within the group. We rejoin the in-depth conversation with Roman and Calu. We pick up the dialogue as Roman began picking at a scab on his arm and it started bleeding:

Calu: (speaking to Roman) If you pick it dude it will leave a scar as I have on my arm here (Calu points to some small scars on his own arm).

Roman: What? These (referring to a few larger scars on his arm) are not from taking off my scabs.

Calu: I know. It is from using glass pieces, with the razor blade...

Roman: No, dude, it isn’t... (laughs). Am I like you, dude?

Me: (speaking to Roman) What happened to your arm? (long pause)

Calu: I cut my arm. Here, here, here (he points out his scars).
Roman: Over here he has a big one (Roman unbuttons Calu’s shirt and points to a 6 inch scar down his chest) Here is because of me… I beat him up and he cut himself so I won’t beat him anymore. (Roman says to Calu) Unbutton it dude, some more… fuck the mouth of your mother (a Romanian curse)…

Me: (asked of Roman) How again did he get the scar?

Calu: I cut myself because of nerves... and the beating...

Roman: He was pissing me off. I get pissed off quickly.

Me: So, how often does that happen among you? Someone getting pissed off?

Roman: Enough about that. (long pause)

Me: How are the relationships... what are the relationships like down here? With Romica and Daniel and when Catalin was here? (long pause)

Roman: The same. (Roman goes to turn on a radio) (long pause)

Calu: The relationships are good among all.

Me: So you have good relationships all the time?

Roman: But of course.

Me: Well... I’ve been hanging out with people all over Bucharest and I know that sometimes even if a group gets along really well together, sometimes they have their problems... and people have fights and there are misunderstandings... and I know that things like this happen ... and it seems like I saw some things like this happen with your group.

Calu: No

Roman: That don’t happen here, never. (still messing with the radio; long pause)

Roman age 18 and Calu age 20, site2

This occurred time and time again in the context of the in-depth conversations with those with power in the group. As a result of this, although one could get a sense for what occurred, there was a lack of specificity related to the dynamics or process of how and why things occurred.

Within Typology A, group substance was marked by a disabled trust. There was a lack of personal trust, even an inherent distrust of others. Even if another person
demonstrated trustworthiness, the person was still not to be trusted. This disabled trust permeated everything. Even though youth from this typology emphasized the importance of self-reliance and not “depending on” or “counting on” others, distrust was even extended to the perception of self.

Me: On the street, who are you able to count on the most?

Iulian: Who do I count on? I don’t necessarily trust even myself... not even my own shirt. You don’t have to trust anybody. If you truly believe in a person... I mean, really believe that he is a little bit more honest, still you have to try him. You need to try him first. To see what his skin is up to. And if you see that he doesn’t steal from you, disrespect you, humiliate you, plot against you... then maybe. But really, you shouldn’t even trust him... I don’t even trust my own sister, let alone other people... I can’t really know what their skin is up to. I don’t even trust myself.

Iulian (group boss) age 23, site23

The themes of not trusting anyone including oneself and expecting the worse from others was consistent across groups within Typology A. At another site, when discussing the issue of trust, the conversation immediately turned to violence and how members were able to protect themselves from others who failed to show them respect.

Me: Who do you guys depend on the most?

Calu: Who do we count on? I don’t even count on myself, let alone on someone else. You count on your pocket. (pause)

Roman: Do you think you have to be big to be able hit someone really well... so he can feel it? If there is a big person I expect him to hit me with a knife. But he does not expect that from me. I am small, what does he say? “Look at this one...” (pause) Do you know what I do to him? (pause)

Me: Not exactly, but I have seen your bat with the nails.

Calu: We pull from that race (we are like those who are dangerous).
Me: In what way are you guys dangerous?

Calu: When someone offends us, when he tricks us or speaks to us in figures (talks badly to us)

Roman: Let one come now... He goes by here and does not respect us... We are not supposed to do anything to him...?

Calu: He leaves this place naked and his eyes like onions (swollen).

Roman age 18 and Calu age 20, site2

Although the youth from Typology A were very savvy and had significant relational abilities, the relationships they developed were *instrumental*. Their value was determined extrinsically. The function of the relationship and what it brought was more important than the relationship itself. This characteristic cut across associations at every level. The instrumental (calculated) nature of their relationships was manifest in their associations with each other and was clearly evident in their associations with those from the informal and formal environments (see Chapter 6). Human association was a means to an end, not an emotional connection; it was about outcomes not process.

Their way of relating in the context of a hierarchical structure maintained through coercive power, rigid norm structure and sanctioning system, along with their disabled trust and instrumental way of relating to others led to *obligated reciprocity and cooperation*. Exchange was *compelled* to maintain group membership and shore up group resources. The notion of obligation was reflected in previous data excerpts. For example, when Calu (age 20, site2) explained why so many group members were no longer staying with them at site2: “They were not doing their part. They didn’t *give* money for the group ... and they thought they were going to stay with us? We got upset.... they didn’t agree to *give* money for the group ... We chased them away.” Or,
remember Reluca’s (age 12, site 23) explanation as to why she could not stay and finish our in-depth conversation: “I need to go make some money to give to the group, otherwise Iulian and my aunt will beat me.” Across sites within Typology A, exchanges were discussed in the context of obligation and the youth used “give” language to describe them. This stood in stark contrast to the “share” language reflected in typologies B and C (discussed below). In fact, when I introduced share language into the dialogue, youth from Typology A consistently explained that one shouldn’t share:

Me: Earlier you were talking about food and money. How does that work among you? Do people who live on the street share their resources with each other, or do they keep it to themselves?

Iulian: No. I don’t share. There are some who share, who are comrades. I could, but you know, I think my own way. Comrades we are, but up to a point. We see each other on the street, we drink a beer together or go to a movie. But it’s better to not trust. You shouldn’t trust your friends. And that’s it. You really shouldn’t share.

Iulian (group boss) age 23, site 23

Iulian extended his no sharing policy to those who stayed with him at site 23:

Iulian: We do not share. We do not eat together; we do not sleep at the same place (some are relegated to less resource-rich area at the site). I just take care of me. I do not share with others and I do not eat with others. We are separated.

Iulian (group boss) age 23, site 23

The exchange appeared to be evaluated on a day-by-day basis with new expectations daily. However, what one contributed to the group did not always equal how one benefited from the group’s resources. The group boss’ distribution of resources was often inequitable with himself and those closest to him receiving more.

As group members cooperated due to obligation and not desire, there appeared to be a lack of commitment to the group or what the group represented. Across sites
in Typology A group members chose to violate group rules in the pursuit of self-interests; it was more about not getting caught than loyalty to the group. One example of this was seen in the context of my in-depth conversation with Flori, who was recently expelled from the group:

Me: If you are not allowed back at site2, how do you see Romica (her brother)?

Flori: I go to site2 and tie a piece of cloth in a tree. I make a sign like this so Daniel (group leader) won’t see me... or Roman. And I make a sign like this and Romica knows to come to me... he sees the sign and comes. He brings me food. We are careful so they won’t see... or Romica will be beat and have to leave too.

Flori age 18, site2

It was clear that Romica was not supposed to have contact with his sister. However, his desire to connect to his sister trumped the group expectation that he would not. Across sites within Typology A there were many examples of violating group expectations in pursuit of personal interests (e.g., buying and eating/drinking food/alcohol away from group so that one did not have to contribute all the money they earned, sharing negative information about a group member to NGO staff to cut-off potential access to a resource, etc.). Although they lived in a group, their connections to each other did not facilitate a transition from individual self-interest to group interest and collective action. Their contributions to the group materially were out of obligation and ultimately self-interest (e.g., a desire to stay in the group, etc.), not out of a desire to contribute in mutually beneficial ways.

Typology B

Groups within Typology B were characterized as having embedded norms that were modeled and reinforced. The norms were part of the fabric of the group and regulated how group members treated each other as well as outsiders. Throughout the
research study, every in-depth conversation began with the following prompt: If someone found herself or himself living on the street for the first time, what are some of the most important things you think the person should know? In response to this question, the youth from Typology B consistently focused on how they themselves tried to live their lives, not on what another person needed to do (e.g., give to group, don’t talk to police, etc.). Although their initial responses reflected the challenges of living on the street, they quickly began to point to the intrinsic qualities of what it meant to be a good person and how such a person should behave. This was clearly evidenced in the context of my in-depth conversation with members of a group from site9:

Me: If someone found themselves living on the street for the first time, what are some of the most important things you think they should know?

Adrian: They need to know to survive cause life on the street in Romania is very hard.

Cornel: If you don’t know how to survive among the street, you cannot live. And when we go to earn ourselves bread, we feel much better... cause when we earn our bread, our soul rises up a little higher. So if we have 2,000 lei in our pocket, it is like a happiness.

Adrian: And I wanted to say that the street life is very hard and some people, if you don’t know how to survive, will come and steal from you, they beat you up, they cuss at you. For example, some drunk ones come and take us on for nothing... we try to talk to them.

Cornel: We try to solve it with a good word...

Adrian: With a good word rather than a fight. Also, rather than stealing, we work or we ask from a car ... and if they give us, fine; if not, fine. If someone gives us something, we receive it with soul and we thank them. Any little help. They don’t necessarily have to help us with money, but at least to talk to us. It makes us a great pleasure.

Cornel: To teach us something good.

Adrian: It is very well received. Anything... even an advice from the heart, so we know for ourselves how it is. The older ones have more understanding and
maybe we don’t have it… we may not be mature enough. It is good to listen to others who have gone through hardships.

Me: What do you think Nicu?

Nicu: If someone new comes to the street? To manage in life and to not steal... that is what they (referring to Adrian and Cornel) have taught me...

Cornel: Because it is wrong to steal. You need to work, to not steal, to not hit people in the head...

Nicu age13, Adrian age 20, and Cornel (group leader) age 21, site9

Across all sites within Typology B the same norms consistently surfaced: do not steal (from each other or others) because it is wrong, do not fight (with each other or others) and try to resolve conflict without violence. The youth referred to the “kind of person” someone was, her or his “soul” and her or his “heart” pointing to the importance of a person’s intrinsic qualities. There was also a strong emphasis placed on the importance of being responsible and accountable for the decisions that one made. These norms were reflected in how they screened people for group membership and the group leader’s responsibility for the ultimate decision. This was reflected in my in-depth conversation with Radu (group leader) and Alin from site25.

Me: If someone new wanted to stay with your group who would make that decision?

Radu: Well, we stay and talk to him. A day or 2 we test him to see what kind of a person he is; what his head is capable of. There are some who come and want to stay... You go to sleep with 50-60,000 lei on you and get up in the morning and you don’t have the money anymore. Or you take off your shoes at night and when you get up in the morning and go to put them on, you don’t have any left! So people have to be tested. I mean... to see if they steal, to see if they are good, if they do stupid things or not... The best thing, if you want to stay here, to be good.

Me: Does one person in the group make the decision or do all you guys talk about it and decide together... or how does it work?
Radu: All. All. We all decide. As a group, it is important to all agree; to all have the same decision.

Me: What if some people in the group wanted a person to stay, and the others don’t. How do you resolve this disagreement?

Alin: We look to Radu. He has more experience with these things.

Radu: But if everyone does not agree and I decide, I need to take the commitment that I will be responsible for him. If the new person goes and does something to him (referring to Alin), he needs to let me know. I allowed the new person in so I need to be responsible for him. But in the beginning I tell the new person it is important to not harm the fellows who are in the group.

Radu (group leader) age 17 and Alin age 17, site 25

Although expectations and standards were explicit and non-negotiable, the rule structure was tolerant. Unlike the more rigid rule structure in Typology A, in Typology B there was an acceptance of or tolerance for error. Conflict and disappointment were a part of life. People were not always perfect, and when they were not, they could make amends; people can be forgiven. However, there were also limits. Over time, if a group member was unable or unwilling to adopt group norms, the member was expelled from the group. The norms and rule structure orientation appeared to be directed toward building character or a desire for group members to be genuinely good. Throughout in-depth conversations and field observations across the groups in Typology B the importance of the character of a person and the aspiration to and benefits of passing character knowledge on to another was consistently verbalized. We rejoin my in-depth conversation with members from site 25 as Radu described the type of people they hoped for and tried to be in the group:

Radu: I was seeing after their hearts. After the words they were telling me. The man who is good, you know him because he teaches you well. I mean, he doesn’t tell you “go and steal, or catch that one, punch him in the mouth and get his
money.” He says “if you have, help that one, or the one who wants to beat you up, don’t go to him, but avoid him.” That one is very good. He teaches you good things and wants to help you. Even if he cannot help with money, he helps you with a good word. That is a true man who wants your good. And the person who wants to harm you is sending you to do evil... to go steal or beat up someone. That is a person who wants to harm me and does not want good for me. But a man who wishes good for me stops me. “Radu, what are you doing? How can you beat up that one? Don’t. It is not good what you’re doing.” The person who wishes me well turns me away from doing evil.

Radu (group leader) age17 and Alin age 17, site25

Radu’s commentary reflected how groups within this typology understood and actualized trust. Trust was having faith, belief and hope in the character of a person. Members trusted the one who had their best interest (defined beyond material) in mind and worked to make that happen. In return, members manifested good character (e.g., didn’t steal, avoided violence, tried to help, etc.). In this way, groups within Typology B were marked by a responsive trust. The youth maintained an open and receptive stance toward people being willing to receive and to give. Within the group responsive trust was deeply embedded in who they were which led them to respond readily and sympathetically to one another. We see this as Radu described whom he trusted and what it meant to trust:

Me: Who do you count on/trust the most on the street?

Radu: Who do I count on the most? Who do I trust the most? I do not like to stay with too many fellow comrades, only with those I trust and know trust me. By the way, about him (referring to Alin) ... as I told you, if something is hurting him, we feel each other’s pain... He listens to me and I listen to him. And we go together at the same risk. I mean, if my hand hurts, he feels my pain, too. That’s how we are. If something happens, we advise each other. This is what it means to trust... to work for the best, to care and help you when you are in need. We are more than brothers.

Radu (group leader) age17 and Alin age 17, site25
The relationships the youth from groups within Typology B developed were *symbiotic*; they were mutually beneficial and the essence of the relationship was as important (at times, perhaps more important) than its function. It was clearly evidenced throughout the data excerpts that human association or connectedness for youth within this typology was an end unto itself where people are valued for their *intrinsic* qualities; it was not just about what a person could do, but about who that person was and how they could assist you in becoming a better person. This symbiosis manifested in many ways. The use of familial language and the deep connection to and empathy for other group members that Radu expressed for Alin was seen across sites within this typology. Although I approached youth for inclusion for this study individually, without exception the youth from Typology B expressed a desire to talk with me as a group. It was not uncommon for the conversations to include manifestation of deep emotion. An example of this is reflected in my in-depth conversation with Cornel, Adrian and Nicu. We join the conversation as Adrian shared about his decision to come to the street in order to relieve some of the financial burden on his mother when he began to cry:

Adrian: ... My mom was struggling; my soul was hurting. I couldn’t stand it. I prefer more to stay on the street than see that mom is struggling (Adrian’s eyes well up with tears).

Cornel: Adrian, here leave it, don’t cry. (turning to the researcher) Brenita, you can ask us another question.

Me: It’s ok to wait a minute, Cornel. My questions can wait. Sometimes, when we think about people we care about, experiences that we...

Cornel: (interrupts): Yes, but we, from the moment we grew together and see one of us crying, it makes us cry, too because our soul is hurting. We ate from the same bowl. If we had a piece of bread, we shared it all. And to see one suffer, it hurts our souls.

Me: I have seen how much you really care for each other.
Cornel: Adrian, please don’t cry anymore. (very long pause) Enough! (Cornel starts crying).

Adrian: (crying very hard) For these things I have started on drugs, so I can forget about sufferance. (he is sobbing) Look (referring to Nicu), we care about these little children...we protect them from the big ones (Nicu starts crying), to not beat them up... (long pause) (All three boys are crying quite hard.)

(Researcher has one hand on Adrian’s leg and the other hand on Nicu; Dana has her hand on Cornel’s back)

Me: I can tell how much you guys care about each other. Everybody’s got tears running down their cheeks. (long pause)

Cornel: (still crying) Brenita, and if we grew up since we were little together... someone can hardly separate us now. We have been through bad times and good times, as well. We cannot separate at all. For example, we are all together and we have a piece of bread, we all share it. And first of all, we give him (referring to Nicu, who starts to cry again) the most, cause he is the youngest... we let him eat first and if there is something left from him so we can eat too, fine, if not, fine. We do not get upset.

Adrian: I wanted to say that we care for each other, as brothers.

Cornel: For example, if they weren’t here, I would have been dead.

Me: So you guys were the ones who called when Cornel got hurt?

Adrian: I called the ambulance. They (referring to street youth from other sites) beat him (referring to Cornel) ... they hit him with the club in the head, after that... even the little one (referring to Nicu) jumped for him. He (referring to Cornel) fell down. He was absolutely in a coma... the blood splashed from his head ... it was running just like a fountain. He fell in the middle of the road... he couldn’t move anymore. We picked him up in our arms and we put him in the ambulance. (Adrian is still crying). We went with him there and I stayed by him. We stay by each other, in good or in bad times.

Nicu age 13, Adrian age 20, and Cornel (group leader) age 21, site 9

The essence of trust was closely linked to the symbiotic nature of and close bonds within relationships, and helped enable reciprocity and cooperation. Group members were willing to take risks based on a sense of confidence that others were equally invested and respond as expected, acting in mutually supportive ways.
Therefore, the substance of groups within Typology B was marked by *communal reciprocity and cooperation*. The symbiotic nature of their relationships enabled a positive-sum gain from cooperation. Exchange based on shared histories was characterized by deference to one another with collective ownership and use of property. Collective dependence was a condition of individual and group welfare where unequal exchanges were (at times) to be expected as was glimpsed here:

Me: If someone new were to come to the street, would it be possible for them to find food and eat everyday?

Adi: Are they a member of our group? If so yes.

Maria: We work wherever we can. We earn some money and we eat like this, all together.

Me: And how does this work?

Adi: So, we each have from 10,000 lei or so. We put it all together and we all eat... we share. Sometimes you don’t have anything to contribute cause you stay a whole day and didn’t earn. Even if one doesn’t have, we all eat. Or if I have a clean shirt and he likes it, I give it to him. If I don’t have, he gives me.

Maria age 17 and Adi age 18, site16

Group members cooperated for the common good and trusted that everyone would contribute. The dense network of interaction broadened the participants’ sense of self, developing the “I” into the “we” - “we are family”. Although this environment fostered norms of generalized reciprocity that fueled coordination and collective action among members of the group, the symbiotic nature of their relationships also left them vulnerable to exploitation. They wanted to believe the best in people and that people had their best interest in mind. Therefore, they were not always as discriminating as they might have been in their relationships with other youth. There
was a bit of naiveté among youth from Typology B. Those who were more savvy could and did take advantage of this.

**Typology C**

Groups within Typology C were characterized as having *manifest norms* explicitly taught that appeared to be oriented toward maintaining external appearance and comity within the group and between the group and the broader environment. The norms and expectations of group members were clearly evident throughout observations and in the context of in-depth conversations. The group norms included: maintaining good hygiene, knowing how to make money (value placed on working over begging), not stealing (from each other or others) because it could cause problems for the group, and not jeopardizing the group’s relationship with the police or NGOs. These norms and expectations were clearly shared with potential new members and one’s ability and willingness to follow the rules was requisite for ongoing group membership.

A unique aspect of groups within this typology was their desire for new youth to really think through their decision about coming to the street; there was an acknowledgement that life was very hard on the street and sometimes it would be better to endure difficult circumstances at home as illustrated below:

**Me:** If someone new came to the street and wanted to stay here with your group, who would make the decision whether they could stay there or not?

**Consuela:** So with our group, even now when we see someone that wants to leave the house and come on the street... First of all, we try to give them advice and tell them that it is not good to come on the street. It is not good. It is better to mind their parents and even if they get beaten once or twice, they should stay.
Me: And if you can’t talk them out of it, who makes the decision as to whether or not they can stay with your group?

Consuela: There is no one boss at site3... there is no boss in our group. If someone wants to stay with us we tell them to not put their hand to steal... not to steal from us or from anybody else cause this will cause us problems. If they do, we will have problems with the police... we tell them to be clean, because from dirt you get full of all sorts of diseases... To wash yourself, to wash your clothes... where you sleep, your linen should be clean... this is it. They can stay.

Me: And if they break one of these requests, they steal from you or they steal from somebody else, or cause problems with the police, what happens?

Consuela: Eventually we chase him away.

Consuela age 22, site3

As previously noted, group norms appeared to be oriented toward maintaining external appearance and comity within the group and between the group and the environment, especially the police. Typology B had the same no-stealing norm as Typology C. However, the norms appeared to be in place for different reasons. In Typology B, they emphasized not stealing as it is wrong to steal and good people do not do it. In Typology C they stressed one should not steal as not to cause problems for the group or with the police. The norm was not about the morality or character of the person, but about maintaining comity among group members and between the group and broader environment.

As previously noted, group norms were manifested and explicitly taught. The youth who lived in groups within Typology C saw themselves as bearing some responsibility to inform and instruct. This was observed earlier when Consuela explained how members tried to deter youth from living on the street. The role of instruction extended to the group norms as well. An example of this was seen in the
following excerpt where Edi was discussing the group norm of maintaining good hygiene:

Me: You have lived in a lot of areas since you have been on the street. What leads you to stay here at site3?

Edi: Compared to other zones... those at site3 are the cleanest. They know how to take care of themselves. Even if dirty ones come to site3, the rest of us teach them to be clean and they take after us. Even if we are in the sewer... we made kind of a shower. There we were washing ourselves, were taking baths... washing our clothes. So you saw site4, how dirty they are... also at site10, site12... They should take care to clean themselves. In fact they live in the most central areas and to walk like a boschetar (bush; slang for street kid) in a central area... I would be ashamed to walk dirty... They should be the cleanest and they are not. We teach this to the ones who want to stay here.

Edi age 25, site3

Although expectations and standards were explicit and non-negotiable, the rule structure was developmental. Consistent with the role of instructor or mentor, there was a recognition that people evolve; expectations increased with age and experience. There was also a sense that group members bore some a responsibility in facilitating this evolution. In the context of my in-depth conversation with Consuela, she shared about her own evolution and the role she played in teaching others:

Me: If someone found themselves living on the street for the first time, what would be important to know about life on the street?

Consuela: How people manage. For example, where to sleep, how to manage if the police come, what to do if people come to beat them up... how to manage with your money – though some beg, it is better for one to work. Since I grew older and I know what life is all about and know how to make something of my life, I can't beg anymore... I earn my money. As I grew older I realized it wasn't good and I was ashamed. When someone grows up and is capable of working they should not beg. The young ones may beg now but they need to be taught along the way. We need to teach them.

Consuela age 22, site3
Although sanctions for norm violations occurred (e.g., driven from the group, etc.), they were rare. Perhaps this is connected to the initial screening of youth prior to inclusion and the intentionality of fostering group norms in members.

The value of relationships was determined intrinsically and extrinsically. Human association or connectedness was a means and an end; people were valued for their intrinsic qualities and for the function of the relationship. Within this context, the relationships the youth from groups within Typology C developed were *discriminating*. The associations they developed within their subunit differed from the larger group, which differed from youth from other sites. A distinct network characteristic of groups within Typology C was that they had layers of association and were connected to a broader network of street youth that they could access beyond their individual subunit or geographic group. In my in-depth conversation with twin brothers Viorel and Cristi, a glimpse of the differentiation of relationships emerged:

**Me:** So, who all stays here with you in your group?

**Cristi:** Al Capone... (starts speaking with an exaggerated Italian accent). We call him Capone... you know him...

**Viorel:** (laughing) yea Al Capone is a bit crazy.

**Cristi:** Me, my brothers (Viorel and Gabi), that boy that wanted to jump (Costel), Elvis, Pirau... and (counting in his head and on his fingers.)

**Viorel:** There are 7 guys. But the closest are me, Cristi and Gabi (brothers). We stay together among them.

**Me:** How do the 3 of you get along here with the others who stay in this group?

**Viorel:** We get along very well cause we know each other for a long time, for a very long time.

**Cristi:** If we didn’t get along, when they (referring to the youth in the group beyond his brothers) needed we wouldn’t have shared food with them, they wouldn’t have shared with us... You see, in a day, I put money, he (referring
Viorel and Cristi (twin brothers) age 15, site5

The larger geographic group was not as necessary for immediate survival. Youth within Typology C relied on their smaller subunits for meeting basic needs and drew from the larger group when the subunit lacked necessary resources. This was seen as the exception, not the rule. But the members knew the larger group could be counted on. Those who lived in groups within Typology C also had associations with youth who were able to move off the street or who stayed at other sites. Therefore, youth could access resources beyond their geographic group.

Me: When staying on the street is it better to stay alone or with other people?

Edi: It is always good, if you have close friends, to stay with them. If you know how to calm down a person if a scandal starts, or something... it is good to stay with friends... to have that connection. On the street, I wouldn’t be able to survive alone.

Me: What makes it better to stay with friends?

Edi: As I told you, out here, it’s a jungle law. I already don’t have the parents by me... at least to have my friends to count on who have been there for me along the way and who care about me. Many times I need them and many times they need me to help them... I need them; they need me and so on...

Me: What makes a person a good friend?

Edi: I have close friends (referring to stie3), but everywhere I go, I know a lot of people. I am a man who gets under a person’s skin and I become friends quickly. And as my friends, they help me. Not just when I am in a fight but even when my girlfriend was pregnant... they are there for me. Look I had a friend from another area who was begging at the traffic lights as he was hungry. We had food. We (he and Irena, his girlfriend) were staying on the street, but we
had food, you know... and I gave him to eat and he stayed with us and got a job... there I was helping him. And then when Irina gave birth I had no money. He begged at the traffic lights until he earned 500,000 lei. He paid for a cab and went with me, cause I didn't know what hospital she was in and he gave her money for food, plus what we bought on the way... there he helped me.

Edi, age 25, site3

Here we see another layer to the network of associations. The closet connections were with subunits. However, they connected to the larger group from the area, as well to youth from other sites across Bucharest. And with these associations came valuable resources.

Group substance within Typology C was marked by acquired trust. To trust another is to know a person is there for support and could relate to the circumstances of your life. When speaking of trust, youth from groups within Typology C consistently pointed to having history with another that included consistent support even when things were difficult. One could trust the person who came through for her or him; who provided support and resources. We have already glimpsed the importance of history in earlier data excerpts in statements such as: “they have been there for me along the way” and “we know each other for a long time”. The themes of shared history and dependability were clearly articulated by Consuela in her description of trust:

Me: Who do you trust/count on the most on the street?
Consuela: On my friends, the ones from site3 and a few from other areas, but not all areas.

Me: What does it mean to trust/count on someone?
Consuela: They help you when you are in hard times... that's when you can know if a person can be counted on... when they want to be friends with you even in hard times. For example, if I have a problem... let's say a person wants to beat me up or something... if the person goes with me to help me,
than yes, they are really a friend to me. If they turn their back to me and say that they don't intervene... that is not a true friend.

Me: Do you only count on people who live on the street or...

Consuela: (interrupts) I have more trust in the friends I made who live on the street than in the friends I made in the neighborhood at the apartment because with these ones from the street... (pause) We ate the bitter bread... and they know what sufferance is. They know what it is to be beaten up by somebody else. And the ones at home? No... they cannot understand things like this.

Consuela age 22, site 3

This conceptualization of trust among youth from within Typology C enabled mutual reciprocity and cooperation. Group members were willing to take risks based on shared histories and assurances that others would be there in the future. As is clearly depicted in the data excerpts from this section, close relationships were typified by mutuality (e.g., “Many times I need them and many times they need me... I need them, they need me and so on...”, “when our other friends here don’t have, we share with them. And when we don’t have, they share with us”). The network of interaction broadened the sense of self, developing the “I” into the “we” - “We ate the bitter bread”. Sturdy norms of generalized reciprocity engendered through socialization and the experience of a shared destiny with others encouraged the emergence of trust. Networks also embodied past successes at collaboration, which served as a template for future collaboration.

Typology D

The youth who congregated at sites within Typology D were characterized as having impuissant norms, unable to establish consistent shared rules that governed the behavior of youth dispersed throughout the locales. Youth from this typology were challenged to establish norms that governed their relationships. Individuals may have
had rules by which they personally tried to live (e.g., come to aid of someone being assaulted or in need of medical attention, share food, etc.). However, since they were not shared, youth appeared to struggle to build relationships with other youth that were mutually agreeable. Furthermore, individual norms were predominantly geared toward self-preservation. The youth appeared to be universally oriented toward survival. As already noted, a variation of the following served as the opening prompt throughout the in-depth conversation phase of research: *If a new kid were to come and stay with you on the street, what would be some of the most important things for them to know?* Youth from the first three typologies focused on how to behave (e.g., don’t steal, do not share information about the group outside the group, maintain good hygiene, etc.) and what someone should know how to do (e.g., know how to make money, know how to resolve conflict, etc.) to manage on the street. In stark contrast, youth from Typology D focused on survival at the most basic level and the challenges of living on the street. This was seen across sites and genders within Typology D:

**Me:** If a new kid were coming to live on the street, what do you think are some of the most important things for them to know?

**Placa:** We are street children and have no place where to sleep… we have no place where to take a bath, to wash ourselves, we have no place where to get dressed… Some comes and beats me… some comes and curse me… they give out to me and beats me… they cuss at me… curse at me… make me like hell…

Placa age 17, site12

**Me:** If someone found themselves living on the street for the first time, what are some of the most important things you think they should know?

**Alina:** It is not good on the street. You need to protect yourself from the police, from the metro guards, because they don’t like the boschetari (bushes; slang for street kids). And you would need to make sure you can find food.

Alina age 26, site4
Me: If a new kid were coming to live on the street, what do you think they should know about life on the street?

Sandu: It’s hard on the street.

Me: What are some of the hardest things on the street? (long pause)

Sandu: (mumbles, pause) The police come and take you and beat you up. No one is interested in you and ... no one cares. The aurolac is gone, the other boschetari (bushes; slang for street kids) is gone... well, many more. Everybody treats you bad on the street. (long pause)

Sandu age 18, site4

Because expectations and standards were not explicit or shared, the rule structure was impaired. As noted, any norms that emerged within relationships were highly individualized and negotiated on a case-by-case basis. When violations occurred, youth seemed powerless to act; there did not appear to be a mechanism in place for redress. This sense of futility was highlighted in the in-depth conversation excerpt shared earlier as Augustin (age 20, site4) described how some youth from site4 treated new members and how quickly the mistreatment was forgotten. “They takes his money, they rob him, they takes his shoes and after that he becomes a partner with them. They pour him some aurolac and that’s it”. Infractions appeared to have no long-term impact on the nature of the future relationship.

It is difficult to discretely conceptualize the nature of relationships for the youth within Typology D. Some youth within Typology D viewed relationships as instrumental. Similar to Typology A, relationships were valuable for their extrinsic qualities; the function of the relationship and what it brought was more important than the relationship itself viewing human association as a means to an end. Other youth desired human association and all the potentialities (intrinsic and extrinsic) inherent in deep connections. One day in January as Dana and I were visiting with two
little girls at site4, I noticed a man standing by us listening carefully to our interaction. After I introduced myself and shared why I was in Romania, he shared that he had lived in that area on the street for 17 years and began describing the type of relationships the youth who lived on the street longed for.

He shared that the youth on the street do not need just things; they really want attention, love and affection. He likened love to a river that brings life to things that it flows through. That if the street kids could have someone in their lives that loved them it would help them so much. He shared that, though necessary, food, money, clothes or a place to stay is not all that the youth want. They want people who will really be there for them. They want someone in their lives to function as a second mother: someone to be the medical assistant in the middle of the night at 3AM and someone to give them attention and show them love and affection.

Field Note, January 9, 2003

In many ways, these are the types of relationships enjoyed by the youth who lived in groups within typologies B and C. However, the youth dispersed throughout the various sites within Typology D often viewed these types of relationships as unavailable or unattainable. Even if they were able to develop a relationship with other youths on the street they deemed important to them, the relationships were often short-lived and ended in pain. One example of this can be seen in the friendship of Alina and Ion:

When we arrived to the sewer area I immediately noticed that Alina’s left arm was bandaged with some gauze from the tip of her fingers up to her elbow, and she was holding it close to her chest. I asked her how she was doing. She said that she wasn’t doing well; she had cut her arm because of a man…. Alina went over and sat on a rock by the sidewalk, motioning for us to follow her. When we got there, we could see that she was crying. She had tears running down her face and neck on to her coat. I put my arm around her and asked her what happened. Alina stated that she had cut herself badly in 3 places – there was a smaller cut (2 inches long) and two larger cuts (3-4 inches long). I again asked her what happened. Alina stated that she had cut herself with a razor blade because of a man. She continued to cry. At times, it was difficult to hear what she said. While we were sitting with her Ion approached the area and Alina threw rocks at him and ran over to where he was cussing at him. Ion walked away from her… Alina took out a picture from her coat and ripped it into a bunch of little pieces and threw it on the ground. We later learned it was a picture of
her and Ion. Alina shared that Ion had gotten drunk and had her drink a lot of alcohol. When he had gotten her drunk he attempted to rape her. She shared that she did not want to have sex with him and fought him as hard as she could, which led to a fight between the 2 of them. Later that evening, she ran into Augustin and Ion and they teased her about it. She said that this made her very sad that her friend would do that to her and she cut herself 3 times with a razor blade.

Field Notes, March 7, 2003

Their desire to seek out connections often created vulnerability as they approached relationships with abandon fully “trusting” others to come through for them even though their myriad experiences proved otherwise. Ultimately these attachments lead to exploitation. This characteristic extended to the relationships youth forged with those in the informal and formal environments as well (discussed in Chapter 6). In either relationship orientation, in the day-to-day interactions among youth, relationships seemed to be valued most for their immediate utility with no prospect of sustainability.

The challenge faced by the youth from Typology D to create and sustain relationships impacted their conceptualization of trust and inhibited their ability to create systems of reciprocity and cooperation. Some youth emphasized self-reliance; one could only truly (and perhaps consistently) trust oneself. This was reflected in the direct, no nonsense responses of youth across sites within Typology D.

Me: Who do you trust/count on the most?
Sandu: (long pause) I count on myself. (pause)

Sandu age 18, site4

Me: Who do you count on the most or trust the most?
Placa: In me. (pause)

Placa age 17, site12
For some youth, trust was defined in the immediate context. They trusted the one who was for them (e.g., who was willing to share food, who would not beat them, etc.) right now. The challenge they faced was that someone might act in a trustworthy manner one day and not the next; history provided no predictability. For example, in Alina’s description of trust and friendship below, the example she provided was not of a current relationship, but a past relationship. Ultimately, the relationship was not sustained.

Me:  How do you know who you can trust/count on and who you cannot?

Alina:  Well, how should I explain this to you… being on the street, you will get to know them along the way, understand? Who is good and who is bad. At the first sight, you never know a person. Some make you trust them, but after that you regret you trusted them. For example, I have money now and I help him or her and after that, when I don’t have money anymore, they is not a friend with me anymore. If you give them once, twice, they want always after that. And after that, when you ask them for help, they don’t help you and so this is how I realize who is good and who isn't. I trust them, but they respect me as long as I have, but after that... I get along best with Mia and with a boy, Emanuel. I talk to the other ones, but... I don’t know... their attention does not support me.

Me:  What makes your relationship with Mia and Emanuel better?

Alina:  I got along with them... with the food, with the words, they gave me good advice... but now we are not friends... we had quarrels a while back, you know...

Alina age 26, site4

In both cases, it resulted in a reactive trust. Youth did not develop a sustainable trust in another, but tended to develop a stance in reaction to her or his experience in relationships. Either youth (with a more instrumental stance toward relationships) did not trust anyone or they (youth who approach relationships with abandon) trusted everyone until proven wrong. Again, this characteristic extended to the relationships
youth forged with those in the informal and formal environments as well (discussed in Chapter 6).

As in the case with norms, a type of reciprocity seemed to emerge between individuals not among the group for the youth within Typology D. Their orientations toward survival coupled with a reactive trust led to *utilitarian reciprocity and cooperation*. Exchange was directed at meeting an immediate need; it was about pure function in the moment. It was often unequal and lacked sustainability. We glimpsed this cut-and-dry lopsided nature of exchange as two youth from the same group talked about their relationship in different ways:

Me: How does it work here with food and money? Aurolac? Do people share or…

Doru: (interrupts) Whoever wants to give, gives.

Me: But how does it usually work? Do you share with the people you stay with or…

Doru: (interrupts) No. If I want to give them, fine, if not, good-bye.

Me: And how do you make this decision, who to share with and who not to share with?

Doru: With whoever I want. Whoever I think is my friend, I give to. Who treats me nice.

Me: What makes a person a friend?

Doru: Placa, Vali, and others.

Me: And what makes them a friend?

Doru: They are my friends. Today they help me, I help them. If I have money, aurolac I give to him… if he has cigarettes, he gives me… I give him. Whoever treats me nicely, I treat him nicely, in return. Whoever treats me badly, I treat him badly, too, in return.

Doru age 15, site12
Doru spoke of reciprocity regarding the exchange of material resources, as well as in how one was treated. The focus appeared to be on the here-and-now; there was no sense that this was how it had been or would continue to be: “If I want to give them, fine. If not, good-bye”. However, one of the youth (Placa) Doru identified in the exchange saw the relationship differently and expressed anger at how the relationship operated and desired (perhaps true) reciprocity.

Placa: He should go to prison... This boy, you know (referring to Doru). (pause) If I go to steal, he comes and says “give me, give me”. Then he says “you didn’t share the money with me, you didn’t share that; that bread or food” and he takes it by force. If I want to share the food with you I will. I stay without asking him for a bread. I want to say: “Doru, if you want to come with me to steal, you come with me, but I give you half and I get half.” I don’t want to give him my money.

Placa age 17, site12

Prolonged engagement in the field corroborated the persistence of this (and many other) lopsided exchanges. Entrenched in these unequal exchanges was one party who engaged in the exchange for an advantage and another who appeared to feel they did not have an option. This is illustrated in my in-depth conversation with Alina:

Me: Earlier you were talking about food... do you ever share your food with anyone... or does anyone ever share their food with you?

Alina: Some are that... you have to give them, you are forced, if they asks. But it is better if you have a friend who you can share the food with, you know? It means to help each other, mutually. But that is hard. For example, I helped many people when I had money from foreigners. And now when I don't have... some who I ask from, don’t give me. They don’t give me food. So, I become the same along the way; with the ones who didn’t give me, if I can. But sometimes I am forced.

Alina age 26, site4

As previously articulated, there was a hierarchy of exploitation among the youth from sites within Typology D that cut across a range of characteristics (e.g., males
exploited females, older youth exploited younger youth, street-wise youth exploited less savvy kids, etc.). It is important to note that youth like Placa and Alina were not always on the losing end and youth like Doru were not always on the winning end of the exchange.

Youth within this typology were confronted with many obstacles. Impuissant norms, an impaired rule structure and reactive trust made it difficult to structure relationships, pool resources, leverage power or forecast the future. Within this context, the struggle over scarce resources led to competition rather than cooperation. Without trust of the other, responsibility for the common good or the expectation of reciprocity, they tended to view interests through the prism of self-interest; every young person was out for herself or himself. Perhaps this was the rational choice within the context. As in the Prisoner’s Dilemma, both parties would be better off if they cooperated. However, without credible commitment perhaps the rational strategy is to defect.

**Integrated Discussion Related to Social Capital Theory**

The central thesis of social capital is that relationships matter; the networks people belong to are a valuable asset. Theorists point to the qualities of associations and how they influence the capacity of people to work together for mutual benefit and to solve shared problems. This chapter explored the second and third overarching questions that guided this study: *Under what circumstances, conditions, or processes are the children on the street able to meet their needs in the face of adversity?* and *What are the informal networks created and used by street children in an effort to build opportunities for survival?* Specifically, did the street children live in groups, and if so, did the groups (networks) they developed and connected with contribute to
their survival? As noted throughout this analysis, to varying degrees, and in varying ways street children did *create* and *use* informal networks that built opportunities for survival.

Several social capital researchers (cf. Furstenberg & Hughes, 1995; Lin, 2001; Newton, 1997; Stone & Hughes, 2002) assert that social capital is multidimensional in its nature and in the benefits it provides. According to Coleman (1990) social capital is not a “single entity” but encompasses different aspects of social structure that foster individual and collective action. The degree to which networks are open or closed (e.g., dense or sparse, characterized by strong or weak ties, etc.) has implications for the quality of the relationships they embody and their productive output (Briggs, 1998; Burt, 2000; Coleman 1988; Gittell & Vidal, 1998; Granovetter, 2005; Putnam, 2000). A focus on external relations foregrounds what has been called “bridging” forms of social capital. According to Putnam (2000), bridging social capital tends to be outward looking and consist of widely dispersed ties between heterogeneous groups. This resembles what Briggs (1998) referred to as social capital as leverage needed to “get ahead” and Granovetter’s (1973) strength of weak ties (see also Burt, 1992 - structural holes).

What has been termed “bonding capital” focuses on internal network qualities. According to Putnam (2000) bonding social capital tends to be inward looking and is inclined to reinforce exclusive identities of homogeneous groups. Bonding capital facilitated through informal face-to-face associations refers to the presence and qualities of relationships within a group. Social capital originates with people forming social connections and networks based on principles of trust, mutual reciprocity and norms of action. Within this view, the social capital of a collectivity is not so much in
that collectivity’s external ties to other external actors as it is in its internal structure or in the linkages among individuals or groups within the collectivity, specifically, in those features that give the collectivity cohesiveness and thereby facilitate the pursuit of collective goals. This resembles what Briggs (1998) referred to as social capital as support and involves relying on others around oneself to “get by” or cope with life circumstances and what Coleman (1988, 1990) referred to as network closure. Putnam asserted that bonding and bridging social capital “are not ‘either-or’ categories into which social networks can be neatly divided, but ‘more or less’ dimensions along which we can compare different forms of social capital” (2000, p. 23). In the context of the present analysis, Chapter 6 will address the quality and nature of the relationships of youth with their external environments (bridging capital) and the benefits accrued through those networks. The following discussion explores the presence and quality of relationships among street children (bonding capital) and the benefits accrued through those networks.

In the present study, the features of the formation and substance of associations among the street children of Bucharest begin to create understanding about how their relationships among each other created opportunity for advantage. There appeared to be several factors at play that enabled or disabled meaningful associations that produced social capital as a potential resource, which may be drawn on to improve opportunities. These factors included how street children organized (or failed to organize) and maintained their structure, the relational dynamics of youth (i.e., the emergence of norms, sanctions for norm violations and the nature of relationships) and the definition and actualization of trust, reciprocity and cooperation.
High Bonding Social Capital - Typologies B and C

The youth from typologies B and C formed and lived in groups. Their relationships were characterized by deep connections to each other. Their dense ties to each other were quite durable with a core group of youth living together from over five years (site16) to over a decade (site3). The investment of the youth in their relationships to each other created embedded relational resources (high levels of bonding social capital) that afforded those within the network access to a range of benefits.

**Embedded Relational Resources.** Although, as reflected in the above discussion on the formation and substance dimension, there were some distinct differences between the groups within typologies B and C, they held several things in common that pointed to high levels of bonding social capital. They had clearly established norms, effective sanctions and a system to foster desired behaviors in new members of the group. Over time, they develop a deep trust in each other and sturdy norms of within-group reciprocity. These resources embedded in the relationships of youth from within typologies B and C, their social capital, fueled coordination and collective action and afforded members of the group access to a range of benefits as a citizen of the group.

The first embedded resource within these networks related to *norms* and *sanctions*. Groups within typologies B and C had clearly established norms of acceptable behavior; they made expectations overt and invested in teaching and developing those within the group. Coleman (1988) asserted that clear norms and effective sanctions for norm violations represent a potent form of social capital that can be used to constrain or facilitate actions. Within typologies B and C norms such as
contributing to ensure the material needs of group members were met and intervening for or protecting someone from the group were encouraged, whereas stealing from within and outside of the group and violence among group members or outsiders were prohibited. Coleman (1988, 1990) pointed to the notion of network closure (everyone was connected to and knew and could monitor the behavior of everyone else) as being an important aspect of network structure that facilitated the emergence of norms and sanctioning systems. With closure comes a set of effective sanctions that serve to direct and monitor actions. Closure enables social norms to impose more external pressures on individuals. Within dense networks, there is greater opportunity to reinforce norms and carry out sanctions through the exchange of information and mutually held values.

Sometimes these norms are internalized and sometimes they are maintained through external rewards or consequences (Coleman, 1988). Both mechanisms were evidenced within these typologies. For example, Typology B had the same no-stealing norm as Typology C. However, in Typology B, members emphasized not stealing because it was wrong to steal and good people did not do it. Members tried to foster an internalization of norms, since adopting norms was more than merely following rules; it was associated with becoming a good person. In Typology C members stressed that individuals should not steal as not to cause problems for the group or with the police. The norm was not about the morality or character of the person, but about maintaining a peaceful coexistence with each other, and with their formal and informal environments. Although there was acceptance within both typologies of errors and mercy shown in redressing norm violations, a group member’s unwillingness
or inability to conform reaped consequences. There was a loss of connection to the
group and benefits associated with belonging to the network.

According to Coleman, “A prescriptive norm within the collectivity that
constitutes an especially important form of social capital is the norm that one should
forgo self-interest and act in the interests of the collectivity” (1988, p. 104). The deep
connections created within the networks of youth from typologies B and C was typified
by mutuality and deference to one another. Group norms pointed to the value placed
on the primacy of people within the group; one should share and make sacrifices for
the group and relate to each other in trustworthy ways (e.g., take action when
someone was in need, do not steal from group members, etc.). Shared values built
cohesiveness in the group and further fueled embedded relational resources reflective
of high levels of bonding social capital. “The extent to which values are shared or
diverse . . . appears positively correlated with levels of trust and reciprocity” (Stone &

The second embedded resource within these networks related to the
expectation of trust. The norm of trust is a key feature of social capitol; Putnam
stated that, “[t]rust lubricates social life” (1993a, p. 37). Although Putnam was
speaking on a macro level, the role of trust in facilitating collective action in mezzo-
level groups, as well as within a macro context is relevant. There are three main types
of trust identified in the literature. Generalized trust (Dasgupta 1988; Putnam 1998;
Uslaner 1999) is extended to strangers and civic or institutional trust (Cox & Caldwell
2000; Uslaner 1999) is extended to formal institutions. Relevant to the present
discussion is familiar trust (see also social trust of familiars, Cox & Caldwell 2000;
particularized trust, Uslaner 1999; personalized trust, Hughes, Bellamy, & Black,
Quantitative studies exploring familiar trust have relied on items from the General Social Survey (Davis, Smith, & Marsden, 1998) to assess the extent of trust in diverse geographic areas (cf., Brehm & Rahn 1997; Jackman & Miller 1998). These items tap into three dimensions of trust including an overall sense that people are trustworthy, a perception of whether other people are helpful or self-focused and a perception of fair treatment or being taken advantage of (Davis, et al., 1998).

The data clearly demonstrated that group members within typologies B and C had high levels of familiar trust. They had an overall sense that youth who had persisted in their group were trustworthy, helpful and fair. As explored above, in Typology B trust was understood as having faith, belief and hope in the character of a person; individuals trust others who had one’s best interest (defined beyond material) in mind and worked to make that happen. In Typology C, to trust another was to know a person was available and could relate to the circumstances of one’s life emphasizing the importance of having history with another that included consistent support even when things were difficult. In both cases there was a demonstrable attribute of trust that had been verified over time. This expectation of trust enjoyed by youth from within these typologies was a crucial embedded relational resource in the creation of social capital and the potential benefits inherent in it. Coleman (1988) noted that collective action relied in part on the trustworthiness of the environment. “A group within which there is extensive trustworthiness and extensive trust is able to accomplish much more than a comparable group without that trustworthiness and trust” (p. 101). As with the creation of norms, he pointed to the notion of network closure as being an important aspect of network structure that facilitated trust. An
environment of reinforced norms and effective collective sanctions builds and ensures trustworthiness thus allowing for the creation of obligations and expectations. For youth from typologies B and C, closure developed trust, which increased the effectiveness of social capital.

This leads to the third and final embedded relational resource, mutual reciprocity and collective action. As noted, Coleman (1988, 1990) identified network closure as an important structural component in facilitating trust and ultimately collective action. In his research on effective governance across regions in Italy, Putnam (1993a) also pointed to network structure (i.e., formation) as a determining factor in the emergence of trust and collective action. Again, although he was speaking in a macro context, his discussion has relevance to mezzo-level group dynamics. Putnam argued that it was horizontally structured, not hierarchical vertically structured networks that laid the foundation for collaboration and mutual assistance. This was certainly reflected in the groups within Typology C. They were characterized by a horizontal structure maintained through mutuality and cooperation. With no distinct boss or leader, group members appeared to have equal authority (e.g., in decision-making, etc.) and responsibility (e.g., in caring for group members, etc.). The youth saw their own interests as invested in the common good. In Putnam’s assessment, within such a context, individuals “deal fairly with one another and expect fair dealing in return” (Putnam, 1993, p. 111). However, in the present study these high levels of cooperation were also observed in the context of a vertical structure, the structure reflected in groups within Typology B. Putnam (1993a) suggested that vertical, hierarchical networks did not serve to foster trust and cooperation. He pointed to the power imbalances inherent in such structures as a
prohibiting factor. In Typology B a vertical structure existed. However, the power that maintained the hierarchy was not focused on control and coercion, but on provision and responsibility. In this case, high levels of familiar trust, a sense of responsibility for the common good, and an expectation of reciprocity from other members of the group enabled collective action. The youth from Typology B also saw their own interests as invested in the common good; they linked their personal interests and well-being to the collective.

Reciprocity within the groups from typologies B and C was an on-going process representing a long-term investment in relationships. New youth coming into the group were not seen as just passing through, but as potential long-term members. Youth who had been on the street longer modeled desired norms and invested time in fostering these behaviors in new members. Long-term investment in the context of durable networks enabled uneven and delayed exchanges; investment in relationships then had the potential of benefiting the group later. This is consistent with Coleman’s description of reciprocity exchanges among family and other studies of intergenerational transfer (Millward, 1999; Short, 1996; de Vaus & Qu, 1998). Norms of reciprocity fluctuate according to network type (Stone, 2001). In the context of durable networks based on a sturdy foundation of familial obligation, family-based reciprocity is marked by flexibility, including uneven and delayed exchanges (Finch & Mason, 1993).

In typologies B and C youth possessed a lexicon of familial terms to describe their relationships with each other (i.e., brother or sister, husband or wife) and their intra-group interactions reflected myriad characteristics of familial interactions (e.g., investment in each other, behavioral expectations and sanctioning systems, provision
of material needs, care and protection, etc.). This is consistent with Hagan and McCarthy’s (1997) findings in their qualitative exploration of the lived experiences of over 400 young people residing on the streets of Toronto and Vancouver. They found that some street youth developed and lived in groups that closely resembled families. They noted that youth used familial labels to describe themselves and that “[m]any of these youth adopt behaviors that are consistent with the role in which they identify” (p. 178). The networks developed by some of the street children in Romania resembled what Coleman referred to as within family social capital, operationalized as parental attention, parental norms, parental empathy for child’s needs, parental expectations and parental monitoring. Several researchers have explored the relationship between within family social capital and indicators of young adult success (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Furstenberg & Hughes, 1995; Runyan et al., 1998; Teachman et al., 1996; Wright, et al., 2001; Yan, 1999). Results suggested that within family social capital helped youth negotiate their way out of disadvantage, reduced their delinquent involvement and positively impacted a range of indicators of young adult success (e.g., educational achievement, employment, economic status, positive mental health, etc.).

The aforementioned research based on Coleman’s conceptualization of within family social capital focused on how parents created connections within the family and how those connections impacted future outcomes for children. In other words, the social capital enjoyed by children was a byproduct of their relationship to adults, not of their own networks. The present study calls this adult-centric perspective into question. As previously noted, the intra-group interactions of youth from typologies B and C reflected many of the identified features of within family social capital.
Although some of those relationships reflected a parental hierarchy whereas older youth (some above the age of 18) invested in younger youth, most relationships reflected a peer orientation. Furthermore, nearly all of the youth above the age of 18 had been on the streets for numerous years. It was through their initial investment in relationships when they first came to the street as children that created the dense networks seen in the present study; it took significant agency to develop and sustain these networks over time. In addition, there are numerous examples of younger youth (below the age of 18) investing in and providing for older youth (e.g., 14-year-old Viorel providing food in the hospital for 20-year-old Eugene, 12-year-old Rubina advising new comer 18-year-old Daniela of the challenges of street life, 13-year-old Nicu jumping to protect 21-year-old Cornel from a physical assault, etc.). In the present study there is significant evidence pointing to the agency of children in the creation and use of social capital.

**Accrued Benefits.** According to social capital theory, actors engage in networking (interaction) in order to produce benefit. This is where social capital demonstrates that it is capital (Lin, 2001a); it generates returns on investment in social relationships. The investment of the youth from typologies B and C in their relationships to each other created embedded relational resources (i.e., clear norms and effective sanctions, the expectation of trust, sturdy norms of reciprocity and collection action). These relational resources afforded those within the network access to a range of benefits and resources, including emotional support, guidance and information, protection and access to a range of material resources.
By virtue of membership in their group, the youth from typologies B and C had access to the resource of emotional support. As was clearly reflected in the data excerpts shared throughout this chapter, the youth from these typologies viewed the other members of their group as empathic and supportive. Their friendships were characterized by a deep sense of connection and solidarity. When asked whom they depended on or trusted the most, youth from these typologies quickly pointed to others in the group. The expression and experience of empathy was described by numerous youth. The sharing of feelings played a significant role in relationships and acts of self-sacrifice for friends were described. Overall the relational field was one of openness and permeability towards others, with relational expectations of care and concern from the other, and trusting and open relational behaviors. And with such deep connections comes significant support. As articulated in Chapter 5, youth who made their lives on the street relied on a number of coping strategies to deal with the challenges of street life. Although some youth from typologies B and C who provided information through in-depth conversations engaged in substance use (e.g., huffing, etc.) as a way of managing difficult emotions, memories and unpleasant realities, the majority of youth relied on spirituality and friendship. None of them engaged in self-injurious behaviors as a way of coping. The youth from typologies B and C had people that they could turn to for emotional support and comfort. They had each other.

The role of emotional support has been linked to myriad outcomes for youth living in families. The experience of meaningful relationships within the family and with peer networks is linked to better physical and mental health, as well as found to be a mediating factor in coping with stressful life events (cf., Cohen & Syme, 1985; Lin, Dean & Ensel, 1986; Samuelsson, 1997). In her investigation of the impact of the
personal networks of children, Samuelsson (1997) found that the social support children received from their broader peer networks served as a protective factor against poor mental health when they were exposed to a range of stressors. Sandefur and Lauman (2000) noted that having supportive relationships had an impact beyond these stated outcomes. “In addition to providing social support conducive to maintaining health or coping with crises, relationships with trusted others can free an individual to use her energies more efficiently and effectively to attain desired goals” (p. 286).

Much of the work related to street children casts their relationships with each other in a negative light. Street children are seen as lacking close persistent peer relationships (Johnson, Whitbeck & Hoyt, 2005), stable relationships with positive assets (e.g., trust, admiration, etc.) (Taylor, Lydon, Bougie, & Johannsen, 2004) and encourage deviant behavior (Gaetz, 2004; Hagan & McCarththy, 1997). Although some of these descriptors reflected characteristics among the relationships of youth from typologies A and D, the present study calls into a question a homogenous view of the social networks of street children. Ennett, Bailey and Federman (1999) asserted that the networks of street children could have risk-enhancing, as well as risk-decreasing properties. Although they did not use social capital theory to frame their discussion, their findings pointed to the value of relationships in negotiating street life. In their study of youth living on the streets of Washington, DC (N = 327), they found that some youth networks had affective and supportive qualities. These networks involved frequent interactions with youth they had known for a long time, were lacking in conflict and were not a source of pressure to engage in risky behaviors. In fact, these networks actually decreased illicit drug use and reliance on survival sex. More recently
Usborne, Lydon and Taylor (2009) found that close peer relationships were positively associated with the subjective well-being (e.g., feeling confident, hopeful and happy versus depressed, worried and fearful, etc.) of street children in Montreal, Canada (N = 50). Again, although they did not frame their discussion within social capital theory, their research emphasized the positive emotional benefits embedded in the relationships among street children.

By virtue of membership in the group, the youth from typologies B and C also had access to the resource of guidance and information. The flow of information inherent in social relationships that help to facilitate action is an important benefit of social capital; relationships are valuable for the information they provide. For Coleman (1988), information provided a basis for action as connections to others were valuable for the information one had access to that may inform future action. In this way, one did not have to be responsible for personally identifying and ascertaining knowledge relevant to all spheres of life, but might draw on the strengths and interests of others.

In the present context this included the guidance offered to new group members in socializing them to the group norms that ultimately equipped them for creating valuable relationships with people from their informal and formal environments. The norms embraced by youth from typologies B and C (e.g., sharing what one has, protecting the vulnerable, respecting people’s property, avoiding violence, behaving in trustworthy ways, etc.) were also valued by the larger society. This increased cultural capital positioned individuals to create bridging social capital that could be leveraged to assist them in accessing a broader range of material resources, services (e.g., medical assistance, obtaining identification cards, etc.) and
employment opportunities, all assets important in facilitating their ability to “get ahead” (see Chapter 6).

By virtue of membership in the group, youth from typologies B and C had access to the resource of increased physical and material protection. The group appeared to serve as a protective factor against violence and theft. Youth from typologies B and C were protected against violence and left at the hands of other group members. All but one youth who provided information through in-depth conversations spoke of their sense of physical security in the context of the group. As will be discussed below, this stands in stark contrast with the experiences of youth from typologies A and D. Not engaging in violent behavior toward a group member or stealing from a group member were explicit norms for youth within both typologies. Violence against others and theft in the group was not tolerated. These expectations were made clear to potential group members. In the context of both typologies the behavior of new members was closely scrutinized to ensure compliance with a norm violations resulting in expulsion from the group.

Group membership also protected the youth from violence and theft at the hands of individual’s from their informal and formal environments. Although youth from within these typologies experienced some violence, it occurred infrequently; the youth consistently pointed to the role of the group in protecting group members from outside threats. The youth provided each other with guidance on ways to avoid trouble, warned each other when trouble was eminent and intervened for each other when violence ensued. Again, the norms established by the groups within typologies B and C played a significant role in establishing and maintaining safe environments. For example, trying to resolve conflict without the use of violence was an expected
behavior of youth within Typology B. The guidance (resource discussed above) equipped youth to attempt to resolve disagreements without defaulting to physical aggression. Although the strategy was not always successful, attempts to resolve conflict without the use of violence appeared to play a role in decreasing the number of altercations with street youth from other sites and with individuals from the informal and formal environments. If violent altercations did occur, youth from within typologies B and C trusted others to help them thus were willing to take risks to protect another. The role of the group as a protective factor against violence is supported by research in other world areas. For example, in their exploration of the lives of street children in Toronto and Vancouver Canada, McCarthy, Hagan and Martin (2002) found that the relationships developed by youth that resembled fictive families not only increased a young person’s access to desired resources (e.g., food, housing, etc.), but also provided protection. Regression analysis supported the assertion that fictive street families marked by deep connection, care and support served as protective factor against violence more so than other street associations.

Youth from typologies B and C had similar emotional support and informational resources at their disposal. Although youth from both typologies also enjoyed a measure of physical and material protection, youth from within Typology C appeared to have slightly more. This may be due in part to the slight variations in the characteristics and attributes of their geographic locations. Youth from Typology B lived in semi-permanent structures, which afforded them a degree of security and control over their living space. However, their inability to secure their spaces coupled with higher levels of visibility (i.e., sites within this typology are located near to main thoroughfares) left them more vulnerable to incursion by others. Youth from Typology
C lived in permanent structures (e.g., sewer, abandoned building, etc.), which afforded moderate security and control over their living space. Although they lived near to public transit sites and in similar-type structures as those sites in Typology B, the exact location of the structure afforded some seclusion and youth from some sites were able to block or cover their entrances. Therefore they were less vulnerable to the incursion of others.

Finally, by virtue of membership in the group, the youth from typologies B and C had access to a range of **material resources**, including clothing, food, household items (e.g., dishes, blankets, etc.) and recreational items (e.g., magazines, soccer ball, etc.). Although youth from both typologies enjoyed similar material resources, the youth from Typology C appeared to have more. They possessed more diverse resources (e.g., multiple pairs of shoes, more food variety, etc.) and far more luxury items (e.g., CD player, cell phone, etc.) than the youth from Typology B. For example, related to hygiene, youth from Typology B had toilet paper. Those from Typology C had toilet paper, laundry detergent, soap, shampoo and toothpaste. Youth from Typology B possessed dishes, cups and silverware used for eating, whereas the youth from Typology C also owned pots and pans for cooking, as well as basins and dish soap for washing their things. A full side-by-side comparison of material resources by typology is included in Appendix L. Items included in the appendix represent possessions I observed or the youth spoke of having. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, I was never invited into the dwelling of youth from site3, a group from Typology C. So, it is quite possible that the items represented in Appendix L do not fully reflect all the material resources they possessed.
The disparity in material resources may be related to the difference in network size. The youth from Typology C had a broader network; they relied more on their smaller subunits for meeting basic needs and drew from the larger group when the subunit lacked the necessary resources. When their needs exceeded the resources available to the immediate group, they were able to access a broader network. Youth from Typology C were also connected to youth outside the group, including youth who were able to move off the street or who stayed at other sites. Social capital theorists assert that network size matters. “The volume of social capital possessed by a given agent . . . depends on the size of the network of connections that he [sic] can effectively mobilize” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 249). As will be discussed in Chapter 6, youth from Typology C also had a sophisticated ability to connect to a broad range of networks in their formal and informal environments. Bonding social capital is often characterized as a means to “getting by” versus “getting ahead” which is associated with bridging social capital (Briggs, 1998; Putnam, 2000). Bridging social capital relates to the presence and quality of relationships between group members and diverse social networks. The youth from Typology C had the ability to use their relationships with broader youth networks and the informal and formal environment for leverage, which afforded them access to a broader range of resources and opportunities (see Chapter 6).

An important question related to social capital is at what level do the benefits occur or who owns the social capital generated by the youths’ investment in relationships? Do individual youth own it or is it a group asset? As previously articulated, Typology C was marked by mutual reciprocity and cooperation. Group members were willing to take risks based on shared history and assurance that others
would be there for them in the future. Close relationships were typified by mutuality in both investment and benefit. Latham (2000) argued that as horizontal structures rely on the participation of all to create and maintain social capital, it is not the exclusive property of any one member. It belonged to everyone; by virtue of membership in the network the social capital created by the network was available to everyone connected to the network. Although Typology B was vertically structured the power within the hierarchy was centered on provision and responsibility, not on control and coercion. Marked by communal reciprocity and cooperation, exchange based on their shared histories was characterized by deference to one another and collective ownership and use of property. Collective dependence was a condition of individual and group welfare. Therefore, as with Typology C, investment in creating and maintaining associations reaped individual benefits and the aggregation of returns benefited the collective.

Low Bonding Social Capital - Typology D

The social capital explanation of advantage is that the people who do better are better connected; one’s relationships matter. The social capital of a group relies on its internal structure, or the linkages among individuals within the collectivity. Specifically, in those features that give the group cohesiveness (i.e., collective commitments, expectation of trust, norms of reciprocity) and thereby facilitate the pursuit of collective goals. As seen in typologies B and C high levels of bonding social capital inheres in networks based on shared norms, principles of trust and mutually reciprocating relationships and actions that affords group members within those typologies access to a range of resources. Unfortunately, the relational hallmarks resulting in the strong bonding social capital enjoyed by those youth were deficient
among the youth from Typology D. With such low levels of bonding capital, youth from Typology D were challenged to accrue benefits and faced increased vulnerability.

Deficient Relational Resources. Social capital is a resource embedded in social relations. As noted, the very characteristics that point to high levels of bonding social capital within typologies B and C were absent in Typology D. Youth from Typology D lacked sustainable networks and were challenged to establish the embedded relational assets (i.e., norms that govern behavior, sanctioning systems for norm violations, the expectation of trust and sturdy norms of reciprocity) that affected the transmission of resources shaping opportunities and life trajectories. The lack of these embedded resources within Typology D, the lack of social capital, hindered coordination and collective action, thus limiting access to the resources enjoyed by youth from typologies B and C (i.e., emotional support, guidance and information, protection, access to material resources) and exposing them to unique vulnerabilities.

Youth from Typology D lacked sustainable networks; they lacked the foundational ingredient necessary for the creation of social capital. Throughout the literature, a multitude of conceptualizations of social capital exits. Social capital has been defined as:

- “The aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition -- or in other words, to membership in a group” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248, emphasis added);
- The “investment in social relations with expected returns in the marketplace” (Lin, 2001b, p. 19, emphasis added);
• “[I]nformation, trust and norms of reciprocity inhering and one’s social networks” (Woolcock, 1998, p. 153, emphasis added);

• “Naturally occurring social relationships among persons which promote or assist the acquisition of skills and traits valued in the marketplace” (Loury, 1992, p. 100, emphasis added);

• “Features of social organisation, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating co-ordinated actions” (Putnam, 1993a, p. 167, emphasis added); and

• “The capacity of individuals to command scarce resources by virtue of their membership in networks or broader social structures” (Portes, 1995, p. 12, emphasis added).

Although there is disagreement regarding at which level social capital as an asset can be assessed and accrued (i.e., relational level, group level, societal level), the source of social capital is consistently linked to assets that inhere in relationships, or one’s connection to networks. Individuals from Typology D did not form and live in groups; they tended to emphasize the importance of separateness from others. Although youth clustered in a geographic location interacted with each other to address emergent circumstances (e.g., youth injured in a fight, etc.), the connections they forged were fragile and did not persist into the next day. Therefore, at the most basic level, youth from Typology D were arrested in their ability to create social capital. Inability to create relationships and lack of connectedness impeded the development of other key resources and disabled their capacity to secure advantages, benefits and resources.

As discussed above (see Substance Dimension), individuals from Typology D had impuissant norms; they were unable to establish consistent shared norms to govern
the behavior of youth dispersed throughout the locales. Although individuals had rules by which they personally tried to live, since they were not shared, youth struggled to build relationships that were mutually agreeable. Coleman (1988) pointed to a lack of closure as playing a significant role in the failure of emergent norms and effective sanctions within a network. In dense networks, or networks with closure, everyone is connected to, knows and can monitor the behavior of everyone else in the network. It is this closure that affords greater opportunity to reinforce norms and carry out sanctions through the exchange of information and mutually held values.

One factor related to developing associations that lead to strong social capital was knowledge of all members in the network or group (Coleman, 1988, 1990; Sandefur & Laumann, 2000; Siisiäinen, 2000). Since the youth within this typology lived in areas identified as gateway sites, there was significant turnover and transition among the youth. This made it difficult for people to know each other all the time. In this more open structure, there was a lack of pervasive ties among group members. Therefore, there was a lack of shared values, common goals and ability to combine forces to encourage desired behaviors and sanction undesired ones. “In a structure without closure, it [undesired behaviors/norm violations] can be effectively sanctioned, if at all, only by the person to whom the obligation is owed” (Coleman, 1988, p. 107). However, even when individual youth were able to negotiate norms to govern case-by-case relationships, when violations occurred, they seemed powerless to act. This may represent another factor impacting their ability to establish shared norms. The person to whom the obligation was owed was unable to sanction the behavior. There did not appear to be a mechanism in place for redress; infractions appeared to have no long-term impact on the nature of the relationship in the future.
A breech of norms established in an individually negotiated relationship did not result in long-term consequences. Within such a context, youth from Typology D had nothing to lose by violating commitments.

Youth from Typology D were also *challenged in their ability to establish the expectation of trust*. The relational resource of trust is central to the discussion of social capital. Many writers (cf., Dasgupta, 1999; Fukuyama, 1995a, 1995b) hailed trust as a leading factor affecting the capacity of people to cooperate and engage in collective action; others viewed trust and cooperation as mutually reinforcing dynamics.

People who trust each other work together more easily. Without trust, cooperation is limited. It would appear that trust is primary to most cooperation. However, by working together people further build trust (good will), so the two concepts have some interactive simultaneity. “Trust” and the “ease of voluntary cooperation” are thus two interlinked concepts. (Paldam, 2000, p. 363)

In exploring the extent of familiar trust and how that interacts with collective action among youth in Typology D we return to the three dimensions captured in the *General Social Survey*, including an individual’s perception of trust or mistrust, perception of whether other people are helpful or self-focused and perception of fair treatment or being taken advantage of (Davis, et al., 1998). As reflected above (see *Substance Dimension*), how familiar trust operated (or, in the case of Typology D, failed to operate) appeared to occur along two trajectories. Some youth from Typology D appeared to have high levels of familiar trust. They desired and sought out connections and all the potentialities (intrinsic and extrinsic) inherent in them.
Suspending their awareness of the significant possibility of exploitation, they approached their relationships with an expectation that others would (this time) be helpful and treat them fairly. However, almost without exception, their expectations were not met. According to Coleman (1988) obligations and expectations (norms of reciprocity) depend on the trustworthiness of the social environment (e.g., will the obligations be repaid, etc.). Coleman described the relationship between trust and obligations or expectations as forms of social capital with the following example:

If A does something for B and trusts B to reciprocate in the future, this establishes an expectation in A and an obligation on the part of B. This obligation can be conceived as a credit slip held by A for performance by B . . . These credits slips constitute a large body of credit that A can call in if necessary - unless, of course, the placement of trust has been unwise, and these are bad debts that will not be repaid. (Coleman, 1988, p. 102)

For some youth in Typology D, the placement of trust was unwise. While they received small immediate benefit in the exchange, over time others did not respond in a trustworthy way and they were taken advantage of. In a given moment, these youth trusted the one who appeared to be for them (e.g., who committed to share food, not beat them, etc.) right now. The challenge they faced was that someone might act (or commit to act) in a trustworthy manner one day and not the next; their history with someone was not dependable or predictable. Consequently, although some youth desired human association and all the potentialities inherent in it, these connections were unattainable. Furthermore, their desire to seek out connections often created vulnerability as they approached relationships with abandon fully “trusting” others to
come through for them. Even though their myriad experiences proved otherwise, they continued to suspend their awareness of the possibility of exploitation and tried again.

On the other hand, some youth within Typology D appeared to have low levels of familiar trust. They approached relationships perceiving that most people could not be trusted and they would not be helpful. On the contrary, they believed others were out for themselves and would take advantage of them if given the opportunity. They did not seek and desire relationships for their intrinsic worth. They viewed relationships as instrumental, valuing them for the extrinsic qualities or what the relationship brought. For these youth, the function of the relationship was more important than the relationship itself viewing human association as a means to an end. They did and said what they needed to in order to get what they needed with seemingly no intention to fulfill their commitments. Both cases reflected a reactive trust. Youth did not develop a sustainable trust in another, but tended to develop a stance in reaction to her or his experience in relationships. Either youth (with a more instrumental stance toward relationships) did not trust anyone or they (youth who approach relationships with abandon) were not discriminating, trusting everyone and having to continuously deal with disillusionment and exploitation. In both cases cooperation was limited to the immediate situation.

Attempts at collective action among youth from Typology D were marked by uneven exchanges and exploitation. The prerequisites for collective action (e.g., the expectation of trust, sturdy norms of reciprocity, etc.) have been established in the literature and demonstrated in the lives of youth from typologies B and C. When there was trust, a sense of responsibility for the common good and an expectation of reciprocity from other members of the group, they tended to see their own interests
as invested in the common good. As seen above, a very different dynamic was occurring for youth within Typology D. Without trust of the other (or unfounded trust), a shared sense of responsibility for the common good or the expectation of reciprocity, they tended to see their interests through the prism of self-interest; every youth was out for her or himself. The orientation toward survival coupled with a reactive trust led to utilitarian reciprocity and cooperation. Exchange was directed toward meeting an immediate need, was often unequal and lacked sustainability.

“Reciprocal relations are governed by norms, such that parties to the exchange understand the social contract they have entered into” (Stone, 2001, p. 28). The challenge for youth from Typology D was that they were unable to establish consistent shared rules that governed the behavior of youth. Therefore, they had very different expectations of the contract they had negotiated. Some youth approached the exchange with an expectation that others would be helpful and treat them fairly. Others cooperated in the moment to access a resource with seemingly no intention to fulfill implicit commitments. This dynamic consistently led to uneven exchanges.

One might think that the person who consistently found her or himself on the “losing” end of these immediate, in-the-moment exchanges would cease engaging in them. The logic of social capital theory asserts that recurrent breeches in trust and/or misplaced trust would impact an actor’s willingness to engage in future relationships under the presumptions of a logical economy. Conversely, these youth continued to desire and seek out connections persistently approaching their relationships with an expectation that others would be helpful and treat them fairly. What is known about the relational resource of trust in the context of social capital does not provide an adequate explanation for this on-going relational dynamic. The field of psychology
affords another lens by which human behavior can be understood. Walker (2004), a psychologist from the United States, explored the behavior of women who persisted in violent relationships and hypothesized that the condition of being exposed to constant abuse strips women of their self-esteem, their will to leave and of any expectation that leaving is an option. This theory is referred to as learned helplessness. Although offering a perspective that may be useful in understanding some of the behavior of the young people from Typology D, this theory has been criticized for its failure to account for the many social, economic and cultural reasons one might persist in an abusive relationship. It is also at times inconsistent with the fact that many in abusive relationships attempt to leave and regularly act in conscious ways to try to reduce the abuse directed at them (Dobash & Dobash, 1992). Further exploring these dynamics through a psychological lens may afford some important insight.

One might also think that the person who found her or himself on the “winning” end of these immediate, in-the-moment exchanges hold some power and were at an advantage among the youth. However, this was not the case. As previously articulated (see Formation Dimension above) there was a hierarchy of exploitation among the youth from sites within Typology D that cut across a range of characteristics (e.g., males exploited females, older youth exploited younger youth, street-wise youth exploited less savvy kids, etc.). Even those youths who appeared to hold power in an immediate exchange, would at some point find themselves on the losing end. In reality, the youth from Typology D could be characterized by a lack of power; power seemed to be consistently held by individuals who did not live on the street (i.e., street “bosses” and “pimps”). The youths’ relationships with those from the informal and formal environments are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.
Within this broader context, ultimately, the youth from Typology D were always on the losing end of uneven exchanges.

**Diminished Benefits and Increased Vulnerability.** With such low levels of bonding capital (i.e., an inability to build sustainable networks, a lack of collective norms to govern relationships and sanctioning system to redress violations, distorted trust, momentary cooperation/uneven exchanges,) youth from Typology D were challenged to accrue benefits and faced increased vulnerability.

Individuals from Typology D *lacked material resources*, including food, appropriate clothing, household and hygiene items, recreational resources and general personal belongings. In the course of this 10-month study, I witnessed or heard youth speak of eating the following food items: bread, yogurt, sunflower seeds, crackers, potato chips, slanina (pig fat) and fruit. This list stood in profound contrast to the food items available to youth from other typologies (e.g., varied meats, cheeses, vegetables, condiments, etc.). Many of the accessible (e.g., youth are able to afford, given to youth by people passing by, etc.) food items for youth in Typology D lacked nutritional value and were even, when consumed over time, detrimental to health. If not for the meal provided weekdays by NGOs (discussed in Chapter 6) youth from Typology D would not have provisions necessary for basic health and well-being. The clothing worn by youth from Typology D was often the wrong size, not seasonal (e.g., short sleeve shirts in the winter, sweaters and wool coats in the summer, etc.), quite worn and often contained broken or missing components (e.g., broken zippers, missing buttons or shoestrings, etc.). Household and hygiene items were nonexistent. On rare occasions someone might obtain a recreational resource (e.g., magazine, radio, etc.) that inevitably ended up broken in an altercation or stolen. Few youth had personal
items (e.g., pictures, etc.). Again, this existed in stark contrast to youth from other typologies that possessed a variety of clothes reflective of the season and in good condition, myriad household (e.g., blankets, dishes, pictures, etc.) and hygiene (e.g., soap, shampoo, laundry detergent, etc.) items, recreational resources (e.g., CD player, soccer balls, television, etc.) and personal items (e.g., watch/jewelry, cell phone, photo album, etc.). A full side-by-side comparison of material resources by typology is included in Appendix L.

With such insufficiency, youth from Typology D found themselves in competition over scarce resources. As previously noted, individual norms were predominantly geared toward self-preservation. The youth appear to be universally oriented toward survival. Abraham Maslow (1943, 1954) established a framework by which to understand the behaviors and motivations of those who are challenged to meet survival needs. The foundation of Maslow’s framework is that people are motivated by unsatisfied needs and that lower level needs (e.g., physiological needs such as food, water, sleep; security of body and resources, etc.) must be satisfied before higher level needs (e.g., love and belonging; self-esteem and confidence, etc.) can be satisfied. He asserted that when people are deprived of or challenged to meet lower level needs, they might use violence to obtain or defend resources.

The youth from Typology D lacked persistent physical and material protection. Although incidences of violence occurred for youth across the city, youth from Typology D experienced disproportionate amounts of victimization. As noted above, connection to a group served as a protective factor against violence and theft for youth within typologies B and C; youth spoke of their sense of physical security in the context of the group and pointed to ways the group buffered violence in their informal
and formal environments. On the contrary, a consistent theme for youth within Typology D was high levels of vulnerability to abuse and exploitation. As was clearly evidenced throughout the data excerpts and discussion above (see Formation Dimension and Substance Dimension), issues of vulnerability, exploitation and violence cut across every domain of life (e.g., in negotiating relationships, finding a place to sleep, engaging in resource generating activities, etc.). Youth from Typology D were also forced to engage in a range of activities (e.g., begging, paying a bribe, etc.) to avoid violence or trade the experience of violence (e.g., engage in survival sex, etc.) to meet a material need (see Chapter 4). This vulnerability to exploitation and abuse was experienced within the group, as well as at the hands of people from the informal and formal environments. The myriad factors that protected youth from typologies B and C from violence (e.g., membership in a group, close connections among group members, etc.) or enabled them to avoid or respond to violence (e.g., norms related to resolving conflict without violence, etc.) were lacking for youth in Typology D. This is consistent with the work of McCarthy and colleagues (2002). Street youth from Toronto and Vancouver Canada that did not have a network of relationships marked by deep connection, care and support were significantly more likely to experience violence than those that possessed such networks.

Finally, the youth from Typology D lacked emotional support. Youth from typologies B and C voiced a preference for staying together to being alone on the street and viewed other members of their group as empathic and supportive. Their narratives were wrought with discussions of friendship and deep connection; there was a pervasive use of familial language. Conversely, persons from Typology D emphasized separateness and had significant misgivings of others. Their narratives were
characterized by a lack of discussion about friendships and an expressed wariness about other people. For youth within Typology D it was best to sleep “where no one is” as others “will steal from you”, to “stay alone” because then “I am in peace” and that “you can only depend on yourself.” Being together did not conjure up images of safety and support, but vulnerability and risk. A lack of emotional support left youth from Typology D to cope with the challenges of living on the street from disconnected and isolated positions. Within this context, it was not surprising that the majority of youth relied on substances and engaged in self-injurious behaviors as a way of temporarily suppressing painful memories and coping with life on the street (e.g., the cold, hunger, stress, etc.) and intense feelings (e.g., anger, rejection, despair, etc.).

As previously noted, many of the sites within Typology D were considered gateways. A significant number of youth (from typologies B and C) shared that they lived at one of these sites when they first came to the street, indicating that they eventually left and became integrated into a group of youth from another typology. The question is, how? What enabled a young person living on the street to locate other groups, connect to them, learn and conform to their norms and establish associations, thus gaining access to the resources leveraged through those associations? What disabled others? Unfortunately these exact questions were not posed to the youth in the context of the in-depth conversations, so explicit accounts of lived experiences were not available for analysis. However, insights offered through social capital theory and attachment theory may point to some potential factors impacting youths’ ability to develop relationships and build networks.

Social capital is almost always defined as an aggregate variable: the norms and networks of a particular family, group or community. However, decisions to invest in
and act on social capital are made by individual actors. As a resource embedded in associations, it depends on an individual’s capacity to form relationships with others, or sociability (Bullen & Onyx, 1998). Exchange is interpersonal in nature, not solitary. Therefore, the creation and use of social capital cannot be fully understood without the exploration of individual background factors as precursors exogenous to the process of accessing or mobilizing social capital. The background factor perhaps most striking in the present study is the path that led a young person to be on the street, or her or his past trajectory. Recall from the descriptive analysis (Chapter 4) that, when the past trajectory of all youth for which that information was available (n = 76) was considered together, no pattern emerged related to the factors that led children to the street. However, a different picture emerges as factors associated with past trajectory by typology were examined (see Table 5.7).

Table 5.7. Past Trajectory by Typology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past Trajectory</th>
<th>Typology A n=5</th>
<th>Typology B n=8</th>
<th>Typology C n=7</th>
<th>Typology D n=8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse in Home</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grew up in Orphanage</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of a Parent</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Help Family</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be with/invited by Friends</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Came to the Street with Family Member</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Two youth grew up in an orphanage and experienced abuse there.

For the most part, the youth from typologies B and C spent their early years in the context of families (i.e., they did not grow up in an orphanage) free from domestic violence. Conversely, abuse in the home was a contributing factor to being
on the street for the majority of youth from Typology D and over one-half of the youth spent significant time in an orphanage, some since birth. As discussed in Chapter 4 Romanians identify the *first five years of education*, the time period between birth and entering school that a child spends in the context of the family as playing a critical role in development. It is within this context a child learns to walk, talk and think. They also learn to distinguish right from wrong, how to develop relationships and get along with others. Research on early childhood underscores this intuitive knowledge; the first five years of a child’s life has a significant impact on ongoing and later development (Shonkoff, et al., 2000).

The impact of early developmental experiences is identified in the social capital theory literature as germane to the development of future relationships. “The family is the first building block in the generation of social capital for the larger society” (World Bank, nd; see also, Bubolz, 2001). The World Bank Group pointed to the significance of relational modeling within and outside the family emphasizing the importance of this modeling to the development of future relationships, especially as it relates to trust, reciprocity and exchanges. “The material and emotional support shared freely between family members generates an implicit willingness to return such support” (World Bank, nd).

Thus far the analysis related to social capital theory has drawn from the approaches of Coleman (1988) and Putnam (2000) that focused on norms such as trust and reciprocity as indicators of social capital. However, their theoretical approaches have been criticized for ignoring issues of power and equity. “Their framework obscures the structural relations of power and the tendencies of economies to reproduce the networks that enable unequal access to scarce resources to persist”
Leonard, 2008, pp. 225-226). Bourdieu (1977, 1986) and Lin (1999) adopted a more critical stance on social capital focusing on the convertibility or lack thereof between social capital and other forms of capital (e.g., human, cultural, etc.). For example, Bourdieu (1977) argued that cultural capital was as important as economic capital in reproducing unequal social relations and the inequality of opportunity, which ultimately produces unequal outcomes. Cultural capital is not conveyed as a one-time gift, but is gained as it imprints itself over time upon one’s habitus; “a set of dispositions, reflexes and forms of behavior people acquire through acting in society. It reflects the different positions people have in society, for example, whether they are brought up in a middle-class environment or in a working-class suburb” (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 19).

Social capital cannot be created by individuals acting in isolation; individuals must be able to engage in relationships. Perhaps the first five years of education received by youth from typologies B and C provided important socialization, or cultural capital, that better prepared them to negotiate normative relationships and systems. As previously articulated, the norms embraced by youth from these typologies (e.g., sharing what one had, protecting the vulnerable, respecting people’s property, avoiding violence, behaving in trustworthy ways, etc.) are also valued by the larger society. Norms are not innate, but learned over time and influenced by one’s context, or habitus. Hastings, Utendale and Sullivan (2007) identified several factors related to the socialization of pro-social development in children including the quality of parent-child interaction, opportunities to observe models (e.g., parents, siblings, peers, teachers, etc.) and sociocultural experiences (e.g., community involvement, etc.).

Many youth from Typology D came from family environments marked by deprivation
and hostility, environments that were not conducive to facilitating a healthy developmental foundation. Research (cf., Haapasalo, Tremblay, Boulérice, & Vitaron, 2000; Lichter, Shanahan, & Gardner, 2002) has demonstrated that youth raised in an adverse family environment are less pro-social than children from more stable homes. Perhaps the endowment of high levels of cultural capital enhanced the youth’s (from typologies B and C) capacity for sociability. It better equipped them to develop and negotiate relationships among each other, and as will be discussed in Chapter 6, with individuals and systems from their informal and formal environments.

The field of psychology offers a theoretical framework and research base affording a more nuanced perception regarding the impact of early developmental experiences on socio-emotional and relational development. Socio-emotional development enables a child to begin to understand his or her feelings, as well as the feelings of others and early attachment experiences create an internal working model for the development of future relationships. Attachment theory represents an ethological approach to personality development that was formulated by John Bowlby and expanded upon empirically by Mary Ainsworth (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). The focus for Bowlby and Ainsworth in this theory was on an infant’s or child’s emotional tie to caregivers and the effects of disruptions on that tie (Ainsworth, 1962; Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1980). In particular the manner in which the infant or child used the caregiver as a “safe haven” in times of fear and anxiety and as a “secure base” in times of exploration were emphasized. In addition, stress was placed on relational configurations between the caregiver and child and how those came to form “internal working models” (e.g., a set of expectations about the availability of attachment figures and the likelihood of support, etc.). These expectations become an
internalized representation of self in relationship to others for the child’s use in future interactions. Factors impacting early attachments include the availability of attachment figures and the quality of the child-caregiver relationships (e.g., warm and responsive versus hostile or unpredictable, etc.).

Using the current data set, Nicholas and Wright (2010) explored the relationship of “rough” estimates of attachment states of mind (George, Kaplan, & Main, 1984) to conceptualizations of friendship employed by the youth who provided information through in-depth conversations. Results indicated variation in both attachment states and conceptualizations of friendship and interaction between the two dimensions operated in a meaningful manner. Youth who exhibited disorganized, preoccupied and dismissive attachment states of mind tended to have an isolated (e.g., expressed wariness about other people, relational expectations of hostility or apathy, etc.) or instrumental (e.g., viewing others primarily in terms of what they could give, minimal connection, etc.) view of friendship. These youth tended to be from typologies D and A. Youth who exhibited an autonomous attachment state of mind tended to have a mutual (e.g., characterized by a deep sense of connection and solidarity with friends, relational expectations of care and concern from others, etc.) view of friendship. These youth tended to be from typologies B and C.

**A Different Kind of Capital - Typology A**

So far, much of what has been seen in the data analysis is consistent with the expectations of social capital theory. The networks created by youth from typologies B and C were reflective of high levels of bonding capital. Their investment in relationships with each other created embedded relational resources (i.e., clear norms and effective sanctions, the expectation of trust, sturdy norms of reciprocity and
collective action) affording those within the network access to a range of benefits (e.g., emotional support, guidance and information, protection/an increased sense of security and access to material resources, etc.). Conversely, the relational hallmarks resulting in the strong bonding social capital enjoyed by the youth from typologies B and C were deficient among the youth from Typology D. With such low levels of bonding capital, youth from Typology D were challenged to accrue material and socio-emotional benefits and faced increased victimization. Therefore, consistent with social capital theory forecasts, groups with high levels of bonding social capital had access to a range of benefits (e.g., material, socio-emotional, safety, etc.) necessary for getting by on the streets; networks with low to no bonding social capital did not.

On the other hand, groups from Typology A embodied dynamics inconsistent with theoretical expectations. The youths’ investment in their relationships with each other did not lead to expected relational resources; some were completely absent (i.e., trust of persons) and others operate idiosyncratically (i.e., norms and system for sanctioning norm violations, reciprocity exchanges and collective action). Their subsequent relational resources were not reflective of bonding social capital, but of what I have termed binding social capital. As previously articulated, bonding capital refers to the presence and qualities of relationships within a group and reflects networks based on principles of trust, mutual reciprocity and norms of collective action. Binding social capital is not based on the expectation of trust between actors, mutually beneficial reciprocity or normative rules of action. Binding social capital is based on trust in the rule structure (e.g., clear rules and sanctioning system maintained through coercive power, etc.) and obligated cooperation. The predictability and structure of relationships appeared more operative and valued than
the affective benefits derives from interactions. Adherence to the rule structure banded members together and exerted a restraining (e.g., forfeiture of autonomy, obedience to rule structure, etc.) and compelling (e.g., relinquishing material resources to group boss) effect. While high levels of binding capital afforded benefits to some members of the network, it also resulted in negative effects within and outside the group.

Embedded Relational/Structural Resources. Youth from Typology A formed and lived in groups. Initial entry into the group was extremely limited; groups within Typology A maintained rigid boundaries that were difficult to permeate. Access to the group was regulated by the group boss and contingent on knowing someone in the group. The groups ranged from 5-10 members and tended to be quite durable with a core of youth being affiliated with the group for over a decade. The dense network of relationships characteristic of groups within Typology A created a unique set of embedded relational resources affording group members access to range of benefits. However, benefits were often uneven, frequently came at a cost to individual members and resulted in negative implications beyond the group.

The first embedded resource within these networks relates to norms and sanctions. Like those groups within typologies B and C, groups within Typology A had clearly established norms of accepted behavior. Behavioral expectations and sanctions for violations were explicit. However, unlike the youth from typologies B and C who invested time in fostering desired behaviors, whose rule structure was tolerant of error and mercy was shown in redressing norm violations; in Typology A norms were rigid and the sanctioning system strict. Group norms were geared toward accumulating and maintaining possessions and position and included earning and contributing
materially to the group, not jeopardizing the group’s relationships (and the benefits that came from those relationships) with the formal environment (e.g., the police, NGOs, etc.) and not being a “sifonara” (a megaphone or gossiper; sharing what the group did with outsiders). As previously highlighted, Coleman (1988) pointed to clear norms and effective sanctions for norm violations as a potent form of social capital that can be used to constrain or facilitate actions. However, the examples he sets forth consistently reflect norms that facilitate socially desirable and constrain socially undesirable behaviors. For example, effective norms that encourage watchfulness in a neighborhood and communication among neighbors make it possible for people to leave their doors unlocked during the day or lawn equipment in the front yard without fear of them being stolen. These norms foster pro-social behaviors that are not only beneficial to those enacting the norms, but to those who live in the broader community.

Conversely, the norms within Typology A did not foster pro-social behaviors, and in some ways encouraged antisocial ones. For example, the emphasis placed on generating and contributing material resources to the group was not constrained by engaging in legal resource generating activities. In fact the youth spoke of assaulting individuals and breaking into foundations to steal from them. This action was celebrated. As was previously narrated by Flori, females in the group were often physically and sexually assaulted and held captive (e.g., tied to the pipes, etc.) by the group (decidedly antisocial behaviors). However, these behaviors were not only tolerated but also expected. Flori’s attempt to rescue females from this abuse by going to the police (a decidedly pro-social behavior) resulted in her being sanctioned for violating a group norm (i.e., not sharing what the group did with outsiders). The
clear norms and effective sanctions for norm violations represented a potent form of social capital in Typology A used to constrain and facilitate actions. However, the norms and sanctioning system frequently constrained (sanctioned) pro-social behavior and encouraged (facilitated) antisocial behavior. Ultimately, this benefited only a handful of group members; it was often detrimental to some group members and to those who lived in the broader community.

The strong durable networks created and maintained by youth from Typology A are consistent with Coleman’s notion of network closure (1988, 1990). As previously noted, Coleman argued that network closure (a network where everyone is connected to, knows and can monitor the behavior of everyone else) is an important aspect of network structure that facilitates the emergence of norms and sanctioning systems. Closure enables social norms to impose more external pressures on individuals. Coleman argued that an environment of reinforced norms and effective sanctions builds and ensures trustworthiness. In other words, closure builds trust in those with whom one interacts within the network, which increases the effectiveness of social capital. But contrary to what Coleman asserted, closure did not build trust among the youth in Typology A; network closure built a more effective surveillance system. Confidence did not lie in members of the group, but in the broader system that structured group behavior.

This leads to the second embedded resource - trust in the rule structure and sanctioning system. This resource did not emerge out of the specific relationships within the network but out of the dynamics between network structure and substance. As has already been emphasized throughout this analysis, an individual’s ability to trust others is central to the development and maintenance of social capital (Coleman,
1988, 1990; Dasgupta, 1999; Fukuyama, 1995a, 1995b; Putnam, 1993a). Once again, using the three dimensions captured in the General Social Survey (i.e., individual’s perception of trust or mistrust, whether other people are helpful or self-focused, expectation of fair treatment or being taken advantage of; Davis, et al., 1998) as a reference point for evaluating the level of familiar trust, data excerpts throughout this chapter clearly point to extremely low levels of trust among the youth from Typology A. They did not have an overall sense that the other members of the group were trustworthy, helpful or fair. In actuality, there was a total lack of familiar or personal trust, even an inherent distrust of others. Even though someone demonstrated trustworthiness in a relationship, youth from Typology A stressed that they were still not to be trusted. This disabled trust permeated all relationships and even extended to blood relatives and the perception of self (e.g., not trusting one’s motives, not trusting oneself to do the right thing, etc.).

Putnam anticipated such low levels of trust in the context of a vertical structure; the power structure of a network impacts the nature of trust inherent within the associations of the network. Returning to his analysis of regional governments in Italy, Putnam (1993a) concluded that the northern regions of Italy prospered because of their high levels of social capital. Whereas regions in northern Italy had been successful in sustaining stocks of social capital such as trust, norms and networks, southern Italy had fallen prey to a culture in which individualism took precedence over wider responsibility. In the “uncivic” regions of southern Italy, there was not much trust; southern Italy was characterized by a concentration of power, less social participation and a more individualism. Putnam noted that differences in vertical and horizontal ways of organizing made a difference suggesting that vertical,
hierarchical networks did not serve to foster trust and cooperation. He pointed to the power imbalances inherent in such structures as a prohibiting factor. “In the north people were citizens, in the south people were subjects” (Putnam, 1993a, p.121).

Although Putnam spoke in a macro context, his observations are relevant to the current mezzo milieu. The network structure of youth from groups within Typology A was quite vertical. There was a distinct person in power that operated more like a dictator (i.e., a person who possess absolute authority and control over others) than a leader (i.e., a person who directs, guides and influences others under one’s authority). The group boss achieved and maintained his position through coercive power and used his power to control the environment and the behavior of other group members, including the control of the physical space in which the group resided (i.e., locked door and limited access) and the flow of resources. Latham (2000) asserted that vertical networks were often sustained through coercive power. “Citizens have some of their rights of participation and choice replaced by the exercise of authority and control” (p. 12). Group members were expected to “earn their keep” by generating resources and turning them over to the group boss who controlled and managed all the material capital, often dispersing it unequally. The group boss often maintained his control through physical restraint and violence; weaker members (e.g., younger, female, etc.) were often exploited for the benefit of the leader. The boss and those privileged in the group hierarchy were attended to first; with position in the group came access to superior resources.

The final embedded resource, obligated cooperation, also emerged from the dynamics between network structure and substance. With a hierarchical vertical structure and a lack of trust in people, theoretical expectations would point to low
levels of cooperation (Putnam, 1993a). In fact, some social capital theorists (cf.,
Dasgupta, 1999; Fukuyama, 1995a, 1995b) attributed the ability of people to
cooperate to their ability to trust each other. Nevertheless, on some level, the youth
from Typology A did cooperate; they participated in a combined effort to accomplish
an end. As established, the youth from groups within Typology A did not cooperate
because they trusted each other, but because they trusted the rule structure and
sanctioning system within which they were obliged to cooperate. Exchange was
compelled to shore up group resources and maintain group membership. In the context
of social capital theory cooperation is typically conceptualized as a means to a
mutually beneficial end (cf., Bullen & Onyx, 1998; Putnam, 1995). However, youth
from Typology A did not cooperate for mutual benefit. Unlike the joint ownership of
social capital enjoyed by youth from typologies B and C, those with power within the
hierarchy of Typology A enjoyed exclusive ownership. The primary beneficiaries of
youths' investment in the group were the group boss and those closest to him. Force
was used as a substitute for trust and obedience to authority as a substitute for
cooperation. Vertical networks devoid of trust and expectations based on the
trustworthiness of another were dependent on the will of those in power, not on the
collectivity. Within such a network, exchange was inherently unequal. Youth within
Typology A relied on the actions of those in authority to achieve individual self-
interest and well-being. Their actions within the context of the group were not equal
to the expectation of benefit; everyone was not equal and did not have equal access
to the group's resources. In such an environment, the youth at times leaned toward
opportunism; they took advantage of circumstances that led to personal benefit in
spite of the potential consequences.
In some cases youth defected in regards to their loyalty to the group. As group members cooperated due to obligation and not desire, there appeared to be a lack of commitment or loyalty to the group. Across sites in Typology A group members chose to violate group rules in the pursuit of self-interests (e.g., buying and eating/drinking food/alcohol away from group so that one does not have to contribute all the money they earned, sharing negative information about a group member to an NGO staff to cut-off potential access to a resource, etc.). Although they formed and lived in a group, their connections to each other did not facilitate a transition from individual self-interest to group interest and collective action. Contributions to the group materially were out of obligation and ultimately self-interest (e.g., a desire to stay in the group, etc.), not out of a desire to contribute in mutually beneficial ways.

For females in the group, defection moved beyond loyalty to physically escaping from the confines of the group. As will be detailed below, females were consistently exploited and abused by other members in the group. The meager benefits accrued via their association to the group did not outweigh the personal costs and injuries incurred. Females did not persist in the groups within Typology A.

**Accrued Benefits, Known Exploitation and Incurred Risks.** As has been articulated throughout this analysis, the essential argument of social capital theory is that relationships matter, that one’s investment in relationships reaps valuable assets by virtue of membership in the network. This is where social capital demonstrates that it is capital (Lin, 2001a); it generates returns on investment in social relationships. For some youth in Typology A, this assertion held true. They indeed had access to a range of benefits (e.g., material resources, limited protection, etc.). However, their access to resources was not solely based on investment, but on the power (or lack thereof)
they held in the network. For many, investment in relationships did not equal their benefit. Most incurred some level of known exploitation; some incurred violence.

By virtue of membership in the group, youth from Typology A had access (though at times constrained by the group boss) to a range of material resources. The material resources available to these youth in fact rivaled any other typology. The youth possessed a variety of clothes for all seasons; many times the clothing was brand new and with high-end designer labels. They even had worn and dirtied clothing items designated for begging (see discussion on adaptive misrepresentation, Chapter 4). They had various pairs of shoes (e.g., boots, tennis shoes, slippers for indoors, etc.), coats for a range of seasons and an array of clothing accessories (e.g., wallets, purses, scarves, watches, etc.). The food items they possessed encompassed all suggested food groups in nutritional pyramids. They had protein (e.g., beans, ham, chicken, sausage, etc.), dairy (e.g., cheese, milk, etc.), fruits and vegetables (e.g., potatoes, carrots, apples, etc.), bread, a host of condiments (e.g., cooking oil, mustard, jelly, etc.) and desserts (e.g., cake, gum, etc.). They also had access to a range of beverages (e.g., pop, fruit juice, beer, wine, champaign, etc.). They possessed myriad personal hygiene items (e.g., soap, toothbrushes, razors, hair dye, shower buff, etc.) and had access to running water to bathe and wash their clothes and dishes. Their living spaces were decorated (e.g., pictures, etc.) and full of household items ranging from blankets, pillows and sheets to dishes (e.g., mugs, glasses, plates, bowls, pots, pans, silverware, etc.), lamps, furniture (e.g., mattresses, chairs, picnic table, etc.) and appliances (e.g., refrigerator, etc.). In addition, their living spaces contained leisure items (e.g., television, VCR, radio, CD player, etc.). Many youth also possessed many personal luxury items (e.g., portable CD player, cell phone, jewelry, etc.). As
previously noted, a full side-by-side comparison of material resources by typology is included in Appendix L.

Not all of the youth in the group had access to all material resources all the time. As previously noted, part of maintaining group membership involved complying with the norm of contributing to the group materially. There was an expectation that group members would turn over their resources to the group boss who controlled and managed all the material capital, often dispersing it unequally. The boss and those privileged in the group hierarchy were attended to first; with position in the group came access to superior resources. Group members strived to earn status in the group by consistently providing material resources, helping to maintain order and doing favors for the group boss. Furthermore, the physical dwellings of groups from Typology A were segregated into two parts, one of which was more resource-rich (e.g., heated, had more resources like a television and refrigerator, etc.). When conflicts arose within the group the boss often resolved it by relegating the “guilty” party to a separate part of the dwelling. This pseudo-exile cut members off from the group and many of the group’s resources. The culpable members stayed disconnected until they reestablished themselves with the group or the decision was made to cut them off from the group permanently.

For the most part, the material items possessed by youth from Typology A were acquired through purchasing them with their economic resources. However, their access to economic resources and resource generating activities, as well as possessing a secure location in which to house themselves and their accumulated possessions, were facilitated through their relationships with their informal and formal environments. As will be discussed in Chapter 6, the youth from Typology A had a
sophisticated ability to connect to a broad range of networks. This “bridging” social capital (Putnam, 2000), the presence and quality of relationships between group members and diverse social networks, facilitated their ability to “get ahead” (Briggs, 1998). Youth from Typology A had the ability to use relationships with broader networks for leverage, which afforded them a significant advantage over youth from other typologies, especially B and D.

In spite of their membership in a group, most youth from Typology A lacked protection within the group. As noted above, for youth from typologies B and C their connection to a group served as a protective factor against violence and theft; youth spoke of their sense of physical security in the context of the group and pointed to ways the group buffered violence in their informal and formal environments. A very different dynamic emerged in the context of Typology A. Membership did not offer a safe haven within the boundaries of the group. Conversely, the experience of violence at the hands of other group members was to be expected. One way the group boss maintained his authority and controlled the behavior of group members was through the use of physical or chemical restraint and violence. Furthermore, weaker members (e.g., those with less power or position in the hierarchy, younger, female, etc.) were exploited for the benefit of the boss. This took the guise of anything from being forced to beg to generate more resources for the group to something insidious like physical and sexual assault.

In the context of within group violence there were distinct differences along gender lines. Females in the group experienced the brunt of violent actions. As previously noted, it was commonplace for females in the group to be sexually assaulted by group members. Although recognized as a negative experience, violence
against women for the pleasure of men was seen as normal within the group. For example, in the context of my in-depth conversation with Roman and Calu from site2, in response to an inquiry about what life was like on the street for females in particular, Roman responded, “If you are a girl on the street? Pfuahhh . . . I don’t wish this to anybody. Do you know why? She didn’t have luck in this world. She should have been born a boy”. When asked what he meant by not having luck, Roman described what women could expect in the context of the group: “Didn’t I tell you? They have to fly like those birds, from one tree to the other (he laughs), from one man to another so they (the males) would feel good (sexually). She does not do what she wants. They (the males) do what they want”. As articulated above, attempts to rescue group members from violence resulted in sanctions.

Although youth from Typology A lacked safety within the context of the group, some experienced decreased victimization from outside the group. Group membership served as a protective factor buffering against the experience of violence from the informal and formal environments. However, the way in which it served as a buffer differed significantly from the experiences of youth from typologies B and C. In typologies B and C the youth provided each other with guidance on ways to avoid trouble (tied to behavioral expectations, e.g., try to avoid violence in resolving conflict, etc.), warned each other when trouble was eminent and intervened for each other when violence ensued. In this case the buffering effect was tied to the relationships within the group. Conversely, in Typology A, the buffering effect was tied to the unique relationships to the informal and, in particular, the formal environments. It was tied to the relationships group members had outside the group. Again, in the context of this potential benefit, females in the group experienced
increased exploitation. At times, male group members took the role of a pimp. One way the group maintained its relationships with those from the formal and informal environments was to arrange for sex with a female from the group. As noted, how youth from Typology A connected to their informal and formal environments and the benefits accrued through relationships to broader networks is more fully articulated in Chapter 6.

Researchers who explored street gang activities in the United States supported this mixed bag of protection. Although gangs did offer protection to members (Decker & Van Winkle, 1996; Sanchez-Jankowski, 1991), not all gang members were equally invested in protecting fellow members and some experienced violence as a result of membership in a gang (Klein, 1995; Miller, 1998; Miller & Decker, 2001; Sanchez-Jankowski, 1991). Those researching street children globally linked level of victimization with the quality of relationship experienced among street children. For example, in their study of the diverse relationships established by street children in Canada and the varying resources afforded youth in conjunction with their differing relationships, McCarthy, et al., (2002) found that non-street family relationships failed to provide the same level of assistance as associated with fictive street family relationships. They were less likely to assist with food, shelter or income, as well as the provision of safety.

Finally, the youth from Typology A lacked emotional support within the group. The descriptions of their relationships reflected a very instrumental stance toward others and were void of emotional connection. The youth in Typology A characterized their relationships instrumentally viewing others primarily in terms of what they could offer, whether this was food, money, sex, etc. Their overall relational field was one of
minimal connection, with relational expectations and behaviors centered on the use of the other as an object to use for one’s own benefit. Relationships were viewed as suspect and distance was required. There was a minimization of relationships and detachment from emotions. Such connections did not lend themselves to serving as resource for emotional support. Unlike youth from typologies B and C, youth from Typology A did not turn to their relationships with each other as a way to cope with stress. Under pressure youth relied on substances and engaged in self-injurious behaviors as a way of coping with intense feelings, especially anger.

As previously noted, the sites within Typology D served as gateway sites with a significant number of youth (from typologies B and C) residing at one of these sites when first coming to the street. However, the youth from Typology A did not enter the street through a gateway site; they appeared to integrate immediately into the group with which they resided at the time. The question is, how? What enabled them to immediately gain entrée into a group within Typology A? What enabled them to locate the group, learn and conform to its strict norms, and embrace and participate in its sanctioning system, thus gaining access (though constrained) to the resources leveraged through those associations? Unfortunately these exact questions were not posed to the youth in the context of the in-depth conversations, so explicit accounts of lived experiences were not available for analysis. Furthermore, the groups’ rigid boundaries in relation to sharing information with outsiders posed a challenge to gaining insight into deeper level dynamics within the groups. However, a return to a Bourdieuan application of social capital theory may provide some preliminary insight.

Youth began developing survival skills before they came to the street. As previously articulated, the youth from typologies B and C received their first five
years of education; for the most part, they spent their early years in the context of families free from domestic violence. This past trajectory afforded important socialization, or cultural capital, that better prepared them to negotiate normative relationships and systems. Conversely, abuse in the home was a contributing factor to being on the street for the majority of youth from Typology D and over one-half of the youth spent significant time in an orphanage, some since birth. Although youth from Typology A had a similar background as youth from Typology D (i.e., four out of five came from home environments plagued by poverty and domestic violence, three out of the five spent time in an orphanage), there are important distinguishing features. Within Typology A, every young person who contributed information through in-depth conversations came to the street with a family member (i.e., sibling, parent) and their time spent in an orphanage was far more limited. Perhaps the habitus formed by being raised in and around violence and poverty and being with a family member who served as a model during the transition to street life equipped youth from Typology A with a set of skills and dispositions important for negotiating non-normative relationships and systems. With this as their foundation, perhaps time in an orphanage afforded youth a venue in which to further refine these skills and connect to other youth who could promote their endeavors. Many youth gained entrée to a group within Typology A via a relationship they established while in an institution (e.g., orphanage, Urban, etc.).

Derived from Bourdieu’s conceptualization of embodied cultural capital, researchers have pointed to the advantage of what has been termed “street capital” in negotiating street life. For example, in his research with street children in Oslo, Sweden, Sandberg (2008) explored how past embodied experiences (one’s habitus) with violence and crime was transformed into “street capital” that could be used to
negotiate street culture. He argued that, in a street culture where knowing how to negotiate and use violence was a critical resource, the habitus formed by being raised in and around violence (e.g., war-inflicted communities, violent and dysfunctional families, etc.) could be beneficial. Also within a Bourdieuan framework, Lankenau, Clatts, Welle, Goldsamt and Gwadz (2005) explored the impact of past trajectory on homelessness, drug use and sex work among homeless adolescent males in New York City.

Bourdieu suggests cultural capital is transmitted diffusely, continuously, and often unconsciously within the family, and is accumulated throughout childhood and adolescence. Similarly, ‘street capital’ is latent knowledge gained through observations and experiences . . . that enables a youth to develop survival skills in the street economy. (Lankenau, et al., 2005, p. 11)

Lankenau and colleagues pointed to early exposure of street capital (e.g., negotiating poverty, criminal activity, abuse, etc.) within the family and experience in public institutions as assisting youth in transforming street capital into competencies and paving the way for successful street careers. For youth within Typology A perhaps preliminary street capital was acquired through negotiating violence and poverty within the family. Consistent with the findings of Lankenau et al. (2005), perhaps time in an institution afforded these youth an opportunity to further refine this street capital; they further developed their ability to negotiate and use relationships and work the system in beneficial ways. How this street capital potentially enabled youth to negotiate relationships and systems in their informal and formal environments for advantage will be further explored in Chapter 6.
Interpretations of social capital have tended to treat social capital as a positive factor. Consistent with previous research, the present study calls this into question. “Although social capital may increase access to an array of normatively valued outcomes, it may also create inroads to disreputable or deviant ends” (McCarthy et al., 2002, p. 834). Social capital may have negative effects for some parties, what is referred to in the literature as the “dark side” of social capital (Portes & Landolt, 1996; see also Putzel 1997). Portes and Landolt (1996) identified four significant problems associated with strong social capital, three of which were manifested in the context of Typology A. One such problem associated with strong social capital is social exclusion, which can be understood as strong ties that enable members of a group to exclude outsiders. This can be seen in the common development of any “us versus them” mentality. The boundaries around groups within Typology A were clear and rigid; access to the group was regulated by the group boss and was contingent on knowing someone in the group. Rigid boundaries also blocked outsiders from gaining information about the group. Another problem associated with strong social capital is restriction on individual freedom. One of the trade-offs of membership in the group was the demand for conformity, which significantly encroached on an individual’s personal freedoms. Group members lost control over their resources, and in some cases their wills and their bodies. Finally, high levels of social capital could develop in negative directions as in the case of “public bads”, such as organized crime families and prostitution operations. These groups rely on closed membership with strong bonds of allegiance but result in socially non-productive, “negative capital” for society as a whole. As noted, groups within Typology A had explicit norms and maintained rigid sanctioning systems. This represented a potent form of social capital used to
constrain and facilitate actions. However, the norms governing groups within Typology A frequently constrained (sanctioned) pro-social behavior and encouraged (facilitated) antisocial behavior. Ultimately, this benefited only a handful of group members; it was often detrimental to other group members and to those who lived in the broader community.

Creating and Leveraging Relationships beyond the Group

As previously outlined, Putnam (2000) distinguished between two forms of social capital: bridging and bonding. Bonding social capital consists of social ties within homogenous groups. It fosters access to the group’s internal resources and is argued to provide people in the group with emotional and material supports for getting by in their daily lives. Typologies B and C had similar emotional support, socialization and protective resources. Leonard (2005) identified these aspects of social capital as having use value; resources available for personal immediate well-being. While this capital is not always convertible to other forms of capital more valued in the “marketplace” (e.g., human, economic, etc.) the benefits are vital for daily survival and support on the street. However, do they situate youth for upward mobility? Bridging social capital consists of ties between heterogeneous groups. It tends to be outward looking and inclusive, bridging people across diverse social divides. These extensive networks may lead to social capital that is rich in what Leonard (2005) called exchange value, capital that is easily converted to other forms of capital. Bridging ties fosters access to a broader range of external resources not possessed by the group necessary for getting ahead in their lives (Briggs 1998; Granovetter 1973; Putnam 2000). The next chapter explores the youths’ links to
broader networks and the potential resources and opportunities embedded in such associations.
CHAPTER 6

INTERPRETIVE ANALYSIS

The creation and use of social capital: Connecting to the informal and formal environments

The previous chapter explored the role of the group (network) the youths who lived on the streets of Bucharest developed (or failed to develop) and how they contributed (or failed to contribute) to their survival. What has been termed bonding capital focuses on the internal characteristics of such networks, associations within homogeneous groups, which foster access to the group’s internal resources. As argued in the previous chapter, groups with high levels of bonding social capital afforded those within the network access to a range of internal resources (e.g., material, emotional support, protection, etc.) necessary for getting by in their daily lives. However, bonding capital only provided half the story. For example, groups from typologies B and C had high levels of bonding social capital, which afforded them similar emotional support, socialization and protective resources. Although these benefits were vital for daily survival and support on the street, they were not always convertible to other forms of capital more valued in the marketplace (e.g., economic assets). Groups from Typology C had significantly more material resources than groups from Typology B and enjoyed more stability in their living environment. The question is: What explained this difference? Groups from typologies A and D had extremely low
levels of bonding capital thus limiting access to many resources enjoyed by youth from typologies B and C (i.e., emotional support, guidance and information, protection within the group) and exposing them to unique vulnerabilities. Although typologies A and D both lacked bonding social capital, youth from groups in Typology A had significantly more material resources than groups from typologies B and D and, to some extent, C. The binding social capital that emerged within the context of the groups across Typology A helped explain how the group functioned and how they managed their resources once obtained, but did not explicate how they were enabled to access rich material resources and maintain stability in their environment. The question remained: *What explains this difference?*

In the investigation of social capital, researchers have observed that social capital varies in its nature and function; bonding and bridging social capital operate uniquely and lead to different outcomes (Beugelsdijk & Smulders, 2003; Briggs, 1998; Gittell & Vidal, 1998; Halpern, 2005; Putnam, 2002). While bonding social capital is heralded as a vital resource for “getting by” in life, bridging social capital is herald as a vital means for “getting ahead” (Briggs, 1998; Granovetter, 1973; Putnam, 2000). Lin (2001b) demarcated associations as homophilous (among persons who are similar) or heterophilous (among persons who are dissimilar). He asserted that homophilous associations (bonding capital) embody the strongest connection with the least valuable payout in the marketplace. Heterophilous associations (bridging social capital) are produced from weaker connections, but result in a more valuable payout in the marketplace (Lin, 2001b; see also McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). According to Putnam (2000), bridging social capital tends to be outward looking and consist of widely dispersed ties between heterogeneous groups, thus bridging across
sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., gender, ethnicity, education, etc.) and other barriers (Gittell & Vidal, 1998; Putnam, 2002). This boundary-spanning quality of bridging capital makes it more likely to expose people to new information and a broader range of resources, which affords pathways to advantage helping people to get ahead (Briggs, 1998; Putnam, 2002).

This chapter continues a more abstract investigation of the youths’ networks and need-meeting strategies moving beyond the group to explore the presence of bridging social capital. The chapter begins with defining the broader network web in which street children operated, including the informal and formal environments. Within the context of the four typologies, the subsequent sections continue to investigate the second and third overarching questions that guided this study: Under what circumstances, conditions, or processes are the children on the street able to meet their needs in the face of adversity? and What are the informal networks created and used by street children in an effort to build opportunities for survival? Specifically, did the youth connect to their broader informal and formal environments, and if so, did the broader networks they connected with contribute to their survival?

**The Broader Network Web in which Street Children Operate**

The young people who made their lives on the streets of Bucharest did not live in a vacuum; they were a part of a broader landscape. To various degrees and in varying ways the street children in Bucharest engaged in relationships with people from their informal and formal environments. For some, these associations were productive and could be leveraged affording youth access to a range of benefits. Other youth were challenged to develop relationships that could be accessed for assistance.
In the context of the present analysis, I have divided these broader associations into two categories, the informal and the formal environments.

The informal environment represents the relationships that developed naturally, were not associated with an official entity and emerged in the context of youths’ day-to-day activities. Across typologies, youth interfaced with individuals in and around the contexts in which they spent their time (e.g., where they lived, worked, socialized, etc.). A comprehensive description of the informal environment is detailed in Chapter 5 under Setting Dimension. As noted in Chapter 5, the youth from typologies B, C and D lived at or near to main thoroughfares and public transit stops. Their surroundings included apartment buildings, stores, parks and hotels. The geographic location of the youth within Typology A was characterized by physical embeddedness in neighborhoods. Although they were removed from main transit lines, they too were surrounded by apartment buildings and some stores; their work placed them in more public arenas, including large markets and public parking lots near to malls and parks. Within these contexts youth had opportunities to interact with a range of people.

The formal environment represents the relationships that developed in the context of interfacing with an official entity. Across typologies, myriad opportunities emerged for youth to interact with individuals associated with formal institutions operating in an official capacity. Within the context of the present analysis, the two most significant entities that emerged in the data were foundations and law enforcement. On an ongoing basis the youth across Bucharest interfaced with personnel from various foundations and law enforcement officials from a range of police sections. These two formal entities appeared to play a key role in the lives of
street children; at times the youths’ associations with these entities led to positive outcomes and contributed to their survival and at times they did not.

It is important to note that it was not the purpose of this study to identify specific foundations or police sections separately or to criticize or highlight the negative or positive attributes regarding their work. Nor was it the purpose of this study to call out the behavior of a particular foundation worker or police officer. All foundations, police sections and workers have strengths and weaknesses, and have much to teach about effectively working with a challenging population. However, it was the purpose of this study to identify themes that emerged in the context of the youths’ interactions with formal environments, to describe the dynamics at play within relationships and the potential consequences (positive or negative) of associations. In order to minimize a focus on specific foundations, police sections or workers any reference to one of these entities will be referred to in generic form (i.e., Foundation X, Police Section X, the foundation worker). Since particular police sections, and potentially foundations, pointed to a specific geographic location in Bucharest, speaking in generic terms further protects the confidentiality of research participants. At times, the street youth mentioned multiple foundations, police sections and/or workers within the same dialogue. In such cases, in an effort to increase comprehension of what is being communicated, numbers will be used (e.g., Foundation 1, Foundation 2, etc.)

It is important to note that the informal and formal environments did not represent discrete categories of associations. At times, a young person developed a relationship with someone in the context of an informal environment that later became associated with a formal institution. For example, two young men lived in the
same apartment complex as children; one later ended up on the street and the other worked for an NGO assisting street children. Although their relationship started in the informal environment, they now interfaced in a formal context. The reverse also occurred. For example, a group of youth first encountered individuals in law enforcement when they were being confronted for “wandering” on the street. They later developed a unique relationship with these law enforcement officials and were able to generate economic resources through working informally for them.

This study was conducted in a particular setting (the streets of Bucharest) because the context itself was a salient part of the study with an emphasis on an overall understanding of the unique characteristics of the participants in their environments. The triangulation of qualitative methods (i.e., prolonged engagement through participant observation, in-depth conversations) afforded an opportunity to observe first-hand youth interacting with a host of people from their informal and formal environments; their narratives reflected if and how youths’ investment in relationships to their broader networks contributed to their survival.

In the subsequent discussion of if and how the street children in Bucharest created and leveraged relationships from their broader social networks, each typology is introduced with a representative interaction from the data that captures the dynamics and consequences (sometimes positive and sometimes negative) of their associations. From the onset of this study, my desire was for the participating youth to be central. Their agency and the centrality of their voices were critical in the context of writing this analysis; they were critical to telling the story. Therefore, I have endeavored to continue to immerse the reader into the data throughout the chapter by incorporating excerpts from field notes, in-depth conversation transcripts and my
reflective journal. Although some data selections are lengthy, the thick description afforded in the field notes allows for an examination of specific behaviors and the settings in which they occurred. Excerpts from field notes and direct quotations from participants also enable the reader to read first-hand from the participants and their perspectives on their lives. These details deepen one’s understanding of the phenomenon and ultimately contributes to an adequate assessment and verification of the findings.

Creating and Leveraging Relationships in the Informal and Formal Environments

To varying degrees, the street children from Bucharest who contributed information to the present study were resourceful and active in their attempts to build social networks with their informal and formal environments. Some youth were successful; they built strong associations that led to a range of resources and opportunities. Some youth were challenged; they struggled to build associations, often lacked necessary resources and could not access pathways to opportunity.

Typology A

At 7:30 PM Daniel arrived home from work via a taxi. Roman noted that Daniel has a lot of friends who drive taxis and is able to get rides for free. He came over and greeted us with handshakes. He indicated that he remembered meeting me before. I explained again who I was. It should be noted that Daniel was dressed in very nice clothes: designer shorts, designer t-shirt and Adidas tennis shoes. He also had a cell phone hanging around his neck. The band it was connected to lit up when touched. I asked Daniel where he worked. He indicated that he worked at a stand in a central area of Bucharest. Daniel went down into the lower level of the utility building and returned with 2 photo albums. He showed us pictures of the kiosk where he worked selling plumbing and electrical supplies. He also showed us pictures of his boss, his boss’ house and boss’ dog – he noted that they were very good friends… As we continued to talk a police officer approached the building. When Daniel saw him he walked over to him. They shook hands. The police officer looked at Daniel’s cell phone. Daniel showed him how the band lit up and then took it off his neck and
handed it the officer. The officer looked it over. Daniel showed an interest in the
officer’s gun. The officer took it out of his holster and showed it to him while
maintaining possession of the gun. We were too far away to hear any of their
conversation. I asked Roman if everything was OK. He indicated that it was – that the
police officer was probably here to see Romica; he probably needed Romica to assist
him with something at the station. After a few minutes, the police officer handed
Daniel his phone back and went over to the steps leading down into the utility
building and hollered down for Romica.

Field Notes, July 23, 2003

The above excerpt from my field notes serves as a representative interaction of
the youth within this typology with their broader social contexts. The youth from
Typology A had a sophisticated ability to connect to an expansive range of networks.
As noted in the field note, youth from Typology A enjoyed beneficial relationships
across the formal and informal environment, which afforded them access to a broad
range of resources and opportunities.

When speaking of their interactions with people from their informal and formal
environments, the youth from groups within Typology A consistently pointed to the
importance of following time schedules, keeping appointments and knowing how to
talk to and interact appropriately with people. For example, in the context of my in-
depth conversation with Reluca, she was clear about when one should seek assistance
from foundations, as well as how one should behave and what one should say while
they are there.

Me: Are there places in Romania that help street kids?

Reluca: Yes ... there is Foundation 1, Foundation 2 ... (long pause). They wash us,
give us clothes, food ... (long pause) Every morning at 8 I can go. I need to
be there before 10 o’clock. They like you to be there early; that is when they
are most likely to help. When you go you need to not be rude. They do not
help the ones who are rude. We need to say, “I kiss your hand” ... “hello”
... “goodbye” .... Like this. You need to act polite. And when you are done
you say “thank you” and you go.

Reluca age 12, site23
The importance of knowing how to interact with people cut across all relationships and contexts. Whether they were interacting with law enforcement, personnel from a foundation or strangers on the street, the youth emphasized the importance of showing consideration, courtesy and good manners in how one spoke to and interacted with others. The youth often tied knowing how to behave with accessing resources. As noted above, when asked about places that helped street children Reluca immediately began to connect receiving assistance with following schedules and behavioral expectations. This included the language one used, the niceties around greetings and saying goodbye, and (as seen below) the posture one took even if (initially) they were not treated with respect. When asked about some of the most important things one would need to know to negotiate life on the street, Roman and Calu first pointed to being amiable and courteous. However, the brothers quickly noted that there were limits to behaving politely; behavior appeared more motivational than characterological or dispositional.

**Calu:** You need to know how to talk to a man. You need to know how to be polite and show respect. This is the most important thing … to know how to show and get respect.

**Me:** And how does that work? How do you show and get respect?

**Roman:** When you meet a man on the street, you first salute him and talk nicely to him… you shake his hand… “Hi, how are you” … like that…

**Calu:** Yes… it is important to talk nicely … even if they do not come through for you at first. For example, to the ones at the foundations if they say to you they will come on a certain day to help you and they don’t come. They come after a week or two. Even then you shouldn’t come to them and say, “Dude … fuck you, cause you didn’t come on that day… and that you come whenever you want…” You need to talk nicely to them. But if they make fun of you in any way, that is different. You then have to react too as he reacts.

**Me:** So if they make fun of you, you should make fun of them?
The youths’ reaction to slights carried both positive and negative consequences. On the one hand, their ability to draw boundaries when they perceived they were being taken advantage of was an asset that enabled them to avoid exploitation and abuse from their informal and formal environments. On the other hand, at times their responses resulted in defiance and were injurious to others. In such cases, sometimes their responses were overt and public; sometimes they were covert and criminal. Examples of how these dynamics played out in the context of their relationships are detailed below in the exploration of the associations the youth from Typology A had with their informal and formal environments and the benefits that inhered within those associations.

The youth from Typology A enjoyed valuable relationships within the context of their formal environments, including with law enforcement. Law enforcement appeared to play a very significant role in the lives of street children across Bucharest. However, the nature and outcome of youths’ relationships with the police varied significantly. In the course of their in-depth conversations, youth from every other typology consistently identified the police as a significant challenge. The following brief excerpts serve as examples:

Edi: The police. (laughs) Some police are very tough... they were taking us because we were wandering on the street... I was getting the beating from the police...and so on. Some police are very hard on you.

Edi age 25, site3

Alina: You need to protect yourself from the police ... because they don't like the boschetari.

Alina age 26, site4
Adrian: We suffer very much. The police is chasing us, is beating us up. We need to protect ourselves from them...

Placa: You need to be careful with the police. The police beats me, beats me, beats me; they take from the street... they say I am a hooligan on the street. They take me for nothing and they beat me.

Maria: They (the police) always take you and fine you and beat you...

Adi: They beat you, they fine you... they put gypsies that they know to beat you and take your money and your clothes.

Maria: They put you innocent in the prison.

These experiences with violence and injustice stand in stark contrast to the experience of youth from groups within Typology A. During my time on the street I witnessed myriad interactions between youth from the various typologies and law enforcement; what occurred with youth from Typology A reflected a dramatic qualitative difference. Their relationships with law enforcement were unique. Many youth from other typologies tried to avoid the police. If they did come in contact with law enforcement they were usually confronted, fined or even taken to the police station for questioning. As noted in the examples above, these encounters at times included violence. When someone in law enforcement came around youth in Typology A, no one panicked; everyone was very sociable. We glimpsed this in the opening data excerpt and interaction between Daniel and the police officer (e.g., handshake greeting, good-natured interaction, etc.). Law enforcement officials did not appear to lord authority over the youth; they seemed to relate with them on a more equal plane.
The youth within groups from Typology A’s unique relationship with law enforcement reaped significant benefits. Sometimes police officers hired youth informally to work at the station taking out trash, wiping down desks, and washing official police cruisers, as well as personal automobiles of police officers. At times, police officers even hired youth from Typology A to do odd jobs at their homes (e.g., painting, cleaning, etc.). The youth indicated they were able to make anywhere from 100,000 - 300,000 lei (about 3-10 U.S. dollars) for 1-2 hours of work. The youth pointed to knowing how to behave and their demonstrable trustworthiness to explain why the police hired them to assist around the station and work in their homes.

Me: How did you first meet the police?

Flori: When I first met them I said things like “I kiss your hand”... “good day”... “I like how you are dressed”... and they started to like me. One day, they took a picture of me. They put their cap on my head and took a picture of me. They were like “That’s it, you are a policewoman now.”

Me: A lot of kids have told me about their experiences with the cops, which were not too good ....

Flori: (Flori interrupts) Yes, but do you know why? Because they cuss at them. When they see them they are like “Look, the elephants” and they (the police) know they are not respecting them. When I see them, I do not talk badly. I say to them: “I kiss your hand. How are you doing?” And they see that I do not steal. They can leave the money on the desk and I will not take it... The police are fond of my brother (Romica) too; he goes, washes a car or two, he makes money. They tried him and tested him many times. They would leave keys on the table... the money out and he did not take them.

Flori age 18, site2

The youth from Typology A’s unique relationship with law enforcement also provided them with protection across many domains. As a result of their relationship with the police, the youth from groups within Typology A did not experience the disruption of their living space encountered by youth from other typologies (discussed
more below) and they had a resource to access when facing incursion or threats. The youth from Typology A pointed to the role of law enforcement in helping them deal with physical violence from the informal environment. Youth from typologies B and C talked about intervening for each other in the context of a physical altercation; the youth from Typology A spoke of law enforcement officials intervening on their behalf.

The youth from groups within Typology A were also shielded from many of the consequences associated with engaging in illegal activity. Although law enforcement had full knowledge of the youths’ engagement in illegal activities, I never witnessed nor did a youth from Typology A mention a sanction for such behaviors. It appeared as though idiosyncrasy credits were given to aberrant behavior when other interactions had instrumental value to the members of the relationship. The open use of inhalants by youth was not confronted. Youth openly huffed aurolac in front of law enforcement with no sanction. They were also able to work informally without disruption. For example, many youth from groups within Typology A engaged in informal resource generating activities such as washing and guarding automobiles in public parking lots. As noted in Chapter 4, many street youth who engaged in informal work ran the risk of harsh consequences (e.g., encounters with law enforcement, enormous fines, etc.). It is technically illegal to wash and guard cars in public parking lots unless hired by the government as a parking attendant. Youth from groups within Typology A were able to engage in such activities without interference. Finally, it also appeared as though the youth from groups within Typology A were able to engage in more insidious criminal activity without sanction. As noted in Chapter 5, the group sanctioned Flori for going to the police in an attempt to rescue the females who were being sexually assaulted and tied to the pipes by the males at site 2. Law enforcement’s knowledge of such
actions appeared to have no impact on the group at site2. In fact, it should be noted that, without exception, the youth from groups within Typology A who were arrested for illegal behaviors (e.g., assault, theft, etc.) had already been pseudo-exiled by the group. Recall from Chapter 5 that when general conflict arose in the group the group boss resolved it by relegating the “guilty” party to a separate part of the dwelling cutting them off from many of the group’s resources, perhaps including the protective benefits that came from the group’s relationship with law enforcement. Every youth arrested for criminal activity had already been relegated to these diminished spaces; they had already been cut-off from complete membership in the group.

Finally, identifying oneself as a part of a group within Typology A carried weight across police sections. Although the youth from groups within typologies B and C enjoyed beneficial relationships with some individual police officers and sections (discussed below), youth from groups within Typology A were connected to multiple police sections across the city. These connections could be leveraged in a moment for the youth’s benefit. I was able to witness one such encounter first-hand.

At about 11:15 AM Octavia came walking from an apartment building to where we were sitting on the stairs. She was carrying a bag full of clothes and toiletries (shampoo, soap, deodorant). Her hair was wet. The clothes she was wearing were clean. She smiled when she saw us and indicated that she was going to take the bag up and she would be right back. A few minutes after she went upstairs a police officer came over to where we were. He walked by us and went up the steps. He was carrying a two-way radio in his hand. Another (older) police officer was standing by the car watching on. A few minutes later we could hear the younger police officer talking with Octavia on the next landing. He asked her what she was doing here. She stated something about a foundation and the girls (referring to us). They came back down the stairs together. The older police officer walked over to where we were. The younger officer asked me who I was and what foundation I was from. The older officer immediately asked for my papers. I indicated that I was not technically from any foundation. That I was a student from America here to learn more about what it is like for people who live on the street. I told him that I did not have my papers because I do not bring anything valuable on the street. He told me I should always
carry a copy then turned his attention to Dana (my translator). She handed him her ID. He asked us to sit on the stairs and looked at Dana’s ID, indicating he may need to take me to the station since I was not carrying adequate documents.

While this was happening, the younger police officer asked Octavia what she was doing up the steps. Octavia did not respond. He told her sit down and went all the way up the steps to the top floor. A few minutes later he came back down with the rest of the youth (Florin, Talanu and Flori) and told them all to stand facing the rail and to spread their legs. All of the youth except Flori complied. Instead Flori sat down by me on the stairs and immediately told the older police officer that she was from site2 and that we (Dana and I) were with her. He nodded in the affirmative and stated: fine, I understand. He handed Dana back her ID asked all the youth to sit down. The younger officer shared that the youth had turned the stairwell into a public toilet and asked the older officer what they should do with the youth... The older officer told Flori to take anyone who was from site2 and go back to the group. The rest were charged with cleaning up the stairwell and told to find another place to stay. The older officer indicated that they would be returning in one hour. If the place had not been cleaned and/or they were still there, they would take the youth to the police station.

Field Notes, July 16, 2003

Once Flori identified herself as a member of the group from site2, the police officers immediately changed their course of action and sent Flori and those associated with site2 back to the group without sanction.

The relationship between the youth from Typology A and law enforcement officials appeared to be mutually beneficial. The youth assisted police officers with a range of tasks (e.g., cleaning the station, washing cars, etc.), and in return the police officers provided economic resources (either directly by paying them or indirectly by allowing them to wash and guard cars) and protection. As noted above, the youth attributed this reciprocal exchange to the respect they showed and the personal trustworthiness they demonstrated to law enforcement officials. Although not overtly identified by the youth, another more corrupt dynamic appeared in the data that may have also played a contributing factor to the development and maintenance of this
unique relationship. My first glimpse at a possible deeper, underlying dynamic occurred on a Wednesday.

We arrived at site2 at about 11:20 A.M. As Florin hollered down the stairs announcing our arrival Gabriel and Romica come around the corner; they were both carrying two large plastic buckets full of beer bottles. I counted about 13 bottles in one bucket; the buckets were deep so there were probably about 20 bottles in each. They stopped to say hello. Florin asked them if they had a party. Gabriel stated that the bottles were not theirs; they were from the police station. He explained that if they go and clean the station in the morning, any bottles they collect they could keep and sell to make some money. Florin asked if the officers drank beer all night at the station. Romica handed his bucket to Gabriel and told him to go downstairs. Gabriel immediately took the buckets down. Romica turned to Florin and stated how should they know... what the police do at the station is not the business of anyone. There was an awkward silence. After a few minutes Florin tried to engage Romica in conversation; Romica appeared pretty closed. For example, Florin asked Romica how things had been going and what all he had been up to. Romica shrugged and responded: not much. For the most part we stood in silence.

Field Notes, January 15, 2003

Their guarded stance toward sharing information or discussing details about their relationship with the police permeated many interactions making it difficult to fully explore the evolution of their relationship and the full dynamics at play sustaining it. However, at times, they let their guard down momentarily affording a glimpse of what may be occurring. One such moment was captured above when Gabriel shared where they had obtained the beer bottles. Another such brief window opened in the context of my in-depth conversation with Roman and Calu.

Me: I've heard you mention a couple of times how important it is to know how to relate to the police, or how to talk to the police. What is your relationship like with the police?

Calu: With the police... our relationship is more good than bad. I mean, you pay the bribe or if you are with a girl, they let you go and they fuck her...
Roman: If you pay the bribe it is good. Without a bribe, you won't solve the problem. You cannot get what you want until you bribe... or with the girls (arranging for sex)...

Calu: Only with money can you talk to a cop.

Roman: They catch you stealing. They ask you, “don't you think my kid should eat something sweet?” And you split half of what you stole with them and keep half. They (the police) don't do it with everyone. Just the ones they know better.

Calu: Others (street kids) get fines, go to jail.

Roman: Let me tell you. One time, it was me, Calu and Romica sleeping outside. We sent Romica to get juice. On the corner someone called him aurolaci and started beating him up. Who do you think protected us? The police. They intervened for us. They know they don't see clean cars and clean offices anymore if something were to happen to us. (pause)

Me: So, is that what makes your relationships with the police so different than what I have seen? If you are able to pay bribes, arrange for sex, help with cleaning, or.... they leave you alone, intervene for you in fights....

Calu: But we don't do this. This doesn't happen here.

Roman: No. Not here. This is just what we heard. (long pause)

Perhaps the youth from groups in Typology A did not enjoy such a distinctive relationship with law enforcement only because they knew how to talk politely to police officers and could be trusted not to steal, as identified by the youth. Perhaps it was in part because they could be trusted with other things as well (e.g., to assist with more deviant activities, to keep quiet about activities that may reflect negatively on law enforcement, etc.) and had the resources to pay (i.e., bribe) for such relationships. This was not the first nor the last time a youth referenced a more questionable exchange, or the first or last time the youth shut down inquiry about the specifics. Perhaps this helps to explain what appeared to be a more equal power distribution at play between the youth from groups within Typology A and law enforcement, the kind of equity in the distribution of power that would even allow a
youth to be defiant to a law enforcement official without consequence. In the
opening field note excerpt, a police officer had arrived at site2 to see Romica.
Returning to that exchange provides an example of this unique power dynamic.

I asked Roman if everything was OK. He indicated that it was – that the police officer
was probably here to see Romica; he probably needed Romica to assist him with
something at the station. After a few minutes, the police officer handed Daniel his
phone back and went over to the steps leading down into the utility building and
hollered down for Romica. Daniel rejoined us. Romica did not come out when the
police officer hollered for him. Instead, someone in the building turned on a Manele
tape quite loudly. The police officer again hollered down for Romica. And again
Romica did not respond; the music got even louder. The officer went down the stairs
and pounded on the door. Eventually Romica answered. We could not hear what was
being said over the music but we could tell that Romica was yelling. I again asked if
everything was OK. Daniel noted that the officer wanted Romica to wash his car. A
few minutes later the police officer came up the stairs and stood for a couple of
minutes. Eventually Romica came out with a sponge and bucket and they left
together.

Field Notes, July 23, 2003

Romica appeared to defy the officer by turning up the music when he was called and
felt free to raise his voice to the officer when he did come out of the building, two
dynamics I did not witness with youth from any other typology.

The youth from Typology A also enjoyed valuable relationships with individuals
who worked at foundations that existed to serve the needs of street children. The
youth were aware of and accessed resources from a range of NGOs. In the context of
the present study, the youth from groups within Typology A spoke of receiving services
from eight different foundations. As with the law enforcement officials, the
relationships the youth had with the workers from foundations appeared quite
sociable. The interaction almost always began and ended with handshakes. Many times
the foundation workers and the youth shared cigarettes with each other. Much of the
interaction was light-hearted and reflective of how one might interact with a friend.
During the conversation, the worker from *Foundation X* gave Patron a cigarette and joked again with Calu, telling him that he was not going to give him a cigarette because he does not smoke. Everyone laughed. Eventually he offered a cigarette to Calu as well. Patron and Calu showed several CDs to the worker from *Foundation X*. They pointed out a CD player on the floor in the far left-hand corner of the room (behind where Roman was still laying asleep). They also showed the worker from *Foundation X* pictures of cars. Patron indicated that he really liked the Mercedes and Calu indicated that he really liked the Ferrari. The worker from *Foundation X* agreed with Calu. There was some teasing and a lot of laughter, which awakened Roman. He came over and greeted us both with handshakes. He expressed an interest in the worker from *Foundation X*'s cell phone and asked if he could see it. The worker from *Foundation X* handed it to Roman who sat down on the mattress and began playing games on the cell phone. He periodically would show the worker what level he had achieved or that he had been killed.

At one point in time, Calu went to the top of the cabinet and got down a spray can. He came over to the worker from *Foundation X* and said that he could see he liked girls; did he want some deodorant to put on his clothes? The worker said he would and motioned as if he was going to spray it. Everyone started to laugh. (The worker from *Foundation X* later shared with me that it was a can of pepper spray). Then Calu went over to a coat hanging on the wall and pulled some condoms out of the pocket noting they were Roman's. Roman jumped up and grabbed them from Calu's hand and told him not to pull those out in front of me. Everyone laughed. The worker from *Foundation X* told him he thought it was a good thing he is using condoms.

Field Notes, December 18, 2002

The friendly exchange witnessed above is not unique between this particular group and foundation. The sociable dynamic was consistent for youth across Typology A and reflected their relationships with personnel from various foundations. As noted above, youth across Typology A emphasized the importance of following schedules, keeping appointments and knowing how to interact with people from foundations (e.g., talking politely, demonstrating good manners, etc.). In talking about their relationships with foundations, youth often referenced the relationship’s longevity, noting that certain foundation employees have been coming to the street for a very long time. They often knew details about their personal lives and asked questions about what they had been doing since they last saw each other (e.g., how a vacation went, if a family member
was still ill, if they had seen a particular movie, etc.). Although most of the youth met these individuals when they came to the street as a foundation representative to offer services to the youth, some youth had relationships with workers prior to coming to the street. I had opportunities to discuss this dynamic with various workers and learn about their history and how that history impacted them. What follows is a transcription of one worker’s comments:

Tudor is a very special case. I have known him since before he became a street child. He was living in my neighborhood and was kind of a friend to me. We used to play football together in the street... we played games. And 10 years ago, because his parents didn't pay the rent or the utilities, they had to leave the house and move somewhere else and couldn't take the kids with them. The kids were forced to live on the streets. So now I see him here. I think at first he may have been ashamed. But I feel like since we played together as kids, I need to do what I can for him.

Post Observation Discussion, January 7, 2003

Foundations provided numerous services to the youth from groups within Typology A, including the provision of a range of material goods (e.g., food, clothing, soap, etc.) and the obtainment of important documents (i.e., birth certificate, identification card), as well as access to housing (e.g., transitioning to a center, etc.), medical care (e.g., brings medicine or medical supplies to street, accompanies youth for medical treatment, etc.), educational and employment opportunities. The resources provided moved far beyond the provision of what was required to meet basic needs to resources with the potential to increase opportunities and facilitate mobility. Often times it was a combination of services that led to opportunities. This was seen in the context of my in-depth conversation with Calu and Roman as Calu shared about his formal employment with Foundation X.

Me: How do you guys go about making money or getting money on the street?
Calu: Now I have this budget of 3 million a month from Foundation X and I come… (pause) if my brother needs, I give him, too. When I have.

Me: How did you first get involved with Foundation X?

Calu: They came here. They were bringing food to us, in the evening every other day… they saw we know how to draw… then they asked if we want to write. And in the end, they asked me if I wanted to work with their foundation. And I agreed. They gave me money. They put me in a school program so I could better learn to read and write and that’s how I began. . .

Calu age 20, site2

Most often services (e.g., food, clothing, delivering medication, etc.) were provided at the living location of youth from groups within Typology A. It was extremely rare for a youth to go to a foundation to access resources. When they did go to the foundation it was usually pre-arranged and associated with a special event (e.g., outside financial supporters were in the country and throwing a party, a holiday celebration, etc.). If services could not be provided on the street (e.g., facilitating procurement of identification card, treatment for sexually transmitted disease, etc.), foundation workers made arrangements to pick up, transport and accompany the youth to the secondary location (e.g., hospital, etc.) and facilitated the process (e.g., paperwork, payment, etc.) to ensure the identified need was met.

Often maintaining this commitment was time and resource-intensive, and at times in violation of their own rules. For example, to assist a young man in obtaining an official identification card, two foundation workers accompanied him to a city 45 miles outside of Bucharest. The agency policy was to only assist youth with documents who were from Bucharest, a policy that had served as a barrier to youth from other typologies (mostly B and D). However, the agency invested the time of its street team (about 6 hours) effectually prohibiting their assisting any other youth that day and paid for three sets of roundtrip train tickets to assist one young man. At times, agency
investment in one youth suspended services to other street youth for extended periods of time. For example, an agency assisted a young woman (Octavia) in accessing the necessary medical care associated with an abortion. Complications during the procedure necessitated a three-day hospital admission; the physician had to perform a caesarian section in order to remove the fetus. I accompanied a foundation worker to the hospital to assist with her discharge, transport her home and arrange for follow-up care. Octavia was not discharged with any pain medication or antibiotics to ward off infection; the NGO worker returned to the agency to see about getting the necessary medications. The following series of excerpts from my field notes tracks the unfolding of her care over the next two weeks:

After discussing Octavia’s condition amongst the street team the agency director arranged for an emergency placement in an orphanage. The street team and the agency administrator bought the medications from a pharmacy and immediately returned to site 2 to pick Octavia up and transport her to an orphanage. They arrived at 4 p.m. but Octavia was not there; she went to buy milk. The foundation staff waited for about 30 minutes and left. The agency administrator returned that evening at 6 PM and transported Octavia to an orphanage.

Field Notes, February 4, 2003

A worker from Foundation X shared that yesterday afternoon he and another worker went to the orphanage to visit Octavia. He indicated that Octavia stated that she was having a very hard time staying put. The street team would be going to stay with her overnight.

Field Notes, February 5, 2003

A worker from Foundation X shared they would not be going to the street today. When the street team arrived at the orphanage yesterday they discovered that Octavia had taken very, very ill. The agency administrator joined them and called an ambulance to take her to the hospital. He indicated that he needed to go to the hospital and relieve the street worker.

Field Notes, February 6, 2003

A worker from Foundation X indicated they would not be going to the street today as Octavia was still in the hospital. He explained that the hospital personnel did not want to allow Octavia to stay in the hospital because she caused too many problems.
The agency administrator made a deal with the hospital personnel; they would let her stay if the agency provided someone to stay with her 24 hours a day.

Field Notes, February 8, 2003

A worker from Foundation X indicated that there would not be anyone going to the street. Octavia was still in the hospital and needed 24-hour supervision; as long as Octavia was in the hospital, they would not be going out on the street.

Field Notes, February 11, 2003

The street team from Foundation X did not return to the street until February 16th.

The time and resources this agency invested in the life of Octavia was admirable. In my time on the street I witnessed and heard stories of how various foundations went above and beyond to ensure the needs of the youth from Typology A were met (e.g., Romica’s treatment for syphilis, Iulian’s surgery, etc.). However, this level of care did not reflect the norm for youth from other typologies. At times, the level of care afforded youth from Typology A actually inhibited a foundation's ability to meet the needs of youth from other typologies.

Either foundations or government agencies directly linked youth to medical assistance as described above, or their connections provided knowledge about resources that were available and how to access them. However, assistance with and information about medical resources was not limited to the formal environment. Youth from groups within Typology A also pointed to the role of those from the informal environment. For example, one day when I came to site2 Roman was resting after oral surgery (wisdom teeth removed). In the context of our in-depth conversation, I inquired about where he had the procedure.

Roman: There is a school where they teach classes for dentists. So I went there and they pulled them out. The service is free. (Roman reaches in his pocket and pulls out a white piece of paper all folded up. He unfolds it and inside is a small x-ray of his tooth. He hands it to me.) That’s the tooth. If you see over
here, it has a cavity. Here, this black area is puss. And over here, the same, the infection has gone down. They had to pull them both out.

Me: How was it that you knew you could go to the University to have that done?

Roman: Well, I have been before to have other teeth worked on. But the first time I found out from Daniel. Daniel is very good friends with all the ones where he works at the market. Once he had a problem with a tooth and he found out from them. When I had a problem, Daniel told me.

Roman age 18, site2

The youths’ ability to engage in and negotiate relationships with individuals from the informal environment also played a critical role in providing access to a broad range of resources and opportunities.

The youths’ relationships with their informal environment afforded a range of employment opportunities. As noted in the opening excerpt, Daniel just returned from working at a stand located at a central market, an employment opportunity born from his relationships with other vendors at the market. Daniel’s work also enabled him to develop friendships with taxi drivers who provided him transportation to and from work. Group members’ work in the informal environment also paved the way for others from the group to work in the informal context. Females within Typology A typically relied on a combination of begging and informal work to generate resources. In the context of my in-depth conversation with Flori, she described how Romica and Daniel’s connections to the vendors at the central market enabled her to engage in informal work.

Me: How do you make money on the street?

Flori: Me? I sing in the trams from here to the central market. I sing “Enigmatici şi cuminti” (A Romanian song about parents who died and left their children alone in the world). Yesterday I made about 250,000 (lei).

Me: Are there any other ways of making money on the street?
Flori: Yes, I go to the people in the market and say: “Do you need help for cleaning, or something... I will clean in exchange for money, to buy food.” I say to them “I broom over there, in the front, I wash the plates, I get the plates off the tables.” There are ones who help me over and over again.

Me: How did you meet them?

Flori: They know my brother is Romica; they know I stay with Daniel. I was saying, “I kiss your hand. How are you doing?” They asked me “are you hungry?” Me... I was ashamed to say yes and they were still giving me. They were like “here, take, don’t be ashamed.” They were buying me a sour soup, or a serving of French fries... they bought me clothes and shoes.

Flori age 18, site2

As noted above, Flori points to her connection to the group and group members’ connection to the informal environment as playing a role in facilitating her access to informal work opportunities. And again we see an emphasis placed on polite interaction. Her ability to work informally afforded her access to food and clothes, as well as medical care as she discussed later in the in-depth conversation.

The experiences of Daniel and Flori are not unique. Youth across groups within Typology A enjoyed relationships with members of the informal environment that led to access to a host of resources. For example, the university students that lived near to site2 provided food, access to showers and medical supplies (e.g., bandages, ointments, etc.) as needed to the youth from site2. Iulian from site23 developed relationships with men who lived in the area. They invited him up to their apartments to watch sporting events, listen to music, and gave him food and beer. Other youth from site23 developed relationships with local food vendors and restaurant employees that gave them food and refuge from the elements (e.g., rain, severe cold, etc.) by allowing them to spend time in their facilities. Youth across Typology A developed relationships with internet café employees who afforded them free access to the internet. Furthermore, their informal work was quite lucrative, which enabled them to
purchase a host of material resources. In the context of our in-depth conversation, Calu and Roman shared how much they were able to earn working informally and the material resources they were enabled to buy with their money.

**Me:** So for the various jobs that you guys are able to get, either washing the cars, or parking the cars, or whatever, about how much money can you make in a day?

**Calu:** 200-300,000 lei for a few hours work, easy.

**Me:** And what kind of things do you use your money for?

**Calu:** Clothes, food, cigarettes... beer.

**Roman:** We also buy paint... you saw us painting. We buy many of things for the utility building. We buy a TV, a new hinge for the door, a new padlock...

**Calu:** A pan, a spoon... a plate.

**Roman:** (talking over Calu) Basin, soap, cause we are not the ones...

**Calu:** Soap, detergent, cause we are not the ones eating from the bowl with our hands. We eat from the plates, like people. (pause)

Roman age 18 and Calu age 20, site2

Their list of material resources moved far beyond the provision of basic needs. Youth from other typologies (i.e., B and D) were focused on basic survival and/or obtaining drugs when they spoke of how they utilized their economic resources. The youth from Typology A also spoke of a range of household items (e.g., dishes, detergent, etc.), maintenance items (e.g., paint, new padlocks, etc.) and luxury items (e.g., television, etc.).

The youths’ connections to their informal environment appeared to have been established over time. In most cases youth spoke of having known a person for an extended period of time and often pointed to how someone they knew in one context connected them to someone they knew which opened up additional opportunities.
Being known by a wide range of people in a variety of contexts even led to a level of notoriety that afforded youth access to distinctive resources. An example involving the youth from site2 serves to illustrate how being “popular” came with unique opportunities.

The workers from Foundation X asked the youth what they did for the holidays. Catalin indicated that he and Roman went to the TV station Antena and celebrated Christmas there. He stated that he and Roman just sang some songs and after that they received some food and clothes. A worker from Foundation X told him that he saw him on television and joked with them about what good singers they were. The youth explained that the station did a short news story about street kids. They wanted to show that there is still a problem with street children in Romania and that their news station was trying to help them have a good Christmas. So they filmed the youth singing Christmas songs and eating. I asked how they found out about the Christmas thing on TV or how the TV station found out about them. Roman indicated that their group is very popular in Bucuresti; they know many people across the city. Everyone who knows a little bit about street kids knows about the group from site2. The workers from Foundation X confirmed their popularity. I asked what makes them so popular? The youth reiterated that they know a lot of people and a lot of people know them. So when people like the TV station want to do a show, they ask around and learn about them from many.

Field Notes, January 7, 2003

Perhaps it is the combination of the youths’ connections to both formal and informal environments that produced the most benefit. The benefit of multiple ties was seen in the youths’ ability to acquire secure and permanent living spaces. As noted in Chapter 5, the geographic location of the youth within Typology A was characterized by physical embeddedness in neighborhoods, which afforded privacy, security and control over their living space. The youth from these sites lived in relatively independent structures that could be locked. The stability and security of their dwelling spaces was a significant asset that afforded them a sense of permanency and enabled them to store resources. Without exception, it was the youths’ connections to both their informal and formal environment that enabled this.
At about 12:30 PM a man wearing a suit and tie arrived at site2. He greeted the foundation worker with a handshake and myself with “Sarut mana” (I kiss your hand), kissing my hand. He then went down into the utility building, where he stayed for about 10 minutes. Upon his return, he stopped and talked to us briefly. He indicated that he works with the utility company and had stopped by to check on something.

Field Notes, November 20, 2002

The worker from the utility company had complete awareness that the youth lived in the utility building. The youth were able to develop relationships with personnel from the utility company that enabled them to live in a building that the utility company owned. I later gained a better understanding of how this relationship emerged, as well as the role of the youths’ relationship with law enforcement in sustaining the opportunity in the context of my in-depth conversation with Calu and Roman.

Me: I remember one time coming to visit and a man who works for the utility company came. He seemed to know you guys. He came up and shook hands with everyone...

Roman: (interrupts) Yes he came to check the (utility) levels and to make sure everything was ok. He knows us quite well.

Me: How is it that you met him initially and knew it would be ok for you all to stay in the utility building?

Calu: So, at first we broke in. And we found right here in the back there was a mess (pointing to the upper room of the utility building). So we made it our own and fixed it. We took everything out. Everything that was here: all the garbage, the radiators, broken cabinets… I went up over there (pointing to roof of the upper level of the utility building) with my little brother, to put up an antenna and we fell with the shingles. (laughing)

Me: (laughing) Oh, so that’s how you found the lower level.

Calu: Yes. Yes. Lucky for us the shingles were rotten and I fell down. And we saw it was a better space. We cut off the padlock and we started cleaning it too.

Me: And no one cared that you cut the padlock and were living here?

Calu: All the cops know us for many years now and they have great trust in us. So they left us alone; they let us stay in the utility building undisturbed here.
Me: And the ones from the utility company?

Calu: At first they were upset. Then they were curious to see... to see how we would act here... (pause). When they saw that we maintain the building well, that we are preoccupied with cleaning it, with the weeds (pulling weeds)... they left us alone.

Roman age 18 and Calu age 20, site 2

Observing the sociable and beneficial interactions of the youth from Typology A with their broader social networks, one might assume that the youth held these individuals and relationships in high regard. However, this is not the case. Although the youth from Typology A were very savvy and had significant relational abilities, consistent with the relationships they developed within their groups, the relationships they developed with those from their larger network were instrumental and marked by disabled trust. They did not appear to experience any affective connection. They did not speak of those from their informal and formal environments as trusted mentors or friends; they spoke of them in terms of what the relationship provided. The value of the relationships was determined extrinsically; the function of the relationship and what it brought was more important than the relationship itself. Furthermore, their perceptions of others were marked by a lack of trust. Across sites youth were often preoccupied with the actions and intentions of those from the informal environment. For example, Iulian and his mother from site 23 often spoke to us in hushed tones if the construction workers were around and tracked who was out on the balcony in a nearby apartment building. During my in-depth conversation with Roman and Calu from site 2 they asked to move to the other side of the building and later to take a break from our conversation, as they believed some people from the apartments nearby were “too interested” in our conversation. At one point in time Roman even climbed up on top of the roof to “keep an eye on them”.

381
The youth appeared equally suspicious of those from the formal environment. Across sites in Typology A, youth tended to view those from their formal environment as corrupt. Though I had witnessed numerous friendly and beneficial interactions between the youth across Typology A and personnel from foundations, a very different picture emerged in the context of our in-depth conversations. For example, when asked about foundations that existed to assist street children, Calu and Roman immediately began to express contempt.

Me: Are there a lot of foundations out there that help people who stay on the street?

Calu: No, there are many who stick the money in their pocket. (they laugh)

Me: Can you tell me more about what you mean by that?

Calu: (still laughing) Well, many who work at foundations leave with their bag full of clothes and food. For example, if they have a sponsor in America or Italy, they take your picture and they send it to them over there and say you need a sponsor. And everything that comes from abroad, they put in their pocket. And whatever they have at home, in the attic, thrown away in the bathrooms, they bring to us and say it is from abroad. Do they think we are stupid? (laughs)

Roman: Everything that is sent for us, they take it. Only when whoever is sponsoring us comes in the country do they actually bring what is sent.

Calu: Listen, they sent blankets from abroad and they brought us rags (laughs). I am serious. Do you (referring to Roman) still have those covers somewhere to show it to her? Go and show her... (pause) Instead of blankets, they brought old drapes from their own homes... And the blankets from abroad they take and sell them for 500,000-1 million (lei)... 

Me: How do you know this?

Calu: We saw it with our eyes. An American lady, Susie came, she has a brother at an International Bank in America and she sent a note that she will bring Adidas to us. Adidas t-shirts, training suits... and the next time we saw them (Foundation X personnel) they were dressed from top to toes with the clothes sent by the sponsor.
Roman: I was seeing with my own eyes too when they were doing their tricks. I stayed in the foundation and saw when the trucks were coming, we were unloading them and I saw they were not sending on the streets at all.

Me: How about other foundations? Are all foundations like that or are some doing something helpful?

Calu: Serious foundations? I saw one. They were giving you original clothes and brand new Adidas. They were taking off the tags right before you...

Roman: But most leave you and don’t solve you. Do you know what happened when George Bush was in Romania? While he was in Romania, they (the government) put us to work at the Urban. And after he left do you know what they said to us? “Dude, after Bush leaves, whoosh whoosh!” (makes a sweeping-go-away sign with his hand.) That’s what they said to us. “After Bush leaves, whoosh whoosh!” (makes a sweeping-go-away sign with his hand again.)

Calu: The problem here is that they send money to make your ID and the necessary papers and while they are there, we are told “yes, we help you.” (laughs) And after... after they leave, they say “Dude, we’ll come next week...” and you’ll see them in 2-3 months, if they come even then. Instead of helping you when you go to them, they say, “God be with you.” (laughs) That’s what they say.

Roman: I should rob them and destroy everything they have so they will see how it is to mock ... to make fun of someone. (pause) Didn’t I tell you what I did? Breaking in foundations and breaking the TV and beating up personnel?

Me: No, you haven’t told me...

Roman: There were three employees. Two I had problems with. They drove me crazy. They were mocking us, “oh yeah, we'll come. We'll come.” They were not coming. Maybe there are others (from the street) that are not that smart. But here we are. They said they would come with clothes. They didn't. I went and destroyed everything. If you disrespect me, watch out. I always take care of me in the end.

Roman age 18 and Calu age 20, site 2

Youth across sites in Typology A spoke about the corruption of foundations and how they exploited the youth for their own advantage (i.e., took and used their picture to solicit funding, kept the best resources for themselves) and how faith-based foundations used faith in an empty way “God be with you”. Based on my own
observations in the field foundation follow-through occurred more often than not; it was rare for someone from a foundation to indicate they were going to provide a service or resource to a youth from Typology A and then fail to follow-through on their commitment. As previously noted, foundations often expended significant resources to address their needs, often at the expense of their ability to assist youth from other typologies. In many of my interactions with youth from Typology A they also shared numerous stories of how foundations assisted them in meeting a need or gaining access to resources. In spite of this, they appeared to have an extremely negative viewpoint of foundations and no tolerance for error. As articulated in Chapter 5, groups within Typology A could be characterized as having rigid norms strictly enforced through explicit sanctioning systems. The same rigidity that governed the rule structure of their groups was also manifested in their relationships with the formal environment. If youth perceived that their formal environment did not keep up its end of responsibilities, the youth often retaliated in some way.

As reflected throughout this section the youth from Typology A had a sophisticated ability to connect to and leverage an expansive range of networks across their informal and formal environments. These associations afforded them access to myriad resources and opportunities with the potential to facilitate upward mobility. The dynamics of their associations with law enforcement were unique compared to youth from other typologies endowing them with special protections and a favorable combination of resources leading to material gain and stability. Their associations with foundations also afforded significant resources and advantage; foundations appeared to invest significant money, personnel and time to assure needs were met. The youths’ relationships with those in their informal and formal environments appeared quite
social and friendly. They were articulate about behavioral expectations and consistent about how one should interact with foundation personnel and law enforcement officials. However, underneath this façade, resided significant contempt and suspicion. Across sites youth spoke of enacting revenge when those in their broader networks failed to meet their expectations. Within such context, an emphasis on behavioral expectations appeared more manipulative geared toward accessing resources and opportunities rather than a reflection of authentic relationships. This points to the extrinsic, instrumental nature of their interactions, but demonstrates socio-emotional and political intelligence.

Typology B

During our conversation, two girls approached the group. They motioned for Alin; he went to them. They handed him a plastic bag. He pulled several things out of the bag and laid them on the front ledge of the window of the grocery store, including bread, meat, butter and yogurt. The three of them stood there and chatted for a few minutes and then the two girls left. Alin rejoined us and asked everyone if they were ready to eat. They indicated that they were. They proceeded to take the food back out of the bag and place it on the ledge. They sliced the bread and created sandwiches with the butter and meat and they each also took a yogurt. They asked us if we wanted some. We declined.

Field Notes, July 1, 2003

Me: The two girls that walked by today, they gave you some salami and ...

Radu: (interrupts) Yes. They have a house. And we have known these girls since they were in diapers. And we have stayed friends since. We know their parents and their parents know us. And we are friends with their kids, too.

Me: How were you able to develop a relationship like that with them?

Radu: When I was young we used to help their parents with things around their house - to clean with a broom, to help carry things, to move furniture, etc. Over time they got to know us; they know our situation that we are on the street since we were little and they know we are good. We do not steal and over time they could see that they could trust us. We do not do evil... and
they began calling us, “Come, go get me a pack of cigarettes, go get me a beer, get me some fruit and the change is yours.”

Member Check with Radu (group leader) age 17, site25

The above excerpt from my field notes and from my member check with Radu serves as a representative interaction of the youth within this typology with their broader social networks. Youth across sites within Typology B enjoyed deep connections to those in their informal environment, which afforded them access to a range of resources and opportunities. Although they also possessed some connections to their formal environment, they were not always positive (discussed below). The informal environment played a much more critical role in contributing their survival.

The youth across sites within Typology B expressed a deep connection to those in their informal environment and consistently pointed to the importance they placed on those relationships, at times emphasizing the value of the relationship over the resources attached to those relationships. As articulated in Chapter 5, the relationships the youth from groups within Typology B developed with each other were mutually beneficial and the essence of the relationship was as important (at times, perhaps more important) than its function. Human association or connectedness for youth within this typology was an end unto itself where people were valued for their intrinsic qualities. A person’s value laid not exclusively in what one could do for another, but also in whom that person was and how they could assist each other in becoming better people. This relational stance extended to those in the informal environment. An example of this emphasis on one’s intrinsic qualities and the value placed on what a person teaches was captured in my in-depth conversation with Radu.
Me: Earlier you mentioned that you have money. How do you get money on the street?

Radu: I work, I beg a little, but I do not steal. Because if you ask from a person, and he gives you, he gives to you from his heart. That’s how I was taught since I was little. I was not taught by parents but by strangers... people I met on the street. They could not always give me food or money, but they could give me advice and that is more important. These strangers, they raised me. They taught me right from wrong. You know, my heart does not pull me towards my mom who made me, to call her mom. Because she did not raise me, she did not teach me things. I am not ashamed to tell you. The strangers that raised me, I would prefer to call them mom and dad... The strangers who raised me gave me what they could and taught me what was right. I care about them very much.

Radu (group leader) age 17, site25

The youth from Typology B expressed a deep affinity toward those they encountered in the informal environment. Across sites, youth shared rich narratives about how those in the informal environment assisted them materially or through instruction. Consistently they expressed appreciation and care.

The youth from Typology B did not only express a deep affinity toward those in their informal environment, but those in the informal environment held a deep affinity toward them. During my in-depth conversation with a group from Typology B, a woman walked by and greeted the youth; they immediately explained who she was. This afforded me with a unique opportunity to hear first-hand about their relationship and glimpse how much those from the informal environment cared about the youth.

(A woman approached us and came over to where we were. Radu immediately started to explain who she was.)

Radu: This woman shows mercy to us. A few years ago she had a dog. When we were younger she let us play with the dog of hers. We have known her for many years. She was bringing food to us at the sewer and we were playing with her dog.

Alin: If we were not home she was tying a rope to the bag and was throwing the food down for us. When we came back, we found the food.
Me: (Turning to the lady.) What is your name?

Lady: Moise Elena.

Me: How long have you known the boys here?

Moise: For about 8 years.

Me: Wow! That’s a long time.

Alin: Since I was 10.

Me: It sounds like you have been very, very kind.

Moise: Let me tell you something. I am an orphan, too. I didn't have anyone, myself either. I was left without parents since I was a year and 8 months old. That's why I don’t speak rudely to them. I help them as much as I can. I care about them and want them to be well.

Radu: She has never offended us or never talked rudely to us. She tries to help us as much as she can.

Moise: Because they are souls and God’s creatures. They belong to God, too.

Radu (group leader) age 17 and Alin age 17, site25

Across sites within Typology B the youth expressed a deep connection to their location and the people that lived in the area. They consistently pointed to the time they had spent in the area and the significance of knowing and being known by people. Many referred to their space as “home” and expressed a desire to stay there even though circumstances in their immediate environment posed difficult challenges. In the context of an in-depth conversation with a group from Typology B, they shared how some police in their area were quite physically abusive and offered an explanation as to why the elected to stay in the area anyway.

Me: You were just sharing that you are sometimes beat up by the police very badly...

Radu: (interrupts) Yes. There are police that hate some of us. They take us to the section, they tell us to leave from here, from site25. But we don't want to go to another place. You see, many of us grew up here; this is where we are
accustomed. This is where the people know me and I grew up here. I don’t want to go to another place, in another sector (neighborhood). For me, this is my home. I do not want to move. I want to stay at my home.

Radu (group leader) age 17, site25

The youths’ deep connections to those in their informal environment afforded them access to a range of resources and opportunities. One such resource included housing or semi-permanent places to be, which afforded them a degree of security and control over their living space. Without exception, youth across Typology B pointed to their connections in the informal environment when discussing how they located and persisted in their spaces. Most of the time they pointed to their relationships with those who lived in the area as seen in the following excerpt from my in-depth conversation with Claudiu who explained the role of someone from the informal environment in enabling them to find a place to sleep and store their belongings.

Me: You started to tell me where it is that you all stay at night...

Claudiu: We stay in the hallway of an apartment building, which is near by here. (He points to an apartment caddy-corner from where we are.) The administrator who lives in the apartment lets us stay at the top on the 10th floor.

Me: How did you meet this administrator of the block?

Claudiu: It has been so long since we have known him... I don’t know this... this I don't remember. Others (in the group) knew him even before I came to the street. But he has understanding and does not treat us badly. He lets us stay in the building.

Me: Do you all just go there at night, or...

Claudiu: We do go at night and sometimes at other times. Up there we have a big mattress, a blanket over it and a duvet. We have about 2-3 pillows... It is also where we keep our clothes and things.

Claudiu age 14, site25

Some youth also pointed to their connections to those who work in the area as an
important resource. In the winter months, the youth from site9 stayed in a sewer. However, in the summer months the sewer was much too hot; they preferred to find alternative housing.

When we arrived at site9 we were not able to find any youth by the sewer. Cornel and Adrian hollered for us from across the street and ran over to where we were. They asked us if we wanted to see where they were staying now, indicating that they were no longer sleeping in the sewer as it was getting too hot. We walked with them across the street to a large what looked like back of a semi truck trailer sitting alongside the road. They stated that they were living inside. There was a sheet hanging down over the entrance. They pulled it off to one side so that we could see inside. They had organized the space. There were mats on the floor and some blankets folded and stacked to one side. There were some nails pounded into the right-hand side of the container with several plastic bags hanging from them. I asked where the container had come from. They stated that it belonged to the Urban (garbage collection company). It was delivered a few days ago for the workers to fill it up with big garbage. They indicated that they knew the people who swept the street and picked up garbage in their area very well, so they asked if they could stay there while the container was parked there. I clarified that the workers from the Urban knew they were there. The youth explained that they did, they were helping them watch the container. They noted that it would probably be several weeks before the Urban would need to take the container away.

Field Notes, April 22, 2003

Although the youth from Typology B’s connections to their informal environment played an important role in their ability to secure places to be, they did not enjoy the permanency experienced by youth from Typology A. In large part this appeared to be connected to their lack of associations with the formal environment, specifically law enforcement. When a group of youth from Typology B experienced a disruption in their living space, it often directly resulted from law enforcement intervention. For example, when I first met the group of youth from site25 they lived in the attic of an abandoned house. Those who lived in the area were aware they were there and left them undisturbed. According to the youth, one evening a police officer spotted one of them climbing in a window from the roof. The police raided the house
and expelled all the youth. They next moved to the roof of a two-story parking garage. According to the youth, once they were discovered by law enforcement they were again disrupted. As noted above, in Typology A, it was the combination of the youths’ connections to both formal and informal environments that produced the most advantage; they benefited from multiple ties across domains.

Although deep connections to those in the informal environment afforded youth access to resources and opportunities such as housing, at times they appeared to serve as a barrier to the youth being able to move off the street. In the context of my in-depth conversation with some of the youth from site9, Adrian shared what attracted him to this area of Bucharest and what enabled him (and the rest of the group) to persist. Consistent with other youth from groups in Typology B he pointed to the role of the informal environment.

Adrian: The first time when I came to Bucharest, I came over here. I met with one guy, Octav. He brought me here and I liked this zone, because it is very quiet. The people here know us and they do not treat us badly. They leave us in peace.

Me: What do you mean by the people here know you?

Adrian: The people who stay in the apartments or work at the kiosks (vendors) see us all the time and know us. They know we do not have a home and have to stay on the street. They understand our situation. We are a few (referring to his group) and help each other. (pause) And those who live in the apartment and at the kiosks, they leave us in peace. Sometimes they help us. Here we are known. One time a boss I was working for by-the-day at a warehouse wanted to hire me full time to stay in the warehouse and take care of it... but still, here is where my soul attracts me to, cause I spent my childhood with them (referring to his group) and here in this zone (neighborhood).

Adrian age 20, site9
Adrian’s rejection of the potential opportunity to work and live at the warehouse, which is ostensibly preferred to living on the street, was not a decision unique to him. Other youth across Typology B also elected to forgo opportunities that would take them away from the group and neighborhood. It is possible that at times the youths’ connections to their informal environment (and each other) may serve as barrier to taking advantage of other opportunities.

The youths’ connections to those in their informal environment also afforded them access to employment opportunities. Most of the youth from Typology B engaged in informal work to generate resources; their jobs were integrated into the local area and near to the site at which they lived. The youth appeared to be entrepreneurial about their daily lives, using their skills and knowledge to create a host of opportunities to work in exchange for money. Some youths demonstrated strong abilities to be self-reliant. For example, the group from site9 collected metals from around the city and sold them to a recycling business. Other youth were able to wash cars on the grounds of a gas station and assist at a carwash because of the relationships they built with the employees there.

Me: How do you get or make money on the street?
Claudiu: We wipe windshields at that gas station (pointing over his shoulder to the gas station across the street). The boss and the workers there knows us and lets us work there. We wipe windshields when people stop for gas and they give us 5,000-10,000 lei.

Me: Are there other ways to make money?
Claudiu: Yes. There is a carwash around the corner. We stay in the lot with the workers and help with the cars and they pay us. There are a lot of people who have known us since we were little. They let us work with them... they try to help us.

Claudiu age 14, site25
Some assisted people in the immediate informal environment (e.g., street vendors, people who live in the neighborhood, etc.) with a variety of odd jobs as needed; opportunities that emerged from knowing people who lived in the area. Across the board, these informal work activities relied on the youths’ ability to develop relationships with those in their informal environment.

Few of the youth from groups in Typology B possessed official identification papers, which served as a barrier to formal employment. In the context of my in-depth conversation with the youth from site9, they highlighted ways they were able to make money engaging in informal work and the role of the informal environment in meeting their needs and identified the lack of identification papers as the main explanation for their inability to obtain formal work.

Me: How do you make or get money on the street?
Cornel: We find iron and we sell it... We find it...thrown away and take it to the center and they pay us.
Adrian: There are some people at the center who have a soul and give extra to us. For example, the other evening a man from the center came here and gave us 50.000 lei, just like that, cause he has mercy. When we don’t find iron...we beg a little, too. When we don’t have money...I beg over here, so we can get food, so we can survive. But begging is hard. People don’t really give to us...they tell us to go to work, but we can’t get a job. They don’t accept us anywhere without our papers (official identification).
Cornel: We would prefer to work for a salary over anything else, but we don’t have papers and such. Without our papers, working for a salary is not a possibility.

Adrian age 20 and Cornel (group leader) age 21, site9

The youths’ connections to their informal environment also afforded them access to food. The supply of food by members of the informal environment was seen in the opening field note and member check excerpts where we learned that a family
consistently brought the youth at site25 bags of food, including meet, bread, butter and yogurt. Throughout my time in the field, on a consistent basis I witnessed someone from the informal environment reaching out to the youth across Typology B.

While we were talking an elderly lady approached. Cornel hollered for her, calling her Mariana. When he realized that she was coming, Daniel also turned around and began to holler for her. She came over and handed them a loaf of bread. She told them she was sorry she could not stay and that she did not have more food. She indicated that she needed to go, but maybe she could stop by a store and get some more food later.

When she left, I asked Daniel and Cornel whom she was. They indicated that she was a nice lady that lived in the neighborhood; she comes by the sewer often and helps them with food. Daniel tore the loaf of bread in half giving half to Cornel and keeping half. They also offered Dana and me some of the bread. We told them “no, thank you.” They both started eating.

Field Notes, March 8, 2003

Cornel and Adrian later spoke of Mariana in the context of their in-depth conversation and the role she played in their lives.

Adrian: There are some people in the apartments who help us, cause they have mercy. There is a woman who lives across the street. From the little she has, she brings us a hot sour soup, a tea...

Cornel: She isn’t too rich herself...

Adrian: But she has a soul, has mercy on us...

Cornel: She is thinking that we should, as street children, eat at least once in a while a hot meal and she brings it to us.

Me: I think I’ve met her before. What’s her name?

Adrian: Yes you did. Her name is Mariana. She saw us that we stay here at the sewer, in winter and she saw us there and was giving us advices... We appreciated that she talked to us.

Cornel: And she asked us “Do you have what to eat? Is there anyone who brings you something to eat?” And since then she is bringing us... not quite every day... but every week she brings us, of course, when she has, too.
Adrian: And it is very well received, any little help. Doesn’t necessarily have to give us food... and even a good advice is well received. We like to talk to someone. We like it when someone teaches us...

Adrian age 20 and Cornel (group leader) age 21, site9

Across sites, the youth from Typology B enjoyed meaningful connections to people in their informal environment. This rich network of relationships afforded them access to concrete resources such as living spaces, employment opportunities and food, as well as more relational recourses such as connection and advice. Although some of these relationships were marked by mutual exchange where both parties experienced a concrete benefit (e.g., the youth performed a needed task and was compensated, etc.), it often appeared as though those from the informal environment gave without a concrete return. Even when the youth were not providing a service of sorts, people who lived and worked in the neighborhood provided food (material resource), advice (mentoring resource), and at times recreation (e.g., playing with the dog, etc.). The youth often spoke in terms of these individuals as “having a soul” or “having mercy”. They also spoke of the long-term nature of the connection (e.g., “people who have known us since we were little”).

Conversely, the youth from Typology B did not appear to have the same strong network of associations with those from their formal environments. Although connections existed which facilitated access to some resources, they appeared to be inconsistent and limited. Their weaker connections were not due to a lack of knowledge. The youth from groups in Typology B had extensive knowledge of foundations and the resources they offered. In the context of the present study, the youth spoke of ten different foundations, two more than Typology A, many of which were the same. In the context of my in-depth conversation with the group from site9,
they listed seven agencies by name, more than any other group across all four
typologies.

Me: Are there official places in Romania like foundations or organizations that
help people who stay on the street?

Cornel: Yes, there are, there are.

Me: What foundations are around?

Cornel: There is… Foundation 1, Foundation 2, Foundation 3… and Foundation 4

Adrian: There is also Foundation 5… and

Cornel: (speaks over Adrian) Foundation 6.

Adrian: At the piata there is Foundation 7. And there are actually more. Perhaps 10.

Me: Do you guys go to these foundations for things?

Cornel: No, rarely.

Adrian: Very rarely because we try to manage, to not ask them for help.

Nicu: I sometimes go to Foundation 2.

Me: You do?

Nicu: Yes. Sometimes I go to eat. So I go there and we are eating and then
coming back to the street. (pause) When we are there we need to …

Cornel: (interrupts) To be good…

Nicu: To not do drugs… if you huff over there, they will not give you food
anymore.

Cornel: (talking over Nicu) …to not make noise… to not do drugs… to not fight.
But sometimes it’s closed… Then it opens back up. Then it is closed…
open. We do not really like it so we do not go that often. Either you hold a
program with us or don’t. You shouldn’t have a program for a week, two
and after that you open again after a year… It is better for us to not go.

Adrian: And for us it’s even far. Rather than go there for a meal, we better stay
here and we earn our bread. (pause) And some organizations that say they
help… even these organizations take advantage.

Me: What do you mean they take advantage? Can you tell me more about that?
Adrian: They take more money (pause) from... How should I explain properly? The foreigners bring from abroad but to us they don’t really give much. They keep more than they give.

Nicu age 13, Adrian age 20 and Cornel age 21, site9

As reflected in the above excerpt, knowledge of foundations and the resources they provide did not always equal access. The youth from groups within Typology B identified a range of variables impacting their decision not to access resources from formal foundations, including the distance, an inconsistent schedule and a desire to earn their own way. Youth from other sites within Typology B echoed similar variables and added the desire to avoid interacting with youth from other areas (who were from other typologies) and feeling as though what foundations had to offer did not provide lasting change (e.g., a bowl of soup versus a job, etc.). Unlike Typology A, where services (e.g., food, clothing, delivering medication, etc.) were provided at their living location, the youth from groups in Typology B most often had to go to the foundation to access resources. In fact, I observed very little interaction between youth from Typology B and foundation personnel in the field. Most observations of the relational dynamics took place when the youth invited me to go with them to a foundation. In contrast, most of my observations of the interactions between the youth from Typology A and foundation personnel occurred in the field; it was extremely rare for them to go to an agency.

Similar to the youth in Typology A, youth from Typology B consistently pointed to the importance of following behavioral expectations (e.g., to be good, to not do drugs, to not fight, etc.). They too tied knowing how to behave with accessing resources. Many of them indicated that those who behaved well, received resources and those that behaved badly did not. This emphasis occurred across sites.
Me: Do these foundations help you in any way?

Claudiu: Yes. They give us to eat, they give us clothes, sometimes the foreigners come and they give us shampoo, soaps. To the girls they give bras. Well, they do not give to all who need. They only give things to the good ones.

Me: What do you mean by the good ones?

Claudiu: Well, how can say it? Today, we are at Foundation X... Lets say a kid starts hitting me or cussing at the workers. They say that he is not good. Now lets say that you stay nicely, they say you are good. And since you are good, they will give you. Those who are not good... they fight, cuss, throw the toys... they are not given anything. Understand?

Claudiu age 14, site25

This consistent theme of access to services being predicated on appropriate behavior appeared to operate like a double-edged sword. On one hand, there was certainly a need for order and safety. In fact, youth within Typology B expressed frustration at the lack of such and identified it as a barrier to them going to a foundation to access resources.

Me: Are there any foundations in Bucharest that help street kids?

Radu: There are foundations that help, but they are very bad. Why? Because they do not know what to do. They've put the older ones, the bigger kids along with the smaller (younger) ones. The older one says “go away”... the one who is smaller, he doesn't know so he goes without (whatever resource is being distributed). Or a big one who smokes says, “I will give you a cigarette butt for all your food.” It is something which is not true. But the little one doesn’t know and is taken advantage of.

Me: So this is happening at the foundation?

Radu: Yes, among the kids. And there is no one to complain to, because if you go to the instructor, he still takes you on. “What? Did I ask you to come here at the foundation? You came here. Manage.” The instructor only intervenes when he sees that they stepped over you and you are flat down there. Or maybe not even then. Rather than deal with this, it is better to not depend on them (foundations).

Radu (group leader) age 17, site25
On the other hand, those youth who were deemed “bad” were not served. Therefore, failing to know how to or be able to act in a certain way cut one off from a host of resources (e.g., food, clothing, etc.) necessary for survival. At times, this impacted some of the youth from Typology B. As will be discussed below, this significantly impacted the youth from Typology D.

There were other differences between typologies A and B regarding the resources afforded youth in the context of their relationships with foundations. At no time did I hear of or witness a foundation assist a youth from Typology B with the obtainment neither of important documents (i.e., birth certificate, identification card) nor to gain access to educational or employment opportunities. In fact, youth pointed to the lack of assistance they received. We pick up my in-depth conversation with Radu:

Me: You mentioned that there were foundations that help street kids. I hear you talking about the problems but do they sometimes do things that are helpful?

Radu: I am 17 years old. They do not accept us at the foundation anymore. They tell us “go to work.” And we say “we would like to go to work, but we don’t have any papers, so we can’t. If we do not have papers, how are we supposed to go to work?” But they don’t resolve us. There is no one who will help us with our papers.

Radu (group leader) age 17, site25

The only housing they facilitated was to a state orphanage. Foundations did assist some youth from Typology B with accessing medical assistance. Sometimes how this transpired was somewhat consistent with the treatment experienced by youth from Typology A (e.g., brought medicine or medical supplies to street, accompanied youth for medical treatment, etc.). An example of this was seen at site9.
When the workers from Foundation X said goodbye, Lili went over to them and told them that her boyfriend (Dan) had a special problem; he had a “leak”. After hearing a description of his symptoms, the workers hypothesized that Dan had gonorrhea and asked if they could speak to her boyfriend directly. When Dan came up the workers pulled him aside and talked with him in private... I asked the workers if they were going to be able to assist him. They shared that they spoke to Dan about his problem and set up an appointment for him at the Emergency Hospital for Thursday at 8 AM.

Field Notes, January 28, 2003

I ran into the workers from Foundation X and asked if they were able to take Dan to be treated. They indicated that they went to the hospital as planned and Dan did have gonorrhea. The doctor gave him a prescription but they did not have any money left for street cases. The workers indicated that Dan would have to wait until next week when they had more money to get the prescription filled. They indicated that Dan asked for the prescription to see if he could get it filled another way so he would not have to wait. The workers from Foundation X indicated that they gave Dan the prescription.

Field Notes, January 30, 2003

However, more often than not, the youths’ experiences related to medical care were far less accommodating. Some ailments went unattended to (e.g., sever toothache, expressed desire for assistance with an abortion, etc.). Other needs were under-attended to. An example of this was seen in the context of my in-depth conversation with the group from site25.

Me: What happens when someone on the street gets sick? What do you do?
Alin: We usually try going to Foundation X.
Radu: But at Foundation X, if more than a band-aid is needed, they do not really help us, except with a referral paper.
Alin: They are sending you with a paper, somewhere behind the Intercontinental. There is a doctor there. But they just send you, they do not help you.
Radu: You get your referral paper and you go alone. One time I got really mad because I was sick and did not think I could take myself. And I asked the worker to help me. He started talking in my nose (to tell someone in their
face); “You are big, you can go to the hospital by yourself... I can make a referral and you can take yourself to the hospital.”

Radu (group leader) age 17 and Alin age 17, site25

As a reminder, foundations directly assisted youth (e.g., 17-year-old Octavia, 22-year-old Romica, etc.) from Typology A with medical needs. This support often included doctor’s visits and assistance with medication; treatment often spanned several days.

A theme that emerged for some youth from Typology B was the desire to be as self-sufficient as possible. An aspect of this was glimpsed above when Dan asked the workers from Foundation X for the prescription to treat his gonorrhea to see if he could get it filled on his own opposed to waiting for the foundation to have the resources. Youth from Typology B spoke of going to the pharmacy for over the counter medications to assist with the stomach flu and headaches, as well as supplies to treat minor scrapes and cuts (e.g., band-aids, ointment, etc.). At times youth even spoke of addressing critical concerns independently. An example of this was seen in the context of my in-depth conversation with youth from site9 as they shared how they assisted Cornel who had been badly beaten.

Cornel: For example, if they weren’t here, I would have been dead.

Me: So you guys were the ones who called when Cornel got hurt?

Adrian: I called the ambulance. They (referring to other street children) beat him (referring to Cornel) ... they hit him with the club in the head... He fell in the middle of the road... he couldn't move anymore. We picked him up in our arms and we put him in the ambulance. (Adrian is crying). We went with him there and I stayed by him. We stay by each other, in good or in bad times. At the hospital they kept him (referring to Cornel) for 3 hours without stitching him, without anything. We were rejected there because they knew we were street kids.

Cornel: So then we put our heads down and we left. I told them: “I don't need anything. If you consider us as some dogs.” You know, even a dog is treated better. Are we worse than some dogs? That’s how people consider
us. If you have money, you are treated with respect. But we don’t and that’s how they consider us. We are sad when we see what’s going on in our life. How a person treats us...

Adrian age 20 and Cornel (group leader) age 21, site9

Unfortunately, the outcome experienced by these youths was not unique. Across typologies youth struggled with the care they experienced at hospitals when they sought treatment unaccompanied by foundation personnel.

A striking difference between how foundation personnel interfaced with youth from Typology A and youth from Typology B was seen in the overall nature of the interaction. As previously articulated, the relational dynamic between foundation personnel and the youth from Typology A could be characterized as sociable and friendly. Interactions were marked by a light-heartedness; there was teasing and joking, as well as the sharing of personal information. Most interaction included swapping cigarettes. The relational dynamic between foundation personnel and the youth from Typology B could be characterized as business-oriented. Although interactions typically began with handshakes and greetings, there was minimal to no teasing or joking. The foundation workers addressed the issues at hand and left the site. As such, they appeared to spend far less time with the youth from Typology B. If youth huffed from a bag of aurolac they were confronted and asked to put the bag away; huffing went unchecked for youth in Typology A. The foundation workers did not share cigarettes with the youth from Typology B. In fact, they refused requests of the youth for a cigarette. One day in the field I had the unique opportunity to see the two relational dynamics collide at site9 (Typology B).

I followed the worker from Foundation X to the metro and began clarifying the interaction that had taken place at the sewer. When we got to the metro we stood
under the awning and continued to talk. During this conversation, Octavia (site2, Typology A) walked around the corner. She immediately saw us and came over to us. The worker from Foundation X greeted her with a handshake and offered her a cigarette. As he was handing her the cigarette 2 youth from site9 came around the corner – Eugene and Vatafu. Vatafu walked over to us and asked the worker for a cigarette (it should be noted that he had asked him for a cigarette a few minutes before over at the sewer and was told no). The worker said no. Vatafu asked the worker again for a cigarette, moving within a foot from his face. The worker continued to say no. Vatafu started to swear at him and got within a couple of inches from his face. The worker stood there; he did not move or wince. Octavia and Eugene stood exactly where they were. No one intervened. No one said a word. I too stood exactly where I was. After a few minutes Vatafu backed off. As he was backing away he told the worker that he should not show a difference among them; he should not give to some and not others.

Field Notes, January 20, 2003

The youth across sites in Typology B were keenly aware of the differential treatment. Youth struggled to understand this difference. At times it led to intense frustration and, as seen above, at times aggression.

As previously noted, law enforcement appeared to play a very significant role in the lives of street children across Bucharest. However, the nature and outcome of youths’ relationships with the police varied significantly across typologies. The youth from Typology A all appeared to reap some benefit from their relationship with law enforcement. In contrast, many youth across the other typologies identified the police as a significant challenge. However, individual youth from Typology B enjoyed positive connections with a few law enforcement officials, which afforded them some benefit. In such cases, the youth differentiated between those officers who were good (e.g., they did not fine them, they did not physically assault them, etc.) and those who were not (e.g., they did fine them, they did physically assault them, etc.). These relationships not only assisted the youth when dealing with an officer that they knew, but also buffered the consequences when confronted by officers they did not know.
Me: Do the police do anything to help you?

Radu: Yes, some do good things. I mean there are policemen who take us to the section and fine us and beat us up. There are other policemen who have been there longer and have known us for many years. If they are there they tell the other ones: “Hey, what are you doing? Why have you taken this poor one? What about the ones who steal from your pockets and break into stores, huh?” He tells them “Don’t fine him anything, do not hit him or anything. From this moment on you let him go through the gate”. And that one lets us go through the gate. Yes, there are many policemen who know me since I was a little kid, and take on the others, so they won’t bother me. So they won’t fine me.

Radu (group leader) age 17, site25

Although the youth from Typology B were not well known across sections like those from Typology A, if they expressed concern to the officers that they did know, they would intervene on the youth’s behalf. However, the benefit of the relationship did not appear to extend to other group members. An example of this was seen in the context of my in-depth conversation with Claudiu from site25, where he lived along with Radu.

Me: What are the biggest challenges about being on the street?

Claudiu: Well, sometimes the police is chasing you... sometimes the ones (street youth) from other areas come and chase us... some things are not good. (pause) There are many policemen. Some are good and some are bad. I know Policeman 1 and Policeman 2. I know many, but Policeman 3 is the worst.

Me: What makes him the worse?

Claudiu: Well, he caught us one time... me and Radu and Florin. We were drinking wine in the park. Policeman 3 gets us in the car and takes us to Section X and after that, he gives us each a 1 million (lei) fine.

Me: Wow!

Claudiu: But Radu knows the ones (police officers) at Section x... And Radu made a complaint in the station to Policeman 4 and Policeman 3 was warned to leave Radu alone and he didn’t have to pay the fine.

Me: What about you and Florin?
Claudiu: We got a fine, but I still haven't paid it.

Radu enjoyed a positive relationship with law enforcement that could be leveraged when confronted with fines. However, his relationship with the police officer was not useful to other members of the group; they were still expected to pay their fines. This stands in stark contrast to the experience of Flori when at the mere mention of her association to the group at site2 the police officers immediately changed their course of action and sent Flori and those associated with site2 back to the group without sanction.

Many youth from Typology B experienced extreme challenges with law enforcement. They often identified knowing how to deal with law enforcement as one of the biggest challenges they faced on the street. In the context of my in-depth conversation with the youth from site9, they all became quite emotional as they talked about the difficulties they had with law enforcement officials.

Adrian: (crying) Know that we suffer very much.

Cornel: (crying) The police is chasing us, is beating us up. We need to protect ourselves from them, but we do not know how.

Adrian: For example, on Sunday evening they took us and left us in the field where the airport is, just like that. And to get back home we had to walk until morning.

Cornel: So we were basically left like some dogs. Left in the jungle. (still crying) They took us at 9 at night and we got back at 4 AM. We were broke tired. And then, knowing that we have no money in our pocket, we had to go look for some iron, so we can have something to eat the next day.

Adrian: (still crying) We don't have possibilities. The police do not help us. They reject us from the collectivity... from the society.
Later they spoke of what they desired from law enforcement officials; they desired understanding and assistance, not punishment:

Adrian: On Sunday the police took us in the van and beat us because we were huffing from the bag. We were huffing, so they hit us with the club. Why beat us for this? Cause that’s how we are used to...

Cornel: They should not beat us cause we huff from the bag. So if we don’t huff one day... we feel bad, cause we have nothing. We huff because of sufferance and because we cannot refrain.

Adrian: Even when we are by you (referring to the researcher and the translator), we still huff from the bag.

Cornel: We can’t refrain ourselves...

Adrian: I know it is for our own good that they (the police) say to not huff anymore... That it is for our own good that they say it. But at least they can say it with nice words, “Dude, it is better for you not to huff anymore”. They do not need to beat us, but help us. You (referring to the researcher and translator) have saw it, that we cannot refrain from it...

Adrian age 20 and Cornel (group leader) age 21, site9

Oftentimes the youth across sites in Typology B sought to understand the behavior of those in their formal environment and often expressed the desire for those in their formal environment to seek to understand them.

In part, the youth from Typology A pointed to knowing how to behave (e.g., being polite, talking nicely to police officers, etc.) to explain their positive relationships with law enforcement. However, the youth from Typology B also discussed the importance of talking politely to police officers with very different outcomes. My in-depth conversation with the youth from site9 pointed to the need to behave appropriately.

Me: Do the police ever do anything to help you?

Cornel: No.
Nicu: No, never. Never.

Me: Do you want to vote, too, Adrian? (everyone laughs)

Adrian: Yes. No, the police never help us. Many times they mock us for being on the street.

Cornel: When they come around we need to speak nicely with them. We try not to talk too much and never cuss at them or they beat us up really, really hard.

Adrian: We talk with nice words. “Hi Mr. Boss. Please, Mr. Boss, what do you need?”

Cornel: And if the beating starts anyway, you need to say, “Please Mr. Boss. Please don't hit me. I'll leave this place, where you just told me to leave.”

Adrian age 20 and Cornel (group leader) age 21 and Nicu age 13, site 9

Many youth from Typology B appeared powerless and at the mercy of law enforcement. Their cowering stance stood in contrast to the brazen stance of youth from Typology A who appeared free to confront and even defy law enforcement officials without consequence.

Consistent with the perception of youth from Typology A, youth from Typology B also characterized law enforcement officials as corrupt. Some pointed to the need to pay bribes. One example of this was seen as Radu compared the law enforcement officials when he first came to the street to the ones he currently encountered.

Now, many of the policemen are meaner. Because we stay on the street and we don’t have to push down a bunch of lei every day to each policeman in his pocket. But the ones who have money to put in their pockets every day... they don’t take on them. The ones that can pay the bribe, they leave in peace. But I don’t have the money.

Radu (group leader) age 17, site 25

Youth across sites in Typology B spoke of the need to bribe law enforcement in order to be left in peace. Many also noted that “the gypsies” (referring to those who were
not also street youth) were at an advantage as they were often able to pay the bribe, if not monetarily through assisting the police with the street children.

Me: What should someone know about the police?
Adi: Well, if you do not have an ID it will not be good for you. If they see you that you sit here on the street continuously, and do not have documents...

Maria: (talking over Adi) They take you and fine you and beat you...
Adi: They beat you, they fine you... they put gypsies that they know to beat you and take your money and take your clothes.
Me: Are you referring to the police or...
Adi: The police. The police.
Me: Can you tell me more about that? How you know it was the police that put the gypsies?
Adi: Because they always sit and talk with them...

Maria: (talking over Adi) And they pay them bribes. The gypsies pay the cops bribes.
Adi: So, the gypsies steal, they do drugs... the cops see them that they steal and do drugs. In order for the cops to not arrest them, the gypsies give money. And if they don't have to give, the cop tells them... go to the boschetari and beat them and chase them away. And if the police come by, and sees that we are not beaten or that we do not run because of them, they fine us and them (the gypsies) and they beat us and they take us to the section over there and others beat us, too. They beat us until we are flat on the ground.

Me: I’m sorry. That sounds very difficult.

Adi: So it doesn’t matter that you are on the street, sick, handicapped, that you don’t have hands, you don’t have feet... they hit you, they break you with the beating. They hit you without mercy.

Maria age 17 and Adi age 18, site16

Most of the youth I encountered from Typology B expressed a desire for their lives to be different, a desire to be able to move off the street. Many youth spoke eloquently about the type of assistance they would find beneficial pointing to the
necessity for more resources for older youth and the need to address the corruption and violence among the police.

Me: If it was possible for you to leave the street would you do it?

Maria: Yes, I would. There should be more foundations for older kids, to help us.

Adi: But the program shouldn’t be too strict. A program I have been to, for example, after a meal at 12 o’clock... if we want to play or if we want to talk, No! They put in a tape with cartoons and say, “watch it” and nothing else. There should be a center where there is a bedroom and a room with a couch and a television you could watch. Not cartoons, but something you wanted. And a kitchen where you could fix your own meal and a bathroom where you could take a bath whenever you wanted. You had doctors if you needed them. You were going to school.

Maria: Yes, to go to school so you can be something in life, so that you won’t be on the street. Me, for example, I do not have many grades. I want to go back to school, to get 10-12 grades, to manage to find a good job, to make good money and not live from one day to the next.

Adi: It should be a place where the workers were not putting you in front of the TV for cartoons. They were going to the park with you, if you wanted to... or to the cinema... they were doing something to cheer you up. They were talking to you, “Hi. How are you?”

Maria: If they really want us to not be on the street anymore, they should give us chances. Foundations shouldn’t make fun of us, to say, “do what I say” and “now you ate, leave here”. After our meal we come back on the street again. Noting changes.

Me: You guys have a lot of wisdom.

Adi: A lot of us have it. If we could do it (leave the street) we would. Don’t you think I want to make a life for myself? Do you think I like to see someone that is holding the hand out to me in the evening because I don’t have money? Here in Romania, it is no use. We will never have anything. Maybe it will even be worse, maybe a lot worse for us. The police are beating us and giving us fines. They give us more and more fines until they put us in jail. So they found this way to get rid of many from the street. (pause) So that the street will be as clean as possible.

Maria age 17 and Romica age 18, site16
Across sites, the youth from Typology B enjoyed meaningful connections to people in their informal environment marked by a mutual affinity and understanding. This rich network of relationships was built over time and afforded them access to concrete resources such as living spaces, employment opportunities and food, as well as more relational resources such as connection and advice. Unfortunately, these resources did little more than assist the youth in their endeavors to meet their subsistence needs. While they expressed a desire for better connections to foundation personnel and law enforcement officials, they were challenged to develop them. Their lack of connection at times led to increased vulnerability to abuses in the context of foundations (e.g., exploited by older/bigger youth, etc.) and/or at the hands of some law enforcement officials. Their lack of connection also led to a lack of access to vital resources (e.g., education, identification papers, etc.) that would ostensibly enable them to better their situation. Across sites, youth expressed a desire to leave the streets and some had specific ideas about the type of assistance they would find beneficial. Assistance that would honor their connections to their informal environment, afford choice within structure, be relationally oriented and provide the requisite resources to reach their potentials.

Typology C

Last year, in winter around the end of the year there was a raid done with the police. A raid that was called “the street children back at home”. If I had been at site3, the police would not have taken me because they know me and my situation. But I was coming from work and in another section. Those police do not know me; they took me to a placement center and from there I was supposed to go back to my birth city. I was dressed in the work clothes... I was coming from work when they took me and I told them that I could not go because I had a job. They said: “Dude, a shirt like that... of ADP we can get that, too.” They were not believing me, cause I didn’t have an ID on me. They took me to a placement center in Section X and wanted to take me to Constanța. I called a worker from Foundation X and explained what happened. They called the police to get me out and had them write a letter because I had missed
about 2 days from work, to prove to the ones at work that the police took me for that raid. The problem is more complicated cause I had a floating ID (did not have a permanent address). When I got back to work I explained the situation and had the letter. And one of my co-workers who became more of a friend said, “All right. We will give you a room to stay somewhere until you can get your ID, so you won’t stay on the street anymore”. So my friend from work arranged for me a room until the raid was over. Foundation X used that address to help me get a permanent ID so none of this would be a problem now.

Edi age 25, site3

The above excerpt from my in-depth conversation with Edi serves as a representative interaction of the youth within this typology with their broader social networks. The youth from groups within Typology C had a robust network of associations within their formal and informal environments they leveraged to solve an immediate problem or address an immediate need, as well as to create opportunities for long-term benefit.

Youth from groups within Typology C enjoyed deep connections to individuals from their informal environment, which afforded them access to rich resources and opportunities. Sometimes these resources were quite unique. Three brothers lived together in one group. In the context of our in-depth conversation the discussion shifted to their families and that they missed them sometimes. Listen to how their relationship with a shopkeeper enabled them to maintain contact with their birth mother.

Cristi: We miss home sometimes. More our mom... we were with her when we were little... When we were little she took care of us.

Me: Do you ever go home?

Viorel: (pause) No (lower, thoughtful tone).

Me: What do you do when you miss your mother?
Cristi: What do we do? (pause) We send an envelope by mail and that’s it. We can’t go home cause we have a second (step) father and he beats us and we cannot stand it. When I want to hear from my mom, I send her a letter. And she gives me an answer.

Me: So she writes you letters back?

Cristi: Yes.

Me: And where does she send the letters?

Cristi: At a man, who is at Concordia that grocery store.

Viorel: It is that grocery store. You know the one over by where we wash windshields.

Me: Yes I have seen that shop. How did you meet that man at Concordia?

Cristi: Well, he was giving us to eat. He was sorry for us that we were on the street. Over time, we became friends with him. He understands our situation... that we do not have. And he helps us with what we need.

Cristi and Viorel (twins) age 15, site 5

The theme of staying connected to their birth families emerged across sites from within Typology C. Often the youths’ relationships established with those from the informal environment played a role in facilitating the connection (e.g., allowed them to use their phones, assisted with transportation, etc.). In witnessing the interaction of youth with those from their informal environment and hearing youth speak of their relationships, a mutual care is clearly evidenced. Often times the youth pointed to the establishment of the relationship “over time” and used friend language to describe their connection.

The youths’ connections to their informal environment enabled them to obtain and sustain opportunities for employment. Some youth (mostly the younger youth) engaged in similar activities as those from groups in Typology B. They assisted individuals who lived in the neighborhood with odd jobs (e.g., cleaning, etc.), washed windshields at a gas station or assisted local vendors as opportunities arose (e.g.,
unloading a truck, guarding a stand, etc.). Many of the older youth from groups in Typology C had opportunities to work informally for more formal entities engaging in what they referred to as “work by the day”. For example, youths who had construction skills were hired informally to work construction sites. Unlike the odd jobs performed for people living in the neighborhood, this type of work had the potential to last for several days or be open-ended making it a much more lucrative opportunity. One such opportunity was captured in my field notes when I ran into Alex from site3 at site15.

While we were waiting for the youth at site15 to return we saw Alex from site3 over in a parking lot helping people park cars. I observed him for a few minutes. He would point out available spots and help guide cars into their positions. On several occasions, people gave him money. I saw two people give him 10,000 lei and a couple other people give him money, but I couldn’t see the exact amount. After doing this for about 20 minutes or so, he spotted us and ran over to where we were. The majority of our interaction was very informal. We traded Romanian and American jokes and talked about music. I noted that it was unusual for me to see him in this part of town. Alex stated that he spends most of his time in that area as this is where he works helping to park and guard cars, and that when we come to talk in the future that we should come there instead of going to site3. I asked him how he knew about this job. He shared that the man that worked the lot was the brother of a friend he made from an apartment in their neighborhood (referring to site3). After about 10 minutes he indicated that he would need to get back to work pointing to the official man working in the lot. We shook hands and told him that we would look forward to seeing him again. We left about 7:30 PM.

Field Notes, June 11, 2003

Although youth from Typology B were afforded employment opportunities through their connections to people in their informal environment, it was their personal relationship with someone in their environment that directly connected them to the opportunity (e.g., they knew the man who worked at the gas station who allowed them to wash windows there, etc.). Alex was able to leverage an employment opportunity indirectly through a personal relationship. It was not his direct
relationship with the parking lot attendant that afforded access to the job. It was his relationship with the parking lot attendant’s brother that facilitated the opportunity; it was Alex’s ability to leverage his contact’s resources. Alex’s experience was not unique. Other youth across sites within Typology C spoke of opportunities afforded via their relationships with people who could connect them with somebody else. Being able to access the broader network of relationships associated with someone one has a personal relationship with, significantly broadened their potential opportunities. These indirect links also tended to take the youth from Typology C away from their living locations to other areas of Bucharest, which afforded them opportunities to develop relationships beyond their local neighborhood.

The relationships the youth from Typology C developed with those in their informal environment afforded them opportunities to develop their human capital. I learned of one such instance in the context of my in-depth conversation with three brothers from site5 when they shared with me how it was that they learned how to read and write.

Viorel: We know how to write. (pause) We know to read and we know how to write. Someone taught us when we were younger.

Cristi: We learned on the street.

Me: Did a person teach you or did you learn at a foundation or...

Viorel: A man helped us from the park over there. A man we met in our area.

Me: How did you meet him?

Cristi: Well... he was sitting on the bench every morning when were sleeping in the park. He had a dog that he would bring to the park in the morning and we would always see each other. One time he asked us “Children, are you hungry?” We said “yes.” And he said to stay there and he brought us food... the second day, too, the third day, too...until we became friends with him. And from then he asked us if we know how to read and we said no. So every morning he brought a blackboard, like in school... we were
writing on the board with chalk and we learned how to read and how to write.

Viorel: And to practice he brought us notepads, pens... He was also bringing clothes too.

Cristi: For dressing... he was bringing us food... he was bringing us everything... He was bringing us food, in the evening, in the morning... was bringing milk in the morning... in the evening cooked food... whatever he could.

Cristi and Viorel (twins) age 15, site 5

Neither Cristi nor Viorel had formal education. Teaching them to read and write ostensibly enhanced their potential for future success. Other youth from Typology C also shared experiences when someone from their informal environment invested time in teaching them something (e.g., carpentry work, about the Orthodox faith, juggling, etc.). At times this investment led to other opportunities (e.g., employment at a construction site, etc.) that benefited them materially.

Their tenderness and care toward the man at the park was easy to detect as I listened to Cristi and Viorel reflect on their relationship with him and talk about their feelings when he passed away. Across sites within Typology C the youths’ deep connection to their living locations and the people in the area surrounding them was evidenced. Many referred to their living location as “home” and expressed a desire to stay there. Edi expressed this in his explanation of why he did not want the police to send him back to Constanța.

When this raid was with the “street children back home”... I told you that as a street kid I really don’t have any address so they wanted to send me back to Constanța even if I don’t have the address there anymore. And even though I explained to them that I work here and that I stay here at site 3, they still wanted to send me... And I told them “if you take me, I will get on the train on one side and get off the other side.” Here I grew up and I consider that my home is here. I know the ones here and they know me. I do not want to live in another city or even another section. I belong here.

Edi age 25, site 3
Consistent with Typology B the deep connections experienced by the youth to those in their surrounding neighborhood could serve as a barrier to them moving off the streets. As was the case with Edi, most youth were emphatic about their desire to stay where they were. Another example of this was captured in my in-depth conversation with the three brothers from site5.

Me: If you could leave the street, would you want to?
Both boys say together: No. No. (nodding their heads no as they spoke)
Me: You would prefer to stay living on the street?
Viorel: Yes. (nodding yes)
Cristi: Why should we go when we were raised here? We have lived here since we were little, since we were 9 years old.
Viorel: We are used to it here. In another place they don’t know us there, we don’t know them... here they knows us... and it’s good. Here is our home.

Cristi and Viorel (twins) age 15, site5

Sometimes, the youths’ connections to their informal environments moved beyond meeting a concrete need of an individual youth to effecting substantial change that benefited many. For example, their connections to those in their immediate informal environment served as a buffering effect in the youths’ relationships with law enforcement from the local section. The relationships they possessed in the informal environment assisted their standing with those from their formal environment. In the context of my in-depth conversation with Consuela she described the difference between their (those from site3) relationships with law enforcement officials when they first came to the street compared to what they currently experienced. She pointed to their relationships with those in their neighborhood, specifically being known by them, as the difference maker.
Me: So how the police are now is different than how they used to be?

Consuela: The police before was… even if you didn’t do anything they would take you. They were taking you to the section, were checking you, they used to keep you 2-3 days at the section. They were putting you in an orphanage because they say you were wandering on the street. They did not leave you alone at all… they were beating you up... the police were a big problem.

Me: And now they are different?

Consuela: Yes, they are a lot more different because… well, of course they take you if you steal, if they hear that you inject yourself. Of course, then they arrest you and put you in jail if you are caught. But other than this, they leave us alone. We are known here and are quiet. People do not complain about us. So the police do not bother us anymore, only when people complain. For example that it’s noisy, that they can’t sleep... But in site3, people don’t complain. They even intervene for us: “Leave these ones alone. Leave them at peace. We know them. They are not a problem.” Where we stay... the entire Section X knows us. They know we are good, even if we huff from the bags... they know we are good and mind our own business and do not take on the people in the area. The people in the area know us and that is why we don’t have problems with the police.

Consuela age 22, site3

The youth across sites in Typology C appeared to be considered part of the community. The youths’ deep connections to those in the area, being known by them, enabled community members to vouch for them and their character, which afforded them a buffer against law enforcement. This buffer protected them from being confronted by law enforcement for being on the street even if they were openly huffing aurolac and spared them the disruption experienced by the youth from Typology B. It appeared as though, providing the youth from Typology C were good neighbors (i.e., were not breaking any serious laws like stealing, doing heroin, etc. or causing disruption) they were left “in peace”.

Another unique benefit emanating from the youths’ connections with their informal environment that resulted in a substantive change with the potential to
benefit many was the establishment of a formal foundation. The youth from site3 established a relationship with an American woman living in the area. Consuela shared how this relationship started and developed over time in the context of our in-depth conversation.

Me: Are there foundations that help people who stay on the street?
Consuela: Yes, there are many foundations in the whole of Bucharest.
Me: Can you give me examples of foundations that help?
Consuela: Yes, for example, mamma Sue, the American lady I told you about. So, to me, to be honest, every week, no matter the day, once a week, she gives me money for my little girl (Robert). And she helps many mothers with children.
Me: Tell me again how you first meet mamma Sue?
Consuela: I met her 9 years ago. She lived in the apartments over there and noticed us on the street. And she started talking to us. She came, exactly the same as you. She got to know us and knew we were boschetari and talked to us, exactly as you come and talk to us. And over time we finally became friends and all... She heard us talking about our problems. We were ok with food and clothes and such. But when I got pregnant I did not know what I was going to do. So mama Sue helped me. When I gave birth to my daughter I stayed about 3 days or 4 at site3 with her... it was summer. But I thought that it is not good to keep her on the street. She was very little and gets sick very quickly. But I didn’t want her in an orphanage. So I took her to mamma Sue and asked if she would help me. She kept Roberta until she was 8 months old. She would bring her to see me and I would go see her. And after 8 months, my mom found a place to live with rent and said that Roberta could stay with her. So I went to mamma Sue to get her. Mamma Sue didn’t get upset. She said that she rather rejoiced more that my girl is by my family and me. And since then, mamma Sue is still helping me when I have a need for food or whatever. She finally opened a foundation here, which is now Foundation X and she started helping other girls who had children too.

Consuela age 22, site3

Unlike most of the examples presented throughout this study, this was a unique occurrence for this particular group of youth. However, the relationships they
established and developed with a person from their informal environment led to a formal foundation that served youth across typologies throughout Bucharest. It stands as a remarkable example of the youths’ ability to build relationships marked by care, trust, and commitment, as well as the potentiality embedded in such connections to the informal environment.

The youth from groups within Typology C also utilized their economic resources to negotiate with their informal environment. Edi shared one such example in the context of our in-depth conversation. As articulated in Chapter 5, youth from Typology C placed a high value on cleanliness and hygiene. When their access to clean water was jeopardized, the youth combined their resources to negotiate a plan of action.

We make sure we can shower even in the sewer... even when the water was once turned off. In front of the metro area there is a utility building. One time they did work and the water was turned off at all the apartments. Before the water was turned off we quickly broke a pipe and made kind of a shower and we took a shower there. There we were washing ourselves, were taking baths... until the ones from the sewers found out and were going to call the police. So, we were all gathering money, were buying them a bottle of vodka and they were allowing us to have the water. Even to this hour it’s still there. Right now, the shower is still there. We just have to buy a bottle of vodka now and then.

Edi age 25, site3

Their knowledge and skills equipped them to create the shower and their economic resources enabled them to negotiate for the water. Youth from groups within Typology C used economic resources to negotiate for other things as well. For example, a group of youth paid the workers at a bread factory to allow them to run a wire to their building to gain access to electricity for their television and radio. On occasion, their relationships with their informal environment were negotiated with money as well (see below).
The youth from Typology C also enjoyed valuable relationships within the context of their formal environment, affording them access to a range of resources and opportunities. The youth from groups within Typology C possessed a sophisticated knowledge of foundations that served the needs of street children and the range of services offered to them through the foundations. In the context of our in-depth conversation, Consuela listed a host of foundations and the specific resources and opportunities provided by them.

Me: Do you know other foundations that help street kids, besides Foundation 1 and the Foundation 2?

Consuela: Yes, there is Foundation 3, Foundation 4, and... Oh, there are many more foundations. Hmmm. There is Foundation 5, Foundation 6... (pause)

Me: And what kind of things do they help with?

Consuela: They help with a lot. Whoever needs employment, go to Foundation 2, they are the ones who help with that... and also Foundation 6. They help you look for work. If you need school, go to Foundation 4, they help with school. If you need food, there is Foundation 3, Foundation 5, Foundation 6... the ones that help with food... like that.

Me: You know a lot about foundations. I know you've accessed a lot of things from these foundations too... school, help finding a job... How did you learn all this?

Consuela: There are workers coming here from the foundations to let us know... They come, see what our need is and try to help us. Or they tell us they will bring food, soap... this kind of thing.

Me: I see... any other ways to find out?

Consuela: Yes, I hear through other street kids. For example, if I go to a foundation and ask for shampoo and they say they don't have... another street kid gives me advice. He says to me “go to that foundation, because they will surely give you.” And this is it. We find out from one another. And even at the foundations they will send you somewhere else. For example, if I go and ask for something from them and they say they don't have it, they give advice where else to go. They say, “We can't help you with that thing. Go to that foundation, cause they help with that kind of thing.” They try to make sure we get the shampoo if we need.
Youth across typologies could typically identify foundations that assisted with meeting basic (e.g., food, clothing, etc.) and emergent (e.g., medical, etc.) needs. The youth from Typology C were no exception. Their relationships with foundations afforded them access to a range of material resources, as well as assisted them in meeting emergent medical needs in addition to preventative health care. This gamut of resources was known by youth across sites and ages. In the context of my in-depth conversation with the three brothers from site5, they even noted that they considered foundations and what they did to assist them as the “best thing” about living on the street.

Me: You boys mentioned there are good things about staying on the street. What are some of the good things?

Viorel: Good things? (pause) For us, the best thing is the people who help us.

Cristi: Foundations are coming to the street and they help us... Foundation 1, Foundation 2... Foundation 3... and um... there are foundations that are coming and they help us with whatever they can.

Viorel: The foundations help us with food, clothes, at the hospital... whatever. If we get sick, we have Foundation 2, who helps us...

Cristi: They take us to the hospital and we get well. They come and do an analysis. From month to month, we go to have our tests done to see if we are sick.

Viorel: And if we are sick they take us and admit us to the hospital... if we are sick with the lungs...

Cristi: Foundation 1 gives us to wash ourselves... they bring us...

Viorel: (interrupts) They bring us detergent...

Cristi: Detergent, soap, toothpaste... they bring us... Actually, tomorrow they will bring us, cause they bring to us every single month.

Me: How do you know when they will come?

Cristi: They send someone to tell us. There is a girl there who works at Foundation 1 and she comes here and tells us so we will be here when they come.
Me: I see. And how did you know about these foundations to start with before you knew anything about any foundations?

Cristi: They came and told us. The foundations come and meet us. For some (foundations) when they first came they took us to the car, they made a chart... and after that, on the 4th or 5th day... they brought us detergent, soap... the frying pans and the pots that we cook food in...

Viorel: And now they come to us. Some come monthly. Some come more.

Cristi and Viorel (twins) age 15, site 5

Across sites in Typology C much of their initial awareness about foundations appeared to come from the foundations. Foundation workers came into their spaces, introduced themselves, and identified what services and resources they could provide. Youth built on this knowledge via referrals from foundations or other street youth. Consistent with the experiences of youth from Typology A, it appeared as though foundation workers brought some services to the street (e.g., food, household items, hygiene supplies, etc.) and directly facilitated medical assistance, even monthly chest analyses to assess for respiratory concerns. This stands in contrast to the experiences of youth from Typology B.

The youth from Typology C’s connections with foundations not only afforded them access to material and medical assistance, but to a range of other opportunities. Like Typology A, the youth from Typology C were also aware of and able to access resources with the potential to increase opportunities and facilitate mobility. Youth across Typology C consistently identified resources associated with schooling and employment. Many of the foundations identified above by Consuela were also identified by the youth from Typology B. However, those from Typology B only spoke of their assistance with food, clothing and medical needs. Many pointed to these foundations’ lack of assistance with education and employment.
Related to employment, foundations assisted the youth from Typology C in a number of ways. In some cases they directly hired the youth to work at the foundation. An example of this type of opportunity and how it emerged was captured in my in-depth conversion with Consuela from site3.

Me: Are you currently working?
Consuela: Now? Yes, I work at Foundation 1. We come with condoms on the street, once a month... (pause) we need to teach them about AIDS, syphilis, how it is transmitted, how it is given, how to get rid of the venereal diseases. If they think they have a problem, we take kids to be tested. This is my role.

Me: How did you get this job?
Consuela: So a friend of mine from Foundation 2 knew the people at Foundation 1 for a long time and they asked him if he knows someone who can read and is able to work. And he told them about me and a girl Flori. So we went to a camp and had some classes and they saw that we learned what they taught us. I have worked for them for a year or so now. Once a month we distribute condoms. We go to the street and talk to the kids and ask if they need tests. If they do we take them to have them done.

Consuela age 22, site3

Consuela’s human capital (e.g., ability to read, work, learn, etc.) qualified her for the opportunity and her connection with a worker from Foundation 2 (her social capital) opened the door for the opportunity. This combination of ability and connections leading to opportunity was witnessed for many youth across Typology C. Furthermore, every instance of a youth hired by a foundation was accompanied by an opportunity to further build their human capital through specialized training and preparation. In addition, employment by a foundation often led to additional networking opportunities with workers from other foundations, further building their network of associations with people from their formal environment.
As already alluded to, foundations assisted youth from Typology C in accessing employment opportunities by providing the requisite education and certifications. Not only did they assist the youth with accessing compulsory education, they also afforded opportunities to receive specialized training leading to formal certification in applied fields. Edi provided an example of this in his discussion of how he identified a foundation with the specific resources required to meet his unique desire to become certified as a carpenter.

Me: Earlier you talked about Foundation 1 and Foundation 2. Are there other foundations that help people who stay on the street?

Edi: Very many… Foundation 3… There is Foundation 4, Foundation 5… there is another foundation, which will soon be open. A center where if we have some schooling we can get help with qualifications (construction certification) and problems like this. This foundation doesn’t buy the materials but they help us with qualifications. They have some friends who have a construction firm. The workers from the new foundation talked to them and they will give me materials.

Me: How do you know about the new foundation?

Edi: Well, I wanted to finish my qualifications, so I thought, hmmm… who do I know that helps with construction qualifications…. like this. So I ask around my friends, the people that I know and at foundations. Then someone tells me that they know some people who are starting a foundation. Aha! That’s where I will go to ask about qualifications.

Edi age 25, site3

Once again, this is an example of how youth from Typology C leveraged relationships in order access resources and create opportunities. Perhaps their ability to do this, as discussed in Chapter 5, relied in part on their capacity (e.g., human capital, cultural capital, sociability, etc.). However, it also appeared linked specifically to their connections to and being known by foundation personnel, their “friends”. Once again
the significance of the combination of ability and connections was seen. Picking up the in-depth conversation with Edi further demonstrated this.

Edi: I hope the new foundation will help me. The foundations open for a very long time knows the situation of each of us individually and they know if they want to help us or not. By now we are friends. They know me and they have helped me.

Me: How do foundations know if they want to help someone or not?

Edi: A foundation when it opens for the first time, maybe at first they are just offering a meal. From all areas children are coming there to have a meal. And from there, they make a file of each of them individually. They find out about their life and get to know everything about them. After that they may open apartments or offer classes, or something. And from who they know they select the ones they think want to do something with their lives and they put them in apartments, help them get hired, make their documents (identification cards), and whatever is needed. Perhaps the ones who know me will speak on my behalf to the new foundation.

Edi age 25, site3

Edi’s human capital (e.g., some schooling, etc.) and his capacity to make the right inquires that led to the precise resources coupled with being known and “selected” positioned him for advantage.

Finally, the youth from Typology C spoke of how foundations advocated on their behalf to address employer concerns or decrease barriers to employment opportunities. An example of the former was provided in the opening field note excerpt. When Edi’s employment was disrupted after he was picked up by law enforcement, a worker from a foundation contacted the police section requesting an explanatory letter be sent to his employer. This experience was not unique to him. Other youth from groups within Typology C spoke of accessing the assistance of a foundation to negotiate with another formal entity. I learned of one such incident while interacting in the field with Marian from site3.
Marian shared that he got his current job when the director from Foundation X “battled” the mayor from Section X. Marian indicated that he saw on TV the mayor from Section X announcing that the city would hire street children who were capable of working. So he went to the mayor’s office to inquire about a job and was turned away. Marian stated that after this happened a couple of times he got very angry. That he believed that the mayor was lying for “his publicity” and that he did not intend to hire any of them. After a month, he decided to go to the director of Foundation X who also got angry when she heard the story. So she arranged to be interviewed with the mayor on television. Marian laughed as he shared about how the director asked the mayor on television why he had not hired any street children like he had promised, was he misleading the citizens of Bucharest? Marian indicated that within a couple of days he was hired at ADP (garbage collection company), along with his friend Liviu and Liviu’s girlfriend.

Field Notes, July 28, 2003

Consistent with the youth from typologies A and B the youth from Typology C also pointed to the importance of abiding by behavioral expectations when interacting with foundation personnel, directly linking them to one’s ability to access resources. This issue emerged in the context of my in-depth conversation with the three brothers from site5.

Me: You mentioned that you have to be careful how you act when you go to a foundation. What did you mean by that?

Cristi: We need to act nicely. For example, if they have food and they give us… to act nicely with them. If they don't give us to not act ugly with them. This is important to keep in mind...

Viorel: (speaking over Cristi) To act good and to not act ugly. You, for example, if you give us food, we should say, “I kiss your hand” to you. If you give us clothes, we could say something like “Bogdaproște” (A Romania expression used when someone gives food or clothes to the needy in honor of a deceased person. It means “in the memory of the lost one.”) And that’s it.

Me: And if you would behave ugly?

Viorel: If you do not talk nicely, they will not give to you. No.

Cristi: It is their opinion. It is up to them to decide…. as to their opinion.

Cristi and Viorel (twins) age 15, site5
Youth from across typologies consistently pointed to the need to follow behavioral expectations when interacting with foundations or risk not receiving resources. Most extended this interactional etiquette to include relationships with everyone. Some identified how one related to others as a key ingredient in developing relationships and another’s willingness to assist you. They defined relating in terms of interaction, as well as personal appearance. However, one’s ability to interact politely at times compensated for appearance.

Me: You have mentioned a lot of times that you have a friend or somebody finds out about a need and they help you. I have talked to many people who stay on the street and they don’t appear to have as many of these relationships ...

Edi: (interrupts) Yes, because others don’t know how to relate... they don’t keep themselves clean and they don’t know how to talk. They behave as dirty as they look and people don’t want to talk to them. To not know how to clean yourself? To not know how to say hello and good day? To not cuss at someone? To not know to put your aurolac away? People don’t want to talk to them. I am not saying I have never been dirty. There were moments even when I was dirty, too, coming from work or from who knows where... I was going to someone who may turn from me, but it was enough for me to open my mouth. After that he knew. He would talk to me and who knows, maybe we become friends. But others? No matter even if they get dressed clean, they talk dirty... Those ones will never have (people willing to help them).

Edi age 25, site3

Related to the formal environment, the youth from groups within Typology C also appeared to have civil relationships with law enforcement officials. Unlike youth from Typology B (and as will be seen below, Typology D) who consistently pointed to the challenges they encountered with the police, when asked about law enforcement, most youth from Typology C appeared to view them as inconsequential. What should a person on the street know about the police? was a standard question included in all of the in-depth conversations. The question elicited descriptive narratives of abuse and
difficulty from youth in other typologies. For youth in Typology C, the question evoked very little.

Me: What should a person know about the police on the street? Do they ever come around here?

Cristi: They come. Sometimes they come. (pause)

Me: What usually happens when the police come?

Viorel: Well, if there are bad ones they take us to the section...take our prints, to see if we had stolen. (pause) Once there was a raid; they put us in an orphanage...

Viorel and Cristi (twins) age 15, site5

Me: Do the police ever come around? What should a person from the street know about the police?

Gabi: What is there to know? Sometimes they come but they don’t really do anything. They just go by and don’t really do anything to us.

Gabi age 13, site22

Me: What should a person living on the street know about the police?

Edi: He should know the laws and he will not have a problem. For example, to not steal.

Edi age 25, site3

However, this relative calm did not reflect the historical account. As was articulated earlier in this section in the context of my in-depth conversation with Consuela, the youths’ relationship with law enforcement was not always positive. As already established, the informal environment played an important role in serving as a buffer for youth with law enforcement. I glimpsed another historical dynamic of this relationship in the context of my in-depth conversation with Edi. A return to my inquiry about the police provides additional insights:
Me: What should a person living on the street know about the police?

Edi: He should know the laws and he will not have a problem. For example, to not steal.

Me: What is your relationship like with the police?

Edi: In other zones they don’t realize I stay on the street, because I am dressed nice and clean. But if they get me and take me to be checked, I tell them that I am from site3. They call Section X, see that I don’t have problems and they let me go.

Me: So your relationship with the police from Section X is pretty good?

Edi: It is very good. You see there was a time many policemen were coming and wanted girls... they came in civilian clothes. They were drunk. There were many beautiful girls that stayed here ... their bodies well made. The police were coming after the girls here and there was a scandal. Yes, there was scandal. And the Section X knows us very well. Now we don’t have any problems anymore because of this scandal. They were coming to the bar over there (points across the field). The entire time we were staying there behind a building where we could see them. We saw that they tried to sleep (sexually) with the girls and we were witnesses. Since then we always had them in our hand. They came again after the girls another day. Four policemen came after the girls and we broke their cars... we put two of them in the hospital... They left. We were very many and nothing happened to us. And now we (them and the police) are friends, because we have them in our hand.

Edi age 25, site3

Perhaps the youth from groups in Typology C did not enjoy such civil relationships with law enforcement due to the intervention of those from the informal environment alone. Perhaps the youth from Typology C also held some power in their relationship with law enforcement officials with the information they possessed about the illegal activities of some of them. At first glance, their relationship had similar characteristics to the relationships between the youth from Typology A and law enforcement. Although there were some similarities between typologies A and C regarding a dynamic of deviousness, there were also distinct differences. The youth from Typology A assisted law enforcement with illegal activities (e.g., arranged for
sex, etc.), covered up unprincipled behavior (e.g., cleaned up empty beer bottles from the police section after a third shift, etc.), maintained their silence about the activities and paid bribes to garner favor. In contrast, the youth from Typology C intervened in the illegal activities of law enforcement to protect the females from their group and issued a personal reprimand (e.g., assaulted their persons and vehicles, etc.) to ensure they did not violate the women again.

The youth from groups within Typology C enjoyed robust connections with individual across their formal and informal environments, which afforded them access to a range of resources, some with the potential to increase opportunities and facilitate mobility. Perhaps, like Typology A, it is the combination of the youths’ connections to both their formal and informal environments that produced the most benefit. The opening excerpt to the discussion of Typology C provided a vivid example; the benefit of multiple ties was seen time and time again. Another unique theme that emerged for youth in Typology C was the combination of capacity and connections. As introduced in Chapter 5, as a resource embedded in associations, one’s social capital depends on an individual’s capacity to form relationships with others, or sociability. Furthermore, at times it appeared that their cultural and/or human capital better positioned them to access potential-rich opportunities.

**Typology D**

We arrived at site4 a little after 10:00 AM. As we walked across the front part of the area we noticed Alina was sitting in the front of the building. I walked over and greeted her. She stood up and gave us both hugs and kisses. I could see she had been crying. I asked her how she was doing. Alina stated that she was not doing well that a boy, Audi, from the street had died last night. Alina shared that Audi had been sleeping in the apartment block hallway and that a person from the apartment block beat him up. She explained that after the beating Audi did not immediately die. The man who beat him up threw Audi out on the sidewalk in front of the apartment block and he lay there until the police arrived. Alina explained that by the time help arrived
Audi had died and they took him away like garbage. I asked if the police were able to find the man who killed Audi. Alina indicated that the police did not know who beat Audi ... and they had already stopped looking. Alina stated that she was pretty sure somebody saw what happened, but none of them (the other street children) did so no one was talking. She indicated that after the beating many of them were there, but none of them knew what to do to help Audi. We sat in silence for several minutes. Alina commented that this was very sad - that one of them could die like this and no one seems to care. She pointed around the area at all the people walking and commented that people go about their business and don't even know that someone died. She commented several times about how no one is considering them; as street children, no one cares about them. We continued to sit in silence. Alina shared with me that I knew this boy - that I had met Audi. Again, we sat in silence.

Field Notes, April 3, 2003

The above excerpt from my field notes serves as a representative interaction of the youth within this typology with their broader social networks. The youth from Typology D completely lacked the beneficial connections enjoyed by youth from other typologies. Instead of hearing narratives about the deep connections experienced with their informal environment, many youth spoke of their informal environment as being unpredictable and hostile, or even murderous. With youth from Typology D, the accounts of assistance received from foundations shared by youth from other typologies were replaced by experiences with a lack of available resources, inconsistency and the perceived apathy and malevolence of foundation personnel. Law enforcement officials were not seen as an accessible resource in a time of need, they were to be avoided; at times they were to be feared.

Youth across sites in Typology D consistently expressed an overarching sense that no one was “considering them”, that no one cared. This appeared to start with feelings of abandonment from their families and extended to an overall sense of alienation from society. One example of this was captured in the context of my in-depth conversation with Sandu when our dialogue shifted to his family.
Sandu: I haven’t seen my family in many years. They are not thinking about me; they are not looking for me.

Me: Do you ever miss them?

Sandu: (pause) Yes. (pause) But if they’re not looking for me, why should I do it either? When I was little, I was taken to the children’s orphanage. I stayed there until I was 12-13. Then I left. (long pause) At first, my parents were coming once a month and visiting me (at the orphanage). (long pause) Once they are not looking for me, I won’t look for them, either. My life is now on the street. (long pause, Sandu’s eyes well up with tears) I don’t know what home means anymore. I was very little since I had a home. (pause, clears his throat) Just like that I got used to being on the street. (long pause)

Me: What are some of the hardest things about being on the street? (long pause)

Sandu: The police come and take you and beat you up. Really no one is interested in you and ... no one cares. Everybody treats you bad on the street. (long pause)

As youth spoke of their interactions and experiences with their informal and formal environments, the theme of not feeling considered consistently emerged. Youth often spoke of believing that people in general thought badly of them, that people looked down on them, and expressed a deep desire to be understood. Some identified the role of the government and the media in perpetuating this “unfair” image of them.

Ovidiu and Vali pointed out that many people have the wrong perception of street kids, and that they felt that the government and the media attempted to help portray them in a very negative way. One example they gave was when somebody in the government had arranged for a building to be used to house street kids. They indicated that all the street kids of Bucharest were taken to this building to live. Both of them talked about how nice it was to have that shelter, how much they appreciated having access to water, having a toilet, being able to take baths and keep their clothes clean, and having a place to keep their things. They then shared that some people from Metro X (public transportation company) came through and indicated that the building was actually theirs and that all the kids would have to leave. They were all forced to leave the building. Both indicated that later when they read the newspaper it was reported by people in the government that the youth destroyed the building; they had destroyed the inside and had to leave because of
their own unruly behavior. Ovidiu and Vali adamantly stated that was absolutely not true. They had taken good care of the space and were forced to leave because the people from Metro X kicked them out. They had not treated the building badly. They did not leave the building in a worse condition than they found the building. They indicated that this type of thing happened often to the youth in that area; they are always reading in the newspaper about things they have supposedly done. The media and government perpetuate an unfair image of them. They commented that if people believe what they read, they understand why they would hate them.

Field Notes, May 10, 2003

Throughout my 10-month field observation period I observed a qualitatively different dynamic on the streets when interacting with youth across sites from Typology D in comparison to any other sites around the city. Those in the informal environment appeared to possess negative perceptions of, and at times expressed fear of, the youth living in the area. People changed their trajectory to avoid walking near to them. We were asked to move away from a storefront as our being there was “bad for business” and people openly criticized me for talking to the “aurolaci” (those who huff aurolac) often with furrowed brows and the use of forceful language. On occasion, someone would hit a young person with a bag of groceries or strike out with a cane when a youth walked by. Observation alone pointed to a lack of connection between the youth from sites across Typology D and their informal environment. This lack of associations with their informal environment appeared to cut them off from many of the resources and opportunities afforded youth from other typologies and opened them up to increased vulnerability.

Whereas the youth from typologies A, B and C enjoyed some opportunity to engage in informal work as a resource generating activity, the youth from Typology D relied primarily on begging as a way to make money. In fact, every young person who engaged in an in-depth conversation with me identified begging as his or her primary
source of income. The following excerpts from my in-depth conversations serve as examples:

Me: How do you get money on the street?

Placa: I beg. Begging, begging. I hold out my hand... You sit on the side of the road and see a man coming. You just stick your hand out...

Placa age 17, site12

Me: Are people on the street able to eat everyday?

Doru: No... but if you beg, than maybe. That is how I earn my money.

Doru age 15, site12

Me: How do you get money on the street?

Alina: Begging or some try to work in the parking lot, but that can be dangerous. Better to beg.

Alina age 26, site4

Me: What are some ways that people get money on the street?

Florin: Well... how should I say it, I like the most to beg. (pause) I beg most for money. I would like to live like this, humanly... I would prefer to work, but when I try to earn by washing cars or in the parking lot I am beat or chased away.

Florin age 17, site4

The theme was clear. Begging was the only reliable way to earn money; the only consistent option available to youth across sites in Typology D. Even this resource generating activity came with risk. As articulated in Chapter 4, begging is illegal in Romania. The public scandal law is used to regulate undesirable public behavior. For example, street children begging or congregating in a group was undesirable so it would fall under the public scandal law. Although inconsistently enforced, if caught begging, youth had the potential of experiencing negative encounters with law enforcement officials (sometimes violent) and being penalized with large fines.
At times, the youth from Typology D were afforded opportunities to engage in informal work assisting street vendors in their immediate environment with odd jobs (e.g., breaking up the ice on the sidewalk in front of the stand, etc.). I witnessed one such occurrence at site 12.

When we arrived at the site we saw Doru filling up some buckets with water from the fountain. He saw us and motioned for us to wait a second. He went back and forth filling up buckets of water and taking them over to a lady who sold flowers. She would then pour the water on the ground in front of where she was selling flowers. When he was done he came over to us. He had a couple of cigarettes in his hand. He stated that the flower lady had given him some cigarettes for helping with the water.

Field Notes, June 12, 2003

Only a small handful of these opportunities seemed to emerge for the youth. And, as was the case with Doru, payment generally consisted of a couple of cigarettes or a small food item (e.g., a small bag of chips, bottle of pop, an apple, etc.). Throughout the course of this study I did not observe nor did any youth share incidences of being paid monetarily for their assistance. Sometimes the youth immediately consumed their payment (e.g., ate the food, smoked the cigarette, etc.), and sometimes they saved their payment to use in a future exchange.

When we arrived at site 12 we ran into Placa down in the metro area by a kiosk. When he saw us he asked if we could wait just one minute. When he came over to where we were, he showed us that he had earned a comb and two cigarettes. He indicated that he was going to get a haircut. He went on to state that a man who worked at another kiosk was going to cut it for him for the two cigarettes.

Field Notes, July 4, 2003

These types of exchanges also demonstrated the youths’ ability to delay gratification.

In the informal work environment for youth across sites in Typology D, the exchange for service was immediate and isolated. The person from the informal
environment involved in the exchange did not typically rehire the same youth over and over again; they did not provide additional resources. This stands in contrast to the experiences of youth from, for example, Typology B who would perform work for the same individuals frequently. Although they were usually compensated in some way immediately (e.g., keeping the change from a grocery store transaction, provided with food, etc.), they were also often provided for (e.g., food, etc.) in between times. Furthermore, if they were compensated materially, the recompense typically involved a bag of food (e.g., bread, meat, etc.) versus a couple of cigarettes or a small food item.

As noted in the above series of in-depth conversation excerpts related to resource generating activities, informal work with the potential to generate more substantial resources (e.g., parking and washing automobiles in parking lots, etc.) was disrupted and often considered dangerous. The brief passage from my field notes below was one of many occurrences when the youths’ attempt at such activities was met with aggression.

When we came up the escalator we saw Istrite (age 17) leaning up against the rail. The entire left side of his face was swollen, his eye was blackened and he had a couple of pretty deep cuts on his lip and cheek. We walked over to him to see what had happened. It was very difficult for him to speak due to the swelling; he often winced. When asked what happened to his face, at first he stated that he had a little accident. Sandu, who was standing nearby protested, indicating that what had occurred was no accident. Istrite stated that it was true; he had not had an accident. He was beat up by the police. He explained that he was in the parking lot near to site4 guarding the cars and washing them trying to earn some money. The police came and when they saw him they beat him up.

Field Notes, November 11, 2002

The youth were not always physically assaulted and the aggressor was not always someone in law enforcement, but their attempts at engaging in more lucrative
resource generating activities were consistently disrupted. The youth from typologies A, B and C had established relationships with individuals from their informal and/or formal environments that facilitated their ability to engage in these work activities. The youth from across sites in Typology D lacked these relationships and were therefore challenged in their endeavors. On rare occasions a young person from Typology D was afforded an opportunity to work informally for a more formal entity, or to work by the day. Although at times they benefited from these exchanges, they were vulnerable to exploitation. Since their work preceded payment, many youth reported being “cheated” and “taken advantage of” and even “mocked”.

Me: Are there any other ways to make money other than to beg?

Augustin: Once I worked at a big firm where they did construction with tiles for floors and walls. I worked hard. In fact the boss called me “salahor” (hard worker). But in the end, he cheated me; he didn’t pay me. He took advantage of me, because I am a street child. I am a salahor (hard worker)? He mocked my hard work.

Augustin age 20, site 4

Most of the resources from the informal environment afforded youth from Typology D came from the hand of foreigners or were the result of Romanian traditions or random chance encounters. My field notes are dusted with such instances.

While we were talking to the girls, two men came up and handed them a bag of pizza. They spoke English. The one that handed them the bag patted the older one on the head and said, “here you are” in English and walked away.

Field Notes, January 9, 2003

While we were talking, a lady came over to where we were and began giving all the youth big pieces of chocolate cake. Both Alin and Ionuti ate about half of theirs and shared the rest with other youth. They explained that this was an Orthodox tradition. They pointed out that when the lady handed them cake, she said: “Bogdaproște” (“in the memory of the lost one”). The tradition is to give things in charity to the needy when someone dies.

Field Notes, February 5, 2003
The conversation with sandu and Claudiu was later interrupted by Ion. Ion had gone down into the metro while we were chatting. When he came back up he had some new clothes. He was wearing what he had on originally and put on a suit coat over top of that and then a jean jacket over top of that. He was carrying blue jean pants in his arms. He indicated that an elderly man had given them. I asked if he knew the man. Ion indicated that he did not. He shared that a man walked by, said Sanatate (wish for good health and a long life), gave him all these clothes and walked away.

Field Notes, February 12, 2003

These transactions were not based on relationships and reflective of the on-going exchanges seen in other typologies. Although these encounters supplied much needed resources, there was no consistency or predictability to them. Furthermore, only those who happened to be present when the encounters occurred reaped any benefit from the exchange. However, perhaps the provision of resources from the informal environment via transients makes sense in a context where youth are challenged to develop persistent relationships. Perhaps it was not accidental for youth across sites in Typology D to position themselves geographically to encounter high levels of transient traffic and foreigners.

Unfortunately, at times the youths’ association with foreigners led to exploitation of varying degrees. In the duration of this study, on four occasions foreigners had come to the street for the sole purpose of photographing, filming or recording the youth from Typology D. Some indicated they were reporters in the country seeking information about street children in Romanian. Others asserted they were hired by foundations to take pictures for brochures. Regardless of their assignment or intentions, across the board, in the aftermath the youth involved expressed anger and experienced the interactions as exploitative.

When we arrived at site12, Dana and I walked over to the group of youth. They were all huddled around a man speaking English. I introduced myself. He told me his name
was X and he was a photographer from Spain. He indicated that he had been to Romania several times throughout the past 5 years and he had taken lots of pictures of children who were on the street. He also shared that he works with Foundation X. He takes promotional pictures for them to use in brochures. X began to take some pictures of the street youth. Afterwards, some of the youth went over to him and asked him for something. For example, one youth asked him if she could have the picture. X said no. She yelled, “suck my dick,” and walked away. Other youth went over and asked him for candy. He told them that he did not have any. Again, they cussed at him. Soon after the picture taking started, we separated ourselves from the group. After a few minutes, I suggested we leave; I did not want to be associated with what was happening with X. We said goodbye to the youth and left the site.

On our way out of the metro area we ran into Gigi. I asked him if he knew X. Gigi indicated that the man had come to take pictures before. Then Gigi asked us if we could come to the side and talk to him in private. Gigi shared that X had taken nude pictures of his friend Cristi; X had taken sexual pictures of Cristi. I asked Gigi to clarify what he meant by sexual pictures. He indicated that they were pictures of Cristi nude with his leg on the coach and with his leg on the table. Gigi stated that Cristi thought they were just for him and X but one day when Cristi had gone to X’s apartment he saw his pictures and pictures of other kids naked on X’s computer and was very angry. Gigi stressed that we should keep our distance from him; X was not a good man.

Field Notes, March 2, 2003

When we returned to the field the next day the youth expressed anger about being photographed and taken advantage of.

Irina commented that she thought it was good that we left when X was taking pictures. She hoped he would not come back. She shared that after we left X took several pictures of them inside and outside and then abruptly left. She stated that the youth were very angry because he did not give them anything. She went on to indicate that when X comes back he would see how things are; they intended to beat him up.

Field Notes, March 3, 2003

Actually, the youth from site12 spoke of this incident and their anger about it for weeks. They were especially angry about X failing to follow-through with what he had promised. They felt as though they had given much to him by allowing themselves to
be photographed; they experienced his failure to provide what was promised as robbery.

Shortly after we arrived Marius again expressed how angry he was that X had been there taking pictures. X had told them he would buy them all some food when he was done. The youth went on to share how they tried their best to please X and pose as he had requested. They did not really like for people to take their pictures but they were hungry and just tried to think about that. They indicated that in the end, he left and did not feed them. That he was a shmecher (tricky one); that he had robbed them. Marius indicated that X “steals their souls” and leaves them with nothing.

April 13, 2003

X was not the most insidious encounter some youth from Typology D had with a foreigner. Over the course of several months a Romanian-born man with British citizenship promised to pay street children to seek out foreign men, engage in sex with them for money and audio record their sexual encounters. He would then use the audio recordings, along with videotapes of the youth getting in and out of the foreign man’s car, to extort money. The youth were rarely compensated monetarily as promised. From time to time they were paid with McDonalds; a couple of them received a new pair of shoes.

Although not a common occurrence, at times the youths’ encounters with foreigners afforded them access to much needed medical care.

Placa came over to where we were. He had several cuts along his chin that had been stitched and some pink, what appeared to be medicine, covering the cuts. I asked him what happened to his face. Placa indicated that he slipped on the ice and he fell down. When asked where he got the medicine he shared that a foreigner was standing there when he fell. His face was bleeding pretty badly so the foreigner took him to the hospital. The foreigner went with him in a cab to the hospital, accompanied him in and assured he received the necessary treatment, covering any associated fees. Then he bought Placa some food from McDonalds and brought him back to site12.

Field Notes, February 13, 2003
This experience of being assisted medically in a significant way by a foreigner was not unique to Placa. Other youth shared accounts of a foreigner assisting with emergent needs. Some of their narratives were positive; like Placa they received the needed treatment and were returned to their site. In some cases a young person was dropped off at the hospital and left to fend for himself or herself; in other cases the foreigner made arrangements to transport them and then failed to follow-through. Again, youth from other typologies relied on people they knew and had established relationships to facilitate such services; the youth from Typology D relied on total strangers.

Many youth from Typology D relied on themselves when they were in need of medical treatment; they did not seek assistance from individuals from their informal or formal environments. An example of this was captured in the context of my in-depth conversation with Doru as he spoke about how he had addressed his own needs in a very matter of fact way.

Me: Do you ever get sick on the street?
Doru: Yes. Sometimes my head and my tummy aches. I vomit and feel sick.
Me: And what do you do when that happens?
Doru: I stay and endure and it goes away. Or I take some pills. I beg then go to the Pharmacy to get some pills. I ask what pills are for the head, for the tummy... whatever is hurting me. Sometimes they tell me and sometimes they don’t. I figure it out.
Me: If someone were to get hurt very badly, like get cut or something, what should they do?
Doru: Go to the hospital here (points catty-corner across the street). Here is the hospital. I went there once and they put my hand in a cast. I fell. I slipped and my hand went like this. (he twists his arm around) Then I cried and I went to the hospital and they put my arm in a cast and that’s it.
Me: Did somebody take you or were you alone?
Doru: I was alone. Yes, alone.

Doru age 15, site12
Like Doru, some youth had successful encounters with medical personnel. However, many more youth recounted negative experiences ranging from being turned away and not treated (e.g., per an inability to pay, because they were not clean, etc.) to experiencing rough treatment (e.g., stitching or scrubbing a wound without anesthetic, etc.). What was far less common was for someone from a formal foundation to assist with emergent medical needs by providing services on the street or by accompanying youth for medical treatment.

Unlike the experiences of youths from other typologies, the young people from sites across Typology D did not enjoy a strong network of associations with individuals from the formal environment. Although youth accessed foundations to obtain basic resources (e.g., food, clothing, etc.), the interface was often marked by misgivings and the resources ultimately inadequate to move them beyond basic survival.

The youth across sites in Typology D did have knowledge of foundations (eight total) and accessed resources from them. Many youth ate lunch on a daily basis at a foundation. Some youth relied on foundations for storing valuable items (e.g., birth certificates, etc.). Some youth went to foundations to acquire clothing when foundations were distributing material aid. Some youth sought medical assistance (e.g., band aids, medicine for headaches) to address emergent concerns. The use of verbs like sought, acquired and accessed emphasizes the youths’ role in attaining the resources offered by foundations. The youth went to the foundations to access resources. In my time on the street I did not witness a single instance of foundation personnel coming to the sites of youth from Typology D to provide material resources (e.g., food, household items, etc.) or services (e.g., medical assistance, assistance obtaining identification papers, etc.). How youth from Typology D learned about and
acquired available resources stood in stark contrast to the experiences of youth from typologies A and C, and to a lesser extent, B.

The youth across sites in Typology D often considered the resources available to them through foundations as inadequate. While acknowledging what was provided they quickly pointed to the resources they desired but were unable to access.

Me: Are there foundations that help you on the street?

Placa: Yes, they give me food and they give me clothes... But I have nowhere to take a bath, I have nowhere to get my ID... There is Foundation 1, Foundation 2, Foundation 3, Foundation 4, Foundation 5. There is another one across from site4. They give you food and that is it.

Me: You mentioned a lot of foundations. Have you gone to them all?

Placa: Yes. There are many foundations but they don't really help with anything - no bathroom, no school, no papers (referring to assistance with getting his ID). They are not interested in helping me because I am street child. I ask but I do not receive anything.

Placa age 17, site12

Some were aware of the range of resources provided by various foundations but were hindered in their attempts to access resources from more than one foundation at a time.

Me: If someone on the street were to get sick or hurt, what should they do?

Sandu: You go to the doctor or hospital. You stay in the hospital and get well. (pause) I don’t like ... (long pause)

Me: You don’t like ... ?

Sandu: Well, there are many foundations you can go to but you need to go to the same one day by day. Go to just one of them because if you go one day here and one day there, they will not help you. You just need to go to one of them and this is what you need to do for them to help you.

Me: So they will not help you in two places? You can only go to one place?
Sandu: (nods in the affirmative). Yes, I was going to Foundation 1 to eat, but they don’t have clothes. So once I went to Foundation 2 to eat and get some clothes but they didn’t accept me. They said: “you go here and there and some don’t get anything.”

Sandu age 18, site 4

Juxtapose this experience with the narratives of the youth from groups in Typology C. Not only were they aware of and able to access multiple foundations at a time, the personnel from foundations actually encouraged them to seek out assistance at other agencies when the resources they provided were not adequate.

A consistent theme that emerged across sites in Typology D was that the youth expressed that they were underserved and at times not served by foundations. Throughout my time in the field I encountered a handful of youth who had reached a significant level of desperation in their failed attempts to meet their needs. Perhaps the most compelling narrative was that of Mariana. Although lengthy, I included excerpts from field notes spanning a six-week period to afford readers a real-time chronicle of her endeavor to obtain medical assistance for a life-threatening illness.

It had been over a month since we had seen Mariana. It should be noted that she was noticeably pregnant. Mariana indicated that she was exactly three months along. She stated that she had recently gone to the doctor (with the help of Foundation 1) and had a bunch of tests done, and she would be going back on Wednesday to see how the baby was doing and get the results of the tests.

Field Notes, May 19, 2003

We continued to engage in a little informal conversation with Mariana. We talked about her pregnancy. She stated that she had not been feeling very good. She had recently lost her appetite and was not eating as much. She was going to go to Foundation 1 tomorrow to see if they would take her to the doctor and expressed concern about the health of her baby.

Field Notes, June 15, 2003

Mariana asked me if I remembered that she did not feel well the last time we saw her and shared that Foundation 1 did not have the money to take her to the hospital so she went to Foundation 2. A lady from there was supposed to meet her to take her to
the hospital but did not show up so Melinda (another street kid) had taken her. She said that they ran some tests at the hospital to see what was wrong. She expressed concern for her baby. She would go back to the doctor’s in a few days to see if they knew what was wrong with her. I told Mariana that I hoped that everything would be OK and that I would be thinking of her. She smiled and put her head down on my shoulder.

Field Notes, June 16, 2003

We asked Mariana how she was doing and if she had been back to the doctor. She stated that she was not doing very well. She had been back to the doctor and found out that she had syphilis but no one would help her with her syphilis. The hospital would not help her without money or the help of a foundation. She had gone to Foundation 1 and Foundation 3 and no one would help her. Finally the lady from Foundation 2 said she would help her. She stated that she was afraid that her syphilis was going to make her baby very sick and that the lady from Foundation 2 was not going to show up because she didn’t show up last time. She again expressed concern for the safety of her unborn baby. She got quite tearful. I put my arm around her and she laid her head on my shoulder. We stood there in silence for several minutes.

Field Notes, June 24, 2003

I spotted Mariana across the street sitting on the steps leading into the building. She was doubled over. As we approached her we could hear that she was crying. I called out to her. She did not respond. I greeted her again when I got to where she was. Again she did not respond. I sat down next to her and put my arm around her. She sat up and put her face in my shoulder. When she sat up I could see blood all over her arms and across her stomach. I continued to keep my arm around her and asked her what had happened. Through her tears she explained that the lady from Foundation 2 never came to help her with her syphilis and that she was afraid that her baby was so sick that it would die. She stated that she was so sad and scared for her baby. She went on to explain that she had been drinking all day and was very drunk. She continued to comment that no one would help her... no one cared if her baby lived or died... the lady said that she would help and Mariana had waited for her many times and she never came. My arm was still around her. She started rocking and continued to cry.

After a few minutes I asked her again what happened/why there was blood. Mariana shared that she did not want to live if her baby was going to die inside of her so she took a piece of glass and cut her stomach. I asked her when this happened and she stated she was not sure - perhaps an hour ago. I continued to have my arm around her; she continued to cry and rock. I asked her if she was in a lot of pain. She stated that she was, but the alcohol helped to numb it. I then asked if it would be possible for me to see her stomach. She slowly lifted up her t-shirt. Across her stomach I saw six or seven cuts up and down her abdomen, each about four to five inches long. It was difficult to see how deep they were. I asked Mariana if she would like to go to see a doctor. She stated that she did not want to go to a doctor - they would not do anything. She commented that the cuts on her stomach were not very deep, as she
did not want to hurt her baby. I expressed concern for Mariana - and wondered out loud if she should see a doctor. Mariana stated that she would only go to a doctor that would help her with her syphilis and to do that she would need money or a foundation to take her. I asked Mariana if she would care if I contacted Foundation 4 to see if their street workers would be able to help. Mariana indicated that it would be OK for me to contact them. I pulled out my cell phone and immediately called them.

Field Notes, June 25, 2003

What was clear is that Mariana wanted to do what was best for the health of her baby but personally lacked and could not access the necessary resources to do so. The lack of systematic, consistent and unencumbered access to services marked one of the significant characteristics of those in Typology D.

The dynamics that governed the relationships between the youth from sites across Typology D stood in stark contrast to those enjoyed by youth from typologies A and C. Friendly and sociable were hallmarks of their interactions with personnel from various foundations. Throughout my time in the field, I had opportunities to accompany various youth from Typology D to foundations. The following passage from my field notes describes my first experience at Foundation 1.

Shortly before lunch was served at Foundation 1, a worker named Octav walked in. I was a bit surprised. I had actually been introduced to him before commencing my study as a possible support person for my research. He is a former street kid. When we first met Octav and I visited at length about his life on the street. At the time, he had recently been hired by and worked for Foundation 2. He was hired as a liaison between the foundation and the street and to help keep the workers who go to the street safe. He added that the street youth could often times be violent; that often times he would have to beat the kids in order to keep them away from the street workers. It was because of his self-report that he used violence against the street kids that I made the decision to not hire him.

He appeared to be there as an assistant of some sort, because he stood up front and helped to co-lead the songs that were sung before the meal was served and keep “order”. For example, if a youth did not participate in singing, he would go over and nudge them. After the songs the other man asked everyone to stand for the reading of the scripture. Octav looked around the room asking some of the youth who were
still seated to stand up. If they did not oblige he walked over and assisted them. Following the scripture, they all quoted the Lord’s Prayer. After the youth were seated, a few other adults began to serve food. Each youth was given a half of a loaf of bread and a large paper cup of soup. Octav circulated the room monitoring behavior.

Field Notes, February 12, 2003

Although most foundation personnel were more sociable, structure and order permeated their interactions. Unlike the exchanges between youth from other typologies, interactions did not commence and end with handshakes; there was very little small talk, joking and no sharing of personal information. Workers typically had notebooks in their hands and were writing things down. On the street, if anyone refused to comply with a request, the workers abruptly left.

The youth across typologies emphasized the importance of showing consideration, courtesy and good manners in how one spoke to and interacted with foundation personnel and often tied knowing how to behave with accessing resources. This theme also emerged among the youth from Typology D. During my in-depth conversation with Alina she explained what one needed to do in order to receive assistance from a foundation.

Well, where we go to at Foundation 1 foreigners are coming there and a social assistant you need to talk, or at Foundation 2 and you tell them the problem and... well, they don’t help from the first time and the second time. But maybe they will along the way... The things is to respect them, talk to them nice ... and ... um ... even if they don’t understand you from the very first time, you know? They will haves yous repeats, understand? Respects them and talk to nice. You need to go for a long time, for them to be able to help you. Not from the beginning he trusts in what you want and what you tell him. To know that you are not bad, or stuff like that, understand? To hear good things about you.

Alina age 26, site4
As with youth across other typologies, Alina pointed to the importance of showing respect and talking nicely. She also identified that foundation personnel might have a difficult time understanding what is being said and ask for things to be repeated. She stressed the need to continue to show respect. In addition, she identified the need to go multiple times to gain the trust of personnel and demonstrate one’s goodness.

Although many of the same foundations served youth from across typologies, the need to repeat oneself and the requirement to come multiple times to establish credibility were uniquely identified by youth from Typology D as requisites to receiving assistance.

Even though the youth from Typology D were aware of behavioral expectations, many were challenged to meet them. In my observations of their interactions with foundation personnel, the youth consistently breeched social norms that often govern interpersonal communication. The youth often stood very close to and touched the people they were speaking with, invading personal space. They also interrupted, spoke loudly and at times used profanity. They were typically dirty, unkempt and had strong body order. As some of the youth did not speak with proper grammar and at times mixed in words from the gypsy language, it could be difficult to understand what they were trying to communicate. Throughout this document I minimally edited some of the data excerpts to increase readability. I intentionally left the above excerpt from my in-depth conversation with Alina untouched. Perhaps it was necessary to read through it more than once to follow what she was communicating. The youth from Typology D possessed characteristics that appeared to challenge foundation personnel.

Consistent with the perception of youth across other typologies, the youth from Typology D also perceived foundation personnel as corrupt. Some expressed contempt
for the need to meet behavioral expectations, especially those associated with some faith-based organizations, and viewed foundation personnel as hypocrites. This perception was clearly evidenced in the context of my in-depth conversation with Augustin.

Me: Are there foundations in Romania that help street kids?
Augustin: Of course. Foundation 1, Foundation 2... Foundation 3.
Me: What kinds of things do they do to help?
Augustin: Food and clothes. You have to say, I am Christian.
Me: Is that important to say? That you are a Christian?
Augustin: Yes, it is important.
Me: In what way?
Augustin: Well, for the foundations... you have to behave. But the organizations are mobs too... they are bandits. They tell you to be a Christian but they are bigger sinners than we are... Everything that is good they keep, take it to second hand stores and sell it. What is torn they give to you. You shouldn’t have to say, I am a Christian. The thing is for you to be a Christian not really before the people... before God you confess your sins.

Augustin age 20, site4

As noted at the beginning of the discussion of Typology D, youth across sites consistently expressed an overarching sense that no one was “considering them” and that people in general thought badly of them. As with the informal environment, there were several incidences in the formal environment that appeared to confirm the youths’ assertion. While in the field, I had the opportunity to observe some of the same foundations interact with youth across typologies. It was informative to compare interactions side-by-side. I had an opportunity to observe an interaction between a young man (Augustin) and Foundation X. The worker from Foundation X spotted Augustin whom he had originally met at site5. The worker approached Augustin and
inquired as to why he had moved and sought additional information about him as a person. Before the worker left the site I had an opportunity to talk with him. What follows is a transcript of his impressions of his meeting with Augustin.

He says that he had lived on the street with his mom. But, you know, I don't have a lot of faith in what he says. I think he is lying. For example, he told me he left (site5) about two months ago, but I've been there a month ago and I met with him there. He said he stayed at site4 for two months and this cannot be true 'cause I saw him at site5 I don't have a lot of faith in what he says. He is not telling the truth. I mean he doesn't know his age? He said, “My mother died when I was 13”. And now he says he is 15 and that she died 5 years ago. He is not one to put your trust in. I do not think we can believe what he says. Most of the youth here (site4) will lie to you.

Field Notes, December 6, 2002

The worker from Foundation X asserted Augustin was lying and deemed him untrustworthy. This stands in stark contrast to how the same worker responded to the potential dishonesty of youth from Typology A captured in the following passage from my field notes:

The worker from Foundation X asked Romica how he had been feeling since his treatment. Romica stated that he drank only one drink to celebrate the holidays. He further noted that he did that with the doctor’s permission. The other guys in the group contradicted what he said. The worker from Foundation X pointed to the large plastic jug that was sitting by the door and said that it used to be full of țuica (plum brand) and Romica had drank it all. Everyone started laughing. (The worker from Foundation X later shared that in his opinion, Romica was lying. That he drank a lot more than he said. The worker from Foundation X then stated, “But it is not my problem, but his”).

They asked us if we had heard about Eugene and went on to share that he was arrested for stealing. The worker from Foundation X asked what he stole and for more details about what happened. They said they did not know what he stole. They also added that they are not like him; they do not steal and did not know what he was up to. (The worker from Foundation X later indicated that he thought Catalin and Romica were lying and had done this kind of thing.).

Field Notes, January 7, 2003
The difference was so noticeable I identified it right away and noted it in my reflective journal.

The worker from Foundation X has a hunch that Romica is not telling the truth but he does not hold him accountable - he sloughs it off as, "not his problem" and he is even joking with him about it. He also acknowledges that the group may be misrepresenting themselves regarding potential criminal involvement. For these youth it appears as though the workers try to understand their shades of the truth... or make sense of it. Their “lying” does not reflect their character, nor the opinion of the workers about them. In other situations involving youth from other areas, when they are deemed as being less than truthful, they tend to attach something negative to that; they associate the dishonesty with the youth not being trustworthy and appear to form a very negative opinion about the youth. In some case, for example, with Augustin from site4, he was deemed as not trustworthy because he couldn’t keep dates and years straight. Perhaps time is not understood in the same way on the street or he has lost his ability to track time. At any rate, the youth at site4 are perceived as “liars” (and perhaps they are) and therefore untrustworthy while those at site2 are also perceived as “liars” (and perhaps they are), but their lies are in some way understandable.

Reflective Journal Entry, January 7, 2003

The same inconsistency was seen when workers from foundations offered me advice about which street children and sites were the most dangerous and thus should be avoided.

A worker from Foundation X shared that he felt it was not a good idea for us (my translator and I) to come to site4. He indicated the people had lived on the streets for a long time, are rougher and huff more aurolac. He reiterated a couple of times that he did not feel it was safe for us to go there, especially after dark.

Field Notes, December 6, 2002

A worker from Foundation X told me that he thought that site4 was the most dangerous site. That he believed that the youth there huffed more than others. He pointed out that they did not respect the worker’s request to put their aurolac away. He encouraged me not to go to site4 without a man. He did not think it was safe for me to go there alone again or with my translator who was a female.

Field Notes, December 18, 2002
It was a challenge to reconcile this with my experiences with youth from sites across Typology A. They were high almost every time I had gone to see them (often also in front of foundation personnel, who did not ask them to quit huffing), spoke of being violent, were known to be violent (e.g., some youth had been incarcerated for assault and stealing, etc.) and even exhibited weapons that they owned (e.g., a bat with nails, pepper spray, etc.). Throughout this data analysis themes of antisocial behavior and violence were far more prevalent among youth from sites across Typology A than Typology D. However, the youth from Typology A enjoyed extremely positive relationships with foundation personnel, which afforded them access to myriad resources and opportunities. In contrast, foundation personnel deemed the youth from across sites in Typology D as dangerous and untrustworthy. Unfortunately my research methodologies did not include any systematic collection of information from foundation personnel. I was unable to explore this significant difference from their perspective.

One of the significant assets enjoyed by youth from typologies A and C was their ability to access formal employment opportunities. On a few occasions, youth from Typology D obtained formal employment; they were hired by foundations to serve as liaisons between the foundation and the street youth. This was a valuable opportunity for these youth. With formal employment they were afforded a place to live off the street, as well as a monthly income. They were charged with providing an important service, communicating resources available and services provided by the foundation they worked for with those living on the street. They were also responsible for informing their employer of unmet needs that required attention and further resources. In concept, these liaisons played an important role in increasing the
awareness of youth regarding much needed resources and communicating valuable information back to foundations that could be used to improve services. Having spent time on the street, these liaisons understood the culture and unique challenges of those living on the street, which could be a tremendous asset in strengthening or developing programs to better serve the youth.

Regrettably, some of these liaisons did not always fulfill their roles as expected. In their positions they possessed significant power and at times exploited their positions for material and economic gain at the expense of the youth living on the street. They took advantage of their positions. Throughout my time in the field I was able to obtain glimpses of this dynamic. An example is captured in the following experience at site4:

We arrived at the site around 5:30 PM. Dana and I went over to the sewer the youth had uncovered. There were several youth either standing above ground, standing near to the opening – I counted 15. We got over to the edge of the sewer and hollered for Constantin. The youth indicated that Constantin was not there. A man immediately came up. He introduced himself as Istrate and stated that he wanted to talk to us. It should be noted that he smelled very strongly of alcohol. When he began talking he appeared agitated – he spoke loudly and quickly. Before we had a chance to introduce ourselves, he started asking questions and making threats: “Why did you come here?”… “Are you here to help us?”… “I should beat you up.” We immediately indicated that we were here to visit some of the youth who lived in the area. He again stated that he should beat us up – he specifically stated to Dana that he would beat her up if she did not translate exactly what he said. I assured him she was. He threatened her a couple of more times and then began talking non-stop about his life – he use to live on the street too. He spent 5 years in prison, had recently got out, was back on the street and was now working for an NGO. He continued to stand very close to us, leaning toward us to the point of touching us and speaking in an aggressive, agitated tone....

Moments into this interaction I became very aware of the different dynamics among the group of youth who were there, especially related to their interaction with Dana and I. It should be noted that throughout this entire conversation the youth continued to go about their business – coming and going from the sewer, walking around the area, talking with each other. Only two spoke to us whatsoever during the conversation – one said hi, the other indicated they wanted to talk to us when
Istrate was done. They immediately put distance between them and us. This seemed odd to me as when we are usually around this area the youth are hanging around where we are even if we are talking with someone. They interrupt the conversation to ask questions or tell stories, stand as close to us as they can (often touching us), try to pull us aside to talk to us in private, etc. I also found it very strange that no one intervened for us. On several previous occasions when someone would get in our face, cuss at us or threaten us in any way, some of the youth we knew better would vouch for us, ask them to back off/leave us alone, stand in between us until the person calmed down, etc. Now, no one intervened....

When we had an opportunity to speak to Alina she noted that Istrate was a very bad person and that we should do what we can to stay away from him. She explained that he was a street boss. She indicated that he tells them to go to the street and beg or he'll beat them up. She went on to share that before we had come there today that he had told her to go to the street and beg. She indicated that she told him that she would not - she would rather throw herself in front of a car. Alina stated that when she made that comment, he left her alone. He did not want the police to come. Alina also asked if we noticed that Ramona had black eyes. She shared that Istrate is why; Istrate had beat Ramona up because she did not go to the street and beg. She shared that he worked for Foundaiton X and should be there to help them. Instead he made their lives miserable.

Field Note, March 7, 2003

Not only did the youth from Typology D lack meaningful associations with foundation personnel, they lacked civil connections with law enforcement officials. The youth across Typology D consistently spoke of law enforcement as unfair in their dealings with street youth and the need to avoid them if at all possible.

Me: Earlier you mentioned the police, what should a person know about the police?

Alina: The police are not considering us. For example, Mariana was taken today to the police - two times they took her. First time, they said she stole. She didn’t and I told them she didn’t. But the police don't believe what we say. And yesterday they (the police) took the mute (Ion) for nothing. You saw him. He has bruises all over his back. They did it with a baseball bat in the back of the van.

Alina age 26, site4

Me: What should a new person on the street know about the police?
Doru: What to know about the police? Me? I run away! If they catch me, they take me to the section.

Me: And what happens at the section?

Doru: They beat me... or if they don't beat me the take me to an orphanage and I get beat there.

Doru age 15, site 12

Me: You mentioned the police... what should a new person know about the police?

Sandu: Well, when one is stealing, they get all of us. They give all of us fines. It doesn't matter if one is innocent. The ones who do not have an ID, we get fines... they beat us up. It's bad on the street with the police. (long pause)

Me: So what should someone do when the police come?

Sandu: Run! (laughs) The police tell us to go home. But we've been for a long time on the street, we have nowhere to go. When I am here and they come I try everything possible to take a bus or something and go to another area until it is over.

Sandu age 18, site 4

Street youth across sites in Typology D often found themselves in conflict with the police, and often altercations resulted in fines or violence. The police violence I witnessed or the youth shared accounts of involved primarily physical assault (e.g., hitting with hands, a club, kicking, setting on fire, etc.). Although at times the youth indicated they were being confronted for something they had indeed done (e.g., stolen something, etc.), the overwhelming majority of youth pointed to unfair treatment.

Throughout the study, various youth shared the challenges of said context indicating that their experience with abuse served as a barrier for them to experience solace and attain justice from law enforcement when they approached authorities for assistance (e.g., to report a sexual or physical assault, robbery, etc.). Most did not view law enforcement as a resource in a time of need. An example of this was
captured in the context of my in-depth conversation when Alina explained the challenges related to going to the police when something bad happens.

Alina: You can try to go to the police and declare what happened. (pause) Some of the police will hear you and some of them won’t. Well, they will hear you only if you give them money. (pause) Or if you tell them what they want to find out about other kids because some steal. But I don’t like telling what the street people are doing; that some are stealing. And the police want to find out. And if I don’t tell them, they don’t like me; I am in trouble too. I too get the beating. Sometimes it is better to resolve it yourself and not to go.

Alina age 26, site4

Youth across Typology D verbalized feeling as though law enforcement officials did not understand them or their situation; they were not “considered” by the police or that the police were not “interested” in them. Some spoke of feeling the police punish them for “existing” and aggress against them for being on the street and not returning home. In Chapter 4 I identified a range of factors that led youth to be on the street. Although a combination of push (e.g., leaving home to avoid violence, etc.) and pull (e.g., coming to the street to be with friends, etc.) factors were at play for youth across other typologies, many of the youth from Typology D were impacted by force factors (e.g., kicked out of the home without the option of return, etc.). For the youth impacted by force factors, they were on the street because there was nowhere else to go. Youth expressed feeling as though law enforcement officials did not understand their situation. They could not return home; they did not have a home to return to. Overall, the police were not seen as a resource. Even when youth faced severe threats of their own, per the youth, the police did not consistently offer them protection.

One of the advantages of the relationships enjoyed by the youth from Typology C with their formal environment was that they had advocates; there were law
enforcement officials and foundation personnel that could be leveraged in a time of need to assist them. With a lack of such relational resources, the youth from Typology D often engaged in self-advocacy. For example, on a few occasions the youth went directly to the media in an attempt to raise awareness about the conditions they faced on the street (e.g., Ion took Eugene to the television station after police officers poured aurolac on his head and set him on fire, etc.) or to confront the negative image people had about them. One day in the field Ovidiu shared how attempts to correct the account of why the youth were asked to leave the building (referenced earlier) left them in a worse condition.

They went on to share about a TV show that was recently broadcast in Romania. Some of the street kids wanted to set the record straight about the building. They had not destroyed it; they were kicked out. So they approached a TV station about doing a show and the station said yes. They were invited to come and talk about what it is that they want and what they thought would help them be able to leave the streets. Ovidiu shared about the situation with the building and Metro X and stated that one thing that would help the youth is if people wouldn’t lie about what they do and give them a bad image. Ovidiu indicated that following the airing of the show he and some other youth who had said negative things on TV were beaten up by police wearing masks. He originally thought that talking to the TV station would help them. However, it ended up causing some of them a great deal of pain. He noted that this was often the case... that they try to tell the truth about what happens on the street, the try to get help, but in the long run things end up worse than they were before.

Field Notes, May 10, 2003

This narrative reflecting a failed attempt at self-advocacy was not unique to Ovidiu. Youth across Typology D referenced instances of endeavoring to address their circumstances at a higher level. Their personal efforts to raise awareness about their lives in an attempt to improve their conditions were consistently unsuccessful.

The youth across Typology D were challenged to create and sustain consistent support relationships with those from their informal and formal environments. Their
lack of associations appeared to significantly reduce the resources and opportunities available to them. Furthermore, their lack of ties left them open to an increased risk of exploitation.

**Integrated Discussion of Social Capital Theory**

Social capital is a metaphor about advantage (Burt, 2001). The social capital explanation of advantage is that the people who do better are better connected. The central thesis is that relationships matter; networks are valuable assets. While bonding social capital is heralded as a vital resource for getting by in life, bridging social capital is posited as a vital means for getting ahead (Briggs, 1998; Granovetter, 1973; Putnam, 2000). According to Putnam (2000), bridging social capital tends to be outward looking and consist of widely dispersed ties between heterogeneous groups, thus bridging across sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., gender, ethnicity, education, etc.) and other barriers (Gittell & Vidal, 1998; Putnam, 2002). This boundary-spanning quality of bridging capital makes it more likely to expose people to new information and a broader range of resources, which affords pathways to advantage (Briggs, 1998; Putnam, 2002).

This chapter explored the presence and role of bridging social capital in the lives of street children in Bucharest, Romania. Specifically, did the youth connect to their broader informal and formal environments, and if so, did the broader networks they connected with contribute to their survival? The young people who made their lives on the streets of Bucharest did not live in a vacuum; they were a part of a broader landscape. As noted throughout this analysis, to varying degrees and in varying ways, street children were resourceful and active in their attempts to build broader social networks. For some, associations with both their formal and informal
environments were productive and could be leveraged affording youth access to a range of benefits and opportunities. Other youth were able to establish meaningful associations with individuals from their informal environment affording them access to more limited resources. However, their lack of connection with formal environments left them challenged to move beyond mere survival. Some youth were ineffectual in endeavors to form associations with either their informal or formal environments. Their position of social exclusion left them challenged to meet basic needs and open to increased vulnerability.

**Strong Bridges to Broad Networks - Typologies A and C**

The youth from typologies A and C had a sophisticated ability to connect to an expansive range of networks across their formal and informal environments. These robust networks of associations afforded them access to a broad range of resources and opportunities. Their relationships could be leveraged to solve an immediate problem or address an immediate need, as well as to create opportunities for long-term benefit with the potential to facilitate upward mobility.

**Boundary-spanning Relational Resources.** Whereas bonding social capital focuses on social ties within homogenous groups or the linkages among individuals or groups within the collectivity (i.e., those features that give the collectivity cohesiveness and thereby facilitate the pursuit of collective goals), bridging social capital tends to be outward looking and consist of widely dispersed ties between heterogeneous groups (Putnam, 2000). Burt (1992) proffered the notion of *structural holes* to refer to this type of network configuration. He argued that it was not dense (highly connected) networks that created the greatest social capital benefits, but sparse (no connection) networks. The premise of his argument was that, generally,
information (e.g., about resources, opportunities, etc.) circulates more within a collective than it travels between separate groups. Social capital is produced when people can “broker” connections between networks not otherwise affiliated; brokering across these structural holes affords access to new resources and information, thus adding value. Therefore, networks marked by multiple structural holes—those accessing other groups for information regarding resources and opportunities—have a high level of social capital. Lin (2001b) emphasized that in order to gain access to resources not already possessed, one must connect to others who are dissimilar, run in different circles, know different people and have access to different resources. Lin (2001b) referred to this as engaging in instrumental action. If a person is interested in gaining valued resources that one does not currently possess, accessing a wider variety of resources by connecting to another social circle is preferred. “Instrumental action motivates one to seek out others with dissimilar (and, it is hoped, better) characteristics and lifestyles in order to access information and influence to achieve the expected return of more and/or better resources” (Lin, 2001b, p. 59).

The youth across sites in typologies A and C possessed such boundary-spanning relationships. They enjoyed positive associations with law enforcement and foundation personnel, including foundation directors and foreign funders. They also had a robust network of associations with individuals from their informal environment including local residents, shopkeepers, university students and employees of national businesses (e.g., APD, etc.) and utility companies. As their work consistently took them away from their living location, each member of the group was exposed to a wider, more diverse range of associations. At times these associations created opportunities for other members of the group. Lin (2001b) argued that social capital theory makes a set
of assumptions related to the macrostructures of society. He asserted that the social structure is pyramidal in shape related to the knowledge of, accessibility and control over normatively valued resources. Few occupy the top. Those that do occupy strategic positions are at a higher vantage point; with position comes increased knowledge of available resources and opportunities, as well as the power to access and control them. The networks leveraged by the youth from typologies A and C were consistently in a superior social position, ostensibly held more power than the youth and possessed resources not attainable by the youth on their own.

**Accrued Benefits.** There is a positive correlation between a person’s ability to broker structural holes (Burt, 1992) and connect with someone further up the pyramid (upward reachability) and the range of resources and opportunities afforded through the association (Lin, 2001b), “Access to and use of better social capital leads to more successful action - - the return to social capital” (p. 60). The youths’ sophisticated ability to connect to an expansive range of networks built robust networks of associations and afforded them access to a broad range of resources and opportunities. Specifically, the youths’ associations with and ability to leverage networks across the formal and informal environments afforded them access to material resources, medical services, employment opportunities and stability, as well as alternatives and a degree of autonomy through the removal of barriers.

Through a combination of the youths’ connections with their formal and informal environments, the youth from typologies A and C had access to a range of *material resources* and *medical services*. The youth across sites possessed a sophisticated knowledge of foundations that served the needs of street children and the range of services offered through them. The range of resources available through
this formal association included, food, clothing, household items (e.g., plates, pots, blankets, etc.) and hygiene supplies (e.g., shampoo, soap, etc.). Foundations also played a significant role in addressing medical needs, either directly or providing information about how to obtain assistance. Most often services (e.g., food, clothing, delivering medication, etc.) were provided at the living location of youth from groups within typologies A and C. It was extremely rare for a young person to go to a foundation to access resources. If services could not be provided on the street, foundation workers would make arrangements to pick up, transport and accompany the youth to the secondary location (e.g., hospital, etc.) and facilitate the process (e.g., paperwork, payment, etc.) to ensure the identified need was met. The youths’ access to material resources and medical services were not limited to their associations with their formal environment in affording access to a range of resources, including food, access to showers, medical supplies (e.g., bandages, ointments, etc.), entertainment (e.g., inviting them over to watch sporting events and listen to music, etc.), assistance with mailing letters and access to the internet.

Through a combination of the youths’ connections with their formal and informal environments, the youth from typologies A and C had direct and/or indirect access to employment opportunities. In some cases foundations directly hired the youth to work at the foundations. With formal employment came the provision of a monthly salary, as well as other resources (e.g., education, connections, etc.). At times, they assisted more indirectly by assisting youth in attaining requisite credentials necessary for employment, obtaining formal employment in other contexts or referring a youth to a foundation who could assist them. For youth in Typology A, their connections to law enforcement officials also reaped significant benefits.
Sometimes police officers hired youth informally to work at the station (e.g., taking out trash, wiping down desks, washing police cruisers, etc.); at times police officers hired youth to do odd jobs at their homes (e.g., painting, cleaning, etc.).

The role of the youths’ connections to their informal environment also played a critical role in assisting youth to obtain and sustain employment opportunities. Some youth (mostly younger) assisted individuals who lived in the neighborhood with odd jobs (e.g., cleaning, etc.), washed windshields at gas stations or assisted local vendors as opportunities arose (e.g., unloading a truck, guarding a stand, etc.). Many of the older youth had opportunities to work informally for more formal entities, or to work by the day. For example, youths who had construction skills were hired informally to work construction sites. Unlike the odd jobs performed for people living in the neighborhood, this type of work had the potential to last for several days or be open-ended making it a much more lucrative opportunity. Some youth were even able to obtain formal employment opportunities through their associations with people from their informal environments (e.g., working a stand in a market, etc.).

Sometimes the work by the day and formal employment opportunities were birthed from a youth’s personal connections and other times indirectly through their personal connection’s connections. Furthermore, a group member’s work in the informal environment often paved the way for others from the group to obtain employment. An added benefit was that work by the day and formal employment opportunities significantly broadened the potential for further network connections. These opportunities tended to take the youth from their living locations to other areas of Bucharest, which afforded them opportunities to develop relationships beyond their local neighborhood.
The youths’ formal and informal work opportunities provided monetary compensation, which enabled them to purchase a range of material resources. The purchase of material resources moved far beyond the provision of basic need (e.g., food, etc.). The youth from typologies A and C used their resources to buy a range of beverages (e.g., champaign, beer, soda, etc.), household items (e.g., dishes, detergent, sheets, etc.), maintenance items (e.g., paint, new padlocks, rope, etc.) and luxury items (e.g., television, refrigerators, etc.). At times, they also used their economic resources to negotiate with their formal and informal environment (discussed below), affording them stability and access to utilities (i.e., water, electricity).

Through a combination of the youths’ connections with their formal and informal environments, the youth from typologies A and C were afforded stability in their living locations. Specifically, through a coupling of their relationships with law enforcement and their informal environments (e.g., neighbors, utility company personnel, etc.), the youth from sites across typologies A and C did not experience the disruption of their living space encountered by youth from other typologies. For example, at site2 (Typology A) the youths’ connections with law enforcement and their relationships with personnel from a utility company enabled them to live in a company-owned building and access utilities (i.e., water, electricity) without disruption. At site3 (Typology C), the youths’ connections with their neighbors served as a protective buffer against law enforcement. The youths’ relationships with those in the area, being known by them, enabled community members to vouch for them and their character. As a result, law enforcement officials left the youth “in peace”. The youth also utilized their economic resources to negotiate access to utilities. One group
pooled their economic resources and paid utility company personnel to gain access to water. Another group pooled their economic resources and paid the workers at a bread factory to gain access to electricity.

The stability and relative security of their dwelling spaces was a significant asset. It enabled the youth to store resources. For example, they were able to accumulate clothing for every season, multiple pairs of shoes and a range of household and hygiene items and have a safe place to store them. They were also able to safely maintain luxury and personal resources. Their access to utilities afforded them the ability to store perishable foods and maintain a level of hygiene often requisite to obtaining medical treatment and employment and avoid aggression from the informal environment.

Finally, through a combination of the youths’ connections with their formal and informal environments, the youth from typologies A and C were afforded alternatives and a degree of autonomy through the removal of barriers. The youths’ associations with foundations provided them with far more resources than required to meet basic needs. They provided them resources with the potential to increase opportunities and facilitate mobility. For example, they assisted many youth in obtaining a carte de identitate (official identification) compulsory for formal employment. At times this assistance was direct; they accompanied youth to get formal pictures taken and then to the official office to complete paperwork. At times this assistance included tracking down and obtaining a youth’s birth certificate that is required for the attainment of a carte de identitate. On occasion, this meant accompanying a youth to their birth city if it was not Bucharest. Possessing a carte de identitate not only removed a significant barrier to obtaining employment, but also appeared to decrease the potential for
altercations with law enforcement. When law enforcement officials confronted youth they habitually asked them for their carte de identitate. If they possessed one, the interaction often ended there. If not, youth potentially faced receiving fines, being returned against their will to their birth cities or, at times even assaulted. Furthermore, the possession of a carte de identitate afforded access to all public services (e.g., social assistance, access to health care, etc.).

Foundations also facilitated the development of the human capital of street youth. Not only did they assist the youth with accessing compulsory education, they also afforded opportunities to receive specialized training leading to formal certification in applied fields. One’s human capital often opened doors to employment opportunities. Furthermore, every instance of a youth hired by a foundation was accompanied by an opportunity to further build their human capital through specialized training and preparation. In addition, employment by a foundation often led to additional networking opportunities with workers from other foundations, further building their network of associations with people from formal environments. Although to a lesser extent, youths’ connections to informal environments also provided them opportunities to develop their human capital (e.g., teaching them to read and write, carpentry work, etc.). Teaching youth to read and write ostensibly enhanced the potential for future success. At times this investment led to other opportunities (e.g., employment at a construction site, etc.) that benefited the youth materially.

Lin (2001a) proffered a few explanations as to why the resources embedded in social networks have the potential to enhance the outcomes of instrumental actions; two of which are relevant to the present discussion. First of all, it assists with the flow
of information. If one is connected to another in a strategic position higher in the pyramidal structure, the individual has access to prime information about resources and opportunities. This was seen across sites for youth from typologies A and C. A second explanation is that persons in strategic positions have the capacity to exert influence. For example, they may exert influence over decisions impacting persons lower in the structure. In the present study, youth pointed to being “selected” by foundations for educational and employment programs. “Thus, ‘putting in a word’ carries a certain weight in the decision-making process regarding an individual” (Lin, 2001a, p. 20). They may also exert influence through advocacy. At times foundations advocated on the behalf of youth to address employer concerns or decrease barriers to employment opportunities; individuals form the informal environment petitioned law enforcement officials to create stability for the youth.

As articulated in Chapter 5, all benefits emanating from high levels of social capital are not positive; social capital may have negative effects, or a “dark side” (Portes & Landolt, 1996; Putzel 1997). The youth from groups across Typology A possessed high levels of bridging social capital affording them access to a range of resources and opportunities that benefited them and ostensibly had the potential of benefiting the broader society. However, high levels of social capital also lowered their accountability for criminal activity and enabled, and at times facilitated, the criminal activity of others. For example, the youth from Typology A were shielded from many of the consequences associated with illegal activity. Although law enforcement had full knowledge of their engagement in criminal activity (e.g., drugs, sexual assault, etc.), they were not sanctioned for such behaviors. Furthermore, the youth from Typology A assisted some law enforcement officials with illegal activities
(e.g., arranged for sex, etc.), covered up unprincipled behavior (e.g., cleaned up empty beer bottles from the police section after a third shift, etc.), maintained their silence about the activities and paid bribes to garner favor. Any consideration of the benefits of high levels of social capital must also include an evaluation of its potential negative effects.

**Limited Bridges with Diminished Returns - Typology B**

The youth from Typology B enjoyed meaningful connections to people in their informal environment marked by a mutual affinity and understanding. These sound networks afforded them access to concrete and relational resources. Unfortunately, these resources did little more than assist the youth in their endeavors to meet their subsistence needs. Although the youth expressed a desire for better connections to their formal environment, they were challenged to develop them. They did not possess networks that could be leveraged to create opportunities for long-term benefit with the potential to facilitate upward mobility.

**Restricted Relational Resources.** The youth from Typology B enjoyed meaningful connections to people in their informal environment marked by a mutual affinity and understanding. This rich network of relationships was built over time and was often shared among all the youth within the group. Burt (1992) argued that it was sparse, not dense, networks that created the greatest social capital benefits. As information (e.g., about resources and opportunities, etc.) circulates more within a collective than it travels between separate groups, social capital is produced when people can broker connections between networks not otherwise affiliated. Brokering across structural holes affords access to new resources as, “structural holes separate nonredundant sources of information, sources that are more additive than
overlapping” (Burt, 2001, p. 35). Although the youths’ associations with these informal networks afforded important resources necessary for survival, they were often marked by redundant ties; all the youth within a group knew and benefited from the same relationships with those from the informal environment. Burt (2001) referred to these as cohesive contacts.

Contributing to this redundancy was the localization of youth. The work of youth from typologies A and C took them to other areas of Bucharest away from their living location. This afforded them opportunities to develop relationships beyond their local neighborhood and thus broker more structural holes adding value (e.g., new resources, information about opportunities, etc.). Conversely, the youth from Typology B spent most of their time around the sites at which they resided. Employment opportunities were at local businesses or gas stations. Little took them away from their neighborhood where they could interface with and develop connections to a broader range of networks, thus connecting networks not otherwise affiliated. As Lin (2001a) noted, accessing a wider variety of resources by connecting to others who are dissimilar, run in different circles, know different people (instrumental action) is preferred if one is interested in gaining valued resources not currently possessed. Since everyone was associated to each other (cohesive contacts), everyone had access to the same information and resources. And, unfortunately, these resources did little more than assist the youth in meeting basic daily needs.

Although the youth across sites within Typology B expressed a desire for better connections to their formal environment, they were challenged to develop them. The resources afforded through their untenable relationships with foundation personnel were inconsistent and did not include access to vital resources (i.e., education,
identification papers) that would ostensibly enable them to better their situation. Although individual youth enjoyed connections to some law enforcement officials, affording them some advantage, the benefit of the relationship did not appear to extend to other group members. Furthermore, many youth from Typology B experienced extreme challenges with law enforcement. They often identified knowing how to deal with law enforcement as one of the biggest challenges they faced on the street.

As previously noted, social capital theory assumes that the social structure is pyramidal, those that occupy strategic positions are at a higher vantage point and possess pertinent knowledge of available resources and opportunities, as well as the power to access and control them. Foundations that exist to address the needs of street children and law enforcement are two of the most significant formal entities in the life of youth who lived on the street and therefore occupied strategic positions in this pyramidal structure. In both domains, the youth were unable to develop robust networks of association that could be leveraged to create opportunities for long-term benefit with the potential to facilitate upward mobility. A lack of these significant associations to formal networks left youth from Typology B disconnected from critical resources.

**Limited Benefits.** The youth from Typology B enjoyed meaningful connections to people in the informal environment. This rich network of relationships afforded them a sense of connection and place, as well as access to material resources, employment opportunities and a measure of stability. Although critical to their survival, these resources did little more than assist the youth in their endeavors to meet subsistence needs. The benefit of their untenable associations with the formal
environment was limited to material resources and assistance with emergent medical needs, often inconsistent. The youths’ lack of upward reachability led to a lack of access to vital resources (i.e., education, identification papers) that would ostensibly open pathways to advantage.

Through rich associations with their informal environment, the youth from Typology B were afforded a sense of connection and place. The youth across sites expressed a deep connection to their location and the people that lived in the area. They had a sense of history in the area and knew and were known by their neighbors and those working in the vicinity. Many referred to their space as “home” and expressed a desire to stay there even though circumstances in their immediate environment (e.g., police violence, etc.) posed difficult challenges. The youth from Typology B did not only express a deep affinity toward those in their informal environment, but those in the informal environment held a deep affinity toward them.

Through rich associations with their informal environment, the youth from Typology B also enjoyed access to material resources, namely, food. The informal environment played a critical role in meeting the nutritional needs of the youth. People living and working in the neighborhood consistently supplied a range of food encompassing many suggested food groups in nutritional pyramids, including protein (e.g., ham, eggs, etc.), dairy (e.g., cheese, yogurt, etc.), fruit (e.g., apples, etc.) and bread. They were also supplied with bottled water, and at times, homemade wine from one’s personal supply. In the winter, those from the informal environment often made it a point to provide the youth from groups in Typology B with warm food (e.g., soup, etc.). The youth did not go to individuals from the informal environment to obtain these resources. They were often personally delivered to their living spaces and...
even left for them when they were not home. The types of items given and the ways in which they were delivered further reflected the care and understanding that those in the informal environment possessed for the youth.

The youths’ associations with foundations also gave them access to material resources (e.g., food, etc.), as well as assistance addressing emergent medical needs. However, they appeared to be inconsistent and limited. Some youth went to foundations to eat lunch or obtain clothes when they were distributed. Unlike typologies A and C, where services were provided at their living location, the youth from groups in Typology B most often had to approach the foundation to access resources. Over time, many elected not to go, identifying a range of variables some of which were associated with the barrier of going to a location to receive assistance versus receiving assistance at one’s own space (e.g., the distance to the foundation, an inconsistent and unpredictable schedule, etc.). Foundations assisted some youth from Typology B with accessing medical assistance. Sometimes how this transpired was consistent with the treatment experienced by youth from typologies A and C (e.g., brings medicine or medical supplies to street, accompanies youth for medical treatment, etc.). However, more often than not, the youths’ experiences related to medical care were far less accommodating. Some ailments went unattended to; other needs were under-attended to (e.g., limited to a referral to a doctor only, etc.).

Overall, the resources afforded youth by foundations were geared toward meeting basic needs; they were not provided with resources or opportunities with the potential to increase prospects and facilitate mobility. At no time did I hear of or witness a foundation assist a youth from Typology B with obtaining important documents (i.e., birth certificate, identification card) nor to gain access to
educational or employment opportunities. In fact, youth pointed to the lack of assistance they received in these domains. Furthermore, feeling as though what foundations had to offer did not provide lasting change (e.g., a bowl of soup versus a job, etc.), served as another variable impacting their decision to not go to foundations for services.

Through rich associations with their informal environment, the youth from Typology B were afforded access to employment opportunities. Most of the youth from Typology B engaged in informal work to generate resources; their jobs were integrated into the local area and near to the site at which they lived. Some assisted people in the immediate informal environment with a variety of odd jobs as needed; others were able to wash cars on the grounds of a gas station and assist at a carwash. Across the board, these informal work activities relied on the youths’ ability to develop and leverage relationships with those in their informal environment. However, the youth from Typology B were unable to access formal employment opportunities. The youth consistently pointed to the lack of official identification papers as a barrier to formal employment.

Finally, through connections with their informal environments, the youth from Typology B were afforded a measure of stability in their living locations. Without exception, youth across sites pointed to their associations with the informal environment when discussing how they located and persisted in their spaces. Most of the time they pointed to their relationships with those who lived in the area (e.g., apartment administrator, etc.). Some youth also pointed to their connections to those who worked (e.g., Urban personnel, parking garage employees, etc.) in the area as an important resource. Persons from the informal environment assisted youth with finding
places to stay, as well as provided some protection from incursion from others in the informal environment. These semi-permanent spaces afforded them a place to sleep out of the elements (e.g., rain, snow, etc.), a place to store their belongings and a moderate level of security and control over their living spaces. However, they did not enjoy the level of permanency experienced by the youth from typologies A and C. In large part this appeared to be connected to their lack of associations with the formal environment, specifically law enforcement. When a group of youth from Typology B experienced a disruption in living spaces, it often directly resulted from law enforcement intervention (e.g., discovering them and forcing them out of the space, etc.).

Although the youth from Typology B were afforded many important resources by virtue of the networks of associations possessed with their informal environment, the quality and potential of those resources were diminished by a lack of connections with the formal environment. As noted above, in typologies A and C, it was the combination of the youths’ connections to both formal and informal environments that produced the most advantage; they benefited from multiple ties across domains. “Because social capital emanates from social relationships, it is an individual’s level of integration in the variety of social organizations available that will determine his or her degree of social capital and thereby his or her success in accomplishing personal goals” (Barber, 2001 p. 270). For youth in Typology B, their lack of ability to build and leverage networks of associations with the formal environment diminished their opportunities for success.

The relational and material assets accorded youth through their associations with their informal environment were critical for daily survival. However, high levels
of social capital across some domains (e.g., the informal environment, etc.) are perhaps in themselves not enough to move youth beyond subsistence into a trajectory of upward mobility. In their study of ghetto areas and urban cities in the United States, anthropologists Stack and Fernandez-Kelly (in Portes & Landolt, 1996) reported that even though some possessed high levels of social capital, the benefits attainable through leveraging those networks were insufficient to remove people from poverty. Portes and Landolt (1996) referred to this as “downward leveling pressures,” a potential dark side of social capital. Although groups may have significant social capital, it may not be enough of the right kinds to raise them out of their circumstances. Stated in the language of Lin (2001a), if an actor does not possess upward reachability, if an actor cannot access the resources embedded in associations with people occupying strategic positions in the pyramidal structure, the individual has limited success and thus limited returns to their social capital.

The Socially Excluded - Typology D

The youth across sites within Typology D were ineffectual in their endeavor to form associations with either their informal or formal environments. Their position of social exclusion left them challenged to meet basic needs and open to increased vulnerability.

Deficient Relational Resources. Heralded as a vital means for getting ahead (Briggs, 1998; Granovetter, 1973; Putnam, 2000), bridging social capital entails connecting to groups outside of one’s social circle, thus increasing one’s access to external resources (e.g., information, opportunities, etc.). As articulated above, social capital is produced when people can broker connections between networks not otherwise affiliated; brokering across these structural holes affords access to new
resources, thus adding value (Burt, 1992). Lin (2001a) emphasized that in order to gain access to resources not already possessed, one must connect to others, accessing others who are dissimilar, run in different circles, know different people and have access to different resources. As with bonding social capital, bridging social capital relies to a great extent on an individual’s ability to relate to others and connect to networks. As discussed in Chapter 5, although youth from Typology D interacted with each other to address emergent circumstances, the connections they forged were fragile and did not persist into the next day. At the most basic level, youth from Typology D were challenged to establish relationships; they were arrested in their ability to create social capital. This challenge permeated every level of association, including those within their informal and formal environments.

They did not possess associations with individuals from their informal environments. Instead of hearing narratives about the deep connections experienced with those who worked and lived around their sites, many youth spoke of their informal environment as being unpredictable and hostile, or even murderous. Neither did the youth from Typology D enjoy positive associations with law enforcement and foundation personnel. Law enforcement officials were not seen as an accessible resource in a time of need; they were to be avoided. At other times they were to be feared. The accounts of assistance received from foundations shared by youth from other typologies were replaced by experiences with a lack of available resources, inconsistency and the perceived indifference of foundation personnel. In regards to their associations with broader networks, the overarching theme for youth from Typology D was not connection to and the perception of empathy. It was disconnection from and the perception of apathy, and at times malevolence. The youth across sites
in Typology D did not possess the boundary-spanning relationships (e.g., across sociodemographic characteristics, etc.) necessary to expose them to new information and a broader range of resources, which have the potential to unlock pathways to advantage (Briggs, 1998; Putnam, 2002). Their lack of associations with their informal and formal environments cut them off from many of the resources and opportunities afforded youth from other typologies and opened them up to increased vulnerability.

**Diminished Benefits and Increased Vulnerability.** When the youth from Typology D were viewed from this more macro bridging context, they emerged as a socially excluded group. Their lack of associations led to inadequate material resources and medical assistance, limited resource generating opportunities, left them without pathways to inclusion, placed them at an increased risk of exploitation and violence and left them with an absence of advocates.

The lack of associations between the youth from Typology D and their informal and formal environments resulted in *inadequate material resources and medical assistance*. Much of the material resources from the informal environment afforded youth from Typology D came from the hand of foreigners or was the result of Romanian traditions (e.g., pomana - giving charity in honor of the recently deceased, etc.) and random chance encounters. These transactions were not based on relationships and reflective of the on-going exchanges seen in other typologies. Although these encounters supplied much needed resources, there was no consistency or predictability to them. Furthermore, only those who happened to be present when the encounters occurred reaped any benefit from the exchange. At times the youths’ encounters with foreigners afforded them access to much needed medical care. Some of the narratives about the assistance they received were positive. The foreigner
accompanied the young person to the hospital and assured they received the necessary treatment, covering any associated fees. Other narratives were not. In some cases a young person was dropped off at the hospital and left to fend for her or hiself; in other cases the foreigner made arrangements to transport them and then failed to follow-through.

In leveraging informal networks to meet material and medical needs, the youth from other typologies relied on people they knew and had established relationships with. These associations were not only addressing an immediate concern, but could be counted on to address future concerns. Furthermore, often the resources leveraged in such relationships benefited the group, not just the individual. In contrast, the youth from Typology D relied on total strangers. The brief encounters only benefited the youth involved and could not be counted on in the future. However, perhaps the provision of resources from the informal environment via transients makes sense in a context where youth are challenged to develop persistent relationships. Perhaps it was not accidental for the young people across sites in Typology D to position themselves geographically to encounter high levels of transient traffic and foreigners.

The youth across sites in Typology D did possess knowledge of foundations (eight total) and accessed resources from them. During the week, some youth ate lunch at a foundation. Some youth relied on foundations for storing valuable items (e.g., birth certificates, etc.), went to foundations to acquire clothing when foundations were distributing material aid and sought medical assistance (e.g., band aids, medicine for headache, etc.) to address emergent concerns. The use of verbs like sought, acquired and accessed emphasizes the youths’ role in attaining the resources offered by foundations. In contrast to practices with other typologies,
foundation personnel did not come to the sites of youth from Typology D to inform them of resources and services, assess their needs or provide material aid or medical assistance. The youth from Typology D went to the foundations to learn about and access resources; the resources were ultimately inadequate to move them beyond basic survival.

Acknowledging what was provided through foundations, the youth from Typology D quickly pointed to the resources they desired but were unable to access. Youth across sites expressed that they were underserved and at times unserved by foundations. Although requested, foundations failed to provide youth from Typology D assistance with obtaining a carte de identitate and access to education and training opportunities, resources that could open doors to other opportunities (e.g., resource generating activities, etc.) and have the potential to facilitate upward mobility. Youth were also denied the opportunity to access more than one foundation at a time and the services provided were at times marked by a lack of follow-through.

The lack of associations between the youth from Typology D and their informal and formal environments resulted in limited resource generating activities. Whereas the youth from other typologies enjoyed some opportunity to engage in formal and/or informal work, the youth from Typology D relied primarily on begging as a way to make money. As shared in Chapter 4, the amount earned by youth across sites through begging appeared to vary. Some youth spoke of earning as little as 50,000 lei in a day (less than 2 U.S. dollars), while others earned between 100,000-200,000 lei a day (about 3-6 U.S. dollars); still other youth spoke of earning substantially more, ranging anywhere between 300,000-400,000 lei a day (about 10-14 U.S. dollars). The youth from Typology D consistently found themselves earning on the low end of this scale.
Therefore they were often unable to make enough to meet their daily subsistence needs. Furthermore, since begging is illegal in Romania, if caught doing so youth had the potential of experiencing negative encounters with law enforcement officials (sometimes violent) and being penalized with large fines.

On rare occasions, the youth from Typology D received opportunities to engage in informal work assisting street vendors in the immediate environment with odd jobs (e.g., breaking up ice on the sidewalk in front of the stand, etc.). Payment generally consisted of a couple of cigarettes or a small food item (e.g., a small bag of chips, bottle of pop, an apple, etc.). Additionally, the exchange for service was immediate and isolated. The person from the informal environment involved in the exchange did not typically rehire the same youth over and over again; they did not provide additional resources. The youths’ attempts to engage in more lucrative resource generating activities (e.g., parking and washing cars, etc.) were consistently disrupted and they were vulnerable to exploitation. Since work preceded payment, many youth reported being “cheated” and “taken advantage of” and even “mocked”. Because of the lack of an official identification card, they could not access formal employment opportunities.

The youth from typologies A, B and C had established relationships with individuals from their informal and/or formal environments that facilitated their ability to engage in many of these work activities. For example, the youths’ established associations with people living in their neighborhoods led to ongoing opportunities to work for material or monetary assistance, the youths’ established associations with shopkeepers and gas attendants enabled them to work informally at places of business, the youths’ established associations with law enforcement enabled
them to work undisturbed, and the youths’ established associations with foundation personnel created pathways to work in the formal sector. The youth from across sites in Typology D lacked these relationships and were therefore excluded from this range of opportunities.

The lack of associations between the youth from Typology D and their informal and formal environments resulted in obstructed pathways to inclusion. Borrowing the definition from Stone and Hughes (2002), “In social capital terms, social exclusion can be defined as a dearth of all forms of capital - social, economic and human” (p. 26). This was certainly reflected in the lives of youth across Typology D. Their lives were marked by the absence of social, economic and human capital.

At the most basic level, the youth were arrested in their ability to establish relationships and create social capital. This challenge permeated every level of association, including the development of relationships with each other, as well as with those from their informal and formal environments. As articulated above, that lack of social capital limited the resource generating activities available to youth, thus limiting their economic potential. The most lucrative opportunities available to youth were through formal employment. One key variable affecting access to formal employment was the possession of a carte de identitate. The absence of a legal identity excluded youth from formal employment and the minimum income guarantee scheme, as well as all public services. In order to obtain a carte de identitate one must have a birth certificate. A birth certificate and official identity papers were two resources many youth from Typology D lacked. Although many youth requested support in tracking down their birth certificates and/or obtaining a formal identification card, they consistently encountered barriers in receiving assistance. Some barriers were
encountered with foundations. Many had policies limiting their assistance with the obtainment of identification cards to youth from Bucharest, a policy violated to assist youth from Typology A. Other barriers occurred at a higher level. In order to obtain a carte de identitate one must have a birth certificate. Many youth from Typology D did not possess this resource, nor did they know the name of their birth parents or birth city, two pieces of information necessary for tracking down one’s birth certificate.

The youth across sites in Typology D also lacked human capital. Many of them possessed minimal formal education, often much of it received in the orphanage system. At a basic level, their inability to use proper grammar when speaking made it difficult for foundation workers to understand them, at times resulting in the lack of needed resources and services. Some were unable to read and write. In the Romanian educational system, any youth who fell more than two years behind was not allowed to return to the public education system. At the time of the study, there were very few foundations in place to assist with the educational needs of street children. Many street youth lacked knowledge of the resources available. In part, this was due to the fact that foundations did not publicize their educational programs; youth went through an informal and then formal selection process before they were invited to participate. Those youth who had knowledge of the resource were also aware that others were “selected” and they were not. They had expressed a desire for assistance and were denied.

The lack of associations between the youth from Typology D and their informal and formal environments resulted in a high risk of exploitation and violence. As the youth lacked strong ties to any formal or informal entity, no one was looking out for or assuring their interests; the youth were vulnerable to exploitation across a range of
contexts. Many youth experienced violence at the hand of other youth. Sometimes the altercations between youth included violent assaults with weapons (e.g., knives, pieces of glass, metal pipes, bats, etc.) and sometimes the violence was sexual. Much of the violence I personally witnessed fell under the umbrella of domestic abuse. It was common to witness a young man hitting or kicking his girlfriend or “wife”, sometimes resulting in bruises and lacerations. Some incidences of violence occurred in the presence of foundation personnel, who did not intervene. When asked about the decision to not intervene the worker indicated that conflict between a husband and wife was a private matter.

Many youth across Typology D were victims of violent acts perpetrated by people from the informal environment. These experiences of violence occurred at the hand of shopkeepers, informal employers, neighborhood residents and strangers. Some encounters were quite threatening involving weapons (e.g. knives, etc.) and resulting in bodily injury (e.g., a female was pushed through a glass window for trying to sleep in an apartment lobby by someone living in the apartment, etc.), and even death. Some youth were exploited by foreigners. With the promise of material resources, foreigners exploited youth for their personal gain. On occasion the youth sold their images and stories in exchange for the promise of food. More often than not, they were not compensated. In the wake, they were angered, frustrated and hurt. They expressed having given much by allowing themselves to be photographed and experienced the lack of promised compensation as robbery. Some incidences included involvement in pornography and sexual exploitation.

On some occasions, the youth from Typology D also experienced violence and exploitation in the context of the formal environment. Those who were entrusted to
protect the youth (i.e., law enforcement, foundation personnel) became the perpetrators of crimes against them. This was not unique to the Romanian context. “Street kids represent one of the most critical cases of social exclusion in contemporary urban life, yet they are the ones that receive the harshest treatment from state authorities” (De Venanzi, 2003, p. 478; see also Scheper, 1992). Street youth across sites in Typology D often found themselves in conflict with the police; altercations often resulted in fines or violence (e.g., hitting with hands, a club, kicking, setting on fire, etc.). The overwhelming majority of youth pointed to unfair treatment. They also experienced violence and exploitation at the hand of those hired by foundations to assist them. Throughout the study, youth shared the challenges of said context indicating that their experience with abuse served as a barrier for them to access much needed resources, medical care and other services from foundations or to experience solace and justice from law enforcement when they went to them for assistance (e.g., to report a sexual or physical assault, robbery, etc.).

The lack of associations between the youth from Typology D and their informal and formal environments resulted in a lack of advocates. One of the advantages of the relationships enjoyed by the youth from other typologies with their informal and formal environments was that people pleaded for and defended them; there were people in their neighborhoods, law enforcement officials, and foundation personnel that could be leveraged in a time of need to assist them. These advocates petitioned law enforcement officials to create stability for youth in their living environment or buffer potential consequences. These advocates held government officials accountable to the promises made to the youth. These advocates removed barriers to provide access to medical treatment, employment and educational opportunities. All of these
represented resources desperately needed and desired by the youth across sites in Typology D. The youth from Typology D were aware they lacked advocates. Youth across sites consistently expressed an overarching sense that no one was “considering them”, that no one cared. They expressed an overall sense of alienation from society and a deep desire to be understood. Yet they were powerless to affect change.

The Potential Difference Makers

As articulated throughout this chapter, to varying degrees and in varying ways, the street children in Bucharest were resourceful and active in their attempts to build social networks with their informal and formal environments. For some, associations with both their formal and informal environments were productive and could be leveraged affording youth access to a range of benefits and opportunities. Other youth were able to establish meaningful associations with individuals from their informal environment affording them access to more limited resources. However, a lack of connection with their formal environments left them challenged to move beyond mere survival. Some youth were ineffectual in their endeavor to form associations with either their informal or formal environments. Their position of social exclusion left them challenged to meet basic needs and open to increased vulnerability. The question is: What made the difference?

The knowledge of available resources and behavioral expectations did not appear to matter. The youth across typologies had knowledge of the foundations throughout Bucharest that served youth who lived on the street, as well as the types of resources and services afforded through the foundations. As seen in Table 6.1, the youth from typologies A and D both identified eight foundations; the youth from typologies B and C both identified ten foundations. Many of the same foundations were
identified by youth from multiple typologies. A brief description of services offered by each foundation and foundation website (for those that are available) is located in Appendix M.

Table 6.1. Foundations Known to Youth by Typology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology A</th>
<th>Typology B</th>
<th>Typology C</th>
<th>Typology D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archway</td>
<td>Archway</td>
<td>Aras</td>
<td>ASIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arsoi</td>
<td>Arsoi</td>
<td>Archway</td>
<td>Casa Cana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASIS</td>
<td>ASIS</td>
<td>City of Hope</td>
<td>City of Hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart to Hand</td>
<td>Casa Cana</td>
<td>Concordia</td>
<td>Concordia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parada</td>
<td>City of Hope</td>
<td>Life and Light</td>
<td>In As Much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save the Children</td>
<td>Concordia</td>
<td>Parada</td>
<td>Life and Light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Macrina</td>
<td>Life and Light</td>
<td>ProVita</td>
<td>Parada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Stelian</td>
<td>Saint Lazarus</td>
<td>Saint Stelian</td>
<td>Saint Macrina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saint Macrina</td>
<td>New Foundation</td>
<td>Saint Lazarus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When speaking of the informal and formal environments, the youth from across typologies also consistently pointed to the importance of knowing how to talk to and interact appropriately with people. This included the language one used, the niceties around greetings and saying goodbye and the posture one took even if frustrated or not treated with respect. The youth also emphasized the importance of not fighting, throwing toys or using profanity, as well as the need to follow directions and schedules and the importance of not huffing in front of law enforcement officials or agency personnel. Youth across all typologies consistently tied knowing how to behave with accessing resources. The equation was straightforward; those who behaved well, received resources and those that behaved badly did not. Manners mattered.

Although the youth appeared to start with the same foundational knowledge related to resources and behavioral etiquette there was great disparity in their ability...
to develop and leverage associations that led to immediate and long-term benefits. Social capital theory offers some propositions related to what might have impacted this differential ability to create and leverage associations that are supported by the data, including the size of the network possessed, the level of upper reachability and how various forms of capital (i.e., economic, cultural, social) interrelate to create advantage. Each will be discussed briefly below.

**Network Size Mattered**

For Bourdieu, social capital is hierarchically differentiated, where a person’s volume of social capital in part “depends on the size of the network connections that he [sic] can effectively mobilize” (Bourdieu, 1997, p. 47). The assertion that a person’s potential stock of social capital is dependent on the number of relationships in their lives that can be leveraged to solve an immediate problem, address an immediate need, and/or to create opportunities for long-term benefit with the potential to facilitate upward mobility was supported by the data.

The youth across sites in typologies A and C possessed the largest networks. They possessed layers of associations, including personal associations, as well as their associations with those from their informal environment and broader formal networks. As noted in Chapter 5, the youth from Typology C enjoyed relationships with a wide range of street youth. They relied on smaller subunits for meeting basic needs and drew from the larger group when the subunit lacked necessary resources. Additionally, they were connected with youth who were able to move off the street or who stayed at other sites. They possessed a wide range of personal associations. Although to a lesser extent, youth from Typology A also possessed a wider range of personal associations. Many came to the street with family members and maintained contact
with and could leverage those relationships in a time of need. Furthermore, they were connected to a network of youth they met in the context of the orphanage. For the youth from typologies A and C, with this range of personal associations came valuable resources.

The youth across sites in typologies A and C also possessed beneficial relationships with their informal and formal environments, which afforded them access to a broad range of resources and opportunities. They had a robust network of associations with individuals from their informal environment including local residents, shopkeepers, university students and employees of national businesses (e.g., APD, etc.) and utility companies. Since their work consistently took them away from their living locations, each member of the group was exposed to a wider, more diverse range of associations. They also had associations with and could leverage a range of foundations and enjoyed positive and beneficial relationships with law enforcement officials. There also appeared to be a multiplier effect; their connections consistently led to new connections. As articulated above, the combination of the youths’ associations to both their formal and informal environments produced the most benefit.

The youth across sites in Typology B had strong associations with their informal environment. Although these associations afforded important resources necessary for survival they were often marked by redundant ties. All the youth within a group knew and benefited from relationships with those from the informal environment. Contributing to this redundancy was the localization of youth. The youth from Typology B spent most of their time around the sites at which they resided. Employment opportunities were at a local business or gas station. Little took them
away from their neighborhood where they could interface with and develop connections to a broader range of networks, thus connecting networks not otherwise affiliated. Their range of personal associations was limited to the immediate group. They also lacked the same robust networks enjoyed by youth from typologies A and C with people from their formal environments. The youth from Typology D were challenged to establish relationships across the board. They did not possess associations with other street youth or with individuals from their informal and formal environments; they were marked by a lack of networks.

**Upper Reachability Mattered**

Social capital theory makes a set of assumptions related to the macrostructures of society, including the pyramidal shape of social structure (Lin, 2001b). According to Lin, the social structure’s pyramidal shape is related to the knowledge of, accessibility and control over normatively valued resources. Few occupy the top. Those that do occupy strategic positions are at a higher vantage point; with position comes increased knowledge of available resources and opportunities, as well as the power to access and control them. Bourdieu (1986) also emphasizes how social capital as an asset draws its worth from the power and influences of the social connections an individual has access to. He asserted that a person’s volume of social capital not only depends on network size but also, “on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his [sic] own right or by each of those to whom he [sic] is connected” (Bourdieu, 1997, pg. 47).

The networks leveraged by the youth from typologies A and C were consistently in a superior social position, held more power than the youth and possessed resources not attainable by the youth on their own. The youths' ability to create and leverage
relationships with persons holding strategic positions afforded access to prime information about resources and opportunities. Furthermore, persons in strategic positions had the capacity to exert influence over the distribution of resources and the decisions impacting the youth. Those in strategic positions were also able to use their influence to advocate; the youth from typologies A and C had people to plead for and defend them, as well as to remove barriers blocking pathways to future potential. Although youth from Typology B enjoyed rich networks of association with those from their informal environment, their lack of upward reachability to more strategic positions led to a lack of access to vital resources (e.g., education, identification papers, etc.) that would potentially enable them to better their situation. The youth from Typology D possessed no reachability.

**Other Forms of Capital Mattered**

Bourdieu (1986) and Lin (1999) focused on the convertibility or lack thereof between social capital and other forms (e.g., human capital, cultural capital, etc.). Bourdieu (1977) argued that cultural capital was as important as economic capital in reproducing unequal social relations and the inequality of opportunity, which ultimately produces unequal outcomes. Cultural capital is gained as it imprints itself over time upon one’s habitus; “a set of dispositions, reflexes and forms of behavior people acquire through acting in society” (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 19).

The youth from typologies B and C spent their early years in the context of families free from domestic violence. In large part, these youth attained their first five years of education, affording them important socialization, or cultural capital, that better prepared them to negotiate normative relationships and systems. As articulated in Chapter 5, the norms embraced by youth from typologies B and C (e.g.,
respecting people’s property, avoiding violence, behaving in trustworthy ways, etc.) were also valued by the larger society. Their endowment of high levels of cultural capital potentially enhanced their capacity for sociability and better equipped them to develop and negotiate relationships among each other, as well as with individuals from broader networks.

As introduced in Chapter 5, the youth from Typology A began developing survival skills before they came to the street. Whereas the first five years of education received by the youth from typologies B and C afforded important socialization, or cultural capital, that better prepared them to negotiate normative relationships and systems, the youth from Typology A were endowed with a set of skills and dispositions important for negotiating non-normative relationships and systems (street capital). Lankenau and colleagues (2005) pointed to the role of early exposure to street capital (e.g., negotiating poverty, criminal activity, abuse, etc.) within the family and experience in public institutions as assisting youth in transforming street capital into competencies and paving the way for successful street careers. For youth within Typology A preliminary street capital was acquired through negotiating violence and poverty within the family; time in an institution afforded these youth an opportunity to further refine this street capital thus further developed their ability to negotiate and use relationships and work the system in beneficial ways (cf., Lankenau et al., 2005).

Many youth from Typology D came from family environments marked by deprivation and hostility, environments that were not conducive to facilitating a healthy developmental foundation. Research (cf., Haapasalo, et al., 2000; Lichter, et al., 2002) has demonstrated that youth raised in adverse family environments are less
pro-social than children from more stable homes. The impact of early developmental experiences is identified in the social capital theory literature as germane to the development of future relationships (World Bank, nd). Even though the youth from Typology D were aware of behavioral expectations, many were challenged to meet them. In my observations of their interactions with foundation personnel, the youth consistently breeched social norms that often govern interpersonal communication. The youth often stood very close to and touched the people they were speaking with, invading personal space. They also interrupted, spoke loudly and at times used profanity. Perhaps the lack of this cultural capital decreased their capacity for sociability; they were not equipped to develop and negotiate relationships with individuals and systems from informal and formal environments.

One must also consider the impact of economic capital. As articulated above, the resource generating activities engaged in by youth from typologies A and C were far more lucrative and generated more monetary resources. Not only did the youth utilize these resources to purchase material things, but also to negotiate relationships with those from their informal and formal environments. As noted, they were able to use their associations and economic capital to access utilities. Among other things, their accesses to utilities afforded them the ability to maintain a level of hygiene often requisite to obtaining medical treatment and employment and avoid aggression from the informal environment. The youth from Typology A were also able to utilize their economic resources to pay bribes to law enforcement officials which decreased their conflict with law enforcement and increased the stability of their living spaces.

Bourdieu’s (1984) discussion of fields places the routines of the everyday lives of street children within a broader context. Specifically, various social arenas are
envisaged as fields of forces. A particular field is made up of economic, cultural, symbolic and social resources with differential possession and access to said resources positioning those within the field. According to Bourdieu, as certain people (endowed with the right appropriation of capitals) enter a particular field, they are more aware of the rules of the game and thus have a greater capacity to play the game or manipulate the rules (Bourdieu, 1984; see also Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu (1986) argued that dominant social classes can use privileged access to the various forms of capital to make strategic conversion of one kind of capital to another in order to solidify further their class position. Perhaps what afforded the youth from typologies A and C an advantage was the ability to convert cultural (or street) and economic capital to create social capital and vice versa.

Although Bourdieu had a micro perspective of social capital (i.e., benefits that accrue to an individual or family by virtue of their ties to/connection with others), he was keenly aware of the role of the broader macro environment helping to facilitate or serving as a barrier to one’s ability to create and use social capital. His discussion of fields and the convertibility of capital offer an explanation of why marginalized groups often remain excluded. Leonard (2005) affirmed these assertions; converting social capital to other forms is not straightforward per the constraints imposed by the wider environment. She further argued that, “Convertibility may be particularly problematic for actors with low stocks of cultural and economic capital, or those positioned as inferior relative to other societal members” (p. 606). Perhaps what placed youth from Typology B, and to a great extent, Typology D at a disadvantage was their lack of possession of all capitals and their lack of ability to covert one type of capital to another.
Other Factors Potentially Mattered

Although youth from both typologies B and C enjoyed rich networks of association with their informal environments, the youth from Typology B were challenged to do so with their formal environments. The question is why. What enabled the youth from Typology C to create and maintain networks of association with their formal environment? What disabled youth from Typology B? Unfortunately the data did not provide clear-cut answers to these questions. However, the data, along with insights offered through social capital theory, do offer up some possibilities. One issue to consider is the role of human capital. The youth from Typology C overall possessed more formal education than the youth from Typology B. There was evidence in the data that this human capital played a role in access to opportunities afforded through foundations. Another issue to consider is the role played by the youth from Typology C’s on-going connection to their birth families. This connection at times facilitated access to birth certificates, thus making the acquisition of official identification cards less complicated. The youth across Typology C pointed to an assessment and selection process facilitated by foundation personnel in deciding whom to include in special programs (e.g., educational, employment-oriented). Perhaps the reduction of these barriers positioned them for better success in programs, thus foundations invested their resources in them.

Portes and Landolt (1996) described significant problems that could be associated with strong social capital, one of which may afford some insight to the present discussion. As noted in Chapter 5, the youth from Typology B had high levels of bonding social capital. Unlike youth from Typology C, their level of connection with each other reflected elements of enmeshment (i.e., symbiotic relationships). Portes
and Landolt (1996) asserted that one of the trade-offs of these strong bonds for members of a group is the potential encroachment on personal freedoms. They offered the example of how an overly tight family can influence a person’s business initiative by stifling the entrepreneur with obligations to the family leading to the neglect of his or her own upward mobility. There were examples of the youth from Typology B choosing to stay with their group and in their neighborhood over other opportunities. The strong connections reflective of bonding social capital may have served as a barrier to creating broader networks of association. As articulated throughout this chapter, youth from Typology D consistently found themselves in positions of exclusion.

Another potential factor in need of investigation relates to the role of perception and its impact on the variant treatment of and services offered to street youth. This potential factor was most pronounced in the differential perception and treatment of youth from typologies A and D. Throughout my 10-month field observation period I observed a qualitatively different dynamic in how people from the informal and formal environments interacted with the youth from Typology D in comparison to those from groups in Typology A. Those in the informal environment that knew the youth from Typology A were quite sociable with them. Those that did not know them approached them and interacted with them with ease. In stark contrast, those in the informal environment appeared to possess negative perceptions of, and at times expressed fear of, the youth from Typology D. People changed their trajectory to avoid walking near to them. We were asked to move away from a storefront since our being there was “bad for business” and people openly criticized me for talking to the “aurolaci” (those who huff aurolac) often with furrowed brows
and the use of forceful language. On occasion, people would hit a young person with a bag of groceries or swat at them with a cane when passing by.

The dynamics that governed the youths’ relationships with the formal environment appeared to reflect these same themes as well. For example, the relationships the youth from Typology A had with the workers from foundations appeared quite sociable. The interaction almost always began and ended with handshakes. Many times the foundation workers and the youth shared cigarettes with each other. Much of the interaction was light-hearted and reflective of how one might interact with a friend. When foundation personnel interacted with the youth from Typology D the overall relational field did not reflect warmth and sociability, but high levels of structure and accountability, as well as an overarching negative perception of the youth from Typology D as untrustworthy and dangerous. Interactions did not commence and end with handshakes and there was very little small talk and joking. Workers typically maintained a professional stance (e.g., wrote in notebooks, stuck to questions, etc.).

On rare occasions, foundation personnel interacted with the youth from Typology D on the street. If a young person refused to comply with a request (e.g., to step back, put aurolac away, etc.), the workers from foundations abruptly left. If a worker perceived that the information provided by a young person was inaccurate, the youth was perceived as a “liar” and characterized as “untrustworthy”. That they huffed aurolac and at times refused to comply with behavioral expectations (e.g., put their aurolac away when talking with foundation personnel, not using profanity, etc.) was associated with them being dangerous. In contrast, the youth from Typology A engaging in the same behavior were not held to the same level of accountability; they
were not deemed dangerous, misrepresentations were not associated with their character, nor did either impact the opinion of the workers about them. It is possible that the perceptions held by those within the informal and formal environment impacted how they treated and the services offered to the youth.

Perhaps how a youth is perceived is more connected to how the individual physically appears and the ability to follow social norms (possession of cultural capital), than reflective of who they are as a person. In many ways, there was nothing to identify the youth from Typology A as someone who lived on the street. They were relational and abided by all social norms. They were also clean, dressed (often) in designer clothes, were accessorized (e.g., carried purses, wore sunglasses, etc.) and carried cell phones. The youth from Typology D were easily identifiable as street children. They lacked social etiquette. In an interaction they quickly violated personal space and often touched those they were speaking with. They were also dirty, unkempt and had strong body order. Their clothing was the wrong size, not seasonal (e.g., short sleeve shirts in the winter, sweaters and wool coats in the summer, etc.), quite worn and often contained broken or missing components (e.g., broken zippers, missing buttons or shoestrings, etc.). Unfortunately my research methodologies did not include any systematic collection of information from persons in the broader networks in which street youth interfaced. Insights gained from foundation personnel, law enforcement officials and those that worked and lived around the areas street youth congregate would have provided some important insight.
CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Creating bonds and building bridges:

Study implications, limitations, areas for future investigation and reflexive comments

The purpose of this study was to explore the creation and use of social capital among street children in Romania that enabled them to meet their needs in face of the multifaceted challenges of street life. The children of Romania who worked and lived on the street were exposed to all its social, economic and environmental hazards. Despite this context much of their daily lives were a display of endurance, resiliency and adaptation. Given all that street children have gone through, how have they managed to survive? Specifically, the three overarching questions that guided this study were:

1. Who are the children (e.g., age, gender, past trajectory, etc.) living and working on the streets of Bucharest, Romania?
2. Under what circumstances, conditions, or processes are the children on the street able to meet their needs in the face of adversity?
3. Are there informal and formal networks created and used by street children in an effort to build opportunities for survival? If so, what are they and how do they operate?

As the investigator, I collaborated with over 280 young people who lived and worked on the streets of Bucharest in 2002-2003 to answer these questions. Given the
complex, multifaceted, contextual and dynamic nature of the questions posed, qualitative methodologies were the most appropriate choice for this inquiry. The investigation relied on qualitative research methodologies, including participant observation on and around the streets of Bucharest and in-depth conversations (interviews); member checks with 54% of conversation participants provided additional data. A complete interview schedule is included in Appendix G. This study further relied on strategies employed through a grounded theory approach because of its usefulness as a theory-building tool -- its value in creating knowledge that has relevant practical application and its consistency with social work values and practice (see Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of methodology).

Adapting the work of social capital theorist Nan Lin (2001a, 2001b) I proposed and utilized a heuristic framework for examining the networks, resiliencies and needs among street children in Romania. A full review of the literature (see Chapter 2) revealed various mechanisms through which social capital produced returns and which types of social capital were needed. Lin’s model was selected because it incorporated many of the diverse perspectives regarding the structure and content of social capital allowing for the exploration of both homogeneous forms of social capital based on common ties and heterogeneous forms that create broader linkages across boundaries. A qualitative study of social capital with street children necessitated a heuristic framework with a broad scope to enable as many possible realities of children to be taken into consideration. The use of Lin’s model also allowed for the exploration of the socio-cultural context of street children and the conceptualization of children as agents.
Using this heuristic framework, I approached this project with a range of sensitizing concepts gleaned from the literature on social capital theory. These concepts guided my initial observations and reading of field notes, while I was careful not to allow the conclusions drawn by previous researchers to unduly influence the analysis and interpretation of data. Peer debriefers played an important role in this process as they probed my biases, sought meaning and pursued clarity of interpretation. In data analysis, the use of grounded theory techniques provided a structured way of analyzing the data, including open coding, axial coding and selective coding. Consistent with the constant comparative approach, the process of data collection and data analysis co-occurred, each informing the other. See Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of the data analysis.

The data analysis revealed that the street youth are not a homogeneous group. Their lives reflected many different approaches, backgrounds, and ways of surviving on the street. To varying degrees and in varying ways they were active in creating a range of networks that contributed to their survival. In the midst of it all there was a very human process of attempting to cope with and make meaning out of life. Many of the interviews displayed a depth and insightfulness into life that belies the focus on risk and psychopathology in much of the literature on homelessness. This chapter starts with summarizing the theoretical and practical implications of the research, as well as implications for the social work profession. It then moves into identifying the limitations of the study and areas in need of further exploration. The chapter ends with my reflexive comments and lessons learned throughout the research process.
Theoretical Implications of the Study

The existing literature on social capital as applied to children demonstrated that this social resource could facilitate a range of pro-social outcomes (e.g., academic success, occupational status, psychological adjustment, etc.), as well as protect against multiple social concerns (e.g., delinquency, child maltreatment, crime, etc.). Most studies focused on the outcomes of children related to the social capital within the family and beyond the family, emphasizing the role of adult social capital in facilitating positive and mediating negative outcomes for children. Few operationalized social capital beyond Coleman’s (cf., Amato, 1998; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Furstenberg & Hughes, 1995) indicators and little attention was paid to the agency of children in creating and using their own social capital (see Appendix A - Coleman Inspired Research).

This qualitative exploration of the creation and use of social capital among the street children in Bucharest points to important insights regarding how youths’ own stocks of social capital were created and leveraged to meet needs and facilitate action. Specifically, children were agents in the creation and use of social capital. Within this context, some of what was revealed in the data analysis is consistent with the expectations posited by social capital theory. Some youth formed and lived in groups leading to strong bonding capital, affording those within the group access to a range of benefits. Some youth were able to create robust networks of association with their formal and informal environments (bridging social capital), associations that could be leveraged to meet critical needs and open doors for opportunities. Other youth were unable to create bonding and bridging capital; their positions of exclusion left them challenged to meet basic needs and vulnerable to exploitation.
Some of what was revealed in the data analysis was not consistent with the expectations posited by social capital theory. The groups formed by some youth embodied dynamics inconsistent with theoretical expectations. The youths’ investment in their relationships with each other did not lead to expected relational resources; some were completely absent and others operated idiosyncratically. Their subsequent relational resources were not reflective of bonding social capital, but of what I have termed binding social capital. The data also revealed the significance of convertibility, how all forms of capital work together to create advantage. Each of these theoretical implications is discussed briefly below.

**Children Have Agency**

The research and application of social capital theory to children emerging from the theoretical camp of Coleman tended to ignore the agency of children. The focus was on how parents created connections within and beyond the family and how those connections impacted future outcomes for the children. Overall, the research did not tap into how children invested in and created their own networks, storing up their own stock of social capital, which may be leveraged to facilitate their own actions. Drawing on the new sociology of childhood (James & Prout, 1990), Morrow (1999) and Leonard (2005) called for a conceptualization of children as having agency. In her critique of social capital research, Leonard noted:

Social capital in the lives of children is generally seen as a byproduct of their parent’s relationships with others and as a result their own social capital networks are rendered invisible. Moreover, social capital is often regarded as an asset that children can draw on and benefit from in their future lives rather than in their lives in the present. This reflects a recurrent tendency to view
children as “human becomings” rather than human beings. (Leonard, 2005, p. 607; see also Qvortrup, 1994)

Leonard (2005) pointed out the traditionally limited attention paid to childhood and children in sociology leaving “many areas of children’s lives invisible to the sociological gaze” (2005, pp. 606-607).

This study afforded an opportunity to make visible the lives of street children and gain a better understanding of how youth to varying degrees and in varying ways were active in the creation of social capital, a resource they could draw on to address emergent needs and or create future opportunities. The present study calls into question an adult-centric perspective of social capital in the lives of children. For example, Coleman’s (1988) conceptualization of within family social capital focused on how parents created connections within the family and how those connections impacted future outcomes for children. In other words, the social capital enjoyed by children was a byproduct of their relationship to adults, not of their own networks.

The intra-group interactions of some street youth created dense networks with characteristics and benefits reflective of many of the identified features of within family social capital (see discussion on bonding capital below). Street children were active in creating the complex, durable and dense networks seen in the present study; it took significant agency to develop and sustain them over time. This finding is supported by previous studies. For example, Stephenson’s investigation of social capital among street children in Moscow revealed that a complex system of social relations emerged on the street. This system, which included a mix of subcultural groups (i.e., punks, skinheads, Satanists) of all ages, was a complex structure of networks with a system of mutual obligations and trust. Through the development of
quasi-families, their networks provided access to food, shelter, emotional support and mobility (Stephenson, 2001).

The street children of Bucharest were not only able to create strong bonding ties within their groups, to varying degrees and in varying ways they were able to create bridging social capital: networks of association with their formal and informal environments were levered to access a range of resources and opportunities (see discussion on bridging capital below). Coleman’s (1988) conceptualization of beyond family social capital focused on how parents created connections within the community and could use those connections to reinforce valued norms for and monitor the behavior of children. Little attention was afforded to the ways children themselves connected to their communities. In the present study, the youths’ connections with their broader contexts were not mediated by parents, but created with their own agency. Again this finding supports and extends the findings of previous studies. For example, Basso et al. (2004) explored the agency of children in their investigation of the relationships children built within their broader environments and the benefits that accrued through those relationships. While Basso and colleagues did not couch their findings in social capital theory, their research shed light on how children interacted in their after-school social environments and how they personally navigated and negotiated relationships with adults and other youth independent of their parents.

Bonding - Bridging Network Ties

To varying degrees and in varying ways, the street children of Bucharest were able to create and use bonding and bridging social capital reaping significant benefits. Some of what was revealed in the data analysis was consistent with the expectations
of social capital theory. The youth that created and possessed strong networks of
associations (i.e., within their groups or with the broader context) could access or
leverage those connections to meet a range of needs or create opportunities. Deficient
resources and increased vulnerability marked the youth that were challenged to create
networks of association.

The Importance of Bonding Capital. The social capital explanation of
advantage is that the people who do better are better connected; one’s relationships
matter. The social capital of a group relies on its internal structure, or the linkages
among individuals within the collectivity. Specifically, in those features that give the
group cohesiveness (i.e., collective commitments, expectation of trust, norms of
reciprocity) and thereby facilitate the pursuit of collective goals. This resembles what
Briggs (1998) referred to as social capital as support and involves relying on others
around oneself to get by or cope with life circumstances and what Coleman (1988,
1990) referred to as network closure. What has been termed bonding capital focuses
on these internal network qualities and benefits. According to Putnam (2000) bonding
social capital tends to be inward looking and is inclined to reinforce exclusive
identities of homogeneous groups. Bonding social capital played a critical role in the
lives of street children in meeting daily needs and helped them face the challenges of
street life.

As fully articulated in Chapter 5, the networks created by some youth were
reflective of high levels of bonding capital. Their dense, durable ties were
characterized by deep connections to each other. The investment of the youth in their
relationships to each other created embedded relational resources (high levels of
bonding social capital) that afforded those within the network access to a range of
benefits. They had clearly established norms, effective sanctions and a system to foster desired behaviors in new members of the group. Over time, they developed a deep trust in each other and sturdy norms of within-group reciprocity. According to social capital theory, actors engage in networking (interaction) in order to produce benefit. This is where social capital demonstrates that it is capital (Lin, 2001a); it generates returns on investment in social relationships. The resources embedded in the relationships of youth, their social capital, fueled coordination and collective action and afforded members of the group access to a range of benefits as a citizen of the group, including emotional support, guidance and information, protection and access to a range of material resources.

Conversely, the relational hallmarks resulting in the strong bonding social capital enjoyed by some youth were deficient among others. Some youth lacked sustainable networks; they lacked the foundational ingredient necessary for the creation of social capital. The sources of social capital are consistently linked to assets that inhere in relationships, or one’s connection to networks. As fully articulated in Chapter 5, some youth did not form and live in groups. Although youth clustered in a geographic location interacted with each other to address emergent circumstances (e.g., youth injured in a fight, etc.), the connections they forged were fragile and did not persist into the next day. Therefore, at the most basic level, they were arrested in their ability to create social networks, and as such, social capital. Inability to create relationships and a lack of connectedness impeded the development of relational resources (i.e., norms that govern behavior, sanctioning systems for norm violations, the expectation of trust and sturdy norms of reciprocity) that affected the transmission of benefits shaping opportunities and life trajectories. The lack of these
embedded resources, the lack of social capital, hindered coordination and collective action, thus limiting access to the resources enjoyed by some youth (i.e., emotional support, guidance and information, protection, access to material resources) and exposing them to unique vulnerabilities.

The Power of Bridging Capital. While bonding social capital is heralded as a vital resource for getting by in life, bridging social capital is posited as a vital means for getting ahead (Briggs, 1998; Granovetter, 1973; Putnam, 2000). Lin (2001b) demarcated associations as homophilous (among persons who are similar) or heterophilous (among persons who are dissimilar). He asserted that homophilous associations (bonding capital) embody the strongest connection with the least valuable payout in the marketplace. Heterophilous associations (bridging social capital) are produced from weaker connections, but result in a more valuable payout (Lin, 2001b; see also McPherson, et al., 2001). According to Putnam (2000), bridging social capital tends to be outward looking and consist of widely dispersed ties between heterogeneous groups, thus bridging across sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., gender, ethnicity, education, etc.) and other barriers (Gittell & Vidal, 1998; Putnam, 2002). This boundary-spanning quality of bridging capital makes it more likely to expose people to new information and a broader range of resources, which affords pathways to advantage helping people get ahead (Briggs, 1998; Putnam, 2002).

As fully articulated in Chapter 6, the young people who made their lives on the streets of Bucharest did not live in a vacuum; they were a part of broader landscapes. To various degrees and in varying ways the street children in Bucharest engaged in relationships with people from their informal and formal environments. Some youth had a sophisticated ability to connect to an expansive range of networks across this
broader context. They enjoyed positive associations with law enforcement and foundation personnel, including foundation directors and foreign funders. They also had a robust network of associations with individuals from their informal environment including local residents, shopkeepers, university students and employees of national businesses (e.g., APD, etc.) and utility companies. Lin (2001b) argued that social capital theory makes a set of assumptions related to the macrostructures of society. He asserted that the social structure is pyramidal in shape related to the knowledge of, accessibility and control over normatively valued resources. Few occupy the top. Those that do occupy strategic positions are at a higher vantage point; with position comes increased knowledge of available resources and opportunities, as well as the power to access and control them. The networks leveraged by these youth were consistently in a superior social position, held more power than the youth and possessed resources not attainable by the youth on their own. Furthermore, since their work consistently took them away from their living locations, each member of the group was exposed to a wider, more diverse range of associations. At times these associations created opportunities for other members of the group.

Social capital theorists have asserted that there is a positive correlation between a person’s ability to broker structural holes (Burt, 1992) and connect with someone further up the pyramid (upward reachability) and the range of resources and opportunities afforded through the association. “Access to and use of better social capital leads to more successful action – the return to social capital” (Lin, 2001b, p. 60). The youths’ sophisticated ability to connect to an expansive range of networks built robust boundary-spanning networks of associations and afforded them access to a broad range of resources and opportunities. Specifically, the youths’ associations with
and ability to leverage networks across the formal and informal environments afforded them access to material resources, medical services, employment opportunities and stability, as well as alternatives and a degree of autonomy through the removal of barriers.

Some youth enjoyed meaningful connections to people in their informal environments marked by a mutual affinity and understanding, but lacked robust networks of association with their formal environments. These youth built strong networks of associations with those that worked and lived in their immediate environments that afforded them access to concrete and relational resources. This rich network of relationships afforded them a sense of connection and place, as well as access to material resources, limited employment opportunities and a measure of stability. Although critical to their survival, unfortunately these resources did little more than assist the youth in their endeavors to meet subsistence needs. These youth spent most of their time around the sites at which they resided. They interacted with people in their neighborhoods; their employment opportunities were at local businesses or gas stations. Little took them away from their immediate environment where they could interface with and develop connections to a broader range of networks, thus connecting networks not otherwise affiliated. Burt (1992) argued that it was sparse, not dense, networks that created the greatest social capital benefits. As information (i.e., about resources and opportunities) circulates more within a collective than it travels between separate groups, social capital is produced when people can broker connections between networks not otherwise affiliated. Although the youths’ associations with informal networks afforded important resources necessary for survival, they were often marked by redundant ties; all the youth within
a group knew and benefited from the same relationships with those from the informal environment. As Lin (2001b) noted, accessing a wider variety of resources by connecting to others who are dissimilar, run in different circles and know different people is preferred if one is interested in gaining valued resources not currently possessed. Since everyone was associated to each other, everyone had access to the same information and resources. And, unfortunately, these resources did little more than assist the youth in their endeavors to meet basic survival needs.

Although these youth expressed a desire for better connections to their formal environments, they were challenged to develop them. The resources afforded through their untenable relationships with foundation personnel were inconsistent and did not include access to vital resources (e.g., education, identification papers, etc.) that would ostensibly enable them to better their situations. Although individual youth enjoyed connections to some law enforcement officials (affording them some advantage) the benefit of the relationship did not appear to extend to other group members. Furthermore, many of these youth experienced extreme challenges with law enforcement. They often identified knowing how to deal with law enforcement as one of the biggest challenges they faced on the street. As previously noted, social capital theory assumes that the social structure is pyramidal, those that occupy strategic positions are at a higher vantage point and possess pertinent knowledge of available resources and opportunities, as well as the power to access and control them. Foundations that existed to address the needs of street children and law enforcement are two of the most significant formal entities in the lives of youth who lived on the street and therefore occupied strategic positions. In both domains, the youth were unable to develop robust networks of association that could be leveraged to create
opportunities for long-term benefit with the potential to facilitate upward mobility. A lack of these significant associations to formal networks left these young people disconnected from critical resources.

Unfortunately, some youth were ineffectual in their endeavors to form associations with either their informal or formal environments. As with bonding social capital, bridging social capital relies to a great extent on an individual’s ability to relate to others and connect to networks. Again, at the most basic level, some youth were challenged to establish relationships; they were arrested in their ability to create social capital. This challenge permeated every level of association, including the informal and formal environments.

Instead of hearing narratives about the deep connections experienced with those who worked and lived around their sites, many of these youth spoke of their informal environments as being unpredictable and hostile, or even murderous. The accounts of assistance received from foundations were marked by inconsistency and the perceived indifference of foundation personnel. Law enforcement officials were not seen as an accessible resource in a time of need; they were to be avoided. At other times they were to be feared. In regards to their associations with broader networks, the overarching theme for these youth was not connection to and the perception of empathy. It was disconnection from and the perception of apathy, and at times malevolence. These youth did not possess the boundary-spanning relationships (e.g., across sociodemographic characteristics, etc.) necessary to expose them to new information and a broader range of resources, which have the potential to unlock pathways to advantage (Briggs, 1998; Putnam, 2002). Their lack of bridging social capital cut them off from many of the resources and opportunities afforded
other youth. Their positions of social exclusion left them challenged to meet basic needs and open to increased vulnerability.

**The Bonding-Bridging Debate and Role of Linking Capital**

Beyond the basic consensus that social capital is derived from social relations, there is some disagreement around what it means to be better connected. The premise is that one’s network of social ties creates opportunities for social capital transactions. Bonding social capital focuses on social ties within homogenous groups or the linkages among individuals or groups within the collectivity; bridging social capital tends to be outward looking and consist of widely dispersed ties between heterogeneous groups (Putnam, 2000). In part, the difference between these internal versus external foci is a difference in assumed goals (Latham, 2000). This assertion was supported by the present study. Bonding and bridging networks structures afforded access to different kinds of resources and support. Bonding social capital marked by homogeneous strong ties helped the youth who possessed it gain access to affection, emotional support and protection, as well as other resources possessed by the group (e.g. food, access to living space, etc.); these resources played a critical role in meeting daily needs and facing the challenges of street life. Bridging social capital marked by heterogeneous, weak ties helped the youth who possessed it gain access to new and different kinds of resources and opportunities; these resources played a critical role in meeting a wider range of needs and opening doors to opportunities with the potential for upward mobility (getting ahead).

Although some youth possessed robust ties with their informal environments, these bridging ties alone were not enough to lift the youth above their current circumstances. Michael Woolcock, a social scientist with the World Bank argued for a
third dimension to the bonding-bridging dyad - linking social capital. Operating from the assumption that all bridges do not lead to equal benefits, linking social capital further delineates bridging social capital. For Woolcock, bridging social capital encompasses heterogeneous ties, but to those on a relatively even plane of power and influence. Conversely, linking social capital pertains to ties with people and institutions who occupy positions of power and influence (Woolcock & Sweetser, 2002); linking social capital is hierarchically differentiated connecting people across vertical dimensions up and down the social scale (Woolcock, 2001).

Woolcock argued for a multi-dimensional approach to understanding social capital. “[I]t is different combinations of bonding, bridging, and linking social capital that are responsible for the range of outcomes we observe in the literature” (Woolcock, 2001, p. 11). He emphasized that understanding the variable impact of the different forms of capital has particular importance when seeking to understand the plight of the most marginalized. Those on the margins often possess stocks of bonding capital they can access to get by (cf., Bebbington 1999; Briggs 1998), a less robust stock of bridging capital with those on a more equal power plane (cf., Barr 1998; Kozel & Parker, 2000; Narayan, 1999), and a dearth of linking social capital facilitating protracted access to formal institutions and power structures (Woolcock, 2001, see also World Bank, 2000). Woolcock’s argument for a multi-dimensional approach is supported by the literature. In a study exploring how different forms of social capital influence health outcomes, Ferlander (2007) found that those in poverty tended to possess bonding capital but little bridging, and little to no linking capital. Bonding social capital afforded emotional support and a reduction in stress. However, the modicum of bridging capital and the dearth of linking capital placed them at a
disadvantage. “Cross-cutting ties - bridging and linking social capital - may improve the chances of having the right kind of contacts for various purposes, thus providing access to new information and resources, enhancing people’s actual control and improving their ability to solve various problems” (Ferlander, 2007, p. 122).

Within this new conceptual framework, the street children in Bucharest who possessed strong networks of associations with those in the informal environment yet lacked the same robust connections with the formal environment, possessed bridging and lacked linking capital. The lack of linking capital cut them off from opportunities with the potential for upward mobility thus disabling them from moving beyond their circumstances. The segment of street youth that were challenged to create social capital across the board was in a position of extreme disadvantage; they were a socially excluded group. Enduring solutions for these two categories of youth require connecting them to mainstream services and resources. Creating these links will require intentionality of those in power.

Binding Network Ties

Some groups of youth who lived on the streets of Bucharest embodied dynamics inconsistent with theoretical expectations. The youths’ investment in their relationships with each other did not lead to expected relational resources; some were completely absent (i.e., trust of persons) and others operated idiosyncratically (i.e., norms and system for sanctioning norm violations, reciprocity exchanges and collective action). Their subsequent relational resources were not reflective of bonding social capital, but of what I termed binding social capital. As previously articulated, bonding capital refers to the presence and qualities of relationships within a group and reflects networks based on principles of trust, mutual reciprocity and norms of collective
action. Binding social capital was not based on the expectation of trust between actors, mutually beneficial reciprocity or normative rules of action. Binding social capital was based on trust in the rule structure (e.g., clear rules and sanctioning system maintained through coercive power) and obligated cooperation.

The youth who possessed binding capital formed and lived in groups organized by a vertical structure. There was a distinct person in charge, who was male. He achieved and maintained his position through the use of coercive power. Like other groups, these youth had clearly established norms of accepted behavior. Behavioral expectations and sanctions for violations were explicit. However, unlike other groups who invested time in fostering desired behaviors, whose rule structure was tolerant of error and mercy was shown in redressing norm violations; their norms were rigid and the sanctioning systems were strict. As previously highlighted, Coleman (1988) pointed to clear norms and effective sanctions for norm violations as a potent form of social capital that can be used to constrain or facilitate actions. The examples he set forth consistently reflected norms that facilitate socially desirable and constrains socially undesirable behaviors. Conversely, the norms established within these groups did not foster pro-social behaviors, and in some ways encouraged antisocial ones; the norms and sanctioning system frequently constrained (sanctioned) pro-social behavior and encouraged (facilitated) antisocial behavior. Adherence to the rule structure banded members together and exerted a restraining (e.g., forfeiture of autonomy, obedience to rule structure, etc.) and compelling (e.g., relinquishing material resources to group boss, etc.) effect. While high levels of binding capital afforded benefits to some members of the network, it also resulted in negative effects within and outside the group.
The strong durable networks created and maintained by these youth were consistent with Coleman’s notion of network closure (1988, 1990). Coleman argued that network closure (a network where everyone is connected to, knows and can monitor the behavior of everyone else) is an important aspect of network structure that facilitates the emergence of norms and sanctioning systems. Coleman asserted that an environment of reinforced norms and effective sanctions builds and ensures trustworthiness. In other words, closure builds trust in those with whom one interacts within the network, which increases the effectiveness of social capital. But contrary to this argument, closure did not build trust among these youth; network closure built a more effective surveillance system. Confidence did not lie in members of the group, but in the broader system that structured group behavior. Throughout the social capital literature it is argued that an individual’s ability to trust others is central to the development and maintenance of social capital (cf., Coleman, 1988, 1990; Dasgupta, 1999; Fukuyama, 1995a, 1995b; Putnam, 1993a). These youth did not have an overall sense that the other members of the group were trustworthy, helpful or fair. In actuality, there was a total lack of trust, even an inherent distrust of others.

With a hierarchical vertical structure and a lack of trust in people, theoretical expectations would point to low levels of cooperation (Putnam, 1993a). In fact, some social capital theorists (cf., Dasgupta, 1999; Fukuyama, 1995a, 1995b) attributed the ability of people to cooperate to their ability to trust each other. Nevertheless, on some level, these youth did cooperate; they participated in a combined effort to accomplish an end. However, they did not cooperate because they trusted each other, but because they trusted the rule structure and sanctioning system within which they were obliged to cooperate. Exchange was compelled to shore up group resources and
maintain group membership. In the context of social capital theory cooperation is typically conceptualized as a means to a mutually beneficial end (cf., Bullen & Onyx, 1998; Putnam, 1995). However, these youth did not cooperate for mutual benefit. Unlike the joint ownership of social capital enjoyed by youth from groups reflective of bonding capital, those with power within the hierarchy enjoyed exclusive ownership. The primary beneficiaries of youths’ investment in the group were the group boss and those closest to him. Force was used as a substitute for trust and obedience to authority as a substitute for cooperation. Vertical networks devoid of trust and expectations based on the trustworthiness of another were dependent on the will of those in power, not on the collectivity. Within such a network, exchange was inherently unequal. These youth relied on the actions of those in authority to achieve individual self-interest and well-being; their actions within the context of the group were not equal to the expectation of benefit.

In such an environment, the youth at times leaned toward opportunism; they took advantage of circumstances that led to personal benefit in spite of the potential consequences. Although they formed and lived in a group, their connections to each other did not facilitate a transition from individual self-interest to group interest. Contributions to the group materially were out of obligation and ultimately self-interest (e.g., a desire to stay in the group, etc.), not out of a desire to contribute in mutually beneficial ways. As group members cooperated due to obligation and not desire, there appeared to be a lack of commitment or loyalty to the group; group members chose to violate group rules in the pursuit of self-interests (e.g., buying and eating/drinking food/alcohol away from group so that one does not have to contribute all the money they earned, sharing negative information about a group member to an
NGO staff to cut-off potential access to a resource, etc.). For females in the group, defection moved beyond loyalty to physically escaping from the confines of the group. Females were consistently exploited and abused by other group members. The meager benefits accrued via their association to the group did not outweigh the personal costs and injuries incurred.

Social capital theorists reference networks with a criminal element (e.g., street gangs, the mafia, drug cartels, etc.) as having high levels of bonding capital (cf., Pope, 2003; Portes & Landolt, 1996). Although some acknowledge this may lead to “public bads” (Portes & Landolt, 1996), no one has explored the unique dynamics at play within these groups; no one has explored the potential of a unique kind of capital. For example, research exploring social capital in the context of gangs tends to focus on the lack of social capital leading to gang involvement; youth seek gang involvement to compensate for their lack of family connection (Bassani, 2007; Deuchar, 2009; Leonard, 2005). For example, Deuchar (2009) argued that a lack of social capital among disenfranchised youth can make the identity, status and social bonding proffered through gangs more attractive. Deane, Bracken and Morrissette (2007) moved beyond a focus on intra-group dynamics and explored the impact of social capital on a member of an urban Aboriginal gang member’s decision to desist from crime and participate in a specialized program. They found that the program’s ability to serve as bridging social capital in connecting youth to employment opportunities and bonding social capital through connection to supportive peers played a significant role in a youth’s decision to desist. Although studies like these offer important insights, there is a dearth of information about the specific dynamics and issues at play for groups with a criminal element from a social capital perspective.
These groups do possess networks that appear to lead to benefits, but the unique formation and substance of these networks warrant further exploration.

The work of Deuchar and Holligan (2010) begins to move in this direction. They explored the issues surrounding territoriality, sectarianism, social capital and youth gang involvement. Although they label it as bonding capital, their summary comments point to some of the dynamics witnessed in the present study. Highlighting the benefits of bonding capital in gangs (e.g., identity, compensating for deprived home environments, etc.), they acknowledged that:

[G]ang membership also resulted in a sense of confinement, a sense of social distance from other communities and a lack of trust. Youngsters often felt trapped in the confinement of their housing schemes and had a feeling of exclusion that stemmed from a history of conflict with authority (such as teachers and the police), thus limiting the reciprocity and trust generated between generations of adults and young people within these communities.

(Deuchar & Holligan, 2010, p. 254)

**Convertibility: The Interaction of Capitals**

Bourdieu (1986) differentiated between various forms of capital. In the marketplace of society people engage in a variety of investments and exchanges in pursuit of their interests. Within this marketplace, some people do better than others; some people have better returns on their investments. An economic or material (physical) capital explanation is that people who do better were better *resourced*; they had access to economic resources like income and physical resources like housing. Through the lens of a human capital explanation, the people who do better were better *equipped*; they were more knowledgeable, more skilled and more
proficient in ways that were valued by the marketplace. These are usually attributes gained through formal education and training. A cultural capital explanation is that people who do better were better socialized; they inherited the requisite “cultural habits and. . . dispositions” to negotiate the marketplace (Bourdieu & Passeron 1979, p. 14). In its embodied form, cultural capital is gained as it imprints itself over time upon one’s habitus, “a set of dispositions, reflexes and forms of behavior people acquire through acting in society” (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 19).

Bourdieu (1986) and Lin (1999) focused on the convertibility or lack thereof between social capital and other forms (e.g., human capital, cultural capital, etc.). For example, Bourdieu (1977) argued that cultural capital was as important as economic capital in reproducing unequal social relations and the inequality of opportunity, which ultimately produces unequal outcomes. In the present study, some youth (i.e., from typologies B and C) spent their early years in the context of families free from domestic violence. In large part, these youth attained their first five years of education, affording them important socialization, or cultural capital, that better prepared them to negotiate normative relationships and systems. As articulated in Chapter 5, the norms embraced by these youth (e.g., protecting the vulnerable, respecting people’s property, avoiding violence, behaving in trustworthy ways, etc.) were also valued by the larger society. Their endowment of high levels of cultural capital potentially enhanced their capacity for sociability and better equipped them to develop and negotiate relationships among each other, as well as with individuals from broader networks.

As introduced in Chapter 5, other youth (i.e., from Typology A) began developing survival skills before they came to the street. Whereas the first five years
of education received by the youth from typologies B and C afforded important socialization, or cultural capital, that better prepared them to negotiate normative relationships and systems, the youth from Typology A were endowed with a set of skills and dispositions important for negotiating non-normative relationships and systems (street capital). Lankenau and colleagues (2005) pointed to the role of early exposure to street capital (e.g., negotiating poverty, criminal activity, abuse, etc.) within the family and experience in public institutions as assisting youth in transforming street capital into competencies and paving the way for successful street careers. For youth within Typology A preliminary street capital was acquired through negotiating violence and poverty within the family; time in an institution afforded these youth an opportunity to further refine this street capital thus further develop their ability to negotiate and use relationships and work the system in beneficial ways (cf., Lankenau et al., 2005).

Youth from Typology D came from family environments marked by deprivation and hostility, environments that were not conducive to facilitating a healthy developmental foundation. Research (cf., Haapasalo, et al., 2000; Lichter, et al., 2002) has demonstrated that youth raised in adverse family environments are less prosocial than children from more stable homes. The impact of early developmental experiences is identified in the social capital theory literature as germane to the development of future relationships. “The family is the first building block in the generation of social capital for the larger society” (World Bank, nd; see also, Bubolz, 2001). The World Bank Group pointed to the significance of relational modeling within and outside the family emphasizing the importance of this modeling to the development of future relationships, especially as it relates to trust, reciprocity and
exchanges. Even though the youth from Typology D were aware of behavioral expectations related to their interactions with foundation personnel and law enforcement officials, many were challenged to meet them. In my observations of their interactions with foundation personnel, the youth consistently breached social norms that often govern interpersonal communication. The youth often stood very close to and touched the people they were speaking with, invading personal space. They also interrupted conversations, spoke loudly and at times used profanity. Perhaps the lack of this cultural capital decreased their capacity for sociability; they were not equipped to develop and negotiate relationships with individuals and systems from informal and formal environments.

One must also consider the impact of economic and human capital. As articulated in Chapter 6, the resource generating activities engaged in by youth from typologies A and C were far more lucrative and generated more monetary resources. Not only did the youth utilize these resources to purchase material things, but also to negotiate relationships with those from their informal and formal environments. As noted, they were able to use their associations and economic capital to access utilities and negotiate relationships with law enforcement. Some youth (i.e., from Typology C) possessed more formal education than most other youth. There was evidence in the data that this human capital played a role in the access to opportunities afforded through foundations. The youth across Typology C pointed to an assessment and selection process facilitated by foundation personnel in deciding whom to include in special programs (e.g., educational, employment-oriented, etc.). Perhaps their human capital positioned them for better success in programs, thus foundations invested their resources in them.
Bourdieu’s (1984) discussion of fields places the routines of the everyday lives of street children within a broader context. Specifically, various social arenas are envisaged as fields of forces. A particular field is made up of economic, cultural, human and social resources with differential possession and access to said resources positioning those within the field. According to Bourdieu, as certain people (endowed with the right appropriation of capitals) enter a particular field, they are more aware of the rules of the game and thus have a greater capacity to play the game or manipulate the rules (Bourdieu, 1984; see also Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu (1986) argued that dominant social classes can use privileged access to the various forms of capital to make strategic conversion of one kind of capital to another in order to solidify further their class position. Perhaps what afforded the youth from typologies A and C an advantage was the ability to convert cultural (or street), economic capital and human capital to create social capital and vice versa. “Social capital of any significance can seldom be acquired, for example, without the investment of some material resources and the possession of some cultural knowledge, enabling the individual to establish relations with others” (Portes, 2000, p. 2).

Although Bourdieu had a micro perspective of social capital (i.e., benefits that accrue to an individual or family by virtue of their ties to or connections with others), he was keenly aware of the role of the broader macro environment helping to facilitate or serving as a barrier to one's ability to create and use social capital. For Bourdieu (1986), social capital as an asset drew its worth from the power and influences of the social connections an individual possessed. Convertibility is not automatic. It is constrained by the broader context. Bourdieu’s discussion of fields and the convertibility of capital offer an explanation of why marginalized groups often
remain excluded. “In social capital terms, social exclusion can be defined as a dearth of all forms of capital - social, economic and human” (Stone & Hughes, 2002, p. 26). In the street field the lack of one or more of these capitals placed youth at a disadvantage vis-à-vis youth who possess stocks of capital across the board.

Leonard’s (2005) work affirmed these assertions; converting social capital to other forms is not straightforward per the constraints imposed by the wider environment and lack of convertibility among capitals. She further argued that, “Convertibility may be particularly problematic for actors with low stocks of cultural and economic capital, or those positioned as inferior relative to other societal members” (p. 606). She explored how children as agents created and utilized their own stocks of social capital and explored the issue of convertibility, or the transformation of social capital into other forms of capital. The data for her study was based on two projects in working class communities in Ireland. While quality relationships between parents and children and positive perceptions of education (seen as a way to rise above poverty) were hallmarks of both projects (i.e., they had strong bonding capital), the lack of the other forms of capital impeded educational opportunities. The same dynamic was seen in the context of bridging ties. Leonard (2005) found that the lack of available leisure activities in the community and the lack of economic capital of families served as a barrier to youth engagement in leisure activities (an indicator of bridging capital per Putnam, 2001). Leonard asserted that this pointed to the importance of economic capital in the creation of social capital for children. In the present study, it is important to acknowledge the potentially potent role played by the stocks of capital in all its forms possessed by some youth (and
lacking for others) and how those capitals interacted in creating advantage, as well as exclusion.

**Practice and Policy Implications of the Study**

Romanian policy makers and practitioners from governmental and non-governmental agencies have expressed a critical need for the development of programs to meet the needs of Romania’s street children (Commission on Romania’s Progress toward Accession, 2003; UNICEF, 1999; Zamfir & Zamfir, 1997). This study revealed a range of gaps in programs and services available to street youth, as well as identified some systematic barriers in the broader macro context. Addressing these issues would not only improve the conditions and opportunities for the street children, but also move Romania in the right direction to assure the rights of this disadvantaged group are protected.

**Action Needed to Strengthen and Support Families and Communities**

Although not the focus of this study, thinking in terms of prevention is an important step in addressing the needs of street children. As articulated in Chapter 4, pathways to the street were multifarious. Many street youth in Romania traded in their difficult lives at home for difficult lives on the street. Push factors related to poverty and domestic violence along with confounding factors such as the death of a parent propelled them to the street. The mirage of a better life and friendships they developed with others who lived on the street pulled youth to the street in a search for a better life; a life they tried to create for themselves in an unforgiving environment. For some youth, life on the street was forced. They were not escaping from anything or being drawn toward anything. For the youth impacted by force factors, they were on the street because there was nowhere else to go; they were
kicked out of the home without the option of return, born on the street or abandoned by parents to the street.

Several researchers investigating the lives of street children confirmed the role of diverse mezzo and macro dynamics in the migration of children to the streets. Fall (1986) was among the first to classify them into push and pull factors. Since then, studies globally (cf., Ferguson, 2005; Hagen & McCarthy, 1997; Lusk, 1989; Trussell, 1999; Wittig, 1994) pointed to this combination of factors; most youth were on the street, whether pushed or pulled, because of family and community deficiencies. Ferguson (2005) found that child street workers were more likely to come from impoverished families who resided in poor and at-risk communities (e.g., deficient in social support systems, public services, etc.). Due to their lack of resources Ferguson (2005) asserted that “both communities and families are structurally unable to fulfill the basic survival needs and provide for the overall well-being of their children” (p. 102). Hagen and McCarthy (1997) combined the approaches of two social capital theorists in their exploration of the past trajectories by which young people in Canada came to the streets and the role of social relationships in the path their lives took while on the street. They utilized Coleman’s conceptualization of social capital to explain the emergence of street youth, linking a lack of social capital in the family to the youth becoming homeless. Lusk (1989) determined that the social institutions of family and schools appeared to play a preventive role in deterring street-working children from progressing to become street-living children.

More recently, Ferguson (2005) expanded the exploration to include economic and human capital variables in an examination of whether families from Nuevo Leon, Mexico with and without street-working children differed in levels of human capital,
economic capital, family social capital and community social capital. Regression results indicated the overall model was significant in differentiating between street-working and non-street working status in children; the model accurately classified 75.4% of the cases. Four variables were reliable in predicting children’s street work ($p < .05$). A child’s human capital (whether or not they were in the correct grade for their chronological age), mother’s human capital (educational level), and two community social capital indicators (mother’s perceptions of whether or not there were safe places in the community for children, the sum of mother’s total social support ties within and outside of the community) buffered against a child’s likelihood of engaging in street work.

Working to protect children from maltreatment and exploitation and to empower and strengthen families and communities is at the heart of the social work profession cutting across all system levels. The issues that led some of Romania’s children to the street traversed the micro, mezzo and macro contexts. A further exploration of these variables and the development of programs designed to bolster families and communities could play a deterring role in the increase of the street youth population.

**Action Needed to Address Unmet Needs**

Although the street youth in Bucharest were creative and active in addressing a host of their needs, there were issues that appeared beyond their capacity to attend to. The descriptive analysis revealed a range of needs requiring attention, including care for preventative and emergent medical needs, increased opportunities to maintain hygiene and increased recreational opportunities, as well as services to address mental health and addiction issues.
**Assistance to Address Medical Needs.** The nature and continuous exposure of street life make the young people who lived on the streets more vulnerable to a host of health concerns. Many suffered from skin diseases, rashes, lice, cuts, abrasions, burns, headaches, respiratory problems and cold and flu symptoms (e.g., sneezing, coughing, muscle aches, feverish, congestion, etc.). This is consistent with the findings of a 2002 assessment of street children (Save the Children Romania for ILO/IPEC, 2002) that also pointed to chronic malnutrition. During my time on the street some youth also complained of toothaches and some sought treatment for broken bones and STDs (i.e., gonorrhea and syphilis). I also encountered youth living with a range of disabilities (e.g., amputated limb, hearing impairment, mute, etc.).

Although foundations existed to meet the medical needs of street youth, services appeared to be inconsistently available and inadequate in scope. Furthermore, services were only available during regular business hours; many medical needs emerged at night when youth faced increased vulnerability to violence. Medical services should be made available that are responsive to the felt needs of street youth and in a way that does not further stigmatize or isolate them from society. An increased presence in the overnight hours would not only afford youth access to much needed services, but could also potentially deter some of the violence that occurs as the city sleeps. Triage care could be offered in the streets to provide early treatment for headaches and stomach discomfort, as well as for things such as cuts, abrasions, skin rashes, etc. Addressing needs as they emerge not only brings comfort to the youth, but also avoids the potential need for more intrusive, specialized care if, for example, cuts and abrasions become infected. Work must also be done to remove barriers to accessing medical treatment from physicians and hospitals, including
opportunities for youth to maintain hygiene and to acquire identification cards. Furthermore, special attention should be given to reproductive health issues. As articulated in Chapter 4, during the time of data collection, 29% of the females \( (n = 22) \) gave birth to a child, experienced a miscarriage, had an abortion or was pregnant (due date after I left the field). Youth also contracted a range of STDs. More needs to be done in the areas of awareness and prevention of STDs, access to condoms and services to pregnant youth.

It is recognized that access to quality health care is a concern for Romanians in general. Hospitals lack basic medical supplies and medications compelling patients to pay for such resources out of pocket (Haivas, 2010). The issue of corruption in the hospital system also serves as a barrier. Across the healthcare system, Romanians often have to pay bribes to physicians and nurses for amenities (e.g., food, sheets for the bed, etc.) and treatment (Haivas, 2010; Ionescu, 2006). This corruption has “a dramatic impact on equity of access to services” (Haivas, 2010, p. 655); the poor are at a significant disadvantage. Issues of access are further complicated for marginalized groups, such as the Roma population (Zoon, 2001), which represented a proportion of the street children in population in Romania (UNICEF, 2006). Addressing these broader national issues not only benefits the young people living on the streets, but would also benefit the country as a whole.

**Improved Opportunities to Maintain Hygiene.** A related issue to health concerns and access to health care in general is the need for improved opportunities to maintain hygiene. Less than half of the youth I encountered had consistent access to bathroom and shower facilities. Beyond the health related concerns associated with poor hygiene (e.g., lice, skin rashes, infected cuts and lacerations, etc.), the youths’
appearance often exposed them to increased aggression from their informal and formal environments, as well as served as a barrier to employment opportunities and, as noted above, receiving medical care. During my time on the street only one foundation had facilities routinely available for youth to shower and obtain haircuts; that facility was closed for several months for renovation. The youth lacking access to showers and bathrooms found themselves searching for alternatives. For example, some youth bathed in rivers and fountains in warmer months; some youth attempted to use the bathroom in restaurants and hotels. Often these attempts exposed them to unpleasant interactions with those from the informal environment, as well as altercations with law enforcement officials. Without options, youth go without bathing and use the bathroom in public spaces (e.g., under a bush, behind a vendor’s booth, in the subway tunnels, etc.). Attention must be given to create access to these much needed resources. Opportunities for street youth to maintain hygiene could potentially have wide-ranging benefits, including improving the youths’ overall health, removing barriers to other needed services, decreasing the youths’ negative interactions with the formal and informal environments and addressing public health issues.

**Increased Recreational Opportunities.** In the present study there were myriad examples of children creating and engaging in times of play and recreation. As articulated in Chapter 4 the youth found great pleasure in listening to and creating music, pointing to the ways music helped them cope with life on the street. Interactions surrounding music often included singing, dancing, whistling, playing instruments (e.g., harmonica, etc.) and a great deal of laughter. The themes of laughter and doing things together consistently emerged around recreation. In the summer months, many youth swam together in the Dombovița River and took turns
jumping off a bridge. Youth huddled together and engaged in a dice game, shared newspapers and engaged in craft-oriented activities. Some youth used their own money to purchase pens, pencils, crayons and paper to draw and color. Their engagement in such activities seemed only limited by their resources. Multiple youth indicated that they wished foundations would provide more opportunities to engage in art-related activities. Perhaps the themes of laughter and cooperative play were most clearly reflected in the context of soccer. In the spring and summer months, an NGO organized a weekly soccer game for street children. Youths who lived at various sites across Bucharest came together on Wednesdays to play soccer for two hours.

Identifying and maximizing the recreational activities of street youth may represent an important untapped resource. Access to art, music and recreation appeared to serve as a protective factor in dealing with difficult emotions and managing stress. Furthermore, the opportunity to play soccer provided youth with a protected space that fostered problem-solving skills, team-building and constructive social skills and behaviors among the youth. In his proposal for a plan to create recreational opportunities for Nicaraguan street children, Gordon (2007) noted the pro-social benefits of recreation for youths that have been socialized within the street culture. “The abilities and expertise that they learn on the streets are only beneficial in that environment, but the expertise that can be gained from . . . athletic competition will assist them with more beneficial positions and walks of life” (p. 7). Creating more intentional opportunities for street youth to engage in such activities has the potential to benefit across psychological and social domains.

**Specialized Programs to Address Drug Use and Mental Health Concerns.** As the street youth who participated in the present study narrated their life experiences,
they identified a host of strategies employed to deal with the emotional and physical challenges of living on the street. Although the youth manifested tremendous resiliency in many of their coping strategies (i.e., music, spirituality and networks of mutual support), other means used to regulate the impact of street life were injurious to them. It was beyond the scope of this project to thoroughly assess addiction and mental health concerns, but my day-to-day interactions with the youth and their in-depth conversations pointed to problems associated with drug use and addiction, as well as potential underlying mental health issues.

As articulated in Chapter 4, some youth engaged in self-inflicted violence as a coping mechanism to help them deal with stress and intense feelings (e.g., anger, rejection, despair, etc.). This included anything from cutting themselves with knives, razor blades or pieces of glass, to punching windows (often resulting in significant lacerations) and setting themselves on fire. The use of self-harm by teenagers to relieve emotional pain and discomfort is well documented in the literature (Feigenbaum, 2010; Greydanus, 2011; Nock, et al., 2009; Redley, 2010). However, little has been done to better understand this issue or explore ways to address self-injurious behaviors in the context of the street youth population. Work should be done to more thoroughly assess its prevalence, etiology and impact, as well as addressing potential associated underlying mental health issues.

The use of substances as a way of coping with life on the streets was also identified by the youth. The youth discussed their use of drugs as a way of numbing themselves against the hunger and cold and/or blocking out difficult emotions, memories and unpleasant realities. Youth consistently pointed to the “cure all” impact of drug use, especially aurolac, identifying it as an inexpensive way to temporarily
relieve their current suffering. The most recent national study (Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999) exploring the prevalence of drug use among street children occurred in 1998-1999 at which time it was found that about 50% of street children were regular or occasional inhalant users; consumption of other drugs, such as marijuana, was found only occasionally. At that time researchers urged practitioners and policy makers to address the issue of huffing, citing long-term negative effects, including behavioral changes that further deteriorate the psychological and physical health of youth. Drug use also opened youth up to a host of additional risks and vulnerabilities. Drug use was a barrier for youth receiving services from foundations and a contributing stigmatizing factor. The general population of Romania associates aurolac with street children, often referring to the youth as aurolaci (the plural form of aurolac).

In the present study, the number of youth who acknowledged the addictive nature and negative consequences of drugs and expressed a desire to “get off” drugs was compelling. During my time on the street I had multiple conversations with youth about their desire to quit huffing and/or using other drugs. Many spoke of aspirations that went unmet due to drug use. Their dreams were often interrupted by an acknowledgment of the insurmountable challenge of quitting on their own. Some even went as far as to research options for treatment programs. At the time of this project, there were no programs in place for street children to address issues of addiction. There is a need nationally to develop and evaluate drug prevention and treatment programs geared toward street children.
Action Needed to Address the Macro Context

The present study identified a range of macro context factors that appeared to play a role in youths’ ability to create and or maintain social capital or to facilitate the convertibility of their social capital. Addressing these broader systematic issues could create an environment conducive to opening up pathways for moving off the streets. Each is discussed briefly below.

Stigmatization. As noted throughout this dissertation, the street youth in Bucharest are known by a range of names, including shmeckers (tricky ones), buschatari (bushes) and aurolaci (those who huff aurolac). Names that dehumanized, objectified and demonized the young people who worked to create a life on the street. The names given to Romanian street children mirror the labels of street children globally. Similar to aurolaci, in Nicaragua street children are referred to as “huelepegas”; in Mexico “chemos” and in Honduras “resistoleros”, all referencing street children as glue sniffers. Street youths’ perceived criminality was reflected in the Rio de Janeiro label of “pivetes” (little criminals) and their objectification was reflected in the Vietnamese label of “Bụ Đờ I” (the dust of life) and Colombian label of “chinches” (bed bugs) (World Health Organization, 1993).

Stigmatization significantly discredits an individual in the eyes of others. The impact of stigma on the lives of street children is well documented in the literature. Around the globe, stigma served as a barrier to economic opportunities (cf., Kobayashi, 2004). Speaking of the challenges faced by Haitian street children as the result of stigma, Moncrieffe (2006) stated, “Authoritative actors have the power to label people and to (mis)recognise them in ways that can have longstanding influence on how they perceive themselves, respond to opportunities, make claims and exercise...
agency. There are substantial and very troubling long-term implications when children are the object of this stigma” (p. 43).

In their study of Brazilian street children and their service providers, de Oliveira, Baizerman and Pellet (1992) presented the disparity between service providers’ views of street youths and the street youths’ views of themselves. They found that the majority of the youth expressed positive attitudes about themselves. In general, street youths considered themselves as “good persons” (65%). Over half expressed a desire to leave the streets and assume “normalcy” (e.g., living with families, obtaining employment, etc.) and nearly all (78%) believed they would “make it” if given the chance. These self-perceptions stood in significant contrast to how they were viewed by service providers. Service provider comments about street children revealed a set of common stereotypes: “they lack a perspective and aspirations; they revolt against society; they are immediatist, living day-to-day; they devalue honest social achievement; and they lack willpower and discipline” (de Oliveira et al., 1992, pp. 170-171). de Oliveira and colleagues argued that these perspectives reflected the “blaming the victim” mentality failing to recognize the broader conditions that serve as barriers for youth or the capacities and motivation the youth indeed possessed. They further argued that public stereotypes, created by government officials, the media, law enforcement and the public in general have the effect of justifying inappropriate, detrimental, or even violent interventions.

Some of these attitudes were reflected in the summation of national reports related to Romania’s street children. UNICEF Romania (2006) reported that the overall assessment of previous studies of Romania’s street children concluded that, “They are addicted to the present, have no desires for the future, and are sometimes even
unable to understand the notion of a future” (p. 56). The data from the present study revealed a much different picture. Youth consistently spoke of their desires for the future, even those who were most marginalized. Although some youth (especially from Typology D) could appear “addicted to the present” as their primary focus was on obtaining subsistence needs on a moment-by-moment basis, they too spoke of future aspirations. They were “immediatists” out of necessity to meet basic needs. It was not a lack of aspirations possessed by the street children but a dearth of opportunities and significant barriers that disabled youth from obtaining their desired futures.

Failing to view street children as fully human possessing capacities, aspirations and undeniable rights as human citizens can lead to national policies that are injurious to them. For example, Nieuwenhuys (2001) noted that the governmental and civil society response to street children in Addis Ababa has led to a preoccupation with social hygiene; portraying the street children as a social disease. Within this context, national policies reflect the need to clean the streets of “vermin”. This sentiment was felt by the youth in Romania. Recall Adi’s (age 18) comment from Chapter 6:

> If we could do it (leave the street) we would. Don’t you think I want to make a life for myself? Here in Romania, it is no use. We will never have anything. Maybe it will even be worse, maybe a lot worse for us. The police are beating us and giving us fines. They give us more and more fines until they put us in jail. So they found this way to get rid of many from the street. (pause) So that the street will be as clean as possible.

As Romania moves forward in seeking ways to improve the circumstances of street children it will be imperative for them to address systemic issues of stigmatization.

**Removing Barriers to Official Employment.** In surveying the macro context for Romania’s street children, one of the most significant resources they could possess is an official identification card. Unfortunately, many do not possess them and are
challenged to attain them. It is imperative that the Romanian government work to create efficient ways for street youth to obtain official identity papers with or without birth certificates. The *carte de identitate* (similar to a social security card in the U.S.) is issued to every Romanian citizen at birth or before 14 years of age and are compulsory for official employment. Recall from Chapter 4 that the possession of a *carte de identitate* played an instrumental role in youths’ access to formal employment; the lack of an identification card removed opportunities and opened youth up to fines for being on the street without proper identification. The absence of a legal identity also excludes youth from all public services associated with Romanian citizenship (e.g., social assistance, social security, access to health care, etc.).

Birth certificates and identity papers are two resources many street children lacked. The 1998-1999 national study of street children found that about 32% of the surveyed children had no identity papers (Save the Children Romania & UNICEF, 1999). It is possible that this number is even higher now. As noted in Chapter 4 (see *Pathways to the Street*), 25% of youth either grew up in an orphanage or came to the street through an orphanage; an additional 7% were either abandoned to the street by their parents or were born on the street. A 2002 study exploring the issues faced by children in institutional care revealed that less than half (46%) of the children in institutions over the age of 14 possessed a *carte de identitate* (ANPCA, et al., 2002). The study highlighted the challenges of tracking down parents and thus birth certificates as a key deterrent to addressing this issue. Furthermore, in order to obtain a *carte de identitate* one must have a permanent residence and a birth certificate. By the very nature of being street children, they lacked permanent residences.
UNICEF (2006) identified the lack of identity documents as a top priority for children deprived of parental care, which includes the street children population. In order for a child to avoid the risk of life-long discrimination, birth registration is of the utmost importance. A targeted study or rapid assessment to attempt to understand all the dimensions and mechanisms leading to a lack of birth certificates and/or identity documents should be of great use to address this weakness in a comprehensive manner. (UNICEF, 2006, p. 178)

To date, it is still not possible to obtain a carte de identitate without a birth certificate. If one is without a birth certificate it can only be obtained through a court order that involves a rather long and complicated procedure. If someone has a birth certificate, even if she or he does not have a stable place of residence, one can obtain a temporary carte de identitate valid for one year. Although this is a step in the right direction, the “floating identification card” identifies the youth as homeless and thus they continue to be labeled and open to the associated consequences. To continue to decrease stigma and barriers, the government should continue to explore more efficient ways to obtain a birth certificate, as well as to attain a carte de identitate without a marker that inevitably identifies them as street youth, thus positioning them for further discrimination.

Building the Human Capital of Street Children. Whereas social capital is generally considered an attribute of an aggregate, human capital is considered an attribute of an individual and comprises a stock of knowledge, skills and qualifications. As previously articulated the possession of human capital appeared to play a significant role in youths’ access to a wider range of opportunities; the increase of capitals across the board ostensibly better positions street youth for advantage. The
Romanian government and non-governmental agencies should work to create pathways for all youth to have access to education.

Although many youth I encountered completed some schooling while they lived at home or in a state orphanage, they could not persist once they came to the street; access to education was viewed as a significant challenge. Some of these challenges were external. At that time, in the Romanian educational system, any youth who fell more than two years behind was not permitted to return to the public education system. In 2003, there were no governmental programs and very few non-governmental programs in place to assist with the educational needs of street children. Most of the non-governmental programs were residential programs geared toward youth under the age of that 18. This barrier to access often left youth feeling they did not have options; there was no hope for change.

In January 2011, the Romanian government passed The Law of National Education. Under the new law, everyone is eligible to continue her or his education, even if she or he has been missing from school for more than two years. Although mandatory education still comes in the form of day classes, for people who are at least three years older than the students in their class, alternative educational modalities can be arranged by non-governmental organizations in collaboration with county education authorities pending approval by the Ministry for Education, Research, Youth and Sport. This new legislation is a significant first step in addressing the educational needs of street children. However, it will be important to monitor the implementation of the new law to ensure the associated bureaucracy does not become a barrier and that the needs of the most marginalized children are being met. In the context of the new law a major effort would need to be made to reassess the
developmental goals and models of school education to improve access and relevance for street children. There may need to be greater institutional flexibility. Variations such as work site schools and shift systems may be more attuned to children’s daily and seasonal routines and with their social and economic responsibilities. Furthermore, traditional academic methods may not be consistent with the experience of street children. This may mean reaching out beyond the core academic subjects to encompass things deemed important to the life-needs of street children within their social environments. Use should be made, whenever possible, of street children’s own materials, language, concepts and understandings.

**Confront the Criminalization of Survival.** In Romania there appears to be a criminalization of survival. Legitimate attempts to work, provide shelter, etc. often contravene rules or laws framing youth as criminals in their efforts to survive. Most Romanian street children relied in some way on begging as a resource generating activity. In Romania begging by is considered illegal as stated in Article 367 of the Romania Penal Code, “The practice of repeatedly calling on the pity of the public, and asking for material help, is punished with 1-3 months in prison, or with a fine.” Youth also attempted to engage in a range of informal resource generating activities, some of which at one point in time were legal avenues to economic resources. For example, youth formerly earned money by assisting travelers at the train station with their bags. Recall the story shared in the introduction. My first experience with street children in Romanian took place as they offered their assistance with my bags at the North Train Station. Since that time, Căile Ferate Române (CFR; translated Romanian Railways), the official railway carrier for Romania, made it illegal to be in the train station without a ticket - - a policy developed in part to deny street children access to
the station. Currently, CFR hires baggage assistants to greet passengers on the platform. Some youth also attempted to earn resources by guarding and washing parked cars in public parking lots. This too is now illegal. The government created positions for parking attendants who are charged with ensuring the safety of vehicles parked in certain public lots. To be hired as a baggage assistant or parking attendant, one must have official identity papers. If caught engaging in any of these activities, youth have the potential of being penalized with large fines or even incarcerated.

There is also a law in Romania that, in essence, makes it illegal for youth to exist in any capacity on the street. Article 321 of the Romania Penal Code, also known as the Public Scandal Law states, “The act of carrying out, in public, acts or gestures, or of uttering words or expressions, or of manifesting any other kind of behavior which affects good morals or produces a public scandal or, in any other way, disturbs public quiet and order can be punished by imprisonment of one to five years. . . . If the outrage is of a grave nature, the sentence can be two to seven years.” The Public Scandal Law was used by police officers across Bucharest to sanction a range of behaviors including, standing in a group, sleeping in a public space, cursing, huffing in public and being extremely dirty; the law was also used to threaten my arrest for standing in a public space talking with street children. For violating the law, youth often received fines and/or faced a physical altercation with law enforcement officials if they did not comply with demands to leave the streets. Since many youth had nowhere else to go, it was often impossible to act in accordance with the law.

This phenomenon is not new to homeless populations around the world. Across the globe, men, women and children who engage in activities necessary to preserve their lives are confronted by law enforcement. As articulated above, the youth often
lacked the very resources necessary to make compliance with such laws possible (e.g., identification cards to seek formal employment, etc.). As the Romanian government seeks to address the issues related to street children it would be important for them to evaluate the utility and potential abuse of these laws. In their concluding thoughts regarding the situation of street children in Tanzania, Lugalla and Mbwambo (1999) asserted that street children are not criminals though some may engage in criminal acts in order to survive. Furthermore, some fall prey to criminalizing policies that fail to recognize that street children are not responsible for nor do they possess avenues out of their situations. As Romania moves forward it will be important for officials and service providers to differentiate between street youth as a problem and the problems of street youth.

Identify and Address Abuses Encountered by the Formal Environment. As Romania continues to improve their services to street youth, it is imperative to address the abuses encountered in the context of the formal environment. On some occasions, those who purport to exist to meet the needs of street youth, assist them with overcoming the challenges of life on the street and to create pathways to a better future become the perpetrators of violence against them. National and non-governmental organizations are often the first-line of contact with street youth. Some of these organizations hired liaisons charged with communicating resources available and services provided by a foundation with those living on the street and for informing their employers of unmet needs that required attention and further resources. Regrettably, some of these liaisons did not always fulfill their roles as expected. In their positions they possessed significant power and at times exploited their positions for material and economic gain at the expense of the youth living on the street.
Organizations that exist to serve street children bear the responsibility to ensure those working under their auspices are acting in the utmost integrity, that their services are reaching even the most marginalized, and that they are advocating on behalf of all children.

In the context of this study, those that were responsible for upholding the laws were at times the same ones responsible for violence against street youth. Sometimes this took place in their attempts to uphold the laws articulated above. Police violence experienced by the youth in the present study primarily involved physical assault (e.g., hitting with hands, a club, kicking, setting on fire, etc.), although some incidences of sexual assault were also reported. Many officers I encountered lacked accurate information related to why the youth were on the street; they believed they were there by choice and were refusing to return home. Some of the officers I encountered acknowledged the absurdity of trying to hold the youth accountable to the laws given their circumstances. Some expressed frustration about not knowing what to do with or what services were available for the street youth; sometimes their aggression towards the youth came from this place of frustration.

Throughout this study, various youth shared the challenges of said context indicating that their experiences with abuse served as a barrier for them to access much needed medical care and services from foundations or to experience solace and justice from law enforcement when they went to them for assistance (e.g., to report a sexual or physical assault, robbery, etc.). As Romanian officials and non-governmental organizations seek to develop an environment of protection, even on the streets, they should develop system for monitoring and accountability and create an infrastructure to assure the protection and redress of grievances of street youth.
Assuring the Protection of Children’s Rights. The 1989 UN-CRC constituted a bold approach to children’s rights, requiring governments to assume responsibility for ensuring the protection of all children. Romania signed the UN-CRC in January 1990 and ratified it in September 1990. Many of the first 41 articles of the UN-CRC are relevant to the gaps and concerns identified by the present study. They may be condensed into three groupings that exemplify the general goals of the UN-CRC: Protection, Provision and Participation (see Table 7.1).

Table 7.1. General Goals of the CRC and Associated Articles

<table>
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<th>General Goal of the CRC</th>
<th>Associated Articles</th>
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| States are to protect children from: | • Discrimination (Article 1)  
• Abuse (Article 19)  
• Hazardous or exploitative labor (Article 32)  
• Drug abuse (Article 33)  
• Physical and sexual exploitation (Articles 34, 35, 36) |
| States are to provide children with: | • The right to a name, nationality and identity (Articles 7, 8)  
• Access to information and education (Articles 17, 28, 29)  
• Access to healthcare services (Article 24)  
• Rehabilitation services for addiction (Article 39)  
• Alternative care when his or her family is absent or unsafe (Article 20)  
• Fair juvenile justice (Article 40) |
| Children are granted the right to participate: | • According to maturity and age in any matter or procedure that may affect him or her Article 12)  
• By expressing his or her views (Article 13) |
In assessing Romanian’s compliance status with the UN-CRC, The European Commission noted that, although Romania had made progress, there were a number of concerns that needed addressed specific to street children, including drug and alcohol prevention and treatment, equal opportunities for education and their vulnerability to violence and exploitation (Commission on Romania’s Progress toward Accession, 2003). Many of the practice and policy implications identified above, if addressed, would move Romania toward better compliance with the articles contained in the UN-CRC.

Implications for the Social Work Profession

The lessons learned in facilitating this study, as well as study outcomes point to implications for social work practice and education.

Social Work Practice

The present study reemphasizes the importance of a strengths perspective rather than a deficiency orientation towards clients. Historically, empirical research and theoretical discussions of human and social development were characterized by a problem-focused approach (Lyons, 1991); knowledge and practice has centered on deficits not capacities. Wolin and Wolin (1993) called this particular manner of thinking the “damage model” (p. 14). Within this damage or pathology model energies are focused on fully identifying symptoms and diagnosing problems and/or abnormalities (Saleebey, 2006). This trend has held true in the context of research and practice with street children. The overwhelming majority of studies conducted on street children tended to focus on the deficiencies that led to children being on the street (cf., Buckner & Bassuk, 1997; Dybicz, 2005; Rizzini, 1998; Ringwalt, et al., 1998), their delinquent behaviors (cf., Beazley, 2003; Felsman, 1981; Greene, et al., 1999; Hagan & McCarthy, 1997; Lusk, 1989), and the ways they were exploited (cf.,
Baron & Hartnagel, 1997, 1998; Hagan & McCarthy, 1997; Ribeiro, 2008; Ribeiro & Ciampone, 2001). While this information offers important insight into the contexts encountered by street children, they focused on deficits and tended to portray children as passive, failing to recognize capacities. “Most writing about children and young people living on urban streets in developing countries assumes, or event insists, that they live in disorganized, illegal misery. They are described as psychologically and irretrievably damaged, unable to form relationships as the children that they are, and definitely destined for emotional, social, and economic failures as the adults they will become” (Ennew, 1994a, pp. 409-410).

Social work practitioners should strive to more mindful of strengths and capacities embedded in even the most vulnerable marginalized groups. The importance of focusing on individual strengths and resiliencies is well documented in the literature (cf., Garmezy, 1987; Werner, 1989; Werner & Smith, 1992; Saleebey, 2006). Cohen asserted that “weaknesses, limitations, problems, and failures remain the filters through which the majority of helping professionals see their clients. . . . This centrality of problems and pathology is the reality against which the strengths perspective is rebelling” (Cohen, 1999, p. 460). The present study highlights the importance of identifying and maximizing the strengths and capacities of street children. Many Romanian street youth were entrepreneurial about their daily lives, using their skills and knowledge to create a host of opportunities to work in exchange for money, demonstrating strong abilities to be self-reliant. Although they faced many difficulties, the youth also created and engaged in times of play and relied on a host of healthy coping strategies to manage the challenges of street life (e.g., music, spirituality, friendships, etc.). Looking at capacities characterizes a possibility-focused
paradigm. In her research, Lindsey (2000) aptly identified the assumptions of the strengths-based perspective useful in working with homeless populations:

1. Clients have strengths that can be tapped to resolve problems. However, they may not be aware of these strengths because of the extent to which problems have saturated their lives and perceptions.
2. Recognizing, respecting, and making visible such strengths is a primary function of the social worker.
3. Clients are experts on their own lives, while social workers offer expertise in facilitating a process through which solutions to problems are discovered and accessed. Clients and social workers are collaborators, each bringing their own knowledge and expertise to the problem-solving process.
4. Client motivation is more readily enhanced by focusing on strengths and solutions than by extensive discussion of problems.
5. Clients are not seen as victims, but as people who have not yet been able to tap into the resources they need to solve problems. Resources may be located within clients themselves, within their social networks, or within the larger community. (Lindsey, 2000, p. 67)

The strengths orientation not only values client capacity and voice, but also situates the challenges faced by clients within a broader context. Viewing problems as individual deficiency “has the political consequences of not focusing on the social structure... but on the individual. Most, if not all, of the pain we experience is the result of the way we have organized ourselves and how we create and allocate life-surviving resources” (Goroff, 1983, p. 134). As previously noted, as Romania moves forward it will be important for officials and service providers to differentiate
between street youth as a problem and the problems of street youth. Many of the challenges faced by street youth emanate from the broader social structure and dynamics in which they are embedded.

Social Work Education

Throughout the course of facilitating this study, I was continuously struck by how my MSW preparation equipped me as a qualitative researcher. The Council on Social Work Education, the accrediting agency for social work education in the United States, sets forth specific guidelines in the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). Following EPAS standards, accredited programs systematically design curriculum to ensure the development of specialized knowledge, skills and dispositions, many of which are also requisite to effective qualitative research. For example, my MSW educational preparation taught me the importance of empathy and equipped me to develop interpersonal relationships. These competencies are articulated in the EPAS -- Educational Policy 2.1.10(a) (Council on Social Work Education, 2008). My MSW educational preparation also taught me systematic ways to collect and seek to understand client data. This included a disposition towards clients of valuing their inherent dignity and worth, a core value that is also emphasized in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics (NASW, 1996). Furthermore, it included a skill set to ask open-ended questions, critically think through information shared and seek clarification. These competencies are articulated in the EPAS -- Educational Policy 2.1.10(b) (Council on Social Work Education, 2008). Perhaps most critical to the present study, my MSW educational preparation equipped me to engage diversity and difference. As articulated in Educational Policy 2.1.4, social workers should be equipped to:
• Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power;
• gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups;
• recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences; and
• view themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants.

(Council on Social Work Education, 2008 p. 5)

Although my MSW preparation equipped me with important knowledge, skills and dispositions requisite for conducting qualitative research, MSW and doctoral social work programs and faculty should afford greater attention in preparing students to conduct qualitative research, specifically as it relates to qualitative research techniques and, as will be discussed below, preparing for the messiness of qualitative research (see Reflexive Comments - Lessons from the Process). Furthermore, attention should be given to building the knowledge base for and equipping researchers with the requisite knowledge and skills for exiting the field. Although there is extant literature on the subject of knowing when to exit the field per adequate data, little exists regarding practical strategies for terminating relationships and leaving the field with compassion and causing the least amount of harm.

Because relationships are virtually the stock and trade of a good ethnographer, care must be taken when leaving the field. Exiting any field setting involves at least two separate operations: first, the physical removal of the researcher
from the research setting and second, emotional disengagement from the relationships developed during the field experience. (Berg, 1995, p. 115)

Since there is a dearth of pragmatic information in the qualitative research methodology literature regarding how best to exit the field, I consulted the social work literature on termination with clients and developed an exit strategy that was process-oriented (i.e., discussed from the beginning and throughout the research process), sensitive to the youths’ (and my) experience in the research context and celebratory. See Chapter III Exiting the Field for a detailed description of the strategies I employed in exiting the field. The social work profession has much to offer in building this knowledge base and developing guidelines.

Limitations of the Study

“A pebble in a rock quarry” or “the left-hand corner of a piece of pepperoni on an extra large meat lovers pizza” - - these are just a couple of the metaphors I have heard describing the scope of a dissertation related to a topic of interest. The message behind the metaphors is that any dissertation can only begin to explore a topic and that exploration is bounded. Starting with the overarching research questions and sampling strategies, every research project inevitably involves limitations. The limitations of this study are briefly identified below.

Sampling and the Generalizability of Findings

Within a qualitative methodological framework, this study relied on the non-probability sampling strategy of stratified purposeful sampling in soliciting respondents for in-depth conversations (Patton, 1990). The power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases, cases whose in-depth study illuminates the particular questions under consideration. It is the most appropriate
strategy to use when the population is difficult to reach and prefers to remain out of sight (Patton, 1990). While rich and insightful, the participants’ stories reflected here are not representative of the experiences or perceptions of all street children in Bucharest, Romania. Therefore, the generalizability of the findings is limited specifically to this particular group of respondents.

In structuring this research project I attempted to include as many diverse voices as possible. The strength of the stratified purposeful sampling strategy in particular is the ability to capture major variations, as well as common patterns that emerged within and between individual youth and sites. As the present study was focused on exploring the creation and use of social capital among street youth, it was important to capture cases that would tap into a range of experiences. The youth selected for in-depth conversations exhibited variation in the nature and range of needs, ownership of material items, degree of organization, position within the group/network, nature of relationships with street youth from other sites, and their connections to and the nature of relationships with the informal and formal environments.

I also attempted to extend the data set by capturing as many experiences as possible through the qualitative research methodology of participant observation. In his article regarding research methodologies with street children, Lucchini (1996) noted, “Triangulation of methods, repetitious observation, comparison of points of view and accounts. . . make it possible to improve the quality of the research results” (p. 169). When data from field notes and in-depth conversations converged and supported each other, as a researcher I could be more confident in the findings and study conclusions (Padgett, 1998). However, as no systematic information was sought
from this broader data frame, the results are still limited to those who provided information.

As a qualitative inquiry, the focus of this study was not on generalization to a broader context, but on particularization to a specific group; I sought to explore and better understand a little known phenomenon (i.e., the creation and use of social capital) for a particular group in a particular context. Researchers interested in expanding on this knowledge base may choose to replicate this study with street youth from other geographic areas or design and implement a quantitative study based on these findings to be facilitated with larger, more representative samples.

**Under-representation of Female Voices**

One shortcoming of the overall sample of participants was the lack of female perspectives. Despite active efforts to secure more female participation, only five of the twenty-eight in-depth conversation participants (18%) were female. Of the 282 young people I encountered throughout this study, 74% \((n = 208)\) were male and 26% \((n = 74)\) were female. This appeared to be consistent with recent national reports. According to UNICEF (2006), about two-thirds of street children in Romania are males and one-third are females. Therefore, female participation in the in-depth conversation portion of this research did not proportionally reflect gender make-up of the street youth population in general. Although the extension of the data through participant observation enabled me to capture perspectives from a wider range of females, their overall under representation may have left aspects of their lives hidden from view and thus missing from the overall analysis.
Lack of Systematic Information from the Informal and Formal Environments

One of the overarching questions that guided this research inquiry was: Are there informal and formal networks created and used by street children in an effort to build opportunities for survival? If so, what are they and how do they operate? Although I was able to access a perspective about how the street youth from Bucharest interfaced with their formal and informal environments from the young people themselves, my research methodologies did not include any systematic collection of information from persons in the broader networks in which street youths interfaced. In the context of this study I did have rich opportunities to interact with those from the informal and formal environment and observe their interactions with the youth. However, such opportunities only afforded a glimpse into the perspectives of few. The lack of these perspectives resulted in a somewhat unidimensional narrative. Although the perspectives of the youth were crucial, they only afforded partial access to the issues and dynamics at play. Insights gained from foundation personnel, law enforcement officials and those that worked and lived around the areas the street youth congregated would provide some important insight.

Limited Access to Youth from Typology A

Limited physical access and later interpersonal access to the youth from groups within Typology A constrained my ability to more fully explore and seek insights related to the dynamics operating within their groups, as well as between those youth and their formal and informal environments. Beginning in November 2002, I shadowed the ASISTA street team as it went about its work on the streets of Bucharest. I intentionally took the role of passive participant (Spradley, 1980), present at the scene but only as a “bystander”. Towards the end of December, many street youth
started to pay more attention to me, asking more probing questions and sharing things with me without prompting (e.g., stories, pictures, etc.). This self-initiated interest and willingness to engage in conversation signified the preliminary development of rapport. Based upon this positive development, I evaluated and shifted my role in the field entering the field with my primary translator, extending my time in the field each day and developing relationships independent of the ASISTA team. Since I had not developed such rapport with youth from some groups within Typology A I continued to rely on the ASISTA street team to gain access, therefore limiting my physical access to the youth.

Once my primary translator and I established a bit more rapport with these youth, we went to the field without the assistance of the ASISTA street team to build independent relationships. Although our interactions were positive they persisted at a superficial level. Groups within Typology A maintained clear boundaries that could be difficult to permeate. Boundary rigidity was reflected in access to the group, the norms and sanctioning of violations and the flow of information from the group to those outside the group. The youths’ guardedness related to sharing information was seen in their interactions with NGO staff, the police and with me as a researcher. In the context of my in-depth conversations with typology members, they often answered questions in a measured way, answering without providing significant detail. Using knowledge gained through field observations to clarify and probe often led to the youth diverting attention away from the conversation or ultimately shutting me down. As a result of this, although one could get a sense for what occurred, there was a lack of specificity related to the dynamics or process of how and why things occurred. This
left me limited in my ability to fully articulate the aspects and dynamics of groups within Typology A.

**Use of Translator**

Although I spoke and understood the Romanian language, translators assisted throughout the observation and in-depth conversation phases of the research to prevent gaps or misinterpretations of the data. The use of translators presented certain risks that could impact the research. For example, the use of translators could result in content errors if any aspect of what was being communicated was reduced, omitted, revised or distorted. Content errors could result from a lack of understanding of the terminology used and how to adequately translate it, only providing a summary at the end of statements of what the translator deemed most important, or changing the content to fit the translator’s understanding. The presence of a translator may also impact the interpersonal nature of interaction and influence the researcher’s ability to build rapport and establish trust. In qualitative research, the introduction of the researcher as the human instrument of data collection already introduces a lens through which the data are viewed. Adding a translator to the interaction adds an additional layer to the interaction and, in essence, the interpretation of the data.

I took a number of steps to diminish translator impact on the research. As fully articulated in Chapter 3, translators were selected based upon their command of the Romanian and English languages, expertise, experience with verbal translation and an understanding of the Romanian context. I provided individualized training for all translators that included a thorough discussion of the translator’s role within the research context, emphasizing the importance of translating verbatim what was being said, identifying words or phrases difficult to translate for later in-depth discussion,
and the acknowledgement of uncertainty around an exact translation. Since I spoke and understood Romanian, some of the interactions that occurred in the context of the field were direct. Furthermore, I could assess what was said in light of what I understood.

The lead translator, a social work major from the University of Bucharest, served during the majority of observation periods. This prolonged engagement in the field allowed the translator and me to become comfortable working together and to finesse the flow of translation. More importantly, it allowed the translator to establish rapport with the youth and the youth to gain experience in communicating with me via a translator. Therefore, when it came time to engage in an in-depth conversation, the youth were accustomed to communicating with me through and had established a relationship with the translator. The translator for a given observation period was always present during the dictation of field notes. This enabled me to gain further clarification of dialogue and allowed for a deeper understanding of context. After each in-depth conversation, the primary translator and I listened to the in-depth conversation again while reading through the transcripts to ensure accuracy and bracket non-text items (e.g., nonverbal gestures, tone of voice, things happening in the environment, etc.).

**Suggestions for Future Research**

This research serves as a foundational understanding of the creation and use of social capital among street children in Romania that enabled them to meet their needs in face of the multifaceted challenges of street life. However, this research is only the first step in providing a holistic picture of this multifaceted inquiry; it is the starting point for further investigation. Although the data revealed a dynamic portrait of the
street youth and afforded insights into their lives and how they created and leveraged relationships to access resources and pursue opportunities, it also pointed to a host of unanswered questions that necessitate further exploration. Select recommendations for future research follow.

Life Trajectory of Females on the Street

As noted above, about two-thirds of street children nationally are males and one-third are females (UNICEF, 2006). In the Romanian context a range of explanations for gender disparities were noted including a potential family preference to keep daughters at home over sons due to their higher level of vulnerability and the potential for girls themselves to be more reluctant to head for the streets and thus more likely to cope with dysfunctional families and poverty (UNICEF, 2006). Throughout my time on the street I heard youth referencing females who used to be on the street but now lived with pimps and worked in the sex trade. I also encountered a young man who came to Bucharest to traffic young girls to other cities in the country. It is possible that the gender differentiation does not only reflect fewer girls coming to the street but that their life trajectory once they got to the street was quite different than that of street boys. The present study only provided a fractional glance of the underworld of human trafficking and organized prostitution. I only engaged in participant observation between seven o’clock in the morning and ten o’clock at night; I did not interact with females who were consistently under the control of pimps. Lalor (1999) noted that the true incidence of working girls might be hidden by the nature of their work, which tends to be less visible than the work of street boys. Perhaps the number of females on the street should not only include the
seen. More information is needed about the lives and issues of these invisible girls, those young people concealed by trafficking and the sex trade.

**Dynamics of Binding Social Capital**

This study pointed to the potential of a new kind of social capital operating within the groups from Typology A. The youth who lived in groups from Typology A embodied dynamics inconsistent with theoretical expectations. The youths’ investment in their relationships with each other did not lead to expected relational resources (bonding social capital); some were completely absent and others operated. Their subsequent relational resources were not reflective of bonding social capital; the presence and qualities of relationships within a group that reflect networks based on principles of trust, mutual reciprocity and norms of collective action. Binding social capital is not based on the expectation of trust between actors, mutually beneficial reciprocity or normative rules of action. Binding social capital is based on trust in the rule structure (e.g., clear rules and sanctioning system maintained through coercive power) and obligated cooperation. While high levels of binding capital afforded benefits to some members of the network, it also resulted in negative effects within and outside the group.

As previously discussed, social capital theorists reference networks with a criminal element (e.g., gangs, mafia, drug cartels, etc.) as having high levels of bonding capital (cf., Pope, 2003; Portes & Landolt, 1996). However, no one has explored the unique dynamics at play within these groups; no one has explored the potential of a unique kind of capital. There is a need for further exploration into the creation, dynamics and consequences of binding social capital.
Influence of Background Factors as Precursors to Social Capital

Social capital is almost always defined as an aggregate variable: the norms and networks of a particular family, group or community. However, decisions to invest in and act on social capital are made by individual actors. As a resource embedded in associations, it depends on an individual’s capacity to form relationships with others, or sociability (Bullen & Onyx, 1998). Therefore, the creation and use of social capital cannot be fully understood without the exploration of individual background factors as precursors exogenous to the process of accessing or mobilizing social capital. The preliminary exploration of past trajectory raised some interesting questions about the importance of early development. The field of psychology (i.e., attachment theory) offered a theoretical framework and research base affording a more nuanced perception regarding the impact of early developmental experiences on socio-emotional and relational development. Further exploring the link between psychology and sociology may afford a more holistic understanding of what enables some to establish networks of associations and what disables others. Exploring the psychology of behavior may also increase understanding related to the antisocial-oriented behavior observed among youth in Typology A and the potential of learned helplessness or other psychological dynamics operating for youth from Typology D. Exploring behavior through a psychological lens may increase understanding of how one’s individual psychology impacts on the capacity to form relationships with others.

Perspectives from the Informal and Formal Environments

As articulated above, although I was able to access the youths’ perspective about how they interfaced with their formal and informal environments, my research methodologies did not include systematic collection of information from persons in the
broader networks in which street youths’ interfaced. Insights gained from foundation personnel, law enforcement officials and those that worked and lived around the areas the street youth congregated would provide some important insights.

**Reflexive Comments - Lessons from the Process**

I would be remiss if I did not afford a transparent look into some of my personal dynamics and struggles in the context of conducting this study and the invaluable knowledge that comes from facing and working through challenges. Visano (1990) contended that actually reflecting on the research process is as much an object of study as the data one collects. Traditional teaching of research falls short of fully reflecting the fluid, multifaceted and emotionally engaged aspects of qualitative methodology; qualitative research is far from linear and straightforward. Throughout this research project I have learned that engaging in qualitative research with street children was pragmatically, analytically and emotionally messy. Having the courage to honestly acknowledge and intentionally respond to these challenges in the field, as well as continuous reflection through the data analysis and writing processes not only developed me as a researcher, but also continued to add rigor to the often muddled and complex process of conducting qualitative research.

**Pragmatically Messy**

Conducting qualitative research with street children was pragmatically messy. The natural setting as the site of inquiry and the emergent nature of the research design necessitated a balance between thoughtful consideration of best practices and methodology literature and responding in the moment to challenges presented in real time throughout the study.
This qualitative study relied on the natural setting as the primary context for data collection. The emphasis of the research was not the objective analysis or statistical measurement of experimental variables. Rather, the emphasis was an overall understanding of the unique characteristics of the participants in their environments. This study was conducted on the streets of Bucharest, the natural setting for street youth. Although desirous, within this highly situated context, one, in essence, becomes a part of the narrative as an element in the environment.

Throughout my time in the field I was witness to the active lives of the street youth. I was present for moments of celebration and excitement, as well as for moments of frustration, anger and despair. I was present when the youths’ neighbors expressed care through words, bringing food, hugs and their presence, as well as when neighbors struck them, cursed at them, avoided them and threw water on them. I was present when law enforcement officers and foundation personnel supported, encouraged and resourced the youth, as well as when they assaulted them, threatened them, cursed at them and belittled them. I was present when the youth were affectionate and supportive toward each other, shared their resources and extended themselves to meet the need of another, as well as when they punched and kicked each other, cursed at each other and in the aftermath of the deep betrayal of being sexually assaulted by a friend. I was present in the basking of a full stomach after a warm meal, as well as for the despair of a child when they had not eaten in days. Sometimes I was a welcomed presence; sometimes I was not.

Although I approached this space as a researcher, I was challenged at times to separate this role from my background as a social work practitioner. As a social worker I had the privilege of working in a residential treatment center for youth who faced
significant emotional and behavioral challenges and at a community mental health agency where I worked with children and teens that had histories of traumatization (e.g., physical abuse, sexual abuse, etc.). In these capacities, I was tasked with facilitating the process of healing; I was tasked with helping to identify key issues, co-creating a treatment plan and working together with my client towards health and wholeness. I was there to assist in a very direct way. Conversely, as a researcher I was not there to address emergent needs or work towards healing. I was there to learn, with the hope that the insights gained would increase understanding, build knowledge and improve programs and policies that impact on the lives of street youth. On a daily basis I was faced with choices regarding how I would respond and what I do, while I was present in the active lives of the youth. At times this created tension for me as a researcher.

In preparing for the realities of the children’s lives and situations, I made a series of decisions prior to the study to protect the integrity of the research process while at the same time responding to critical humanitarian needs. For example, although I had a no giving rule, if a youth asked for assistance I would assume the role of broker and share information about foundations and the type of assistance they offered. I did this on innumerable occasions. But the more I learned about how systems worked and the challenges faced in accessing resources, I began to feel more like passing on information pacifying my conscience more than serving a real purpose. Therefore, I also began sharing general information about critical needs to foundations. I also decided a prior that if I were to observe a child in critical condition, I would contact my collaborative agency (ASIS) for immediate intervention. I did this a few times as well. Each time I strove to balance thoughtful consideration of
best practices and qualitative research methodology and responding in the moment to the real needs of the youth. In such contexts the youths’ relationship with me became part of their social capital. As opposed to being detrimental to the research process it enabled me to gain firsthand insight regarding the circumstances under which youth leveraged our relationship to meet various needs, as well how they interfaced with broader networks.

This study also embraced an emergent (as opposed to predetermined) design. Within the phenomenological, holistic, and process-oriented context of qualitative research, the research process - from preliminary fieldwork to analysis and writing decisions - has also been a highly situated endeavor. Because qualitative researchers seek to observe and interpret meaning in context, it is neither possible nor appropriate to finalize research strategies before data collection has begun (Patton, 1990). Therefore I maintained a flexible stance toward my research design. This flexible posture also necessitated a balance between thoughtful consideration of best practices and methodology literature and responding in the moment to challenges presented in real time throughout the study. At times, design decisions made a prior had to be reconsidered and adjusted. For example, I adapted my in-depth conversation structure from talking with youth one-on-one to talking with them in groups. I would like to say that I quickly recognized this as a natural change emerging from the process; that it makes sense that some youth preferred to talk in the context of their groups. However, the constructivist nature of the qualitative inquiry created tension for me at times. My preconceived notions regarding the importance of building in rigor to a qualitative design by keeping methods pure clouded my judgment. Space does not permit the four-page dialogue I had with the first group of youth who
requested to speak to me together; a dialogue in which I tried to convince them it would be better if I spoke with them one at a time opposed to all of them together in a group. That is what I had planned in my research design. Although I finally conceded, it serves as a glaring example of inflexibility and non-responsiveness to the environment. Qualitative research is far from linear and straightforward. Flexing the design in response to the context afforded significant insights related to a group’s dynamics and relationships I would have completely missed had I not been willing to release power and control; two things often demanded in the context of empirical research.

Emotionally Messy

Conducting qualitative research with street children was emotionally messy. In their discussion of the stance of qualitative researchers, Maykut and Morehouse (1994) urged researchers to “assume a posture of indwelling,” which they defined as “being at one with the persons under investigation, walking a mile in the other person’s shoes, or understanding the person’s point of view from an empathic. . . position” (p. 25). Stepping into this space as the human instrument of data collection necessitated the negotiation of a small emotional corridor, opening myself up to the lives of the street children and responding humanly and empathically to their lived experiences, while not becoming emotionally defensive or enmeshed.

One challenge I faced was the renegotiation of my relationship with youth over time. At first, the youth held me at arms-length, were aloof and uninterested. Over time, their detachment turned to curiosity and questions (e.g., where was I from, why was I here, etc.), then to ambivalence and suspicion (e.g., we’ve been through this before, foreigners cannot be trusted, are you here to take advantage of us, etc.). With
most youth I experienced a testing period, a time of questioning and scrutiny and a time of testing behavioral (e.g., huffing in front of me, taking my sunglasses and trying them on, touching me, etc.) and emotional (e.g., speaking sexually to me, making fun of my weight, etc.) boundaries. Some youth pushed further, at times becoming aggressive and even threatening (e.g., screaming at me within an inch of my face, throwing rocks at me, etc.). They were keen observers of my reactions and careful listeners to my responses.

Street researchers must also go through rites of passage, in order to be respected. The approval of street children is instrumental to research success. The privilege of entry into the street culture demands that the street researcher face the challenges without feelings of resentment, frustration or anger. Researchers must be able to weather hostility, playful joking, behaviors contrary to their own values, impertinent questioning, teasing and witnessing illegal acts. Passing these tests allows one to continue with the research, failing makes it harder to initiate or maintain contact with the children.

(Bemak, 1996, p. 153)

Negotiating each phase of my relationship with the youth tripped different emotional levers ranging from anxiety, inadequacy and uncertainty to embarrassment, sadness and disillusionment. Often in the context of being very cold and at times tired, it took significant energy to not retreat, but engage. Each phase required me to acknowledge and be attentive to my feelings, while not internalizing and personalizing the source of my feelings and thus becoming emotionally defensive. As we negotiated these phases together we eventually developed a relationship that appeared to move beyond tolerance to caring about and liking each other.
Prolonged engagement with the street youth also necessitated the negotiation of responding humanly and empathically to their lived experiences, while not becoming emotionally enmeshed. Although I possess a background as a social work practitioner and have been witness to narratives of suffering, I was naïve to think I was fully prepared for what I would encounter on the streets of Bucharest. Remember I was very present in the active lives of street youth. That presence required me to climb into bug-infested sewers where the stench burned my nostrils. That presence led me to a soccer field full of hope and possibility. That presence led to a hospital room where a young female’s deep lacerations were scrubbed without anesthetic. That presence led me to a curb by a metro stop where I learned to sing Romanian songs and attempt traditional Romanian dance steps. That presence privileged me to the thoughts and feelings, the fears and dreams of some of the most vulnerable yet resilient people I have ever met. And in that context I experienced a range of often dichotomous emotions: delight - anger, amazement - disappointment, tranquility - fearfulness, adequacy - deficiency, comfort - uneasiness, empowerment - vulnerability, guilty - exemption, hopefulness - desperation, humility - presumptuousness, calmness - anxiety, powerfulness - powerlessness. Many times I was surprised by the intensity of my internal responses and their lingering hauntings. In describing their experiences in the field, other qualitative researchers (cf., Behar, 1993; Lather & Smithies, 1997; Wolcott, 2002) confirm the emotional challenges inherent in qualitative inquiry. Tillmann-Healy and Kiesinger (2001) amply summed up this challenge:

When studying emotional topics, we become what Behar [1996] calls “vulnerable observers.” By confronting the joys and horrors of others’
experience, we face the joys and horrors of our experience. Because of this, we must ask ourselves before embarking on such a project: am I prepared to take on another’s full humanity and to explore and unveil my own? (Tillmann-Healy & Kiesinger, 2001, p. 101)

Working through the emotional (and technical) aspects of my research required intentionality and courage. Rather than becoming overwhelmed by my emotions or cutting myself off emotionally from the sources, I sought to acknowledge and process them. I relied on several strategies in helping me to negotiate this small emotional corridor, opening myself up to the lives of the street children and responding humanly and empathically to their lived experiences, while not becoming emotionally defensive or enmeshed.

Throughout my time in the field I kept a reflective journal. As seen in Appendix G, field notes were divided into two sections. Down the left-hand side of the page I recorded my concrete observations (Berg, 1995; Merriam, 1988). Down the right-hand side of the page I recorded emotional reactions and personal reflections. Keeping a raw and honest account of my feelings and reactions not only afforded me an opportunity for catharsis, but also created an account of my personal journey I could revisit and reflect on. Journaling alongside my data also afforded me a mechanism by which I could keep a watchful eye upon how my personal reactions were interacting with and perhaps influencing the research context.

Throughout my time in the field I also engaged Catalin Ganea and Dorothy Tarrant as peer debriefers (their backgrounds and the selection process was detailed in Chapter 3). At the beginning of the study, I met with each peer debriefer once a month. In advance of the meeting I provided them a copy of the data set. An
important purpose of the peer debriefing sessions during the initial phase of research was to process my unfolding relationship with the youth and my feelings and reactions to it. In the context of the discussion, my peer debriefers also helped me maintain emotional boundaries. As the study progressed, I maintained monthly contact with both debriefers. Although their primary role shifted to assisting me in thinking “with” the data and pushing me toward an analytic stance, they consistently checked in with me and processed issues as they arose.

While in the field I also worked to maintain a sense of balance; the dissertation was not my whole life. I ensured I got good rest and ate healthy. I ensured that I made time for long walks with friends I had made talking about nothing really, but laughing a lot. I made sure to leave the city from time to time. In fact, one of my peer debriefers lived in the village of Sighisoara; we often met there. I prayed and read scripture and reflected on God. I made sure to connect with my family and friends in the U.S. through telephone calls and emails. I tried to expose myself to all the wonderful things about Romania - its history, culture, food, traditions, festivals and people. I ensured I lived, as well as learned.

Analytically Messy

Conducting qualitative research with street children was analytically messy. The emergent and cyclical nature of knowledge in qualitative research, as well as the impact of a human instrument for data collection necessitated a balance between a tuned-in immersion in the data and achieving analytic distance.

Qualitative researchers predominately use inductive data analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). “The process of qualitative research is inductive in that the researcher builds abstractions, concepts, hypotheses and theories from details” (Merriam, 1988,
Within an inductive stance, data collection and analysis, as well as the results and conclusions are grounded inductively in real-world observations, rather than deducted from *a priori* theories or the theorist’s organizational constructs. As such, rather than following a linear, bounded approach to data collection and analysis, insight emerged from a combination of direct observation, participant interaction and analysis, which in turn was checked through direct observation, participant interaction and further analysis (i.e., constant comparative methods, Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This approach continually returns a researcher to the data and as such to the lived experiences of those who contributed to the data.

Since the nature of qualitative research is a contextual inquiry, the researcher becomes the instrument of data collection by entering into and spending time in the real world setting under investigation. With prolonged engagement in the field I grew close to the youth. Although developing relationships of trust was vital in gaining physical and interpersonal access to participants, those very relationships complicated my ability to step back for the purpose of analysis. As Gilgun (1994) pointed out, there are “pitfalls” that come with interpersonal closeness with research participants.

One pitfall is the risk of a loss of an analytic stance. The researcher needs to stay in tune with informants while at the same time maintaining a focus on concepts and hypotheses that need to be explored and tested. Sometimes the material informants provide is compelling to the point where researchers are drawn so far into the worlds of informants that they do not explore other aspects of informants’ experience. The result is a limited description of phenomenon. Researchers can lose the balance between being in tune and furthering comparison and testing. (Gilgun, 1994, pp. 119-120)
The characteristics that make human beings the instrument of choice for naturalistic inquiry (e.g., ability to perceive situations holistically, interact directly with a situation, respond to environmental cues, etc.) are many of the same characteristics that posed a challenge for me in stepping back from the intimacy of the data into a more analytic posture. At times I found it extremely difficult in the data collection and analysis processes to see beyond the lived individual experiences of each young person and group.

I relied on several strategies in the field and throughout the data analysis process to assist me in maintaining a balance between a tuned-in immersion in the data and achieving analytic distance. As already noted, throughout my time in the field I kept a reflective journal that was divided into two sections. Down the left-hand side of the page I recorded my concrete observations; besides my personal reflections, down the right-hand side of the page I recorded theoretical reflections and memos. I used the journaling process as a check-and-balance vehicle. I recorded my thoughts, reactions and feelings related to what I was encountering in the field, as well as my early analysis musings and propositions. With the data and my reflective journal positioned side-by-side, I was able return to the data and check my own attitudes and beliefs and compare them to the data obtained from the context as voiced by the participants. The systematic recording of data and journaling enabled me to articulate, document and assess theoretical perspectives. The process also enabled me to track my affective responses and be aware of how I was interacting with the study context.

Once again, peer debriefing also played a critical role while in the field. At the beginning of the study, one of the main purposes of peer debriefing was to challenge
my suppositions. Peer debriefers probed my biases, sought meaning and pursued clarity of interpretation. “Debriefing is a useful - if sobering - experience to which to subject oneself; its utility, when properly engaged, is unquestionable” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 309). As the study progressed, I maintained monthly contact with both debriefers. As the data set diversified and increased they assisted me in thinking with the data and pushing me toward an analytic stance. As Lincoln and Guba (1985) noted, peer debriefing is the “process of exposing oneself to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling an analytic session and for the purpose of exploring aspects of inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit with the inquirer’s mind” (p. 308).

Throughout the data analysis process I continued to seek balance between a tuned-in immersion in the data and achieving analytic distance. During this time I leaned heavily on my dissertation committee relying on them as pseudo-peer debriefers. They were patient as I recounted innumerable stories from the field and were instrumental in challenging me to push my thinking beyond the individual lived experiences of each child. I also reanalyzed the data seeking broader conceptual themes and developed typologies (see Chapter 4). This focused more analytical analysis required me to release the individual youth to a boarder conceptual framework while seeking to ensure their voices penetrated the narrative. It also required me to relinquish the need to answer every question neatly and precisely; there is a welcomed place for ambiguity in the final assessment of things.

Unlike the structured boundaries built into quantitative designs that facilitate a standardized analytical process, the analytic process of qualitative research is inherently disordered. This is not to say that there are not systematic methods one should use in approaching, combing through and seeking to understand the data, some
of which I employed in this study. But I have learned that the messiness of immersing oneself in the study context, interacting and transacting narratives, perceived inconsistencies, and at times nonsensical input of qualitative research requires a researcher to embrace the labyrinthian nature of field observations and participant conversations, spending hours in the data, leaning on others, returning to the data sources for clarification and at times accepting that there will be loose ends, unanswered questions and mysteries.


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APPENDIX A: COLEMAN INSPIRED RESEARCH
Coleman Inspired Research

Coleman presented a view of social capital as the social-structural resources that exist as assets that inhere in relationships and identified specific aspects of social structure believed to serve as resources one can draw on to achieve their interests. These aspects of social structure include obligations and expectations (norms of trust and reciprocity), information channels in social relations (networks) and norms and effective sanctions that constrain or encourage certain kinds of behavior. As previously noted, Coleman distinguished between social capital within the family (e.g., parental investment in children, shared expectations) and social capital beyond the family (e.g., parents’ relationships with their child’s friend’s parents, engagement in the community) pointing to how the investment in relationships produce social capital as a potential resource which children may be drawn on to improve opportunities.

Social Capital Within the Family

Following Coleman’s (1988, see also Coleman & Hoffer, 1987) empirical precedent, several successive studies followed the same conceptualization of social capital within the family focusing on similar indicators. Some inquiries mirrored those of Coleman in exploring how the social capital within the family (which gives the child access to the adult human capital) facilitates the development of human capital in children operationalized as educational attainment. Other researchers expanded this body of work exploring additional outcomes important to the lives of children, including mental and physical well-being, as well as crime and delinquency. This research is discussed briefly below.

As previously noted, Coleman’s (1988) work demonstrates how social capital within the family is important to educational outcomes for children. He found that
parents’ level of education (human capital) did not impact their children’s academic success unless it was mediated by the parents’ presence and attention. As a part of this analysis Coleman examined the aspects of family life that appeared important to social capital. Coleman identified four indicators of family social capital, including family structure (i.e., the presence of one versus both parents in the household), parental attention (i.e., the presence of one versus four siblings), quality of parent-child relationships (i.e., frequency of discussion with parents about personal matters) and parental norms and expectations (i.e., mother’s expectations for child’s educational attainment – college versus no college). Coleman found that the ratio of parents to children in the household had an important effect upon the likelihood of a child dropping out of high school. A single parent with four children was more likely to experience a child dropping out of high school than a two-parent family with one child. He also found that the mother’s expectation that the child would go to college was negatively associated with the likelihood of the child dropping out of high school. The frequency of talking to parents about personal matters showed essentially no relation to dropping out.

Several other researchers have explored the impact of family social capital on educational attainment using many of the same indicators. Furstenberg and Hughes (1995) conducted one of the most comprehensive studies. Utilizing data from a 20-year longitudinal study of children born to teenage mothers in Baltimore, Furstenberg and Hughes (1995) explored the relationship between measures of social capital and indicators of young adult success. They characterized their sample as “disadvantaged” noting that nearly all had spent the majority of their lives living in or near poverty. Specifically, they explored the impact of family structure (operationalized as the
biological or long-term father’s presence or absence in the home), parental investment (operationalized as receiving help from a parent with homework, engaging in activities with parents, a child receiving encouragement from their mother), parental norms and expectations (operationalized as parent’s expectations regarding school performance and educational aspirations for the child) and extended family support (operationalized as family cohesion - involvement and exchange with extended family, perception of support to and from own mother, seeing siblings or grandparents weekly) on young adult outcomes (i.e., high school graduate, enrolled in college, in labor force, stable economic status, robust mental health, for females - avoided live birth, for males - avoided criminal activity). Many of the indicators of social capital directly mirrored Coleman, with the exception of an expanded conceptualization of parental attention and the inclusion of extended family support. Findings related to within family social capital are captured in Table A1.1.
Table A1.1. Indicators of Social Capital within the Family found to be Statistically Significant to Youth Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure of within Family Social Capital in 1984</th>
<th>Outcome of Youth in 1987</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High School Grad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family cohesion</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to &amp; from own mother</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See sibs or grandparents weekly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father in home</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents help with homework</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities with parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent expectations re school performance</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational aspirations for child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother encourages child</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As seen in Table A1.1, using the retrospectively created measures of within family social capital, results suggest that social capital does help youth negotiate their way out of disadvantage. Completion of high school and stable economic status were significantly related to six out of nine of the social capital measures used by Furstenberg and Hughes (1995). However, the gender-specific outcomes, mental health and enrollment in college appeared unrelated.

Focusing on the outcomes related to the entire sample, particular aspects of social capital were also found to be more important to youth outcomes than others. Consistent with Coleman (1988), parental attention ("Activities with parents") was
related to four out of five outcomes; parental norms and expectations (“Educational aspirations for child”) and family structure (“Father in home”) were related to three out of the five outcomes. Their findings also suggest that extended family exchange and support may be important as “Support to and from own mother” was related to three out of the five outcomes. However, “Family cohesion” was only related to two and “Seeing siblings or grandparents weekly” was only related to one. This is an area worth further exploration as subsequent research did indicate that high levels of extended family exchange and support were found to reduce the likelihood of children experiencing depressive symptoms (Stevenson, 1998).

The findings related to parental attention and norms/expectations (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Coleman, 1988; Furstenberg & Hughes, 1995) are supported by research directed at exploring other outcomes. Amato (1998) extended Coleman’s definition of family social capital to include parent-parent relationships as well as parent-child relationships and examined fathers’ contributions to their children’s lives. Amato used the quality of the co-parental relationship and the parent-child relationship as indicators of social capital within the family. Parent-child relationships were measured using retrospective data about receiving help with homework, receiving help with personal problems, having talks, showing affection and feeling close. The co-parental relationship was evaluated through a proxy measure, marital discord (the extent to which fathers model constructive interpersonal skills, cooperate with mothers in child rearing, and are emotionally supportive of mothers). Amato (1998) concluded that the quality of the co-parental relationship and the father-child relationship did impact the well-being of children. Marital discord had a direct negative effect on children’s life
satisfaction and self-esteem. With regard to the parent-child relationship, high levels of support from fathers lowered children's psychological distress.

Wright, Cullen and Miller (2001) used data from the second wave of the National Youth Survey longitudinal study to explore if within family social capital acted to reduce delinquent involvement. The 1,725 youth included in the National Youth Survey study were ages 11-17 in the first wave (1976), 12-18 in the second (1977) and 18-24 in the third (1983). Wright et al. (2001) created a family social capital scale using three indicators, including parental attention (operationalized by a three-item measure asking youth how much time they spent with their family on the weekends talking, working or playing), family attachment (operationalized by a seven-item measure asking youth how important it is to have a family that does things together, to have parents to talk to, etc.) and parental norms/expectations (operationalized by a 14-item measure asking youth how disapproving their parents are of a number of delinquent behaviors, including stealing, hitting someone, selling drugs). Their scale also includes indicators captured by Coleman (1988) and others (Furstenburg & Hughes, 1995; Hagan, Merkens, & Boeknke, 1995; Yan, 1999) reflecting parental attention and the important role of familial norms and expectations. The dependent variables included the moral beliefs of youth (operationalized by a 13-item scale asking youth their level of agreement with things such as the importance of telling the truth and playing by the rules), school success (operationalized by grade point average), school commitment (operationalized by a four-item scale capturing time spent engaged in activities such as studying), level of involvement with delinquent peers (operationalized by measures included in the National Youth Survey asking about the proportion of their friends that have engaged in various delinquent behaviors such as
drinking alcohol and stealing something), level of delinquent involvement (operationalized by measures included in the National Youth Survey asking about delinquent and criminal involvement in the previous year) and long-term outcomes including physical health and job role commitment.

Wright et al. (2001) asserted that families who invested in their children were more able to create social bonds and fostered pro-social learning; social capital fostered informal control while increasing conventional moral values and decreasing access to delinquent peers. They found that family social capital was positively associated with an increase in moral beliefs concerning the wrongfulness of delinquent behavior and negatively associated with the acquisition of delinquent friends. Furthermore, this impact of family social capital on delinquent conduct proved significant and stable across waves of data collection. Although modest in magnitude, social capital measured in 1977 predicted significantly higher levels of job role commitment, self-reported health and self-reported exercise, and significantly lower levels of adult drug use and adult criminal friends in 1983. These findings are supported by other research. Hagan and McCarthy (1997) and Sampson (1997) linked the weakening of social capital in inner city families and communities to higher rates of violence and crime.

Adding to the knowledge of within family social capital related to norms/expectations, Hagan, Merkens and Boehnke (1995) explored the impact of parental monitoring on youth identification with subterranean traditions in East and West Berlin. Borrowing from Matza (1964), Hagan et al. defined subterranean traditions as, “[p]ractices and beliefs that are part of the mainstream culture but generally unacknowledged as such because they are also publicly condemned” (1995,
The data for the project were collected as part of a longitudinal study involving 16 public schools. Student participants were in the seventh and ninth grade in 1991 and the eight and tenth grade in 1992. Specifically, they were interested in looking at the impact of parental control (operationalized by youth’s response to questions such as, can you meet friends after 8pm, stay over at someone’s house, go on holiday without checking with your parents?), on right-wing extremism (operationalized by Likert responses to slogans such as, “Führer command, we will follow; Germany - the only true future; Keep Germany clean”), anomic aspirations (operationalized by youth’s level of agreement to statements such as, “It is not important how you get your money, you have to have it to get ahead; Winning is more important than how you win”), delinquent drift (e.g., unstructured leisure time – hanging out, cruising), involvement in school vandalism, and hostility toward foreigners (operationalized by Likert responses to statements such as, “foreigners are better off in their homeland, foreigners are not as trustworthy as Germans, foreigners should be dismissed from jobs before Germans”). The research yielded evidence to support the assertion that parental monitoring did impact a youth’s identification with subterranean traditions. A youth’s tendency to drift into right-wing extremism and juvenile delinquency are constrained by informal social controls associated with the formation of within family social capital.

Finally, the findings related to family structure (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Coleman, 1988; Furstenberg & Hughes, 1995) are supported by other research exploring educational outcomes. Teachman, Paasch and Carver (1996) found that two-parent households decreased the likelihood of youth dropping out of school. Two-parent households were also found to be associated with lower levels of violent acts in
youth (Johnson, 1999) and mediated adverse family circumstances (e.g., poverty, violence) in the behavioral and physical development among preschool children (Runyan, Hunter, Socolar, Amaya-Jackson, English, Landsverk, Dubowitz, Browne, Bangdiwala, & Mathew, 1998). Furstenberg (1996) later shifted the focus of social capital in families from exclusive focus on physical presence of the parents to include non-resident parents. He contended that even parents who did not live with the child still could contribute to the available social capital because it is his notion that there is social capital resting in the culture that parents transmit or create for their children. This culture transcends geographic location as it is the passing on of traditions, values, expectations, rituals and worldviews, which he asserted are also important in the formation of social capital.

In a more recent study, Schlee, Mullis and Shriner (2008) explored the extent to which parent’s social capital and parent’s resource capital predicts children’s academic performance using data from a longitudinal study of a kindergarten class. Parents and their children who participated in the study spring 1999 (baseline) and again in spring 2002 (third grade) were included in the study. Although family structure (operationalized as one versus two parent family) was positively associated with academic performance (children from two-parent families did better in math and reading than those from one-parent families), the authors concluded, “The results of this study revealed that parents’ resource capital was the best predictor of childhood academic achievement” (p. 233). Having a computer at home and access to literacy resources were more important. In the second phase of their research, Furstenberg and Hughes (1995) introduced two measures of family human capital as control variables. Noting that fewer of the associations are significant, they contended that
half of the social capital measures continued to be significantly associated with high school completion and stable economic status; college enrollment and participation in the labor were associated with one-third. Unfortunately, they did not provide the actual data, nor did they specify which indicators ceased being significant.

Some research has been conducted to explore social capital across racial/ethnic groups. For example, using data drawn from the National Educational Longitudinal Study initiated in 1988, Yan (1999) sought to explore the different characteristics of social capital held by successful African American students compared to those of successful Caucasian and non-successful African American peers. Success was defined as those that successfully completed high school and enrolled in post-secondary education. The nationally representative sample was composed of eighth graders surveyed in 1988 (first wave) that participated in the follow-up surveys in 1990, 1992 and 1994. Yan defined social capital along four dimensions, including parent-teen interactions, parent-school interactions, parent interactions with other parents and family norms. Beyond family social capital dimensions will be discussed below. Parent-teen interactions were operationalized as discussions between parents and teens about issues and topics of interest to teens, parents’ discussions with their teens about their school experiences and future plans, and joint participation in cultural activities. Family norms were operationalized as family rules (e.g., limits on television and time spent with friends) and educational expectations. Yan (1999) found that despite disadvantaged home environments, the parents of successful African American students demonstrate equal or higher levels of parent-teen interactions than the parents of both their Caucasian and non-successful African American peers. Yan found that participation in cultural activities, family rules and educational
expectations were negatively associated with stepparent and single parent headed households and positively associated with parental education and family income. However, when these family background factors were taken into account, African America parents and teens were found to participate in more joint activities, have higher levels of family rules and higher educational expectations than their comparison groups.

**Social Capital beyond the Family**

Individuals also greatly benefit from extra-familial forms of social capital.

Extra-familial social capital is so important that Coleman even suggested that community-based social capital compensates substantially for its absence in the family (Coleman, 1988). Specifically, he stresses the advantages of intergenerational closure in the lives of youth. Intergenerational closure refers to the density and consistency of a social network of the peers and adults in a child’s life. Coleman explained:

> Here the social capital derives from the existence of closure of a social network involving a child and two (or more) adults. Closure is present only when there is a relation between adults who themselves have a relation to the child. The adult’s are able to observe the child’s actions in different circumstances, talk to each other about the child, compare notes, and establish norms. The closure of the network can provide the child with support and rewards from additional adults that reinforce those received from the first and can bring about norms and sanctions that could not be instituted by a single adult alone. (Coleman, 1990, p. 593)

Coleman and Hoffer (1987) demonstrated the importance of patterns of interpersonal relations existing in and around the school for academic achievement by assessing the
levels of connectedness between parents, teachers and parents of peers. The social
capital that existed in relations between students and their parents, classmates,
teachers and adults in their neighborhoods determined the extent to which students
are able to benefit from the human capital possessed by these others (Coleman, 1988;
Coleman & Hoffer, 1987). Students lacking in social capital were less likely to
experience academic success. These findings suggest that a strong social network,
where parents, peers and non-parental adults are all connected by strong network
ties, should have positive consequences for adolescents.

Coleman (1988) used a proximate indicator to operationalize intergenerational
closure. Based on the assumption that families have a greater chance of establishing
social networks that produce closure the less they move, he measured the number of
times a child has changed schools due to family relocation. In his logistic regression,
the number of moves since fifth grade is 10 times its standard error and the variable
with the strongest overall effect on graduation rates of any variable in the equation,
including the financial and human capital in the family.

Another important finding related to intergenerational closure identified by
Coleman and Hoffer (1987) was that of religious affiliation. Part of their original data
set included tracking dropout rates of students between 1980 (sophomore year) and
1982 (senior year). When comparing dropout rates across school types, they found that
for public schools 14.3% of sophomores had dropped out of school by 1982, followed by
11.9% of sophomores from the non-Catholic private sector. This was a marked
difference from those attending Catholic schools, which included only 3.4% of
sophomores who had dropped out of school by 1982. Coleman pointed to
intergenerational closure when he concluded:
It was not the result of greater curricular demands or anything else within the school, but was due to a different relation of the school to the parental community. . . In effect, this church-and-school community, with its social networks and its norms about what teenagers should and should not do, constituted social capital beyond the family that aided both family and school in the education of the family’s children. (Families and Schools, date, p. 36)

Again, following Coleman’s (1988, see also Coleman & Hoffer, 1987) empirical precedent, several successive studies followed the same conceptualization of social capital beyond the family focusing on similar indicators. Some of the inquiries parallel Coleman. Other researchers expanded this body of work exploring additional outcomes important to the lives of children. This research is discussed briefly below.

Furstenberg and Hughes (1995) also explored the relationship between measures of beyond family social capital and indicators of young adult success. Specifically, they explored the impact of mother’s connection to her child’s friends (operationalized as the number of child’s friends mother knew), mother’s connection to the community (operationalized as mother’s attendance at school meetings, religious involvement/church attendance, strong help network/having someone to turn to, saw close friend weekly), family mobility (operationalized as child changing schools due to move) and child’s perspective of social context (operationalized as friend’s educational aspirations, perception of the quality of school, perception of neighborhood as a good place for children to grow up) on young adult outcomes (i.e., high school graduate, enrolled in college, in labor force, stable economic status, robust mental health, for females - avoided live birth, for males - avoided criminal activity). Again, some of their selected indicators of social capital directly mirrored
Coleman (i.e., mobility, attendance at religious services). However, they utilized more direct indicators of intergenerational closure by seeking information regarding mother’s connection to her child’s friends and to the community, including measures beyond church attendance. They also sought to access the child’s perception of the environment and to tap into the important role of a child’s peer group. Findings related to social capital beyond the family are captured in Table A1.2.

**Table A1.2. Indicators of Social Capital beyond the Family found to be Statistically Significant to Youth Outcomes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure of beyond Family Social Capital in 1984</th>
<th>Outcome of Youth in 1987</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High School Grad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of child’s friends mother knows</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother attended school meetings</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious involvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong help network</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sees close friend weekly</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child ever changed schools due to move</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend’s educational aspirations</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School quality</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood as good place to grow up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As reflected in Table A1.2, Furstenberg and Hughes (1995) demonstrated that families mediated community-based social capital to advance their children’s socioeconomic success. Like social capital within the family, community-based social
capital did not appear to have an impact on mental health or the gender specific outcomes. Focusing only on the outcomes related to socioeconomic success (i.e., high school graduate, enrolled in college, in labor force, stable economic status), particular aspects of social capital were also found to be more important to youth outcomes than others. Mother’s connection to her child’s friends was related to all four outcomes with mother’s sense of a strong help network and her connection to close friends related to three out of four outcomes. Noteworthy is that one of the indicators designed to tap into the child’s perception of the environment, perception of school quality, was significantly related to all four socioeconomic success outcomes, as well as robust mental health and the female specific outcome of avoiding a live birth prior to the age of 19. The impact of a child’s peer network (friend’s educational aspirations) also played out significantly, being related to all four socioeconomic success outcomes.

Interestingly, the indicators used by Furstenberg and Hughes (1995) that most closely mirrored Coleman (family mobility and religious involvement) seemed to not have the impact hypothesized by Coleman as they were related to only two of four and one of four socioeconomic success outcomes respectively. Related to religious involvement, this may be due to the fact that mere attendance at church services did not reflect the net of relationships identified in the context of Catholic schools. Mother’s attendance at school meetings also did not appear to impact youth outcomes.

In their exploration of the extent to which parent’s social capital and parent’s resource capital predicted children’s academic performance, Schlee and colleagues (2008) included a series of beyond family social capital indicators. Specifically, they
were interested in whether parents’ connection to their child’s school impacted the child’s academic performance. Data was collected regarding parents attendance at open houses and parent-teach conference, as well as if the parents had served as a volunteer in the classroom. Schlee et al. (2008) found that children whose parents attended open houses and worked as a volunteer in the classroom scored higher in reading and math. There was no relationship between attendance at parent-teacher conferences and academic performance.

Yan (1999) also explored parent-school interactions in the investigation of the different characteristics of social capital held by successful African American students compared to those of successful Caucasian and non-successful African American peers. As previously noted, Yan defined social capital along four dimensions, two of which tapped into beyond family social capital. Parent-school interactions were operationalized by the extent to which parents participated in parent-teacher organization activities (e.g., PTA), had knowledge of the child’s school experiences and future plans and contacted the child’s school about the child’s school experiences and future plans. Parent-parent interactions were operationalized by the extent to which parents knew the parents of the child’s friends and discuss their child’s school experiences and future plans with other parents.

Other studies have included the exploration of family mobility and its impact on youth outcomes with different results than Furstenberg and Hughes. Pettit and McLanahan (2003) had the opportunity to explore the impact of mobility in a unique experimental context amidst the Moving to Opportunity initiative in Los Angeles County in 1996. The main initiative of the program was to move families from areas with high concentrations of poverty to other areas in the county with more economic
stability. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three groups, a group of participants who were provided support services and a housing voucher and were restricted to areas where the poverty rate was below 10%, a group of participants provided a housing voucher with no restrictions or support services and a control group. Using data from a telephone survey conducted in 1996-1997 with parents participating in the Moving to Opportunity initiative, Pettit and McLanahan sought to explore whether moving reduced social connections important for children in general and if moving to a middle-class neighborhood reduced social connections more than moving to a poor neighborhood. The specific indicators of social capital explored included the level of school engagement of the child (operationalized as whether a child participated in any after-school activities and total number of after-school activities in which a child participated) and parent-parent connectivity (operationalized as whether parents talked to the parents of the child’s friends). Although family mobility appeared to have little impact on a child’s participation in after school activities, moving reduced the odds that parents talked to the parents of the child’s friends by 40%, a significant decrease in this network tie. Furthermore, their findings indicated that moving to a middle class neighborhood did not reduce social connections more than moving to a poor neighborhood. While they did not explore the impact of this social capital on any specific outcomes, the authors suggested that moving to a neighborhood where the poverty rate was below 10% may moderate the harmful effects of moving per se.

Hagan, MacMillan and Wheaton (1996) explored the impact of family mobility on life course issues (e.g., high school graduation, occupational status) and whether within family social capital mediated negative effects related to migration. The life
course study took place in a suburban community in Toronto Canada beginning in 1976. Participants were solicited from four secondary schools in the central part of the area. Follow-up telephone surveys were conducted with participants in 1989. Their analysis was based on the 492 participants that were employed at that time. Specifically, Hagan and colleagues were interested in comparing the life course outcomes between migrant (operationalized as someone who came to Toronto from another place in Canada; participant asked, during the past 3 years, how many times the family moved from one home to another) and non-migrant participants. The life course outcomes explored included high school graduation, college gradation, educational attainment (operationalized as highest level of education completed) and occupational status. As noted above, they were also interested exploring whether within family social capital mediated any negative effects related to family mobility. Family structure (operationalized as who the participant lived with most until the age of 12), parental attention (operationalized as number of siblings and, specific to dads, participant’s response to the question: “How much time does your father spend with the family?”), quality of parent-child relationship (operationalized as a participants’ response to a series of questions related to mother and father: “Do you talk about your thoughts and feelings with your mom/dad? Does your mom/dad understand you? Would you like to be the kind of person your mom/dad is?”), norms/expectations (operationalized by participants’ response to how much schooling they would like to get and how much they expected to get) and parental monitoring (operationalized by participants’ response to: “Does your mom/dad know where you are when you are away? Does your mom/dad know who you are with when you are away?”) served as indicators of within family social capital.
Hagan and colleagues found that the disruption brought on by family mobility had a significant negative effect on life course issues. The children of families who had experienced moves in the last three years were significantly less likely to complete high school or college and had lower levels of educational attainment and occupational status. They also found that within family social capital did mediate some of the negative effects. Family structure (the presence of both parents) increased the chances that a child would complete college and a quality relationship between a child and the mother increased the chances of high school graduation and raised the level of educational attainment and occupational status.

Other researchers have explored the role of both within and beyond family social capital and demonstrated the value of the cumulative effect of social capital on youth outcomes (Runyan et al., 1998; Furstenberg, Cook. Eccles, Elder. & Sameroff, 1999). Using data from the LOGSCAN database, a consortium of longitudinal studies exploring issues related to child maltreatment, Runyan et al. (1998) explored the cross-sectional relationship between an index of social capital including within and beyond family indicators and the behavioral and developmental outcomes of two to five year old children identified as at risk for child abuse and/or neglect. Data collection methods included an interview with the mother and a developmental screening of the child.

Specifically, they explored the role of social capital in mediating between unfavorable family circumstances (poverty, domestic violence) and the developmental and behavioral well-being of children living in these conditions. Developmental screening tools were used to measure whether a child was “doing well” (screening tools indicate no problems). Indicators of within family social capital included family
structure (operationalized by the presence of two versus one parent in the home) and parental attention (operationalized by the presence of two versus more than two children in the home). Indicators of beyond family social capital included engagement with the community (operationalized by attendance at religious services and perception of social support by the maternal caregiver) and neighborhood support (operationalized by response to statements such as, people in neighborhood help each other out, watch out for each other’s kids and can be counted on). Runyan and colleagues found that a mother’s engagement in the community had a positive significant impact on developmental and behavioral well-being. Furthermore, the presence of each social capital indicator, an accumulation of social capital, exerted a protective influence on children known to be at risk for abuse and/or neglect. The addition of any indicator of social capital increased the odds of a child doing well by 29%, and when adding two indicators the odds were increased by 66%.

Furstenberg and colleagues (1999) demonstrated that social capital made a difference in early adolescent outcomes in a longitudinal study conducted with youth from Philadelphia. Using qualitative and quantitative data, they investigated how parents manage social capital within and outside the confines of the home in order to foster successful adolescent development. The cross-sectional study surveyed children and parents of nearly 500 families in 65 census tracts that were randomly selected from low-income neighborhoods in Philadelphia in 1991. The presence of social capital affected the levels of adolescent academic competence, self-competence, psychological adjustment, problem behavior and pro-social involvement. The authors concluded that adolescents need good parenting, good opportunities and links between the two for effective development (Furstenberg, et al., 1999).
Coleman (1988), Furstenberg and Hughes (1995), Runyan et al. (1998), and Furstenberg et al.’s (1999) work demonstrates the cumulative power of social capital; the greater the extent of within family and extra-familial social ties, the greater the developmental outcomes. Furstenberg and Hughes (1995) suggested “Coleman’s notion of social capital is attractive because it provides a conceptual link between the attributes of individual actors and their immediate social context, most notably the household, school, and neighborhood” (p. ?). Focusing on the social capital within the family and how the family connects to the broader context “[h]elps to bridge the current gap between the overly narrow purview of psychology and the overly broad purview of sociology” (p. 582). Despite the attractiveness of social capital as a way of understanding the outcomes of children, they stressed the importance of recognizing and exploring the multidimensional nature of social capital noting that different dimensions of social capital may be differentially linked to a range of outcomes. They concluded that social capital could serve as a “useful tool” in exploring the outcomes of children adding, “[i]f we are to use this tool to great advantage, we need to clarify the concept and probably recognize the problems of thinking that social capital is a common set” (p. 590).
APPENDIX B: AGREEMENT TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY - TRANSLATOR
Agreement to Maintain Confidentiality

Translator

I______________________________ agree to maintain the confidentiality of all information about any of the subjects if I am hired to translate for the observations/interviews of street youth engaged in by Brenita Nicholas, of The Ohio State University, (U.S.A). I understand that I may not discuss the contents of any of the observations/interviews with anyone except Brenita Nicholas and that I may not make reference to the names, identity, living locations or circumstances of any of the individuals who I come in contact with through this project. This is to protect the rights of the street youth. Finally, I understand that if I violate this agreement of confidentiality it may affect payment for my services as a translator.

I understand the above conditions on this project, and I agree to these conditions without reservation.

Signed:______________________________ Date:_______________

(Translator)

Signed:______________________________ Date:_______________

(Researcher)

Signed:______________________________ Date:_______________

(Witness)
APPENDIX C: AGREEMENT TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY - TRANSCRIBER
Agreement to Maintain Confidentiality

Transcriber

I ______________________________ agree to maintain the confidentiality of all information about any of the subjects if I am hired to transcribe for the observations/interviews of street youth engaged in by Brenita Nicholas, of The Ohio State University, (U.S.A). I understand that I may not discuss the contents of any of the observations/interviews with anyone except Brenita Nicholas and that I may not make reference to the names, identity, living locations or circumstances of any of the individuals who I come in contact with through this project. This is to protect the rights of the street youth. Finally, I understand that if I violate this agreement to confidentiality it may affect payment for my services as a transcriber.

I understand the above conditions on this project, and I agree to these conditions without reservation.

Signed:_________________________ Date:______________
(Transcriber)

Signed:_________________________ Date:______________
(Researcher)

Signed:_________________________ Date:______________
(Witness)
Appendix D: Informed Consent Witness Form - Interviews
Informed Consent Witness Form

Interviews

I, _____________________________________, give witness to the facilitation of the
oral script with _________________ as approved by the Internal Review Board of The
Ohio State University. The following areas were discussed with the aforementioned
youth, per the oral script, on the dates noted:

☐ Purpose __________________________ date

☐ Process __________________________ date

☐ Confidentiality ____________________ date

Following the completion of the oral script, the aforementioned youth consented to participate in an extended conversation with researcher Brenita Nicholas.

________________________________________
Translator’s Signature

_____________________
Date

631
Appendix E: Oral Script - English Version
Oral Script

English Version

I would like to thank you for the time you are taking to talk with me. Before we talk, I would like to introduce myself. I am a student from America and I am working with my professor Dr. Mary Kondrat to write a paper for my graduation.

Purpose

- I have visited Romania several times and have seen children like you who spend their time on the streets and have wondered what their lives were like and what helps them. I am interested in hearing about you......more about what your life is like, how you live on the street, and what has helped you.

Do you have any questions about the reason why I would like to speak with you?

(Questions answered until participant indicates that they are satisfied with the answer.)

- You do not have to talk with me if you do not want to. We can say goodbye if you want. (If the child indicates this is his/her desire, the interview will be terminated). If you think you might want to talk with me, I would like to tell you a little more about what that would be like and what I might ask you.

Process

- If you agree to participate in this interview, it will take about one and a half to two hours.

- I will record our conversation in this tape player. (If necessary, demonstrate how the tape player will be used).

- I will start by asking you to tell me about a typical day for you. Though I and Dr. Kondrat (my teacher) are interested in hearing from you, you control whatever you choose to tell me and what you choose not to tell me. Most of the time I will listen. Sometimes I will ask questions.

Do you have any questions about what we will be talking about, if you agree to speak with me?

(Questions answered until participant indicates that they are satisfied with the answer.)
• If you want you can stop the interview at any time. I would like you to know that I do not want to do anything to hurt you, or to profit from you, or to make you feel uncomfortable. You have the right to refuse to answer any questions just by saying that you do not want to answer it. If you want to answer a question, but you want your answer to be off the tape, just tell me, and I will turn the tape player off until you tell me I can start again.

Do you have any questions about your right to refuse to answer any of the questions or your right to stop the conversation?

*(Questions answered until participant indicates that they are satisfied with the answer.)*

• Sometimes, the children that I interview need to stop and go somewhere else. If this happens, please tell me and we can plan another meeting, if you want.

• After the interview, I will think more about the things you shared with me. Then I would like to share my thoughts with you to see if I fully understood what you told me. If that would be ok with you, after the interview I will ask you when and how I could find you for a second interview. The second interview should take approximately 45 minutes.

Do you have any questions about the second interview?

*(Questions answered until participant indicates that they are satisfied with the answer.)*

• Later, the words that we say to each other will be written so they will be on paper. Here you will not be identified by name or any other thing or characteristic that will allow other people to guess who you are.

Do you have any questions about this?

*(Questions answered until participant indicates that they are satisfied with the answer.)*

**Confidentiality**

• It is important for me to tell you some of the conditions that help me to keep what you tell me in confidence/secret.

• Besides me, the only people that will hear your interviews or will see it written down on paper will be the person that will hear the tapes and write what you say on paper, the person that will help me translate it from Romanian to English, and my professor. These people were trained to keep in confidence what they heard.
or read and have signed a paper agreeing to tell no one the information you have shared with me.

- There may be a possibility to combine the words of several children to write a large story. If I do this, I will combine what you told me with what other children told me. Here you will not be identified by name or any other thing or characteristic that will allow other people to guess who you are.

- If you don’t want your name in the tape, you can choose another name, or a nickname. This way, there will be no connection between narrative and name even in the audiotapes.

- Interview materials will be kept with my personal things near me when I travel and will be locked in a case. When I go back to the university, the tapes will be kept in a locked, secure place, away from anyone other than my professor and me. When I am finished I will erase and destroy the tape.

Do you have any questions about these conditions?

(Questions answered until participant indicates that they are satisfied with the answer.)

- It is important for me to tell you that there are two things that I am not allowed to keep secret. First, if you tell me you have a plan to end your life, and second, if you tell me you have a plan to end someone else’s life. When I use the word plan, I mean that you know what you want to do, how you want to do it and when. Under those two circumstances I cannot keep a secret. If you share that information with me I will immediately contact a foundation that is an expert with children who will help me keep you and others safe.

- It is important for you to know these things before we talk so you can choose whether or not to share that type of information with me.

Do you have any questions about the two things I am not allowed to keep a secret or what will happen if you share that information with me?

(Questions answered until participant indicates that they are satisfied with the answer.)

Do you have any other questions before we begin?

(Questions answered until participant indicates that they are satisfied with the answer.)

635
• Would you still be willing to talk with me about your life on the street?
  *If the child responds in the negative, the interview will be terminated.*

  *If the child responds in the positive, the co-investigator will ask the leadoff question.*
Appendix F: Oral Script - Romanian Version
Oral Script

Romanian Version

Vreau să-ți multumesc pentru timpul pe care-l ie-l ca să vorbesti cu mine. Dar înainte de ați spune de ce sunt aici vreau să ma prezint. Sunt o studentă din staterale unite și eu lucrez împreună cu profesorul meu Dr. Mary Kondrat la acest studiu ca parte a lucrări mele de diplomă.

Scopul

• Care sunt interesată să aflu mai multe lucruri despre viața voastră.

   Ai ceva întrebări despre motivul de ce vreau să vorbesc cu tine?

   (Intrebările vor fi răspunse până cand participantul arată ca este mulțumit de răspuns)

• Vreau deasemenea să-ți spun câteva lucruri despre studiul pe care il fac eu și profesora mea Dr. Mary Kondrat și de ce vreau să vorbesc cu tine.

Procesul Se Desfasurare

• Dacă esti de acord să participe la acest interviu, interviul va dura o oră până a două ore.

• Voi înregistra conversația noastră cu acest casetofon. (Dacă este necesar demonstrează cum va fi folosit casetofonul).

• Voi începe prin a te întreba sa spune pentru az. Desi eu si Dr. Kondrat (profesorul meu) suntem interesați să auzim de la tine, tu vei putea controla ceea ce vei alege să-mi spui și ceea ce vei alege să nu-mi spui. Majoritatea timpului voi asculta și câteodată îți voi pune întrebări.

   Ai ceva întrebări cu privire la lucrurile despre care vom vorbi, daca vei fi de acord sa vorbesti cu mine?

   (Intrebările vor fi răspunse până cand participantul arată ca este mulțumit de răspuns)

• Dacă vrei poți să opresti acest interviu în orice moment oricare ar fi motivul. Vreau sa stii că nu vreau fac nici un lucru care sa te raneasca sau sa profit de tine sau sa te ac sa te simti înconfortabil(râu). Ai dreptul sa refuzi sa raspunzi la unele
din intrebari prin a spune ca Nu vrei sa raspunzi la intrebare sau daca vrei sa raspunzi la vreo intrebare ,dar vrei ca raspunsul sa nu fie inregistrat doar trebuie sa spui si voi inchide casetofonulpana vei fi gata sa inregistrez din nou.

Ai ceva intrebari despre faptul ca ai dreptul sa refuzi sa-mi raspunzi la vreo intrebare sau la faptul ca ai dreptul sa opresti conversatia?

*(Intrebările vor fi răspunse până cand participantul arată ca este mulțumit de răspuns)*

- Cateodată copii pe care l-am interviewat au trebuit să se oprească pentru că trebuia să meargă altundeva. Daca se intampla că trebuie să mergi altundeva te rog să te simți liber să-mi spui si putem programa o alta întâlnire pentru a continua interviu.

- Dupa interviu ma voi gandi mai mult la lucrurile care mi le-ai spus as dori să-mi împărtășesc gandurile mele cu tine ca să vad dacă am inteles pe deplin ceea ce mi-ai spus. De aceea as dori să stiu cum si cand as putea să te găsesc. Al doilea interviu va dura aproape o oră.

Ai ceva intrebari

*(Intrebările vor fi răspunse până cand participantul arată ca este mulțumit de răspuns)*

- Mai tarziu cuvintele care ni le-am spus unu altuia vor fi scrise pe hartie. mi-au spus nu vei fi identificat cu numele sau oricare alt lucru care ii va face pe alți oameni sa ghiceasca cine esti.

Ai ceva intrebari

*(Intrebările vor fi răspunse până cand participantul arată ca este mulțumit de răspuns)*

Confidentialitatea

- *Este important pentru mine sa-ti spun cateva din condițiile care ma ajuta sa ţin ceea ce mi-ai spus in secret.*

- În afara mine, singuri oameni care vor auzi interviul tau sau vor vedea ceea ce am scris pe hartie va fi persoana care va asculta casetele si le va scrie pe hartie si care ma va ajuta la traducere din romana in engleza si profesorul meu. Acesti oameni au fost invătați să ţina secret ceea ce au auzit si citit si au semnat o hartie ca nu vor spune nimanui din informatie pe care mi-ai impartasit-o.
• S-ar putea să combin mai multe cuvinte pe care copii mi le-au dat pentru a face a povestire mai largă. Daca voi face lucrul acesta adica, să combin ceea ce tu mi-ai spus cu ceea ce alți copiii mi-au spus nu vei fi identificat cu numele sau oricare alt lucrul care i va face pe alți oameni să ghiceasca cine esti.

• Daca nu vrei ca numele tau să fie înregistrat pe casetapoti să alegi un alt nume sau porecla,nu cel adevărat,unul pe care sa-l folosesti doar în timpul interviului.În felul acest nu va fi nici o legatura între povestitor si nume chiar si pe casetele audio.

• Interviurile vor fi tinute cu lucrurile mele personale aproape de mine si cand calatoresc vor fi inchise intr-o servieta.Cand ma intorc inapoi la universitate casetele vor fi ținute intr-un dulap inchis, la loc sigur departe de altcineva in afara de mine si profesoara mea. Dupa ce voi termina lucrarea de diploma voi erase and distruge casetele.

Ai alte interbari despre acest condiții?

(Intrebările vor fi răspuns până cand participantul arată ca este mulțumit de răspuns)
Appendix G: Excerpt from Field Notes/Reflective Journal
Weather: chilly

Participants: Dana (my translator) and myself

Pre-observation Discussion: I told Dana we would be returning to site12 to continue solidifying our relationships with the youth staying there and to see if we could meet more youth. I would also like to try to go to site4, but want to be careful not to go after dark. If it starts getting late we would go to site4 on another day.

Site12: We arrived at site12 at around 2:30. We walked around the platform level of the metro area to see if we could find any street youth. We could hear a group of youth in the middle section. As we made our way around the platform level of the metro area we observed a group of youth in the middle level - 2 girls came running down the stairs from the middle level and sat on some chairs on the platform level. We decided to sit on the chairs on the other side of the pole from where the girls were sitting. We could see the middle section very well from there. After a few moments we could hear some yelling. It could potentially be some sort of a conflict. One kid said, “suck my dick”. Then one of the girls who were sitting on the chair ran up to the middle level. The other girl yelled, “I hope your mother goes to hell and satan shits in her mouth!” We also heard somebody yelling, “I didn’t put my hand to your mouth, so leave me alone.” It was difficult out make out everything that was being said but there appeared to be some sort of conflict. We could see youth in the middle level of the metro area (about 7-8). They were pushing and shoving each other and yelling at each other. We also noted that F16 was up there.

At about 2:55 the second girl came back down and sat on the chairs. A few moments later, a third girl came down, and then a fourth girl, which we could see was F16. Shortly after that, two boys. They all came down and they were sitting on the other side of the pole to where we were sitting. At about 3pm a third boy came running down the stairs. He was yelling, “What are you doing down there? Why are you there?” Behind him was a small boy - about 3 feet tall. He was wearing blue pants, a red hooded shirt, a knit hat and brown boots. All were in moderate condition - slightly soiled. He didn’t talk to any of the kids sitting behind us. He just circled around the area, blowing in a whistle. The metro stopped and he went to get on it. All of the youth who were sitting behind us (with the exception of F16) got on the metro. The little boy with the whistle got on and then stuck his head out to see the other youth. When the metro was ready to go he jumped out of the metro and ran back up the stairs. F16 followed him.
As the group who had just gotten off of the metro was dispersing, I saw F2 from site2 among them. She looked terrible. She looked thinner to me - the bone structure in her face was more pronounced. Her clothes and hair were much more dirtied than I had seen before. She had dark circles under her eyes. I said hello to her and greeted her with a handshake. I told her that I had heard that she was not staying at site2 anymore. She indicated that was true - that she was now staying in the site9 area. She asked me if I would tell the people at ASIS that she had moved - that she wasn’t staying at site2 anymore. She went on to share that M4 had been arrested and was in jail. She was staying at site9 with some new friends (motioning to the people around her). She introduced us to F23. F23 had short medium brown hair. She was dressed in blue jeans and an oversized coat that was quite dirty. She had a couple of band-aids on the left side of her face. Her face looked old for her age. She had a lot of deep wrinkles. F2 also introduced us to M66, indicating that they all lived at site9. At one point, F2 commented that M66 was her man. She sat on his lap for a large part of the conversation. She indicated that they were living in the canal, near to Site9 and that we could find her there between like 10 and 11 in the morning. F2 shared that she had some sickness in her stomach and needed to go to the hospital. She noted that her friend F23 was also sick and that they were interested in having ASIS come to take them to get some medical assistance.

It soon got pretty chaotic. As we were talking with F2, more and more youth came over to where we were. I counted about 15 total. It should be noted that we were still sitting on the platform of the metro area. F2 introduced us to 3 specific individuals: M67, F24 and M68. She noted that all three lived in site3. F24 was a very slender girl with a dark long hair. M68 and F24 were huffing from bags. We asked them if they would please put their bag away as we spoke and they complied.

| **F2 at site12** | have never seen her away from site2. She looked MUCH worse than I had seen her before. **Appearance** - changed |
| **F2 staying at site9 now** | change in living location |
| **Introduced “friends”** |
| **Appearance** |
| **M66 her “man”** | - M4 (previous ‘man’) now in jail (couple) |
| **Sickness in her stomach** | could ASIS help (health) |
| **Several youth** | 15 (group size) |
| **Appearance** |
| **This was the first time I had asked someone to put his or her bag away. I did so as that is what I had seen ASIS staff do. I am not sure it is the best thing to do. I do not want to come across as judging any of their behaviors - nor do I want them to think they have to be or act a certain way around me. I regret having asked her to put it away and will not do so in the future.** |

It got very confusing, because several people were talking at once - most of the questions had to do with who we were. Several had
asked if they had met me before. I told them that I had been on the street with the ASIS street workers before. This information initiated several comments regarding ASIS from a few different youth. They were complaining about the work of ASIS. One stated that they (ASIS) don’t give anything on the street; they don’t give food, they don’t give clothes, they just give lip service, they just “use their mouth…. but words don’t help us.”

Youth perspectives re Foundations: Youth complain about ASIS. This is the first time I had heard something negative about ASIS - to this point I had only heard negative things about other foundations. This could be because I had only been on the street with ASIS.

It was very interesting for me to hear some of the concerns the youth have with ASIS; their focus on providing only lip service and not providing anything concrete on the street. Also, up to this point, I had only seen positive interactions between ASIS and the street youth. However, this may be because I am on the street with ASIS. It will be interesting to see how youth interact with individuals from other foundations. Do they interact with them in a pleasant way and talk negatively about ASIS when they are with people from other foundations. Is it that the street youth take on the personality or the characteristics necessary in relating to people in order to maybe obtain the resources that that particular foundation has to offer? Perhaps this is some sort of ‘instrumental relationality’... ‘relationality’...
F2 stated that she spoke with Florin and he was supposed to take her somewhere. She indicated that he promised her something before Christmas. But he didn’t follow-through. She noted that it is the New Year and Florin didn’t do what he said. I asked her what Florin was suppose to have done. F2 indicated that she had told Florin that she was moving to site9. He said that he would come and see her there and he had not. F2 stated that Florin was suppose to go to site9 and take her to the hospital and then back to site2. (As she was talking I thought back to the last time I had seen F2 - which I believe is the last time Florin had seen her. I do not remember her saying anything about moving to site9. Florin and I were in site2 just last week and we found out at that point in time that F2 had moved to site9 and, from what I could tell, that was the first time that Florin had heard it as well. I thought that because he was asking a lot of questions about when she had moved and exactly where she had moved.)

No follow-through/accountability?

F2 stated that she spoke with Florin and he was supposed to take her somewhere. She indicated that he promised her something before Christmas. But he didn’t follow-through. She noted that it is the New Year and Florin didn’t do what he said. I asked her what Florin was suppose to have done. F2 indicated that she had told Florin that she was moving to site9. He said that he would come and see her there and he had not. F2 stated that Florin was suppose to go to site9 and take her to the hospital and then back to site2. (As she was talking I thought back to the last time I had seen F2 - which I believe is the last time Florin had seen her. I do not remember her saying anything about moving to site9. Florin and I were in site2 just last week and we found out at that point in time that F2 had moved to site9 and, from what I could tell, that was the first time that Florin had heard it as well. I thought that because he was asking a lot of questions about when she had moved and exactly where she had moved.)

This relates back to the conversation I had with Dan and Florin when they disagreed whether or not the street youth truly respected them. Florin stated Yes, he felt that the street youth put the bags away and complied with the different requests because they respected them. But Dan said “NO”, that their response was not out of respect but of wanting of what ASIS has to offer. Perhaps I am glimpsing some clarifications regarding this difference of opinion. Now I am hearing street youth express concern or complaint about ASIS. Perhaps Dan was more correct in that a street youth acts in a way that he or she needs to act based on who they’re interacting with and what that person has to offer to them.

No follow-through/accountability?
F2 told me she was hungry and asked me if I could give her something to eat. I told her that I could not give her anything. She stated, “Not you and ASIS. Just you, as a person. Could you give me something to eat?” I told her that even though I was not with ASIS, I still followed their policies. F2 told me that Dana sometimes does not follow the policy. She explained that her and Dana had a good relationship and sometimes Dana gave her food and clothes. F2 also shared that at the new site where she lives, in site9, that she has a bed, but they do not have much food there - there is a lot less food at site9 then she was able to have at site2. She then turned to the man who was sitting next to us on the chairs. He was sitting there eating some cookies or crackers. She asked him if she could have some. The man gave some to F2 and to the rest of the youth sitting around the area.

M67 was predominantly the one talking about ASIS only giving lip service and not really following through with what they say. He noted that ASIS doesn’t do anything specific for them, like clothes or food. He also shared that he was in Italy and had a lot of experience with street kids. He said that we should spend a week watching other street kids and then spend some time watching him and that we would see a big difference. We asked him what would be the difference and he said that he wants another future - most street kids do not.

He went on to state that he and all the kids are used by every foundation. He indicated that foundations were like a business, a political business; they make money off of them. He stated that all of the foundations come and take their pictures and make up stories about what they (the foundations) are actually doing. He even stated that, “Andrea is being fooled by ASIS”. He indicated that this is what foundations do - they fool those from the outside so they will come in and give them money. M67 went on to state that if a foundation received a truck of clothes, they first share the clothes among themselves and after that they give what is left to the kids. He also noted that the budget that a kid should receive is not given to the kid - the foundation keeps a part of it, more than they should, and they only give a small part to the kid. He kept telling me that I should not be fooled by foundations.

I shared with them that I was a student from America here to learn more about how it was for them to live on the street. I stressed that I was not working with or for any foundation. I told them that I went on the street with ASIS only so they could introduce me to them, and other youth. I was not working for ASIS. M67 stated that Americans, Germans and other foreigners are scums - that they take their pictures and they make up all kind of stories and they get money out of that. I told them that I wasn’t here to take pictures and that I wasn’t here to make money. I then asked them what kind of story would they like to be told. M67 stated, “I would like our story to sound like this...” He suggested that all the principles and the directors of the foundations and organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F2 asks “me” not ASIS for something to eat - request_food</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F2 states that Dana sometimes gives her things. She characterizes that relationship as “good”. Rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man shares cookies &amp; crackers with the youth request_food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M67 states he has a lot of experience with street youth - he is different from the other youth on the street - he wants a future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth perspectives re Foundations Used by foundations - make $$ off them Take pictures, make up stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundations fool people from outside - adaptive misrepresentation?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foundations take some of the clothes and keeps more money than they should - accountability?</td>
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<tr>
<td>I stressed I was not working for a foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth perspectives re Foreigners M67 - foreigners are “scums”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They definitely have past experiences with foreigners that were not perceived as positive by them. This directly</td>
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</table>
come around the street kids/meet with the street kids and then decide at that moment exactly what they (street youth) need and what they want. He pointed to F2 and stated that she would like to work - and pointed to himself stating that he would like to work. He noted that they would all like to work but because they live in the canals, no one “gives a damn” about them. F2 asked why all the foundations didn’t work together and make it possible for them to go to school. I indicated that I don’t know a lot about the foundations and the programs regarding school. I did not know.

He noted that they would all like to work but because they live in the canals, no one “gives a damn” about them. F2 asked why all the foundations didn’t work together and make it possible for them to go to school. I indicated that I don’t know a lot about the foundations and the programs regarding school. I did not know.

effects how they perceive and relate to me. It will be very important that I stay consistent, not say I will do anything unless I know FOR SURE I can, and ALWAYS follow-through on what I say.

What does this say about trust and reciprocity? Sounds like they felt they gave something but did not receive in return.

The stock of social capital one can use depends on the strength of the network or connections. One of the most important building blocks of social capital is trust and it plays a significant role in the creation and maintenance of social capital. Building trust with street children may be found to be a fundamental prerequisite to working with them.

The youth’s comments about “principles and the directors of the foundations and organizations” getting together and talking as group - working together reminds me a bit of Coleman’s discussion of intergenerational closure; for a dense and consistent network of peers and adults in a person’s life. Perhaps those working with street children should be connected by a strong network of ties that
While we were talking to the kids, 4 police officers approached us. They were pretty upset because there were many kids around us. They stated that we were disturbing the society. They asked us what we were doing there. Before we said anything, F2 stated, “We had a meeting, an appointment with this organization, so please don’t kick us out of here. We’re good and we need to talk to them.” When the police officers heard this they asked Dana and I for our IDs. We shrugged our shoulders – we explained that I was a student from America and I had been on the street with the ASIS foundation - Dana was here as my translator. They asked us to leave the area. The youth suggested that we go to the next metro stop. We said we were leaving. The policemen then turned to the man who had given the youth cookies and asked him why he was there. He did not respond. The policemen then asked him for his ID. He stated that he did not have one. They asked the man to please come with them. The policemen escorted this young man out of sight.

wrap around the child offering a consistent presence of support. Perhaps initiatives should work toward better integration and collaboration of service providers providing opportunities for relationships characterized by longevity and consistency. Working to enhance the broader social networks of street children may improve the embedded resources in those networks and their access to them.

Law enforcement - 4 police officers approach - we were disturbing society
F2 stated that we were from an organization
Asked for our ID’s
Asked us to leave the area
Police took away man who gave cookies/crackers
Resource - ID
I could not get over how quickly and convincingly F2 was able to lie to the police. She immediately told them that we had a scheduled meeting and that we were from an organization. I wonder what would have happened if she did not say this. I wonder how the police would have responded to us if F2 did not make this comment. I wonder why F2 felt
While we were talking about where to go M67 jumped up and said “This is my mother” and he ran over and hugged a woman and that she needed to tell the police officers we were from a foundation when I know that F2 is pretty clear that we are not; that I am a student from America. It seems like perhaps lying is an aspect of survival... perhaps it is more adaptive misrepresentation.

This also relates to what F2 shared about Florin “knowing where she was”. I was there when they told us she was gone - Florin seemed to be hearing the information for the first time. Plus when we first met today, F2 asked me to tell ASIS where she was...

Who is telling the ‘truth’ and when? Is there a truth? Will my data be reflecting the ‘adaptive misrepresentations’ created to survive? Which is better? Which is more necessary to know if one really wants to understand their world? Does one even need to make a distinction? Has their world become what they tell themselves it is?

Also need to be thinking through what I am going to say to the police when I am approached - did not like being caught off guard and I had not pre-discussed this issue with Dana.

M67 interacts in a warm way with Parada worker
kissed her hand. He introduced her as Mirela Buciu indicating that she was from Parada. We went over and introduced ourselves to her. I told her that I was a social worker and student from America. She said it was nice to meet me - that she is a social worker, too. Several of the kids came over to talk to her. At first she was smiling and greeting them and then she started to push them away - asking them to stay away, keep away. They all left her alone and returned to the seats except for M67. He stayed and talked with her.

We went back over and sat down. M66 leaned over and stated that Mirela Buciu was a shmuck. He stated that he was one of the boys who went to Italy. For 2 days they were housed in a hotel - but then, for the rest of the days she had left them on the street. While M66 was talking, 2 of the police officers returned and were upset that we were still there. So we said goodbye to the youth and that we hope we would see them again soon. We left around 3:35. I should note that when we left, M67 was still talking to Mirela Buciu from Parada.

We decided not to go to site4 as it starts getting dark around 4pm.

1-20-03
Weather: Cold and sleeting rain
Participants: Florin and myself

Pre-observation Discussion: Florin stated that we would be going to site1 first. He wanted to see if he could connect with M27 and take him to have his ID pictures taken and medical analysis. If we were unable to find M27 and had time we would then be going to site9 to check in with the youth there. We had no morning meetings scheduled.

Site1: We arrived at site1 at 11:00 and found all three canals had been completely sealed. We made our way down the street to where M27 had previously stayed. M27 was laying between the two canal openings on a piece of cardboard. To his left sat F22 and to his right sat his brother, M64. Florin greeted them all and asked what had happened to the canal at site1/when had it been sealed. M27 indicated that it happened 3-4 days ago. He explained that they had been in the neighborhood for the day and when they came back, they were sealed - all there stuff was sealed down in the canal.

Florin told M27 that he was there to take him to have his picture taken for his ID and to have the medical analysis. M27 stated that he did not want to go today because he was dirty and had not washed his hair. Florin asked him why he had not gone to ARMS.
M27 explained that he had gone to ARMS but that they were under construction. He indicated they would not permit him to take a bath - they would be closed until they had finished their construction. Florin asked M64 if he knew of a place where they could get clean. M64 stated that he might - he had to think about it. Florin asked M27 to try to find a place to have a shower and meet him at the McDonalds at Unirii at 10:00.

While Florin was talking to M27, F22 stood up and walked to the street. She approached people as they came by and spoke to them. On one occasion a woman gave her three apples - she brought one to M27 and one to M64. On another occasion a man gave her money (I could not see the exact amount but it was coins. On a third occasion a man gave her a cigarette. After a few minutes, she rejoined the group. When Florin had finished speaking to M27 F22 shared that she had something wrong with her head and wanted to go to the hospital. Florin said that we would have to see later.

We said goodbye and began to leave the site at 11:20. As we were walking away M27 got up from the ground and came after us. He shared that he was having a problem with his leg - that he thought the bone of his leg was starting to poke through because he was so skinny. He also stated that he was still real sick and really wanted to go to the doctor - could Florin take him to the doctor? Florin told M27 that he could not take him to the doctor until he had had a shower. When they meet on Wednesday to have the pictures taken they would also try to go to see a doctor. (Florin later explained to me again that the doctors will not see the youth if they are dirty and if ASIS brings a dirty youth to the doctor it will negatively effect ASIS’ relationship with the doctor. The doctor may refuse to see youth brought by ASIS altogether in the future.

Site9: We arrived at site9 at around 12:05 in the afternoon. No one was above ground. Florin hollered down into the canal and soon F25 and M73 came up. They invited us down into the canal to sit and talk because it was too cold outside. Florin asked me if I wanted to go down in the canal. I told Florin only if it was ok with the youth, I did not want to intrude. Florin asked them if they were sure it was ok with them that we come down. They stated that it was fine - if they invite us it is no problem. We went down into the canal.

I climbed down into the round opening of the canal on a small rusty ladder. Each rung was wet and muddy from the feet of the person who had gone down before me. As I descended further and further down into the canal, the smell of garbage and human waste got stronger and stronger and the temperature got warmer. I also found it to be more and more difficult to see. When I reached the bottom, at first I could not see around because it was very dark. It took a few moments for my eyes to adjust. I followed Florin across to the other side of the room and sat down next to him on one of the beds. As my eyes adjusted, I could see that it

| Hygiene        | ARMS under construction |
| Set up meeting for Wednesday |
| Appointment    |
| Begging        | Received apples (Food), $$, cigarettes from passerby - shared apples |
| Health         | Need to go to hospital - Florin: maybe later |
| Health         | M27 wants to go to doctor |
| Hygiene        | Florin: need a shower 1st |
| Health         | Doctors will not see kids if they are “dirty” |
| Respect        | We were invited down - & went |
| Warm           | Went down on ladder |
|                | Smell of garbage & waste |
|                | At first dark - eyes got adjusted |
was one of three beds. If one were to stand facing the room from the bottom of the ladder at the round canal opening, there would be one bed immediately to the right (M80 was sitting on this bed) and one bed immediately to the left (between the round and square canal opening). There was an individual (M81) lying catty-corner across this bed sleeping fully clothed - not covered with any blankets. F25 was sitting next to him. Finally, there was a third bed parallel to the first on the other side of the room. It was this third bed I sat on with Florin. All three beds sat about a foot off the ground and were covered by 2-3 blankets.

As my eyes got better adjusted, I was able to look around the area. What I saw was very, very hard to put into words. The room was about 7 by 11 feet. There were clothes stacked all along all four walls of the room. Across the ceiling there were long thick pipes that ran through the entire canal area. These pipes hung down requiring one to duck as they walked through the middle of the room. Garbage was stacked on the ground to my left of me about 3 feet high and appeared to extend a ways under the pipes. Where the garbage was there was about a 2-foot opening between the top of the garbage and the bottom of the pipes. Though one could stand in the canal area, one could not stand up underneath these pipes - you would have to duck down. While I was sitting on the bed, the pipe was probably just a few inches above my head. Behind me, on top of the stack of clothes, there was a board that had several items on it. On the board were a clock, some plates and some cups. One of the cups was holding different types of silverware. There were also old cans. They were not labeled. Though most of the garbage was stacked to my left, there was some garbage on the floor. It was a dirt floor. I also noticed several small candles on the floor that had been burned down to the nub. F26 was sitting on the floor playing with an old magazine; looking at it and talking about the various pictures.

After a few moments of being underground, M73 lit a couple of candles. This made it easier to see in the canal area. I realized there were several bugs in the canal, mostly cockroaches. They were a dark red in color; 2-3 inches in length. I could see them crawling across the ground. I could see the crawling up the wall. Often times, I could see them crawling up the legs of the youth. They seemed unconcerned with these cockroaches and would just flick them off their legs.

Florin asked the youth what happened on Friday in regards to the police. F25 stated that the police did come. She indicated that most of the youth ran away. The police tried to put M73 in their car, but he ran away. F25 explained that everyone got away except for her and her daughter (F26) and F23. She indicated that the police took the three of them to the police station. F25 stated that the police asked them for their ID’s. She explained that she has all her paperwork - ID, birth certificate, children’s birth certificates - so it was no problem. It should be noted that she did not comment about what happened to F23 nor did Florin ask her.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Living Conditions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material Resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 beds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes stacked along all four walls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garbage stacked to the left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plates, cups and silverware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old cans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dirt floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small candles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F26 playing on floor &amp; looking at magazine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M73 lit candles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Law enforcement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police came Friday - most youth ran away - F25, F26 &amp; F23 taken to police station</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F25 had all her papers - no problem</td>
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about F23.

When F25 was talking to Florin about the IDs, she went over to the far right of the canal area near to the bed where M80 was sitting. She reached on top of the stack of clothes and pulled out a big plastic bag. In it were several items; her ID, her birth certificate, the birth certificates of her children and several pictures. She did not show us the pictures, but I could see that there were pictures in the bag. After Florin and her discussed the situation with the birth certificate and the IDs, she went back over and returned the bag to the stack of clothes.

Florin asked F25 about her pregnancy. He asked her how far along she is in her pregnancy. F25 indicated that she was 12 weeks - about 3 months along. She further noted that the father of this baby is M73. She shared that she wants to keep this baby and after she delivers she wants a procedure done that would prevent her from having other children. Florin asked F25 if she had children other than F26. F25 stated that she had given birth to 5 children. F25 shared that her first child had a heart condition. The doctor said that he would probably live only 7 years, but he died when he was about 2-3 years old. The second child was given up for adoption. Her third child is in a camin and her fourth child, F26, lives with her in the canal. Her fifth child was still born - when she gave birth the umbilical cord was wrapped around his neck. F25 noted that the baby that was currently in her stomach would be her sixth child.

During Florin’s conversation with F25, M80 went and got a candle and lit it. He came over to near I was and climbed underneath the pipes and over the clothes. He told me he would be right back. I am not sure where he went. He disappeared through the stack of clothes, under the pipe. I could see the glow of the candle and then the glow disappeared. A few minutes later I could see the glow of the candle reappearing again and he emerged from the stack of clothes, out from under the pipe. Perhaps there is a whole other room back through the stack of clothes that we could not see from where we were.

As noted, F26 was sitting on the floor playing. At one point in time, she picked up the ends of the candles that were on the floor and took them over to M81 and asked him to light them. Often times he would refuse and knock them out of her hand. His interaction with F26 was very interesting to watch. On occasion he would pick her up and bounce her around on his knees; another point in time he spit on her head. As previously noted, at one point in time when F26 asked M81 to light her candles he refused and knocked them out of her hands. Later, he lit them.

F26 also interacted with me a great deal while Florin was talking to her mother. At one point in time she went and got a shovel from under the bed opposite of where I was sitting. She pulled it over to me. F26 handed me the handle of the shovel and she stood on the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource - place to keep important things</th>
<th>Bag full of ID, birth certificates &amp; pictures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>F25 12 weeks pregnant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Wants to keep baby then have a surgery to keep from having children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Given birth to 5 children</td>
<td>1 in a camin, 1 adopted 1 here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perhaps another room in the canal??</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationality?</td>
<td>I/A between M81 and M26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource - shovel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
edge of the shovel and rode the handle - kind of like a horse. She started to bounce up and down. I assisted her by bouncing the handle up and down. She laughed. This may be a game that she has played with other individuals before, as it was entirely initiated by her. At another point in time she went over to her mom and asked for the pictures her mom had in her pocket. F26 then brought the pictures over to me and began to show them to me. They were pictures of a man. She had referred to him as tata. (Later I asked Florin if the pictures were of F26’s father. Florin stated that he did not think so - F26’s father was currently in jail. Florin stated that he thought they were pictures of someone else that lived in the canal. He could not state who.). F26 showed me these pictures several times. Then she would go lay on one of the beds and look at them. She also brought the magazine over to me and we flipped through it together.

When M80 came back in the room he asked Florin for help getting his ID made. Florin asked him how old he was. M80 stated that he was 15 years old. Florin asked him if he had a birth certificate. M80 indicated that he did but it was at his home - his parents live in Bucuresti. Florin asked him why he did not stay there. M80 stated that he does not want to go there because he likes “this” life (on the street) more. Florin did not ask him anymore about that. (Florin later shared with me that there are many things that attract youth to the street. Florin noted being able to huff aurolac and the fact that they have a lot of money on their hands from begging or other illegal stuff. I asked Florin how he knew that. He responded that it is a general common thing on the street.) M80 asked Florin if the ID ASIS helped to make would be valid for one year or if he is going to get a “real one”. Florin told M80 that if he wants to get a real one he needs to talk to his mother and go with her to the Police. M80 stated that he does not want to do that. Florin stated that he would take him personally to have the pictures taken for the ID and then to the police station. Florin pointed out that he could not do that until M80 got his birth certificate from his house. M80 stated that he understood - no specific plans were made.

About 1/3 of the way through our time in the canal I became aware that the cockroaches were also climbing on me. As with the youth, they would crawl up my legs. I would flip them off my legs with my fingers, as I had seen the youth doing. At one point in time I could see one crawling up my arm, from my shoulder. I flicked it off as well. During Florin’s conversation with M80, M81 grabbed a cockroach that was crawling up the wall and carried it over to me. I was really hoping that he would not hand it to me, because I knew I would have a very difficult time taking this bug in my hand. He did not. He just showed it to me and threw it on the ground. Towards the end of the conversation I felt a cockroach fall on my head. I could feel it crawling around in my hair. I reach up and grabbed it and threw it on the ground.

F25 shared with us that she too has a place off the streets to live.
She indicated that her mother has 2 houses. Florin asked her why she is not staying there. F25 stated that she did not stay there because she did not want to. She went on to share that she has a sister who is married to a police colonel - her brother in law has a high rank in the Police. (Florin later shared with me that he felt she only shared the information about her brother-in-law who has a high rank in the police in order to brag. He questioned whether or not it was true).

F25 continued to share various stories. She noted that she sometimes begs for money/food. She also shared that she use to stay at site4 - that she had a lot of friends there. F25 indicated that these friends had had a lot of problems with the police. It should be noted that she talked continuously but did not give very much depth of information.

F25 also shared that she has to appear in the Court of Justice. She explained that her last boyfriend (M82) is in prison right now. She indicated that the police came about a month ago to take him from the canal and wanted to arrest him even though he didn’t do anything. She stated that the police accused M82 of beating up an officer even though he did not. F25 noted that this is how M82 ended up in prison. F25 stated that she would be serving as a witness. She noted that after she testifies as a witness, she wants to go to an Obstetrician /Gynecologist and have some tests done to see if the baby is all right.

For the largest part of Florin’s conversation with the youth, M81 either interacted with F26 or sat on the bed. It was not until the end of the conversations that he expressed a need. He shared with Florin that he was having problems with his teeth and wanted to see a dentist. Florin stated that they would try to take him to a dentist but he did not know when - there were a lot of problems to take care of. While he was talking M80 whispered that M81 a little bit crazy. He made funny faces and twirled his finger in a circle towards his head.

Florin stated that he had heard that F2 was using drugs and asked the youth if they ever used drugs. F25 and M80 stated that they had tried injectable drugs once or twice. They also indicated that they know about the problems/dangers of using drugs so they have not done it very often. Florin reviewed some of the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>has 2 houses - does not stay there because she does not want to</th>
<th>Relative high rank in police-why is this site not protected?? Why do they not have a better relationship with the police like site2?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Begging - Begs for $$/food</td>
<td>Change in living location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law enforcement - Youth have problems with the police</td>
<td>Couple - Last boyfriend in prison-she has to testify in court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence - Accused of beating up a police officer-F25 says not true</td>
<td>Health - F25 wants to see OBGYN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health - M81 wants to see a dentist</td>
<td>Florin: not sure when - Foundation Assistance - sometimes assist the youth, sometimes do not... what makes the difference?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M80: M81 a little crazy - joking/play</td>
<td>Drug Use - F25 &amp; F80 have tried drugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction Problems/dangers with</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
problems/dangers with them. He noted that the drugs were very addictive and that they could catch a disease if they all used the same needle. F25 stated that she also knew that F2 had used these drugs once or twice - she noted that there were two people who lived in the canal that use the drugs all the time. Florin asked which drugs they were using. F25 indicated that they were using cocaine and heroine. Both F25 and M80 stated that they would not use the drugs again.

When M80 spoke, he continued to be quite animated. As he spoke about the drugs, he stood up and demonstrated how the youth in the canal area would inject drugs into their arms. He made facial expressions of pain during the injection part and then walked around the room mimicking high behavior (stumbling, goofy smile). Everyone in the canal laughed.

About this time another young man came down into the canal. He was carrying a bag full of food. (Florin later shared that this young man was M83. Florin indicated that M83 is a little boss on the street and he takes care of the youth. Florin further stated that he knew M83 from site2 - M83 had visited there before when Florin was there and he met him.) M83 handed the bag to F25 and told her to be careful with it because there was some cheese in the bag and it might get damaged. I could also see a loaf of bread sticking out of the top of the bag. M83 came over to where we were sitting and shook our hands. He then went over and sat by F25.

Florin stated that we should probably be going and we headed up the ladder out of the canal. F25 followed us. She told Florin that she wanted to be able to get the allocation for her daughter, F26 so she could buy her some clothes. Florin told her that she only needed an ID and F26’s birth certificate - she had both of them. F25 thanked us for visiting and shook our hands. We said goodbye. We left site9 at 1:05.

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**problems/dangers with them.**

**Drugs**

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**Resource - allocation**

This whole experience was very difficult for me. The smell was overwhelming; the smell of garbage and human waste, being surrounded by bugs that were constantly crawling on my legs and on my arms, falling on my head. It was difficult to hear the stories being shared by F25, about all the children that she had had and how they had died and her struggles around that. I started to feel myself numbing out; to feel myself detaching in some way, trying to cope with the different
things that I was experiencing.

I wanted to jump up and scream and cry and shake all the bugs off me and stamp around and climb up out of there and brush myself off. I felt like I was being surrounded by and covered by bad things; not just the bugs, also the smell and the stories - like all my senses were being attached at once. I sat there, literally trying to detach from the experience. I kept saying to myself - surely this is not real. I kept taking deep breaths. I could feel myself being overwhelmed and wanting to get sick - to pass out.

Then I would tell myself that these children; these youth lived down here. I found myself experiencing disbelief as I observed little F26 walking across these cockroaches and sitting down, perhaps on them, as she flicked through her magazine. When the cockroaches crawled on her she did not seem dismayed. She just flicked them off her legs as well. I realized that this was part of their life. There I was having a difficult time coping with their reality for the 45 minutes I was in it.

In many ways I was surprised by my reaction. As a social worker I have been in
many houses with bugs, had experienced many bad odors and have heard numerous tragic recountings of people's lives. Yet I have never responded physically or emotionally like I did to this experience.

I was convinced that I had bugs in my hood that were crawling in my hair. Several hours after the experience I continued to feel as if bugs were on me that were not really there. I had to take deep breaths. When I got home that evening, I had a very difficult time; I was very jumpy. I felt very overwhelmed inside, emotionally.

Once I was able to step back from the experience and really think about it beyond myself, I found myself being incredibly tearful at the life that these youth had to live; the environment that they live in; where they go to get warm, into the bowels of the earth, into the sewer, where it smells bad and they are surrounded by things like these bugs. I was overwhelmed by how much strength they had; inner strength, in order to live in this kind of context. I had asked myself before: How do they stand the cold; how do they deal with the cold? Well, how do they deal with it all? How do they deal with the loss
of children? How do they deal with the pain of toothaches? How do they keep from getting terribly sick from breathing the toxic fumes in the sewer?

I had a brief taste of their lives today, as I was down in the canal. I, myself, was numbing out in order to cope.

Florin not planning on going back inside canal
Appendix H: Interview Schedule
Interview Schedule

Opening Prompt

If I were to come and stay with you on the street, in preparation, what would be some of the most important things for me to know?

Resource Acquisition

For each question the researcher probed for interface with other street youth, as well as the informal and formal environment.

Would I need money? What would I need money for? How would I go about getting money?

Would I be able to eat every day? What would I need to do to get food?

Where would I stay in the daytime?

Would I be able to find a place to sleep? Where would I sleep? How would I find a place to sleep?

Would I have to move? How would I know that it was time to move?

What would I need to know to stay healthy?

What would I do if I got hurt?

What would I do if I got pregnant?

What if I wanted to go to school?

What should I do if the police come? What should I know about the police?

Trust/Reciprocity

What if you are not around and I am all alone?

Would others share their things with me? Would it be important for me to share anything with others?

Who will I be able to count on the most? The least?
How will I know who is safe/not safe?

Norms/Sanctions

If someone new were to come to the street and want to stay with you and your group, how would that decision get made? (Who would decide? What would be considered?)

What would the group expect from him/her?

What would happen if they did not meet the expectations?

Past Trajectory

How is it that you came to be on the street?

Summary/Closing Questions

What are the best things about staying on the street?

What are the biggest challenges?

I would like to thank you for taking so much of your time to sit in talk with me. I have been asking a lot of questions. Is there anything you would like to ask me?

Is there anything else you would like to share or think I should know before we end?

Thank you!
Appendix I: Codes and Descriptions
Codes and Descriptions

- **Access** - (to the group) Relates to boundary permeability

- **Accountability** - Held to standards of behavior for actions or words. Could be related to youth, NGO, state institution (casa/camin, hospital), police or government.

- **Adaptive Misrepresentation** - A functional story that is ‘made-up’, or behavior engaged in (how ‘lying’ is used); can be on an individual, institutional or societal level

- **Advocacy** - Defends/works on behalf of own ‘cause’ or the ‘cause’ of another

- **Agency.X** - Ability to act on own or others behalf; self-directedness
  - Need-meeting/Autonomy (self/others)
  - Protection (self/others)
  - Restricted - something interferes with a youth’s ability to use their agency (connected to category of boundary)

- **Altruism** - Concern for or dedication to the welfare or interests of others.

- **Appointment Keeping** - did/not show up, was/not on time

- **Assessing/Assessment** - Appraising a person or situation; asking questions to gain a better understanding of motives, intentions, purpose, etc.

- **Attachment** - attachment states per attachment theory

- **Boundaries.X** - Some type of limiting or intervening behavior, circumstance, decision, rule whether by an individual or a formal or societal system (could be social norms, physical, formal rules)
- Controlling Expectation: being sure to not promise things, presenting ‘realistic’ picture to youth

- Police

- Policy
  o Institutional: re age and staying in a camin/casa (orphanage)
  o My Research: Saying no to giving on the street/my policy about no giving
  o My Research.Youth: When a youth asks me for something, another youth indicates that I cannot give/shares my ‘policy’

- Separation: Physical/walking away; drawing a ‘boundary’; turning back while huffing

• Bridging.X - A unidirectional connecting or gaining access to resources that one does not have immediate access to or that one ensures or attempts to ensure the other gains access to; goes beyond sharing

  - Formal.X: Institution, NGO, Goverment
    o Birth Certificate
    o Education
    o Foundation
    o Housing
    o Hygiene (the ability to get clean; access to shower)
    o ID
    o Information
    o Job
    o Material (clothes, food, money; things)
    o Medical
    o Recreation
    o Unique (certain groups of youth have special relationship with the police; foundation helping the youth to write a letter/helping them to get married if they want)

  - Informal.X: Other persons in environment (i.e., persons selling stuff at local kiosk, stores; persons who live in neighborhood)
    o Housing
    o Education
    o Information
    o Job
    o Material
    o Medical

  - Me: I serve as the bridge

  - Youth: Youth bridge for me and each other
• **Change in Status** - to or from the street

• **Coping** - How youth indicates (or I observe) they deal with psychological issues faced
  - Music
  - Relationships
  - Spirituality
  - Substance Use

• **Criminal Activity** - Any behavior identified as illegal in Romania.

• **Desire and Reality** - Differentiation between what is desired by youth and what is possible due to the reality of circumstances (either youth identified or other identified).

• **Disruption** - Internal (within group) or external (outside of group, e.g., police or government action) that brings about a change in living situations/relationships.

• **Durability** - How long a particular group of youth have been staying together.

• **Emotion** - Expression of emotion (both presence and absence)

• **Empathy** - Capacity for participating in or understanding the feelings/experiences of another.

• **Family** - mention of/reference to family

• **Foreigners** - mention of/reference to foreigners

• **Friends** - mention of/reference to someone as a friend

• **Gender** - Statements or actions where gender differentials are explicit

• **Geographic Characteristics** - Street or other (e.g., apartment block hallways, utility building) and surrounding area.
• **Gift** - circumstances when a gift (identified as gift) is given

• **Government Intervention** - Government actions directed towards the youth/NGOs (includes police)

• **Group Conflict** - Disputes, disagreements, altercations (verbal and physical)

• **Group Rules/Expectations** - Norms; explicit and implicit

• **Group Size** - number of youth living together in one location

• **Health** - concerns or conditions

• **Hierarchy** - Place/status in group - spoken or witnessed

• **Holiday** - youth identified/reference to a holiday; includes thoughts, feelings about and activities/how celebrated

• **Institutional Conditions** - youth’s/NGO staff description of; includes NGOs and other institutions

• **Law Enforcement** - References to or whenever involved in a situation/present during an interaction.

• **Living Conditions** - Conditions of “housing”

• **Loss** - youth make reference to the death of someone

• **Media** - youth make reference to the media

• **Mobility** - movement among and between sites, cities, countries

• **Music** - any reference to or experience with music.
- **Past Trajectory** - historical antecedents, how the youth came to the street

- **Reciprocity** - An exchange leading to mutual benefit (one side could happen later)

- **Relationality.X** - Something done relational in nature
  - Care-taking: Exploitative or non-exploititative
  - Expectations: Behaving/acting in such a way because they know it is expected; putting away aurolac when NGO staff come to the scene (possibly a part of adaptive misrepresentation; what is the ‘true kid’?)
  - Including: inviting behaviors (especially as relates to ‘outsiders’ - persons not form the group)
  - Instrumental: Behaving/acting a specific way in order to get something (i.e., taking off clothes to ‘get ready’ to go to an NGO for clothes; appearing more ‘needy’) (possibly a part of adaptive misrepresentation)
  - Knowing: Relational, have knowledge of someone, person/NGO (appears to be an important issues as relates to trust)
  - Physical Contact: Handshakes, hugs, looping arms
  - Play: Joking, banter
  - Sociability: More extroverted personality traits
  - Trust: Expressed trust/lack of trust

- **Resource.X** - any resource
  - Animal
  - Appearance
  - Education
  - Important Papers (e.g., birth certificate, ID)
  - Intelligence: problem-solving skills, street smarts, as well as ability to write, read, etc
  - Job
- Material (e.g., food, clothing, blankets, CD player/CDs, cooking supplies, earrings/jewelry, mattresses, lamp, personal photos, phone cards, etc.)
- Medical
- Police - the police are a resource for some groups/have a special relationship with them
- Recreation
- Reputation - youth’s street/group reputation
- Safety - ability to be safe
- Sleeping Location (public spaces - metros, grass; semi-private spaces - block balcony, hallways, basement, roof; private - utility building)
- Weapon

- **Resource-Generation Methods**
  - Begging: Begging behavior with the goal of acquiring something
  - Bribery
  - Buying
  - Garbage: scavenging for something
  - Inquiry: Asking someone about the possibility of assistance (can include NGO assessment of need/asking questions to assess need)
  - Instrumental Exchange (tit for tat)
  - Intimidation: Threatening; exploitation
  - Sex Industry/Prostitution
  - Selling
  - Stealing
  - Working (formal or informal)

- **Respect** - To feel or show esteem or regard to.
• **Sanctions** - How youth respond to youth ‘mesbehavior’

• **Schedule** - Youth’s references ton a schedule that they keep

• **Self-esteem** - youth’s references to self-perception

• **Sexuality** - youth’s references to sex, sexual relationships, experiences, assaults, exploitation

• **Sharing** - A unidirectional giving of something that one has immediate access to; with information one does not ensure access to the resource

• **Sociability** - Outgoing personality vs. introversion, on a continuum

• **Spirituality** - Youth’s references to spiritual things; spiritual rituals or symbols (i.e., icons, Bible)

• **Stigmatization** - labeling or not labeling persons and/or motivations

• **Structure** - How the youth in a give are organize themselves (characteristics and dynamics).

• **Substance Use** - any (witnessed or shared)

• **Time on Street** - amount of time on the street

• **Transparency** - being overt; mostly related to my stance on the street; being transparent about who I am, why I am there, answering questions honestly about myself, etc.

• **Trust** - speaking of; response to interview questions

• **Vacation** - Youth-identified
• **Violence.** X - occurrence of any violence - victim or perpetrator (not yet broken down in the computer; what follows would be the sub-categories of violence)
  - Within group violence
    - Type (physical, sexual, etc.)
    - ‘Motive’ (what appeared to lead to the violence)
    - Target (victim)
    - Source (perpetrator)
  - Outside group violence
    - Type (physical, sexual, etc.)
    - ‘Motive’ (what appeared to lead to the violence)
    - Target (victim)
    - Source (perpetrator)

• **Youth Perspectives.** X - Youth’s overtly shared perceptions/opinions/thoughts (e.g., foundations, government, law enforcement, help/assistance, foreigners, other youth).
  - Foreigners
  - Foundations
  - Future
  - Government
  - Help/Assistance
  - Law Enforcement
  - Me
  - Other Youth
  - Street Life
Appendix J: Typology Dimensions
## Typology Dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Dimension</th>
<th>Typology A</th>
<th>Typology B</th>
<th>Typology C</th>
<th>Typology D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Characteristic</td>
<td>Permanent physical dwelling embedded in neighborhoods</td>
<td>Semi-permanent physical dwelling near public transit sites</td>
<td>Permanent physical dwelling near public transit sites</td>
<td>Dispersion on streets at public transit sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attributes</td>
<td>Privacy, security and control over living space</td>
<td>Moderate visibility and minimal security and control over living space.</td>
<td>Minimal visibility and moderate security and control over living space.</td>
<td>High visibility and a lack of security and control over living space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formation Dimension</td>
<td>Network organized via a vertical structure</td>
<td>Network organized via a vertical structure</td>
<td>Network organized via a horizontal structure</td>
<td>No network; youth are unstructured and do not form and live in groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Boss achieved and maintains position through coercive power</td>
<td>Leader achieved position through expert power; maintains through legitimate authority</td>
<td>Relationships among equals maintained through mutuality and cooperation</td>
<td>No structure to maintain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Rigid boundaries</td>
<td>Semi-permeable boundaries</td>
<td>Semi-permeable boundaries</td>
<td>Open boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durability</td>
<td>Some group members together 10+ years</td>
<td>Some group members together 6 years</td>
<td>Some group members together 10+ years</td>
<td>Individual time ranges from a couple of days to 15+ years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Substance Dimension</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Norms</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rigid norms strictly enforced</td>
<td>Embedded norms modeled</td>
<td>Manifest norms taught</td>
<td>Impuissant norms</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rule Structure</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rigid structure</td>
<td>Tolerant structure</td>
<td>Developmental structure</td>
<td>Impaired structure</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nature of Relationships</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Value determined extrinsically; relationships are instrumental</td>
<td>Value determined intrinsically; relationships are symbiotic</td>
<td>Value determined intrinsically and extrinsically; relationships are discriminating</td>
<td>Value determined extrinsically; relationships are unsustainable</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Trust</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Disabled trust</td>
<td>Responsive trust</td>
<td>Acquired trust</td>
<td>Reactive trust</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reciprocity and Cooperation</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Obligated reciprocity and cooperation</td>
<td>Communal reciprocity and cooperation</td>
<td>Mutual reciprocity and cooperation</td>
<td>Utilitarian reciprocity and cooperation</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K: Cast of Participants by Typology
Cast of Participants by Typology

Typology A

Site 2

Calu (M; age 20)
Time on Street: 8 years
Past Trajectory: Mother gave him and his brother to their grandmother when a toddler per poverty, grandmother gave to orphanage; ran away with brother (Roman)

Roman (M; age 18)
Time on Street: 8 years
Past Trajectory: Mother gave him and his brother to their grandmother when a toddler per poverty, grandmother gave to orphanage; ran away with brother (Calu)

Flori (F; age 18)
Time on Street: 13 years
Past Trajectory: Domestic violence in the home; left with brother (Romica); spent time in orphanage

Other youth who live in their group:

Daniel (M) - Group Boss
Catalin (M) - Gabriel’s brother
Ciobi (M)
Gabriel (M) - Catalin’s brother
Patron (M)
Romica (M) - Flori’s brother
Octavia (F)

Site 23

Iulian (M; age 23) - Group Boss
Time on the street: 13 years
Past Trajectory: On street with family; mother lost home per poverty; spent time in orphanage

Reluca (F; age 12)
Time on the street: 12 years
Past Trajectory: Born on the street; on street with family; grandmother lost home per poverty; spent time in orphanage
Other youth who live in their group:
Magdalena (F) - Iulian’s “wife”
Cristi (M) - Iulian’s nephew
Flori (F) - Iulian’s mother
Ionuti (M) - Iulian’s nephew
Lenuta (F) - Iulian’s sister
Vali (M) - Iulian’s brother

Typology B

Site 9

Adrian (M; age 20)
Time on the street: 5 years
Past Trajectory: Stepfather physically abusing his mother because of him; left home so she would not suffer

Cornel (M; age 21) - Group Leader
Time on the street: 11 years
Past Trajectory: Family struggling financially; left home to not be a hardship

Nicu (M; age 13)
Time on the street: 4 years
Past Trajectory: Father died and stepfather physically abusive; left home and now cannot return; spent time in orphanage

Other youth who live in their group:
Alexandra (F) - Geanina’s daughter
Ana (F)
Dan (M) - Lili’s “husband”
Daniel (M)
Elena (F)
Geanina (F) - Alexandra’s mother
Tannasse (M)
Vali (M)
Lili (F) - Dan’s “wife”

Site 16

Adi (M; age 18)
Time on the street: 7 years
Past Trajectory: Mom alcoholic; dad died when he was 4; stepfather did not want him; stayed at neighbors and then met friends on street and started spending more and more time there

Maria (F; age 17)
Time on the street: 4 years
Past Trajectory: Mother died; step mother did not want her; spent time in orphanage

Romica’s “wife”

Other youth who live in their group:

Audi (M)                      Florin (M)                      Romica (M) - Group Leader;
Chiorcea (M)                  Marius (M)                     Maria’s “husband”
Claudiu (M)                   

Site 25

Alin (M; age 17)
Time on the street: 6 years
Past Trajectory: A lot of conflict with his brother; made friends on the street

Claudiu (M; age 14)
Time on the street: 6 years
Past Trajectory: Spent first few years in an orphanage; was adopted and adoptive father beat him; left home to avoid abuse

Radu (M; age 17) - Group Leader
Time on the street: 13 years
Past Trajectory: Came to train station with father on business and made friends; father died; mom on 3rd husband does not want him; spent time in orphanage

Other youth who live in their group:

Judy Monkey (F)              Petronel (M)                 Roxana (F)
Typology C

Site 3

Consuela (F; age 22)
   Time on the street: 13 years
   Past Trajectory: Snuck out to beg to help family with food and money; made friends and stayed on street

Edi (M; age 25)
   Time on the street: 18 years
   Past Trajectory: Mom separated from father and very poor; Edi and brother (Vlad) elected to leave home to relieve financial stress

Other youth who live in their group:

| Alex (M) | Marius (M) | Laurențiu (M) |
| ---       |            |               |
| Catalin (M) | Mihaela (F) - | Mihaela’s “husband” |
| Claudia (F) | Laurențiu’s “wife” | Rubina (F) |
| Florența (F) | | Vlad (M) - Edi’s brother |

Site 5

Cristi (M; age 15)
   Time on the street: 6.5 years
   Past Trajectory: Father died; stepfather kicked him out; mother writes to him; on street with his brothers Gabi and Viorel (his twin)

Gabi (M; age 12)
   Time on the street: 6.5 years
   Past Trajectory: Father died; stepfather kicked him out; mother writes to him; on street with his brothers Cristi and Viorel

Viorel (M; age 15)
   Time on the street: 6.5 years
   Past Trajectory: Father died; stepfather kicked him out; mother writes to him; on street with his brothers Cristi (his twin) and Gabi
Other youth who live in their group:

Al Capone (M)  Elvis (M)
Costel (M)  Pirau (M)

Site 22

Andrei (M; age 13)
  Time on the street: 6 years
  Past Trajectory: Father died; stepfather did not want him and kicked him out

Costell (M; age 13)
  Time on the street: 7.5 years
  Past Trajectory: Came to street for first time with a cousin who forced him to steal; made friends and stayed

Other youth who live in their group:

Istrite (M)  Nelu (M)

Typology D

Site 4

Alina (F; 26 years)
  Time on the street: 9 years
  Past Trajectory: Grew up in orphanage; physically abused by other children; kicked out when turned 18

Augustin (M; 20 years)
  Time on the street: 17 years
  Past Trajectory: Mother an alcoholic; came to street to escape physical abuse in the home; lost track of parents

Costin (M; 17 years)
  Time on the street: 2 years
  Past Trajectory: Stepmother an alcoholic; came to street to escape physical abuse in the home

680
Eugene (M; age 12)
   Time on the street: 4 years
   Past Trajectory: Grew up an orphanage; ran away per abuse

Nicolae (M; age 22)
   Time on the street: 10 years
   Past Trajectory: Father physically abused him; friends invited him and
   thought it would be better on the street

Sandu (M; age 18)
   Time on the street: 9.5 years
   Past Trajectory: Taken to orphanage when little; left when parents quit
   visiting

Other youth who live in the area:

Bogdan (M)  George (M)  Melinda (F)
Ciobi (M)    Gigi (M)    Nicoleta (F)
Claudiu (M)  Ilia (M)    Ovidiu (M)
Constantin (M)  Ion (M)  Rokeru (M)
Cristina (F)  Liviu (M)  Vali (M)
Flecia (F)    Marietta (F)  Vatafu (M)

Site 12

Doru (M; age 15)
   Time on the street: 6 years
   Past Trajectory: Physically abused in home; taken to an orphanage when
   little

Placa (M; age 17)
   Time on the street: 7 years
   Past Trajectory: Physically abused in home; taken to an orphanage when
   little and left per abuse by older children; wants to go
   home but mother no longer accepts him

Other youth who live in the area:

Dimitru (M)  Liviu (M)  Ramona (F)
Gigi (M)     Mariana (F)  Ramos (M)
Gina (F)     Marius (M)  Rares (M)
Irina (F)    Marius Mic (M) - little Marius
Appendix L: Material Resources by Typology
# Material Resources by Typology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Typology A</th>
<th>Typology B</th>
<th>Typology C</th>
<th>Typology D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clothing</strong></td>
<td>Seasonal, designer clothes</td>
<td>Seasonal clothes</td>
<td>Seasonal clothes</td>
<td>Worn and tired-looking clothes, often unseasonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Various pairs of shoes (boots, tennis shoes,</td>
<td>Tennis shoes</td>
<td>Various pairs of shoes (tennis, sandals)</td>
<td>Worn-out shoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>slippers for indoors)</td>
<td>Coats</td>
<td>Coats</td>
<td>Some youth have coats and some do not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coats</td>
<td>Purse</td>
<td>Seasonal clothes</td>
<td>Bottle of pop/cup of coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food</strong></td>
<td>Beans</td>
<td>Bread</td>
<td>Bread</td>
<td>Bottle of pop/cup of coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beer</td>
<td>Cartons/cans of food</td>
<td>Cheese</td>
<td>Bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bread</td>
<td>Cheese (hard and spreadbale)</td>
<td>Coca-Cola (liter bottles)</td>
<td>Cookies/crackers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bubble gum</td>
<td>Chocolate</td>
<td>Eggs</td>
<td>Fast food (e.g., McDonalds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cartons/cans of food</td>
<td>Coliva</td>
<td>Fast food (kabob, pizza, soarma)</td>
<td>Fruit (e.g., apples)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Champaign</td>
<td>Cookies</td>
<td>Gum</td>
<td>Pastries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cheese</td>
<td>Fruit (e.g., apples)</td>
<td>Meat (salami, baloney, mici, sausage)</td>
<td>Potato chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooking oil</td>
<td>Hardboiled eggs</td>
<td>Sarmale (cabbage, meat, rice)</td>
<td>Slanina (pig fat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fruits</td>
<td>Meat (sausage, sliced meat)</td>
<td>Soup</td>
<td>Sunflower seeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jars of jam</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>Yogurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jars of pickles</td>
<td></td>
<td>(i.e., tomatoes, cucumbers)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Juice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ketchup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lentils</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meat (slices, mici, chicken)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Milk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mustard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vegetables (i.e., potatoes, carrots, onions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household</strong></td>
<td>Air fresheners</td>
<td>Beds/mattresses</td>
<td>Beds/mattresses</td>
<td>Blanket (from time to time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items</td>
<td>Bed/mattresses</td>
<td>Pillows</td>
<td>Blankets</td>
<td>Cardboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blankets</td>
<td>Candles</td>
<td>Sheets</td>
<td>Van seats (near garbage pile)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bucket</td>
<td>Clock</td>
<td>Pillows</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clothesline</td>
<td>Dishes</td>
<td>Towels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dishes (e.g., mugs, plates, silverware)</td>
<td>(plates, cups, silverware)</td>
<td>Cooking utensils (pots, pans)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Holiday-specific décor (e.g., Santa Clause)</td>
<td>Shovel</td>
<td>Dishes (plates, cups, silverware)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Icons</td>
<td></td>
<td>Grill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lamps</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bucket</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Magnets</td>
<td></td>
<td>Basin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Metal Cabinet</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dish soap</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Curtains</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

683
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene</td>
<td>Condoms, Hair dye, Razor, Toilet paper, Shower buff, Soap, Toothbrushes</td>
<td>Toilet paper</td>
<td>Toilet paper, Laundry detergent, Soap, Shampoo, Toothpaste, Condoms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational</td>
<td>CD Player, CDs and tapes, Television, DVD Player, Walkman/earphones</td>
<td>Magazines, Soccer ball, Simple toys (i.e., airplane, gun)</td>
<td>Walkman/Earphones, Radio/CD Player, Tapes/CDs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Craft supplies (rarely), Magazines/newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Cell phone, Jewelry/watch, Personal photographs in albums, Stuffed animals, Padlocks, Paint/paint brushes</td>
<td>Personal photographs</td>
<td>Personal photographs, Cell phone, Phone card (for payphone), Pens/pencils, Envelops, Paper, Stamps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix M: Foundations Mentioned by Youth during In-depth Conversations
Foundations Mentioned by Youth during In-depth Conversations

ARAS
Asociatia Romana Anti-Sida (Romanian Association against AIDS)

ARAS provides preventative services (i.e., education and the distribution of condoms) and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases. Services are offered on the street.

Website: http://www.arasnet.ro/

Archway

Archway programs include a residential center and a street program. Through the residential center youth receive temporary housing, education, medical services, counseling and reintegration. The street program affords youth material aid (e.g., food, clothing), medical services, counseling, assistance with identity papers and support in finding employment. Services are offered on the street and through their center.

Website: http://www.fundatiaarchway.ro/

ASIS

ASIS programs include a residential program and a street program. Through the residential center youth receive temporary housing, education/training, counseling, reintegration and transitional support. The street program affords youth medical aid, assistance with identity papers, access to education/training and vocational support. Services are offered on the street and through their center.

Website: http://www.asis-ong.ro/EN/index.html

Casa Cana

Casa Cana is a day center that provides youth with a hot meal, material aid (e.g., clothing), medical services and access to bathing facilities. Services are offered through their center.

Website:
City of Hope (Associated with Perton Christian Fellowship)

City of Hope is a day center that provides youth with a hot meal and material aid (e.g., clothing). They also organize recreational opportunities (e.g., art, drama, sports) through the center and throughout the city. Services are offered on the street and through their center.

Website:  http://www.churches.lichfield.anglican.org/rugeley/hednesford/romania.html

Concordia

Concordia programs include a street program, a residential center and a training program. The purpose of the street program is to develop relationships with youth and serve as a bridge for youth to Concordia’s residential center and training program. Through the residential center (Lazarus) youth receive medical care, clean clothing, food and consultations, in addition to sanitation facililites and a place to sleep. They also receive assistance with obtaining identification paperts and participate in a back-to-school program to prepare them for re-entry into public schooling. The training program affords youth an opportunity to obtain apprenticeship training in trade fields (e.g., baker, carpenter, agricultural assistant) and vocational orientation. Services are offered on the street and through their center.

Website:  http://www.concordia.or.at/concordia_en/

Heart to Hand

Heart to Hand is a day center that provides youth with material aid (e.g., food, clothing) and medical supplies (e.g., medications, bandages). Services are offered through their center.

Website:  http://www.hearttohand.net/

In As Much

In As Much is a residential center for expectant and new mothers. The program affords youth housing, medical treatment, mental health counseling, vocational support, transitional assistance into permanent housing and follow-up support. Youth are identified on the street and services are offered through their center.

Website:  No website located
Life and Light

Life and Light programs include a day center and a residential center. The day center provides youth with a hot meal, material aid (e.g., clothing) and medical supplies (e.g., medications, bandages) and assistance. Youth identified for the residential program are afforded temporary housing, vocational support, transitional assistance into permanent housing and follow-up support. Services are offered through their center.

Website:  No website located

Parada

Parada programs include a street program, a day center and a residential center. The street program is geared toward meeting emergent needs (e.g., medical). The day center provides youth with material aid (e.g., clothing), recreational opportunities and vocational training. Youth identified for the residential program are afforded temporary housing, vocational support and reintegration (e.g., back into their family, into the community) support. Services are offered on the street and through their center.

Website:  http://www.paradaromania.ro/

Pro Vita

Pro Vita is a program for expectant and new mothers. The program affords youth housing, medical treatment and support throughout pregnancy and after the birth of their baby. Services are offered through their center.

Website:  http://provitabucuresti.ro/english/provita-association/provita-bucharest

Save the Children, Romania

Primarily an advocacy and policy organization, Save the Children, Romania also provides an educational program related to sexually transmitted diseases and connects youth to programs throughout the city as emergent needs arise. Most services are offered through their center; targeted educational programs are offered on the street.

Website:  http://www.savethechildren.net/romania_en/
Saint Lazarus

Saint Lazarus provides youth with material aid (e.g., food, clothing) and connects youth with necessary programs to meet emergent critical needs (e.g., medical). Services are offered through their center.

Website: http://www.lazarus.ro/indexEN.html

Saint Macrina

Saint Macrina programs include a street program, a day center, a training program and a residential center. In the street program teams go to the street to establish relationships with the youth and serve as a bridge to other programs. The day center provides breakfast and lunch, material aid (e.g., clothing), medical assistance and educational activities. Youth identified for the residential program are afforded temporary housing, educational reintegration, mental health counseling and vocational support. The training program affords professional preparation for life (e.g., managing a household) and vocation (e.g., finding a job). Services are offered on the street and through their center.

Website: www.sfmacrina.rdslink.ro

Saint Stelian

Saint Stelian provides youth with material aid (e.g., food, clothing) and connects youth with necessary programs to meet emergent critical needs (e.g., medical). Services are offered through their center.

Website: www.sfstelian.ro