Every Flavor Beans: Children Constructing Meaning in a Responsibility-Based Program

DISSERTATION

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Abstract

Children who grow up in poverty are more likely to be exposed to prolonged and cumulative stress, which can lead to several risk factors (Fraser, Kirby, & Smokowski, 2004; Garmezy, 1993). They are more likely to have negative life outcomes such as poor academic achievement, lack of a sustained familial support structure, emotional distress, and behavioral struggles (Fraser et al., 2004; Garmezy, 1993; Gonzales, George, Fernandez, & Huerta, 2005; Halpern, 1999; Kalil & Ziol-Guest, 2008; Li, Nussbaum, & Richards, 2007). Common programs, such as 4-H, the Boys and Girls Club, and the YMCA, provide viable options for children to negotiate such potential negative outcomes and contribute to building protective factors. After-school programs are one of the most prominent strategies in promoting positive youth development.

The Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) program is a common curriculum used in physical education, summer, and after school programs, particularly with underserved minority children (Hellison, 1995; 2003; 2011; Hellison & Martinek, 2006; Hellison & Walsh, 2002). TPSR is a responsibility-based program which can be used as both a preventative measure and an intervention to support a value and belief system that supports prosocial behaviors in children.
There were two purposes of this study: (1) To understand how 2nd and 3rd grade students who are underserved create meaning in a TPSR structured program and transfer TPSR values to the classroom and YMCA afterschool program; and (2) To explore what factors influenced responsible behaviors in 2nd and 3rd grade students participating in a community-based after school program. A case study strategy with a social constructivist perspective and social development theory were used as guides for this study.

Data collection methods included interviews, live and video-taped observations, document analysis, source journals, picture illustrations, researcher journal, and grading reports. Data were analyzed thematically to create both preliminary and advanced codes. In addition, the data was mapped on individually themed poster boards, using different colored post-it notes to represent each data source and determine final thematic representations.

The findings indicated that a TPSR program must be adapted to accommodate children of this age group, by changing the format of the TPSR lesson plan, the activity curriculum, and the discussion time. Most children cognitively understood the responsibility values of TPSR, although they demonstrated it inconsistently throughout the 8-week program. Responsibility values of caring and honesty emerged from the data which was an indicator that these values should be addressed up front in the program and included in the TPSR framework. Findings also indicate that the interactions amongst adults and peers impact participant
behaviors and therefore, adults modeling caring, responsible, and supportive behaviors are of utmost importance to children.
Dedicated to my loving and supportive Mom

and in memory of my Dad
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Attendance

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Children who grow up in poverty are more likely to be exposed to prolonged and cumulative stress, which can lead to several risk factors (Fraser, Kirby, & Smokowski, 2004; Garmezy, 1993). They are more likely to have negative life outcomes such as poor academic achievement, lack of a sustained familial support structure, emotional distress, and behavioral struggles (Fraser et al., 2004; Garmezy, 1993; Gonzales, George, Fernandez, & Huerta, 2005; Halpern, 1999; Kalil & Ziol-Guest, 2008; Li, Nussbaum, & Richards, 2007). In addition, these children tend to have substandard health and well-being outcomes (Perriera & Ornelas, 2011) and often lack access to programs to help mitigate the negative impact of their environments (Fraser et al., 2004; Gonzales et al., 2005; Halpern, 1999; Urban, Lewin-Bizan, & Lerner, 2010). Thus, it is imperative we provide high quality programs to meet these children’s needs and assist in providing them with protective factors to buffer the risk factors they face in their lives.

Nature of Risk and Resiliency

Poverty in the U.S. is on the rise with 15.1% (46.2 million people) of the population living in poverty in 2010, up from 14.3% (43.6 million people) in 2009
Poverty disproportionately affects different ethnic groups with African-American (27.4%) and Hispanic (26.6%) populations having some of the highest poverty rates of all the races residing within the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). The children in these ethnic groups, who grow up in impoverished and disorganized communities, have a higher probability of developing adverse behaviors than their peers of a higher socio-economic status who live in richer and more supportive neighborhoods (Gonzales et al., 2005; Fraser et al., 2004; Zimmerman, Phelps, & Lerner, 2008). These young people have limited access and opportunities to participate in programs that can mediate their physical, emotional, social, and psychological struggles in life (Gonzales et al., 2005; Jarrett, 1999; Larner, Zippiroli, & Behrman, 1999). Providing disadvantaged children with access to relevant, positive youth programs in which they can engage with responsible, supportive adults can enhance their responsibility to themselves and to others (Anderson-Butcher, Cash, Saltzburg, Midle, & Pace, 2004; Anderson-Butcher, Lawson, Fallara, & Furano, 2002; Hellison, 1995; 2003; 2011; Kahne & Bailey, 1999; Scales, Benson, & Mannes, 2006; Urban et al., 2010). Thus, it is vital to provide programmatic support and engagement early in the children’s lives, especially for those who face economic adversity in their neighborhoods.

Behaviors developed during the early years of life, such as in elementary school years, whether negative (e.g. disregard for others feelings, bullying, hitting, verbal abuse) or positive (e.g. helping others, sharing, acceptance of others, respecting the rights and feelings of others) often track into adolescence (Theriot &
Dupper, 2010). If these early behaviors are negative by the time children reach adolescence, the outcomes of these behaviors can manifest into more severe consequences such as injury, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, jail, and/or death (Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001; Li et al., 2007). In addition, unruly and delinquent actions can impact children's peers, parents, teachers, and the society with whom the children interact. Using a developmental approach it makes sense to turn our focus to the promotion of positive behaviors in the early years of childhood (Theriot & Dupper, 2010), particularly for those who are underserved and at-risk for negative physical and social outcomes due to their low socio-economic status.

Consequently, it is imperative for communities to share the responsibility of treating and caring for children (Benson, 1997) by developing programs that are accessible and affordable to youth of all socioeconomic backgrounds (Committee on Environmental Health, 2009; Dryfoos, 1999). Such programs will help mitigate the academic failure, and maladjustment in health and wellness often seen disproportionately in children who are disadvantaged (Benson, 1997; Garmezy, 1993; Halpern et al., 2000; Kahne & Bailey, 1999; Scales et al., 2006). Across the long term it is hoped that such programs will change the likelihood that these children will grow up with an employment history riddled with inadequate salaries and chronic unemployment (Garmezy, 1993) and citizens ill-prepared to contribute in a positive manner to their communities (Benson, 1997; Benson, 1997; Halpern et al., 2000; Kahne & Bailey, 1999; Scales et al., 2006). Hence, it is important to
introduce protective factors early in childhood to mediate the effects of an environment burdened with risks of poverty that can lead to potentially negative developmental outcomes (Eccles, 1999; Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001).

Poverty is a powerful risk factor for children that transcends various contextual environments such as homes, schools, communities, and neighborhoods (Committee on Environmental Health, 2009; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001). Most often, risk factors are cumulative, interrelated and reciprocal, contributing to an increased vulnerability in children over time (Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Gonzales et al., 2005; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001). Structured community programs can temper these risk factors by providing a curriculum in which accountable, compassionate adults promote positive youth development (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2004; Anderson-Butcher et al., 2002; Eccles, 1999; Hartmann, 2003; Kahne & Bailey, 1999; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2000; Scales et al., 2006). Good community programs provide mechanisms that allow children the chance to embark upon an agenda focused on building constructive behaviors through a specified curriculum (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2004; Benson, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003).

Common programs, such as 4-H, the Boys and Girls Club, and the YMCA, provide viable options for children to negotiate such potential negative outcomes and contribute to building protective factors. Protective factors are the positive influences, events, and/or occurrences that counteract risk factors (Fraser &
Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001; Li et al., 2007). Empirical evidence indicates that increasing the amount and level of protective factors for underserved children has been found to boost their chances for resiliency (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2004; Li et al., 2007).

Children who are resilient find ways to adapt to their environmental hardships and emerge from the experience with positive developmental outcomes (Fraser et al., 2004; Hawkins et al., 1992; Smith & Carlson, 1997).

**YMCA program**

The YMCA was the program used for this study. This YMCA program consisted of an after school community program operated out of an underserved elementary school deemed to be in academic emergency, according to the Ohio Department of Education (2009-2010). The mission of the YMCA after school program is to serve the children of the community by fostering personal growth and development in a safe and nurturing environment (YMCA, 2010-2011). The YMCA program was a structured program that encompassed children receiving a snack, doing homework, engaging in themed activities such as science, art, board games, and the program also included physical activity. The YMCA program provided a good site for the implementation of a responsibility-based program. I had volunteered at the site for the previous two years and recognized the need for children to engage in more personally and socially responsible behaviors and enhance their levels of physical activity.
**Teaching personal and social responsibility**

The Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) program is a common curriculum used in physical education, summer, and after school programs, particularly with underserved minority children (Hellison, 1995; 2003; 2011; Hellison & Martinek, 2006; Hellison & Walsh, 2002). TPSR is a responsibility-based program which can be used as both a preventative measure and an intervention to support a value and belief system that supports prosocial behaviors in children. It has the ability to increase the protective factors and resiliency of participants who are at-risk for negative outcomes due to their environmental circumstances (Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2000; Martinek & Hellison, 1997). It aims to empower children to take control of their lives by providing them the chance and space to exhibit responsible behaviors. The program gradually shifts responsibility from the facilitator to the program participants (Hellison & Martinek, 2006; Hellison, 2003; Hellison & Walsh, 2002).

TPSR has four core values in the framework (respect for the rights and feelings of others; participation and effort; self-direction; and helping others and leadership) (Hellison, 1995; 2003; 2011). Not only were these values addressed in the study, but also caring and honesty were two values that emerged in the study. Honesty has not been addressed in any of the TPSR studies, but caring has been addressed in responsibility-based studies. Noddings (1992) noted the importance of teachers creating a caring atmosphere in order for children can learn how to care. These six values can cultivate protective factors to increase resiliency in the
children (Martinek & Hellison, 1997). The TPSR program has a curricular format which includes relational time (e.g. greeting the student upon entering the gym), awareness talk (e.g. inform participants of TPSR core values), the activity (e.g. adventure based learning activities or a sport such as basketball), group time (e.g. discuss activities in a group format), and reflection time (discuss behaviors and transference of positive behaviors to areas outside of the gym, in a group format) (Hellison 1995; 2003; 2011). This format is vital to the efficacy of the TPSR program and engages children in discussions so they have the opportunity to create meaning from those experiences. Additionally this approach provides students with physical activities that provide a forum in which to engage in prosocial behaviors.

TPSR has been implemented with a variety of physical activities from basketball (Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; Hellison & Wright, 2003; Walsh, 2008; 2007; Walsh, Ozaeta, & Wright, 2010) to martial arts (Martinek, Schilling, & Hellison, 2006; Wright & Burton, 2008; Wright, White, & Gaebler-Spira, 2004) to multiple sports (e.g. tennis, lacrosse, soccer, volleyball, fencing) and fitness activities (Cutforth, 1997; DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Gordon, 2010; Martinek, Schilling, & Johnson, 2001; Schilling, Martinek, & Carson, 2007; Schilling, 2001). To date there have been no data-based articles in which researchers used solely cooperative activities in conjunction with a TPSR program. Cooperative activities are those designed to create community in a non-competitive, safe environment through use of collaboration, trust, and open communication (Frank, 2004). They include partner or group tag games, ice-breaker activities (e.g. acquaintance activities), and
activities that empower participants to make decisions for themselves and others (Frank, 2004). There is a strong alignment between the goals and core values of cooperative activities and the goals and core values of TPSR. Cooperative activities and a TPSR program strive to engage children in useful, structured activities that promote positive communication, respect for others, teamwork, and overall prosocial behaviors.

TPSR can be a useful vehicle in assisting children in becoming more responsible citizens, but it requires a clear understanding of the underlying values of TPSR and a sustained commitment to program implementation (Hellison & Walsh, 2002). In the introductory part of a TPSR lesson children are instructed about the core values in an attempt for them to understand (“to know”) each of the values. The main part of the TPSR lesson provides a framework for children to practice (“to do”) these values. Through the use of a debrief process used in TPSR (e.g. group meeting and reflection time), participants are encouraged to then reflect on their behaviors and interactions with others within and outside of the program (Hellison, 1995; 2003; 2011). In particular, facilitators help children reflect on the “knowing” and “doing” aspect of the responsibility values across various contextual circumstances in their lives. Therefore, during discussion times with the participants, the program facilitator promotes the transfer of the learned values to areas outside of the program (e.g. classroom, neighborhood, home) (Hellison, 1995; 2003; 2011). The overall goal of TPSR is for participants to internalize the core TPSR values in order for the values to become part of their belief system and
subsequently transferred from the gymnasium to the classroom, to their homes, to
their communities, and within their peer groups (Hellison, 2003; Hellison & Walsh,
2002).

There is a growing body of empirical evidence (N=27 studies) demonstrating
TPSR programs bring about positive youth development outcomes (Buchanan,
2001; Cecchini, Montero, Alonso, Izquierdo, & Contreras, 2007; Cutforth, 1997;
Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Escarti, Gutierrez, Pascual, &
Llopis, 2010a; Escarti, Gutierrez, Pascual, & Martin, 2010b; Gordon, 2010;
Hammond-Deidrich & Walsh, 2006; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Hellison & Wright,
2003; Lee & Martinek, 2009; Li, Wright, Rukavina, & Pickering, 2008; Martinek,
Schilling, & Hellison, 2006; Martinek, Schilling, & Johnson, 2001; Mowling, Brock, &
Hastie, 2011; Newton, Watson, Kim, & Beacham, 2006; Pascual et al., 2011; Schilling,
Martinek, & Carson, 2007; Schilling, 2001; Walsh, 2007; Walsh, 2008; Walsh, Ozaeta,
& Wright, 2010; Watson, Newton, & Kim, 2003; Wright & Burton, 2008; Wright, Li,
Ding, & Pickering, 2010; Wright, White, & Gaebler-Spira, 2004). Such research
suggests that TPSR is a valuable tool in promoting pro-social behaviors and steering
children towards respectable and responsible adults (Hellison & Walsh, 2002).

Much of this research (50%) has demonstrated that the core values of TPSR were
understood and demonstrated by the program participants (Cecchini et al., 2007;
DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Gordon, 2010; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Hellison &
Wright, 2003; Lee & Martinek, 2009; Martinek et al., 2001; Walsh et al., 2010;
Watson et al., 2003; Wright & Burton, 2008; Wright et al., 2004), but transfer of the
TPSR core values to areas outside of the gym was reported in only three studies (Martinek et al., 2001; Walsh et al., 2010; Watson et al., 2003). In all other studies, transfer was not evident, even though transference is one of the most crucial outcomes of TPSR (Hellison, 2003). Several of the studies found an increase in interpersonal relationships between participants and their peers and the youth staff (Cutforth, 1997; Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Gordon, 2010; Hammond-Deidrich & Walsh, 2006; Schilling et al., 2007).

However, there are a number of limitations within the TPSR literature. All of the empirical studies examined participants older than 3rd grade. In reference to study design, there was no consistent theory or epistemological lens used to provide guidance for the study design, analysis, and write up of the findings. Only three studies (Gordon, 2010; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Walsh et al., 2010) used a constructivist lens which may be valuable in helping situate how individuals make meaning of their worlds through their interactions with others in their environments. Few studies have demonstrated transfer of TPSR core values to areas outside of the gym (e.g. classroom, other programs, home) and those that did had limited outcomes (Martinek et al., 2001; Walsh et al., 2010; Watson et al., 2003). There was limited or no connection evident between the TPSR curriculum implementation and student outcomes in all of the studies. Specifically, programmatic fidelity was evident in only 3 studies (Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Pascual et al., 2011; Walsh, 2008), thus there was no clear indicator that facilitators
delivered the program as intended in their respective studies, an essential step in determining observable responsibility outcomes in participants.

This research study attempted to address a number of the limitations in the TPSR literature. Programmatic fidelity was addressed by following a specific lesson plan and evaluating whether I did what I said I would do during the program. I made an effort to connect the program implementation with participant outcomes as well as promote transfer of TPSR core values to the classroom and the YMCA after school program. Finally, I conducted the study with 2nd and 3rd grade children when typically the TPSR literature has focused on 4th through 10th graders. In addition a social constructivist lens was used so that I could gain an understanding of how the participants made meaning of the TPSR values and the role social interactions amongst peers and adults impacted their understanding. Social Development Theory (SDT) was also used as a theoretical framework for my study design, data collection methods, data analysis, and subsequent write up of the research findings. SDT is grounded in social constructivism, underscoring the importance of culture and context in forming understanding and learning through social processes in peoples’ environments. As products of their environments, children construct their understandings and meanings of the world, based on their experiences within their surrounding environments (Bodrova & Leong, 2007). Both approaches were utilized to situate the study theoretically and increase the richness of the data by capturing the meaning children made of the TPSR values and moreover, how they interpreted and subsequently demonstrated these values. Although the formal
TPSR model originated over 15 years ago, there is much to be explored in this line of research, especially in consideration of valuable outcomes for underserved children.

**Purpose of the study**

There were two purposes of this study: (1) To understand how 2nd and 3rd grade students who are underserved create meaning in a TPSR structured program and transfer TPSR values to the classroom and YMCA afterschool program; and (2) To explore what factors influenced responsible behaviors in 2nd and 3rd grade students participating in a community-based after school program. More specifically, I wanted to know their perceptions regarding the nature of responsibility, the connection between the program implementation and programmatic outcomes, and finally, the extent to which participants internalized the values of TPSR into their belief system transferring them to other parts of their life.

**Research questions**

The specific questions were used to explore my research:

1) To what extent do children understand, make meaning of, and demonstrate the four TPSR core values (respect, effort, self-direction, leadership)?

2) How do individual factors influence the children’s’ learning of the four TPSR core values?

3) To what extent are the four TPSR core values transferred to the classroom and the standard YMCA afterschool program?
**Limitations**

Although the information derived from the study is valuable and useful for practice in the field, the following were the limitations to the study:

1) **Time was a huge limitation in this study.** The study was implemented over an 8-week period, but more weeks were needed to determine the extent to which TPSR values were understood and demonstrated. A high quality youth development program needs to expose children to positive experiences on a consistent basis over time to see changes in participants.

2) **There was limited evaluation of transfer with transfer only being looked at relative to the classroom.** Additionally, the transference of the core values to the classroom used only self-reported data from the teachers and semi-structured interviews. Observations would have been a useful method of data collection to enhance the trustworthiness of the transference data.

3) **Each YMCA staff member was assigned a group of students to track their behaviors over the study period to determine if the TPSR program impacted the participant.** However, written youth staff journals were collected only twice over the 8-week study, a greater frequency of collection would have been valuable. In the beginning of the study, the YMCA site director was released from employment. Therefore, the absence of this staff member did not allow me to collect information on a group of four participants’ behaviors over the study period. Adjustments were made to the number of journals collected from the YMCA staff. Mr. Arthur, the male YMCA member, in his
first year at the YMCA, also was relieved of his position in the last 3 weeks of
the study. Thus, only one journal was obtained from him on the students he
was following in the study.

4) Tracking the participants over time was not a deliberate method of data
collection. Instead this information emerged from the study unintentionally.
Therefore, tracking students over time to determine their understanding and
demonstration of responsible behaviors was limited in this study.

5) One teacher left the school after spring break and another teacher was
unavailable so I was unable to gather a second interview from them.
Therefore, I obtained more information on some children over others.

6) For the children’s interviews, I was able to gather 11 interviews for the first
interview, 9 interviews for the second interview, but only 5 interviews in the
last interview. Children either left the after school program as it came near
to the end of the school year or were unavailable when I arrived to conduct
the interviews. Accordingly, I had limited sustained data across the program
from the child participants.

7) The interviewing process was a limitation in that I was not an expert
interviewer and during the first interviews, I did not obtain as in-depth
information as I would have liked due to my inexperience. Follow up
questions would have been ideal for me to gain a deeper understanding of
the meaning that all participants, both child and adult, were attempting to
convey to me.
8) Recording live field notes was limited in that I had to recall observations and conversations that took place sometimes several hours after the program. This information recall only allowed me to record a few notes, which were helpful in the study, but lacked depth most times. Having a digital voice recorder would have been of great use for recording live field notes to gain more depth and accuracy of observations of and conversations held with the participants.

9) The YMCA after school program site had limited gym space in which to conduct cooperative activities. The space to conduct activities was in the gym which also served as the dining room and the primary site for the after school program serving 30 children.

**Delimitations**

There were several delimitations of this study which determined the boundaries to which this research was held.

1) The participants who participated in the TPSR program were chosen from a pool of 2nd and 3rd grade students who attended one YMCA after school program. Of these 20 children, twelve (12) were selected to participate in the study (group and reflection periods, as well as in the interview process).

2) The participants resided in a poor, underserved community and attended a school that was deemed as academically failing according to the state’s standards. Most (66%) of the participants were Black American students.
3) Due to the time constraints of the researcher, the length of the intervention was restricted to 8 weeks. During this time, the researcher gathered various sources of data (e.g. interviews, observations, informant journals, picture journals) to obtain depth of knowledge. Two sessions per week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, for a total of 15 sessions, lasting approximately 60 minutes each time, accounted for the intervention time. It allowed for the researcher and the participants to have consistent interactions over the length of the study.

4) The TPSR program was bounded by the YMCA program structure that was already in place. The time allowed for the program was limited to the 60 minutes of time allotted for activity and free time within the YMCA’s structure.

5) This research project was delimited to a Midwestern city as this is where the researcher attended school and would be able to feasibly conduct this study.

Definition of terms

*Awareness talk:* A very brief discussion of the core responsibility values at the beginning of the lesson.

*Caring:* A connection between two individuals in which both people are contributing to the relationship by demonstrating empathy, compassion, sensitivity, and inner strength (Hellison, 2011; Noddings, 1992).

*Case Study:* A strategy to research that focuses on in-depth and complex study of the social world of a culture, representing the meanings of the people who live
within it (Somekh & Lewin, 2005). The focus is on an individual person, group, situation, or program and the social activity that takes place within their surrounding environment (Stake, 1995).

Cooperative activities: Activities designed to create community in a non-competitive, safe environment through use of collaboration, trust, and open communication (Frank, 2004).

Core Values of TPSR: (Hellison, 1995; 2003; 2011)

• Respecting the rights and feelings of others: Exhibiting self-control, engaging in peaceful conflict resolution, including people in activities and groups.

• Participation and effort: Self-motivation, discovery of new tasks, perseverance.

• Self-direction: On-task independence, peer pressure resistance, self-responsibility.

• Leadership and helping others: Giving support to and showing concern for others; seeing others’ perspectives and having the ability to step up as a leader, demonstrating confidence.

• Transference: Transferring the core values (previous four bullet points) to settings outside of the program.

Decision-making ability: Opportunities given to children to make choices on gymnasium activities and topics of discussion in group meetings and reflection times of the lessons.
Existing identities: Personal characteristics that are present inherently in participants based on socio-economic status and family background.

Group meeting: Discussion time at the end of the lesson to reflect upon activities during the gymnasium time. This discussion lasts approximately 10 minutes.

Honesty: Integrity and trustworthiness without lying or cheating.

Irresponsible behaviors: Behaviors not in alignment with the teaching personal and social responsibility framework. Such behaviors include disregard and disrespect of others, defying authority figures, and excluding others.

Post-activity discussion: The collective discussion that includes both the group meeting and reflection time.

Prosocial behaviors: Voluntary behaviors that are intended to benefit other people in society. Such behaviors include helping others, respecting the rights and feelings of others, and concern about the welfare of others.

Protective Factors: set of influences that diminish the effects of risks and in some way increase resiliency (Catalano et al, 1999; Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001; Li et al., 2007; Smith & Carlson, 1997).

Resilience: The ability to persevere in obtaining positive health and social outcomes, despite the overwhelming amount of adversity present in one’s life (Fraser et al., 2004; Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001). Resilience cannot exist without risk, as it functions as the interplay between risk and protective factors.
Reflection time: A time after the group meeting for children to reflect upon their behaviors during the gymnasium activities and make behavioral connections to areas outside of the program.

Relational time: Getting to know students on an individual basis either before or after the lesson.

Risk Factors: Cumulative characteristics, events, or processes that increase the likelihood that a child will develop emotional or behavioral problems (Catalano et al., 1999; Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001; Li, Nussbaum, & Richards, 2007; Smith & Carlson, 1997).

Self-control: The ability to control one’s behavior so as not to interfere with other students’ learning and/or participation in activities (Hellison, 2011).

Self-responsibility: Responsibility for own actions; accountability.

Sources: Teachers and youth care staff that work with the participants on a daily basis. They can inform me about the participants so that I can better understand the lives and perceptions of participants. These persons also helped to inform me about how the values of the TPSR program were being transferred into the classroom and the existing YMCA program.

Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR): A dynamic curricular model used to teach responsibility to children and youth in many domains (e.g. after-school program, physical education class, summer program). It encompasses several core values: participation and effort; self-control; self-
direction; helping others; and leadership. The goal of any TPSR program is transference of the core values to other environments (e.g. classroom, neighborhood). (Hellison, 2003; 2011)

TPSR Themes: (Hellison, 1995; 2003; 2011)

- **Integration**: The key elements of responsibility should be embedded within the physical activity curriculum, not taught as a separate curriculum.
- **Empowerment**: Enables the student to make decisions and the teacher to become a facilitator of the learning process rather than a direct instructor.
- **Student-Facilitator Relationship**: A respectful relationship has to exist between the student and the facilitator in order for the program to be successful. This requires the teacher to relinquish power and allow the student the opportunity to be responsible.
- **Transference**: See above definition.

*Underserved children*: Children who do not have the access and opportunity to attend community youth programs because such programs do not exist in their neighborhoods.

*Value and belief system*: Personal ideals based on foundations in ethical and cultural principles.

*Youth*: Children under the age of 18 years old.

*Youth Development*: The life-long natural process through which young people learn to understand and respond to the environment. It is predicated upon families and communities providing active support to young people by creating
structured practices to foster this natural developmental process (Hamilton, Hamilton, & Pittman, 2004).
Chapter 2

Review of Literature

This chapter provides the reader with an overview of the existing literature to better understand the issues within this line of inquiry. The chapter is comprised of five (5) segments. The first segment discusses a social constructivist epistemology and the social development theory, both of which influenced how I viewed this research project. The second segment reviews the status of children and youth today in the United States. The third segment examines risk and resiliency and the impact it has on young people in today’s society, particularly impoverished, underserved minority children and youth. The fourth segment considers youth programming as a potential solution to issues adversely facing young people. The fifth segment suggests teaching personal and social responsibility (TPSR) as a specific curricular model in youth programming to counter the influence of youth risk factors and to teach pro-social behaviors to manage within society.

Epistemology and Theoretical Framework

Social constructivism and social development theory provided guidance to this research study. Specifically, both showed how the researcher viewed the
Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) Model and the design of this study. Social constructivism and social development theory are discussed separately, then tied together to explain how they complement each other and furthermore provided direction for this study.

**Social constructivism.** The tenets of social constructivism reflect how people come to understand themselves within the social environment in which they live and work (Creswell 2009; 2007). Individual's knowledge is formed actively through social interactions with others in their environment. During this active social construction of knowledge, people develop subjective and numerous meanings and realities of their experiences through varied and multiple contexts, based on their historical and cultural backgrounds (Pope, 2006). The principles underlying this research acknowledge that real-life learning and making meaning of day-to-day concepts is a messy and complex process since the interpretation of experiences is based on the values, beliefs, and actions of individuals (Hellison, 2011).

To gain an understanding of how others construct meanings of their worlds, the researcher finds ways to explore the processes through which meanings are constructed (Somekh & Lewin, 2005). She seeks to know why things are happening in a particular society and attempt to understand participants’ actions in the way the participants understand them (Pope, 2006). The researcher positions herself within the research to be able to make sense of participants’ interpretations of their social environment while also determining how her personal experiences and
background guide her interpretations of the participants’ words and actions. The goal for the researcher is to rely mostly on participant views of contextual situations by talking with individuals, but also by observing people functioning in their social worlds, learning about the issues they face within their environments, and the experiences they endure in their lives.

**Social development theory.** In addition to approaching this study through a social constructivist lens, social development theory was used to provide guidance to my research. Social development theory (Vygotsky, 1978) argues that social collaboration precedes development and is fundamental in cognitive development. Vygotsky believed that children are active participants in their own lives, acquiring knowledge and shaping their development through the various stimuli that exist within their lives (Vygotsky, 1978). This theory is grounded in social constructivism as it emphasizes the importance of culture and context in forming understanding and learning through social processes. Development cannot be separated from its social context and with increasing age, children construct their own understandings and meanings based on their experiences (Bodrova & Leong, 2007). Vygotsky suggested that experiences pervading a child’s life shapes his or her adult life (Vygotsky, 1978). As each person’s experiences are unique, so is their development according to Vygotsky (1978) and therefore, there are no universal stages of child development.

There are three principles that characterize social development theory:

1. Social interaction plays a central role in cognitive development.
(2) The more knowledgeable other (MKO). He or she has either a better understanding or higher ability level in understanding a task or concept and supports the learner. This person is most likely a teacher, coach, or parent, but also can be a more knowledgeable peer.

(3) The zone of proximal development (ZPD). ZPD is the gap between the learner obtaining guidance from the MKO in solving issues or engaging in a task and the learner having independence in obtaining knowledge and solving issues. Learning occurs in this zone.

Thus, Vygotsky viewed learning as collaboration between adults and children. Adults are responsible for bringing children to their initial level of learning and then gradually helping children to advance to a higher level of learning by promoting independent thinking and activity (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). Essentially, the main point of Vygotsky's approach is the significance of interactive learning conditions within the social environment that provide cumulative guidance for the learner. The changing face of the population no doubt has an impact on the social environment and subsequent learning conditions of the children and youth in today's society. This current study was a continuous interactive collaboration between a MKO and children set within an environment for children to actively learn, construct their own realities, and assimilate into a rapidly changing society.

**Demographics of the United States**

The demographics of the United States will change drastically over the next half century. In particular, the number of ethnically and racially diverse groups is
projected to grow to more than 50% of the United States (U.S.) population by the year 2050, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's (2011) population projections. While this growth is remarkable and representative of a multicultural society, a diverse population is associated with a number of issues that plague the growing minority groups. Black Americans (25.8%) and Hispanic (25.3%) populations have some of the highest poverty rates of all the races residing within the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). In fact, there has been a 1.1% increase in poverty in Black Americans and a 2.1% increase in the Hispanic population from 2008 to 2009. Moreover, the U.S. Census Bureau (2011) notes that 36% of Black children and 31% of Hispanic children under the age of 18 years old live below the poverty level.

Poverty is associated with several problems. It is linked with children and families living in disadvantaged, poor neighborhoods, attending schools located in unsafe areas and lacking the appropriate resources for learning, and people having limited access and opportunities to participate in programs that can moderate their physical, emotional, social, and psychological struggles in life (Gonzales et al., 2005; Jarrett, 1999; Larner et al., 1999). Furthermore, poverty is connected with academic failure, anti-social, disruptive, and delinquent behaviors in children and youth (Fraser et al., 2004). Therefore, it is essential that access and opportunity to positive youth programs for families transcend economical disadvantages, in order for optimism and hope to prevail in youth (Martinek & Hellison, 1997). It is important for children to become positive assets in society (Benson, 1997). As such, risk and resiliency play a key role in youth development.
Risk and Resilience

An evolving collection of research has indicated that there are multiple factors that affect youth development and outcomes (Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Li et al., 2007; Smith & Carlson, 1997). Some factors will lead to crime and delinquency and others will assist youth in becoming responsible citizens within society (Catalano et al., 1999; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001). Understanding risk factors and resiliency is necessary to contribute to positive youth development as such consideration provides practitioners and researchers with a basic framework to determine and facilitate programming.

Risk factors. Risk factors (e.g. low socioeconomic status, impoverished neighborhoods, dysfunctional communities, and poor family, peer, and adult relationships) are characteristics, events, or processes that increase the likelihood that a child will develop emotional or behavioral problems (Catalano et al, 1999; Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001; Li, Nussbaum, & Richards, 2007; Smith & Carlson, 1997). Usually, they have a cumulative effect on children, as they do not exist in isolation, meaning that no one risk factor such as teen pregnancy, delinquent behaviors, or substance abuse determines a specific negative outcome (Catalano et al, 1999; Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001). As Li et al. (2007) indicated, risk factors can equal stress, but stress does not have to lead to risk (Li et al., 2007). It is important to identify risk factors so early intervention strategies can be developed and implemented for youth who are blanketed by such issues.
Identifying risk factors in the community, at school, within peer groups, and within the family structure are important, as they can have vital implications for child outcomes (Catalano & Hawkins, 1996).

**Resiliency.** Positive youth development considers both risk and protective factors in order to create a means by which youth can make the successful transition into adulthood (Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001; Smith & Carlson, 1997). Nevertheless, children who experience disadvantages, especially early in their childhood, within themselves (e.g. biologically, psychologically, and emotionally), their family, neighborhoods, community, peer groups, and school are the most vulnerable to anti-social and behavioral issues (Eccles, 1999; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001). Examining protective factors and discovering how to strengthen them for children, can reduce the impact of risk factors (Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001; Li et al., 2007; Smith & Carlson, 1997).

Resilience is the result of protective factors converging on risk factors to create positive outcomes despite adverse ecological contexts (Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001). Resilience cannot exist without risk, as it functions as the interplay between risk and protective factors (Fraser et al., 2004; Fraser & Galinsky, 1997). Children who are resilient have found a way to adapt to their environmental hardships and emerge from the experience with positive developmental outcomes (Fraser et al., 2004). A consistent
finding in Fraser et al.’s (2004) work was individual behavior was the result of persistent exchanges between children and experiences with family, peers, schools, and communities. The environment holds vital implications for both prevention and intervention of negative social and health outcomes (Fraser et al., 2004), as environmental factors can become protective factors for children. Protective factors are the components which explain why some children are resistant or surmount challenges and others do not (Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001). Identifying and understanding both risk and protective factors in various ecological contexts is necessary to progress towards finding the balance to establish a framework of resiliency in children (Fraser et al., 2004; Li et al., 2007). Therefore, it is important to introduce protective factors early in childhood to mediate the effects of an environment burdened with risks and potentially negative youth development outcomes (Eccles, 1999; Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001).

**Protective factors.** Protective factors (e.g. positive family interactions, social competency, relationships with other caring adults and peers, a cohesive neighborhood environment) are a set of influences that mediate the effects of risks and in some way increase resilience by impacting youth adjustment to circumstances within their environment (Catalano et al., 1999; Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001; Li et al., 2007; Smith & Carlson, 1997). Not all protective factors can assuage or cancel risk factors as it depends on the number and level of risk factors present in the child’s environment.
Because protective factors can provide a barrier to risks, it is vital to discover and increase the number of protective factors and reduce risks to positively contribute to youth development (Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001; Smith & Carlson, 1997).

Society and communities have an obligation to meet the needs of children, particularly in the development of their citizenship and the recognition of children as assets to the community (Benson, 1997) and as human capital (Lawson, 2005). The dichotomy that exists between children and adults leads to a rift in society, limiting the sense of connectedness in the community (Benson, 1997; Halpern et al., 2000). Benson (1997) identified forty internal and external assets, positive developmental experiences, to which communities can commit in the development of their children. The internal assets reside in four broad categories as follows: (1) commitment to learning (e.g. school engagement, bonding to school, homework); (2) positive values (e.g. caring, honesty, restraint); (3) social competencies (e.g. planning and decision-making, peaceful conflict resolution); and (4) positive identities (e.g. self-esteem, sense of purpose). The external assets also reside in four broad categories as follows: (1) support (e.g. family support, caring school climate, caring neighborhood); (2) empowerment (e.g. youth as resources, youth serving the community, youth feel safe at home, school, and neighborhood); (3) boundaries and expectations (e.g. clear rules in the home and in school; adults and peers modeling positive behaviors); and (4) constructive use of time (e.g. spending time in school or...
community organizations, spending time practicing music, theatre, or other arts).

Programs serving youth should make efforts to incorporate the developmental assets suggested by Benson (1997), but few rarely do (Roth et. al, 1998).

Nevertheless, such assets can be utilized as an ecological framework to provide guidance to youth development programs (Fraser et al., 2004; Roth et. al, 1998).

There are several research studies which examine developmental assets in neighborhoods and communities as processes and contexts for youth development. Kegler et al. (2005) investigated the association of parental and adolescent perceptions of neighborhood and community resources (e.g. sense of community, neighborhood concerns, city services and quality of life) with youth assets (e.g. peer role models, non-parental adult role models, use of time in sports and religious contexts, community involvement) in 1,350 randomly selected households with only 51% of those households providing a response. Through survey data collected from approximately 92% of the responsive households and interview data collected from a randomly selected parent and adolescent in each of those households, researchers found that some of the youth assets were associated significantly with at least one or more neighborhood and community resource (e.g. safety, neighborhood services, city services). Similarly, Li et al. (2007), in a descriptive study, examined individual and cumulative effects of family and neighborhood risk and protective factors on internalizing (e.g. depression, anxiety) and externalizing (e.g. delinquent behavior), behaviors in 263 5th through 8th grade African-American students across a range of economic conditions. Self-report and survey data collected over a two year period
suggested that the effects of family protective factors (e.g. support, income) were limited when overwhelmed by neighborhood risk factors (e.g. violence, poverty).

Both Kegler et al. (2005) and Li et al. (2007) examined relationships between neighborhoods and communities factors and the impact on youth assets. However, a few other studies narrowed their focus to examine the significance of the relationships between youth care staff and youth (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2002; Anderson-Butcher et al., 2004; Kahne & Bailey, 1999; Scales et al., 2006). Using a case study design, Kahne and Bailey (1999) assessed two community-based youth programs, one African-American and one Latino, over a 2 ½ year period and the impact of social capital development (e.g. communication patterns, behavioral norms) between youth care staff and youth. Each program provided financial, academic, and social support for randomly chosen 6th grade classes, in public schools, via wealthy family sponsors, who adopt an entire class from 6th to 12th grade and promise college scholarships to those students who graduate from high school. The program staff remained with the class throughout the entire six years. The researchers conducted interviews, made observations, and gathered perspectives from youth care staff and program coordinators, and reviewed academic records and graduation rates. The main finding suggests that relationships with caring, responsible adults can have significant implications on youth' development in both academic and social contexts (Kahne & Bailey, 1999). In fact, some youth and staff members sustained contact with each other, although this relationship did not always result in academic achievement (Kahne & Bailey, 1999).
Similar to Kahne & Bailey (1999), Scales et al. (2006) conducted a longitudinal examination of 370 students followed from 6th to 8th grades through 10th to 12th grades through self-administered surveys. Simultaneously, the researchers evaluated a cross-sectional national study of participants between 12 and 17 years old, who each participated in one 15 ½-minute phone interview. Both studies concentrated on students’ activities and engagement with non-familial adults and the development of youth assets (e.g. support, empowerment, boundary-setting) during these processes and among contexts. The researchers suggested that involvement in activities and cultivation of relationships with responsible adults can promote long term positive youth asset-building (Scales et al., 2006).

Anderson-Butcher et al. (2002; 2004) evaluated the Boys and Girls Club of America (BGCA) youth program, a non-profit community-based program, by gaining perspectives from both youth care staff and youth using both qualitative and quantitative methods, respectively. The BGCA encompass a comprehensive youth development framework and therefore, offer programs in the following areas: (a) alcohol, drug, and pregnancy prevention; (b) career exploration; (c) citizenship; (d) educational supports; (e) delinquency and gang prevention; and (f) sporting events, recreation activities, and health and fitness classes (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2002). The purpose of both studies was to obtain insight from participants that could elicit the appropriate the necessary changes to increase success in the program. Success encompasses maintaining positive relationships between staff and youth,
encouraging pro-social behaviors, deterring anti-social behaviors, and enhancing connections between youth and the program (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2002; 2004).

In particular, Anderson-Butcher et al. (2002) obtained perspectives from seven youth care workers, who worked for approximately nine months at the program, and nine youth participating in the BGCA, who had participated in the club for approximately two years. The researchers provided little information about the participants; only an average age was provided for both groups, 28 years old for youth care workers and 11.5 years old for youth participants. Although the study does not specify the research design as a case study, the data collection method implies such a design. Anderson-Butcher et al. (2002) conducted a 25-minute semi-structured interview with each participant and through inductive analysis, discovered emergent themes. To establish a level of trustworthiness and validity, peer reviewers and participants verified emergent themes, even though triangulation of data collection methods (e.g. observations, journals) would have increased the trustworthiness, validity, credibility, and transferability of the study. The findings suggest that not only is it necessary to elicit youth participants’ perspectives, but also the development of positive relationships between youth care workers and youth participants is important to keep participants connected with the program and enhance the opportunity to develop pro-social behaviors (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2002).

Anderson-Butcher et al. (2004) also acquired perspectives from the BGCA program participants, but only from youth participants, who ranged in age from 7 to
18 years of age. Researchers obtained survey information from 149 youth, who were diverse in terms of ethnicity, gender, home stability (e.g. 41% of students changed homes), and one versus two parent homes. The survey took 15 minutes to complete and encompassed items on age, gender, length of program involvement, staff-youth relationships, anti-social behaviors in school, and pro-social behaviors in school (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2004). The findings suggest that increased age significantly factors into increased time of participants’ program involvement, but increased time in the program does not lead unequivocally to positive relationships between staff and youth participants. Nevertheless, interactions and relationships with youth staff does correlate significantly with decreases in anti-social behaviors and increases in pro-social behaviors (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2004).

Each of the aforementioned research studies in this section indicates the importance of the development of youth internal and external assets, enabling youth to make positive contributions to their neighborhoods and communities. Therefore, having neighborhood and community youth development programs and investigating the outcomes of those programs can help researchers and ultimately society in better understanding risk and protective factors as to provide interventions, buffering children from negative outcomes (Smith & Carlson, 1997). Access and opportunity to such positive programs is imperative for youth who are disadvantaged and at risk for negative life outcomes.
**Access and Opportunity**

Although identifying and understanding risk and protective factors is significant in the development of resilience-based practice, the burden of poverty in communities increases the level of risk for negative developmental outcomes (e.g. delinquency, low academic achievement, social and emotional maladjustments) in children’s lives (Fraser et al., 2004; Gonzales et al., 2005; Halpern, 1999). Failed social structures, transient residency, racial tension, crime, and unemployment characterize disorganized neighborhoods, limiting the opportunities for children to attain legitimate social goals (Fraser et al., 2004; Gonzales et al., 2005; Jarrett, 1999; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001). In particular, ethnic minorities tend to represent children and families of low SES and may have less access to parks and recreational facilities (Committee on Environmental Health, 2009), limiting their opportunity to engage in physical activity (Taylor et al., 2007). In addition, when resources are distributed equitably, the quality of the facility or program (e.g. sport, recreation, play, youth development) does not match the quality of the more affluent populations (Halpern, 1999; Taylor et al., 2007).

**Communities of low socio-economic status.** When programs exist in low SES communities, they often are plagued not only with facility or program issues, but also with staffing and funding issues (Gonzales et al., 2005; Halpern, 1999). Youth staff is a crucial element to quality programs (e.g. recreation, as they are the individuals designated to carry out the program’s curriculum and more importantly, establish relationships with youth in the programs (Dryfoos, 1999). Therefore,
youth care workers, who are responsible, caring, and knowledgeable adults, can serve as protective factors for youth (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2004; Dryfoos, 1999). However, obtaining experienced adults for a youth program is difficult, as budgets tend to be low for programs in low SES communities, resulting in a low paid, inexperienced staff (Dryfoos, 1999; Halpern, 1999). In addition to a program’s inability to pay adequate wages to individuals working in the various programs, programs ask for fees from participants on a sliding scale, which is dependent upon parents’ salaries (Halpern, 1999). In more advantaged communities, parents are responsible for paying fees that cover approximately 75% of program costs, whereas in underserved communities, parents’ fees provide an average of 18% of program fees (Halpern, 1999). Less money generally indicates that fewer resources are available, in terms of equipment, program development and implementation, and qualified staff. Therefore, it is imperative that programs look to meet the challenges they face with respect to facility, staffing, and funding (Halpern, 1999).

Dramatic differences in SES separate the availability of opportunities for programs and access to such programs (Cappella & Larner, 1999). Even if children are resilient and relentless in pursuing positive social and health outcomes, the odds are stacked against them (Fraser et al., 2004). Communities must share the responsibility of treating and caring for children (Benson, 1997) by developing programs that are accessible and affordable to youth of all socioeconomic backgrounds (Dryfoos, 1999). Otherwise, the future of children is overshadowed by
academic failure, maladjustment in health and wellness, and future citizenship is at stake.

Therefore, youth development programs need to be structured and have responsible, caring adults as youth care workers or program facilitators. Having these types of programs can merge the division between adults and youth and establish positive personal and working relationships (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2004; Anderson-Butcher et al., 2002; Kahne & Bailey, 1999; Scales et al., 2006). These programs also can also enhance the relationships amongst peers, promoting personal and social development in youth.

**Youth Development Programming**

The abovementioned studies have contributed greatly to the literature in enhancing researchers’ understanding of the interplay among risk and protective factors as an indicator of resiliency, and moreover, the proactive development of youth as assets. Nevertheless, these programs utilized a multi-faceted approach to promote positive youth development using not only sport and recreation, but also other vehicles such as prevention programs, skills training, and service projects.

Sport and recreational physical activity have become popular tools for outreach to the youth population (Hartmann, 2003). Despite this, researchers recognize that sport and recreational physical activity cannot cure all the social problems of society or transcend urban dilemmas (Pitter & Andrews, 1997) or transform all youth (Hellison, 2003; 2011). Nevertheless, sports and recreational physical activity has a powerful generative capacity (Hartmann, 2003; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher,
enabling opportunities for youth to become more personally and socially responsible (Hellison, 2003; 2011), to increase self-efficacy and skill development (Catalano et al., 1999; Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, & Jones, 2005) by providing a safe space for youth to explore their independence, self-direction, peer and adult relationships (Eccles, 1999).

**Characteristics of high quality youth programs.** The salient theme across different types of youth programs and strategies that exist is that all involve some interaction with an adult and aspire to promote positive youth development (PYD). According to researchers, there are five Cs of PYD (Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas, & Lerner, 2005; Lerner, Fisher, & Weinberg, 2000; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). They include competence, connection, character, confidence, and caring. These characteristics are desired outcomes of PYD programs and specifically, promote competence in academic and social areas, connection with family, peers, and community, confidence in self, character values of integrity and morality, and caring for self and others (Lerner et al., 2000). The concept of PYD is that if youth have positive interactions with people and institutions within their environment, then youth will thrive on an individual basis, within their family and peer groups, in school, in the community, and in the broader society (Lerner et al., 2005).

A quality community youth program has several features that can contribute to positive youth development as noted by Eccles & Gootman (2002):

- Physical and psychological safety
- Adult supervision
- Supportive relationships
- Opportunities to belong
- Positive social norms
- Support for efficacy and mattering
- Opportunities for skill building
- Integration of family, school, and community

Coatsworth & Conroy (2007) also suggest a few more factors associated with quality after school programs as follows:

- Setting a clear mission
- Small enrollment
- Stable, trained youth workers
- Appropriate developmental structure to meet the needs of youth
- Frequent assessments

Having the specific characteristics of a positive youth development program can encourage participant attendance and sustained involvement in the program. To enhance and maximize the value of youth programs and participation, programs must be evaluated rigorously for fidelity as well as researchers and practitioners need to identify components that positively contribute to individuals’ experiences in the program (Halpern, 1999; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). Both quantitative and qualitative methods should be implemented so that practitioners have an understanding of what is working in the program and what needs improvement (Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray, & Foster, 1998). Youth care staff trained to identify
and understand risk factors and further understand their roles as protective factors (Halpern, 1999; Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray, & Foster, 1998) can improve programmatic outcomes in the psychological, social, and community domains. In addition, staff needs to be trained in a variety of positive youth development skills (e.g. leadership, effort, self-direction, and caring) or specific curricular models (e.g. TPSR, adventure-based learning) in order to promote pro-social behaviors in youth participants.

Prior to any programmatic changes (e.g. multi-component programming) and youth care worker professional development, the basic paradigm of youth development requires a shift from a deficit reducing paradigm to asset-building paradigm (Benson, 1997). In order for the paradigmatic shift to occur, there needs to be collaboration on an intergenerational level and a society that empowers youth to be resources (Benson, 1997). Also, youth programs need to operate from an ecological perspective, acknowledging and understanding that there is an interactive, reciprocal process that occurs between an individual and her environment (Fraser et al., 2004).

Finally, program location, reasonable cost, and availability are essential to a youth development programs, especially those which service underserved youth (Gonzales et al., 2005; Halpern, 1999). Underserved youth are at the highest risk for deviant behaviors, teenage pregnancy, alcohol and drug use (Gonzales et al., 2005; Halpern, 1999). Therefore, creating programs that are relevant to disadvantaged youth and have well-defined goals can have a positive impact on youth participants’
lives (Martinek & Hellison, 1997). One of the many goals of any youth development program also should be to build upon existing strengths in children (e.g. self-confidence, independence, leadership qualities) (Martinek & Hellison, 1997).

The aforementioned variables can have considerable implications to youth who participate in youth development programs. By seeking understanding among youth and within programs, program delivery can be improved and youth participants will be more interested in maintaining attendance in a well delivered and relevant program. After school programs can function as sites for such youth development.

**After-school programs.** After-school programs are one of the most prominent strategies in promoting positive youth development. Children of working parents are often home alone between the hours of 3pm and 6pm (Capella & Larner, 1999; Coatsworth & Conroy, 2007; Halpern, 1999) and have the opportunity to engage in delinquent behaviors, perform sexual activities, and experiment with drugs (Coatsworth & Conroy, 2007; Halpern, 1999). Therefore, after-school programs can be an option in preventing such behaviors. Several types of after-school programs exist using various formats and strategies to enhance positive social, emotional, and physical behaviors in youth.

After school programs can involve recreation-based programs and extra-curricular activities involving sport. For example, Hartmann (2003) conducted an ethnographic study on a community based program developed and implemented by a local, long-standing member and coach of the community. The coach ran
basketball programs and track programs in order to get youth interested in and prepared to attend college. Not only did he run the after school program, the coach also ran a summer youth program. Coatsworth and Conroy (2007) also advocate bringing sports into afterschool programs to promote physical activity and overall health. However, bringing sports into after school program involves planning for specific activities with clear objectives and goals and training youth care staff to implement the curriculum (Coatsworth & Conroy, 2007). In addition, sports are attractive factors for a youth program as it sustains youth engagement and retention in the program (Coatsworth & Conroy, 2007; Hartmann, 2003). Recreation programs can serve this purpose also.

The YMCA national youth, recreation-based programs typically occur before and after school, as well as during the summer. This program includes a curriculum which involves personal and social development, academic development, as well as promotes overall health and well-being (YMCA, 2006). Although the YMCA programs have a specific curriculum (e.g. snack, free time, homework, activity) to follow during their allotted time, they offer a variety of activities (e.g. arts, music, games, and fitness activities) in which children can engage. YMCA programs are programs in which youth enroll, meaning that the program is not designed for drop in youth. On other hand, the Boys and Girls Club of America (BGCA) is designed for students to be able to drop in and out at any time the program’s doors are open (Boys & Girls Clubs of America, 2011). The BCGA offers various enrichment programs (e.g. alcohol and drug prevention workshops), various activities, or just a
place to ‘hang out’ after school. The environment is much less structured than a YMCA program. In summary, there are several types of after-school programs that can accommodate youth in enhancing positive youth development, focusing on the existing strengths that reside within youth.

**Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility**

Teaching personal and social responsibility (TPSR) model serves as a curricular model across various domains (e.g. intact physical education (PE) classes; mentoring and coaching programs; extended-day programs) and is flexible enough to accommodate these different type of programs (Hellison, 2003; 2011; Lee & Martinek, 2009; Martinek, Schilling, & Johnson, 2001; Walsh, 2007; Wright & Burton, 2008). It centers on empowering children to take control of their lives by infusing core values of responsibility into an after school or summer program’s or intact physical education class’ content. An effective responsibility model program using physical activity as the catalyst to responsibility embraces the following elements as denoted by Hellison (2003, p. 17):

1. Respecting the rights and thoughts of others (e.g. self-control, the right to inclusion, the right to peaceful conflict resolution).

2. Participation and effort (e.g. self-motivation, discovery of new tasks, perseverance).

3. Self-direction (e.g. on-task independence, peer pressure resistance)

4. Helping others and demonstrating leadership (e.g. caring, empathy, sensitivity)
There are four overarching themes important to a TPSR program and the themes include the following: Integration, empowerment, student-facilitator relationship and transfer (Hellison, 2003, pp. 18-23). Hellison (1995; 2003; 2011) suggested that the key elements of responsibility should be integrated within the physical activity curriculum, not taught as a separate curriculum. Empowerment enables the student to make decisions and the teacher to become a facilitator of the learning process rather than a direct instructor. The student-facilitator relationship has to exist in order for the program to be successful. Facilitators should build upon the existing strengths of students, recognizing individuality, and listening to students. Finally, transference is the ultimate goal of a TPSR program, as this is the point at which students are expected to transfer values of the program to areas outside of the program setting (e.g. classroom, home, and neighborhood). Furthermore, the program has the following lesson format to serve as a guideline for the lesson: (1) relational time (getting to know students on an individual basis either before or after the lesson); (2) awareness talk (very brief discussion of responsibility model); (3) physical activity lesson; (4) group time (time to reflect upon activity); (5) reflection time (time to reflect upon self and behaviors during the activity).

A high quality TPSR program encompasses each of the components of the lesson plan and incorporates the overarching themes (Hellison, 1995; 2003; 2011). Each portion is vital to the lesson, so time should be allocated accordingly to
encompass all of the components of the lesson (Hellison, 1995; 2003; 2011).
Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of the facilitator to carry out the central plan of
TPSR but also to adapt the plan that best accommodates the program participants.

**Evidenced-based findings from literature.** Several researchers have
established sport and recreational programs as catalysts to promote responsibility
in youth, considering specific TPSR components as a means to attain that
responsibility (Buchanan, 2001; Cecchini et al., 2007; Cutforth, 1997; Cutforth &
Puckett, 1999; DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Gordon, 2010; Hammond-Diedrich &
Walsh, 2006; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b;
Hellison, 2003; 2011; Hellison & Martinek, 2006; Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Hellison &
Wright, 2003; Lee & Martinek, 2009; Li et al., 2008; Martinek et al., 2006; Martinek
et al., 2001; Mowling et al., 2011; Newton et al., 2006; Pascual et al., 2011; Schilling
et al., 2007; Schilling, 2001; Walsh, 2008; Walsh, 2007; Walsh et al., 2010; Watson et
al., 2003; Wright & Burton, 2008; Wright et al., 2010; Wright et al., 2004).

Although there is an extensive literature base encompassing the TPSR
framework over the past 15 years, there are only twenty-seven (27) empirically-
based, published articles written on the topic. Of the 27 studies, 16 were qualitative
studies (Buchanan, 2001; Cutforth, 1997; DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Hammond-
Deidrich & Walsh, 2006; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Lee & Martinek, 2009; Martinek
et al., 2006; Martinek et al., 2001; Mowling et al., 2011; Pascual et al., 2011; Schilling
et al., 2007; Schilling, 2001; Walsh, 2008; Walsh, 2007; Walsh et al., 2010; Wright &
Burton, 2008; Wright et al., 2004), 5 were quantitative (Cecchini et al., 2007; Li et al., 2008;
Newton et al., 2006; Watson et al., 2003; Wright et al., 2010), and 6 were mixed methods of a quantitative and qualitative nature (Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b; Gordon, 2010; Hellison & Wright, 2003; Walsh, 2007). Eleven of the qualitative studies (DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Hammond-Deidrich & Walsh, 2006; Martinek et al., 2006; Martinek et al., 2001; Pascual et al., 2011; Schilling et al., 2007; Schilling, 2001; Walsh, 2008; Walsh et al., 2010; Wright & Burton, 2008; Wright et al., 2004) and all of the mixed method studies (Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b; Gordon, 2010; Hellison & Wright, 2003; Walsh, 2007) were descriptive case studies, while the other 5 qualitative studies (Buchanan, 2001; Cutforth, 1997; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Mowling et al., 2011; Lee & Martinek, 2009) were deemed ethnographies by their authors. A few of the quantitative studies (Li et al., 2008; Newton et al., 2006; Watson et al., 2003) were mostly descriptive in nature with a few exceptions. One of the quantitative studies (Cecchini et al., 2007) was a true experimental study in which the researchers randomly assigned individuals to one of three treatment groups. Finally, one of the quantitative studies (Wright et al., 2010) and three (3) of the mixed methods studies (Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b; Gordon, 2010) were quasi-experimental interventions as the researchers randomly assigned classes to either intervention or comparison groups. Another quantitative study was of an inferential nature using path analysis (Newton et al., 2006). In subsequent sections, theoretical frameworks and epistemological lenses,
populations, length of studies, major outcomes, and reliability and trustworthiness are discussed to describe what is known about TPSR research.

**Theoretical frameworks and epistemological lenses in TPSR studies.**

Theory can be used in qualitative research in a manner similar to the way it is used in quantitative research. It can be used “as a broad explanation for behavior and attitude... and [the epistemological lens] provides an overall orienting lens...that shapes the types of questions asked, informs how data are collected and analyzed, and provides a call for action or change” (Creswell, 2009, p. 61-62). Qualitative researchers are increasingly utilizing theoretical perspectives or orientations to govern their research, providing a lens that shapes their study design, but moreover, offering insight on how they view the world (Creswell, 2009; Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). Only 12 (Buchanan, 2001; DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b; Gordon, 2010; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Lee & Martinek, 2009; Martinek et al., 2006; Mowling et al., 2011; Newton et al., 2006; Walsh, 2008; Walsh et al., 2010) of the 27 studies mentioned theoretical research paradigms in their papers. The theoretical perspectives included the following:

- The model of cognitive moral development (Buchanan, 2001) is centered on moral orientations and the cognitive basis of development.
- The model of moral reasoning (Buchanan, 2001; Martinek et al., 2006) is focused on the development of moral and cognitive orientations.
- The ethics of care (Buchanan, 2001) implies that caring actions occur out of the belief that caring is the appropriate way to relate to others.
- An interpretivist (Walsh et al., 2010) perspective focuses on how people make meaning from their world and the researcher gaining a deeper understanding of a participant’s lived experience (Somekh & Lewin, 2006). A participant’s reality is socially constructed through human interaction.

- A constructivist paradigm or theory (Gordon, 2010; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Walsh et al., 2010) supports that people socially construct their perceptions of the world through interactions with others, but that no one perception is more real or true over another (Glesne, 2006).

- A critical theory (DeBusk & Hellison, 1989) seeks not only a deeper understanding of a participant’s lived experience, resembling an interpretivist perspective, but also it pursues emancipation of the marginalized and oppressed people of the world (Creswell, 2007; Somekh & Lewin, 2006).

- The students’ multiple worlds model (Lee & Martinek, 2009) uses an integrative framework to enhance the understanding of the knowledge, behaviors, interpretations, and expectations of multiple cultures.

- Maslow's theory on self-actualization (Martinek et al., 2006) “proposes that higher-level needs are much different than lower-level needs in that partial or complete fulfillment of them [higher level needs] increases motivation for further fulfillment” (Martinek et al., 2006, p. 146).

- Achievement Goal Theory (Newton et al., 2006) seeks to understand motivation as it relates to contexts of goal achievement, with the
understanding that behaviors are based on cognitive interpretations of the context (Newton et al., 2006).

- Theory of Possible Selves (Walsh, 2008) underscores the infinite possibilities for realizing future potential, which in turn enhances motivation and regulates the direction of behaviors (Walsh, 2008).

- An ethnography (Mowling et al., 2011) focuses on the cultural underpinnings of a group, interpreting behaviors, language, and beliefs of the individuals sharing within the culture (Creswell, 2007).

- Self-efficacy concerns believing in one’s capabilities of engaging in an action and achieving the goal associated with that action and is determined by “personal, social, and environmental factors” (Escarti et al., 2010b, p. 668).

In 11 of the 12 studies (DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b; Gordon, 2010; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Lee & Martinek, 2009; Martinek et al., 2006; Mowling et al. 2011; Newton et al., 2006; Walsh, 2008; Walsh et al., 2010) theoretical frameworks guided the study design, data collection methods, and analysis, and subsequent outcomes and discussion. For example in Lee and Martinek (2009), the researchers examined participants’ perceptions of Project Effort culture and school culture. Throughout the study, the researchers used their data collection methods (e.g. observations, individual interviews) to gain an understanding of cultural perspectives in both Project Effort and the school. Researchers, then, provided a detailed discussion about the differences in culture and provided implications for bridging the gap between cultures so that students
received a similar message about life values. In another example, Newton et al. (2006) used the achievement goal theory, in which two predominant goal structures, task involving and ego involving were used to guide data collection methods (e.g. questionnaire), analysis, and discussion. Of the studies 12 studies, only one did not link the theory to the methods. In Buchanan (2001), three theories (model of cognitive moral development; model of moral reasoning; ethics of care) were described in the beginning of the paper, but the researchers did not provide any link between the theories and the implementation and discussion.

In reviewing the TPSR literature, there was little consistency in the utilization of theory. TPSR attempted to attain several responsibility outcomes according to its framework, but the body of work did not provide overarching theories to give direction to the investigations of programs with TPSR underpinnings. Personally, the theory most appealing in this work was the constructivist theoretical paradigm, as it underscores all of the characteristics of the TPSR framework, specifically positing that learning is an active, constructive process during which people develop their knowledge through personal experiences and interactions with others in their environment. Fifteen of the 27 studies did not have a theory informing study design, methodology, analysis, and discussion sections in their papers (Cecchini et al., 2007; Cutforth, 1997; Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; Hammond-Deidrich & Walsh, 2006; Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b; Hellison & Wright, 2003; Li et al., 2008; Martinek et al., 2001; Schilling et al., 2007; Schilling, 2001; Walsh, 2007; Watson et al., 2003; Wright & Burton, 2008;
Wright et al., 2010; Wright et al., 2004). Much of the TPSR empirical research is atheoretical or lacks an epistemological lens.

**Participants in the TPSR literature.** Most TPSR studies (17 of the 27 studies) had participants who were Black American children and youth, who were underserved, at-risk for negative outcomes, and between the ages of 9 and 18 years old in 4th through 12th grades (Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Hammond-Diedrich & Walsh, 2006; Hellison & Wright, 2003; Lee & Martinek, 2009; Li et al., 2008; Martinek et al., 2006; Martinek et al., 2001; Mowling et al., 2011; Schilling et al., 2007; Schilling, 2001; Walsh, 2008; Walsh, 2007; Walsh et al., 2010; Wright & Burton, 2008; Wright et al., 2010; Wright et al., 2004). However, two studies (Gordon, 2010; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000) included mostly or only white participants who ranged in age between 11 and 15 years old. Seven studies (Cecchini et al., 2007; Cutforth, 1997; Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b; Newton et al., 2006; Pascual et al., 2011; Watson et al., 2003) included mostly or only Hispanic participants ranging in age from 9 to 14 years old. One study (Buchanan, 2001) examined youth staff members’ perceptions of TPSR implementation and the staff was mostly white. The remaining study (Wright et al., 2004) included children with varying levels of spastic cerebral palsy.

The studies with mostly or all Black Americans and Hispanics took place in an urban community after school or summer program in either the midwestern, southern, or western regions of the United States. Four studies which included all Hispanic participants took place in a suburban area of Spain (Cecchini et al., 2007;
Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b; Pascual et al., 2011) and one study of white participants took place in a rural area of New Zealand (Gordon, 2010). The remaining study (Hastie & Buchanan, 2000) with white participants took place in a rural, southern region of the United States. All of the studies in Spain, the one in New Zealand, and the few in the U.S. with white participants took place in intact physical education classes. There was one study (DeBusk & Hellison, 1989) that took place during lunch time and another (Wright et al., 2004) that took place in a rehabilitation hospital. In summary, the TPSR literature explored mostly urban, underserved, and at-risk Black American children and youth between the ages of 9 and 18 years old. They have been studied in the midwestern, southern, and western regions of the United States in after school or summer programs.

**Length of intervention studies.** Of the 27 TPSR studies, twenty (20) were intervention studies (Buchanan, 2001; Cecchini et al., 2007; Cutforth, 1997; Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b; Gordon, 2010; Hammond-Diedrich & Walsh, 2006; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Martinek et al., 2006; Martinek et al., 2001; Pascual et al., 2011; Walsh, 2008; Walsh, 2007; Walsh et al., 2010; Wright & Burton, 2008; Wright et al., 2010; Wright et al., 2004). These studies ranged in intervention length from 5 weeks to 3 years. There were only three studies that had an intervention length 1 to 3 years (Cutforth, 1997; Escarti et al., 2010a; Walsh et al., 2010). Excluding those three studies, invention lengths ranged from 5 to 36 weeks, with an average of 17.6 weeks for implementation.
Twelve of the 20 implementation studies were conducted in a systematic manner (Buchanan, 2001; Cutforth, 1997; Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Pascual et al., 2011; Walsh, 2008; Walsh, 2007; Walsh et al., 2010; Wright & Burton, 2008; Wright et al., 2010; Wright et al., 2004). For example, in Wright et al. (2004), the author taught martial arts to children with spastic cerebral palsy at the rehabilitation hospital for 45 minutes, one time per week over a 13 week period. He adhered to the TPSR lesson format as it was earlier described in the paper. The similarities in the systematic implementation studies were that the researchers provided an explicit description of what the researcher did for the implementation and how often they did it. In addition, the systematic studies used Hellison’s (1995; 2003; 2011) lesson plan format. The differences in the studies that did not use a systematic process were that the reader may have had difficulty understanding what the researcher(s) did in their study intervention since their intervention methods were either poorly discussed or not discussed at all. This lack of description can cause readers to question study outcomes.

Although some (n=12) of the literature described their systematic process of how they conducted their implementation, the researchers in those studies did not measure and rarely discussed implementation fidelity. One group of researchers described fidelity as “the extent to which delivery of an intervention adheres to the protocol or program model originally developed” (Mowbray, Holter, Teague, & Bybee, 2003, p. 315). Only one (1) study (Pascual et al., 2011) focused on implementation fidelity with two elementary teachers using a TPSR program. One
of the researchers took both teachers through a 20 hour training course on the theoretical and methodological foundations of TPSR. Subsequently, both teachers delivered the program over 9 months with their students. The study determined that one of the teachers (Pablo) had high implementation fidelity while the other (Juan) had low implementation fidelity as a result of the level of consistency in their TPSR delivery. Pablo was able to deliver successfully levels 1 to 3 of the TPSR program whereas Juan struggled with level 1 of the program. Higher level of fidelity was associated with better short-term outcomes than a low level of fidelity. Without implementation fidelity, it is difficult to validate outcomes of the study and draw conclusions that the implementation actually was responsible for the study outcomes. Based on the literature, one cannot have sound faith that TPSR directly leads to the positive outcomes the researchers see in their youth participants as programmatic fidelity is very limited in the TPSR literature.

Walsh (2008) conducted a well implemented TPSR study, despite not conducting a fidelity measurement. The study design and methods adhered to the principles underlying the Theory of Possible Selves, which is the notion that endless possibilities exist for realizing future potential and endeavors. The implementation for this study involved the researcher teaching one time per week for 90 minutes for 9 weeks. The first 3 weeks focused on enhancing leadership skills, responsibility, and work-related techniques. The last 6 weeks focused on setting future goals, understanding hopes and fears, and bring awareness to the participants about how values learned in the first 3 weeks of this study can impact a career. Although the
author did not observe and measure implementation fidelity, he provided a table that listed extensive details on the format of the daily lessons he conducted. There are some flaws in the study in terms of the length, but the researcher provided good detail and had various methods of data collection to inform his study. The data analysis seemed to be sound, as he took steps to develop central themes that represented participant perspectives, leading readers towards the study outcomes. He discussed credibility and dependability, both of which were captured through triangulation of data sources, peer examination, member checks, and an audit trail.

On the contrary, DeBusk and Hellison (1989) conducted their study with less scientific rigor. The core values of TPSR were well explained and operationalized and the TPSR lesson format was used as the guidance for the implementation. The study noted that the implementation was conducted during 3 one hour periods per week for six weeks at noon recess. The researchers provided details of the study and collected multiple data sources as well. However, the multiple sources were not integrated according to the noted findings. Data analysis was not discussed and it was not understood how the researchers arrived at their conclusions. Unlike Walsh (2008), implementation fidelity was not measured in the DeBusk and Hellison (1989) study and therefore the reader is limited in drawing conclusions on programmatic impact.

**Major findings in TPSR.** The TPSR literature had several major and consistent findings spanning across the various articles. In particular, *participants understood and demonstrated the core TPSR values* (participation and effort,
respecting the rights and feelings of others, self-direction, and leadership through caring) as noted in 14 studies (Cecchini et al., 2007; Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b; Gordon, 2010; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Hellison & Wright, 2003; Lee & Martinek, 2009; Martinek et al., 2001; Pascual et al., 2011; Walsh et al., 2010; Watson et al., 2003; Wright & Burton, 2008; Wright et al., 2010; Wright et al., 2004). These 14 studies varied in terms of the level at which participants understood and demonstrated responsible behaviors. Some of the studies indicated that only some of the participants showed the TPSR core values and some only at minimal levels.

For instance, Martinek et al. (2001) explored the impact of a sports club and mentoring program for 16 elementary children over a 6 month period. The investigators used Hellison's TPSR model, evaluating all 5 levels of framework (respect, effort, self-direction, helping others, and transfer) with the children. The study also involved training adult mentors in 5 one hour sessions over the school year to be able to implement a responsibility program. Journal entries from mentors and classroom teachers, exit interviews from participants, and a goal matrix evaluating TSPR goals were the data collected in the study. The findings indicated that 88% of the participants were willing to try things out showing their effort, but only 37% attempted to set goals and 63% had little self-direction. Most of the participants (63%) showed respect and self-control most of the time and half of them (50%) showed their caring for others as a component of helping others. This study also determined that 62% of students demonstrated medium to high levels of transferring taught behaviors to the classroom. Therefore, even though
participants demonstrated TPSR values over a 6 month period, the results were not very promising, particularly in the areas of self-direction and helping others. This study did not show a trend in the data, only an average result from the participants.

In another study (Gordon, 2010), the investigator used a mixed methods approach to examine the responsibility model in 103 secondary students attending a rural school in New Zealand over a 6 month period. Classes were randomly assigned to two experimental (responsibility model group) and two comparison groups, in which all groups were taught touch rugby, dance, gymnastics, and games. Data collection included eight (8) interviews between 20 and 60 minutes, three (3) group interviews from a select group of students representing each of the four groups, daily observations with field notes, and one student reflection sheet on the program and students' personal behaviors collected at the end of the study. Gordon found that there were improvements to self-direction, self-control (respect), levels of engagement (participation and effort), and helping others in the experimental groups over the control groups, although transfer of behaviors was not evident. In addition to the TPSR gains in the experimental groups, all groups noted their enjoyment of physical education and the student-teacher relationship was enhanced in the responsibility classes. Both Martinek et al. (2001) and Gordon (2010) suggested that participants understood and demonstrated responsible behaviors in their respective programs, although the level at which those values were shown varied in the two studies.
However, of the 14 studies, only 4 studies (Escarti et al., 2010b; Martinek et al., 2001; Walsh et al., 2010; Watson et al., 2003) demonstrated transfer through their data collection methods, analysis, and subsequent reporting. For example, Escarti et al. (2010b) assessed responsibility and self-efficacy in 30 middle school students at risk for school dropout. As a self-identified mixed method study, the researcher randomly assigned two classes, one to the intervention group and one to the comparison group. A perceived self-efficacy scale was distributed to the students pre-study, post-study, and six (6) months after the study. Program evaluation interviews were conducted once, at the end of the study, with individuals in the intervention group and their teachers. The researcher followed the TPSR lesson format in training the physical education teachers to implement a TPSR program. The researcher also familiarized the students with the levels of TPSR prior to the study, which may have led to internal validity issues. Nevertheless, the results indicated that the participants had improvements in respect for rules and other's speaking, cooperation and teamwork, willingness not to cheat in activities and have positive dialogue with peers, and an improvement in self-efficacy. The participants reported that they transferred responsible behaviors to the playground, in the street, and at home. Transfer confirmation was self-reported and the study did not explain how they promoted transfer, but just that it had occurred according to the participants.

Walsh et al. (2010) conducted a qualitative study with a constructivist lens to investigate the transfer of responsibility values to the classroom. The researchers
ran responsibility-based coaching club program with 13 students between the ages of 9 and 11 years of age, attending an underserved elementary school. The program lasted for 2 years and took place 1 hour per week for a total of 45 sessions over that time period. Semi-structured interviews with participants, two classroom teachers, and the after-school program director, documents (attendance records, lesson plans), field notes, and participant journals were collected during the study. The findings convey that most of the participants (approximately 80%) described the program as the reason for them not only practicing responsible behaviors designated by the TPSR program, but also transferring those behaviors to the school environment. For instance, the participants indicated that the program enhanced their willingness to work hard and as part of a team (participation and effort) in the school environment. The two teachers and the program director noticed an increased effort in the classroom and more willingness to work together. This account was same as those provided from participants and the adults in the other responsibility values of respect, self-direct, and leadership as well. This study was a combination of self-reported data and corroborating evidence from the classroom teachers and after school program director. Walsh et al. (2010) indicated that transfer occurred from the gym to the classroom, but there was no description of the process in which investigators engaged to promote transfer. Thus, it is unclear what methods were used in the group meeting and reflection time portions of the lesson or even if those parts of the lesson were used to encourage transfer to the school setting.
On the other hand, four (4) studies (Cecchini et al., 2007; Gordon, 2010; Lee & Martinek, 2009; Wright et al., 2010) discussed transfer and attempted transfer with the participants. However, there was no evidence to denote that transfer actually occurred in these studies. Lee and Martinek (2009) did a critical ethnography to examine the extent to which culture impacted children’s responsible behavior over an 8-week period. The participants were five Black American 4th and 5th graders who had attended a responsibility-based after-school program for at least one semester of the school year. The researchers conducted non-participant observations of how responsibility program values were communicated and the physical settings in addition to two interviews with each of the five students lasting 45 to 60 minutes each. The findings indicate that the participants were willing to try new and different activities (participation and effort), felt physical and emotional safety, had the opportunity to improve self-direction and setting goals, and understood and demonstrated respect and helping others. The study attempted to promote transfer of responsible behaviors, but the notion of transfer was misinterpreted by the students who thought it meant to transfer sports skills learned to other sports. Thus, transfer was not achieved in this study in the way it was intended.

Of similar importance to attaining the TPSR core values and transferring the values outside of the gym is building interpersonal relationships with peers and youth staff or teachers which were demonstrated in seven of the studies (Cutforth, 1997; Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Gordon, 2010; Hammond-

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Deidrich & Walsh, 2006; Mowling et al., 2011; Schilling et al., 2007). Some studies noted a buildup of student-teacher relationships both over short and long periods of time. Hammond-Deidrich and Walsh (2006) was a descriptive case study that indicated the extent to which a student-teacher relationship was important over just an 8 week period. This study focused on empowering youth, 11 to 15 years of age, through a responsibility-based cross age teaching program. Through interviews at the beginning and end of the study, staff field notes, and lesson observations, the researchers found that the participants appreciated being with the program staff, spending time with staff who mentored them, and having conversations with the staff about their future careers and aspirations. Although only seven TPSR studies talked explicitly about student-teacher relationship, it is almost impossible to not have built a relationship with the participants in a TPSR study to be able to teach responsible behaviors and have the students learn those behaviors.

Reliability and trustworthiness in TPSR literature. Most of the TPSR literature has been conducted in the qualitative research paradigm and researchers have derived their outcomes using qualitative methods. The trustworthiness of qualitative studies was established through prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation of multiple data sources, member checking, peer debriefs, searches for disconfirming evidence, and audit trails. Some of the studies’ findings had questionable trustworthiness as there was no mention if the investigators conducted member checks, peer debriefs, or audit trails and there was limited discussion with regards to the data analysis process (Cutforth, 1997; Cutforth &
Puckett, 1999; DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Escartí et al., 2010a; Escartí et al., 2010b; Hammond-Deidrich & Walsh, 2006; Martinek et al., 2006; Martinek et al., 2001; Walsh, 2007). Therefore, the reader may have a difficult time linking the methods with the study above noted outcomes. Other TPSR literature (Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Lee & Martinek, 2009; Pascual et al., 2011; Schilling et al., 2007; Schilling, 2001; Walsh, 2008; Walsh et al., 2010; Wright & Burton, 2008; Wright et al., 2004) using qualitative research had a minimum of three of the following criteria to establish trustworthiness in the above noted findings: prolonged engagement, triangulation of multiple data sources, member checks, peer debriefing, search for disconfirming cases, audit trail, and persistent observation. Using these criteria assisted the investigators in establishing trustworthiness or credibility in research findings.

**Previous TPSR review of literature.** Hellison and Walsh (2002) conducted a TPSR review of literature and included 26 studies. The studies, however, encompassed not only published, data-based articles, but also it incorporated dissertations, theses, commentary, practitioner, and conference papers. The researchers did note that only 6 studies were data-based, published articles. They suggested that experimental studies pose a number of problems in real-life settings because the impact of the program is difficult to separate from contextual influences. Therefore mostly case studies (21 of the 26 studies) have been used to measure outcomes of a TPSR program. TPSR researchers suggested that the triangulation of data sources strengthens the process of the research as well as the
outcomes. They also indicated that the number of participants, not more than 15, influences the full implementation of the model and the impact of the implementation depends partially on the length of the program.

The review indicated that life skills should be integrated into the physical activity portion of the lesson and that program delivery needs to be consistent. All of the studies indicated that some of the participants enhanced their responsibility behaviors, despite some studies showing stronger evidence over others. Transfer was reported in only a few of the studies (e.g. improved self-control = 6 studies; enhanced effort = 2 studies; increased self-esteem = 2 studies). The review indicated that there were existing gaps within this research, particularly surrounding implementation fidelity and transfer. Several years later, the review of the TPSR literature in this study exposed the same gaps in the research. In addition, I felt that not engaging in a TPSR program with children younger than 4th grade was a misstep in the research as children can be molded and taught at a young age and absorb it over time. This provides them with a foundation for middle school of knowing how to act in a responsible manner. Finally, time and student-teacher relationship development are key components to a successful TPSR program.

**Benefits of a TPSR program.** TPSR can be a meaningful and sensible path in assisting children in becoming more responsible citizens, but it requires a clear understanding of the underlying core values of TPSR and a continued commitment to program implementation (Hellison & Walsh, 2002). In fact, most of the studies were conducted on underserved, at-risk Black American youth in low income
neighborhoods. Establishing a program that serves to enhance pro-social behaviors and increase interactions with responsible caring adults, can be an essential, life changing element. Also, utilizing a model that enhances interrelationships between program staff, youth care workers, and youth is important for overall youth development as it increases the number of protective factors for youth to hopefully point him/her in the direction of resiliency to overcome life circumstance (Catalano et al., 1999; Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001; Li et al., 2007; Smith & Carlson, 1997). Gaining perspectives of program participants with regards to program structure, implementation, and behaviors allows researchers to obtain insights into how youth interpret and negotiate their surroundings. As a result, program facilitators can tailor the program to fit the needs of youth.

**Gaps in the TPSR literature.** There were some major issues with the data-based TPSR research pertaining to theoretical framework, research design, population limitations, programmatic fidelity, and transference of TPSR core values. Only 9 of the TPSR studies had a theoretical framework informing their study design and data collection methods (Buchanan, 2001; Debusk & Hellison, 1989; Gordon, 2010; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Lee & Martinek, 2009; Martinek et al., 2006; Newton et al., 2006; Walsh, 2008; Walsh et al., 2010). The remaining studies presented no theoretical frame or epistemological lens (Cecchini et al., 2007; Cutforth, 1997; Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b; Hammond-Deidrich & Walsh, 2006; Hellison & Wright, 2003; Li et al., 2008;
Martinek et al., 2001; Mowling et al., 2011; Pascual et al., 2011; Schilling et al., 2007; Schilling, 2001; Walsh, 2007; Watson et al., 2003; Wright & Burton, 2008; Wright et al., 2010; Wright et al., 2004).

Most of the interventions in the TPSR literature were short in length with an average of 12.2 weeks and were limited to an underserved, low socio-economic Black American community and children under the age of 9 or over the age of 14 (Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Hammond-Diedrich & Walsh, 2006; Hellison & Wright, 2003; Lee & Martinek, 2009; Li et al., 2008; Martinek et al., 2006; Martinek et al., 2001; Mowling et al., 2011; Schilling et al., 2007; Schilling, 2001; Walsh, 2008; Walsh, 2007; Wright & Burton, 2008; Wright et al., 2010). No studies had been conducted with children younger than 9 years of age. Most of the TPSR research had been conducted in urban after school or summer programs. Thus, it was difficult to determine viable outcomes with such a limited study period and population. Of the 27 studies, there were 7 mixed methods research paradigms used in this line of inquiry (Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b; Gordon, 2010; Hellison & Wright, 2003; Walsh, 2007; Wright et al., 2010). The studies were deficient, particularly in the quantitative portion, in which valid and reliable instruments were limited in use and the analysis was limited in description.

Also, it was difficult to determine the programmatic implementation fidelity and subsequent programmatic outcomes as various methodologies were used in these studies, some very limited in their description. Program implementation was
not shown to be connected directly with participant outcomes in any of the studies. Therefore, suggesting viability of the framework was challenging. To respond to the issues of programmatic fidelity, Wright and Craig (2011) developed an instrument, the Tool for Assessing Responsibility-Based Education (TARE) and tested the instrument by observing 18 physical education classes. The validity of the tool was determined by a panel of TPSR experts (Wright & Craig, 2011). The TARE assessment encompasses four parts to it in order to assess various aspects of the TPSR framework. The four parts are as follows: 1) Observable teaching strategies; 2) personal and social responsibility themes; 3) student responsibility; 4) additional comments or contextual notes.

Part 1 is a 5-minute interval observational tool to discern the use of teaching strategies in TPSR program facilitators during a lesson. Wright and Craig (2011) denoted nine distinct teaching approaches towards responsibility. The teaching strategies were: modeling respect; setting expectations; opportunities for success; fostering social interaction; assigning tasks; leadership; giving choices and voices; role in assessment; and transfer. Reliabilities over the 18 lessons and 94 time sampling intervals ranged from 88% to 100% (Wright & Craig, 2011).

After the observation period and coding, the next part of the tool addresses the four personal and social responsibility themes. The themes include: 1) The extent to which roles of responsibility are incorporated into the lesson; 2) the extent to which the facilitator promotes transfer in the lesson through associating responsibility values to applications in life; 3) to what extent does the facilitator
share power with the program participants; and 4) the extent to which participants are treated as people who are unique and worthy of respect, voices, and choices. The responsibility themes are measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 4 (Extensively demonstrates) to 0 (never demonstrates). The observer makes this determination after the lesson has been completed.

Part three encompasses assessing general areas of student responsibility for the overall group. This part of the instrument was validated by TPSR experts and has test-retest reliability for the areas of self-control, participation, effort, and caring were 80% or above. Self-direction only had a test-retest reliability of 60%. The student responsibility section of the instrument includes five areas of interest: self-control (respect), participation, effort, self-direction, and caring (leadership). A Likert scale from 0 (very weak) to 4 (very strong) was used to indicate the level of responsibility exhibited throughout the lesson. This instrument was used after the observation instrument was completed and responsibility themes were assessed. Part 3 of the instrument allows the facilitator to rate student responsibility and provides a space for comments. Finally, part four consists of a notes page for reflecting on the evaluations in parts 1, 2, and 3 and the comments made during such evaluations (Wright & Craig, 2011; See Appendix E for the entire instrument).

Finally, the last gap in the literature in addition to implementation fidelity is the issue of transferring the core values of responsibility to areas outside of the gym. Transference of TPSR core values is difficult to measure, but as the principal goal of TPSR, it has not been adequately captured in the literature. Researchers who have
attempted to measure it could not draw concrete conclusions that transfer of values
had occurred to areas outside of the gym, such as to the classroom or at home
(Cecchini et al., 2007; Escarti et al., 2010b; Gordon, 2010; Walsh et al., 2010; Wright
& Burton, 2008; Wright et al., 2004; Wright et al., 2010). Transfer is difficult to
measure as the facilitator has to be sure that what she or he is doing in the gym has
an irrefutable impact on the children in their other settings (e.g. classroom, home).
To associate the implementation with the outcomes would involve understanding
what is happening in other settings (e.g. classroom, home). The facilitator would
have to determine what measures have been taken in those settings to enhance
responsible behaviors and subsequently, rule them out to show, without doubt, it
was the responsibility-based program that had an impact on the participant and not
something else.

Summary

Sport and recreational activities alone, cannot reverse the impact of all of the
social problems youth will face in their lives, however these activities can serve as a
catalyst for positive youth development. A key element in positive youth
development is learning to become personally and social responsible to one’s self
and to others. Research studies that embrace Hellison’s (1995; 2003; 2011) TPSR
model or tertiary characteristics (e.g. leadership, caring) of the model have
demonstrated that programs including values-based components can assist youth in
exploring personal and social values. Furthermore, programs implementing a
responsibility model can help children in making good decisions by providing them
with multiple opportunities to practice leadership skills, set goals, and improve intrapersonal and interpersonal skills.

The TPSR literature indicated that the responsibility-based model works in children and youth between the ages of 9 and 18 years of age. Findings from the literature show specifically that most participants in TPSR studies understood the core responsibility values and some of those participants showed those values in TPSR lessons, but rarely exhibited the behaviors outside of the TPSR program. Programmatic fidelity measures in terms of connecting implementation with program outcomes has been non-existent in most of the studies. There were similar issues in TPSR studies surrounding transference of responsibility values to areas outside of the gym (e.g. classroom, home). Most of the studies (85%) could not determine that transfer took place, even though transfer is essential in a responsibility-based program.

Martinek and Hellison (1997) stated, “Hopelessness has the greatest impact on an individual’s vulnerability to at-risk conditions” (Martinek & Hellison, 1997, p. 39). Therefore, programs, which incorporate a philosophy that youth are assets as opposed to problems, enhance positive developmental outcomes. These programs boost youth’s exposure to opportunities and support (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003), enabling the youth in society to become better citizens in the future.

The importance of this literature review was to provide an overview of the overall issues pervading youth in society and the potential solutions to resolve such issues, namely the TPSR framework. The gaps within the existing TPSR literature
lead to the current study. In the next chapter, the methodology for the TPSR research study is discussed in detail to lay the foundation for the emergent findings and subsequent discussion sections.
Chapter 3

Methodology

There were two purposes of this study: (1) To understand how 2nd and 3rd grade students who are underserved create meaning in a TPSR structured program and transfer TPSR values to the classroom and YMCA afterschool program; and (2) To explore what factors influenced responsible behaviors in 2nd and 3rd grade students participating in a community-based after school program. The following research questions were explored in this study:

- To what extent do children understand, make meaning of, and demonstrate the four TPSR core values (respect, effort, self-direction, leadership)?
- How do individual factors influence the children's' learning of the four TPSR core values?
- To what extent are the four core TPSR values transferred to the classroom and the standard YMCA afterschool program?

In order to examine the issues that existed within this research, my first step was to understand the contextual environment as well as develop relationships with the children and youth staff. This relationship allowed me to expand my
understanding of the circumstances that affected the participants and gain their perspectives of how those circumstances influenced their behaviors, attitudes, and overall lives.

This chapter comprises four sections. The first section discusses my research design of a case study and how my theoretical framework of Social Development Theory and epistemological assumption of a social constructivist lens guided my study. Next, I provide a personal and professional background of myself to situate myself as the researcher. The third section provides an overview of the research methodology. Finally, data collection methods, data analysis, trustworthiness, and ethical considerations are provided.

### Research Design

A qualitative case study design was used to inform this study as it allowed the investigator to better understand how children made meaning from the TPSR program. A case study is a strategy or an approach to research that focuses on an in-depth study of culture and society (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Somekh & Lewin, 2005). According to Merriam (2009), there are three special features of case study: (a) Particularization; (b) Thick, rich description; and (c) Heuristic.

Particularization indicates that the focus of a case is on a particular situation, program, or event and has a foundation in a practical, real life issue (Merriam, 2009). This case study involved a specific group of 2nd and 3rd grade, underserved children who participated in a YMCA after school program. Also, it is necessary for the researcher to provide a thick, rich description of the case under examination.
over time (Merriam, 2009). In reporting on each aspect of this case, such as the methods utilized to study it, the analysis procedures, and the final report, I provided the readers with an in-depth account of 2nd and 3rd children participating in a responsibility-based after school program. Finally, it is the job of the researcher to be heuristic, illuminating the reader’s understanding of the phenomenon under study (Merriam, 2009). As the researcher, I helped readers to understand the complex issues that encompass the lives of the participants in this study. In addition, providing participants the opportunity to participate in a responsibility-based program assisted them in dealing with social issues and limited physical activity, a few characteristics underlying low socio-economic and underserved communities (Fraser et al., 2004; Gonzales et al., 2005; Halpern, 1999; Urban et al., 2010). Usually, through case study, existing generalizations are reinforced or modified (Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995), but formal generalizations to other cases cannot be inferred.

A case study does not claim any specific method for data collection or analysis (Merriam, 2009), but does require an in-depth exploration of the case within its real-life context (Stake, 2005). The goal of this approach is to thoroughly understand and preserve all the perspectives of what has happened in the study. Data collection for this study was extensive and relied on multiple sources of data collection such as observations, interviews, source journals, pictures, and grade reports. Through the data collection process and analysis, I made interpretations
and assertions about the gathered data and subsequently reported a description of 
the case and the themes that emerged.

This study was a single case and explored the impact of a responsibility-based 
program on young children who participated in an afterschool YMCA 
program. The program was considered the case and the case targeted a specific 
population of children attending a school in academic emergency and living in an 
underserved community. In particular, my case included twelve 2nd and 3rd grade 
children who participated in a YMCA operated after school program for K-5th grade 
children. The children's ethnic make-up was 66% Black American (n=8), 9% 
Mexican-American (n=1), and 25% White American (n=3). This group was unique 
to the TPSR research as this was the first time that TPSR was utilized with 
participants of this age. Previous TPSR studies involved children between the ages 
of 9 and 14 years old (4th-9th grade) and involved sport pursuits rather than 
cooperative activities, which involve creating community through use of 
acquaintance and team-building games (Frank, 2004). This study implemented the 
TPSR curricular model using cooperative activities with one group of 2nd and 3rd 
grade students within an existing after school program.

I chose this case to address my overall concern for children with limited role 
models and structured programming to enhance their sense of responsibility 
towards themselves and others. The children in this study were from low income 
backgrounds and were enrolled in a school that was considered to be in academic 
emergency by state test standards according to the Ohio Department of Education
(2010). As such, students in the school were identified as having an increased risk of academic failure and are more likely to encounter negative life outcomes (Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001).

**Epistemology and Theory**

In order to understand the mechanisms at work within the participants, I situated myself within the social constructivism theoretical perspective. Social constructivism is people building knowledge through active social processes with others, places, and things within their environment (Creswell, 2007). From this perspective, the researcher can obtain an understanding about how people interpret and construct meaning in their social and psychological world through text and language contexts (Somekh & Lewin, 2006). The intent of the TPSR program was to enhance the children's ability to make meaning from the programmed activities through promoting key TPSR outcomes through social interactions with others in their environment. Cooperative activities support experiential learning, allowing individuals to learn from their mistakes and giving them the opportunity to make decisions in a safe environment. The core assumption of TPSR and the use of cooperative activities within a TPSR framework promoted the participants actively constructing their own subjective meaning to an objective reality.

Furthermore, by collecting specific data (participant interviews, source interviews, participant pictures, source journals, audio-taped and videotaped lessons, observations, and teachers’ grading reports), I was able to appreciate how the participants in my study came to understand and made meaning of the TPSR
program, essential to a social constructivist. Also, through my understanding of why the participants operated in the way they did, I attempted to teach and encourage transference of the TPSR core values to their world outside of the program, principally in the classroom and in the traditional YMCA program. By giving children a voice, in this study, through discussions, interviews, and pictures, it allowed them to express their thoughts, ideas, and opinions, which may have otherwise gone unheard. These data sources that were collected stimulated communication between the participants and me, providing me with insight of how they constructed meanings of their worlds. Essentially, it allowed for me to learn from them.

To understand the social constructivist lens, it is necessary to discuss its ontology and epistemology. **Ontology** is the nature of reality. The ontology of social constructivism is centered in how people methodically construct their social reality from their experiences within their worlds (Pope, 2006). In particular, people negotiate and produce socially constructed meanings for actions and situations (Pope, 2006) and as the researcher, I shed some light on how my participants generated and made sense of their social actions. **Epistemology** is the nature of knowledge. It is the means of establishing what counts as knowledge. Epistemology is central in any methodological approach (King & Horrocks, 2010). The epistemological assumption in social constructivism is that knowledge is actively constructed through people’s interpretation of day-to-day concepts and meanings (Pope, 2006). Historical and cultural backgrounds play a key role in people’s
understandings and subjective interpretations. Therefore, there are no universally applicable underpinnings as to how knowledge was constructed. As a social constructivist researcher, I attempted to understand participants’ actions in the way they understood their own actions and considered the individuality of each participant. I realized that my personal experience guided my interpretations of the participants’ values, beliefs, actions, and meanings. However, my analytical process of this study helped me gain insight to participants’ varied experiences and how these experiences impacted their acquisition of TPSR values and subsequently transfer those values.

The ontological and epistemological assumptions of a social constructivist lens guided my methodological decisions to use a case study design and implement a TPSR curriculum using cooperative activities. Ultimately, the assumptions underlying the social constructivist lens guided me towards the development of my research questions. My research questions aligned specifically with how children made meaning of the program through their interpretations and perspectives gathered through data collection methods of observations, participant interviews, source journals, participant picture journals, audio-taped debriefing sessions, videotaped lessons, grading reports, document analysis, and reflexive researcher notes. By using a qualitative case study design, I ascertained an in depth understanding of how children constructed meaning in their environments through interactions with their peers, youth care staff, parents, and teachers over a period of six months and transferred those interpretations to the classroom and the typical
YMCA program. Having a small, purposeful sample allowed me to attain the depth of knowledge that I was seeking.

In addition, my study was framed within the Social Development Theory (Vygotsky 1978). Social Development Theory (SDT) emphasizes an approach that recognizes children as active, not passive, participants in their own lives in shaping their development through social interactions with disparate stimuli in their individual environments. Development is based on the children’s interpretation of their surroundings and the meanings assigned to those social interactions with others who are more knowledgeable in a subject area or life in general. These social interactions with more knowledgeable others (e.g. parents, teachers, peers) are the beginnings of higher level thinking and learning. SDT argues that children construct their own understandings and with increasing age and experiences make adaptations to those understandings to exist and function within their social realities (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). A social constructivist lens and SDT have similar assumptions, complementing each other, even though one operates from an inductive, emergent approach and the other from a deductive, pre-established theoretical approach, respectively. Both provided guidance for my methodological decisions to use a qualitative case study, develop the research questions, use the particular methods of data collection, and analyze the sources of data for a comprehensive, in-depth report of the case.
Researcher Bias

The goal of this research was to construct knowledge through the shared experiences of the researcher and the participants. Therefore, it was essential for me not only to situate myself as the researcher in this study, but also as an individual who had the capacity and desire to listen to the narratives of underserved children who are often marginalized in society. As a researcher and a Black American female, I had the ability and a responsibility to reveal those experiences. I chose the term Black American as I feel that it characterizes the race and ethnicity of people whose families are native to America and have been for many generations. While I respect the African heritage of all humankind, I do not recall any talk of African descendants in at least five generations of my family. Thus, I use the term Black American throughout this dissertation report.

Although I identified with most of the participants in terms of race, I did not identify with them in terms of socioeconomic status and class. I had experiences quite different from the commonly stereotyped poor Black American. I grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area of California, a melting pot of races and ethnicities, in a middle class family with both parents and attended private schools Grades 1 through 12. In my school experience, the classrooms were diverse from both a race and ethnic standpoint. However, in my sports experiences from childhood through adulthood, I usually was one of the few, if not the only Black girl on the team, particularly as I embarked upon my adult experiences in sport. However, I never once felt out of place during those experiences.
Truthfully, I never thought much about race or ethnicity or the marginalization of a poor children living in under-resourced neighborhoods until I spent time in a Midwest school system as an adult, observing vast differences between more affluent and less affluent schools. There were differences with regards to the appearance of the school and the experience of the teachers. Upon entering the research setting, the children received me well, but I think it may have been because I looked like most of them. Still, I felt out of place in a way because I had no idea of their experiences, which involved children being raised in poverty, living in mostly single households, poor neighborhoods, and attending an underperforming school. Nevertheless, the goal of my research was to understand and disseminate information about this marginalized group of children. I refused to let my background impact this important work. I wanted to know how my participants negotiated their environments and how their attitudes and behaviors reflected such negotiations.

Therefore, to support my research interest, I continued my education through several means. I volunteered in the research site for 2 years prior to embarking upon this research project. For the cooperative activities, I have worked and continue to work with children and youth groups facilitating initiatives, which involve building community, cooperation, trust, problem-solving, decision-making, and leadership. Additionally, over the past few years, I have been actively engaged with learning the TPSR curriculum and interacting with TPSR scholars in the field throughout the United States. I have attended the TPSR Alliance Annual Conference
since its inception in 2008, which is organized by Don Hellison, the creator of the TPSR framework. I attended a summer session at Adelphi University in New York, which allowed me the opportunity to apply TPSR in a practical manner to middle school students. Dr. Hellison led this session as well. I have collaborated with and continue to collaborate with TPSR scholars on research presentations on national and international stages.

I realized going into this research that I would have some limitations in the cultural understanding of my participants, but I had the desire to understand and found my understanding of my participants’ cultures was constantly evolving with each interaction I had with them. As the researcher, I assumed two roles, one as the researcher and one as the learner (Glesne, 2006). The researcher role was the one denoted as the outsider to the research project, as the person who conducted observations while taking field notes and who conducted the interviews. This role required that I develop a level of self-awareness that constantly kept me attuned to my verbal and non-verbal behaviors and how they affected the participants. Conversely, as the learner, I was driven to be reflective of the research process and how I represented the participant perspectives. I was expected to listen and not be deemed the authority on this research.

Although I engaged in these two roles throughout the study, my lens was biased by the view that I was sure that I could make a difference in these children’s lives by employing a TPSR program into their after school setting. I had come to understand the TPSR framework and the power in its outcomes over the past few
years and was certain that this framework could be used in various settings with varying ages of children. I had high expectations of these children as I assumed that everyone was capable of exhibiting good character and being good citizens of society. Nevertheless, I had to keep these expectations at bay by reading through the collected data, allowing the participant perspectives and behaviors to emerge throughout the study. Also, gaining perspectives from persons outside of the study, such as peer reviewers and my advisors, helped to ensure my objectivity.

**Setting for the Research Study**

The site for this research study was a public elementary school set in a large Midwestern school district consisting of predominantly Black American children. Hope Elementary School (a pseudonym) is located in a largely Black American community with approximately 14,650 residents residing within its zip code. Thirty-four percent of the housing units are owner occupied with the remaining 66% as renter occupied. The median household income in this area is $20,893 and approximately 33% of families are below the national poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Approximately 23% of the population is married, which encompasses persons over the age of 15 years. The elementary school has a population of 363 children, of whom 86% are Black Americans enrolled at the school and 93% are disadvantaged from an economic standpoint (Ohio Department of Education, 2010-2011 report). According to the state school report card, the school met only one of 8 state indicators, the attendance rate. Test scores for 5th graders in reading (11.4%), mathematics (2.3%), and science (4.5%), were well
below the state requirement of 75%. This was a dramatic decrease from the 2008-2009 statistics, which were 36.4%, 13.6%, and 27.3% in reading, mathematics, and science, respectively. According to past and current measures, the school is identified by the State Department of Education as being in academic emergency. The value-added rating, which represents growth since last school year at one point in time, indicated a one year of progress in mathematics and reading from grade 4 to grade 5. Overall, the elementary school did not meet its Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for reading and mathematics proficiency.

The after school program (Y-Club) took place in the school gymnasium, directly after the school day was complete and was organized, staffed, and managed by the YMCA. The philosophy of the Y-Club program was to focus on the children and to enhance their self-esteem and developmental needs (e.g. independence, build character, promote self-control and cooperation). The program is centered on four core values – Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility (YMCA of Central Ohio Y-Club Parent Handbook, 2010). Also, the program seeks to aid children in the following areas, according to the YMCA Parent Handbook:

* Personal Growth
* Personal value clarification
* Getting along with others
* Diversity appreciation
* Leadership
* Specific skill development
* Self-esteem promotion

* Fun

The children transitioned from their classrooms to the gymnasium to begin the Y-Club program. The gymnasium served two purposes during the school day: a dining area for breakfast and lunch and a physical education area. The design and set up of the gym for the YMCA program is illustrated in Figure 3.1.
Tables 1, 2, and 3 were the areas at which the children ate and did homework. The folded tables were the additional large dining tables taking up wall space in the areas of the gym as noted in the diagram. These tables posed a safety issue, limiting
the area of the gym in which children were allowed to play and have structured physical activity. The other tables and carpet areas (e.g. science, music, and games) were centers at which children were allowed to go during their free play time. There were a variety of items set up at each of the tables, organized for the children to easily access. The reading area was designated as a quiet space for children to gather not only for reading, but also for announcements and sparingly to manage behaviors.

Once children entered the gymnasium, they dropped off their backpacks into one of the empty baskets, as illustrated in Figure 3.1, and proceeded to one of the centers until all of the children arrived to the program. The typical program schedule is noted in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Program Schedule (Adapted from the YMCA of Central Ohio Y-Club Parent Handbook).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3:35 – 3:45 pm</td>
<td>Arrival/Group Time/Bathroom Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:45 – 4:05 pm</td>
<td>Thematic Activities (e.g. Science, art, group projects, interest area time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:05 – 4:30 pm</td>
<td>Outdoor/Gym Play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30 – 4:45 pm</td>
<td>Snack/Dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:45 – 5:05 pm</td>
<td>Homework/Quiet Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:05 – 5:40 pm</td>
<td>Interest Areas/Centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:40 – 6:00 pm</td>
<td>Clean-up/Parent Pick-up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The time from 3:35 to 3:45pm is the time during which all of the children participating in the after-school program begin to enter the gym and the youth care staff organized them into groups to go to the bathroom. It was a little chaotic at this time. During the thematic activities, children were free to choose any center or go to the carpet for quiet reading, similar to their time upon entering the gym to begin the program. The outdoor play usually consisted of playing on the play structure outside or children playing kickball or tetherball for roughly 25-30 minutes. Although these activities were supervised, they were unstructured play activities, as there was no youth staff leadership. Conversely, the gym play consisted of Y-Club fitness activities for approximately 10-15 minutes lead by a youth care staff member. The fitness activities included, but were not limited to line dancing, jump rope, yoga, stretching routines, and tag games. At the homework/quiet activity time, youth staff helped children with their homework of various subject matter areas. Children’s involvement in their interest areas or centers was similar to the time during which they engaged in thematic activities. During clean up time, the children helped the youth staff put away the various toys, games, art supplies, musical instruments, and science items into the YMCA closets located on the side of the stage. Most parents picked up their children between 5:30 and 6:00pm.

There were a total of 45 children, ranging from Kindergarten to 5th grade. Three staff members were required at the site to be in compliance with the ratio of adults to students. The compliance ratio was 18:1 of children to staff. The staff
changed over the course of the 8 week study, but the YMCA program always had the necessary adults to meet the needs of the children.

**Site Entry**

The after school program located at Hope Elementary School was chosen because it was an urban, underserved elementary site with high attendance rates. Children attended the after school program daily with few absences. There had been no previous relationship with the school site prior to my arrival two years ago. At that time, I received Mary’s name from one of my colleagues, who knew Mary by her position, but had never met her. Mary was the YMCA Program Director and I first contacted her via phone to discuss my thoughts and ideas for a study. Soon after our phone conversation, we met to discuss my thoughts and ideas in further detail. Per our discussion, Mary indicated the Y-Club at Hope Elementary School site was not meeting the physical activity expectation of 30-45 minutes on four days of the week. Therefore, she was excited to have a person come into the site and lead a structured program 2 to 3 days per week. Also, I made clear to her that my goal of entering this site was not only to engage in a research study, but to develop relationships with the youth staff and the children built on reciprocal respect, trust, and understanding.

In the fall of 2008, I arrived at the site three weeks after the start of the school year to allow the program to get up and running smoothly, allowing for the rules, routines, and expectations to be communicated and implemented. At this time, I met the then site director, Ms. Storm, who welcomed my presence
immediately. I volunteered one to two times per week for approximately six months, with the exception of the holiday breaks, prior to gathering any information about the program participants. By positioning myself in the after school program on a consistent basis, engaging in activities and conversations with the children and the staff helped me to cultivate rapport and build a reciprocal, non-hierarchical relationship with the staff and the children. This developing relationship was instrumental in earning their trust and having them understand my intentions for my research study. As indicated in Glesne (2006), building rapport is an important component of conducting qualitative research because establishing a relationship with participants allows access through building trust and confidence in the researcher. Even though the person in the site director position has changed twice over the past two years, I have continued to volunteer after collecting my initial data to sustain my relationships with the staff and the children.

**Primary Participants**

**Sampling strategy.** In a qualitative case study design, a common approach for obtaining a research sample of participants is using a purposeful sampling strategy (Patton, 2002). This type of sampling strategy usually targets a specific group of people and is not seeking to generalize findings. Small samples are selected deliberately to examine the contextual circumstances that are relevant to the purpose of the study and the research questions, providing an in-depth understanding of the problem central to the research study. Patton (2002)
suggested that information-rich cases can highlight the issues under study, enhancing the knowledge about important issues.

A purposeful criterion sampling procedure was utilized to select the participants in my research study. A criterion sampling procedure involves studying a case or cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance for the study, lending a deeper understanding to the case. The eligibility criteria for inclusion in this study were as follows:

1) The participants were in either the 2nd or 3rd grade.
2) The participants must have attended Hope Elementary School.
3) The participants attended the YMCA after school program.
4) The participants were economically disadvantaged.
5) The participants lived in an underserved community.

There are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry as it depends on what the researcher wants to know, what will have credibility, what can be done in a feasible amount of time, and data saturation (Patton, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Good case studies draw on progressive focusing of the researcher, who exhibits patience, is reflective, and is willing to acknowledge another perspective (Stake, 1995). Patton (2002) indicated that gaining rich information through exploration of a case study is much more meaningful than the concern with sample size.

**Participant selection.** There were 45 children in the YMCA after school program, of which 17 were 2nd and 3rd graders. I recruited the children by gathering all of the 2nd and 3rd graders in the after school program and talked to them about
getting their opinions about my responsibility-based program. I told them that I would give them permission forms to take home to their parents and if they wanted to participate, they would bring the forms back to me in a week’s time. Fourteen (14) of the 17 (82%) students returned the parental permission form, but two of children were committed to after-school tutoring and therefore were unable to participate. Thus, I was left with 12 students to participate in the study. Although TPSR has been used in physical education with groups of 30 or more students, Hellison (2011) suggests that TPSR is more conducive to small groups of 10 to 15 participants. A small group allows for more individual attention and relationship development between student and teacher or program facilitator, underscoring a TPSR framework. TPSR is based fundamentally in building relationships for a facilitator to teach and for students to learn responsible behaviors. Therefore, twelve children were chosen to participate in this study. They were twelve underserved, of mixed ethnicity (Black American, 66%; Hispanic, 9%; White, 25%), second and third graders, ranging from 8 to 9 years old. Parental permission and child assent was obtained prior to the participants’ involvement in the research study. The participants were selected from the pool of second and third graders who attended the Y-Club program at Hope Elementary School and met the aforementioned criteria. I assumed that the high attendance in school would lead to high attendance rates in the after school program, but that was not necessarily the case. The average number of participants for 15 lessons was 9 participants. The
percentage breakdown of students attending a specific amount of lessons is indicated in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2. Program attendance (Group).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of lessons attended</th>
<th>Number of participants attending lessons</th>
<th>Percentage of participants attending lessons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 to 15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 to 11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, I gathered information about the participants’ ethnicity, age, grade, with whom did they live, and whether or not they received free or reduced lunch. Detailed information is noted in Table 3.3.
Table 3.3. Demographics of participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant (Pseudonym)</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Primary Caretaker</th>
<th>Free or Reduced Lunch?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annie</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Black American</td>
<td>Grandmother</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antoinette</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Black American</td>
<td>Grandmother</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avery*</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Black American</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caitlyn</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Black American</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edie</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Black American</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>White American</td>
<td>Mother and Boyfriend</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>White American</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessie</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Black American</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnny</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>White American</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaleb</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Black American</td>
<td>Both Parents</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyla</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Black American</td>
<td>Both Parents</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naomi</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Hispanic American</td>
<td>Both parents</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Entered study after the first two weeks.

**Sources.** Sources were considered those individuals who could provide me with information about and perspectives of the participants. There were a total of seven sources – four classroom teachers and three youth care staff. Each of the classroom teachers were chosen to provide me with a perspective of the participants in a contextual situation dissimilar from the afterschool program. All sources, youth care staff (3) and teachers (4), were recruited through having personal conversations with each of them, telling them about my program and my
goals for the participants. After explaining what information I wanted to gather from them, I provided them with consent forms, and let them know if they wanted to participate, to return the consent forms to me within a week’s time. The teachers included one second grade teacher and three third grade teachers. The 2nd grade teacher, Mrs. Rogers, was a white female in her second year at Hope Elementary, but had seven years of overall teaching experience. The third grade teachers were all white males, two of whom were in their first year at the school and Mr. Matthews was in his third year. They had a range of 8 to 10 years of teaching experience.

On the other hand, the youth care staff were all Black Americans, two females and one male. The two female staff had been working with children for 10 to 20 years, but the male staff had only worked with children for the past two years. One of the female staff, Ms. Charles, had worked for the YMCA for five years and the other, Ms. Hamilton for almost two years. Unfortunately, within the first two weeks of the study, Ms. Hamilton was released from her duties as site director and was no longer present at the site from this point forward. Therefore, adjustments were made to the number of data sources collected from the YMCA staff. Mr. Arthur, the male YMCA member, in his first year at the YMCA, also was relieved of his position in the last three weeks of the study. Thus, limited data was gathered from him, similar to Mr. Anderson, one of the 3rd grade teachers, who left the school with two weeks left in the study. Still, the role of the sources was to inform me if children were transferring the TPSR goals they learned in my program to the other days at
the YMCA after school program and within their classrooms. They were able to provide me with supportive information.

Data Collection

There were several methods of data collection used throughout this study: 1) Observations with field notes; 2) video-taped lessons and extended field notes; 3) semi-structured individual interviews with participants and sources; 4) researcher journal; 5) source journals; 6) picture journals and videotaped explanations; 7) document analysis (e.g. Ohio Department of Education – School Report Card; YMCA Parent Guide; Census Bureau 2010 data, grading reports). A wide range of data was collected in order to provide rich, thick description and to enable triangulation of data sources.

A summary of research questions for the study and the nature of the data collected to answer each research question are noted in Table 3.4.
Table 3.4. Research Questions with Associated Sources of Data Collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Sources of Data Collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To what extent do children understand, make meaning of, and demonstrate the four TPSR core values (respect, effort, self-direction, leadership)?</td>
<td>• Observations • Picture journals • Semi-structured interviews with participants • Video-taped lessons • Researcher journal • Grading reports • Document analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How do individual factors influence children’s learning of the four TPSR core values?</td>
<td>• Observations • Semi-structured interviews with participants and sources • Video-taped lessons • Researcher journal • Grading reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To what extent are the four core TPSR values transferred to the classroom and the standard YMCA afterschool program?</td>
<td>• Video-taped lessons • Source journals • Semi-structured interviews with participants and sources • Researcher journal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Observations.** Observations involve systematically recording events and behaviors in the social setting in which the study will take place. Observations are recorded as field notes, which are detailed, non-judgmental accounts of what is occurring in the setting. They play an extremely important role in qualitative inquiry as a method to uncover complex interactions in the social setting to better understand participants from an objective viewpoint (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).
Observations are focused and provide some emerging analytic insights to the phenomenon under study.

Fifteen observations were conducted over an 8 week period. For each observation conducted, I had a plan to focus on the core values of TPSR and how children demonstrated those values in the typical YMCA program. During observations, I wrote detailed field notes to denote the particulars of the research setting and to record the interactions that took place between participants, between participants and other children in the after school program, and between the participants and the youth care staff of the program. In addition, I logged field notes that illustrated how and when participants demonstrated responsible behaviors including those not noted within the TPSR framework, during the intervention and outside of the intervention period.

Field notes and extended field notes were taken before and during the 8-week TPSR intervention. One week prior to the TPSR intervention, I spent two days of that week at the research site recording live field notes on how participants interacted with their peers and the youth care staff. I wanted to know what responsible behaviors they exhibited prior to the research study to assess whether or not I needed to tweak my program. For each of the two days, I spent one hour recording field notes.

During the period of the 8-week responsibility program, I took field notes directly after the lesson and after-the-fact from videotaped lessons. The live field notes were taken for approximately 30 minutes, directly after the completion of the
lesson. I spent time after each lesson, in a quiet setting, reflecting upon the occurrences of each day. Subsequently, I analyzed those occurrences by writing extended field notes within 48 hours of recording the live field notes. This process which allowed me to reflect on what had occurred and record field notes that aligned with the core value of the week to indicate how the participants were displaying core values of the TPSR program. One core value (e.g. participation and effort, respect) was represented each week for 8 weeks so that all core values were addressed for two weeks over the course of the study. However, another responsible behavior, honesty, was noted as it emerged within the study.

In addition, field notes were taken from the videotaped lessons. Since I taught the lessons, recording field notes from the video was necessary to capture the interactions that took place between the participants, specifically how they related to each other, supported each other, participated in the activity, responded to me as the facilitator of the physical activities, and ultimately discussed their definitions of the TPSR core values. The length of each video was approximately 55 minutes and field notes were recorded during the review of the video, which took place within 72 hours of recording it. Two lessons per week of approximately 55 minutes each were taught and videotaped over the 8-week study period for a total of 15 lessons. Once field notes were recorded, I reviewed them and reflected on and analyzed the events that took place in each video and subsequently wrote extended field notes within 72 hours to document those reflections and my analysis.
Through observation, I was afforded the opportunity for participants to help me to understand firsthand how words correspond with actions and see behavioral patterns. I experienced expected and unexpected situations in the setting. I progressed towards “making the strange familiar” by constantly analyzing observations for meaning (Glesne, 2006).

**Video-taped lessons.** Each lesson was videotaped. The camera was set up in the corner of the gym to capture both the children and me, as illustrated in Figure 3.2.

![Figure 3.2 Illustration of camera placement.](image)

Videotaped lessons were reviewed within 48 hours to ensure program and lesson fidelity. Videotaped observations were also used to write field notes and extended field notes on the lesson. As the facilitator, I was unable to acquire live field notes to describe the behaviors of the children as they were participating in the TPSR program. Therefore, it was necessary for me to take notes during the review of the videotaped lessons. The purpose of the field notes was to record behaviors during the program, such as interactions between participants, interactions between participants and me. In addition through the field notes I was able to observe,
recognize, and note how the participants made meaning of and demonstrated responsible behaviors.

**Group meeting and reflection time.** The group meeting and reflection time took place at the end of each of the 15 TPSR lessons. All lessons were videotaped and thus this portion of the lesson was videotaped as well. During this time, participants engaged in a 25 to 35 minute group meeting and reflection time to discuss the all aspects of the lesson and subsequently evaluate their attitudes and behaviors in relation to the TPSR core values. More specifically, the group meeting was used as a space for participants to evaluate the day's lesson, the effectiveness of my instruction, problems they had with one another during the lesson, and suggest possible ideas for enhancing the lesson. Some sample questions during a group meeting time were as follows: ‘What did you like/dislike about the lesson?’; ‘What can we do as a group to make the next lesson better?’; ‘How can I improve as the lesson instructor? The purpose of the group meeting was to provide the students with the opportunities and practice to make sound decisions over time.

As an extension of the group meeting, reflection time was a space for the children to evaluate themselves and communicate this assessment to the group. Having been in the site for over two years prior to collecting data, the children seemed to feel comfortable with their peers and me. There were no issues with children sharing their opinions, particularly after the first person’s response in the discussion period. In fact, it was sometimes difficult for them not to talk about their behaviors. By creating an environment that welcomed interaction amongst them,
they appeared willing to share openly and honestly their thoughts on their conduct. The goal of the reflection time was for the children to reflect upon their attitudes, intentions, and behaviors as it related to the TPSR core values. Sample questions during reflection time included: ‘How well did you control your temper today?’; ‘Give me an example of how you showed respect today within your peer group?’; ‘Did you help anyone learn something in school today?’ In addition to asking questions of participants, participants reflected on their meanings of the core values and self-evaluations through picture journals. The picture journals illustrated how they understood the TPSR core values in their individual ways.

Each group meeting and reflection time took place in a classroom with most of the 12 participants. Days 5 and 12 had the lowest attendance rates, both had seven participants. The average number of participants engaging in the group meetings and reflection times were nine participants. During group meeting and reflection times, I facilitated discussions surrounding the TPSR core values to which children responded in a manner that furthered my understanding of how they made meaning of the values and demonstrated those values in the classroom and the standard YMCA after school program. Group meetings and reflection times were video-taped with permissions to capture the interaction among the children and the researcher. Video-taped group meetings and reflection times, as part of the entire lesson, were transcribed after each of the 15 lessons.

Finally, as part of our discussions, the children and I developed a list on a several sheets of poster size paper of what each of the TPSR values looked like, did
not look like, sounded like, and felt like. Since I had explained the core responsibility at the front end of the lesson and they had practiced it during the activity session, the discussion was used to break down each of the responsibility values. Thus, I had an easel with a large pad of paper and stood asking the children what respect looked like, did not look like, sounded like, and felt like, for example. I facilitated the questioning and subsequently, wrote down on the paper the students’ meanings of the value in their words. I continued to write until the participants had exhausted all of the meanings they could conjure. This practice enabled the children to voice their meanings of each value and visualize what each of their peers said about the responsibility value.

**Individual semi-structured interviews.** Individual interviews help the researcher build an in-depth picture of the case. Through interviews researchers attempt to understand participant experiences from their perspective and to uncover the meaning of those experiences (Kvale, 1996). There was one type of interview used in this study: the general interview guide approach with the primary participants and sources (Patton, 2002).

**Child participants.** The general interview guide approach involved the use of individual, semi-structured open-ended interview questions and interviews which lasted approximately 15 minutes with primary participants. Interviews were conducted in a quiet location outside of the gym and was planned to be conducted with each of the 12 participants three times, during weeks 1 or 2, 4 or 5, and 7 or 8, of the study. However, for the first interview, eleven (11) participants were
interviewed, while for the second interview, nine (9) participants were interviewed, and for the final interview, only 5 participants were interviewed. The drop in the number of participants was due partly to some attrition in the study. Three (3) students left the program all together prior to the end of study and four (4) were unavailable (e.g. absent from YMCA program) for the last interview, even when I made a few attempts after week 8 of the study. Each of the three interviews had different purposes to gain a progressive, in-depth understanding of participant perspectives on TPSR core values.

The first interview obtained demographic information and living situations (e.g. single parent home) and furthermore, attained some preliminary information on how participants understood and made meaning of the TPSR core values. For example, this interview asked questions surrounding what the participants thought of the values and the types of things they do in their lives to demonstrate these core values. I asked them questions such as, “What does respect mean to you?” or “In what ways do you feel your teacher respects you? How about the staff at the Y? Peers?” (see Appendix F for guiding questions).

The second interview served to clarify information gained from the first interview and to probe deeper into the meanings of the TPSR core values. At this point in the research study, all of the core values had been discussed in group and reflection times, participants had developed a large poster size illustration of values, and participants had drawn pictures to illustrate their understanding of the values. It was important in this second interview to ask questions pertaining to each of
these responsible behaviors since they now had verbal and visual illustrations of the core values and could connect the values with their behaviors in the classroom and the customary after school program. Therefore, during the second interview, I put these artifacts in front of the child to reference them during questioning. My intention was to gain their perspectives on how they viewed the core values poster and probe them about the pictures they had drawn to illustrate those values and subsequently, how they could transfer them. Therefore, this interview provided me with the beginning evidence of transfer of the TPSR core values (see Appendix F for guiding questions).

Finally the third interview was a follow up to the first two interviews and served the purpose of probing further into the transfer aspect of the TPSR framework. The essential goal of TPSR is to transfer core values to areas outside of the gym. So, to explore this area further during this third interview was warranted. By the time of the third interview, I had received two source journals from the youth care staff, an interview with teachers and youth care staff, and a third period grading report from the participants’ teachers, all of which evaluated each participant’s behaviors. I also had conducted six weeks of observations in the typical after-school program. Hence, interview questions reflected the information obtained through these sources of data collection (see Appendix F for guiding questions). Within all of the semi-structured interviews, I confirmed the answers of participants to ensure that I understood what they wanted to say in response to the questions. Since these were young children, I considered this the best strategy for
member checking the data as it would not have been developmentally appropriate for them to read manuscripts, a summary of their words, or have a questionnaire confirming their responses.

**Adult participants.** Semi-structured interviews also took place with the teachers and youth care staff of the second and third grade participants. These talks were not primary sources of data collection in my study, but they provided me the opportunity to have teachers and youth care staff member explains the behaviors I observed in the research site. Six of seven teachers and youth care staff participated in the first interview, but the second interview only consisted of two (2) teachers and one (1) youth care staff. For the first interview, one of the youth care staff had been relieved of her employment prior to my ability to get an interview from her. By the time of the second interview, one teacher (third grade) had quit the school, not returning after spring break, one youth care staff was relieved from his employment, and another teacher (third grade) was unavailable consistently when I attempted to obtain the last interview. I audio-taped each exchange to assure that I captured all aspects of it for later analysis. Each conversation was carried out on an individual basis and conducted twice, during weeks 1 or 2, and 7 or 8 of the study. These exchanges lasted 20 to 30 minutes. With the youth care staff, they took place within the context of the standard after school program as to not take them away from performing their duties as the youth care staff for an extended period of time. I sought out classroom teachers before the school day began, during lunchtime, or immediately after the school day ended. Sample questions from the interviews
include the following: 1.) “Please provide me with examples of how each of them [your students] have exhibited responsible behaviors”; and 2.) What types of decisions do you allow your students to make? What responsibilities do you give your students?” (see Appendix G for guiding questions). The discussions with the sources helped to inform me of participant behaviors in the standard after school program and the classroom, indicating to what extent participants were transferring TPSR core values. For the adult semi-structured interviews, I confirmed their answers by restating what the teachers and youth care staff said in each of their interviews to ensure they said what they meant to say in their responses to the questions asked of them. I determined this tactic to be the most efficient since I did not want to take up more of the teachers’ and youth care staff’s time any more than necessary.

All interviews took place in a quiet area outside the gym and were audio-taped with permission and transcribed verbatim. A transcription service was used for all 35 interviews of primary participants, teachers, and youth care staff. I randomly selected 7 of the primary participant interviews and 3 of the teacher and youth care staff interviews, 30% of all interviews, to check for accuracy of the transcription service used for transcribing the interviews verbatim.

**Source journals.** Source journals from youth care staff were collected two times, once in the second week and once in the sixth week of the study. Two written journals were collected during the intervention during the 8-week intervention. Source journals were structured written journals that allowed sources to discuss
participant behaviors in the standard after school program. They were instrumental in getting the youth staff’s perspectives of participants’ transference of TPSR core values. Each journal took approximately five minutes to complete and encompassed evaluations for 4 students for a total of 20 minutes per group. The journal format was the same each time and the questions remained consistent of the two journals collected. Some example questions were as follows:

- How has the participant exhibited responsible behaviors (e.g. respecting self and others, participation/effort in activities, demonstrating self-control, setting goals for herself/himself, demonstrating leadership behaviors such as role modeling) in the classroom/YMCA program this week? Please provide examples.

- How often is the participant exhibiting these responsible behaviors, if at all (e.g. one time per week, two times per week, three times per week, more than three times per week)? (See Appendix H).

There were a total of 12 child participants and three youth care staff at the beginning of the study. I assigned each staff member four students to track their behaviors over the course of the study. I wanted to know if the participants’ behaviors were changing over time as a result of my study. For consistency and in consideration of the youth care staff’s time, I was adamant about the assignment of the specific number of students to youth care staff. However, in the first week of the study, one of the staff members was released from her position. This prevented me from collecting source journals on 4 of the children from the YMCA perspective.
Another staff member, Mr. Anthony, was released from his position with 3 weeks left to go in the study, so I was only able to collect one journal from him on the four participants who were assigned to him. In total, I was able to collect two journals on each of 4 children from one youth staff and 1 journal from the male staff member. Therefore, I had journals on a total of eight children, two journals for four of the eight and one journal for the remaining four children. Therefore, more information was gathered on certain children over others and this is an obvious issue for data analysis and subsequent findings. The data was skewed to represent the children on whom I received the most data.

**Picture journals.** Each student drew a picture of their interpretation of the TPSR goals on the second and sixth weeks of the intervention. Picture drawing allowed the young children to express their perspectives, particularly if they had difficulty articulating their viewpoints in words. These pictures contributed to my understanding of how children understood the TPSR core values. The first drawing focused on respect as the plan was to have a total of four drawings, but it did not work out that way. There just was not enough time to hold lengthy discussions about how children made meaning of the TPSR core values and draw pictures every week. Therefore, we only had time for two sessions for drawing. For the second drawing, the children had the choice to draw about any of the TPSR goals, as they had been introduced to and we had discussed in depth all of the values by Day 12 of the study.
Participants were allowed 15 to 20 minutes during the group and reflection times to draw their pictures. Due to time limitations, pictures were explained at a time outside of the TPSR program. On the weeks children were asked to draw the pictures, children were asked to explain their pictures on an individual basis and this activity was videotaped. Within the typical YMCA schedule, there were 35 minutes during which time children had free time. I used this time for each participant to explain her or his picture in a quiet area outside of the gym. Each participant took 2 to 3 minutes to discuss her or his picture on the two days of the week that the implementation took place. All of the children took less than 3 minutes to describe their pictures on video. Each picture was described the day after the participants drew it, although there were a few exceptions when a child was absent from the YMCA program on the day when I attempted to retrieve her or his explanation of the picture.

**Researcher journal.** A daily researcher journal was kept throughout the study. Keeping a researcher journal allowed me a space to be reflexive, questioning myself and my understanding of the interactions with participants and collected documents. After each of the 15 lessons, I spent 5 to 10 minutes reflecting upon my methodology as a facilitator, what was going well, what was not going well, what I needed to change, how I was going to change it, and the behaviors and/or personalities of the children. I wrote down my reflections after each lesson and subsequently typed them into a word document in preparation for analysis.
**Document analysis.** Document analysis involves locating materials at the research site and gathering information from web sources. Collecting documents was useful in complimenting interviews, observations, and other sources of data collection in this study (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Understanding the historical particulars of the program was a contributing factor to my research as well as understanding participants’ perspectives of TPSR core values and exploring the transfer of such values to the classroom and YMCA program. Documents such as the parent hand-book, the YMCA website, zip code demographic website (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011), and the school report card website (Ohio Department of Education, 2010-2011) were reviewed for analysis.

The parent handbook provided the typical activity schedule for the after school program indicating the type of activities in which the children engage during their time at the program. Furthermore, the handbook denoted the mission statement which allowed me to better understand the beliefs and values of the YMCA. The YMCA website provided the physical activity curriculum of the Y-Kids Are Fit program and informed me of the types of physical activities the youth care staff conducts with the children. The zip code demographics provided information on the surrounding neighborhood of the school, giving insight to the participants’ environments. The school website specified demographic information of the school, school indicators, and school report card. These documents provided me with a basic understanding of the school and the after school program. In addition to the above mentioned documents, I collected the grading reports from teachers for
periods three and four of the school year for 8 of the 12 children. After repeated requests, one teacher (second grade), who was responsible for three of the students did not provide me with the reports and another teacher did not provide me with information on one of his student because the student had left the school indefinitely. On the grading reports, there was an area that denoted a social behaviors’ grade for each student, but mostly I focused on the comments by the teachers which usually included an evaluation of behavior for each grading period. I wanted to determine if there was behavioral shift in the classroom that coincided with my responsibility-based program to note if there was some element of transfer from my program to the classroom, but it was difficult to determine any direct relationship.

Program Implementation

The program delivered to the selected second and third grade participants involved a TPSR curriculum format using cooperative activities. I chose cooperative activities for the activity portion of the curriculum as these activities were structured in a way that complimented the TPSR lesson. The activities involved actions that promoted personal and social responsibility through use of cooperative, team-building, problem-solving, and trust activities. After piloting cooperative activities with the chosen participants on four days in the two weeks prior to the study, I developed a 16-day unit and confirmed that these activities would work well within this setting. However, due to an assembly taking place on one of the days of the study, the unit became 15 days. I was unable to make up the one day, as
my program was planned to end the week before spring break. It did not seem appropriate to have one day of TPSR set apart from the rest of the unit, so instead I opted to have a 15-day unit.

**Core assumptions of delivering a TPSR curriculum.** The TPSR model centers on empowering children to take control of their lives by infusing core values of responsibility into an after school or summer program or an intact physical education class’ content. An effective responsibility model program using physical activity as the catalyst to develop responsible behaviors and embraces the following core values as denoted by Hellison (2011, pp. 35-43):

1. Respecting the rights and feelings of others
2. Participation and effort
3. Self-direction
4. Leadership and helping others

For the purposes of this study the four TPSR goals were operationalized in Table 3.5 to explain what the goals looked like, did not look like, sounded like, and felt like.
Table 3.5. Operation of TPSR core responsibility values.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Looks Like</th>
<th>Does Not Look Like</th>
<th>Sounds Like</th>
<th>Feels Like</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respecting the rights and feelings of others</td>
<td>Self-control – controlling temper, mouth, behaviors</td>
<td>Arguing or fighting with others</td>
<td>Greetings: “Hi.” or “How are you?” to the instructor or peers upon entering the gym</td>
<td>I am important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peaceful conflict resolution</td>
<td>Exclusion</td>
<td>Quiet when others are talking and participant is listening</td>
<td>People are considerate of my feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inclusion and recognition of differences among individuals</td>
<td>Making fun of others/name-calling</td>
<td>“Thank you.”</td>
<td>I feel like I belong to something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allowance of others to express opinions freely</td>
<td>Blaming others for behavior</td>
<td>“Let’s all play together.”</td>
<td>I feel good about myself because others are acknowledging my opinion and listening to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Takes accountability for actions</td>
<td>Disrupting play or work of others</td>
<td>“I will teach you how to do that activity.”</td>
<td>Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation and effort</td>
<td>Moving to next station without prompting</td>
<td>Sitting on the sidelines</td>
<td>“That looks fun.”</td>
<td>Satisfied that I am working hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trying out new tasks despite fear</td>
<td>Selecting tasks in which success is assured</td>
<td>“I am willing to try this game.”</td>
<td>Good about myself because I tried something new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persistence through difficult tasks</td>
<td>Giving a partial effort</td>
<td>“I am not very good at doing pushups, but I am willing to learn how to do them better.”</td>
<td>More confident about my abilities in doing activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Giving the best effort in all tasks</td>
<td>Exhibiting behaviors denoting superiority to others</td>
<td>“I will work hard to finish this activity.”</td>
<td>A little more trust in talking about my feelings and giving my perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full participation in activity</td>
<td>Being off task</td>
<td>“How hard can it be? Let’s play.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-motivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-direction</th>
<th>Setting personal goals for the short term and long term</th>
<th>Constant reminders about completing a task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Working independently without prompting</td>
<td>“I can't talk right now unless it is about the activity.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-monitoring</td>
<td>“I am trying to pay attention to the instructor.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Task oriented</td>
<td>“My goal is to listen to others and not talk so much and take over conversations.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resisting peer pressure to engage in off-task behavior</td>
<td>Quiet (e.g. during participant picture journals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Persistent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leader</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership and helping others</th>
<th>Sensitivity to others’ level of ability in tasks</th>
<th>Making fun of others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modeling positive behaviors</td>
<td>Goofing off when should be engaged in activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leading groups in activities</td>
<td>Talking trash to adults and peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrating patience with peers in various activities</td>
<td>Complaining about working with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unwillingness to lead an activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Come on team, let's go; we can do this!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I am happy to lead the next activity.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Susie, please stop talking, I am trying to listen to the instructor.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Here, let me help you.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Remember, just pump your arms, and run as fast as you can.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Team Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Confident</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This program incorporated four overarching themes important to a responsibility program: integration, empowerment, student-facilitator relationship and transfer (Hellison, 2003, pp. 18-23). The core values of the responsibility program were integrated into the physical activity portion of the lesson plan and taught during group and reflection times of the lesson. I empowered children to make decisions by facilitating them to work through the cooperative activities, acting as a facilitator rather than a teacher who would have had the role of providing them with explicit instructions and leading them in the task. As a person who had volunteered at this research site for the past two years, I had developed a relationship with some of the students, but I built a deeper relationship with them and the other participants through this program delivery. I strengthened my relationships with them by providing them with the opportunity to voice their perspectives and understanding of the program and its core values. I encouraged them to build upon their existing strengths, recognizing their individuality. Finally, transference is the ultimate goal of a TPSR program as students are expected to transfer values of the program to areas outside of the program setting. During the group meetings and reflection times of the lesson plan, I focused on specific core values (e.g. respect, self-direction), discussing them individually on a weekly basis to reinforce values and promote transfer.

More specifically, I stimulated core value transfer by first briefing the participants on the core values and the particular focus of the week (e.g. participation and effort). The activities in which I had the children engage were
activities that framed the core value that I wanted to emphasize during that lesson. For example, one of the activities, ‘Help Me Tag’ was designed to promote helping each other become unfrozen once tagged on a day that focused on the value of leadership and helping others. Such activities and the awareness talk of the lesson plan created the foundation for the group meeting and reflection time to follow the activity. The group meeting and reflection time provided the space for me to ask specific questions of the participants in terms of them assessing the activity and the implementation of the activity as well as considering their own behaviors in relation to the core values taught. Furthermore, I linked their evaluations with how they planned to demonstrate the taught core values to the classroom and the YMCA program.

Each week focused on only one of four core values as to channel their energies in grasping that one concept (participation and effort, respect, self-direction, and leadership and helping others). Beginning the 5th week of the 8 weeks of data collection, we repeated the core values, in the same order as weeks 1 through 4 to reinforce what they had been taught in the previous weeks. Additionally, I tried to understand if transfer of the core values had occurred when observing children in the typical YMCA and gathering information (e.g. interviews, source journals, grading reports) from teachers and youth care staff.

The following TPSR lesson format was used as a strategy for guiding the lessons two times each week (Hellison, 2003): (1) relational time (getting to know students on an individual basis either before or after the lesson); (2) awareness talk
(very brief discussion of responsibility model and expectations); (3) physical activity lesson (e.g. fitness, adventure based learning, sport activity); (4) group time (time to reflect upon activity); (5) reflection time (time to reflect upon self and behaviors during the activity and transference of positive behaviors to areas outside of the program). A detailed lesson plan is outlined in Table 3.7.

Each portion is vital to the lesson, so time was allocated accordingly to encompass all of the components of the lesson (Hellison, 2003). For my lessons, relational time took 3-5 minutes, the awareness talk 1-2 minutes, the activity portion of the lesson 20-25 minutes, group and reflection times 20-30 minutes.

**Core assumptions of a cooperative activity curriculum.** A cooperative activity curriculum engage students in activities that enhance their sense of building community, collaborating, showing respect towards one another, trusting each other, and working towards common goals (Frank, 2004). The cornerstones of any curriculum is to first develop a set of rules by which each student follows to create a safe environment, then as the facilitator to relinquish some control by allowing the students the choice to participate in an activity at a level that is comfortable, yet challenging for individual students. This curriculum is experiential and facilitates reflection so that participants can extract relevance from the experience; it is a continuity of developing experiences (Frank, 2004).

A cooperative activity curriculum was used with the TPSR intervention to augment the core values of the program. A 15-day unit was developed in sequence with the core values of each week and a cooperative activity that tied into each
principle each day. The activities began by creating community first, through mutual respect for each other, then effectively moving through team-building and leadership activities.

In presenting the cooperative activities, I briefly explained and demonstrated each activity prior to the children performing the task. Subsequently, I allowed them to play the activity reinforcing the tasks with cue words or phrases, particularly since the participants were so young in this study. Although I had a planned time for each activity to guide the lesson, there was flexibility in the execution of activities, as it depended on whether or not children were engaged and enjoying the activity as well as how quickly they moved through the activity. If either one of these circumstances occurred, I was able to pull from a list of activities I kept with me that aligned with the core value of the week. Also, I tried not to rush the children through any of the tasks unless we were approaching the 25-minute limit we had for activities. I wanted them to be able to experience the activity in full and be competent to reflect upon it and its relevance to their lives later in the lesson. Nevertheless, I had to maintain a schedule to sustain the lesson plan format outlined in the TPSR program and the time limitations imposed by the YMCA program.

For the most part, I was able to follow the time allotted in the study. I adhered to the curriculum that I delivered, but allowed for some flexibility in the curriculum in order to give the participants the opportunity and space to make decisions and practice leadership roles. The existing YMCA program was flexible so I was able to stretch my time on some days from 45 minutes to 60-65 minutes,
which allowed me to expand my lessons with the students. This extension occurred on Days 9 through 15 of the study. There was no particular reason about the day, other than we prolonged our discussion time, especially at the end of the lesson, depending on the topic. I let the children drive the discussion. I was able to extend all aspects of the lesson, but in particular the areas I most expanded were the relational time at the beginning of the lesson to approximately 6 minutes and the group meeting and reflection time to approximately 30 minutes. This time extension provided me with the opportunity to get to know the students better and gain a more comprehensive understanding of their perspectives on the lessons and their behaviors.

Implementation of the responsibility-based program. I spent three days a week, on most weeks of the study, at the elementary school site from January to March 2011 for a total of 8 weeks. On the first two days of the week, I spent about 90 minutes in the site. I conducted the TPSR program intervention lasting approximately 50 to 55 minutes, providing children with the tools to develop and demonstrate responsible behaviors. The TPSR program was implemented during the thematic activity and outdoor/gym play on the typical schedule of the YMCA after school program. I usually arrived and set up about 15 minutes prior to the children entering the gym. The remaining hour was spent conducting observations, talking with students, and recording field notes during the regular part of the YMCA program. On the third day of the week, every other week, I spent approximately 2 to 3 hours conducting interviews with child participants, teachers, and youth care staff.
To implement the TPSR lesson plan format, a block plan (Table 3.5) for the research study was designed to focus on specific mechanisms that impacted the four core values of TPSR. The overall unit goals of the TPSR program were as follows:

- **Cognitive Objectives:**
  - The students will be able to define the TPSR core values of participation and effort, respect for self and others, self-direction and demonstration of leadership and helping others verbally during group and reflection times in each lesson.
  - The students will be able to illustrate the TPSR core values of participation and effort, respect for self and others, self-direction and demonstration of leadership and helping others in picture drawings during group and reflection times over an 8 week program.
  - The students will be able to explain the TPSR core values of participation and effort, respect for self and others, self-direction and leadership and helping others during individual interviews with me.

- **Affective Objectives:**
  - The students will be able to demonstrate the core value of participation and effort by engaging in unfamiliar activities, contributing to discussions by responding to questions asked of them, sharing opinions in discussions, and cooperating with other participants for most of the lessons plan over an 8 week program.
The students will be able to demonstrate the core value of respecting the rights and feelings by controlling their temper and mouths, practicing active listening skills while others are talking, and giving others the right to be included for most of the lessons over an 8 week program.

The students will be able to demonstrate the core value of self-direction by working in activities without direction and not allowing others to get them into trouble for most of the lessons over an 8 week program.

The students will be able to demonstrate the core value of leadership and helping others by resisting peer pressure, stepping up as a leader, and assisting others in activities for most of the lessons over an 8 week program.

The students will be able to demonstrate the core values of TPSR in the classroom and the typical YMCA program as reported by classroom teachers and YMCA youth care staff for most of the lessons over the 8 week program.

Although the overall goals for the program only involved the cognitive and affective domains, the children engaged in motor tasks as indicated by the curriculum. However, motor objectives were not the focus of this study. The TPSR framework overwhelmingly is dominated by the affective domain, but it is important to understand the core values of TPSR. Thus objectives in the cognitive domain were
warranted in this study alongside the affective objectives. The affective and cognitive domains were the priorities in this 8 week program.

Nevertheless, the participants were expected to take part in each of the activities outlined in the daily lesson plan. In addition, they were expected to acquire and adapt to a variety of manipulative, locomotor, and non-locomotor skills as individuals and as teams in a dynamic environment. A 15-day block plan is noted in the below table (Table 3.6).

The block plan for the TPSR program was as follows:

Table 3.6. TPSR Program 15-Day Block Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TPSR Goal Focus: Participation and Effort</strong></td>
<td><strong>TPSR Goal Focus: Participation and Effort</strong></td>
<td><strong>TPSR Goal Focus: Respect for self and others</strong></td>
<td><strong>TPSR Goal Focus: Respect for self and others</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Relational Time (greet students and ask students about their day)</td>
<td>- Relational Time (greet students and ask students about their day)</td>
<td>- Relational Time (greet students and ask students about their day)</td>
<td>- Relational Time (greet students and ask students about their day)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Awareness Talk (define and explain participation and effort)</td>
<td>- Awareness Talk (define and explain participation and effort)</td>
<td>- Awareness Talk (define and explain respect)</td>
<td>- Awareness Talk (define and explain respect)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cover Safety Issues (emotional and physical safety)</td>
<td>- Cover Safety Issues (emotional and physical safety)</td>
<td>- Cover Safety Issues (emotional and physical safety)</td>
<td>- Cover Safety Issues (emotional and physical safety)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Welcome Circle (10 minutes)</td>
<td>- Follow Me (15 minutes)</td>
<td>- Wizards and Geflings (15 minutes)</td>
<td>- Team Juggle (10 minutes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Run Rabbit Run (15 minutes)</td>
<td>- Turnstile (10 minutes)</td>
<td>- Everybody's It (10 minutes)</td>
<td>- Pairs' Tag (15 minutes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Group Time (discuss activities – what liked, did not like, what</td>
<td>- Group Time (discuss activities – what liked, did not like, what</td>
<td>- Group Time (discuss activities – what liked, did not like, what</td>
<td>- Group Time (discuss activities – what liked, did not like, what</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | | | | (Continued)
Table 3.6. TPSR Program 15-Day Block Plan (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>TPSR Goal Focus: Self-Direction</th>
<th>TPSR Goal Focus: Self-Direction</th>
<th>TPSR Goal Focus: Leadership and Helping Others</th>
<th>TPSR Goal Focus: Leadership and Helping Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>- Relational Time (greet students and ask students about their day)</td>
<td>- Relational Time (greet students and ask students about their day)</td>
<td>- Relational Time (greet students and ask students about their day)</td>
<td>- Relational Time (greet students and ask students about their day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>- Awareness Talk (discuss TPSR core values and transfer)</td>
<td>- Awareness Talk (discuss TPSR core values and transfer)</td>
<td>- Awareness Talk (discuss TPSR core values and transfer)</td>
<td>- Awareness Talk (discuss TPSR core values and transfer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Cover Safety Issues (emotional and physical safety)</td>
<td>- Cover Safety Issues (emotional and physical safety)</td>
<td>- Cover Safety Issues (emotional and physical safety)</td>
<td>- Cover Safety Issues (emotional and physical safety)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Monkey Tails Tag (15 minutes)</td>
<td>- Elbow Tag (10 minutes)</td>
<td>- Fox in the Morning (15 minutes)</td>
<td>- Triangle Tag (10 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Blob Tag (10 minutes)</td>
<td>- Asteroids (15 minutes)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.6. TPSR Program 15-Day Block Plan (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TPSR Goal Focus: Participation and Effort</strong></td>
<td><strong>TPSR Goal Focus: Participation and Effort</strong></td>
<td><strong>TPSR Goal Focus: Respect for self and others</strong></td>
<td><strong>TPSR Goal Focus: Respect for self and others</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Relational Time (greet students and ask students about their day)</td>
<td>- Relational Time (greet students and ask students about their day)</td>
<td>- Relational Time (greet students and ask students about their day)</td>
<td>- Relational Time (greet students and ask students about their day)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Awareness Talk (discuss TPSR core values and transfer)</td>
<td>- Awareness Talk (discuss TPSR core values and transfer)</td>
<td>- Awareness Talk (discuss TPSR core values and transfer)</td>
<td>- Awareness Talk (discuss TPSR core values and transfer)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cover Safety Issues (emotional and physical safety)</td>
<td>- Cover Safety Issues (emotional and physical safety)</td>
<td>- Cover Safety Issues (emotional and physical safety)</td>
<td>- Cover Safety Issues (emotional and physical safety)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Freeze Tag (15-20 minutes – participants choice)</td>
<td>- Help Tag (15 minutes)</td>
<td>- Trust Circle (10 minutes)</td>
<td>- Insanity(15 minutes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Dead Fish (5-10 minutes –</td>
<td>- Robot Safety Operator (10 minutes)</td>
<td>- Crows and Cranes (15 minutes)</td>
<td>- Sharks and Minnows (10 minutes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minutes)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson</td>
<td>TPSR Goal Focus: Self-Direction</td>
<td>TPSR Goal Focus: Leadership and Helping Others</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>- Relational Time (greet students and ask students about their day)</td>
<td>- Relational Time (greet students and ask students about their day)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Awareness Talk (discuss TPSR core values and transfer)</td>
<td>- Awareness Talk (discuss TPSR core values and transfer)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Cover Safety Issues (emotional and physical safety)</td>
<td>- Cover Safety Issues (emotional and physical safety)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Mookie (10 minutes)</td>
<td>- Rock, Paper, Scissors Tag (10-15 minutes)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Transformer Tag (15 minutes – partially participants)</td>
<td>- Modified Dodge Ball (15 minutes)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>- Group Time (discuss activities – what liked, did not like, what would the participants change)</td>
<td>- Group Time (discuss activities – what liked, did not like, what would the participants change)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Reflection Time (discussed how children helped each other in activity and how they can help people; talked about respect – rudeness; importance of getting along with others)</td>
<td>- Reflection Time (talked about self-control; discussed how having a bad day affects behavior and how they handle a bad day)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>- Group Time (discuss activities – what liked, did not like, what would the participants change)</td>
<td>- Group Time (discuss activities – what liked, did not like, what would the participants change)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Reflection Time (talked more about respect and how participants showed it or did not show it in the activities; chose behavior cards and talked about behaviors of the day and how they can show respect outside of the gym)</td>
<td>- Reflection Time (talked more about respect and how participants showed it or did not show it in the activities; chose behavior cards and talked about behaviors of the day and how they can show respect outside of the gym)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The block plan reflected the TPSR lesson plan format, which included approximately 25 minutes of cooperative activities. Lessons emerged over the course of the program, as it depended on the participants’ display or lack of display of responsible behaviors. They were adapted to accommodate the participants in a manner that enhanced and maximized their demonstration of responsible behaviors.

A sample lesson plan (Table 3.7) is illustrated below as an indicator of how each lesson was carried throughout the research study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.6. TPSR Program 15-Day Block Plan (Continued)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>choice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Group Time (discuss activities – what liked, did not like, what would the participants change)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reflection Time (reflected on how to react to people who talk negatively about the participants; experiences with negative talk and how dealt with them; what self-direction had to do with activities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Group Time (discuss activities – what liked, did not like, what would the participants change)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reflection Time (chose behavior cards and discussed behaviors in activities; discussed participants meanings of self-direction at this point in the program)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Group Time (discuss activities – what liked, did not like, what would the participants change)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reflection Time (discussed leadership surrounding honesty – cheating; qualities of a good leader – modeling good behavior and how the participants model it; talked about what leadership and helping other means at this point in the program)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.7. Sample Lesson Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development &amp; Management Tasks</th>
<th>Anticipated Time</th>
<th>How will the task be communicated include Teaching Cues/Critical Elements</th>
<th>Organizational Arrangement</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Group and Reflection Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relational Time</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Hi, how are you today? Did you have a good day at school?&quot;</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>Students sitting in a semi-circle around the facilitator as discuss questions</td>
<td>Students respond to greeting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Awareness Talk</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Today we are going to focus on participation and effort. It means working together, giving your best effort, and participating in all activities.&quot;</td>
<td>1-2 minutes</td>
<td>Students sitting in a semi-circle around the facilitator</td>
<td>Students listening attentively; eyes are on the instructor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cover Safety Issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;We want to play safe, hard, and fair but also have fun!&quot;</td>
<td>30 secs</td>
<td>Students sitting in a semi-circle around the facilitator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued)
your peers but you need to be able to work with them

**Welcome Circle**

Focus: Perspective taking, valuing diversity, using put-ups

- Gather in a circle
- Teach the students a welcome greeting to perform while saying “Welcome”:
  - Pat your thighs twice
  - Clap twice
  - Snap twice
  - Thumbs up
- Tell them that you will call out different things. If it is true for them, they are to take 2 small steps into the middle of the circle.
- Everyone else does the welcome greeting

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|  | 10-12 minutes | 1. The teacher will explain the activity  
2. The teacher will remind children to look around to see if other students have things in common with them.  
3. Be respectful of each other’s differences. | Students standing in a circle on poly spots. I am outside the circle walking around it, providing teaching cues. | Did you find that you had anything in common with anyone else in this room? What? Were you surprised at how many times you stepped into the circle? How did you welcome each other, and how did it feel? What can we do to make everyone feel welcome in this class? |

Table 3.7. Sample Lesson Plan (Continued)
As an example, call out: “Everyone who is a student at this school (all the students will take a step in and you will do the welcome greeting for them)

Call out a variety of things. Examples are:

Everyone who:

- Is a girl; is a boy; has a brother, sister, pet, does not have a middle name, is right-handed, is left-handed, likes to play soccer, likes to sing, has a birthday this month; lives in an apartment; lives in a house; lives on a farm; likes math; likes reading; likes art; likes sports; has moved this year; celebrates Kwanzaa, Hanukah, Christmas, Ramadan; clothes wearing (e.g. tennis shoes, colors)
Run Rabbit Run is an activity that encompasses physical activity, emphasizes safety, helping others, and participation.

1. Choose 2 students to be the first foxes. Rest of the class will be rabbits.
2. Rabbits are trying not to get caught by the foxes.
3. Play begins when the foxes yell, “Run, rabbit, run!” Rabbits run across to the other side of the play area to the line, where they are safe, if they have not been tagged.

Transition Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transition Time</th>
<th>1-2 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Run Rabbit Run</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>1. The teacher will explain the activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. The teacher will note the safety rules of gentle touching, no pushing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. The teacher will ensure the game is played within the safe boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e.g. gym floor, open space).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Create a large rectangular play area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Students playing safe, hard, fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Students following directions provided by facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage students to discuss how it felt to be a frozen fox helper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discuss participation and effort and how it contributed to this activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Did you feel that you were participating and giving all your effort when</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>you were the frozen fox helper? How did you feel when you were</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.7. Sample Lesson Plan (Continued)
4. Rabbits who are tagged by foxes become frozen tag helpers. Frozen helpers may tag, but cannot move their feet.

5. Continue play until all rabbits have been tagged.

6. Play another round using different locomotor skills besides running for safety concerns.

Transition to Classroom

3-4 minutes

Students and facilitator walk in a group to the classroom

Group Time

5 minutes

The teacher will prompt students with questions but allow them more talk time to gain perspectives

Students sitting in semi-circle around facilitator in chairs on the carpet area of the classroom

Students sharing their opinions openly

Discuss both activities – what they liked about them, did not like about them

frozen? What would have happened if you did not participate to help the fox?

Make connections to the after school program and the classroom about the important of participation and giving best effort in tasks.

Table 3.7. Sample Lesson Plan (Continued)
Questions include:

1. What did you like about the Reflection Time 20-25 minutes

   The teacher will prompt students with questions but allow them more talk time to gain perspectives

   Students sitting in semi-circle around facilitator in chairs on the carpet area of the classroom

   Students sharing their opinions openly

   Discuss behaviors based on the TPSR goal of participation and effort

   “How well did you participate today? (Continued)
   What did your participation look like? What can you do to show participation? Effort? What does participation sound like? Feel like? Not look like?

Table 3.7. Sample Lesson Plan (Continued)
Table 3.7. Sample Lesson Plan (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Closure</strong></th>
<th>1-2 minutes</th>
<th>Students in semi-circle around facilitator in chairs on the carpet area of the classroom</th>
<th>“See you next time.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Provide students with feedback on lesson (briefly)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Provide students with preview of the next lesson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I implemented the TPSR curriculum using cooperative activities on 2 days of the week for approximately 50-55 minutes each time for 8 weeks. Outside of the 50-55 minutes for the TPSR implementation, the youth care staff carried on with their normal programming as denoted in the usual schedule (Table 3.1). Children ate their snacks, did homework, and engaged in free time at activity stations. On days of the week when I was not there leading the TPSR program, students either had free time or engaged in physical activity in their Y-Kids Are Fit Program, led by youth care staff.

Several activities during the 8-week intervention had an impact on the participants learning, developing, and implementing the core values of TPSR. Each week there was a TPSR core value (e.g. participation/effort, respect) on which to focus. At the start of the lesson, students were greeted with “Hello” and “How was your day today?” This greeting was the initial interaction with each student that would set the stage for the lesson and start of children building their capacities to develop and demonstrate the core values of TPSR. The next 1 to 2 minutes was spent talking to the children about the core values of TPSR, providing them with an introduction to the value focus of the week and my expectations for them to exhibit the values. During this time, I indicated to the children how I wanted for them to be adept in telling me what the values meant to them, what they looked like, did not look like, sounded like, and felt like throughout the 8 weeks of the program. Next, I engaged the children in the cooperative activities, explaining to them beforehand
the focus of the lesson (e.g. respect, self-direction). For the duration of the lesson, I reinforced the intent of the session.

Finally, group and reflection times were comprised of discussions I facilitated surrounding the core value of the week, relating it to the activity, their behaviors in the program, the classroom, and the standard after school program. Not only were there discussions during the group and reflection times, but also, there were illustrations (e.g. picture elicitations by participants, poster development to highlight values) to reinforce and encourage the core values of TPSR. Pictures were completed by each participant on weeks two and six of the program intervention. The pictures drawn illustrated what the core values looked like to participants and were completed during the group and reflection times of the lesson. Students were later asked to explain their pictures on video to me on an individual basis later in the week. Starting with the first week of the implementation, the children and I developed a large poster that described the core values. We began with respecting self and the rights and feelings of others and what it meant to them. Their definitions were written on the poster. Each week, we added another value until we got through all of the core values. Beginning in the 5th week, we refined the definitions as needed. The goal was that through discussions and illustrations, participants had the ability to make a connection between the importance of the TPSR core values and their lives.
Implementation Fidelity

It was important to assure programmatic fidelity, as TPSR literature has limited in this area. Therefore, I conducted fidelity checks using two instruments, the Tool for Assessing Responsibility-based Education (TARE; Wright & Craig, 2011) and the TPSR checklist (Hellison, 1995; 2003; 2011), to confirm that I was doing what I said I would be doing within the TPSR program. The details of both instruments are detailed in the below section.

**Tool for assessing responsibility-based education.** Wright and Craig’s (2011) Tool to Assess Responsibility-based Education (TARE; See Appendix H) and Hellison’s (See Appendix I) TPSR Feedback Form were utilized to assess the program fidelity in this study. The TARE instrument has four parts, but this study only used the first two parts of the instrument. The third part of the instrument encompassed capturing students’ responsible behaviors and the fourth part consisted of an area to write reflective notes. Since the data methods collected in the study already captured this information in great detail, there seemed to be no reason to repeat the gathering of this information with this instrument. Thus I only used the first two parts of the TARE instrument. The first part consisted of a time-sampling tool that was used to systematically observe and subsequently document the nine (9) discrete teaching strategies of the TPSR program. The teaching strategies were as follows: Modeling Respect; Setting Expectations; Opportunities for Success; Fostering Social Interaction; Assigning Tasks; Leadership; Giving Choices and Voices; Role in Assessment; and Transfer.
This section involved observing each of the teaching strategies for 5-minute intervals for the entire lesson, during which time the applicable code for each strategy was circled by the . Videotaped lessons were observed by a graduate student and me throughout the intervention. Six videotaped lessons were observed for inter-observer agreement. Sixty separate intervals were observed and recorded with inter-observer agreement ranging from 87% to 100% for all lessons across all nine categories. Fidelity for this segment of the instrument was successful if 80% of each category was observed. In terms of modeling respect and giving choices and voices, the IOA agreement was 100% whereas the lowest teaching strategies for agreement were the leadership and role in assessment categories at 87%.

The second part of the TARE instrument involves a holistic evaluation of the personal and social responsibility themes. This includes: 1) integration of responsibility roles into the lesson; 2) transference of core values (e.g. respect, self-direction) from the TPSR program to the classroom and the YMCA program; 3) the facilitator's empowerment of children by sharing responsibility; 4) and the extent of the teacher-student relationship during which facilitators allow voices and provide respect to students (Wright & Craig, 2011). After the observational tool was used, the graduate student and I assessed the overall application of the responsibility themes on a Likert scale from 4 (extensively applied theme) to 0 (never applied theme). This part of the instrument allowed us to rank the overall tone of the lesson and provided a space for comments. The evaluations of this section of the TARE instrument had reliabilities ranging from 72% to 100%. The category of
empowerment was rated the lowest between coders at 72% over the course of the study. After obtaining the 72%, the coders watched a shortened part of the video on Day 6, since the low agreement occurred around this time. I wanted to ensure that we were both identifying empowerment appropriately within the lesson. Consequently, the percentage increased to 80% or better in the later lessons. The highest agreement between both coders was the integration of the responsibility roles into the curriculum, at 100% agreement. No comments were made in this section by either the graduate student or me.

The primary purpose in using this instrument was to determine if the TPSR teaching strategies and responsibility themes were incorporated like the framework suggested. My program adhered to the fidelity measures I intended when I planned for this study, although inter-observer reliability did not reach 80% in the empowerment category on part two of the TARE instrument. To further establish fidelity, I confirmed that I used the TPSR lesson plan format as it was intended in the literature by using the lesson format feedback form.

**Lesson format feedback form.** In addition to the TARE instrument, I wanted to ensure the TPSR lesson plan format was used throughout each lesson. Therefore, Hellison’s (1995; 2003; 2011) TPSR Feedback Form to assess the daily format which was comprised of the following components: Relational time, awareness talk, physical activity lesson (cooperative curriculum), group meeting, and reflection time. This tool was created by Don Hellison, the developer of TPSR and subsequently was validated by a panel of TPSR experts. The feedback form asks
for the evaluators to respond ‘yes’, ‘somewhat, or ‘no’ to the incorporation of each
part of the class structure. A section for comments was provided if addition space
was needed to discuss the response given on the form. No comments were written
in this section of the form.

To assess fidelity using this form, the teacher had to respond ‘yes’ to each
portion of the lesson plan format in order for the lesson to be successful. If any
portion of the plan was not followed, then the lesson needed to be revised for the
next teaching session as fidelity was not attained. All lessons were successful, as
indicated by the graduate student and I writing ‘yes’ for each portion of the lesson
plan. Thus, we a 100% agreement that I followed the TPSR lesson plan as outlined
in the literature.

Both the observational portion of the TARE instrument and the feedback
form were completed during the review of six or 40% of the videotaped lessons.
The other sections of the TARE instrument were completed after the review of each
videotaped lesson. Both instruments served to ensure programmatic fidelity in this
study.

Prior to carrying out the fidelity checks, I trained a coder, a fellow graduate
student, to do inter-observer reliability to determine agreement between her and
me on the instrumentation used in this study. This graduate student was doctoral
student in her first year in the department of physical education.

Training of coders. Each of the 15 lessons was videotaped and reviewed by
me and one graduate student who assisted with this study. I assessed the first 2
parts of the TARE instrument and the lesson plan feedback form to determine feasibility of both instruments during four practice lessons conducted prior to the actual 8 week intervention. The training protocol for both the graduate student and me involved five steps:

(1) We became familiar with the definitions outlined in both instruments by reading over the definitions and quizzing each other on random terms to ensure that we understood what the terms meant within the context of a TPSR program.

(2) I verbally explained to the graduate student the lesson format and illustrated how a TPSR program was to be implemented. There was a sheet of paper denoting the TPSR lesson plan format and this served as a constant reminder for the graduate student to understand the format.

(3) We reviewed the videos from the practice lessons which were approximately 25 minutes long. At first we reviewed the videos to recognize the lesson plan format in the context of the program before coding them. The purpose was just to observe and for me to point out areas in the lesson plan that outlined the various parts of the lesson so when we began to code, the graduate student would know what she was looking for in her observations.

(4) We coded the practice lessons according to the instruments used in the study. We practiced with the 5-minute interval coding using the TARE instrument and the lesson plan format checklist first. Once we were finished with coding, we discussed our responses, why we marked the sheet the way we did, and how our responses were different. The coding of the instrument took approximately 25 minutes, the
length of the lesson, but the extended discussion of the coding took another 15 minutes. After watching the video the first time, we watched it a second time to complete the TPSR lesson plan checklist and the facilitator behaviors on the second part of the TARE instrument. Watching the video the second time took only 20 minutes, as it was just to recognize the parts of the lesson and ensure that the facilitator was implementing the strategies of TPSR.

(5) Finally, the coders needed to obtain 80% agreement on the practice lessons to confirm inter-observer agreement. This was an indicator that we could begin coding the actual lessons of the intervention. On the first lesson, the coder and I achieved 60% on the first attempt, but 80% on the second attempt. After talking through the parts of the lesson and explaining the graduate student what we were looking for within the lesson, the instrument became familiar in reviewing the second video for the first time and the coders were able to attain 80% agreement.

**Study Procedures**

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was secured and parent permission obtained. I finalized the TPSR program with a cooperative curriculum and started to conduct preliminary observations of the site, specifically focused on core values of TPSR. These activities took place in the month prior to Winter break. Children returned to school the first week of January and I started my intervention and data collection in mid-February. The TPSR program was delivered through mid-April, for a total of 15 sessions over 8 weeks. Follow up activities took place every week post intervention, from April to June. I conducted observations and
interacted with my participants in the after school site one time per week until the end of the school year. I tried to determine if children retained information learned during the intervention by taking note of their interactions with their peers and with the youth care staff.

**Data Analysis**

Data analysis began with organizing the data corpus in a manageable format prior to any analysis. I printed and read through all of the collected data for thoroughness and familiarity. Thematic analysis was used to create some preliminary codes, using highlighters to segregate data into clusters for further analysis and description (Glesne, 2006). Descriptive, low inference coding was used during the first reading and the codes were recorded into a code book to keep an account of them. During the second reading of the data corpus I used a pencil to underline and begin to synthesize information from both the first and second readings of the data, generating categories, themes, and sub-themes. I looked for emerging themes and descriptions in alignment with my ontological and epistemological assumptions, as well as with my research questions. I mapped all of the data on individually themed poster boards, using different colored post-it notes to represent each data source. I documented data interpretations in the form of analytic memos, noting my thoughts and perspectives. I reviewed the mapped data several times and made adjustments to the post-it notes as necessary to support the theme under which they resided. After situating and finalizing the placement of
each post-it note, I then determined in which order I was going to discuss the themes and their associated sub-themes in this document.

During the analytical process, I searched for disconfirming evidence and documented any alternative understandings of the data. Constant comparison of themes and data took place to develop categories and subcategories, reflecting interpretations of the gathered data. Ultimately, each phase of data analysis comprised reducing data to make sense of it and understand the participants’ perspectives. The data analysis was ongoing, beginning with the first observation and interview and sought to incorporate the perspectives of the participants as deemed through a social constructivist lens.

Trustworthiness

Establishing trustworthiness in this study involved prolonged engagement, triangulation of data collection methods and sources, a peer review of data and emergent themes, and member checks to verify the data collected from various sources. In addition, the researcher kept an audit trail which included maintaining a record of all of the data collected in the research project. Finally, credibility was reinforced by seeking out disconfirming evidence through negative case study analysis.

- Prolonged engagement is the time it takes to build rapport, develop trust, learn culture, and scrutinize researcher instincts through reflexive journaling. It is not specified in the research how long a researcher should be
in the field, as this area is subjective. I spent two years in the site prior to collecting my research data. During this time, I developed relationships with the youth care staff, the children, and parents while also developing an understanding of the after school program.

- **Triangulation** is the use of multiple data sources, data collection methods, multiple investigators (Glesne, 2006), or multiple theoretical perspectives (Glesne, 2006; Lather 1991). Not only is triangulation important for ascertaining trustworthiness, but also researchers want to avoid putting data into a tight box. Triangulation can strengthen a study’s usefulness for other settings (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Data in this study were triangulated by using multiple sources of data (e.g. observations, interviews, pictures, documents) and multiple people from whom data was collected (e.g. participants, sources such as youth care workers and teachers). (Reference Table 3.4).

- **Peer review and debriefing** is the having external input and reflection of colleagues of a researcher’s work for objectivity. A peer review and debrief was conducted by both of my advisors, as they provided me with feedback on my collection of data and interpretation of it.

- **Negative case analysis** is the search for disconfirming evidence for refinement of working hypotheses and themes. This evidence runs counter to themes and brings a higher level of legitimacy to a researcher’s work by dispelling bias in findings. I searched for disconfirming evidence through constant
analysis of the collected data. This is evident in my findings chapter, in which participants' perspectives and actions did not align with a sub-theme.

- **Member checks** encompass sharing documented information (e.g. interview transcripts, emergent themes) with participants to be sure that they believe that they are appropriately represented in the research, known as the crisis of representation. I conducted member checks in this study during interviews, by confirming statements made during the interview. This group of participants was very young and their literacy levels were limited and thus having the children read transcriptions or summaries of what they discussed would have been inappropriate. In the case of the teachers and youth care staff, they barely had enough time to sit down for an interview with me. Therefore, to conserve time I conducted an interview check with them also during the interview by reiterating statements they made to me, ensuring that I had heard them correctly. This was my form of member checking the adult participants in the study.

- **An Audit Trail** encompasses keeping records of all of your data processes, all of the iterations of themes, accounting for and organizing all the data and time spent conducting this research. I kept records of all of the collected data in an organized manner so that I could reference any data at will.

- **Thick description** requires very descriptive writing for possible transferability of methodology utilized in research. It allows readers to make interpretations and subsequently, their own decisions to put trust in the
researcher’s methods and use them in their own research or practice. Thick
description was used in the writing of my case.

**Ethical Considerations**

Glesne (2006) noted, “Ethical considerations are inseparable from your
everyday interactions with research participants and with your data” (p.129).
Therefore several ethical considerations were adhered to for this research project.
Parental permission was provided by each of the participants’ parent or guardian
and child assent was also obtained for their research study involvement according
to the explicit guidelines of the Institutional Review Board of The Ohio State
University. In exchange for the parents and participants’ to consent/assent to take
part in my research study, I agreed to protect their privacy and preserve their
anonymity. I did this by masking their identities through the use of aliases and
sometimes writing in a manner that reflected collected responses from all
participants rather than individual ones. In addition, I kept all data in a locked file
cabinet and in a password protected file on my computer.

In addition to the ethical considerations with regards to study permissions,
IRB approval, and protecting the privacy of participants, I had one ethical dilemma
with a child participant. This particular child participant was disruptive to the
learning process of the other children. One of the purposes of the study was for
children to understanding, make meaning, and demonstrate responsible behaviors
and arguably, this child needed these responsibility-based lessons more than any
other child in the program. However, I had to make the difficult decision of
removing her from the program as I felt that she was jeopardizing the other
students by preventing their environment from being a physically and emotionally
safe one. Antoinette’s behavior began with mild disruptions, such as talking out of
turn or interrupting peers when they were talking or saying the occasional put
down to her peer. This occurred in the first 2 to 3 sessions she attended. I gave her
verbal reprimands and she seemed to stop for the moment until the next moment in
the lesson. This behavior escalated to verbal abuse of students. This verbal abuse
happened 3 times in the program (Days 9, 10, and 11). For instance, on day 11,
Antoinette put down one of her peers, commenting on the student’s appearance and
odor, not only to the person’s face, but also to the group, putting the student in an
uncomfortable position. Once again, I reprimanded her for this irresponsible
behavior saying to her that this was inappropriate and unacceptable behavior in my
program. Finally, Antoinette’s behavior escalated to the point of her actually
pushing and hitting two of her peers on the same day (Day 11). I pulled her aside
and talked to her about one of the situations, but her behavior continued for the rest
of the lesson. At the point where despite my attempts to help her behave more
appropriately, she had become consistently verbally abusive and started to
physically mistreat her peers, I felt it was time to remove her from this short
program for the sake of the other students.

If the study had been longer than 8 weeks and more time could have been
spent in each session, I would have made a different decision, about removing
Antoinette. I wrestled back and forth with this decision for a few days prior to
drawing this conclusion and removing her on Day 11. Nevertheless, I felt it was the right thing to do, as I believed that if I did not remove her, the rights of the rest of the group to receive quality TPSR instruction. Not being mistreated by a peer was more important than the rights of one child to stay in the group. In removing her, my primary goal was to protect the group’s emotional and physical safety as well as to continue with teaching responsible behaviors to this group of participants.
Chapter 4

Findings

There were two purposes of this study: (1) To explore TPSR programmatic outcomes in underserved 2nd and 3rd grade students participating in a community-based after school program; and (2) To understand how underserved children create meaning in a TPSR structured program and transfer TPSR values to the classroom and YMCA afterschool program.

This chapter presents the findings for the single case study and is organized into three major themes: 1) connection with responsible behaviors; 2) caring for self and others; and 3) factors influencing responsible behaviors in participants. Within each of these major themes are sub-themes which represent a more extensive and focused explanation of the theme’s data. The data sources to support the sub-themes that will be represented throughout the chapter are illustrated in Table 4.1. These abbreviations allow for increased readability of the document.
Table 4.1. Provenance of Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PI1, PI2, PI3</td>
<td>Participant Interviews 1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TI1, TI2</td>
<td>Teacher interviews 1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YSI1, YSI2</td>
<td>Youth staff interviews 1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Day of study (e.g. D1 = Day 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PX1, PX2</td>
<td>Pictures 1-2 and notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LFN</td>
<td>Live Field Notes (e.g. LFN D1 = Live Field Notes Day 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VFN</td>
<td>Video Field Notes (e.g. VFN D1 = Video Field Notes Day 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GR3, GR4</td>
<td>Grading Report Periods 3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YSJ1, YSJ2</td>
<td>Youth Source Journal 1-2: Journals gathered from the youth care staff on specific participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RN</td>
<td>Researcher Notes (RN D1 = Researcher Notes Day 1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attendance**

Prior to discussing the themes and sub-themes of this study, disclosing the attendance patterns of the participants is important as it helps to connect attendance to the program outcomes. The attendance is noted in the below table (Table 4.2).
Table 4.2 Attendance Sheet for Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>D1</th>
<th>D2</th>
<th>D3</th>
<th>D4</th>
<th>D5</th>
<th>D6</th>
<th>D7</th>
<th>D8</th>
<th>D9</th>
<th>D10</th>
<th>D11</th>
<th>D12</th>
<th>D13</th>
<th>D14</th>
<th>D15</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annie</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antoinette</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>7</td>
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Nearly all of the participants attended either 60% or higher of the 15 TPSR sessions. In particular, five (5) students attended 12 or more sessions, five (5) students attended 9 to 11 sessions, and two (2) students attended less than 9 sessions. The children who participated in 9 or less sessions either began the study late, like Avery, or had tutoring one day a week for the first few weeks of the study, like Kaleb and Antoinette, or in some cases left before the lesson was started, as was the case with Jessie. A high attendance rate could increase the possibility that responsible behaviors are understood and demonstrated. Findings of such outcomes are presented in the sections below with supporting data to substantiate both themes and sub-themes.

**Theme 1: Connection with Responsible Behaviors**

The first theme focused on the notion that children developed an understanding of what it meant to be responsible individuals, although few practiced responsible behaviors on a consistent basis. Teachers, youth care staff, and I constantly reinforced practicing responsible behaviors throughout this study to promote consistency. Although children sought responsibility often within and outside of the responsibility program, the display of responsible behaviors was inconsistent. Within this context, four key areas emerged: 1) understanding the meaning of responsible behaviors; 2) having choices and making responsible decisions; 3) seeking responsibility; and 4) counter measures to irresponsible behaviors.
Understanding the meaning of responsible behaviors. As the responsibility program facilitator, I engaged children in activities that helped them to better understand how to be responsible people. For example, the children played ‘Blob Tag’ on Day 5 during which two people started with linked arms to chase the remaining group members. When the two participants tagged another person, the tagged person became a part of the blob by attaching her or his arm to one of the two people. The intent of this activity was to promote communication and cooperation, as the children had to work together to stay attached and they had to communicate with each other on the direction around the gym. I encouraged the children while they were engaged in the activity by reminding them that being part of the blob was a team effort and to be sure they were working together, not pulling each other around. I discussed communication before the activity as a characteristic of being a teammate and then prompted them during the activity to talk to each other during blob tag. After the activity in the gym, we proceeded to the classroom to hold our group meeting and reflection time. I facilitated a discussion with the participants to follow up on the activity asking them about working together. One participant, Jessie responded by saying, “I was getting pulled around, but we were working together to tag people” (Jessie, VFN D5). This activity was an example of the kinds of activities utilized to facilitate the understanding and demonstration of responsible behaviors.

Understanding the meaning of responsible behaviors involved the children providing their interpretations of what it meant to: 1) respect the rights and feeling
of others, 2) participate and give effort, 3) be honest, 4) be self-directed, 5) lead and help others in activities, situations, and discussions. They showed their comprehension of such values through various data sources. The data sources to support this sub-theme were video observations, participant interviews, and participant picture journals. The following sub-themes will elaborate on each of these core values and show how children made sense of each value.

**Respecting the rights and feelings of others**. Respecting the rights and feelings of others involved self-control and having the right and giving the right to others to be included in all phases of each lesson. This value “is intended to provide a psychologically and physically safe place for students, to respect their right to participate without being hassled and to confront those who need to deal with issues of self-control and respect” (Hellison, 2011, p. 35). Relative to respecting the rights and feelings of others, children mostly indicated in individual interviews, pictures, and video field notes that it encompassed speaking kindly to others, listening and not talking while others were talking, keeping their hands to themselves, following directions, helping others, and treating people fairly.

In the first individual interview that took place with 11 of the 12 children at the beginning of the study, I wanted to know what each of their initial characterizations of responsible behaviors were before I had any influence on how they thought about responsibility. The consensus in the interview data indicated that children felt that respect meant treating people like they wanted to be treated and being nice to one another. For example, one participant said, “I think respect
means to me is just – is respect each other the way you want to be treated and like not pushing each other, hitting each other, not saying mean words, saying nice words, and being positive” (Jessie, PI1). Kyla mentioned something similar by indicating, “You wanna treat somebody else the way you wanna be treated” (Kyla, PI1). Likewise, other participants mentioned, “Respect means like if you respectful to somebody by not pushing them or talking back” (Caitlyn, PI1) and “you be nice to one another” (Johnny, PI1). Children had their views of what respect meant to them and for the most part they indicated that it meant not violating each other’s’ space by pushing or hitting, following a teacher’s instructions, and treating people how they would want to be treated.

The children reiterated their constructed meanings of respect in our shared discussions. During days 3 and 12, respecting the rights and feelings of others was the lesson focus in activities and discussions. In our group meetings and reflection times, the conversation period of our lesson plan, I asked the children their perspective on respect. For example, Johnny said, “It looks like not pushing” (VFN D3) while Kyla indicated it sounded like, “Don’t make noise when people are talking, like tapping your feet” (VFN D3). Avery stated, “Respect is being kind and helpful to everybody and listening to my teacher and following directions” (VFN D12). Caitlyn also provided her perspective by saying that respect is, “listening to the teacher” (VFN D12). Collectively, most children indicated that respect meant exhibiting congeniality towards one another and listening to others, especially when they were talking.
Two children, Kaleb and Hannah, had notable changes in their definition of respect, moving from a simple, naïve view of the value to provide a deeper, more sophisticated characterization of respect. When asked what respect meant, Kaleb stated, “If you get tagged, you should freeze or sit down” (VFN D3). Yet on Day 12, Kaleb described respect as, “Respect is if you treat somebody the way you want to be treated” (VFN D12). Hannah indicated that respect looked “respectful and kind”, but expanded her definition to include, “It looks like listening to you while other people are trying to talk. No one’s hitting” (VFN D3). On Day 11, Hannah extended her definition of respect to indicate that it also meant, “helping others” (VFN D11). Both participants showed that they expanded their meaning of respecting the rights and feelings of others over the duration of the study, as a result of the TPSR program.

The participants were able to verbalize their meanings of respect in interviews and group discussions, but also showed their understanding of respect in gym activities and picture illustrations. All participants agreed that it felt good when they felt others respected them and one participant highlighted this in a way that focused on the language used in demonstrating respect towards her from her teacher:

[I feel] excited, because if they’re saying something great, something kind to you instead of something mean to you. Like if they say, ‘why didn’t you put away your stuff?’ that would be unkind. Like if you said, ‘could you please put up your stuff?’ That would be kind. (Annie, VFN D3)
She alluded that language is a prominent factor in determining how she followed
directions or listened to others. On Day 10 of the study, the children and I engaged
in a discussion about rudeness and the role it played in their behaviors. They
claimed that how people spoke to them and how they spoke to others may lead to
negative responses. The conversation began because the children were talking
when I was talking and I said, “Everyone is being rude” (Me, VFN D10). Then a side
dialogue between the participants began about who was being rude to who. I
stopped the conversation and asked them, “Why is it not cool to be rude to people?”
One participant responded, “It’s like if you say it to the wrong person, you gone get
hit and then you gone get punched because you ain’t supposed to say that”
(Antoinette, VFN D10). Another student responded in a similar manner noting the
emotion involved in being rude to others. She stated:

   It’s not cool to be rude to people because it doesn’t feel right to the other
   person ‘cause it gets them all upset when they keep doing it over and over
   again. Then that’s when people start getting into fights. (Caitlyn, VFN D10)

This discussion about rudeness further supported the notion that language,
specifically how one spoke to others, could impact emotions and possibly escalate to
more serious matters, such as fighting.

   Moreover, the children illustrated what respect looked like to them whether
it was based on interactions between themselves and peers, family members,
teachers, or the YMCA staff. Most children drew pictures that showed respect by
greeting their peers with ‘Hi’, playing with each other, or helping each other. For example, a sample of the pictures is presented in Figure 4.1.

![Figure 4.1. Pictures to illustrate respect –left: Caitlyn right: Annie.](image)

Caitlyn stated that her picture was about, “like if a person is crying because she got poked in the eye and I asked her ‘Are you ok’ and she says, ‘Yes, I feel much better because you helped me” (Caitlyn, PX1). She felt that by helping another person, she was showing respect for them. She indicated, “My picture is about people saying, ‘hi’. I’m saying ‘hi’ to Antoinette and Antoinette is saying ‘hi’ to Caitlyn” (Annie, PX1). On the other hand, Annie saw respect in greeting her girlfriends. Both children depicted respect as different, one as helping another person and the other as greeting another person.

Overall, the pictures implied that the participants saw respect as a positive behavior to be demonstrated among peers. In addition to the children drawing pictures, I videotaped their individual explanations of their pictures so that it was
not left up to my interpretation. It was important for me to understand how the children made meaning of respect and thus, plenty of time was devoted to this value throughout the study in both activities and discussions.

Nonetheless, although we spent quite a bit of time on respect, even on the days that it was not the focus of the day's lesson, there were times when it did not seem evident that some of children's actions matched their words in terms of what it meant to be respectful to another person. For example, on Day 2, a conflict occurred towards the end of 'Turnstile', an activity in which children worked individually and as a team to jump over a swinging rope, an age-appropriate modification I made to the cooperative task.

Naomi and Annie had volunteered to be the first people to turn the rope for the group. After children had gone through the rope a few times, I relieved Naomi and after the group went through the rope again, Edie relieved Annie. Instead of Annie getting in the back of the line, as indicated in the directions, she cut in front of Naomi. Naomi immediately pushed her and got back in front of Annie. I did not see the entire interaction and said as much, but I saw the after effects that included a frowned brows, tight lips, and raised voices. I told them to “keep your hands to yourselves.” The conflict seemed to be resolved as no other negative interactions occurred between Naomi and Annie. (VFN D2)

Naomi did not appear to show respect for Annie by pushing her out of the way even though Annie did jump into the line in front of her. In her first interview, Naomi
saw respect as “you need to respect your teacher [by] listening”, and mentioned nothing of respecting her peers (Naomi, PI1). It is possible that she did not understand respect in the sense that the other children did, in terms of being nice to one another and not hitting or pushing.

Antoinette was another example of a child who did not engage in respectful behavior. However, she stated in her first interview that being respectful meant being “respectful to self, respect others, teachers, and school” (Antoinette, PI1). Respect was not demonstrated after the activity ‘Trust Circle’ on Day 11. We had just finished playing the activity in which children were given different bean bag colors (e.g. 3 children = green; 3 children = red) and were told they needed to cross the circle to another spot, without touching each other, if I called out their bean bag color. It was a game of trust and respect.

After the ‘Trust Circle’ activity, an argument ensued between Hannah and Antoinette. I could not hear what the argument was about, but Antoinette pushed Hannah. I called Antoinette over to me and told her, “Keep your hands to yourself!” She responded, “She was in my way.” I subsequently said, “It doesn’t matter. That’s not how you handle it. You don’t push somebody to get out of the way; you say ‘excuse me’.” She turns away from me while I am talking to her. I asked her, “Do you hear me talking to you? Do you do that at home?” She nods ‘Yes’. I said, “Well, don’t do it here.” (VFN D11)
Antoinette was able to articulate what respect meant to her verbally, but was not able to demonstrate it in this instance on Day 11, as she had described it. Both Antoinette and Naomi were not able to show respect towards their peers in these situations. Understanding the meaning of respect for self and others is a vital part of the TPSR framework, as it is the basis for all of the other responsibility values.

According to Hellison (2011), “respect for the rights and feelings of others often is necessary before much else can be addressed” (p. 32). Therefore, one of primary goals of the gym activities was to assist the children in understanding respect. The children's understanding of this concept was an important element in learning responsibility as it was the gateway for other values to be understood. The participants were able to substantiate their understanding of respecting the rights and feelings of others through individual interviews and group discussions as well as through picture illustrations. To participants, it meant treating people the way they wanted to be treated by not intruding on their personal space (e.g. hitting, pushing), saying nice things (e.g. “Hi” or “Are you okay?”), and listening to their teachers. Therefore, from a developmental aspect, the children’s verbal elicitation of the basic definition of respect did not change in the 8 weeks of the study. The demonstration of respect and other responsible behaviors will be discussed in a later section.

**Participation and effort.** Respecting the rights and feelings of others and participation and effort were the first values addressed in the initial two weeks of the program. Participation and effort involved not only engaging in gym activities,
discussions at the beginning and end of the lesson, but also it involved exploring unfamiliar tasks. Respect and participation and effort are viewed as the, "beginning stages of responsibility development. Both are essential to establishing a positive learning environment" (Hellison, 2011, p. 21). Video observations, participant interviews, and participant pictures were used to substantiate this sub-theme.

On Day 6, I introduced the activity of ‘Asteroids’, originally a game of honesty, in which individuals use yarn balls to tag each other. If an individual gets tagged with a yarn ball, she or he has to squat down. However, a participant who has not been tagged can get her or him back into the activity by handing the tagged player a ball. This activity promoted children getting along and working with each other, thus making the activity a cooperative one. Some of the children made the effort to help each other get back into the activity and were engaged fully in the activity, while others neither followed the rules nor helped others in the task (VFN D6).

[Some of the children] seemed to follow the rules of the game and [were] honest when they were tagged – let the yarn ball(s) go when they were tagged and squat down. Kyla helped Hannah get up by handing her a ball, but Annie seemed to be concerned only about herself, as she kept tagging people, but did not help anyone become free. However, when Kyla got tagged she did not squat down. Hannah tagged Annie, but when Annie did not squat down, Hannah said, "You got tagged!" and touched her. Annie responded by swiping her hand away and still not obeying the rules. She argued with Hannah about not being tagged. Meanwhile, Naomi tagged Kyla, but Kyla
argued with her about being tagged. Naomi was following the rules, but then she saw that Kyla was not squatting down when tagged and therefore, stopped squatting down when tagged also (towards the end of the activity).

(VFN D6)

I froze the activity to remind them of being honest in the game, but some children practiced honesty and helped their peers and others did not do so.

On Day 10, I facilitated the activity ‘Help Tag’. The goal of the activity was for the children to help each other remain unfrozen. Two people were chosen randomly to be the taggers, while two other children were chosen randomly to have one yarn ball each. The participants with the yarn balls were safe from the taggers during the game. Thus the first two participants with the yarn balls could keep them or give them to another child to save them from being tagged. If they chose to give the yarn ball to someone else they could then be tagged by the taggers.

During this activity, the participants ran around, getting tagged and frozen, but also asked each other for help to stay unfrozen. Edie and Naomi started off holding the yarn balls. Edie handed her ball to Avery who was running around trying to avoid Johnny tagging him. Meanwhile, Naomi handed her ball to Antoinette prior to Annie tagging her. The two taggers, Johnny and Annie, attempted to tag everyone without a ball and thus the ‘safe’ people had the difficult decision of determining who they wanted to help. (VFN D10)
All of the children tried to or did help each other avoid getting tagged. In the second round, children were able to also help those children who became frozen when tagged and did so accordingly. In both activities on Day 6 and Day 10, children seemed to grasp the concept of participation and effort as shown in their demonstration of working together and making the attempt to help out their peers, even though they were not always successful. These activities encouraged selflessness and putting others before themselves. Children were willing to take the risk of giving up their freedom in the activity in order to assist one of their peers, although a few did not acknowledge getting tagged, at times. Children demonstrated their understanding of participation and effort in the activity portion of the lesson plan and on an individual basis during their interviews.

In the first interview with the children, the questions covered the meaning they attributed to participation and effort. Mostly they attributed listening and following the teacher’s instructions, not getting into trouble, and working hard on their class assignments to underscore their views of participation and effort. For example, Hannah said that she participated and gave her best effort, “by always doing my work and always trying my best no matter what” (Hannah, PI1). Similarly, Jessie stated she showed participation and her best effort by, “doing my best work and work[ing] hard” (Jessie, PI1). Jane stated, “I’m giving my best effort when I work hard and don’t pay attention when other kids [are] talking” (Jane, PI1). Annie mentioned that giving one’s best effort involved, “doing your work in class, turning it in neat, and stuff like that” (Annie, PI1). Kyla discussed participation and effort as
it pertained to classwork as well, stating, “It means to work hard, harder than you ever did before” (Kyla, PI1). Moreover, Caitlyn specified, “I give my best effort by writing neatly and paying attention to my work, not just in my la la land. Helping my teacher if he needs help with anything” (Caitlyn, PI1). The children seemed to understand that participation and effort meant working hard by doing one’s best work, working hard, and not letting other things distract them.

In addition to their interviews in the first week, I asked the children during our reflection time what participation looked like, did not look like, felt like, and sounded like on the first two days of the study. Kyla stated, “Participation and effort is listening to the person who’s talking so you can listen and participate” (VFN D1). Likewise, Marcus indicated that it meant, “Listen to the teacher” (VFN D1). Annie associated participation with being included in the group and said, “Participation is like if you tell a person to come in the group and they come in the group” (VFN D1). Johnny and Jessie defined participation and effort through behaving and following the rules in class. Johnny said, “It looks like following the rules” while Jessie mentioned, “It looks like behaving” (VFN D1). Caitlyn said, “It sounds like ‘Follow me’ and feels like not pushing” (VFN D2). Annie spoke of effort in terms of complimenting another person by saying that it sounded like, “Good job, girl” (VFN D2). Whereas, Hannah spoke effort in terms of exerting energy and said, “It feels exhausting” (VFN D2). These statements from the participants’ first interviews and first discussions surrounding participation and effort showed their basic, verbal understanding of the core values of participation and effort.
Some children also seemed to understand participation and effort in the YMCA after school program and in their classrooms through pictures they drew on Day 9 of the study. They subsequently explained their drawings the next day, a non-research day, in a brief videotaped interview. During the reflection time on Day 9, children were asked to choose any one of the responsibility values we had discussed in our lessons and how it could be shown in either the YMCA or the classroom. At this point in study, we had discussed each of the four (4) responsibility values (respecting the rights and feelings of others; participation and effort; self-direction; helping others and leadership through caring) and thus, children made their individualized choices about which value they wanted to depict. Two children portrayed images of their classrooms. One picture displayed how students participated by lining up as per the teacher’s instructions and the other revealed how children contributed during math when the teacher inquired about a multiplication problem. The pictures are represented in Figure 4.2.
Johnny’s picture on top revealed how children contributed during math when the teacher inquired about a multiplication problem. Annie’s picture displayed how students participated by lining as per the teacher’s instructions. Annie said, “This is Mr. Good telling the students to Check 3 (hands in pocket or arms folded and mouths closed), so that we can go to the library. Respect” (Annie, PX2). On the other hand, Edie’s picture illustrated in Figure 4.3 showed participation by respecting other people.
Edie revealed in her picture that she was showing participation, “by not hitting anybody” (Edie, PX2). Hellison (2011) said that children showing participation and effort “show a minimal level of respect for others” (Hellison, 2011, p. 34) and “getting along with others” (Hellison, 2011, p.21). Hellison meant that at the very minimum to show the core value of participation, one has to show at least a low level of respect for that person. Thus Edie’s picture illustrated her participation by showing respect towards others. These images as well as the interviews and group discussions suggested that the children had a clear understanding of the meaning of participation and effort. It involved doing your best work in class, listening to others, and following instructions given by the teacher.

The video observations and the interviews indicated that children had an understanding of what it meant for them to participate and give effort in both my responsibility-based program and their classroom. Although the verbal accounts of
what it meant to participate and give the best effort were limited to the first two
days of the study, most of the children demonstrated this value through their
willingness to play in activities and work with others during the program. Overall,
most of the group seemed to show cooperation with others and give their best
effort, as they were willing to participate in all of the activities and work with any of
the other participants. Further descriptions of how the children demonstrated
participation and effort are noted in a later section of this theme.

**Honesty.** Honesty was a value that emerged from the data in addition to the
previous values. Hellison (1995; 2003; 2011) did not speak of honesty specifically
in his text, but I thought it was an important virtue that came through in the data.
Children learn honesty and other values through more knowledgeable others, such
as a parent, a teacher, or possibly a peer (Bodrova& Leong, 2007). I identified
honesty as a quality that was shown in a sporadic manner among a few of the
participants. When I noticed the sprinkling of dishonesty in activities, particularly
tag games, I addressed it immediately with the children, but mostly around the
notions of respect and participation, rather than honesty. I did not address honesty
specifically in a discussion forum until late in the study, even though I addressed
issues of children not admitting they had been tagged in a game, for example, as they
were participating in the activity. I could have addressed honesty in a more formal
way throughout the study, but only addressed it briefly on Day 3. Honesty was
discussed specifically at the end of the study, on Day 15, in the group meeting and
reflection time. The sources of data to support the emergence of honesty in the study were video observations and participant interviews.

Although inherent in my interactions with the children during activities and group discussions, honesty was not addressed in much detail until the latter part of the study, particularly in the last interview and the last day of the study. However, two students drew a picture illustrating what honesty looked like to them, based on our brief discussion on Day 3. The picture of honesty, drawn on Day 9 of the study, is illustrated in Figure 4.4.

![Figure 4.4. Illustrations of honesty from Caitlyn (left) and Avery (right).](image)

Caitlyn’s talked about her honesty in school when her mom confronted her about it. She stated, “This is my Mom and I’m saying if I was honest about being bad at school” (Caitlyn, PX2). Avery’s indicated he demonstrated honesty by telling on
another student when that student was not doing the right thing. He said, “He was doing something bad and I told the teacher” (Avery, PX2). The meaning attributed to honesty for some students was associated with not cheating on a test. One student said:

If you cheat on a test then the teacher see you cheating on your test, then he will give you automatically zero – if you copy off somebody. It means that you’re going to be a dummy when you get older. (Annie, PI3)

Another student concurred with Annie’s statement. She indicated:

It might lead to good grades, but it can lead to bad consequences. If the teacher finds out that you’re cheating, [you’re] going next door to the kindergarten room, going to PEAK (in-school detention), getting written up, getting suspended” (Hannah, PI3).

In the last interview data, some of the children seemed to understand and focus on the consequences of cheating rather than the dishonesty involved in the actual act of cheating. For example, Caitlyn stated, “It’s like if you cheat on a test and that person is wrong, you’re gonna be wrong as well” (Caitlyn, PI3). Edie provided a response similar to Caitlyn and indicated, “Like if we’re doing a test and somebody got theirs wrong and somebody copied theirs, then you might get it wrong too” (Edie, PI3).

Although most of the children gave answers about cheating as it pertained to tests or school work, one child talked about cheating in a general sense. Kaleb said, “Because when you cheat, somebody else will cheat on you” (PI3). Then he discussed it within the framework of playing a game extending upon his general
response. Kaleb communicated, “It means like if you cheat in a game, you know the rules already, and then let’s say you hit somebody in the face and it was dodge ball, but they said hit below the shoulder” (PI3). Kaleb expressed his understanding of cheating by recognizing it as following the rules in a game and being dishonest compared to the other children who focused on the consequences of cheating in their interview responses. Children articulated their perspective on honesty and what it meant to them. During some of the activities, the children demonstrated their understanding of honesty through their behaviors in tag games.

In program activities, several children often made the decision not to acknowledge getting tagged during tag games, especially when she or he thought I did not see her or him get tagged by another student. For example, on Day 7 of the program, the children played a tag game named ‘Fox in the Morning.’ The goal of the activity was for the person designated as the fox to give the participants a physical activity (e.g. mountain climbers, jumping jacks, pushups) before they could run across the field of play. Once the participants completed the activity per the instructions of the fox, they were allowed to run across the gym and attempt to get to safety on the opposite side of the gym. During the first round of the game, the four (4) tagged participants and the original fox were now all foxes and had asked for the children to do mountain climbers before running across the gym. Annie, Antoinette, and Kyla not only failed to complete the mountain climbers, but also did not admit to getting tagged when the foxes tagged them. These children made the choice to not follow the rules of the game as per the instruction of the foxes. It
seemed as though they just wanted to stay in the game and that they made a conscious decision to disobey the rules. I pulled Antoinette, Kyla, and Annie to the side of the gym and asked, “What are you doing?” when I caught them not adhering to the rules. I received no response, so I reiterated the rules of the game and told them that it was important for them to be “honest so as to be fair to the rest of the group” (VFN D7). This seemed to work for the next round of the game, although Kyla was now the fox, but Annie and Antoinette complied with getting tagged and becoming a fox. Although it took some prompting, the three girls became more honest during this activity.

On Day 15, I brought up cheating in the discussion period after the activities for the day as some children still had an issue acknowledging that taggers had tagged them. Thus, I held a conversation about what it meant to play fairly and the conversation seemed to naturally transition into the concept of cheating. I asked, “So, does everyone think it’s okay to cheat” (Me, VFN D15)? The dialogue that ensued was as follows:

Kaleb: I love cheating.
Edie: I don’t love cheating.
Caitlyn: I cheat in the money game whatever it’s called. I cheat at cards.
Avery: Cheaters never win.
Me: So, is it good to cheat? You think it’s ok to cheat?
Avery: NO.
Kaleb: I don’t do it all the time.

Caitlyn: I don’t think it’s ok, but I like cheating.

Me: Why would you like cheating?

Edie: It’s like stealing. You like stealing?

Caitlyn: It’s not the same thing though.

Me: It is the same thing. It’s exactly the same thing.

Avery: It is?

Me: Cheating, stealing, lying - it’s all the same thing. It’s pretty much on the same page.

Caitlyn: I don’t lie.

Edie: I have never cheated in one game.

Avery: I ain’t never cheated.

Me: So, is it okay to cheat?

Most: No. (VFN D15)

I continued the conversation within the context of leadership as I was attempting to make the point that cheating is unfair and not okay to do. We were interrupted with Ms. Charles entering the classroom to collect Edie; her mom was there to pick her up from the program. I resumed the conversation with the participants and stated:

Me: So we talked about cheating and how it’s important to be fair. And people talked about it’s not ok to cheat, but you do it. If you’re a leader and you cheat, is that good? I mean if Barack Obama was cheating you in some
way, like he took your money or said something he didn’t mean, would you be upset since he’s a leader?

Annie and Caitlyn: Yes.

Kaleb: I would say it’s wrong, but I do it anyways and I would try and stop.

Avery: If I was the president and I cheated, I would do something better for them [people]. I would raise the amount I would give them in each pay check.

(VFN D15).

Although most kids connected honesty with cheating in the classroom and telling on themselves and others, a few did not associate honesty with getting tagged in a game or connect it with lying or stealing. Thus, the children understood that cheating was wrong and they should not do it, but I should have expanded the conversation more to help the children extend their thoughts beyond the classroom, particularly about the consequences of cheating and the impact it can have on their lives.

**Self-direction.** Self-direction encompassed children behaving and working independently and setting goals. Hellison (2011) stated that students who practice self-direction, “not only show respect and participation but also are able to work without direct supervision. They can identify their own needs and began to plan and carry out physical education plans” (p. 34). With this group of participants, I felt it was more appropriate to concentrate on on-task independence and resistance to peer pressure, rather than goal-setting because there was limited time in the program. I felt that it was age appropriate to simplify self-direction and it would
have been difficult to determine if the participants would have met the set goals. Self-direction was the value that was a challenging concept to grasp, but the children were able to arrive at a basic meaning of the term and furthermore relate it to areas outside of the program. The sources of data to support this section were video observations, teacher interviews, and youth staff interviews.

In the early days of the study, on Days 5 and 6, we focused on self-direction for the first time in the study. On both days during the awareness talks, the second part of a TPSR lesson plan, I explained to them the definition of self-direction. I told them, “It means being independent; it means that you are not being a follower; it means doing the right thing without me telling you to do the right thing” (VFN D5). To operationalize the meaning and gain the children’s perspectives of what self-direction meant to them, during our post-activity discussions on Days 5 and 6, I asked the participants what they thought self-direction looked like and did not look like. They had varying responses. For example, Hannah responded that it involved, “focus[ing] on your work and being a responsible person” (Hannah, VFN D5) while Johnny stated that it meant, “listening to directions” (Johnny, VFN D5). Naomi said that it does not look like, “being distracted” or “[letting] the people who are talking to you get you in trouble” (Naomi, VFN D5). Annie, similar to Hannah and Naomi, indicated that self-direction entailed, “you doing stuff and working by yourself” (Annie, VFN D6). Mostly, the children seemed to understand self-direction as not letting others deter them from behaving in a responsible manner as it pertained to activities in the classroom. The children gained a limited and basic understanding of
self-direction from their involvement in my responsibility program after talking about the meaning and breaking it down in awareness talks and end of lesson discussions on Days 5 and 6. After talking about self-direction during the awareness talk, integrating this value into activities, such as ‘Asteroids’ and ‘Modified Dodge Ball’ and discussing the value at the end of the lesson, children were able to make their own interpretations of the meaning of self-direction.

Although the children were able to tell me what self-direction looked like and did not look like, they had difficulty describing what it felt or sounded like in our discussions, mostly describing it as learning from others or exhibiting leadership. For example, Naomi said, “It feels like learning from your teacher” (Naomi, VFN D6), and Jane indicated, “It feels like growing up to be a leader” (Jane, VFN D6). Other children had a more specific perspective of what self-direction meant when sharing their thoughts in our group discussion. For example, Kaleb noted, “It sounds like if somebody says something nice to you. Think about what you say before you say something” (Kaleb, VFN D6). Caitlyn expressed a similar comment by saying, “It sounds like not getting smart with people and saying nice things like cheer them up, like ‘Don’t listen to them. That’s not true” (Caitlyn, VFN D6). Thus, the children who discussed self-direction in terms of what it sounded and felt like had some difficulty describing the term within these parameters. When they talked about self-direction within these parameters, the participants likened the term to respectful behaviors.
In addition to providing their verbal definitions of how they understood it, some of the children demonstrated self-direction during the activities. For example, on Day 6, the children played an activity called ‘Asteroids’.

In ‘Asteroids’, each participant was given two yarn balls and upon my command of “Go”, they were to toss the balls into the air and let them fall to the ground. Once the balls hit the ground, the participants were allowed to pick them up and begin to tag each other with the balls below the waist. In the first round, when the child was tagged, he or she had to squat down, but in the second round, children could re-enter the game if someone helped them by handing them a ball. I explained the new version (3rd round) of the game – now when tagged, one can do 5 jumping jacks and 5 sit-ups and get back into the game. (VFN D6)

During this activity, most of the children were following the rules by squatting down when they were tagged in the first round and helping others rejoin the activity in the beginning of the second round. The children appeared to be practicing responsible behaviors without my having to tell them. Nevertheless, as the second round progressed, two children, Annie and Kyla did not acknowledge that they had been tagged by others. In fact, they argued with the people who tagged them. In a sense, the participants who followed instructions and those who did not practiced self-direction. They did their own thing by acting independently even though in some cases it was a positive display of self-direction and in others their behaviors were a negative presentation of self-direction.
An example of another appearance of self-direction occurred on Day 14. I facilitated a modified dodge ball game. The children had chosen the game, but I revised it to increase physical activity levels and participation. In the amended game, there were two foam balls per team of 4 children and the children could always rejoin the game after getting tagged. Upon children getting tagged, I had them choose from a stack of cards on which there were pictures of physical activity exercises. Once they performed the activity on the card, they were allowed to return to the game. When the participants began to play the game, they seemed to be playing fairly for the most part. There were still two people, Caitlyn and Kyla, who at times were not getting out when they were tagged. However, they seemed to become more honest as the game progressed. For example:

Once they got out [tagged with the dodge] I gave them a fitness card and they did the activity on the card. Then they returned to the game. They came to pick up a card without me having to prompt them about being hit with the foam ball, as I had to do earlier in the activity. (VFN D6)

They got to this place on their own without me having to tell them, as I had done in other activities. I can only theorize that they changed their behaviors based on the actions of the other children who were receiving fitness cards and performing the activities on the card on the side of the gym. I deliberately gave them the opportunity to do the right thing on their own; after all I had been teaching them responsibility for 13 days. I would not consider this willingness to do the right thing a breakthrough for their behavior, as they practiced this type of self-direction.
sometimes, just not consistently throughout the program. The children practiced self-direction in this activity by following directions, being honest, and doing the right thing without having to be told to do so.

On this same day, Day 14, I asked the children during our post-activity talk to give me an example of how they showed self-direction today. Kyla was the first to respond. She stated, "When Mr. Matthews told me to do my work. I did my work. I did a good job on that thing. And he took it and said, ‘Great’" (Kyla, VFN D14). She further indicated that she did not allow anyone to bother her while she completed her work. Kaleb said something similar pertaining to class. He said, “Somebody was trying to play with me in class and I didn’t listen to them” (Kaleb, VFN D14). Avery took it as far as removing himself from a situation in which he may have been likely to get into trouble. He indicated, “We were doing a test today and I asked the teacher could I move so that nobody would bother me or look at my paper. I got my work done and I passed” (Avery, VFN D14). Caitlyn provided a more general response by mentioning, “I did what I was supposed to do and not follow people and what they did, like passing notes” (Caitlyn, VFN D14). This was a change from her first interview in which she indicated that, “Sometimes it’s good to work by myself. I don’t always need to copy off of other peoples’ work” (Caitlyn, PI1). She appeared to make progress in her understanding self-direction in the way she demonstrated it. By the end of the study, most of the children provided both verbal and physical examples of their understanding of self-direction, demonstrating that their
understanding of this value became more sophisticated with the progress of the study.

From our conversations together, the brief ones at the beginning of the lesson that focused on self-direction and the ones during our group discussion, most of the children had an understanding of what it meant to be self-directed. In addition, most exhibited self-directed behaviors during activities over the course of the study, but seemed to increase their understanding through verbal and physical means by the end of the study. For example, in her first interview, Caitlyn indicated that she sometimes liked doing things by herself, but tended to follow others. By the end of the study (Day 14), Caitlyn indicated that she tried not to follow others as often. She also demonstrated this behavior during the ‘Modified Dodge Ball’ game when she acknowledged getting tagged, did not follow Kyla or Annie, retrieved a fitness card from me, and proceeded to engage in the fitness activity on the card. The children knew that they had to do their own thing and not let anyone interfere with them completing their work or behaving in the classroom. Nearly all of the participants understood that they needed to be true to themselves and do the right thing even if others were not doing so. Teachers and youth care staff also provided their accounts of how students practiced self-direction in discussing their students’ levels of independent thinking.

Sources. In their first interview, teachers and youth care staff were asked not specifically about self-direction, but about their thoughts on their students’ level of independent thinking. On-task independence is one of the definitions of self-
direction, so this line of questioning was valid for this area of discussion. Therefore, when asked if they thought their students were independent thinkers and why or why not, the teachers and youth care staff had varied responses. For example, Mr. Gosling discussed Annie and Johnny. When discussing Annie, he said, “[She] is an independent thinker. She is not one to just go with the flow. She’s not influenced so much; she kind of influences the group” (Mr. Gosling, TI1). On the other hand, he stated about Johnny, “[He] is not an independent thinker. I have to hover over him to just make sure he’s going along.” Mr. Gosling then contradicted himself by mentioning, ”[Johnny] just sits and does his work and he doesn’t bug the other kids” (Mr. Gosling, TI1). The teacher considered independent thinking to be mostly about leadership, but Johnny displayed characteristics of self-direction by working independently and not letting anyone get him off task or take anyone off task.

Mr. Matthews discussed the independent thinking of Caitlyn, Jessie, Naomi, and Hannah in his first interview. He explained independent thinking as, “being able to sit there and do your work without me instructing anything” (Mr. Matthews, TI1). Thus, he felt that Jessie and Hannah were independent thinkers, as they did their work autonomously and appeared to be more mature than the other two students. When he talked about Caitlyn and Naomi, he mentioned that both were not independent thinkers. The teacher stated that he often told them, “My brain hurts really bad today because I thought for you” (Mr. Matthews, TI1). He sometimes had to reinforce instructions for tasks that were review because these two children had not read the directions, which he knew them to be capable of reading and
understanding them. Essentially, Mr. Matthews felt that two of his students participating in the study were independent thinkers and two others were not, at least on a consistent basis, as it related to performing class tasks on their own.

Similar to Mr. Matthews and Mr. Gosling, Mr. Arthur, of the YMCA youth care staff, had a few students that exhibited self-direction in the after school program, but he spoke of children exhibiting this behavior through defiant actions. In his interview, he was asked to discuss Antoinette, Jane, and Caitlyn and provided me with examples of their self-direction. For example, he stated, “If I tell them to sit down, Antoinette goes and says ‘I’m not about to listen to you’ from time to time and goes off and running” (Mr. Arthur, YSI1). Both Jane and Caitlyn showed similar behaviors at times, acting independently of their peers and defying instructions given to them. Although Mr. Arthur situated the children’s behaviors within the context of self-direction, it could be also be construed that the children were demonstrating disrespectful behaviors towards Mr. Arthur. The teachers and youth care staff talked about their students’ self-direction as it pertained to independent thinking and indicated that some students showed such independence, while others did not show independence at times.

**Leadership and helping others.** Leadership and helping others are about having a sense of responsibility beyond oneself. Hellison (2011) stated that children exhibiting leadership and helping roles “extend their sense of responsibility beyond themselves by cooperating, giving support, showing concern, and helping” (p. 34). Like self-direction, the leadership and helping others values of TPSR extend the
learning environment by encouraging children to take on leadership and helping roles. Video observations, participant interviews, and source interviews corroborate this sub-theme.

The participants associated leadership with not following others mostly, but they also understood that leadership was sometimes connected with being responsible and caring for and helping themselves and others. In the first interview with the children, I asked them, “What does leadership mean to you” (PI1)? The interview responses from most of the children indicated the simple way in which they attributed significance to leadership. An example was when Edie stated, “We’re in line. Okay, then if you’re the leader, the other kids are following behind you” (Edie, PI1). Jessie conveyed a comparable definition by saying, “I think a leader means to me is you don’t follow what the other person is doing” (Jessie, PI1). Likewise, Hannah indicated, “Leadership means never to be a follower” (Hannah, PI1). The girls associated leadership with not following what others are doing and all of the other students gave a similar meaning of leadership. The children were not given a context in their interviews and therefore discussed leadership in a simple manner. Some children extended the meaning of leadership to include not following others, but associated leadership with responsibility, respect, caring, honesty, self-direction, following directions, and listening to others. This occurred over the time of the study from the first interview to the latter part of the study in which deeper meanings were associated with leadership through physical and verbal demonstrations.
In addition the children showed their respect for each other in gym activities. For instance, I facilitated the game ‘Robot Safety Operator’ on Day 10, during which time children were paired with each other and one acted as the robot while the other was the robot operator. The participants were given commands for their ‘robots’, such as tap the right shoulder to turn right or gently touch the middle of the back to move forward. Participants had to lead each other around the gym safely using these commands. At first Antoinette did not let Jane lead her because Antoinette did not want to be paired with Jane, but after a few minutes of playing the game, she succumbed to Jane leading her. However, the pair seemed to work better together when Antoinette had the opportunity to lead Jane and Jane was open to Antoinette leading her. By the end of the activity, their respect for each other’s role seemed to improve, they followed instructions, and they seemed to have a good time engaging in this activity based on my observations and perspective. All of the other children adapted to their roles from the beginning of the game by using the commands, practicing safety by not running each other into other pairs of participants, and working together. Essentially, they demonstrated that they could lead others through a series of commands as well as be a follower when the roles switched, showing caring and cooperation with their partners.

Another example of leadership occurred on Day 14, when the children were playing ‘Rock, Paper, Scissors Tag’. In this activity, children were numbered off as 1 or 2 to participate on one of two teams.
Each team had to decide if they were going to be rock, paper, or scissors as a group, then come to the middle divider of the gym, and compete with the other team. If team A chose rock and team B chose scissors, then team A chased team B back to their safety zone, which was behind team B. If any member of team B was tagged, then that member had to join team A in the next round. (VFN D14)

The children worked together to come up with signs and shared the leadership role, as different children came up with ideas for the sign they should choose for each round. They supported each other in making the decisions on the sign to use. Different people made suggestions about which signs to use when the groups came up to the center line to begin play. In particular, “I played with them [the participants] in the activity since only 7 children were present. I was the team with Avery, Kyla, and Annie. Avery and Kyla suggested we use scissors as the sign at the center line”, thus demonstrating shared leadership (VFN D14). By cooperating with, listening to, and supporting one another, children demonstrated their leadership qualities, as these are the qualities of good leader as noted by Hellison (2011).

When we were able to discuss what leadership meant and the role of a leader, during the group meetings and reflection times on Day 7 and Day 15, the children had more meaningful responses than their first interview revealed. In the first round of interviews, conducted in the first week in the study, participants revealed simple definitions of leadership, such as “You should not want to be a follower, you should always want to be a leader” (Annie, PI1). Antoinette made a
similar statement remarking, “You’re supposed to be a leader instead of a follower” (PI1). Edie stated, “Like if you’re the leader, the other kids are following behind you” (PI1). Kyla also stated that leadership meant, “That I’m not following nobody” (PI1). In essence, all children in their first interviews defined leadership as either leading their peers or not following others.

Later in the study, however, after we spent time engaging in cooperative activities and discussing the characteristics of leadership, they seemed to have a more mature understanding of what it meant to be a leader. In particular, I asked them about the qualities of a good leader. Some children responded that it meant caring about and giving support to others. For instance, Caitlyn stated, “Making a good leader is not pushing anybody and being caring about what they say” (VFN D7). Also, Avery indicated, “What you need to be a leader is respect, be kind [and] help. You have to have self-direction. You have to tell the truth, not lie” (VFN D15). Similarly, Hannah mentioned that a leader was “caring, honest, respectful, and responsible” (Hannah, VFN D15). Both Avery and Hannah moved from superficial comments about leadership earlier in the study that defined leadership as “be[ing] responsible” (Avery, VFN D7) and following instructions (Hannah, VFN D7) to more sophisticated and expanded definitions of leadership on Day 15. Most of the other children agreed with Caitlyn, Avery, and Hannah in that showing leadership was not just about leading others or not following someone else, but also it was about listening to others, caring about what they say, being honest, working cooperatively with others, and overall exhibiting responsible behaviors. The children’s
understanding of what it meant to be a leader and help others may lead them to demonstrate such actions and becoming more selfless as individuals.

**Having choices and making responsible decisions.** Despite the children's understanding of what it meant to be responsible individuals, some children showed a great deal of unpredictability in demonstrating such behaviors. In my view, they did mostly the “right thing” over the “wrong thing”. This section was substantiated by video observations, teacher and youth care staff interviews, and grading reports from teachers.

In the early part of the study, we played a cooperative activity called ‘Wizards and Geflings’ and the goal of the activity was to work together towards the common goal of unfreezing a participant who had been tagged.

In the activity, two children volunteered to be wizards and were responsible for tagging the geflings. Once a gefling was tagged, she or he was frozen, but would call out for help to other geflings. To unfreeze the frozen gefling, two other geflings would have to hold hands around the frozen gefling to help her or him become free. This activity was designed to promote cooperation amongst the group. Naomi was the first person to be frozen by one of the wizards. Kyla noticed that she was frozen and went over to help her, calling over Edie, so together, they could unfreeze her. Next was Hannah who became frozen. Edie noticed and got Jane’s attention. Jane came over to assist Edie in unfreezing Hannah. However, during the same activity,
Antoinette and Annie stood right by Edie while Edie was asking for help, but neither one of them made any attempts to help her (VFN D3). Children were in a position to help each other; some made the choice to help and others made the choice not to do so. Selected children seemed to be focused on not allowing the wizards to tag them, instead of helping others who were in need of becoming unfrozen. After the first round of the game, I brought them into a standing circle and reminded them to pay attention to the people who were frozen. This reiteration of the rules did not appear to change some of the children’s behaviors, so we discussed their behaviors in the activity within the realm of respect. I said, “Since we’re talking about respect this week, did anybody notice any ways that any of you demonstrated respect towards each other” (Me, VFN D3)? Then the following conversation took place:

Kaleb: If you get tagged, you should freeze or sit down.
Me: So, is it demonstrating respect when I have to tell you all that you got tagged. Is that demonstrating respect for yourself and your classmates?
Kaleb shakes his head: No.
The group says: No.
Me: […] Is it respectful that when you got tagged to not squat down?
Group: NO.
Me: Why is it not respectful? Kyla. (She raises her hand)
Kyla: You told us what to do. You tried to help us, but if you didn’t do, then you’re doing the wrong thing.
Jane: If you don’t squat down when your tagged, it’s not fair.

Me: Yeah. It’s not fair, right? So, how about is it honest? Does respect have something to do with honesty? (Most kids responded, “Yes”). Is that being honest when you get tagged and you don’t go down?

Kyla/Naomi: No.

Annie: Cause if you tell the teacher that you didn’t get tagged, then the person who tagged you can tell that they really did tag you.

(Going back to the Wizards and Geflings game...)

Me: When the Geflings got tagged, what did the other Geflings have to do?

(Hannah raises her hand)

Hannah: They had to get two other people to help them unfreeze.

Me: So that required you to be a teammate with someone to help another person become unfrozen? That [would] have been the right thing to do.

I attempted to help the children focus on the right thing to do when they were engaged in the activity, by indicating to them that they were supposed to be helping their peers. In the discussion the focus started with respect and I never went into any depth about helping each other until later on Day 10. The children understood that not responding to getting tagged was associated with dishonesty and unfairness as per their own words. By connecting the dots between the activity and honesty and fairness, they seemed to have a more complete understanding of the importance of responding when tagged. I addressed helping others more so when the children engaged in the activity, ‘Help Me Tag’ on Day 10.
’Help Me Tag’ was another cooperative activity, in which the object was to help each other once again, but this time a participant had the opportunity to help the person prior to that person getting tagged. I explained the activity verbally, then had two children demonstrate what was supposed to take place within the activity. In ‘Help Me Tag’, there was one person who carried around a yarn ball and was considered safe as long as she or he held the yarn ball. A person could choose to pass on the yarn ball to help someone who was about to be tagged by the ‘IT’ person but in return the person who gave up the yarn ball was no longer safe.

The children ran around and asked the people with the ball for help so they could become safe before they were tagged. Most of the children gave up the yarn ball to help their peers. A few minutes into the activity, I stopped hearing people ask for help and so I asked the entire group, “Are you asking for help?” Of course, several children yelled out “HELP!” They continued to play. (VFN D10)

The majority of participants helped each other consistently throughout the activity. In the discussion later in the lesson surrounding helping others, many of the children admitted that they either helped or they did not. Kaleb said, “I was helping” (Kaleb, VFN D10). He expanded his comment by saying, “I did [help] cause I threw it [the ball] to Avery, then I gave it to Caitlyn” (Kaleb, VFN D10). Similarly, Hannah revealed, “I was helping, [but] I was trying to avoid being tagged” (Hannah, VFN D10). I extended the questioning to ask, “Do you feel that it is ok[ay] to help someone when they need help” (VFN D10)? Caitlyn responded to the question by
declaring, "Yeah, it’s good to help people. It’s better than just sitting around and looking at them" (Caitlyn, VFN D10). Annie stated, “I wasn’t trying to help anybody... I don’t like to help people. They’re rude to me” (Annie, VFN D10). We digressed into a conversation pertaining to rudeness and I subsequently followed up with the question, “So, what do we need to do to try to be nicer and not rude to people” (VFN D10)? Naomi responded, "By saying nice things" (VFN D10). Additionally, Johnny stated, “You have to listen to whoever is talking and if they are talking, you tell them to be quiet” (VFN D10). With this line of questioning, I attempted to connect the activity of ‘Help Tag’ with helping others, the importance of it, and how rudeness can play a role in helping or not helping others and being nice to one another.

Helping each other in activities became common practice for many of the children and even though this activity demonstrated progress in many of the children’s thinking about others, it remained inconsistent throughout the study. For instance, on Day 13, during an activity called Transformer Tag, some children helped others to understand the directions I provided in the game. In Transformer Tag, children decided on whether they would be a head or a tail. If a participant decided to be a head, then she or he put a hand on top of her or his head and if a tail, then the hand was placed behind the back. Throughout the game, the children were to walk around the gym tagging each other so they could transform each other into a head or tail, eventually trying to get everyone to be one sign. The purpose of the game was not what warranted this notion of the children helping each other, but it was that some children helped others to understand the activity.
Kaleb and Kyla are having a side conversation in whispers and bumping elbows with each other while I am explaining the instructions for the game. I asked for their attention to which they responded by stopping what they were doing and looking at me. Annie and I demonstrated the activity, but after having assigned the children heads or tails, a few children did not know what to do, specifically Naomi and Kyla who were running around when I gave children their assignments. Thus, Hannah helped them out by simply letting them know that they needed to change into a head or tail upon getting tagged. (VFN D13)

Most of the participants exhibited responsible behaviors over the course of the study, but they demonstrated those behaviors in an inconsistent manner. I saw one particular example worth noting.

I had just frozen the first activity in the lesson plan on Day 11 named ‘Trust Circle’. The activity involved children being organized in a circle and subsequently demonstrating respect by not touching each other when passing through the circle to secure a spot on the opposite side of the circle. I was on the verge of explaining the next game when I noticed that Antoinette was bothering Kaleb by hitting and pushing him, seemingly for no reason. But, not once did Kaleb push her back or react in a physical way towards her, even though she kept taunting him. (VFN D11)

Kaleb showed that he had self-control by both avoiding confrontation and not reacting to Antoinette in this situation. Antoinette, on the other hand, did not show
any self-control towards Kaleb. She neglected to model responsible behaviors in the TPSR program on this day.

Modeling responsible behaviors was not only demonstrated in the TPSR program, but also in the classroom. The classroom teachers provided more examples of students exemplifying model behaviors in their interviews and grading reports. For example, Mr. Matthews discussed Jessie in a positive light by saying, “Jessie is the ideal student” (Mr. Matthews, TI1) and, “[she] is a great role model at school and puts forth her best effort” (GR3). The same was said of Kaleb, from his teacher, Mr. Gosling, and a YMCA staff member, Ms. Charles. Mr. Gosling stated, “Kaleb has been a model student all year. He works hard every single day, makes good choices, and enjoys learning” (Mr. Gosling, GR4). Ms. Charles concurred in stating, “Kaleb is a good role model because he tries to follow all directives” (Ms. Charles, YSJ1). In each one of these cases, the students had been exemplifying these behaviors throughout the school year and this was typical behavior for them.

Other teachers noted that a couple of students learned from their mistakes by admitting to their fault and correcting their behaviors over the school year. For example, Mr. Gosling stated:

Annie has come a long way in my opinion. Well, she takes a little bit more responsibility for her actions. Like, if she’s talking, I can look over at her, and instead of saying, ‘I wasn’t talking, Mr. Gosling’, she’ll say, ‘Sorry, I was talking, Mr. Gosling; I’ll stop.’ That’s a big improvement to me. (Mr. Gosling, TI2).
Over several months, Annie had become more accountable for her actions in Mr. Gosling’s view. Mrs. Rogers noted similar improvements in Jane, Avery, and Edie:

I think they’ve come a long way since the beginning of the year. Jane took it upon herself – she was getting in trouble because she sat at the table – and she took it upon herself to ask me, ‘Can I have a seat by myself?’ And she’s very good at ‘Ok, I’m talking too much. I need to move.’ [Also] I want to mention this. He [Avery] will come to me – like their routine is they come in in the morning, they turn in their homework folder, they get started on the board work. And I go through the folders, and if you don’t have your homework done, you have no recess. I write your name on the board. I’ve noticed with him the past month or so, he’ll come in and he’ll say, ‘Can I talk to you?’ And I’ll say, ‘Yeah.’ And he’ll pull me aside privately and say, ‘I didn’t do my homework.’ And depending on if it’s two or three days, yeah, I’ll start making him lose, but if it’s like every once in a while out of the blue, and I’ll say, ‘Look, you took the responsibility to tell me. I didn’t have to ask you about it. You can go outside because of what you just told me.’ So I’m noticing...(Mrs. Rogers, TI2).

Mr. Gosling and Mrs. Rogers noticed discernible improvements in their students over the school year. These children had learned to take more responsibility for their actions by admitting to behaviors that earlier in the year they did not acknowledge. Furthermore, Avery had grown over the year to take the initiative to
report himself to the teacher and be willing to accept the consequences of his actions. This act showed respect for himself and his teacher, it displayed self-direction, it revealed honesty, and moreover, it exposed Avery’s potential leadership qualities.

The teachers, youth care staff, and I witnessed and reported several instances in which children were practicing responsible behaviors. There seemed to be an overall improvement in most students’ display of responsibility over the time of the study and over the school year. However, it was not possible to determine if the change in children’s behaviors was a product of the TPSR program or just their time in school, in general. All children showed they were capable of helping each other, me, and themselves whether it was in a game of tag, volunteering to put out equipment, or admitting to their shortcomings.

In addition to the adults observing and reporting the participants’ behaviors, I asked the children to reflect upon their own behaviors during the discussion part of our lesson. They provided examples of how they demonstrated responsible behaviors in multiple environments. For example, the children did an activity called ‘Mookie’ in which two groups of an equal number of children stood shoulder to shoulder facing each other. One participant had to walk between the rows of children, while the children shouted “Mookie” in different, animated voices. The purpose of this activity was for the children to ignore the shouting by walking through the line calmly without laughing. When we held our discussion after the activity, I connected this activity with avoiding reacting to others in situations
where people teased them or talked unkindly about family members. So, I asked them how they had exhibited responsible behaviors of practicing self-control, respecting themselves and others, and exhibiting self-direction. Most of the children expressed that they walked away or ignored it when people teased them or talked about them or their families in general. For instance, “In my class, when they talk about me, I avoid it by ignoring them or walk away” (Naomi, VFN D13). Kyla took it one step further by not only ignoring them, but thinking about something else. She stated, “While they’re talking, I think about something else, like I do with my Mom. She be talking about something and I’m not even listening” (Kyla, VFN D13). These two statements from students were examples of children respecting themselves by not becoming confrontational and exhibiting self-control.

Earlier in the program, I asked the children in our debrief time, how they showed respect either in their classroom or in the YMCA program. Most indicated that they showed respect by listening to their teacher and following instructions outlined by the teacher. One case to exemplify this behavior was denoted by Caitlyn who said, “I showed respect in the classroom by listening to the teacher and doing my work” (VFN D12). As one of the last persons to respond to this question in one of our sessions, Avery gave a very thoughtful response by replying, “How you can show respect is that if someone is mean to you, you could be nice to them” (VFN D11). This statement not only reflected Avery’s understanding of respect beyond following directions, but also showed his willingness to practice self-control and potential ability to lead others by modeling responsible behaviors. The children
knew how to practice responsible behaviors and such behaviors had been
demonstrated and corroborated by teachers, youth care staff and me on several
occasions.

**Seeking responsibility.** The children understood and demonstrated
responsible behaviors for the most part, but they frequently sought out
responsibility. Children asked me on a daily basis if they could take attendance for
our group, carry the video camera to and from the classroom when we moved from
and back to the gym, record the classroom session, lead an activity, and help out
with setting up or putting away equipment. From Day 1 to Day 15, children sought
responsibility from me. For instance, on Day 1, Hannah asked to carry the video
camera to the classroom for our group meeting and reflection time. On Day 7,
Naomi had asked if she could take attendance, while Edie and Hannah asked to help
me to set up the cones before the other students were sent over to our area of the
gym. Then, on Day 15, most of the girls helped me to untie scarves. Somehow, the
scarves got tied together after a previous lesson and I did not realize it and the girls
jumped in and began to help me untie them without my asking. These are just some
of the examples of children seeking responsibility throughout the program.

Some children also sought responsibility in the classroom as noted by their
teachers. Mr. Matthews indicated, “[Hannah] likes to volunteer her recess time to
help Mrs. Rogers” (Mr. Matthews, GR3). In addition, Mr. Gosling said, “Annie and
Kaleb will ask if they can do stuff...When we do math or science, hands-on stuff, they
ask if they can help pass out stuff. I usually let them” (TI2). In the YMCA program,
Ms. Charles commented, “Annie and Antoinette ask to wash tables in the Y” (YSI2) and she lets them do so. Overall, the children seemed to want to be helpful in their classrooms, in the YMCA, and with me, but had few opportunities to be helpful on a regular basis.

There were a few children who sought responsibility because it was simply the right thing to do. Kaleb was asked in his last interview why he sought responsibility, he replied, “I do because some people just won’t do it, so I just ask if I could do it” (PI3). Likewise, Edie stated:

> Then like before we go out the door, I say can I carry something or can I carry the turn-in (bucket in which completed work is kept), because sometimes she [the teacher] has too much stuff in her hands, and she’s like ‘yes, sure you can’ (PI3).

These were examples of a few children who took the initiative to help their teachers without their teachers having to ask them. They stepped up to take responsibility and follow through on the responsibility they sought. These actions were typical of these students.

When any of the participants sought responsibility, they took it seriously and did not slack on their responsibility at any time during the 8-week responsibility-based program. However, one teacher had a different perspective on this matter when we discussed a few of his students in an interview:

> Hannah can be responsible but she seems to wander off and do something different than what I’ve asked her to do sometimes. She
does that often. Kyla, she could probably do some things, but I’m working with her on becoming more responsible. She would help me and not do something because she can’t figure it out then asks for help. Same thing [with] Caitlyn (Mr. Matthews, TI1).

Mr. Matthews experience with a few of his students was that they sought responsibility and accepted the responsibility given to them, but then did not follow through to complete the task. He felt that these students needed more work to become responsible. My experience with the participants was that if they sought responsibility, then they carried out the task.

Children sought responsibilities over the course of the study. They seemed comfortable asking me for the various responsibilities and followed through on the tasks they sought. They sought responsibilities in their respective classrooms as well as in the YMCA, but were given limited opportunities.

**Counter measures to irresponsible behaviors.** Although children, on many occasions, had the opportunity and choice to make a responsible decision and did so, there were instances in which they did not make a responsible decision. I believed that 7 to 9 year old children were learning how to conduct themselves and how to behave on a consistent basis. They were supposed to make mistakes, but by my creating an environment for them to practice making those mistakes, they learned and made progress towards regularly practicing responsible behaviors. I communicated this to them on several occasions at the beginning of lessons, during our awareness talks, as well as at the end of our lessons, during the reflection
period. For example, on the first day of the study, I told the children what my goals were for them. I stated, “I want to teach you how to be responsible. I not only want you to be responsible for yourselves, but I also want you to be responsible and respectful [towards] others” (Me, VFN D1). On Day 8, I reinforced the values we had talked about in previous lessons. I reminded them, “We talked about being responsible, showing leadership, caring about people, and helping out other people. [Leadership and helping others] will be our focus for the week, but we always, always want to show respect towards yourself and others” (Me, VFN D8). Similar expectations and awareness of the TPSR core values was talked about in each of the 15 lessons. Thus, within this space, I reinforced what it meant to demonstrate responsible behaviors. Often the teachers and youth care staff reinforced these behaviors and sometimes the children's peers provided reminders as well. This sub-theme was substantiated by video observations, teacher and youth care staff interviews, youth source journals, and grading reports.

Behaving in an irresponsible manner encompassed children not listening, not following directions, not controlling their bodies, exhibiting disruptive behaviors, and showing dishonesty during activities and/or discussions. This display of actions took place throughout the study period, but I observed it first through my interactions with them during the gym activities, then after the gym activities in the post-activity discussions.

The children had a difficult time listening to directions, making it difficult for them to follow directions, and thus carry out the activities on some days for the
planned length of time. For instance, I explained the tag game ‘Everybody’s It’ and for the first round when one person was tagged by another person, the tagged person was to squat down until the round was completed. Annie and Kaleb were tagged, but kept participating in the activity. Annie and Caitlyn tagged each other, although neither of them accepted they had been tagged and thus, continued to play in the game. As I monitored the activity, I asked the people who were still running around, “None of you have been tagged yet?” Caitlyn replied, “Annie got tagged. She got tagged two times.” Kaleb chimes in, “Yeah. She got tagged two times” (VFN D3). Because I did not witness her getting tagged, I did not respond to the children telling on her. Instead, I monitored her more closely in the next round and when she was tagged, I called her out reinforcing that she had been tagged and she needed to squat down (for the first round of the activity). Once the children were involved heavily in an activity, some children seldom were honest about getting tagged while others were quick to tell on a peer if the peer was not following the rules of the game. The children who were not honest about getting tagged seemed to want to just stay in the game. However, each activity that was conducted during the gym period had progressions in which a participant could get back in the game through the help of others or self-help. There were several of these examples of children not wanting to get tagged during the course of the program implementation.

During the middle of the study on Day 11, I chose an activity that emphasized respect. The setup of the game was for children to stand in a circle on designated spots with bean bags of different colors strategically placed around the circle. The
goal was for children to demonstrate respect by crossing the circle when I called out
their bean bag color without them touching each other. Upon distributing the bean
bags, Naomi and Antoinette proceeded to throw their bean bags because they did
not like the color of the bean bag that was given to them. Thus, the following
conversation ensued:

Me: Why are you throwing the bean bag?
Naomi: I don’t like that color.
Me: What difference does it make?
Antoinette: I want purple.
Me: I don’t care what you want. You’re taking what I give you. I have
the bean bags there for a reason.(VFN D11).

Both Naomi and Antoinette complied with what I told them. I then explained to
them the reason that I had the bean bags strategically placed around the circle with
each child. At the beginning of the activity, Naomi and Antoinette were not behaving
in an appropriate manner, but by reprimanding them and explaining why I
organized the game in the way that I did, I re-directed their actions. I facilitated a
counter measure to change their behaviors in this moment.

For all activities, I constantly reinforced the rules and the responsible
behaviors that they were to practice. I reminded them of being respectful and
honest during all activities, especially in tag games. I also praised them when they
did the right thing. During the discussion period after the activity portion on Day
11, but before we got too far into the children’s evaluation of the activities and reflecting upon their own behaviors, I complimented them and stated:

I liked how all of you followed directions and really tried to stay inside the boundaries. Even though I had to tell you at the beginning, I liked that you all, when someone tagged you in freeze tag or called you out [in] dead fish, you actually got out and followed those directions. I really appreciate that and noticed that so I wanted to let you know. (Me, VFN D9)

There was no response to my comments neither in a verbal nor in a non-verbal way. The children kept responding to the questions posed in the discussion without missing a beat. It was as if I said nothing at all. I complimented their behavior to reinforce that I liked what I saw. This gesture did not necessarily provide a counter measure to irresponsible behavior, but did encourage positive behaviors in the participants.

However, there were times I had to talk to the children about being tired of having to lecture them on listening and doing the right thing, and that I wanted them to have fun. On Day 11, children were behaving in a hyper manner by not settling into their seats for discussion, laughing at others who were acting silly, talking while others were trying to talk, and not paying attention to the discussion at hand. Thus I said to them, “I don’t really like that I have to talk to you all. I shouldn’t have to do that. I want you to have fun. I want us to come in here, talk, and not talk for a long time” (Me, VFN D11). I wanted them to understand that although this was their program and while I wanted them to have fun and have their say, they also needed
to show respect towards each other. It was a constant exchange between us about what it meant to practice responsibility and exhibit responsible behaviors.

During the beginning of a gym activity when I asked about their day or held classroom conversations subsequent to our activity session, often times the same few children exhibited disruptive behaviors. When they needed to be listening to others, they talked, made noise, raised their hand, or performed other gestures, while others were talking. One notable example was when I had gathered the children in our seated circle, as usual, in the classroom after our gym activity, and asked them what they liked or did not like about the activities of the day. Earlier on this day (Day 10), Antoinette had thrown her bean bag at another child, pushed Hannah out of her way, and hit and pushed Kaleb during the activity portion of the lesson. Once we proceeded to the classroom for our group meeting and reflection time, Antoinette continued with this disposition by disrupting the discussion by making sounds with her mouth, dancing in her chair, yelling out “I don’t want to be here!”, and moving her chair noisily to the outside of the circle. She continued with these behaviors until Ms. Charles collected her from the classroom when her guardian arrived to pick her up from the program.

There were other children who displayed an array of responsible and irresponsible behaviors, meaning they exhibited both behaviors somewhat equally. Mr. Matthews declared, “Caitlyn talks when she should be doing her work. [She’s] distracted lately and Kyla relies on her neighbors for answers on assignments” (Mr. Matthews, GR3). In the YMCA, Ms. Charles indicated, “Caitlyn does not try to work
things out herself” (Ms. Charles, YSI2). Caitlyn admitted to following others and seemed to display her behaviors because she appeared to lack confidence in herself. Caitlyn’s behavior was very different from Annie and Antoinette, who demonstrated irresponsible behaviors involving confrontation and more simply not following rules or ignoring what they were told to do.

*Counter measures not working.* There were two children, Annie and Antoinette, who acted out more frequently and with more severity than the rest of the group, one of whom I elected with mixed feelings to remove two weeks prior to the end of the program. They both did not follow directions or rules at times, purposely ignored what I had to say to them, particularly when I asked them not to do something (e.g. putting away a drawing or perfume bottle), and on a few instances lacked self-control, lashing out, mostly in verbal ways (e.g. yelling in a person’s face, saying hurtful words). For example, Annie showed no self-control with Hannah after they had just finished playing a game of ‘Asteroids’. ‘Asteroid’ involved children tagging each other with yarn balls and during the first round, participants were to squat down until the next round.

Annie did not acknowledge getting tagged and so Hannah came to me and said in a calm manner, “Annie doesn’t know how to play.” Annie consequently turned to yell in her face, “I DON’T CARE!” and walked away. I responded, “Don’t yell in her face like that!” She started to walk away, when I called her back and told her, “You need to change that attitude because we’re not having it today.” (VFN D6)
What I found out after this exchange was that earlier in the session, Hannah had accidentally hit her in the eye and she was upset because she felt Hannah did it on purpose, but Annie participated in all of the activities of the day.

Antoinette also did things that were irresponsible, such as not following directions or practicing safety, such as going the opposite way through a jump rope when others were coming towards her in the direction they were instructed to do so. These were actions that other children did also and did not warrant more than a reminder of the rules and a casual reprimand, at the beginning of the study. Her behaviors, however, escalated to her becoming rude with others. For example, on Day 7, Antoinette made comments after each person briefly talked about their day during the relational portion of the lesson. The conversation proceeded as follows:

- **Me:** I want everyone to tell me one thing that was good or bad about your day.
- **Avery:** I had a great day [because of] math.
- **Antoinette:** Booo! (I did not hear Antoinette, in person, make the comment the first time; I heard it on the video).
- **Johnny:** I didn’t have to move my clip today.
- **Antoinette:** Booo!
- **Me:** Excuse me. Do you want to be in this group?
- **Antoinette:** Yes.
Me: Ok, then you need to stop commenting on what others are saying and listen. How would you like it if someone said ‘Booo’ to you after you talked about your day and it was important enough for you to share?

Antoinette: (She humps her shoulders as if to indicate that she did not care or did not know how to respond).

I ended this conversation between Antoinette and me and proceeded to listen to the other children talk about their day. Antoinette left shortly after the first activity, so there was no opportunity to include her into the post-activity discussion, in which the students talked about leadership as exhibiting caring and responsible behaviors. This discussion would have tied in well with the actions Antoinette exhibited during the relational time of the lesson.

Antoinette started off the session well in the first activity on Day 10, when I asked her to participate in a demonstration of Help Me Tag, a tag game in which children helped others who had been tagged to become unfrozen. She participated fully in the game and followed the rules. However, after explaining the next game Robot Tag and pairing children, Antoinette’s disposition changed. She was paired with Jane and she was not happy about it as indicated by her comment, “Oh my God! I don’t want to be with her” (Antoinette, VFN D10)! I responded, “Maybe she doesn’t want to be with you either. But remember what I said in the beginning. You have to be able to work with people even if you don’t like them. You’re only going to be working together for a couple of minutes” (Me, VFN D10). Working together was challenging, especially when Jane led Antoinette around the gym, Antoinette would
move faster than Jane was moving her, attempting to take control. The purpose of the game was for one child, the “robot” to be able to follow instructions of the other child, the “robot operator”. Antoinette said again, “I don’t want to work with her.” However, Antoinette seemed to settle in after Jane was the operator for a couple of minutes. Moreover, as soon as the roles reversed, when it was Antoinette’s turn to lead Jane, then Antoinette was fine and she did not complain about working with Jane.

After the activities, we moved to the classroom for our group meeting and reflection time to discuss the activities. It was Antoinette’s turn to record the session. Since every child sought this responsibility, I assigned the responsibility to one child each day of the study and today was her day. After she started the recording, she sat down in chair within the circle of the other participants and we moved forward with our discussion. Late in the discussion, I said to the children, “It seems that for some of you, it was difficult for you to have people leading you around. Why was it hard” (Me, VFN D10)? Kaleb responded, “It was hard because you had to make every move that the creator did when he pushed the button” (Kaleb, VFN D10). Out of the blue, Antoinette responded to the question, “Because I don’t like her (Jane).” I said, “What is that about?” Antoinette retorted, “I don’t know”, while Jane said, “I don’t really care.” Other children, Hannah and Caitlyn chimed in mentioning that Antoinette does not like them sometimes. I commented on the entire conversation by reiterating the need to be able to work with others even if the participants did not like the person, or did not like how the person
looked or behaved. Then I asked them, “So, how do you get past that you don’t like them, but you have to work with them [in the classroom]? Caitlyn responded, “You could try to get to know them better.” However, the conversation took a turn for the worse, as Antoinette and others discussed what made them not like people, which was within my line of questioning surrounding this topic. They talked of people “stinking”, starting fights, being dirty, living in apartments instead of houses. I halted the conversation and stated:

What I’m trying to get at here is it’s not always about how people look or what they do. So what about their values and beliefs? Like if you don’t like people who are mean to you, I understand that. You may have something in common with someone and may not even know it; they can be your friend. Still, you are going to have to work with others and have to figure out how to do so. (Me, VFN D10)

All of the children had simple notions of why they did not like someone and it was up to me to help them understand this on a deeper level and relate it to things with which they could identify, such as bullying or people being mean to them either verbally or physically. I wanted the children to look beyond external factors, such as the way a person dresses, how they smell, or the type of home in which they live. I focused on having other reasons for not liking someone, for example when they say hurtful things, are mean spirited, violate personal space (e.g. hitting or pushing). Antoinette did not stand out from the group in anyway, as she had similar views as
the other children, but on Day 11, her behavior escalated to an unacceptable level. She was not only disruptive, but she was disrespectful and mean towards others.

On Day 11, the session began with my having to ask Antoinette to put away a perfume bottle in her school bag, to which she responded with “Oh my God” (VFN D11)! and pokes out her tongue at me. I did not respond to her in this moment. Then, after explaining ‘Trust Circle’, an activity to teach trust and respect, Antoinette threw the bean bag across the circle because she did not like the color and argued overtly with me. I sat her out for 1-2 minutes of the game, went over to talk to her about her behavior, and then asked if she was ready to play the game. She said yes, so I returned her bean bag to her and she re-entered the activity. After approximately 5 minutes in the activity, she pushed Hannah and between activities, she pushed and hit Kaleb. In both cases, there seemed to be no apparent reason other than these children were in her way. I told her to “keep your hands to yourself” (VFN D10) in Hannah’s case, but was not aware of her interaction with Kaleb until I reviewed the video.

We moved to the classroom as usual for our discussion. I had to tell Antoinette to put away a perfume top that she had in her mouth and told her that she has been in trouble with me this entire session, but that could change with our discussion. Nevertheless, she continued to be disruptive by mouthing something that I could not discern to Annie and Caitlyn and flipping her eyelids at them. Both of Annie and Caitlyn alerted me to this, as Antoinette was sitting beside me and thus it was difficult for me to see her performing these actions. I had her move across the
circle so I could better observe her to which she responded, “I want to go back to the other room.” I could not let her go back to the gym unsupervised, so she had to stay until the end of the session. I proceeded to start the discussion with the group, specifically to ask what they liked or did not like about the activities. Antoinette interrupted, “I don’t want to be here!” and gets up to leave. I told her to have a seat and she repeated that she did not want to be there. I responded, “When we go back [to the gym], you will be out of the group from this time forward. Okay?” We were 10 to 12 minutes into the discussion portion of the lesson and had not yet gotten to the topic of discussion.

Hellison (2011) addressed individual discipline dilemmas suggesting that a facilitator should try to negotiate with children, but that this may be unsuitable for the circumstances. He advocated for giving children a say in their gym life, but also stated,

Also worth considering is the fact that their presence reduces the effectiveness of the program for others. They need special help, and it would best serve them, their peers, and PE (physical education) and PA (physical activity) professionals if they got that help. (Hellison, 2011, p. 95).

In my discretion, I felt that Antoinette should be removed from the program as she was interfering with the other children’s learning responsible behaviors. In addition, she created an unsafe environment, both emotionally and physically, for the other children. Overall, I determined that Antoinette was infringing on the rights of the other children in the program and as such I chose to remove her from
the program so the other children could learn responsible behaviors and I could provide a safe space for them to freely share their opinions and interact with each other in a cooperative manner.

Both Antoinette and Annie both behaved irresponsibly often in the program. Annie was present every day during the study, whereas Antoinette had inconsistencies in her attendance. I cannot solely charge that Antoinette’s attendance was the reason for her irresponsibility, but it may have been a contributing factor. It may have been that not all individual children can learn what we might like to teach them as Noddings (1992) has pointed out in her text. Antoinette may not have been capable of receiving the information that I was trying to teach her. Also, I had no opportunity to speak to her guardian, as her guardian never entered the site; it was always a cousin or uncle who arrived to collect her from the program. On the other hand, I feel that Annie’s consistency allowed for Annie to be taught more of the responsibility lessons. I sensed that I had a better chance of reaching her to reinforce positive behaviors and also, I had the opportunity to speak with her grandmother on one occasion and she welcomed my concerns, assuring me that she would speak with Annie. I was not sure how the discussion faired between Annie and her grandmother as her behavior remained inconsistent throughout the study. I had hoped that the longer she was present in the study, the more opportunity she had to change. After all, she had been participating consistently throughout the 8 weeks. For some children, the frequency of irresponsible behaviors diminished over time in my program, but for other
children they remained inconsistent, as was the case with Annie. Sometimes, she acted in a very responsible manner and other times she did not.

**Summary**

In summary of this theme, children were able to articulate and illustrate how they understood and made meaning of responsibility values as outlined in the program. However, their demonstration of such behaviors was unpredictable as they tended to show them at times and not at others. There was no linear pattern in terms of their responsibility development. It was contextual and contingent on what happened to them earlier in the day, particularly in the classroom. If they had a bad day at school, then most likely they brought those prior experiences with them and had a bad day with me. We held a discussion about this very topic on Day 11, midway through our reflection time. Children indicated that their day at school determined their actions in the YMCA. For instance, Avery said, “Sometimes I have a great day if nobody bothers me and other days, if somebody bothers me, I get mad and I end up having a horrible day” (Avery, VFN D11). Kaleb and Caitlyn said something similar saying, “If/when I have a bad day, I bring it onto here” and Kaleb further indicated “I don’t like to talk” on his bad day (Kaleb and Caitlyn, VFN D11).

Children showed honesty in their responsibilities and an acknowledgment and an awareness of their behaviors.

Although there was no consistent pattern in the participants’ development of responsible behaviors, they sought out responsibility on a regular basis and took their sought out responsibility seriously, never neglecting it. As elementary
students, early in the responsibility developmental stages, a few children acted irresponsibly. Overall, most children understood and demonstrated responsible behaviors, even though it may have been on an inconsistent basis.
Theme 2: Understanding Caring and Its Development in Participants

The second theme that emerged from the data encompassed the issue of caring. The teaching personal and social responsibility framework recognizes caring as a complex skill to acquire and suggests that students need to possess interpersonal skills of listening to, helping, and responding to others in a non-judgmental manner to exhibit this trait (Hellison, 2011). In general, Noddings (1992) discussed caring as relational in its basic form, focusing on the connection between two individuals. Not only did Noddings consider caring as an encounter between people, such as the interactions that took place in one’s inner circle, but also she regarded caring in terms of self (Noddings, 1992). In defining caring in the inner circle, Noddings (1992) stated:

It is important to understand that caring does not require us to abandon all other guides to moral behavior. Indeed, if we are to be prepared to care for those we encounter, we must give some respectful attention to the social customs and principles they accept...This kind of acceptance and conformity makes everyday life smooth and congenial...Students need to consider when cooperation is more appropriate than competition. (p. 100, 102)

She indicated that it was “important for all [children] to have opportunities to become genuinely engaged in activities that contribute to [their overall] development” (Noddings, 1992, p. 87). Such activities for development can include the responsible behaviors I attempted to teach them, children taking on
responsibilities, as well as the children's commitments to homework and doing well in school.

Caring was discernible in different areas of the TPSR-based program such as in the relational time, the awareness talk, the activity, the group meeting, and the reflection time. It was interesting that the theme of caring about self and others emerged from the data, as it was not a primary focus of the program. Yet, caring was embedded within the responsibility values of respect, participation, and leadership that were the foci of the program.

In particular, as seen within the data, caring was identified as helping and encouraging others, cooperation with others through the use of respect and participation, and following through on sought-out responsibilities. For example, Hellison (1985) conveyed that students showing caring “are motivated to extend their sense of responsibility beyond themselves by cooperating, giving support, showing concern, and helping” (p. 6-7). In this section, three sub-themes surfaced: (1) children's perspectives on caring for self and others; (2) development of caring in a responsibility-based program; and (3) teachers and youth care staff strategies to promote caring in the children. Data were gathered from video and live field notes; participant, teacher, and youth staff interviews; grading reports; and youth source journals to support this theme and the sub-themes.

Children's perspectives on caring for self and others. The first sub-theme concentrated on how children made sense of caring and their views of what it looked like, did not look like, sounded like, and felt like. Furthermore, this segment
discusses how the participants demonstrated caring about themselves, with their peers, and with adults, namely the teachers, youth care staff, and me. This area was supported with video and live observations, teacher interviews, and participant interviews and was broken into five sections: 1) Identification of caring; 2) caring about self; 3) caring about what peers think; 4) participants’ views on teachers, youth care staff, and facilitator caring; and 5) caring about others.

**Identification of caring.** Children identified caring as helping others, being respectful of others, having leadership qualities, and being personally responsible. In a few of our post-activity exchanges, when the focus of the lesson was on leadership and helping others, the tenets of caring came into the conversation. Although it was not the focus of the conversation during our reflection time, caring was discussed within the topic of leadership on Day 7 of the program when I asked the participants, “What makes a good leader?” The first response came from Caitlyn who replied, “Making a good leader is not pushing anybody and being caring about what they say” (Caitlyn, VFN D7). Naomi said something similar in relation to leadership stating, “Making a good leader is not pushing them or tripping them because it’s not nice and you can get hurt” (Naomi, VFN D7). Avery concurred by indicating that a person has to, “be responsible” (Avery, VFN D7). Many of the children associated caring with leadership in terms of listening and not harming others. One child summed up caring by associating it with leadership. She disclosed, “The way you have to be a leader is self-direction, not cheat and being caring, honest, respectful, and responsible” (Hannah, VFN D15). Many children
seemed to understand that leadership also involved demonstrating responsible behavior by showing respect towards others and caring about them.

Nevertheless, caring was discussed in more detail during the last lesson over previous lessons. Not only was caring discussed in terms of leadership, but also we examined it as it related to modeling good behaviors. I probed the participants on Day 15 to grasp in what ways they understood caring. Avery indicated, “Caring looks like helping other people.” Two children discussed what caring did not look like in terms of respecting others. Thus, Hannah stated, “It doesn’t look like talking when other people are talking” (Hannah, VFN D15). Another child conveyed that caring did not look like “talking about other people” (Avery, VFN D15). Naomi expressed, “It sounds like ‘I trust you’. It feels like you’re responsible” (Naomi, VFN D15). The participants seemed to be able to express with ease, especially for their grade level, what caring looked like, didn’t look like, sounded like, and felt like. In these children’s accounts, caring was understood as respecting others by allowing those persons to participate in discussions without interruption, helping and trusting others, and demonstrating responsible behaviors.

In addition to holding discussions of leadership as it pertained to helping others, showing responsibility, and caring, I asked participants to draw pictures of how they had demonstrated any of the TPSR core values during the study period. As previously mentioned, we did not explore caring in any depth in the initial weeks of the study, but did discuss it, at times, as a function of leadership, which was one of the focal points for four days of the study. Only one participant, Kyla, drew a picture
of herself asking another girl if she needed help and denoted it as caring. The picture is shown in Figure 4.5.

![Figure 4.5. Kyla's depiction of caring.](image)

She stated:

My cousin came over and told me she was going to college and I won’t see her for a long time. So, I drew a picture of her dropping her books and papers and I asked her if she needed help and I helped her. I’m trying to help her; that’s why it says caring. (Kyla, PX2)

The picture shows Kyla’s perspective of caring as associated with helping another person. She made the connection that assisting others was a component of caring. Through discussions, activity observations, and a picture illustration, some children
were able to tell that caring meant helping others, being individually responsible, and respecting others. In addition to understanding the concept of caring, the children demonstrated it through their effort given in class. Although the participants did not mention caring in their interview responses about their effort in class, I recognized their caring attitudes when talking with them in their first interviews.

**Caring about self.** The children revealed care by speaking of doing well in school in terms of getting good grades, passing standardized tests, and/or behaving in the classroom. The children, who depicted care for themselves, discussed it as it related to classroom activities. In their first interview with me, I asked the children what makes them give their best effort and persevere to complete their work. Although the question I asked them related to effort, it was the responses that the children provided me that implied care and concern about their achievement in school. They cared to give their best effort in school. One child responded, “So I can pass the grade” (Annie, PI1). Another responded, “Doing my best work, and work hard, passing the OAA test we have in April to go to the 4th grade” (Jessie, PI1). Jane said something similar to Annie and Jessie by stating, “Because I get threes and twos and I don’t get no ones. If you get a three, then you’re working hard” (Jane, PI1). Likewise, Caitlyn mentioned, “I give my best effort by writing neatly and paying attention to my work, not just in my la la land” (Caitlyn, PI1). Johnny also indicated that he showed his best effort by “doing your best [work]” (Johnny, PI1). Another participant, Kyla, said that giving her best effort meant, “To work hard, harder than
you ever did before [and] studying over the summer” (Kyla, PI1). These are just examples of all of the children who felt that getting good marks and doing their best work in the classroom was important to them. By showing concern about doing their best work and giving their best effort in class, I implied from the children’s interviews that some of them showed that they cared about themselves through achieving academic success.

Some children seemed to associate caring about themselves with not getting into trouble in their classrooms. For example, Jessie, a model student according to her teacher got into trouble for the first time during the school year. Mr. Matthews made a comment about her having to move her clip, which is similar to writing a student’s name on the board for getting in trouble with the teacher (e.g. not following directions, talking out of turn). Depending on how many times a student has moved her or his clip during the school day, may result in an in-school suspension, PEAK, or a phone call to home. So, when Jessie had to move her clip, Mr. Matthews talked of the impact it had on her. He said, “And that threw her off totally. [Jessie said] ‘Oh my gosh I have to move it?’” (Mr. Matthews, TI1). In general, Jessie was a model student, who rarely, if ever got into trouble as noted in her response to her teacher. Her reaction was one of shock and seemed to indicate the concern she had for herself, particularly getting into trouble with her classroom teacher. I reasoned that her reaction spoke to her caring about herself, especially how she was viewed in her teacher’s eyes. Another student, Caitlyn, told me during our last interview how she felt when she had to go to in-school suspension. She stated:
When I went to PEAK, that was my first time. I did not feel so good. She [the teacher] yelled at me. She’s like, ‘Caitlyn, how could you get yourself in PEAK?’ I just listen and don’t get myself in more trouble so I have to go to [the principal] and I do feel kind of mad because that –that’s gonna be on my thing when I go to the 4th grade that I went to PEAK. (Caitlyn, PI3).

Caitlyn’s statement pointed out that she cared about what went onto her school record and her concern that going to in-school suspension, PEAK, would follow her to her next grade level. Just a few students discussed caring in a way that seemed to show their concern about what their teachers thought about them and what impact the students’ behaviors had on their future.

However, there was one student, Kyla who did not appear to care about what her teacher or peers thought of her. Her teacher, Mr. Matthews stated, “Kyla will just go up there and move hers [clip] and go sit down. She’s done it so many times” (Mr. Matthews, TI1). He indicated that she was one student who did what she wanted to do depending on her mood and getting into trouble in front of her peers did not embarrass her. Mr. Matthew’s perception was that Kyla did not seem to care that she had to go to the front of the classroom to move her clip, unlike some of the other children.

**Caring about what peers think.** Noddings (1992) revealed, “For adolescents these are among the most pressing questions: ...What kind of person will I be? How do others see me” (p. 20)? Also, she indicated, “People want others to respond to them with respect and a touch of deference” (Noddings, 1992, p. 17).
Thus, it is natural for children to consider what others are thinking of them, especially as peer groups are powerful social forces and have the “capability of shaping the mode of children’s dress, speech, or actions and their decisions concerning participation in... activities” (Payne & Isaacs, 2005, p. 57). Caring about what peers thought of them seemed important to some of the children in this study. The comments that peers made usually had to do with speaking negatively about the participant or her/his family.

For example, on Day 12, during our discussion period, Annie gave Caitlyn a contemptuous look because she thought Caitlyn was laughing at her. Caitlyn was not laughing at her, but Annie told me otherwise assuming that I would intervene and stop Caitlyn from laughing at her. Instead, I responded with, “Why are you worried about what she’s doing because her laughter has nothing to do with you” (VFN D12)? Annie replied, “I don’t know” (Annie, VFN D12). Edie chimed in and said, “I don’t care what people say about me” (Edie, VFN D12). For Edie, it did not matter what her peers said about her, such as teasing or making fun of her. Other participants stated that either they were self-confident to know that what the person said was not true or ignored it when people spoke negatively about them. For instance, Kaleb stated, “People talk about me in the Y, but I know it’s not true” (Kaleb, VFN D13). On the other hand, Naomi stated, “In my class, when they talk about me, I avoid it by ignoring them or walk away” (Naomi, VFN D13). Avery provided a similar statement saying, “Sometimes when people talk about me, I walk away” (Avery, VFN D13). Edie and Hannah also mentioned that they walk away
from a situation, in which people talk negatively about them. Most of the participants indicated that they avoided confrontation and maintained self-control by not allowing others to impact their behaviors.

Despite their comments of not caring about what people said in a few of the lessons, a few children still expressed their sad, angry, or hurt feelings upon hearing the negativity directed towards them when we spoke in the last interview. By Day 12, there were 9 of the 12 participants remaining in the study due to attrition. Of the 9 continuing participants, only 5 participants took part in the last interview and so I asked them, “Does it bother you when people talk about you in a negative way? (PI3). Most of them responded, “No” (Hannah, Kaleb, Annie, and Edie; PI3). Thus, when I probed further and asked how it made them feel when someone spoke of them in an adverse way. Kaleb stated, “It makes me feel upset sometimes” (PI3). Whereas, Hannah expressed, “It makes me feel hurt inside, but I will never show that because that just means I’m weakening” (PI3). On the one hand, not caring about what people thought implied self-confidence and independence on the participants’ parts. Conversely, these five children exposed their vulnerability to undesirable comments about them. Ironically, they cared, even though they said they did not.

**Participants’ views on teachers, youth care staff, and facilitator caring.**

Some participants talked about the impact their teachers and YMCA staff had on them, but did not characterize it as caring, even though that is exactly what the children described in their interviews and discussions with me. For example, on
Day 8, the children specified in our group discussion that caring sounded like “saying nice things”, looked like “respect [and] being responsible”, and felt “good, nice, and honest”. Students can benefit in both social and academic ways when they perceive their teachers as caring, but teachers must talk to their students to determine how they understand care and subsequently be willing to demonstrate care in ways that are congruent with their students’ perceptions (Tosolt, 2008). Thus, it was important for the children and I to have a conversation about their teachers, youth care staff, and me to understand the children’s views of each individual. The children and I talked specifically about why they liked or did not like their teachers, youth staff, and/or me. Most of the children said that their teachers were nice to them and they felt their teachers respected them for the most part. For example, Kyla said, “I like about him [Mr. Matthews] because he’s very caring; he lets us do something over that we don’t get right” (PI2). Similarly, Avery stated, “I like that she’s [Mrs. Rogers] kind and nice and sometimes she throws us parties” (PI2). Kaleb said about this teacher, Mr. Gosling, “Like if I respect him, then he’ll respect me and just keep giving me stuff” (Kaleb, PI2). Some of the children seemed to associate caring, respect, and kindness to some extrinsic reward (e.g. going outside, having a party, getting candy) as opposed to connecting those characteristics to listening to them or giving them chances to make decisions. This distinction is important because students may not be motivated intrinsically to show caring if they are taught in their early years that exhibiting a caring behavior has rewards. Most likely, this will not be the case in life. The goal of teaching the
TPSR framework is for students to not only understand the responsibility values, but have the ability to internalize those values to transfer them outside of the program (Hellison, 2011). Thus, key elements of the program are to give children voice and listen to what they have to say.

When I talked to children in their last interview, a few of them noted that they felt good about my giving them a voice during our discussion time at the end of each lesson. I asked the participants specifically how they felt when they were allowed to give their opinions and make decisions, in general. Edie responded, “It makes me feel happy, because actually I like when you tell us like when we sit in a circle how was our day” (PI3). Caitlyn mirrored Edie’s sentiment and said, “It makes me feel happy, because I get to give my opinion” (PI3). Two other children, Kaleb and Hannah stated that it made them “feel good” when they were able to give their opinions (Kaleb, PI3; Hannah, PI3). This group of children expressed pleasure because during our relational and discussion portions of the lesson, they had the opportunity to share their opinion freely. I interpreted that this small group of participants cared that I cared to listen to them share their opinions because they did not often get this chance. In Kinloch’s (2007) research, she noted that sometimes children felt that their voices were not heard and wanted to build a reciprocal relationship between adults and children to expand ideas and perspectives as well as enhance adult learning. Noddings said, “Everyone wants to be received, to elicit a response that is congruent with an underlying need or desire” (Noddings, 1992, p. 17). All individuals want to be heard and this is what I did for
the participants in this study – listen to them about the adults surrounding their school lives.

Some children revealed that they had mixed feelings about their teachers and youth care staff. For example, Caitlyn said, “Sometimes I could like my teacher, but sometimes I can’t because he gets smart too much” (PI2). She did not feel respected when he ‘got smart’ with her or, in other words, had a witty response to her behaviors in class. Johnny said that his teacher, Mr. Gosling “makes us smart and he [is] nice to us sometimes” (PI2), but wanted his teacher to, “be more nice” (PI2). Essentially, he wanted Mr. Gosling to be more kind towards the class on a more frequent basis as his teacher is nice to the class sometimes and not all of the time. Both children seemed to want their teachers to be more respectful towards them.

In my program, the children had the opportunity to provide their views on the youth care staff. This discussion began when Hannah asked questions of her fellow participants that she had prepared prior to the lesson on Day 14. The two questions she asked surrounded the participants’ experiences in the YMCA afterschool program. She had asked me the previous week if she could lead part of the group discussion and said that she would create questions to ask the children; I agreed to it. For whatever reason, the other participants neither asked me to lead a discussion nor did I ask them to do so. Nevertheless, one of the questions Hannah asked was, “Do you like the Y-staff?” Most of the children mentioned that they liked me and Ms. Charles. For example, Caitlyn and Avery said, “I like Ms. Robin and Ms. Charles and that’s it” (VFN D14). Otherwise, they complained about the staff, mostly
in terms of the staff not letting them have free time and doing homework on Fridays, which is usually the only day that the children do not have to do homework. However, Kaleb provided a more detailed response than the other children. His response was associated with personality in addition to the things the other children mentioned. He stated:

I don’t like some of the Y-Club like Ms. So and So with the short hair. The one girl said, ‘DO THIS AND DO THAT AND DO THIS’ and it’s just mean. She don’t let us do nothing and she always taking people’s stuff” (Kaleb, VFN D14).

Kyla agreed with Kaleb and the rest of the children in acknowledging that some of the staff are, “nice, mean, kind of nice, kind of mean” (Kyla, VFN D14). Naomi had a similar sentiment as Kyla. She said that the staff was “mean and nice” (Naomi, PI2).

In essence, some of the children wanted their teachers, youth care staff, and me to be friendly and respectful towards them. In the participants’ definitions, respect was a characteristic of caring. Therefore, the children wanted the adults to be kind and respectful towards them which seemed to indicate to the children a demonstration of caring towards them.

**Caring about others.** As caring related to others, participants described it as helping others, being respectful towards others, and being responsible individuals. Two children, Kaleb and Edie, exhibited caring beyond themselves and had consideration for others by showing their willingness to help their peers without externally motivating factors. After observing Kaleb and obtaining Mrs. Rogers’ account of caring with regards to Edie, I realized that these two children had
embodied caring behaviors prior to my program. Thus, their demonstration of
caring was not a result of my program implementation. Nevertheless, I think that it
is important to note their caring behaviors towards their peers. For example, on the
first day of the study, after our lesson was finished, I observed the children in the
after school setting communicating politely with each other. During my observation
Johnny’s mom came to pick him up from the program. Before he left, Kaleb checked
with Johnny to make sure that he had a paper the teacher had given him before
Johnny headed home (LFN D1). Kaleb had no incentive to prompt Johnny other than
to do the right thing by his classmate and show a definite illustration of caring.
Similar to Kaleb, Edie demonstrated caring as underscored by her teacher Mrs.
Rogers. Mrs. Rogers denoted that Edie was another student who recognized when
others needed help and did so without persuasion or being asked. Specifically, Mrs.
Rogers asserted, “I've noticed that she's very willing to help other students in need,
especially the special educ[ation] students. When she notices that they're
struggling, she'll go over and help and do what she can do” (Mrs. Rogers, TI1).
These two children recognized that others needed help and subsequently, offered
their help which showed they knew how to express care in an observable way with
their peers. Caring seemed to be an already established behavior in both Kaleb and
Edie.

The first sub-theme encompassed the children's understandings of caring as
a component of leadership and described it as respecting and helping others. Most
of the participants also discussed caring in terms of being responsible individuals
and demonstrated caring about themselves and others, in doing well academically and not getting into trouble in their classrooms. Some participants seemed to care about what their teachers and peers thought of them, even though a few acted as if they did not care about the perspectives of their peers. Nevertheless, only a couple of children demonstrated caring about others in their classrooms without being prompted to do so, but it was an already established behavior.

**Development of caring in a responsibility-based program.** This second sub-theme is about my promoting the development of caring in participants throughout the responsibility-based program. Caring developed over the course of a program through my modeling empathetic behaviors and getting to know the children and through holding conversations at the beginning and the end of each lesson. From a responsibility standpoint, caring was defined as, “recognizing that others have needs and feelings just as they do, and they [children] learn to see and feel things from viewpoints of others” (Hellison, 2011, p. 41). Principally, caring involved recognizing and having an understanding of other people’s needs and feelings, expressly having empathy towards other individuals. Thus, getting to know the participants through individual and group conversations, I listened to their opinions, and modeled caring behavior towards them. Noddings (1992) stated, “We do not tell our students to care; we show them how to care by creating caring relations with them” (p. 22). I had hoped by modeling caring behaviors that I would promote caring in the participants, as noted by video and live observations supported the focus of this sub-theme.
Caring began with me as the facilitator of the program. Showing caring towards participants was a vital aspect of my program, as children needed to understand that I cared about them through my listening and respecting their opinions and ideas, giving the children opportunities to practice responsible behaviors, and empowering them to make choices. TPSR has much to do with relationships between people, as Noddings (1992) has noted in her work, and by exhibiting caring towards the participants, it can further enhance the outcomes of my program in promoting caring in the participants. My perspective of caring focuses on not only showing empathy towards others, but also respecting others feelings, helping individuals, being a selfless person, and taking care of ones’ self both from a physical and mental standpoint. The notion of caring permeated all aspects of the lesson plans, but I really had the opportunity to promote caring when the children and I were able to talk about this value late in the study and model caring behaviors.

Relational time occurred at the beginning of each lesson and was the first opening for me to engage with the children and ask them about their day. During this time, I listened to the children discuss their day with me and assured them I was listening through my eye contact with each child as they spoke and probing for further details, if warranted. Relational time was to consume 1 to 2 minutes according to Hellison’s (2003; 2011) model at the beginning of the lesson, but I usually spent closer to 5 minutes on this area of the lesson plan. I felt it imperative to check the children’s emotional pulse to try and anticipate how the day would go
for all of us. I wanted to know if the children’s day was good, bad, or okay and furthermore, why they provided their answers. Therefore, I spent as much time in this area of the lesson plan, as time permitted.

However, during the first couple of weeks, I felt rushed in attempting to get through the lesson plan and consequently only solicited answers of children who wanted to share the reason for their good, bad, or okay day. For example, on day 3 of the program, I asked, “How’s everybody’s day today?” The responses from most of the group were “Good!” Annie however volunteered to explain why her day was not so good and I had asked for her to share it quickly with the group. She said, “’Cause of class. We had a substitute and I didn’t want to be in the classroom and I went to PEAK. Boom” (VFN D3)! In another response, which was from Antoinette, she indicated that she had a good day because, “We was fighting today” (VFN D3). She talked about fighting in a manner that indicated that she was proud of it and that it was acceptable to fight. Needless to say, both girls were honest about their day and disclosed information about their days to the rest of the group. At this point in the program, I had not yet decided to spend more time in this area of the plan; I tried to stick to my outlined lesson plan and keep it short. Thus, I did not ask the other participants to share their reasons for the responses they gave about their day. By not allowing the other children to discuss their day, I was doing a disservice to them by not appearing to care through my listening as I had done with Annie and Antoinette.
After the first few days of the study I allowed more relational time. I realized that I was not giving each of the participants enough time to share their thoughts at the beginning of each session. I needed more time to better understand their feelings on the day. So I extended the relational time from 2-3 minutes to 5-7 minutes to make sure that I heard from each person. I wanted each participant to feel included, respected, and empowered to give their thoughts. Moreover, I wanted them to know that I cared about what they had to say. So, on Day 7 of the study, I had the children organize themselves into a semi-circle; some stood while others sat. The conversation carried on as follows:

Me: Alright...now I want everyone to tell me one thing that was good or bad about your day?

Avery: I had a great day.

Me: What was great about it?

Avery: Math.

Johnny: I didn't have to move my clip today.

Caitlyn: My day was bad because we got to go to a different class.

Jane: Good.

Me: Why was your day good?

Jane: Because of math.

Naomi: It was good because I was listening.

Hannah: It was ok. [She did not want to elaborate].

Jessie: My day was a little bad because we had to switch classrooms.
Kyla: My day was just ok.

Annie: The worst day ever because we had a substitute.

This example was the typical dialogue that took place each day with the participants after the first two weeks of the study. These brief interactions at the beginning of the lesson were the first exercises in modeling my care for the participants. I anticipated that by listening to each child discuss their day, it would be an indicator to them that I cared about what they had to say. The principles of caring were explored further in our discussion that took place during the last 25 to 35 minutes of the last lesson, Day 1. When children discussed their understanding of caring on this day, it was the extent of our exploration of caring. Unfortunately, there was no remaining time in the study to discuss caring.

There were times I had informal conversations with children and hoped those conversations would aid them in their development of caring. For example, I sat with Annie and talked with her individually, after one of the lessons, and told her, “I see the good in you.” She asked me, “Do you really mean that?” I responded, “Yes, I see you as a leader” (LFN D5). On the same day, I gave similar encouragement to Kyla by telling her that she was a leader and therefore needed to be a good role model because people tend to follow what she does. She listened intently and just responded, “Ok.” I constantly reinforced to all the children how to be more respectful of themselves as well as towards each other, hoping they were learning from not only their mistakes, but also by my modeling respect towards them and giving them encouragement.
In this second sub-theme, I did not actively promote the development of caring, as not much time was planned to be spent on this character value. Caring emerged in the study and is a part of the TPSR framework as a function of leadership, but was only specifically focused on during the last lesson of the study. Nevertheless, I stimulated caring mostly through modeling caring behaviors by listening to the students share their events of the day and encouraging potential strengths in a few children.

**Teachers and youth care staff strategies to promote care.** In addition to my involvement in the development of caring in the participants, the teachers and youth care staff made contributions to promote caring in the children, which was an integral part of them becoming responsible people. The teachers and youth care staff, who spent several hours per day with the participants, implied that teaching caring involved three strategies: (1) getting to know your students; (2) practicing and modeling empathy with students; and (3) providing children with guidelines and examples of how to practice caring towards others. Teacher interviews, youth staff interviews, and source journals substantiated this theme.

**Getting to know your students.** When talking with teachers and youth care staff, it was evident that they spent time building rapport and understanding the lives of their students. They discussed in both their journals and interviews how they made it a priority to listen to their students, ask about aspects of their lives, and show they cared through helping the children to build character. The youth care staff collectively stated in their written journals that they listened to the children,
respected them, and gave them the opportunities to make good choices. For example, Ms. Charles wrote about Naomi, ”Respect and choices are always given. She is given the choice to do right. If she has something to say, she is always welcomed to speak” (Ms. Charles, YSJ1). She recorded a similar statement about Kaleb in which she stated, ”I exhibit respect towards Kaleb by listening to suggestions he may have toward activities and allowing him to choose which activity he wants to participate in” (Ms. Charles, YSJ1). She wrote comparable words about Annie and Johnny in the two journals she completed for them over the course of the study. She indicated her respect for the children, which by the participants’ definitions was a component of caring.

Mr. Arthur, the other youth care staff member, indicated that he showed respect towards the children, but told the children they needed to show respect towards him as well. However, not only did he demonstrate respect towards the students, but also he spent time talking with them. When talking about Caitlyn, Jane, and Marcus, Mr. Arthur stated that he got to know the children by, ”sitting down and just talking to them, seeing what’s wrong with them” (Mr. Arthur, YSJ1). Mr. Arthur felt that sitting down with students and finding out what was going on with them that day was best way to get to know the children in his group at the after school program. Both youth care staff demonstrated caring through their interactions with the children. The YMCA staff, through their interviews, indicated that one of the essential behaviors of the youth staff was to show they cared by cultivating relationships with the students.
Ms. Charles discussed her thoughts on the importance of forming relationships with her students:

It's very important, because first of all they need to know they have someone that they can depend on, they can trust, and they can talk to no matter what the situation and what goes on. So it’s very important to have that one-on-one relationship and to have a group relationship, to be able to work individually or as a group. And to know that they have an adult that they can come to. While they’re eating or having conversations to see how their day was or what's going on with them. So just mingling with them and doing different activities. I’m a disciplinarian, but they also know that I love them and care. (Ms. Charles, YSI1)

The youth care staff felt that they both needed to hold conversations with the children to become familiar with them as individuals, as well as within a group. They understood that holding these dialogues contributed to the rapport they built with these students and put the youth care staff in a position to be trustworthy adults to whom children could talk to in various situations.

In addition, each teacher spoke about their relationships with their students and their strategies of building key connections. As a second year teacher at Hope Elementary, Mrs. Rogers stated, “I treat them as if they were my own children, basically treat each other with respect and use your manners” (TI1). She indicated that she provided them various opportunities in the classroom to talk with each other, as a way to create an interactive social environment and to learn how to
respect each other. Mrs. Rogers noted that giving her students the chances to get to know each other in her classroom involved, “pushing them and putting them with a more outgoing student and like, probing them. Or even putting them with me and say, you know ‘Hey, what did you do this weekend?’” (Mrs. Rogers, TI1). Like the youth care staff, Mrs. Rogers noted the importance of familiarizing herself with her students to understand their personal characteristics and determine their strengths and things on which they needed to work. This familiarization was an indication of Mrs. Rogers’ caring attitude towards her students.

Mr. Gosling, a first year teacher at Hope Elementary School, did something similar in the classroom by giving the students projects on which they had to work as a team to complete. This led to the children having to communicate with each other and working in a cooperative manner to accomplish the planned task. Mr. Gosling stated, “It’s not quiet in here. It’s not quiet in here because they’re just doing whatever they want; it’s because they need to be talking to each other to do the assignment. [Also], I want them to be independent thinkers” (TI1). Mr. Gosling wanted his students to be able to interact with each other in a respectful way. He stipulated, “It’s okay to be white. It’s okay to be black. It’s okay to be red. Whatever you are, it [doesn’t] matter. [What] is not okay is being mean to each other” (Mr. Gosling, TI2). Mr. Gosling cared about how his students interacted with each other and that the students were in an environment to share their opinions and ideas.

In addition, both teachers mentioned that they needed to understand their students. For example, Mrs. Rogers said, “I truly believe that you have to know your
students, know where they’re coming from, and know that every day something
different is going to be thrown at you” (T12). Mr. Gosling stated something similar in
commenting that, “They’re never gonna act how you exactly want them to act” (Mr.
Gosling, T12). Therefore, he spent time getting to know them as individuals by
sitting down with different small groups at lunch and by talking with them one-on-
one to find out what is going on in their lives. Mr. Gosling commented, “You’re with
them all day long for six hours a day. You have to really try not to get to know them
[Laughs]” (T12). Both Mrs. Rogers and Mr. Gosling implied that they had to be
flexible and adaptable in getting to know their students because they never know
what to expect from the students. By better understanding their students, the
teachers can be better prepared to plan for and teach their students. Getting to
know their students was an indicator of both teachers caring for their students.

**Practicing and modeling empathy with students.** Caring seemed evident in
the YMCA in my conversations with the staff, but I also noticed this ethic of care in
my site observations. In my observations, I noticed the differences that existed
among Mr. Arthur and Ms. Charles, the YMCA youth staff members. Mr. Arthur was
more distant with the students and did not seem to have as strong a rapport with
students as Ms. Charles. Ms. Charles’ caring attitude was displayed more overtly
with the children as she had been working at the site for approximately five years
and knew the children well. On a daily basis, she modeled caring when she spoke to
the students, welcomed them into the after school program, and helped them with
homework, by giving them encouragement and support to speak respectfully to
each other and complete their work. For example, on Day 4 of the study, Ms. Charles gave all the children who attended the after school program a short lecture on respect. Then she stated, “If I didn’t care about you, then I would just let you run around acting crazy” (Ms. Charles, LFN D4). Ms. Charles also interacts positively with more of the children than Mr. Arthur, as I noticed on Day 14. She spent time reinforcing positive behaviors in children, such as making sure that the children spoke kindly to one another and respected the YMCA staff (LFN D14). Whereas, Mr. Arthur tended to work with a few select children leaving the remainder to be attended to by Ms. Charles (LFN D14). Thus, Ms. Charles had the opportunity to interact with more children and she appeared to do so in a caring manner.

Although Mrs. Rogers, Mr. Gosling, and Mr. Matthews, the classroom teachers, did not know the students for the length of time as Ms. Charles, they managed to foster caring relationships with their students and help the children to learn about caring. They did this not only by talking with the students about their lives outside of school, but also through modeling caring behaviors. Therefore, during the second interview, I asked the two teachers who were available for interviews, Mr. Gosling and Mrs. Rogers, what behaviors they felt were essential to working with this population of students. They both stated that they had to be easygoing and adaptable, yet structured and consistent in their lessons (Mr. Gosling TI2; Mrs. Rogers, TI2).

Not only did Mrs. Rogers and Mr. Gosling feel that they needed to be flexible in their approach with their students, both teachers also felt it important to embody
the mannerisms they wanted their students to replicate. They modeled the behaviors they wanted the students to exhibit by offering examples from their personal lives. Mrs. Rogers talked to the students about how she demonstrated responsible behavior and caring within her family.

Like we were talking about this morning, my two girls [and] that it was my responsibility instead of my husband’s this morning to take them to the babysitter and to be to work on time. And then I had two students show up at 10:30. I said, ‘Look it is your responsibility to get here at 9:00; you need to help your mom and dad watch the clock and say, ‘I’m missing out on my learning’ (T12).

In giving students a personal account from her life, Mrs. Rogers was able to illustrate to her students the importance of showing responsible behaviors by her arriving at class on time. She connected it with explaining the need for students to come to class on time and although she did not specifically mention caring, it was plausible that she was encouraging students to care about themselves by arriving on time to class and not missing out their learning.

This third sub-theme involved the strategies of the teachers and youth care staff that encouraged caring among their students. Their tactics involved building relationships with students, modeling caring behaviors, and providing students with guidance on how to practice caring behaviors. These approaches were supportive in teaching caring to their students.
Summary. The theme of caring and its development in participants encompassed three sub-themes as follows: (1) Children’s perspectives on caring for self and others; (2) development of caring in a responsibility-based program; and (3) teachers and youth care staff strategies to promote care. Caring was not a primary focus in this study, but emerged from the data and permeated the responsibility values of respect, participation, and leadership that were the foci of the program. Caring was identified through the understanding the children’s perspectives and its development was taught minimally in the responsibility-based program and more heavily promoted with the strategies of the teachers and youth care staff, who had worked with the children for the entire school year.
Theme 3: Factors influencing responsible behaviors in participants

Several factors influenced responsible behaviors in the participants. Some positively impacted them, while others had a negative impact on them. All of the participants had unique personalities that partly determined how they received and internalized the responsible behaviors that I taught during the study. However, the participants’ teachers, youth care staff, peers, and I seemed to also play a role in influencing their behaviors as indicated in the data. Data was gathered from video and live field notes, participant, teacher, and youth care staff interviews, grading reports, researcher notes, and source journals to substantiate this theme. In this area, four sub-themes materialized: (1) existing identities of participants; (2) facilitator impacting behavior; (3) sources shaping behavior; and (4) positive and negative influence of peers.

Existing identities of participants. The participants in this study all had distinctive personalities and this sub-theme highlights the individual journey that some of the children took during the course of the study. I believed that the participants’ personalities influenced their understanding and incorporation of responsible behaviors. As I got to know the children on a more personal and individual level, their personalities materialized and I discovered each person’s uniqueness, particularly once I probed deeper into their lives at school and the YMCA. I also found out a little about their personal lives through teacher accounts and my observations of the children’s interactions with their parents or guardians. I thought it was important to describe the existing characteristics to situate student
identities and help me to better understand how they made meaning of and demonstrated responsible behaviors outlined in the TPSR framework. Therefore, this sub-theme focused on two areas of discussion: (1) participants’ perceptions of self; and (2) sources and facilitator perspectives on participants. Interviews with participants, video field notes, interviews with teachers and youth care staff, and grading reports provided the support data for this sub-theme.

**Participants’ perceptions of self.** Hellison (2011) indicated that the core value of participation in the TPSR framework includes accepting challenges and being self-motivated to complete tasks. I wanted to understand how the participants perceived themselves in terms of persevering through tasks, working independently, and leading others. In addition, I wanted to learn how they saw themselves overall by having them describe their appearances and character values. Understanding each child’s character through her or his own eyes revealed a part of the children’s identity in their own words, helping me to determine their personal characteristics upon their entry into the program. Therefore, during the first interview, I obtained not only demographic information noted in Table 3.3 in chapter 3, but also descriptions of the participants’ characters. I asked participants about their perceptions of their personalities through their understanding of persevering in difficult tasks by inquiring, “When you have things that are really hard, how do you do it” (PI1)? The follow up question was, “Do you ever quit” (PI1)? In response to the questions, many of the children answered that they thought about the complex task at hand and subsequently, tried to figure it out.
Participants indicated that they persisted through difficult tasks in the classroom and did not give up on completing a task. For example, Jessie answered, “I just stop and think. Well, I’ll say ‘Oh, I know it’” (Jessie, PI1). Similar responses came from Caitlyn who said, “I just think and I make my brain work [and] I keep going” (Caitlyn, PI1) and from Johnny who stated, “[I] keep on trying [and] I figure it out (Johnny, PI1). These responses represented the views of several of the participants, but there were a few children who extended their answers by indicating that they tried to listen carefully, follow instructions, and ask the teacher for assistance when asked to accomplish a challenging assignment. For instance, Edie asserted, “When I do stuff that’s hard, I raise my hand and ask the teacher for help” (Edie, PI1). Likewise, Naomi said that she “listens carefully and does what they [teacher] tell you to do” (Naomi, PI1). The children’s responses to my questions in the interview spoke to their wanting to be successful in accomplishing tasks.

There were two children who admitted that they quit sometimes, depending on the difficulty of the assignment. For example, Marcus disclosed, “Sometimes I do both [quit and keep going]” but said that he quits when, “it’s too hard” (Marcus, PI1). Kyla also declared that she abandons the task, “sometimes, not all the time” but, “I try my best to see if I can do it” (Kyla, PI1). Both children gave me the idea that they attempted to complete tasks asked of them, but that the difficulty of the task may have persuaded them to abandon it.

The children talked about themselves within the context of determination, but the third interview captured their descriptions of and feelings about themselves...
as well as touched upon personal values. In relation to the children’s existing identities, when I asked them to explain how they would identify themselves and to discuss their personality, many children responded that they had a friendly, fun-loving, caring, and respectful personality. For instance, Caitlyn explained, “My personality is to be caring, respectful, and all those good things. I’m a fun-loving person” (PI3). Jessie stated something similar about her perceived personality and appearance, indicating, “I would say that I’m a kind friend, respectful” (PI3). One of the boys said about himself, “I’m friendly” (Kaleb, PI3). On the other hand, one student, Annie, discussed her desire of academic success. When asked the same question as the other students about her personality, Annie went a different direction than the other participants by stating, “I would say I wish I’d been doing good in school, but not that good” (Annie, PI3). Most of the children provided me with a perception of themselves that encompassed positive attributes, but Annie in her statement admitted that she would like to change her academic standing in school. Annie seemed to value academic standing, even though she felt that she was not doing as well as she wanted to in school. A few children, those who participated in the last interview, spoke of their personality, indicating a little bit about their personal values in doing their school work and self-perceptions.

Children’s perspectives of their existing identities were an important contribution to the factors influencing their responsible behaviors, although the information I received in this area was limited to the interview questions I asked of them in the first and third interviews. This limited amount of information emerged
from the data and I thought it was important to discuss some of the characteristics of children in the program. It was important not only to gain an understanding of the participants’ self-perceptions, but also it was essential to gather information from the sources and give my perspective of the children’s existing identities during this study. The children portrayed these identities in the classroom, the YMCA, and with me in the responsibility-based programs, but the identities of most participants seemed to be fixed, although there were a couple of children who transformed slightly over the time of the program. Confidence was the characteristic that evolved the most in participants. This information will be discussed in detail further into this theme. The next section expands upon the participants’ identities through from the viewpoint of the teachers, youth care staff, and me.

**Sources and facilitator perspectives on participants.** Teachers, youth staff, and I also spoke of students’ identities and how the students portrayed themselves in the diverse spaces within which we interacted with them. The teachers and youth care staff gained a firm grasp of the children’s identities over the school year while I understood the participants’ identities through my responsibility program. Some children spoke up for themselves through either words or actions and appeared comfortable in discussing their like or dislike of an activity, which seemed to indicate, on some level, self-confidence and independence.

For example, on Day 2, the children played the cooperative activities of ‘Follow Me’ and ‘Turnstile’. ‘Follow Me’ involved pairing two children and having them to take turns following each other through an obstacle course. ‘Turnstile’ was
a whole group activity where children had to work as a team to get through a turning rope. I modified this activity so that the rope moved on the floor in a snake-like manner to accommodate the developmental level of the participants. After finishing both activities and moving to the classroom, I began our group meeting and reflection time of the lesson. I said to the children to start the discussion, “I want you to tell me one thing about the games we played, whether you liked them or didn’t like them” (Me, VFN D2). All of the children responded with what they liked about the activities except Hannah, who stated, “I didn’t like either game. Well, I liked the first one, but I don’t know why I didn’t like the last one” (Hannah, VFN D2). Hannah asserted her independence from the group with her comment. She did not go along with the group who indicated that they liked the activities. She was comfortable speaking out and standing alone with her opinion.

On Day 3, we played two types of tag games in which participants had to help each other to get back into the game. During our discussion time, I held a similar conversation as Day 2 with the participants. All of the children expressed their liking of both activities and said they would like to play them again. I said, “That’s boring to play the same games all of the time” (Me, VFN D3) to which Kyla responded, “No, it’s not” (VFN D3) with fervor. Both Kyla and Hannah exuded confidence in stating their opinions without hesitation or fear in the initial weeks of the study. They seemed to already possess existing strengths in their identities. Hannah and Kyla were the only two participants at this point in the study to give their honest opinions about the gym activities.
In latter parts of the study, more students became confident in providing unfavorable opinions about the activities or speaking up for themselves. For example, on Day 9 of the study, I allowed the children to choose both activities for the day. Giving the children the choice of activities allowed them to have some autonomy over the day’s activities. It provided the children with the opportunity to make decisions and share responsibility with me. The group chose ‘Dead Fish’ as one of the activities. This activity involved all of the students lying in a still position on the floor like dead fish and one student would call the name of each student when he or she moved any part of his or her body. When a person was called out, she/he was out of the game, but assisted the original referee in calling names of moving participants. Since Caitlyn was the original referee, I allowed her to name the person who would moderate the next round. She chose Naomi. At this point, Avery stated, “No boys are getting picked” (VFN D9). There were only two boys on this day of the study and Johnny had led the earlier activity. Avery was assured enough to speak up for himself and for Johnny, something he did not do when he first entered the study in the third week. Although Avery did not have any issues speaking during our discussion periods, this was the first time he took the approach to speak for someone other than himself. This gesture may have been a ploy for Avery to get chosen and have nothing to do with justice for the small group of boys or it may have been a legitimate argument for Johnny and him.

Another child, Jane, started off rather quiet and reserved when it came to contributing to discussions, although when called on she would answer. Also, she
would help out others when she was not asked to do so. For example, on Day 5, Kyla had her feet propped up onto a chair when the group was preparing to discuss the day’s activities and their behaviors within the activities. I told Kyla, “Go put the chair back” (VFN D5). There was a delayed response and when I told Kyla to put the chair back again, Jane took the initiative to pick up the chair and put it back for Kyla. I responded saying, “Kyla needs to put the chair back” (VFN D5). Jane ended up putting down the chair, but she was attempting to help out Kyla.

However, Jane had another side to her and I did not realize that until Day 8 of the study. We got into a conversation at the end of the lesson in which the participants talked about being disrespected in their classrooms by their peers. I expanded the questioning saying, “So tell me how that affects your behavior in class” (VFN D8). Several children respond indicating they do nothing or are just angry and take a moment to calm themselves. Jane, however responded, “[I will] be bad. I [will] say to this girl ‘Excuse me’ for my spot. She acts like she’s going to punch me and she will” (VFN D8). I said, “And what do you do” (VFN D8)? She answered, “I punch her back” (Jane, VFN D8). I replied, “I guess that causes you to get into trouble, right, since that is not the right thing to do? You have to be able to control yourself and not let others control you” (VFN D8). This response from Jane surprised me, as I did not realize that her existing personality encompassed the type of reaction she denoted in her statement. This was an indicator that Jane stood up for herself and I saw it firsthand with her reaction towards Antoinette on Day 10 when Antoinette talked of not liking Jane. Jane responded to Antoinette’s face, “I
don’t care” (VFN D10). I reminded the children that, “You’re going to have to work with people in the classroom. You may not like what they do, how they act, but you gotta still work with them” (VFN D10). These two incidents let me know that Jane stands up for herself and can be assertive, maybe even aggressive at times. Jane’s personality seemed to emerge as the study progressed furthering my understanding of her existing identity.

In the TPSR program, the most significant change I noticed was in Edie, in terms of enhanced assertiveness and willingness to speak up for herself over the course of the study. Edie was a quiet girl and did not assert her opinion until later in the study. I am unsure if she just needed to warm up to me or the group or both, but she was able to convey her honest thoughts during our group time on days 8 and 11, where this was not the case on Days 2 and 3. For example, on Day 2 during our group meeting, Annie had complained about Edie not following her in an activity, as per the instructions of the activity. She stated, “I didn’t like the first game because Edie, she didn’t want to follow me at first. Then every time I said ‘come on’ she said no” (Annie, VFN D2). Edie responded in protest through her body language of her arms crossed and lips poked out, mumbling something under her breath so that no one heard what she was saying. At other times she would start to speak during our discussion but closed down when others started speaking over her. During our discussion on Day 3, Edie began to talk but was interrupted by others talking over her. I interjected that, “No one should be talking while Edie is talking” (VFN D3), however, Edie stopped talking and did not participate in the rest of the discussion.
Edie seemed to change from this quiet and shy behavior to become a more assertive and verbal individual by Day 8 when she spoke of standing up against the ‘big kids’, the 4th and 5th graders in the YMCA program. The following short conversation ensued:

Edie: Sometimes when Ann Marie [a 4th grader in the YMCA program] she always push me and then she always say every time we get into the bathroom, ‘you mean’.

Me: Hmm... and what you say back to her?

Edie: Tell her she mean. (VFN D8)

Day 8 was the first day that I heard Edie speak up for herself and she demonstrated this again on Day 11. During our discussion, Edie gave her opinion about one of her peers within the TPSR program. Antoinette thought it was funny to spray on perfume well after I told her to put the perfume bottle away into her pocket. Antoinette squirting the perfume caused most of the group to laugh. However, Edie did not laugh or smile and with her arms crossed and looking at Antoinette said aloud, “That’s not funny” while simultaneously shaking her head. Edie stood independent from the crowd with conviction.

In the classroom, Mrs. Rogers said that not only Edie, but also Avery have opened up over time by expressing their opinions and sharing their personalities with her. She expressed:

Edie, I feel like she’s opened up a lot more to me. I’ve given her more leadership roles. And I know she likes to help, so she seems to open up more
Mrs. Rogers felt that both Edie and Avery had improved their leadership and that she was able to gain a better understanding of their personal identities through the relationship she built with them.

Some children, such as Hannah and Kyla had a level of self-confidence at the beginning of the program that allowed them to share their opinions. They maintained this identity throughout the program. For other students, such as Avery, Jane, and Edie personalities emerged over the time of the study. The changes I noticed in these participants may or may not have been a result of my TPSR implementation; I cannot say with certainty. I encouraged them to speak their minds when I asked them probing questions during our discussion times and they did so more and more as we progressed through the study. The rapport that was built within the group and with their teacher provided them with a space to share their voice. In addition, Edie's and Avery's teacher provided them with more leadership roles in the classroom, which may have contributed to their increased level of confidence.

There was one child who showed confidence in an inconsistent manner, both during the TPSR program and over the school year with her teacher, Mr. Matthews, and the YMCA youth care staff. Caitlyn initially appeared to lack confidence at the beginning of the study, although she was talkative and opinionated. She later demonstrated that she could be confident, but still followed others at times. In Mr.
Matthews 3rd period grading report, he stated that Caitlyn became, “more involved with her friends in class [and] talks more when she should be doing work” (GR3). It seemed as though she became more negatively influenced by her peers and therefore, began following her peers’ behaviors and actions. Ms. Charles, a YMCA staff member, said that Caitlyn, “tends to be a little more of a follower. Instead of work things out herself, she just wants to [do] whatever [her peers] say that’s what it is” (Ms. Charles, YSI2). Also, Caitlyn admitted that she lacked confidence because, “sometimes I'll follow people when I shouldn't do it” (Caitlyn, PI3). She seemed to struggle with following others on a regular basis. For instance, on Day 11 of the study, the children had engaged in two activities, as per our usual lesson plan. After the two activities, the students and I headed to the classroom to discuss the activities.

Towards the beginning of the conversation, in the middle of Edie providing her thoughts of the activities, Caitlyn pointed at Antoinette and whispered something that I could not hear. I had talked to [Caitlyn] on several occasions prior to today about following others. So, I gave her a stern look for about 5 seconds and said, 'I should not even have to talk to you, Caitlyn, at all. Like I keep telling you, you're going to let other people get you into trouble’ (VFN D11).

During this lesson, Caitlyn laughed with the majority of the other children when Antoinette had squirted herself with perfume at the start of our group meeting and reflection time. I expected more from Caitlyn because she and I had talked about
her following others on several occasions to the point that I talked with her mother about it, once I noticed the pattern. In my informal conversation with Caitlyn’s mother, which was not part of the data collected in this study, her mother indicated to me that she saw the same thing with Caitlyn. I gave Caitlyn’s mother an overview of what I had noticed and let her know that I constantly reminded Caitlyn to be herself. She indicated that she had had similar conversations with Caitlyn and that she would be talking to her again. Caitlyn seemed to follow others less than she had during the first several weeks of the study.

Although these statements from Caitlyn, Ms. Charles, and I indicated that Caitlyn was sometimes a follower, she also exhibited self-confidence at times by not following others, albeit not routine. For example, on Day 12 of the study I facilitated the activity “Insanity”, a game in which participants had to work as a team to get yarn balls into one hoop. The children were grouped in pairs or in threes and at first understood the game to be a competitive one, in which they competed with other teams to get the yarn balls within their respective hula hoop. However, the goal of the activity was for the entire group of participants to work together to get all of the yarn balls into one hoop. Prior to the children figuring out the end goal, children took the competition seriously by guarding yarn balls held within hoops and stealing other participants’ yarn balls. Annie became upset that Caitlyn was guarding the hoop which she shared with Edie, her teammate, as Annie was trying to steal the yarn balls and Caitlyn would not let her. Annie’s annoyance carried through to the discussion we had after the gym activity. We engaged in an
informative conversation about what the children liked and did not like about the activities. As part of the TPSR framework, it is crucial to give children the space to share and participate in discussions. In the process of discussing the activities, Annie, who was sitting between Caitlyn and me, whispered to Caitlyn “It’s not funny. Shut up” (VFN D12). It was an unexpected comment as it was during the time when Avery was sharing his opinion about the activities of the day. Caitlyn wasn’t laughing at Annie, at all. She was giggling at Avery because he responded to the question with his dramatic high-pitched tone and facial expression of raised eyebrows and a smile, characteristics of Avery. A few people laughed. However, Caitlyn responded, “Don’t talk to me like that”, also whispering. By the end of the study, Caitlyn showed that she had some self-confidence in standing up for herself.

Caitlyn still wavered throughout the program on following others. On Day 13, there was another instance of her following one of peers by allowing that person to draw her into a conversation. In our reflection, the participants and I were discussing ‘Mookie’ which was an activity where children practiced not reacting to each other. During our discussion after the activity the following conversation ensued:

Me: Ok. So, people talk about people talking about them. How can you avoid reacting to them? Caitlyn? (I called on her because Annie had engaged her in a conversation, causing her not to listen). Did you hear the question?
Caitlyn: Yeah. You said how can you avoid reacting...
Me: To what?
Caitlyn: I didn’t hear the last part.

Me: I know because you were talking to Annie. (VFN D13)

This distraction led her not to listen to what was taking place within the discussion. Thus Caitlyn did show signs of self-confidence, but there times that she allowed others to influence her to behave in an inappropriate manner during our lessons. However, overall, I saw her show more conviction in standing up for herself over the time of the study.

A few children spoke up for themselves, but did so in a manner that was overt and somewhat dramatic. Annie was an example of one of those few participants. Her behavior did not seem to change during my program. There was marginal improvement in her classroom over the year but her behavior had deteriorated in the YMCA over the year. Both her teacher and the youth care staff did not indicate the decline in the frequency of her behaviors. They only noted that they noticed a change from the beginning of the school year to the end of the school year. As the data indicated, Annie frequently rolled her eyes, poked out her lips, had a frown on her face, and/or crossed her arms when she did not get her way in my program. She taunted classmates when she thought that she was smarter than them in the classroom and acted in a disrespectful way in the YMCA by not following the directions of the youth care staff and bullying other children.

In the responsibility-based program, each day I had assigned a different participant to take attendance. All of them had asked for this duty at one time or other during the first days of the study. Therefore, I proceeded to create an assigned
list so there would be no confusion and no arguments amongst the participants about this job. On this particular day, Day 5 of the study, I had assigned Edie to take attendance for our group. Subsequently, the following interaction took place:

Annie immediately responds, “Oh my God! You told me last week I could do that! You said that I could do the attendance!” She proceeded to pout and frown, turning her back on the gathered children, who were seated in a circle around me. I respond, “Turn around and relax. You can do it, the attendance, on Thursday.” She continues to pout and say in a pouting voice, “I want to do attendance.” I say, “You really need to stop it. Next time remind me.” I switched gears to ask each child about his/her day to move forward with the lesson. (VFN D5)

Annie was immediately upset when she was not able to take the attendance. Edie was assigned to take attendance, but I tried to make up for this misunderstanding with Annie by involving her in the demonstration for the first activity on Day 5 of the study, as it was my fault for not remembering what I said to her. This seemed to appease her as she no longer appeared upset about not taking the attendance on this day. Annie’s behavior may have been a ploy to gain her peers’ attention or she may have truly felt wronged in this situation. Either way, it was a learning moment for her as she needed to learn that not all things will go her way in life.

Another situation with Annie occurred on Day 8. During our group meeting, the children and I had a lively discussion about their disenchantment with the older students in the after school program, specifically the 4th and 5th graders, who the
children felt did not respect them. The participants spoke of the “big kids” pushing them or telling them what to do, but in bringing this particular discussion to a close, I told the children that I would allow two more comments. These comments were from Avery and Caitlyn as they were the only two children who had their hands raised. I stated the following:

Ok. These will be the last two. Then I’m going to say something else. [Avery and Caitlyn are raising their hands, then after I say this Annie raises her hand.] No, no. [I say to Annie and gesture her to put her hand down – she pouts and puts her hands over her eyes]. (VFN D8)

When Annie pouted, she not only put her hands over her eyes, but she cast her eyes down towards the floor and poked out her lips. Annie’s gestures in the discussion portion of the Day 8 lesson were overt behaviors to get my attention, as she attempted to do most days when she did not get her way. On the same day, we continued the discussion on respect, but I extended to areas outside of the YMCA. Once again, during the discussion, I asked a question and the children raised their hands to respond. The following conversation took place:

Me: Let me ask you this real quick. So, are there other areas instead of just the Y where you feel...

Annie interrupts: (jumps up) I know, I know.

Me: You don’t even know my question! Are there other areas that you don’t feel respected in other than the Y? (Just about everyone has their hand
Me: Why is it always that you have to make a reaction every time I don’t call on you? What is that about? [she says nothing and then raises her hand]. You do it all the time. You need to be patient and wait until I call you. (VFN D8)

Annie’s behaviors of sulking and getting others’ attentions occurred often throughout the program. In my researcher notes, I wrote, “It seems as if it was mandatory to Annie for her to speak first, monopolize the conversation, finish other people’s sentences, tell others’ stories” (RN D8). This behavior was not a daily occurrence, but Annie exhibited this behavior frequently throughout the program.

Another example of Annie’s attempt to get my attention and bring attention to herself occurred on Day 13 when I gave the awareness talk of the TPSR program to the children. In the middle of my reminding the children what it meant to be self-directed, I noticed Annie writing/drawing on a piece of paper. I said to her:

‘Put it away. That is not what we’re doing right now.’ Her response was delayed and she kept doing what she was doing and taking her time. I said,

‘Go put it away, right now, today. Hurry up so we can get started.’ (VFN D13)

I cannot explain in absolute terms why Annie reacted the way she did when she did not get her way. What I do know is that there was no noticeable change in Annie’s behavior over the course of the TPSR program.

Mr. Gosling, Annie’s classroom teacher, indicated that there was a slight improvement in Annie during his last interview with me. He stated:
I’ve had her all year, and nothing has changed really since. She’s gotten better, but she still has the same – I think it’s a confidence thing. I think she picks on kids she thinks she’s smarter than. Because the kids she normally picks on are the ones who leave for Special Ed, or you know, she thinks she’s smarter than. Or she can bully, because they don’t really say stuff back (Mr. Gosling, TI2).

Annie’s teacher believed she had an issue with self-confidence and that was the reason she acted out by bullying other students. Apparently, she also showed aggressive behaviors in the YMCA program, according to Ms. Charles. She stated:

Annie has become more aggressive in a negative way whether it’s outside or you now wherever the influence is coming. You know with wanting to be with the older girls she’s become more aggressive and disrespectful in that kind of way. Of course over the year as the year has progressed. (Ms. Charles, YSI2).

Annie demonstrated her pouting, bullying, and aggressive behaviors in the TPSR program, in the classroom, and in the YMCA, respectively. Her behaviors indicated that she did not exhibit responsible behaviors or seldomly did so as was the case in her classroom. The teachers and youth staff tracked Annie for the entire school year and saw the changes in her behavior, for better or for worse, respectively. Nevertheless, there had been no change in her current behavior during the program, even though there was a slight improvement from her teacher’s perspective, and a decline in the YMCA.
The existing identities of the participants were unique to each child. Each child in this program had her or his behavioral strengths and also behaviors in need of improvement. Some children entered the program with self-confidence and assertive behaviors, while a few others did not show their true identities until halfway through the study. In showing their true identities, these few children may have been hesitant to show themselves possibly because of having to warm up to me. Not all of the students knew me prior to the beginning of the study. Nevertheless, there were still other participants who seemed to grow in their display of responsible behaviors over the course of the study and a culmination of events, such as informal parent talks and reminders from me on practicing responsible behaviors. However, it was not only the children’s existing identities that had an effect on their demonstration of responsible behaviors, but also the people with whom they interacted on a regular basis.

**Facilitator impacting behavior.** As the facilitator of the responsibility-based lessons taught over an 8 week period, I had hoped to influence and build the participants’ responsible behaviors. The information gathered from participant interviews, video field notes, live field notes, and researcher notes was used to substantiate this sub-theme. In creating an interactive social environment throughout all of the lesson plans, setting expectations, providing explicit explanations of responsible behaviors, encouraging participation in activities and discussions, and giving the children the opportunity to voice their thoughts and
opinions, I believe that I contributed to their empowerment and taking responsibility.

At the beginning of the study, I shared with the participants the goals for the entire study and throughout the study I set and reinforced daily expectations with the children. For example, on Day 1, I began the lesson by saying, “I want to teach you how to be responsible. I not only want you to be responsible for yourselves, but I also want you to be responsible and respectful of others” (VFN D1). In addition, we went over the safety rules of staying physically and emotionally safe. I told them, “Keep your hands to yourself. And no put downs, which means don’t talk about people, don’t say mean things to or about people” (VFN D1). In terms of specific responsibility values, I briefly talked about the value at the start of the lesson. For instance, on Day 2, I stated:

We are going to focus on participation and effort and how [you] can do things like that in the classroom and when I am not here [in the YMCA].

Participation means participating in all activities and giving 100% effort.

Also, we need to play safe, hard, and fair as well as have fun. (VFN D2)

Towards the middle of the study, I continued to explain the focus of the lesson and set expectations briefly at the beginning of the lessons. For instance, on Day 7, I said:

Last week we talked about self-direction. We talked about doing the right thing when no one is looking, right? Today, we are [focusing on] leadership
and caring. We want to make sure that we’re helping each other out and being a leader not a follower. (VFN D7)

Similarly, on Day 8, I reminded the participants of what we have been talking about for the past seven days. I indicated:

We talked about being responsible, showing leadership, caring about people, and helping out others. Remember I said that I want you to be able to show leadership and help out others in your classroom and also in the Y. This is going to be our focus for the week, but we always, always want to show respect towards yourself and others. We’re going to play safe in this game.

(VFN D8)

These reminders and setting the expectations continued until the last day of the study. By this point in the study, the children were giving me the meanings of the responsible behavior I wanted them to practice that day. For example, the following conversation took place during the awareness talk at the beginning of Day 15:

Me: Today, we’re going to focus on leadership and caring. What’s leadership?
(Kyla raised her hand) Kyla?
Kyla: Leadership is being a leader not a follower.
Me: Ok. And what does it mean to care for other people?
Hannah: To not hit anybody.
Avery: When you care for other people, you have to be nice to them.
Me: Ok. That’s our focus for the day. So, we’re going to play safe when we’re playing this game. (VFN D15)
I communicated to the participants what it meant to be responsible people and discussed the individual TPSR values daily with them, giving them examples and hearing from them how they defined those values. Each value is defined in great detail from the children's perspectives in Theme 1, in which I discuss how children understood and demonstrated responsible behaviors.

In explaining the TPSR values of respect, participation and effort, self-direction, and leadership, I was very explicit. I felt that it was important to explain the values in a developmentally appropriate manner for this 2nd and 3rd grade group of participants. For example, on Day 3 when discussing respect in the awareness talk, I stated, “We talked about participation and effort. This week we’re talking about respect. We’re not only talking about respecting the rights and feelings of everybody else, we’re talking about respecting ourselves [too]” (VFN D3). Another example of explaining the core values of TPSR occurred on Day 5 of the study. I explained self-direction by saying, “It means being independent. It means that you are not being a follower. It means that you are doing the right thing without me telling you do the right thing” (VFN D5). Each week I focused on one of the core values underlying the TPSR framework.

In later lessons, beginning on Day 9, we had started to revisit all of the core values again so I could reinforce their meaning and understand how the participants now grasped the meaning of these values. In the previous 8 days of the program, I had explained each core value in detail to the participants and the values were discussed in great detail at the end of each lesson during our group meeting and
reflection time. By the second half of the study, children seemed to grasp the concept of each of the core values of responsibility. For example, Avery defined self-direction as he understood it, “Self-direction means doing the right thing, don’t let nobody lead you the wrong way. Uhh...setting a goal and make sure that you do the goal” (VFN D14). Avery fully captured the definition of self-direction similar to the way I discussed it earlier in the study. Hannah stated, “It means not letting people lead you to doing the wrong thing” (VFN D14). Kaleb mentioned, “It means not reacting to people” (VFN D14). While the participants seemed to understand clearly some of the TPSR core values of responsibility, this was not the case for participation and effort. The participants were able to provide a simple verbal definition of participation and effort, but were unable to expand on their responses since I was limited in my ability to engage them in a more extensive discussion of the value as the study progressed. For example, on Day 10, we were supposed to talk about participation and effort, but got sidetracked with a discussion about helping others and respect. This direction of the conversation was warranted as the activities of ‘Help Tag’ and ‘Robot Safety Operator’ involved both characteristics and thus, I was unable to address participation and effort. As for the other core values of responsibility, respect and leadership, they were addressed with in a detailed and comprehensive description in Theme 1. Nonetheless, expectations were set at the beginning of each lesson and explicit explanations of the TPSR character values were defined and discussed by the participants and myself, and I reinforced the expectations and meanings of the responsibility values throughout the program.
In addition to setting and reinforcing expectations, I empowered the children through listening to them speak of their day and actively participate in the awareness talk when we talked about the responsibility values of TPSR. Hellison (2011) discussed empowerment in a way that involves the participants during each aspect of the lesson plan. Specifically, he states the following:

Empowerment is encouraged by having students actively participate in the awareness talk...Empowerment is also addressed in the physical activity plan whenever students are able to make choices or provide some form of leadership...Empowerment is also central to participation in the group meeting and reflection time, because kids are asked to share their own evaluations of both the program (group meeting) and themselves (reflection time). (Hellison, 2011, p. 50)

I empowered the participants by giving them voice, as many do not get the opportunity to share their opinion often in their typical settings of the classroom and the YMCA. In addition, by allowing children to make decisions about activities and/or shaping discussions and giving them responsibilities, I considered these actions empowering gestures on my part. Thus, I gave them opportunities to share their opinions about topics ranging from activities in my program to their thoughts on their classroom teachers and staff members of the YMCA. For example, on Day 2, the participants were asked if they liked or did not like the activities of ‘Turnstile’ and ‘Follow Me’ and why. Johnny responded, “I liked when we played the jump rope game when I jumped over the ropes” (VFN D2). Similarly, Edie commented, “I liked
when we was jump roping and yawl [swung] it up and we had to run through it” (VFN D2). Caitlyn said that she “didn’t like the first game [Turnstile]”, but “liked [‘Follow Me’] because there was a lot of running around” (VFN D2). On Day 11, the participants had similar opportunities to evaluate the gym activities. Avery indicated, “I didn’t like because it was hard to find a spot [in ‘Trust Circle’]” (VFN D11). Hannah said, “It was hard because people were running, literally, like a tornado” (VFN D11). Like Avery, Johnny commented, “It was hard trying to get a spot” (VFN D11). On Day 4, during a pause in the gym activity, the participants indicated that they liked the game of ‘Pairs Tag’. This activity involved:

Two people playing tag with each other. Each person has a bean bag on their heads. If the tagger tags the escaper, then the escaper has to spin in a circle [once] without letting the bean bag fall off before beginning his/her chase. Children cannot pick up their own bean bags. (VFN D4)

After the first round of the game, the children asked if they could play two more rounds and the discussion proceeded as follows:

Me: We’re going to play one more round.
Kyla: Two more rounds! Two more rounds!
Most of the group: Yeah!
Me: You like this game?
All: Yeah!
Kyla: Two more times. PLEASE!
Me: We’ll play for 2 minutes.
Most: Yey! (VFN D4)

Participants were empowered to share their opinions about the activities, particularly whether or not they liked the activity and why they responded the way they did. Most of the participants had no issues providing me with input about the activities.

In addition to giving voice to participants, I also presented them with chances to make decisions about activities, lead activities, and lead discussions during our group meeting and reflection time in a regulated setting. Hellison (2011) stated, “Cultivating the decision-making process involves giving young people the opportunity to share their beliefs and knowledge and to test these ideas in a controlled forum” (Hellison, 2011, p. 13). For example, on Day 2, I gave the children an opportunity to make decisions while keeping their partner safe in the activity ‘Follow Me’. This activity entailed pairs of children leading each other through an obstacle course. The two children paired together chose which one of them would be the leader through the course and after each time through it, the roles of the children would switch so that the original leader was now the follower. Although I had arranged a short obstacle course in our small area of the gym, I enabled the leader to skip, hop, sing, snap their fingers, or whatever else they wanted to do to get their way through the course leading their partner. The only caveat was the leaders could not do any cartwheels or tumbling of any kind to get through, over, or around each obstacle within the course. In this activity, children were given the
opportunity to make decisions about leadership and how to keep their partners safe.

One example of a partner group staying physically safe was Antoinette and Marcus. Antoinette led Marcus through hoops, punching the padded wall, crawling on the floor between some obstacles, over buckets and through more hoops, then back to the beginning of the obstacle course (VFN D2). She kept her partner safe throughout the course. Comparably, Edie led Annie through the obstacle course, jogging between obstacles, stepping through hoops, jumping over buckets, twirling hoops around their waists, and returning to the beginning of the course (VFN D2). All of the participants kept their partners safe even though they skipped, sang songs, hopped, ran, and twirled while leading around their partners. At times, the followers did not follow the leaders with the exact move of the leader, so I reiterated this point when I froze all of the groups. However, the children kept each other safe. All of the children appeared to be having fun in both their leader and follower roles.

In a subsequent lesson, Day 9, children were given the opportunity to choose the activities for the entire lesson and a couple of the children even provided instructions to their peers and started the activity. As part of the TPSR framework, decision-making was a key to empowering children, so I ensured that I incorporated different ways to give children the chance. Children were given this opportunity to make a decision and to have some autonomy over the lesson because I wanted the children to have a vested interest in the activity and to maximize engagement, all the while increasing their participation and effort, self-direction, and leadership, most of
the core values outlined in the TPSR program. Although I did not explain the purpose of my actions specifically as it pertained to making decisions, I had previously provided the participants with a general statement related to responsibility and its importance when the children grew older. At the end of the Day 5 lesson, I said the following:

So it’s [the TPSR program] to give you an idea of when you grow up and not even when just when you grow up, but as you go into the next grade is being respectful an being responsible so that you can be responsible for your actions, do the right thing just because you do the right thing all the time. (VFN D5)

It was important for me to have the participants feel that they had control over the lesson and I wanted them to have the opportunity to make decisions and lead activities, building their responsible behaviors. Therefore, I took the children’s requests on Day 8, in the beginning of our reflection time, for the activities on Day 9 and they all agreed to play Johnny’s suggestion of ‘Freeze Tag’ and Kyla’s idea of ‘Dead Fish’ (VFN D8). Because I understood ‘Freeze Tag’ and the length of time it should be played, I did not ask the participants about the length of the activity. However, I did ask them about the length of ‘Dead Fish’ since I did not have an understanding of how long they should be engaged in the activity. So I asked them. Kyla and Annie responded, “About 20 minutes” (VFN D8). I said that we could not play for that long because we did not have enough time in the lesson and thus Annie negotiated, “10 minutes”; I agreed (VFN D8). On Day 9, I stated, “So, for today, you
all requested that we do two things, play ‘Freeze Tag’ and ‘Dead Fish’.” The children reacted by jumping up and down, saying, “Yeah” (VFN D9)! Since Johnny and Kyla proposed the games, I asked for them to verbally explain and provide the rules for each activity to their peers and both did so. The children responded excitedly about being able to play the two games they had chosen for the day. I empowered the participants by letting them make that decision and essentially, getting them involved in the choices for the lesson.

The children had other opportunities to make decisions regarding activities in later lessons throughout the TPSR program. For instance, on Day 12, I chose the first activity, but allowed the participants to make a decision about the second activity of the day. Kyla suggested that the group play ‘Sharks and Minnows’ and the rest of the participants agreed to play this activity. Similarly, on Day 15, I gave the children the opportunity to choose both activities. The participants chose the first activity, ‘Sharks and Minnows’, during the previous day’s discussion period. However, for the second activity, I gave them two options. They had chosen ‘Sharks and Minnows’ for the second time in this study, so I wanted them to expand their horizons, but give them the chance to make a choice. I told them that they could either play ‘Asteroids’ or ‘Tails Tag’ and took a vote by a show of hands. I did not explain to them why I gave them a choice on this day, but I had indicated to them on Days 5 and 7 the importance of practicing responsibility for the purposes of life. Hellison (2011) states, “Each student has the capacity, if not the experience, to make good decisions. Often, they just need practice, as they do in learning a motor skill. If
given the opportunity, they will make mistakes, but that’s an important part of the process” (p. 26). I gave the children practice in making decisions through choosing activities and in some cases leading activities in the way they wanted to lead them. Thus, at times, children were enabled to make decisions regarding the activity portion of the lesson plan and I saw these opportunities as ways to develop more responsible individuals.

Participants were empowered not only during the times of activity, but also during the group meetings and reflection times of the lessons. For example, they voiced their opinions on their leadership opportunities in the classroom and the YMCA, indicating that the opportunities to lead in the YMCA were few and far between. Specifically, on Day 7, during our group meeting, I engaged the children in a conversation that related to the activity, ‘Fox in the Morning’, which was explained in Theme 1. I asked the children, “Do the teachers [staff] give you a chance to lead?” Then the following dialogue took place:

Kyla: We don’t get no chances.
Avery: Only the big kids. Sometimes.
Hannah: Usually, the big kids are the only ones who get to lead.
Annie: They get to lead the kids to the bathroom.
Kyla: That’s the only people who do it.
Caitlyn: Exactly.
Me: Is that why you guys always ask me to do stuff because you never get a chance to do it in the Y?
Everyone: Yeah. (VFN D7)

Me: That’s why I was giving you the chance to practice leadership today. [For example] when Avery called out things to do that was showing leadership. Then when you all had to get together and figure what activities you wanted to do, like jumping jacks or the jump squats, I let you make the decision about what you wanted to do. I wanted you all to think about you wanted to do so that you could lead [the group]. (VFN D7)

I gave the children opportunities to lead activities, make decisions, share their opinions, as well as presented them with responsibilities such as controlling the video recording of the lessons, taking attendance, and leading discussions.

The participants let me know that it made them feel good to be able to share their thoughts and make decisions when I asked them in the 3rd interview, “How does it make you feel to be able to talk and say what you feel … and then get to make decisions sometimes in the games that we play” (PI3)? Annie stated, “I be happy” (PI3) but did not respond to why it made her feel that way. Edie indicated her happiness as well by denoting, “I feel that [happy] like every single time when you come and stuff and you tell us to talk about what we feel and stuff” (PI3). Hannah, Kaleb, and Caitlyn said that it made them feel good. In particular, Caitlyn said, “I feel good about me having a voice because I have the voice” (PI3). Whereas, Hannah mentioned that she felt good about sharing her view, “because I hardly ever get to do anything” (PI3). The five children who were present and available for the
interview provided me with positive responses with regards to giving their perspectives. Either they felt happy or good to have this chance.

However, the children had limited responsibilities given to them in the YMCA. They felt that the “big kids” were given the responsibilities over the “little kids”. It seemed to be important for the participants to seek responsibility from me since they felt that they were not given enough of those opportunities, especially in the YMCA. Therefore, on Day 14, I let Hannah lead off the group meeting. She had talked to me the week before about wanting to ask some questions of the participants and was very excited about leading the discussion. She had prepared written questions in a composition notebook focused exclusively on the YMCA activities and staff. With her notebook open, she asked the first question of the other participants which was, “Do you like Y-Club activities” (Hannah, VFN D14). By giving Hannah the chance to ask her prepared questions, I empowered her to lead the discussion without my interference or influence. Not only did I empower Hannah, but her actions of preparation and leading the discussion were tied to the core responsibilities of self-direction and leadership. Hannah initiated the conversation with me to take on this responsibility and so I let her do it. All children were provided the space to have as many chances as possible to practice responsible behaviors in the forms of decision-making and leadership, whether in activities or discussions. Thus, I empowered the participants to be responsible individuals.
**Groundwork for transferring responsible behaviors.** The participants and I spent time talking about how they could show responsible behaviors in their respective classrooms and the YMCA program by relating the principles taught within each of the lessons to real life experiences. For example, during our reflection time on Day 7 of the study, the children and I were conversing about caring, leadership, and helping others as it related to the activities of the day. I broadened the conversation on this topic with the intention of promoting the transfer of caring, leadership, and helping others in other aspects of the participants' lives, particularly the classroom and the YMCA. So I asked the children, “How do you show leadership, caring, and helping others in the classroom” (VFN D7)? A few of the children responded that following the directions of the teacher was important in showing caring. Other children provided me with more specific replies pertaining to their respect for others, their accountability, and their honesty. Caitlyn said, “I show it in my classroom because I show good respect to [others] and I [am] responsible by returning my library books, not losing them like other people do” (Caitlyn, VFN D7). In a statement comparable to Caitlyn, Jessie indicated that she has gotten Kyla into trouble by talking to her in the classroom. The teacher assumed that Kyla initiated the dialogue and Jessie did not tell the teacher anything different and felt dishonest. She stated:

In the classroom, when I call Kyla’s name and when she turns around and when she talks to me, our teacher tells her ‘Kyla – stop turning around and
talking to Jessie and stuff’ and I don’t say nothing and I should give an apology to Kyla. (Jessie, VFN D7)

Jessie showed partial accountability by admitting her actions to Kyla, but she should have been fully culpable by admitting her behavior to the teacher. Telling on herself to the teacher may have been too sophisticated of an action for Jessie, especially since her teacher saw her as a model student as noted in his interview and grading report comments. Nevertheless, the content of the discussion on Day 7 was based in relating the activities of the day with real life occurrences, particularly how children can show respect, be accountable for their actions, and demonstrate honesty outside of the TPSR program.

In the reflection times with the children, I facilitated discussions to get them to think beyond their behaviors within the activities in the gym and emphasized the application of responsibility in the classroom and the YMCA. For instance, the participants and I discussed ‘Freeze Tag’ on Day 9 to begin our group meeting. ‘Freeze Tag’ involved helping others become unfrozen once tagged by the tagger. I asked the children if they had helped someone during the game become unfrozen. Most of the children responded, “Yeah” (VFN D9). To make the connection to a general life situation, I inquired, “Why do you think it’s important to help people” (VFN D9)? Two children responded that helping people was “nice... and if you need help, they will help you” (Kyla, VFN D9) and “it shows that you are a good friend” (Jessie, VFN D9). Caitlyn answered, “If you don’t know the person, like if it’s a homeless person, they might not help you back because they don’t have anything to
give” (VFN D9). Avery gave an example of helping others in specific terms, like Caitlyn, by saying, “Like if one of your family members, they don’t know where to go and they need to stay at your house for a little while to get their house back because their rent is too much” (VFN D9). I extended the discussion by asking them, “How do you help people in class” (VFN D9)? They proceeded to respond with answers such as “I help out with the kindergartners” (Hannah, VFN D9) or “If people need help with their work, I can help them” (Jessie, VFN D9) or “I can help in my classroom by listening to what the teachers says and telling other kids to be quiet while the teacher is talking” (Johnny, VFN D9). On this day, children associated helping others with not only the activity ‘Freeze Tag’, but also with helping others outside of this activity, in their classroom, at home, and in the community. By asking these types of questions to the children, I laid the groundwork for children to learn to express responsible behaviors in areas outside of my program.

Another example of promoting transfer of responsibility values occurred on Day 11 when the children and I conversed about the activity ‘Trust Circle’. This activity involved children, standing on polyspots in a circle, practicing trust and respect by not touching each other as I called for them to cross the circle. This activity went well for the most part, as the children were not touching each other when they crossed the circle. However, there were a couple of instances when Avery and Johnny playfully and gently pushed each other when they reached the same spot. I reminded them of the rules and all of the children complied except Avery, who acted silly by bumping Kyla. Both of them laughed when he bumped
into her. After the activities in the gym, we proceeded to the classroom and our talk focused on respect and how participants showed it in this activity and moreover, how they have and how they should show respect. In the game, a few of the children noted that they showed respect by, “[trying] not to run into nobody” (Kaleb, VFN D11) and, “by not pushing people and knocking them down and getting their spot” (Caitlyn, VFN D11). Johnny said something similar to both Kaleb and Caitlyn indicating that he showed respect in the game, “by not pushing anyone down when we were running” (VFN D11). When asked how they should show respect, the children responded, “by helping somebody” (Naomi, VFN D11) or “listen[ing] to you” (Edie, VFN D11). Annie stated she should show respect by “moving my clip” when her teacher tells her to do so (VFN D11). The line of question directed at the participants facilitated children’s thinking about how they can show the core responsibility of respect outside of the TPSR program. Again this needs to be discussed further in chapter 5

The examples provided for transfer promotion on Days 7, 9, 11 demonstrate that I asked a line of questioning that facilitated children to think beyond the confines of the TPSR program of 8 weeks. It seemed from our discussions that they were able to make connections between demonstrating responsible behaviors in the gym activities and the demonstrating those same behaviors in areas outside of the gym, such as their classroom, home, and even in the community, at times. Through our group meetings and reflection times in most of the lessons, after Day 6, I set the foundation for transferring responsible behaviors to other spaces.
**Building trust with the participants.** The levels of responsibility in a TPSR program mean nothing if the relationship between the participant and the facilitator are not developed (Hellison, 2011). Indeed, Dyson (2006) contends that, “Trust is an essential requirement to attain authentic voice” (p. 329). To build the relationship and ultimately, trust with my participants, I spent time with most of them over a two years period prior to collecting data. In my time at the site leading up to the study, I spent individual time with most of the children in my group. For instance, I spent time reading with Annie, sometimes for up to 30 minutes. I played table games, such as Connect Four and puzzles with Caitlyn and Antoinette and helped Edie, Johnny, and Kaleb with homework.

Throughout the study, I built relationships and rapport with the participants. To begin with, I showed up every day demonstrating my commitment to them. I asked about their day every day at the beginning of each lesson. Oftentimes, I spoke with the children in small groups or one-on-one to broaden our relationship and encourage positive behavior. For example, after the lesson on Day 5, I sat with the children and spoke to them in small groups, as most of my group had left to go home. Kyla and Jessie had taken the initiative to begin organizing a parent night, “by figuring out what performances people could do in the show they would put on for their parents” (LFN D5). By talking with them and having an interest in what they were doing, they were excited to tell me what they were doing and what things they had left to do to prepare for the parent night. This was just one way of getting to know the children and some of the responsible behaviors that they portrayed.
Other times, like Day 12, I engaged the group during the relational time of the lesson, asking each child about their day. It was another approach in finding out more about them and how certain occurrences during their day at school impacted their behaviors. This time during each lesson was always informative. In addition to finding out more about the personalities and behaviors of the participants, I acted silly at times and frequently, joked around with them so they also got to know me. For example, during a demonstration of ‘Wizards and Geflings’, a tag game, I played the role of the gefling, who were happy creatures that the wizards wanted to freeze. As a gefling, I laughed while skipping around the outside of the seated circle of the participants, who were listening intently to the instructions and demonstration for the activity (VFN D3). In participating in this portion of the demonstration, I showed the children that I was willing to be silly, laugh, and have fun in addition to being serious with them. I showed these actions on Day 14 of the study also. In our group meeting, I facilitated a discussion of the participants’ evaluations of the activities of the day, but in the middle of the dialogue, Kyla began to laugh uncontrollably and fall out of her chair for no apparent reason. She acted very silly to say the least, but it was infectious and caused the other children and me to laugh also. A portion of the lessons on days 3 and 14 are just two examples of many illustrating the fun and mutual rapport developed between the participants and me. The children did not verbally admit to trusting me, but through their actions and behaviors, particularly by sharing their opinions openly especially in the second half of the study indicated that they had developed a level of trust in me.
The relationship I built with these children led them to be more open with their opinions over the course of the study. By allowing the children voices, empowering them to take responsibility for their own behaviors, and giving them choices, contributed to the trust the participants had in me. The participants’ sources, the teachers and youth care staff, also played a critical role in the attitudes and behaviors of participants.

**Sources shaping behavior.** As the sources, both teachers and youth care staff, spent many hours each day with participants during school and after school hours, they also had an effect on the children’s behaviors, although the impact was not always one of a positive nature. Teachers and youth staff are in a position to play a significant role in children’s acquisition of knowledge and values (Payne & Isaacs, 2005). All of the sources created an interactive social and learning environment by having group projects, holding discussions with the children and giving them choices, all of which contributed to building responsibility in the participants. In addition, sources set expectations, modeled behaviors they wanted the children to imitate, and encouraged students to practice responsible behaviors. Data collected that supported this sub-theme included source interviews, source journals, participant interviews, video and live field notes.

Throughout the school year, teachers and youth staff had developed and put into place a structure in their classrooms and the YMCA program, respectively, which promoted cooperation, teamwork, accepting others, and empowerment. They seemed to accomplish these outcomes by building relationships and setting
expectations with their students, as well as through facilitating paired and group activities. Developing relationships and setting expectations with students appeared to be the foundation upon which the entire school year was built. Over time, this allowed the teachers and youth staff to better understand the students' personalities and behaviors, in order to deal with them in a way that was best for their learning. For instance, Mr. Gosling stated, “You need to be able to know what your kids’ capabilities are, and the only way you know how to do that is through a relationship” (TI2). Ms. Charles similarly stated, “It’s very important to have that one-on-one relationship and to have a group relationship...And to know that they have an adult that they come to” (YSI2). Like Ms. Charles, Mrs. Rogers thought it was important to know your students. She stated, “I truly believe that you have to know your students...know where they’re coming from” (Mrs. Rogers, TI2). Based on these excerpts from interviews, the sources indicated the importance of building and sustaining relationships with their students and further, being the supportive adult upon whom the children could rely.

In addition to the relationship between sources and children, teachers spoke of setting expectations for their students in the classroom. For example, Mr. Matthews indicated in his interview that this was the first year that his students had desks and therefore, he set expectations surrounding desk maintenance. He specified, “It’s their responsibility to keeping their desk clean, keeping their areas clean, and keeping control of their pencils” (Mr. Matthews, TI1). Ms. Charles said something similar of the children when they were in the YMCA program. She noted,
“They [children] have responsibilities of picking up after themselves [or] helping when needed in setting out [activity] centers or picking up centers” (Ms. Charles, YSI1). Both in the classroom and the YMCA, it was important to sources that the children took the responsibility of maintaining the upkeep of areas in which they worked or played. Mr. Gosling wanted his students to keep their area orderly, but he seemed to be more concerned with the children keeping track of the supplies within their desks. He said:

> They need to be in charge of all the stuff in their desk and not losing that stuff (e.g. markers, crayons, and notebook). These are things we use on a day-to-day basis that they're responsible to have; so being prepared and not losing [them]. (Mr. Gosling, TI1)

Sources insisted on their students’ adherence to these expectations and reinforced these behaviors on a regular basis. They were teaching children to take care of themselves, their personal responsibilities, and their personal belongings.

Students were taught to take care of their personal responsibilities as well as to be considerate and respectful towards others. The teachers and youth care staff discussed in their interviews how they consistently discussed accepting others, treating people fairly, and resolving conflicts among peers. One case in point, Mrs. Rogers discussed her modeling of how to accept others in her students’ environments. She said that she, “tell[s] them, ‘Hey, I might not like this person, or I might not like the behavior of this student, but we have to deal with it.’ And just showing them how to do it and work through those things” (Mrs. Rogers, TI2). Ms.
Charles spoke of the children working together also; even though at times it may have been difficult for them. She modeled for them how to work together by exhibiting positive behavior per her interview responses. She said:

One way [to show the children] responsibilities is first of all showing up to work and to show you know that if you have a job you have to show up and be responsible. Again, showing responsibility by trying to [show] caring, responsible, honest guidelines that they have and by portraying that and showing that to them you know so they have something to follow. (Ms. Charles, YSI2)

Ms. Charles indicated that by her modeling responsible behaviors, children have an adult to imitate and show them how to demonstrate responsible mannerisms.

Mr. Gosling discussed in his second interview of speaking kindly to others and treating people fairly. For example, he cited:

Nobody speaks to each other courteously, even though I talk about it all the time. [It’s like] ‘Give me a pencil. Shut-up.’ One, that’s not how you ask anybody for anything. [Instead say] ‘May I have a pencil, please?’ I will more likely say yes to you. (Mr. Gosling, TI2)

Mr. Gosling focused on this area of fairness, as it seemed to be a sore spot for him. He even mentioned that he stopped class on occasion to reiterate the importance of treating people, “nice and fairly” (Mr. Gosling, TI2). Thus Mr. Gosling, along with the other sources, consistently influenced responsible behaviors in their students through nurturing relationships with students, setting expectations with students,
and modeling the behaviors they want their children to display in the classroom and the YMCA program.

Despite the benefits of setting expectations, cultivating a relationship with the children, and modeling positive behaviors, one YMCA staff member indicated that building relationships with the children was a challenge because of the high children to staff ratio, which he claimed was approximately 25 children to 1 staff member. He stated:

When we had a side kick [3rd staff member], it was 18, 18, 18 so it was easy for us to communicate, talk, me asking them how they're doing and things like that. Now that that has changed, it's very hard. (Mr. Arthur, YSI1)

Mr. Arthur had a concern that the high student to staff ratio impacted the building of relationships between the children and the staff. He believed the relationship was grounded in communication, which was limited and therefore did not allow for Mr. Arthur to develop close relationships with the children and get to know them.

However, the relationship between Mr. Arthur and the students seemed to be questionable according to the students and was not necessarily the result of the high student to teacher ratio especially when the children spoke of Mr. Arthur during our discussion on Day 15. Some children did not trust him. In the reflection period, I let the participants know that I had checked in with the youth care staff about their behaviors in the YMCA program and from the conversation below, it seemed that some of the children did not trust Mr. Arthur. The children spoke as follows:

Annie: You don’t know if their lying or not. They could be lying.
Me: Who?

Annie: Staff.

Me: Hah hah. I don’t think so.

Naomi: Sometimes they be lying.

Edie: Sometimes Mr. Arthur be saying he gone tell on us and he be lying.

Annie: He lied to my Grandma.

Edie: Yeah. He lied to my Mom.

Caitlyn: Yeah. He lied to my Mom too. (VFN D15)

Mr. Arthur did not make a positive impression on the children, despite the time he spent with them every day in the YMCA after school program. In addition to the issues with Mr. Arthur, the children had a negative impression of the program as it pertained to the dichotomy between the older elementary and younger elementary students. In particular, many children felt the YMCA staff did not stand up for them against the older children but only allowed them to have leadership roles. However, based on participants’ accounts, the youth care staff did not really allow the participants to lead in those moments. The older children were allowed to usurp the power of the younger children. For example, Johnny stated, “When I get in line, some of the big kids cut me. The teachers don’t say nothing at all” (VFN D8). All of the children agreed that the YMCA staff allowed the older children to get away with pushing, cutting in line, and being rude to the younger children. The participants talked about the 2nd and 3rd graders not having the opportunity to lead over the 4th
and 5th graders when leading groups outside of the gym to go to the bathroom or get a drink of water. The conversation proceeded as follows:

Me: Oh, I see. So a lot of times they go to the bathroom and they drink water, but then they want to tell on you getting water?

Caitlyn: If they drink water, why should they be worried about other people? They should be telling on their selves.

Me: Ok. Then, if they are... well, then are the Y staff saying anything to them?

Avery: They never do.

Me: So...

Edie: Sometimes when Mr. Arthur is here, he stands at the door and you gotta ask to get a drink.

Hannah: Now that we’re in Mr. Arthur’s group when you’re not there, Ann Marie will just cut in front of me. I’ll tell on her and Mr. Arthur will just say, ‘So, she’s older than you’, but I’m a good leader. I’m actually a good leader.

Kyla: Yeah. She is. She and Charlie [a first grader] are. He said that.

Me: So, they tell you that you’re the group leader, but then they don’t actually let you lead?

Hannah: No. I may get to lead them to the door, but I don’t get to lead them nowhere else.

Me: How do the boys feel? Do you have the same problem?

Johnny: Same thing.

Avery: Same thing, except it’s worse.
Me: How is it worse Avery?

Avery: We get to play basketball. If we shoot a hoop, they [big kids] get to take it. We’ll get a soccer ball and they’ll take it. So anything that we get like a basketball or something, they’ll take it from us.

Me: And then the teacher doesn’t say anything?

Avery: Nope.

Me: And what about you Johnny?

Johnny: When I get in line, some of the big kids cut me. They [the teachers] don’t say nothing at all. (VFN D8)

As such, most of my group of 2nd and 3rd groups felt that the YMCA staff did not respect them (VFN D8). They felt the Y staff did not stand up for them against the “big kids”, letting the “big kids” get away with being mean to the “little kids” (RN D8). The children’s comments suggested that some of the participants’ relationships with not only Mr. Arthur, but also with the other members of the YMCA staff had an impact on the children’s behaviors in the YMCA program. By allowing the upper elementary students to direct the lower elementary students and give privileges to them over the younger children lead to some of the children in my group feeling disrespected. Relationships are important to have with students and by building one based on trust can to lead to the development of positive behaviors in students.

Teachers building trust with students by getting to know them seemed to be a catalyst for the children understanding and practicing responsible behaviors in the classroom. Mr. Gosling was one of the teachers who noted in his first interview that
it was virtually impossible to not know your students and build a relationship with each of your students. He became very familiar with Annie’s mannerisms to the point of distrusting her. Mr. Gosling said to me in his second interview, “She’s just untrustworthy. She takes other people’s stuff...Just sneaky. And, then she’ll lie about it. She’s gotten better with not doing that stuff, but I’m still not confident enough to trust her to do it on her own” (Mr. Gosling, TI2). He mentioned that he allowed her do things such as pass out and collect papers, take things to the offices or other teachers. He continued to give her chances to prove she was trustworthy, but Mr. Gosling restricted Annie’s independence in completing class work with others until she rebuilt trust with him. Mr. Gosling continued to work with Annie throughout the school year to rebuild trust in her and help her to improve her behaviors. Annie demonstrated a slightly positive shift in behavior, such as admitting to talking or that she did something wrong to a peer in her classroom, towards the end of the school year, according to Mr. Gosling. Mr. Gosling seemed to have had an impact on her behavior through his guidance and reinforcement of the appropriate conduct in the classroom.

Building relationships with students was the groundwork for sharing responsibility with them. Some sources empowered their students by listening to their opinions and welcoming ideas, giving them chances to make decisions on class assignments, and giving the children jobs in the classroom. Mr. Gosling encouraged his students to give their opinions and make their own judgments about things, not taking everything at face value. In giving daily writing assignments, for example, Mr.
Gosling asked them to give opinions about books they were reading in class. Specifically, he told them, “Just because you read it in a book doesn’t always mean that’s how it was. You’ve got to be able to think, because if you believe everything everybody says, you’re going to be made a fool of” (Mr. Gosling, TI1). He encouraged independent thinking and constantly promoted this behavior through individual and group assignments and whole class discussions. Mrs. Rogers used classroom learning centers, during which students stopped at each station for an allocated amount of time to work on subject matter. She stated, “So I basically set up learning centers, and I explain them, and then they’re responsible to work together as a team” (Mrs. Rogers, TI1). This group work stimulated student independence by the students managing how much work they completed at each station. Overall, Mr. Gosling and Mrs. Rogers provided examples of how they have empowered their students and were an example of how the teachers in this study shared responsibilities and power with their students. Furthermore, these two teachers had students who indicated in their interviews that they saw Mr. Gosling and Mrs. Rogers as role models. For instance, Kaleb mentioned, “I want to be like my teacher, Mr. Gosling. Because it’s like when he was a little kid and I’m a little kid now, it’s like I’m gonna be in his shoes when I get older” (Kaleb, PI2). Another student, Avery, said something similar of his teacher. He asserted, “My teacher [is a role model for me] [because of] her kind[ness], her niceness. What she does for us. And that’s all” (Avery, PI2). When Kaleb and Avery spoke of their teachers as their role models, it was an indicator of the close relationship the teachers had built with their students.
While the classroom was different from the YMCA, as there were obviously no class assignments, the YMCA staff provided some opportunities of sharing control with participants. The staff allowed the children to make decisions about going to activity centers during their free time, but mostly the YMCA staff generally stated they allowed their students to, “make the right decisions” (Ms. Charles, TI1) or, “make a wise decision” (Mr. Arthur, TI1). Both Mr. Arthur and Ms. Charles mentioned comparable statements in the two completed source journals, over the 8-week program, about all of their students. The staff seemed to be limited in empowering their students during the after school program. They seemed to have some difficulty relinquishing some of their control such as when Ms. Charles gave a statement regarding decisions and following rules. She stated, “They’re allowed again the right choice and following directives” (Ms. Charles, TI1). In other words, according to Ms. Charles, the participants had limited chances to make decisions in the YMCA. The students were expected to make the right choices by listening and following instructions of the staff and respecting the staff and each other. Hence, throughout conversations with me, the YMCA staff consistently reinforced their desire for the participants to behave in a responsible manner. Youth care staff and teachers both expressed this objective.

Teachers and youth care staff influenced behaviors in students through building relationships, providing students with expectations and guidelines, teaching children to accept others, and empowering students. However, promoting social interactions between students also impacted students by teaching them how
to work with others and have effective communication to meet a common goal. Teachers and youth care staff facilitated such interaction between students in both the classroom and the YMCA after school program.

In the first interview with the sources, I asked them, “How does your class or the Y program encourage social interactions between students” (TI1, YSI1)? Mr. Gosling responded, “We do a lot of cooperative learning. We do a lot of talk. It’s not quiet in here. It’s because they need to be talking to each other to do the assignment” (TI1). Similar to Mr. Gosling, Mrs. Rogers’ class is set up so that children work together to meet a common goal by setting up learning centers. Both teachers had specific learning goals for the class assignments and promoted group work in the classroom. The teachers seemed to feel that this was ideal for learning and facilitated cooperation among students.

Further encouragement from teachers occurred when teachers guided children in their classroom work. Mrs. Rogers discussed Edie’s desire to do better with the task of handwriting. After Edie, Edie’s mom, and Mrs. Rogers had a conference about it, over the time of the school year, Edie improved her handwriting through independently checking her work. Mrs. Rogers stated:

And she’ll self-check herself now. She’ll go, ‘Oh, my gosh. My homework’s sloppy,’ and ‘What can I do to fix it?’ And she’ll stay in – volunteer stay in for recess now to fix it, or [ask] ‘Can I have extra time? I didn’t do it well,’ or ‘Can I move and get it done?’ So she’s starting that responsibility of ‘I know I have sloppy handwriting. I’m gonna work on it.’ (Mrs. Rogers, TI2)
According to Mrs. Rogers, Edie paid more attention to her work by not only refining her handwriting, but also by recognizing her mistakes and taking the initiative to correct them. The change in Edie seemed to be the result of teacher-student-parent interactions, not the result of my TPSR program. Similarly, Kaleb’s teacher, Mr. Gosling talked about giving responsibility and additional homework to Kaleb because the teacher knew that he could do it successfully. He specified, “Kaleb, I give him a lot of responsibilities, I’ll give him different assignments. You know, stuff he can do independently. Because, he’s responsible enough to do it” (Mr. Gosling, TI2). Kaleb demonstrated self-direction and leadership through his abilities to take on more challenging work and complete it. Edie and Kaleb were examples of how a few children in the study pursued and persisted in their tasks. Both acted responsibly through the assistance of their teachers.

On the other hand, in contrast to Naomi’s account of her determination to get through her class work, her teacher, Mr. Matthews said, "Naomi doesn't get her homework done" thus calling into question Naomi’s comment. Mr. Matthews gave a similar account about Caitlyn speaking of her not getting homework done as well as not following instructions to get her class work completed. He stated:

She'll raise her hand and I'll say, ‘Caitlyn - ask me a question’. [Caitlyn will raise her hand prior to reading the directions of an in-class assignment]. And I'll say ‘Caitlyn, did you read the directions?’ [She responds] ‘No.’ [He continues]’Okay you read the directions and then raise your hand.’ And she raises her hand and I’ll say ‘What did they ask you to do?’ [She responds] ‘I
don’t know.’ [Mr. Matthews says] ‘Caitlyn, reread the directions and then raise your hand.’ So it’s just little things. I’m trying to get her to be responsible enough to do something without asking me before she’s tried. The responses from the children and their teachers seemed to indicate that most of the participants wanted to keep trying and figure out their assignments, and some had enough confidence to ask for help, if necessary, from their teachers, while a few others did not even complete their homework.

Although the learning and social goals were not as specific as they were in the classroom, the YMCA gave children the opportunity to interact with each other during activities. Mr. Arthur said he encouraged social interactions by, “playing games, sitting down reading books with each other. Things like that” (Mr. Arthur, YSI1). Ms. Charles further clarified how the children were organized during activities in the YMCA. She noted, “They are usually teamed or with someone so they’re social skills should be that they are always going to interact and they have to learn how to get along and adjust to different people’s personalities” (Ms. Charles, YSI1). Mr. Anderson and Mr. Matthews said something similar of giving students the chance to work with people they do not normally spend time with outside of the classroom. For example Mr. Anderson disclosed, “We sit [in] many groups of four that are always changing based on different things, giving [students] and opportunity so they can interact with each other” (Mr. Anderson, TI1). All sources seemed to agree with each other that grouping students was an advantageous structure to enhance social interactions and promote responsible behaviors.
The sources made strides in emphasizing and shaping responsible behaviors in their students. In an interactive social environment, they promoted cooperation and teamwork among peers, accepting others, and empowerment through means of developing and sustaining relationships with children as well as setting expectations at the beginning of the school year. Teachers and youth staff constantly reinforced the notion of demonstrating responsibility in their classrooms and the YMCA program, respectively. However, they were not the only ones who had an influence on the behaviors of participants. Peers had both positive and negative impacts on program participants.

**Positive and negative influences of peers.** According to Payne and Isaacs (2011), as children approach adolescence, the peer group becomes a progressively significant social force, has the ability to shape children’s attitudes and behaviors and also can impact decision-making (Payne & Isaacs, 2011). Although the participants in this study were 2nd and 3rd graders, already there were noticeable peer influences on some individuals. Some of these forces compelled students to engage in responsible behaviors and speak fondly of peers, while other peer influences prompted participants to exhibit irresponsible behavior. The data to substantiate this area were from video field notes, participant interviews, and source interviews.

Positive peer influences seemed to stem from participants modeling certain behaviors during the responsibility-based program and the relationships that developed among classmates over time. Most of these students had been attending
school with each other since kindergarten or 1st grade and it was noticeable that they knew each other well enough to be honest about each other’s behaviors. For example, on Day 7 of the study, we were holding a discussion as usual about the activities of the day and children also were asked about their perspective of good leadership. The conversation ended up not addressing leadership at all. Instead, it turned into friends attempting to positively influence one of their friends. The participants talked amongst themselves as follows:

Hannah: Say I’m the teacher and Jessie and Kyla are the students (both Jessie and Kyla were smiling), I’ll say ‘Line up’ and Jessie lines up but Kyla wants to jump around.

Kyla: Why you keep saying that I have to be bad? (Waving her hands and smiling).

Jessie and Caitlyn: Cause you are Kyla!

Me: Why does everyone keep saying that you’re bad?

Jessie: She is bad.

Kyla: I’m not bad all the time! I was not bad today!

Although the intent of this conversation was initially to discuss leadership, it proved to be a good example of how peers have the potential to positively influence behavior. This conversation was an amicable, but honest dialogue amongst friends. Kyla’s peers evaluated her behavior and she was aware of her own behavior. I am unsure how seriously she took the criticism from her friends, since she smiled and admitted to her sometimes defiant behavior. This interaction amongst the girls had
the makings of being a positive influence on Kyla and the girls seemed to have good intentions, but I am unsure of the direct impact it had on Kyla.

In a subsequent discussion at the end of the study, peers seemed to have a more direct impact on Annie's honesty. Another example of peer influence occurred on Day 15. The participants and I were discussing leadership once again and the collective response from the children was that a leader was responsible and did not "goof" around in class. So, I proceeded to ask them, "Are you modeling good behavior in their classroom" (Me, VFN D15)? Annie was the first to respond with "YES" and shook her head emphatically (Annie, VFN D15). However, when other children were honest in saying that they only sometimes modeled good behavior, she changed her response and indicated, "Sometimes I model. All the time I do my work in class. Sometimes I don’t do my [home] work because I need help from my tutor. So, that’s when I don’t do my work" (Annie, VFN D15). She admitted that she did not always complete her homework and bring it back to school to submit to the teacher. Nevertheless, Annie was honest and this action on Day 15 was an improvement from earlier responses in group discussions where she would sometimes answer questions dishonestly.

For example, during a game of 'Everybody's It', several of the children did not respond when they were tagged. The first round of the game was an elimination round, so this may have been the reason that the children did not want to acknowledge getting tagged. The difference between Annie and the other children was that when I called them out, they squat down and followed the instructions per
the game; Annie did not. In fact, she argued with me saying, “Nah-uh! Nobody tagged me yet” (Annie, VFN D3)! I had seen two people tag her and stated, “Two people tagged you” (VFN D3). She looked at me with sad eyes, but I ignored her because I saw it as her trying to get over on me. Another example of Annie’s untruthfulness occurred on Day 12 of the study. The children gathered sitting in chairs around me, the normal routine. Prior to getting started, a conversation ensues amongst the children. I do not know the exact context, but the dialogue was as follows:

Annie: He got a dice from over there (talking about Avery).

Hannah: So...

Annie: It’s not ours. That’s Ms. Walter’s (1st grade teacher).

Hannah: No, you brought it out (pointed at Annie) and ruined it and he grabbed it.

Me: So why [are] you telling on him?

Annie: (smiling wide) Well, he grabbed it off the desk.

Me: Yeah, but why are trying to blame it on him? (VFN D12)

Avery handed the dice to Annie who gets up to put it back onto the desk where she found it. Annie attempted to point the finger at Avery, but Hannah caught her in a lie, but she corrected herself by getting up to put away the dice. Although Annie had times during which she lied, she also had moments during which she came clean and it seemed to be the result of her peers having a positive impact on her behavior.

Peer influence did not necessarily lead to a change in behavior. There were
times during which some participants recognized one another’s positive behavior and saw a peer as a role model. Although a few children gave recognition to a peer and described that person as a role model, this recognition did not seem to lead to a recognizable change in behavior in them. In the second interview with participants, I asked them, “Who do you feel is a role model for you?” In some cases I needed to define the term role model and I described it as, “somebody that does the right thing that you can follow” (PI2). One participant, Annie responded, “Like my classmate, she do the right thing and I just follow what she do so I could get a good grade” (Annie, PI2). Annie did not mention the person’s name specifically who she felt was a role model, but this person obviously had an enough of an impact on her since she mentioned this unnamed girl. Other students collectively named Jessie as their role model. Hannah, Kyla, and Naomi all felt that Jessie always did the right thing and made the right decisions. Hannah summed it up best for this group by indicating, “I feel that Jessie is [a role model] because she is always doing the right thing. She has never gotten in trouble. She will never let anybody get her into trouble. She is always nice” (Hannah, PI2). Peers can have a positive impact on one another and it was apparent in these examples when students praised one another and/or named one person as their role model in independent interviews. Jessie’s teacher also agreed with her peers’ assessments of her in his first interview by stating, “Jessie is my most responsible student. Jessie is my role model in the classroom. She has been since day one” (Mr. Matthews, TI1).
Nevertheless, it is sometimes difficult for students to do the right thing when their peers are not doing so. One participant Edie said, “Because when other people are not doing the right thing and you’re not doing the right thing, then that makes it hard” (Edie, PI3). As such, there were occasions throughout the study when children followed others in performing an act that they knew to be irresponsible. For instance, during the activity portion on Day 3, when I was explaining the activity in which the children were about to engage, a few children, Caitlyn, Annie, and Antoinette spoke among themselves at the same time that I was talking. I stopped talking and looked at them and said, “I’ll wait until everyone is paying attention to what’s going on” (Me, VFN D3). Caitlyn, Annie, and Antoinette influenced each other in engaging in the inappropriate behavior of not listening while I was talking. On Day 11, a similar situation occurred when two children engaged in off-task behavior at the very end of the gym activities. In particular, Antoinette goaded Caitlyn into chasing her, causing both her and Caitlyn not to pay attention to the instructions I was in the process of giving the group. I reminded Caitlyn of acting independently and not following others. This had been an on-going conversation between Caitlyn and me. She knew exactly what I meant and I just did not need to keep on her case about it. Caitlyn knew that she followed others and furthermore, that she should not be following anyone as evidenced in her last interview with me. Ms. Charles concurred with Caitlyn’s self-assessment in which Ms. Charles said, “Caitlyn I think once she grows a little she’ll be more confident” (Ms. Charles, YSI2). Although Caitlyn had more single instances of following other children, there were other
children who also exhibited following behaviors as well. At this age, with children spending more and more time with friends, it was plausible and natural that peers would be a mitigating factor in influencing behavior in children whether positive or negative.

**Summary.** There were three major themes on which the findings of this chapter were based. The themes were as follows: 1) Connection with responsible behaviors; 2) understanding caring and its development in participants; and 3) factors influencing responsible behaviors in participants. In theme 1, most of the children understood and demonstrated responsible behaviors in the responsibility program even though their demonstration of such behaviors was not consistent. Although I felt that I had laid the foundation for these responsible behaviors to be carried out in the classroom and the typical YMCA program, I cannot confirm that transference of these behaviors actually took place.

In theme 2, caring emerged as a character value in children as it was not a primary focus in the study. Children identified caring as helping others, showing leadership, and exhibiting responsible behaviors. Some students cared about what their peers and teachers thought of them, while a few did not care. Nevertheless, the teachers, youth care staff, and I promoted caring in our respective environments through getting to know the participants, providing guidance, and modeling caring behaviors towards the children.

Finally, in theme 3, several factors influenced the participants’ responsible behaviors. These factors involved participants’ identities and the relationships built
and interactions with their teachers, youth care staff, peers, and me. The participants in this study had an existing identity, such as self-confidence, perseverance, or friendly dispositions, which were determining factors contributing to their understanding and demonstrating of responsible behaviors. The teachers, youth care staff, and I helped to shape the students’ responsible behaviors through setting and reinforcing expectations, modeling upstanding characteristics, and building rapport and trusting relationships with them. Finally, peers either had a positive or negative impact on the participants. If positive, some of the participants recognized it and spoke of their desire to emulate that individual. On the other hand, if negative, then a few of the children noticed that too and realized that if they were following a negatively behaving individual, then they needed to become more independent people. Self-confidence seemed to play a role in this ‘follower’ mentality.

Overall, most children appeared to understand the responsibility values within the TPSR program I implemented over an 8-week period. All of the children at one point in time of the study demonstrated responsible behaviors of participation, effort, respect, honesty, leadership, caring, and/or helping others, although such a display was inconsistent. Although it was my intention for the participants to transfer the responsible behaviors they were taught to their classrooms and the YMCA after school program and I believe that I set the groundwork for such transfer to take place, I cannot confirm or deny that transfer actually occurred outside of the program. Nevertheless, several factors such as
existing personalities of the children, dealings with teachers, YMCA staff, peers, and me, had an influence on the participants, whether positive or negative.
Chapter 5

Discussion

Children are assets to the community and require developmental experiences to contribute to their positive youth development (Benson, 1997). Society needs to have an understanding that children are human capital and represent the future of our society (Lawson, 2005). Thus, as educators and responsible, caring adults, we need to invest our knowledge in and provide guidance to these children in cultivating their positive citizenship through building relationships, rapport, and trust between adult and child. Youth development has emerged as a preventative approach to apply a set of practices to nurture the development of children (Hamilton, Hamilton, & Pittman, 2004). The teaching personal and social responsibility (TPSR) model is one type of youth development method designed to promote responsible behaviors in children (Hellison, 2011).

This study focused on promoting responsibility in young children and had two purposes. The first purpose was to explore how 2nd and 3rd grade students, who are underserved, created meaning in a TPSR structured program and transferred TPSR values to the classroom and YMCA afterschool program. The second purpose was to explore what factors influenced responsible behaviors in 2nd and 3rd grade
students participating in a community-based TPSR afterschool program. The research questions were as follows:

- To what extent do children understand, make meaning of, and demonstrate the four TPSR core values (respect, effort, self-direction, leadership)?
- How do individual factors influence the children’s learning of the four TPSR core values?
- To what extent are the four TPSR core values transferred to the classroom and the standard YMCA afterschool program?

This qualitative study not only explored the intended purposes, but also it allowed me to gain more insight to the dynamic and unpredictable nature of working with children and the importance of forging trusting relationships with them. Building relationships with caring, responsible adults can have significant implications on children’s development in both academic and social contexts (Kahne & Bailey, 1999) and promote long-term asset building (Benson, 1997; Scales et al., 2006). Thus, implementing a responsibility-based program that infused time for creating bonds with and empowering children was a stimulus for creating a community of positive youth development for the children in this study.

In this chapter, I discuss the following: 1) an interpretation of the findings based on thematic representations and research questions; 2) transfer of responsibility values; 3) my reflexivity and ethical dilemmas during the process of completing the study; 4) implications of the findings to running a TPSR-based youth
Interpretation of the findings

The interpretation of findings is based on thematic representations that emerged from the data corpus and were presented in chapter 4. The three major themes are: (1) connection with responsible behaviors; (2) understanding caring and its development in participants; and (3) factors influencing responsible behaviors. These three major themes and the associated sub-themes will be discussed in this section.

Theme 1: Connection with responsible behaviors. The TPSR program implemented in this study had a focus on teaching children to be personally and socially responsible through a physical activity program based upon cooperative activities. Hellison (2011) indicated that from a developmental perspective, children existed on a continuum from having no responsibility to practicing responsibility in all levels outlined in a TPSR program. Hellison's (2011) levels of responsibility are as follows: (1) respecting the rights and feelings of others; (2) participation and effort; (3) self-direction; (4) helping others and demonstrating leadership; and (5) transfer of the first four levels of responsibility to areas outside of the gym. Although Hellison discussed these characteristics as levels of responsibility, he indicated that children could move between levels one through four on any given day, hopefully becoming progressively more responsible as they sustained their participation and engagement in the program.
Another approach to looking at affective behaviors is the affective taxonomy (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1973). In the affective taxonomy there are five stages of commitment to describe the way people respond emotionally to others and grow in their attitudes and feelings. The stages exist on a continuum that ranges from a general awareness perspective to a more highly developed understanding of values, to the point where understanding guides a person’s behavior in all dimensions:

1. **Receiving**: students become aware of a behavior or attitude; can listen to others; describe behavior or attitude (e.g. participants listening to me discuss the value of respect in the awareness talk).

2. **Responding**: students actively participate in discussions, questioning new concepts to fully understand (e.g. participants answering questions about participation and effort, such as what it means and how have they shown it).

3. **Valuing**: the value a student attaches to a behavior and displays through commitment (e.g. demonstrating cooperation with other participants without having to be told to do so).

4. **Organization**: students organize values in terms of importance and make adaptations to their behavior (e.g. participants setting goals to make changes to behaviors).

5. **Internalizing values**: students integrate values on a consistent basis as part of their character (e.g. participants practicing responsible behaviors on a consistent basis as a result of becoming a responsible person).
After the 8-week TPSR program, each child fell within the first three stages of the affective taxonomy (receiving, responding, valuing) and understood at some level what it meant to be responsible individuals. Most of the children seemed to understand what it meant to respect the rights and feelings of others, participate and give effort in activities, engage independently in tasks, and embrace leadership qualities mostly through helping others, indicating that they attained the four levels of responsibility according to Hellison’s (1995; 2003; 2011) framework. There were three children (Annie, Antoinette, and Kyla) who were the exceptions and who I felt needed more time and attention to understand the essence of the responsibility values I was attempting to teach them.

I have organized my discussion of this section around the themes represented in Chapter 4. The first and second themes will respond to the first research question and third theme will respond to the second research question. The third research question will be addressed in a separate section following the three themes.

In this segment of the discussion, I first discuss respect and how the sequence of cooperative activities and post-activity discussions helped the children to understand respect in their verbal definitions as well as in their practical application of respect. Subsequently, I focus on how the children understood and practiced participation and effort. Moreover, I take the position, that participation and effort along with respect are the foundations for children to learn the other core values of self-direction and leadership. Honesty is discussed next and how the
cooperative activities tied into teaching this value, even though honesty was not a primary focus in my program. Self-direction is then discussed in terms of how the children’s understanding of self-direction became slightly more sophisticated over the time of the study through my teachings. Lastly, I talk about leadership and helping others in this section and the extent to which children understood this value and the measures I took to teach it.

For all of the responsibility values, I will discuss my teaching intentions and my expectations of the participants. I set boundaries with participants by setting rules and expectations at the beginning of each lesson and reinforcing expectations throughout each of the lessons. Benson (1997) indicated that boundaries need to be set with children and they involve giving “clear signals about what is expected, what is approved and celebrated, and what deserves censure” (p. 41). The messages, with regards to the rules, were communicated clearly and consistently in this TPSR program. In addition to the parameters I set in the program, I will speak to the pedagogical sequence of activities and how it impacted the children's understanding of the value. I will consider what methods worked, what I would have done differently, where the children fit on the affective taxonomy continuum according to their developmental understanding of the TPSR core values, and moreover, how the children have socially constructed their understanding of the responsibility values in this study. Social constructivism underscores an individual’s development through the interactions with his/her surrounding environment (Creswell, 2009). Using a social constructivist lens, I understood that the children in this study were
constantly constructing what it meant to be responsible people through communications with me as the facilitator and also with their peers. My epistemological lens was in alignment with Vygotsky’s view of children shaping their development through the stimuli in their environment (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). Finally in this section, I will compare the existing TPSR literature and youth development literature, determining similarities and differences with this current study, and moreover how my study has extended the TPSR literature and is situated within the broader literature of youth development.

**Respect.** In implementing a responsibility-based program, I had specific intentions in teaching the TPSR core values and expectations of what I wanted the students to learn over an 8-week period. Having a structure that has an embedded curriculum that crosses “domains of social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development” (Deschenes, McDonald, & McLaughlin, 2004, p. 26) is necessary for success in youth development program. I addressed the social domain by holding discussions with participants and encouraging and facilitating participation in discussions between peers. The emotional domain was addressed in the form of caring about and respecting what participants said in discussions, an indication of my respect towards them. The physical domain involved engaging participants in cooperative activities that supported physical activity while simultaneously respecting their peers. Within the cognitive domain, children were taught the verbal meanings of respect to understand the behavior and be able to practice it.
The participants were able to provide their perspectives of the respect through our post-activity discussions.

In teaching the value of respect, I intended to communicate and teach the participants that the value of *respecting the rights and feelings of others* meant the following: (1) listening while others are talking, recognizing that individuals have varying opinions; (2) controlling mouths by not saying mean or derogatory words (e.g. stupid, retarded) to other participants; (3) language is important when talking to others in terms of not just what one says, but how it is said; and (4) admitting to actions of wrong doing towards others, having a conscience. I expected that participants in this age group would grasp these concepts, at least at some basic level of understanding, specifically fitting within the first three levels (*receiving, responding, and valuing*) of the affective taxonomy and attaining the five levels of Hellison’s TPSR model. Eccles (1999) noted that children in this age group are in a critical position to receive information and use it to cope with new circumstances. I hoped that a few participants would get to the fourth level (*organization*) by making adaptations to their behaviors in most of the TPSR areas of responsibility by setting personal behavior goals but we were unable to address this level of the taxonomy. Lack of time was the main factor in not addressing *organization* with the children. During the study I did not observe consistency in the participants practicing responsible behaviors; I did not feel that they had enough time to have children set goals and note if they had attained those goals over the study. Additionally, I was
concerned with other behaviors, such as understanding and demonstrating responsible behaviors.

Teaching respect and expecting the children to practice respect was of utmost importance to me. Thus, in implementing the TPSR program in this study, I addressed the responsibility value of respect in the first days of the study. Although, the literature did not specifically discuss sequencing the content of activities in a TPSR program, Hellison (2011) denoted the importance of teaching the values of respect and participation and effort up front in a program. Similar to Hellison’s view, I felt that respect was the one of first values that children needed to understand as it is the characteristic that begins the process of developing responsibility in children. Respect allows for individuals to communicate and exist in relative harmony. Personal value assets, such as respect, “provide a foundation for wise decision-making [and] are important predictors of both non-engagement in risk behaviors and of multiple positive outcomes. And each [asset] is touted as an essential value for a humane and democratic society” (Benson, 1997, p. 49). Respect encourages kindness, cooperation, caring, and acknowledges the value of others and thus is an important concept to learn and understand early in the study and early in life. I believe that respect drives the learning of the other responsibility values.

In order to teach respect, I developed a comprehensive lesson plan that integrated this value into all components of the TPSR lesson plan (relational time, awareness talk, activity, group meeting, and reflection time). Having a good program with the appropriate curriculum “encourage[s] the development of good
habits and a wide range of competencies and life skills” (Eccles & Gootman, 2002, p. 106). Developing good habits early in life, particularly with regards to personal and social responsibility, holds significant consequences for later development in adolescence and adulthood. Rogoff, Malkin, and Gilbride (1984) noted that children come into the world prepared to learn from experienced adults and involve themselves, from an early age, in situations that allow them to learn. I specifically selected 2nd and 3rd grade students as participants in the study as no-one in the TPSR empirical literature had worked with children this young, and in addition I believed that promoting positive behaviors early in life is critical. One of my goals during this study was to help children construct the meaning of respect so they could refine and enhance their understanding of the value. At this age, children are more open and adaptable to learning concepts; they are “sponges” and at a crucial place in their development “marked by several types of advances in learning and understanding” (Eccles, 1999, p. 33). They are still malleable, which I believed provided me with an opportunity to take preventative measures by providing children with experiences that encouraged appropriate behavior before they settled into who they will become as middle school students and later as adults.

Four days were devoted to respect in the unit plan, but every day I seemed to address at least one issue surrounding respect, whether it was the children talking out of turn during a relational time or children saying mean things to each other during a post-activity discussion. During relational time, when children shared briefly with the group about their day, I showed respect by listening to them and
asked for them to listen to each other. Relational time, at the beginning of the study, was only planned for 2 to 3 minutes, but I extended the time to approximately 5 to 7 minutes to ensure that all of the participants had the chance to discuss their respective day. Hellison (2011) does not specify the amount of minutes allotted for relational time, as it depends on how much time a teacher or facilitator has for each lesson. Most of the TPSR literature does not specify how much time was devoted to relational time with the exception of two studies, Escarti et al. (2010a) and Escarti et al. (2010b), which both indicated that they spent 1-2 minutes in relational time. I felt more time was needed to build relationships with the participants and thus I allotted more time to this area. I would recommend spending between 5 to 7 minutes in relational time for a group of 10 to 15 participants, so that all of the participants have an opportunity to share feelings about their day. After I engaged students in relational time, I followed up with the awareness talk, defining specifically what respect meant, particularly on the first day I covered it. In the subsequent 3 days of focusing on respect (Day 4, Day 11, Day 12) in the awareness talk, I asked the children if they remembered what it meant and I filled in the blanks, if they missed any parts of the meaning. The awareness talk was brief, occupying 1 to 2 minutes of the lesson plan, which was ample time to cover respect. I adhered to Hellison’s recommendation of keeping the awareness talk brief and would recommend this amount of time to other TPSR facilitators. I felt the need to cover the value briefly and then get into the physical activity portion of the lesson and reinforce respect through the children’s participation.
The gym activities lasted approximately 25 minutes and consisted of cooperative activities (e.g. ‘Everybody’s It’, ‘Crows and Cranes’). Eccles & Gootman (2002) suggested that activities in youth development programs should be cooperative ones to promote cooperation amongst children working towards a shared goal rather than competition. Cooperative activities were used in my TPSR program because they were able to capture the essence of the responsibility values I taught to the participants. Engaging children in cooperative activities helps students understand and works towards community. I created an atmosphere in which the participants could work together towards group goals. For instance, cooperative activities underscored the value of respect by having rules embedded within the activity that encompassed tagging each other on the back or shoulder without pushing and encouraged participants to work together. In addition, underserved second and third graders have a higher probability of a developmental delay in motor skills due to environmental circumstances (e.g. low socioeconomic status, poor neighborhoods, lack of community support) (Goodway & Branta, 2003; Goodway & Rudisill, 1997; Robinson & Goodway, 2009). Therefore, engaging children of this age in cooperative activities was advantageous because it not only allowed me to have more freedom in the curriculum, but also gave me the opportunity to delve into the activities without having to teach specific sports skills of which they may not have been proficient. Typical TPSR studies utilized sports skills and may have been able to do so because the participants were older than the ones involved in this study. If I had used a sport for the activity portion of the
lesson, I would have not have been able to go into as much depth in teaching responsibility values because I would have spent a lot of time focused on teaching sport skills (e.g. dribbling a basketball). Using cooperative activities allowed for all of the participants in this study to be at a similar level of basic skills (e.g. running, throwing) and participate equally in all of the games. Cooperative activities were conducive to children of this age group, who may have had delayed motor skills and thus, should be used more often to teach responsible behaviors. I recommend that cooperative activities should be used more in TPSR programs as the activities fit well within a responsibility-based framework since the activities focus on some aspect of responsibility.

After facilitating the cooperative activities in the lesson, the children were given the opportunity to discuss their opinions about the activities in the group meeting, such as whether or not they liked them. Listening to young people talk about their experiences can inform effective practices in youth programming (O'Sullivan & MacPhail, 2010). Hellison (2011) suggested discussions at the end of the gym activities so that participants could, “express their opinions of the day’s activities and processes and how to make improvements [and also] so that students can evaluate how personally and socially responsible they were that day” (p. 49). In talking about the activities, I would ask the children to be sure that they were listening while others were talking because it was respectful to do so and I reinforced this type of respect throughout the group meeting. Approximately 5 to 10 minutes was spent in the group meeting and 15-20 minutes was spent in the
reflection time for a total of 20 to 25 minutes spent in post-activity discussion. This was a good amount of time spent in discussion because I felt this to be the crux of the entire lesson and wanted each child to have the chance to contribute to the discussion. The trade-off in having a long discussion time in the lesson meant less activity time was planned in the less, approximately five less minutes. I planned for this discussion time in each lesson, although at the beginning of the study, I held discussions for approximately 20 minutes or less. As the study progressed, the discussion time was extended to 25 minutes and closer to 27 to 28 minutes in the last few lessons, which usually meant an extension of the entire lesson. Hellison (2011) suggested that 5 to 10 minutes be spent in the area, which was devoted mostly to reflective journaling for the participants in TPSR studies (e.g. DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Escarti et al., 2010a; Martinek et al., 2001; Walsh, 2008; Walsh et al., 2010). In each of these studies, the researchers did not hold in-depth discussions about responsibility values during the reflective period. For example, Escarti et al. (2010a) spent only 2 to 3 minutes in reflection time, at the conclusion of the lesson, having the participants give written self-evaluations. My role as suggested by Knapp (1990) was to create a situation in which children could learn about themselves and others through group debriefings, which were semi-structured with pre-planned questions. Having time for these interactions between the participants creates opportunities for children to take a central role in their own learning by talking and sharing information with each other (Sutherland, 2012). I believe that not enough time is spent in the TPSR literature in discussion with participants to
make connections between the participants’ behaviors in gym activities and the behaviors they should be exhibiting outside of the gym. In the current study, the extended 25 to 28 minutes of reflection time connected the activity with the participants’ behaviors. Additionally, opportunities were provided for the respect they learned in the TPSR program to be discussed and potentially transferred to the typical YMCA program and their classrooms. I specifically asked questions to the participants about how they showed respect currently, the consequences of not demonstrating respect, and the steps they would take to practice respect in the future.

Through this debriefing process, I was able to understand how the children constructed their knowledge and understanding of respect through their interactions with their peers and me. Eccles and Gootman (2002) suggested that instruction should include an “active construction of knowledge rather than reproducing or repeating facts and views expressed by teachers” (p. 108). Vygotsky also believed that children “do not passively reproduce what is presented to them” (Bodrova & Leong, 2007, p. 9). Eccles and Gootman's (2002) thoughts on instruction aligns with my own program’s instruction that provided an open arena for participants to learn with my assistance by stimulating a dialogue that helped them to construct knowledge (e.g. asking what respect looks like, feels like, and sounds like). As a social constructivist, I actively engaged the participants in gaining an understanding of responsibility concepts by facilitating discussions amongst the group to help them learn and demonstrate responsibility values. The children were
able to reflect upon their own behaviors as well as discuss what responsibility values looked like, did not look like, sounded like, and felt like. Through this process of reflection and discussion, I was able to better understand how children socially constructed their meaning of responsibility values, specifically respect in this case. Vygotsky’s social development theory is one of the foundations of social constructivism and it suggests that learning is a social process and knowledge is constructed through both past and present interactions (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985). Obviously, I can only control the interactions the children had with me and their peers, but feel that I created an environment that promoted the construction of knowledge of responsibility values over the time of the 8-week study.

Spending time on teaching the value of respect within the first few days of the program and in all areas of the lesson plan was important to help children grasp the concept. By teaching respect up front, I gave the children many opportunities to practice it throughout the program and laid the foundation for the other core values to be learned. In learning any skill, practice is a necessary process to hone in and adopt the skill. Vygotsky (1978) emphasized that learning takes place in a zone of proximal development in which children practice skills through their interactions with others. The zone of proximal development is a concept that involves teachers or more knowledgeable individuals meeting children at their respective learning levels and, through collaborations and guidance, building upon what they already know to further their development (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978).
“defines those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86) with the understanding that what children are able to do with support today, they will be able to do independently tomorrow. As the study progressed and the children's understanding of respect was enhanced, less time was devoted to teaching respect because the children had been given assistance on how to define and practice respect towards each other. They were able to explain respect to me, even though they did not always practice it.

Most of the children had an existing knowledge of what some of the responsible behaviors entailed, at a basic level, but grew to gain a more sophisticated understanding of the responsibility values of TPSR over the time of the 8-week study. What I realized in reflecting upon the study implementation was that it was easier to teach the cognitive aspects ("knowing") of respect, participation, self-direction, and leadership than to teach the behavioral aspects ("doing") to the participants. Teaching the "knowing" aspect of the curriculum required me to define the value for the participants, integrate the value into the activity curriculum, and facilitate a discussion surrounding the activity, the value, and the children's behaviors. Teaching the "knowing" aspect of the curriculum focuses on children understanding the responsibility values, in particular being able to define and make meaning of them. On the other hand, teaching the "doing" part is much more difficult and I had much harder time with getting children to practice responsible behaviors on a consistent basis. Teaching the "doing" part means to help children to act responsibly on a consistent basis across different contexts. In
order to demonstrate consistent behaviors I believe that children need to understand and value the TPSR core characteristic, but also need to develop a skill set to master these values and practice them across contexts. Part of what makes TPSR a unique responsibility model is the notion that children integrate responsibility values into their internalized value system, practicing responsible behaviors both inside and outside of the gym (e.g. classroom, home, neighborhood) even when conditions are not ideal.

For instance, in the first interviews, all children understood respect to mean following instructions, not physically harming anyone, and treating others with kindness (P11). I reminded them consistently in our lessons of what it meant and they extended their meaning to include considering others and being fair (VFN D3, VFN D4, VFN D11, and VFN D12). The children seemed to associate these deeper meanings with respect by the end of the study and furthermore showed their understandings through their demonstrations of respect in activities, albeit inconsistently.

Upon discussing respecting the rights and feeling of others after the gym activities, the children indicated that respect should be demonstrated as a positive behavior. Most of the children described respect as being friendly towards each other, treating people as they would want to be treated, and listening to others when they were talking. In this current study, the participants also defined respecting their peers as speaking in a respectful manner to one another. On Day
10, for example, the children expressed that not speaking nicely to people was a rude behavior (VFN D10).

The children had different levels of understanding of what it meant to be respectful to others. Some understood this value at a very basic, rudimentary level while others were able to convey a deeper meaning of respect over the course of the study. For instance, on Day 3, Kaleb provided a simple, narrow definition of respect indicating that it meant to squat down when tagged in a tag game. Whereas, on Day 12, Kaleb provided a more broad response saying that respect meant that people should treat others the way they want to be treated. Hannah was another example of a child providing a more developed definition of respect. On Day 3, she described respect as being kind and listening when other people are talking, but extended her definition to include helping others by Day 11. Both Kaleb and Hannah seemed to grasp the notion of respect at a more advanced level over the other children in the program. I believe it was because of their foundations at home. Both Kaleb and Hannah had parents who were constant in their lives, promoting responsibility, and both of them seemingly had positive characteristics prior to entering my program. All of the participants got to the *responding* stage of the affective taxonomy as they were able to answer questions surrounding respect, such as what it looked like, sounded like, felt like, and how they showed it towards others.

Although the children could tell me the characteristics of respect, their ability to demonstrate respect was more challenging for them. They demonstrated respect on an intermittent basis since they sometimes showed disrespect towards each
other by talking out of turn, pushing to get into line, or saying mean things to one another. Hannah and Kaleb, however, seemed to approach the 

*valuing* level, as they seemed to embrace respect both verbally and practically on a consistent basis. Hannah, for instance, helped out Naomi and Kyla by explaining the directions of an activity because the two girls were not listening to the instructions that I had given them. Kaleb embodied his definition of respect by maintaining a calm demeanor when he did not react to Antoinette hitting and pushing him (VFN D11). I believed Hannah and Kaleb to be two of the more mature children in the group. While I felt that I contributed to their more insightful understanding of respect, I also recognize that they had a foundation in understanding respect prior to participating in my TPSR program.

Most of the children in this current study showed more respect towards each other in practicing self-control and following the rules of a game. Specifically, children demonstrated more self-control by listening and not interrupting others while talking more consistently, although this was the most challenging aspect of respect for them to practice. Also, the participants acknowledged getting tagged in tagging games which not only showed their practice of honest behaviors, but also demonstrated more respect for the rules of the game and ultimately towards other participants by playing fairly. Cecchini et al. (2007), Walsh (2008), and Walsh et al. (2010) findings suggested that their participants improved their self-control and treated other individuals in a more respectful manner over the term of the studies. For instance, Walsh et al. (2010) explored the impact of a coaching club infused with
a TPSR framework on 13 elementary-aged students. They found significant improvements in self-control and overall respect towards peers in the school environment. My findings were consistent with the findings from the three TPSR studies with regards to respect.

In addition, I believed that language was an important part of how children learned about respect and demonstrated respect. For example, the words a peer used to ask for something or a teacher spoke to participants to complete a task was important to the children in this study. A few of the participants specifically indicated that it was better to not ask someone to do a task or speak to an individual, in general, in a rude manner (VFN D10). Language is used as a valuable tool for communication between individuals (Bodrova & Leong, 2007). Using the appropriate tone, tactfully conveying statements, and taking turns speaking are important for peer relationships (Reed, McLeod, & McAllister, 1999). Reed et al. (1999) found that vocal tone interpretation and the conversational partner’s perspective were of high importance to the adolescent participants in their study. The children, in this current study, were emotionally charged, passionate even, when speaking of language, particularly about not being rude to one another and teachers and youth care staff showing kind behaviors towards them.

*Teaching respect.* Often I did not have to say any words to reinforce respect. For instance, during our group discussions at the end of the lessons, children were not always respectful towards others as they would talk or make noise when others were talking (e.g. VFN D3; VFN D6; VFN D8). Sometimes I just had to give the
children a look and they stopped talking, for example, and I did not need to say a word and therefore, only seconds were needed to address respect. Providing guidelines and setting reasonable expectations for acceptable behavior influences positive behavior standards and reinforce the boundaries set for children in youth development programs (Benson, 1997). I set standards for respect at the beginning of each lesson and reinforced these guidelines throughout the lessons over the time of the study and thus minimal time was needed to reinforce these guidelines as the study proceeded over the 8 week period and children became more respectful towards each other over time.

Tracking and describing how behaviors tied to respect changed in individuals over time helped me to understand what children had learned about respect from my program. Also, on what level the children were within the affective taxonomy continuum. Previous TPSR studies had not tracked children to determine a change in their behaviors or intentions to practice responsible behaviors. Thus, this approach added a new dimension to the TPSR literature. One study by Walsh et al. (2010) did track behaviors over the course of their program and found that the individuals progressed from a primitive understanding of respect to a more mature understanding by demonstrating control over their tempers and treating people in a more respectful manner overall. Noting the trajectory of individual students over the course of a TPSR program is an important addition to the TPSR literature. Having an understanding of what changes took place over the time of the study can help practitioners understand the programmatic impact on individuals and help
them to better understand the developmental changes that can take place in the children.

**Participation and effort.** My intentions for teaching participation and effort involved helping the participants in my program to understand that participation and effort meant to: (1) give their best effort in all tasks; (2) participate fully in all activities; (3) try out new tasks; and (4) cooperate with their peers. Participation and effort as well as respect are viewed as the, “beginning stages of responsibility development” (Hellison, 2011, p. 32). Therefore, the first few days of the study were devoted to participation and effort and respect. Both were infused constantly into activities whether in the gym or within the classroom for discussions. Respect and participation and effort required children to include others in activities despite any potential negative personal feelings towards them, to cooperate with peers, and to have consideration for others. These characteristics set the stage for developing responsible behaviors in individuals by emphasizing the notion of human decency.

When children were initially asked what participation and effort meant to them in discussions and interviews, they associated the values with doing their best work and listening and following the directions of their teacher at the beginning of the study. By the end of the study, some understood participation and effort to mean to engage in a cooperative manner with others in activities and a willingness to participate in all of the activities from the relational time at the beginning of the lesson to the reflection time at the end of the lesson. The TPSR literature did not discuss the “knowing” part of participation and effort, specifically how their
participants verbally understood this value. Instead, the TPSR literature focused on the “doing” aspect of participation and effort.

Most of the group in this current study showed more ability to work together over the time of the study. They were willing to participate in all of the activities and work with any of the other participants, showing their understanding of teamwork. Martinek et al. (2001), Walsh et al. (2010), and Wright et al. (2010) found that it was not difficult to get their participants to try out activities. Specifically, Walsh et al. (2010), in their study with 9 to 11 year olds learned that over 45 sessions in two years that their participants were more willing to work with each other and talk problems out with the group. In this study, I observed participants engaging fully in a game of ‘Asteroids’ when during one stage of the game they had to help each other return to the game once tagged. The children acted selflessly in freeing their peers and showed cooperation in their willingness to work with and help any of the peers. This is just one example of the participants demonstrating the value of participation and effort, particularly showing their ability to “do” this aspect of the TPSR value.

The first two days of the study were focused on participation and effort as well as Days 9 and 10 of the study. The lessons integrated participation and effort within all aspects of the plan through an initial explanation of the values, followed by practice and discussions. Embedding responsibility values, such as participation and effort, in the lesson content enhances the effectiveness of learning the behavior (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Hellison, 2011). For instance, on Day 1, I explained the
definition of participation and effort, and then during the activity of 'Run Rabbit Run', I reinforced the concepts of fully participating and giving their best effort. During the post-activity discussion, I asked the participants how they had shown participation and effort in the gym activities and subsequently to operationalize the value by telling me what participation and effort looked like and did not look like. Vygotsky’s (1978) social development theory suggests children play an active role in acquiring knowledge. Therefore, by holding discussions to gain constructed meanings of participation and effort from the children, I facilitated them in actively learning what it meant to participate and give their best effort in our group reflection time. In discussions on Days 1 and 2, I asked if they had shown participation and effort, then how they had shown it and if they had not shown participation and effort, how could they show it in the classroom and the YMCA? In later lessons on Days 9 and 10, I reiterated what participation and effort meant in the awareness talk by asking the participants how they would define the values, and then they engaged in activities new to them and fully participated in the cooperative games and discussions that followed in the classroom. The participants were engaged in the discussion by contributing their opinions more openly in the later days of the study than they had done at the beginning of the study. Additionally, a few participants associated respect with participation and effort and contributing to class discussions. From my observations, by this time of the study, the participants seemed more willing to work with others, not having as much concern about the people with whom they were partnered for activities, for example. Participation
and effort was reinforced inherently by the participants’ contributions to the group meeting and reflection time.

By having a systematic pedagogy in which children heard the value, practiced the value, had the value reinforced, and were able to break down the value in discussions, I provided them with opportunities to move from a simplistic meaning of participation and effort to a more developed level of understanding. The zone of proximal development, within social development theory, represents a continuum of learning and each child becomes “more capable of learning more complex concepts and skills” with the assistance of a more knowledgeable individual (Bodrova & Leong, 2007, p. 41). Thus, in developing the TPSR program, I sequenced the activities in an age-appropriate manner by beginning with simple ways to give their best effort (e.g. staying on task; participating in all activities) and cooperate with their peers to more challenging activities (e.g. working with all peers, not just friends; engaging in difficult discussions about individual behaviors) later in the program to assist them in gaining a deeper understanding of participation and effort. The lesson plans incorporated cooperative activities that were unfamiliar to the children so that they had the opportunity to engage in new tasks where prior learning did not influence their behaviors.

Understanding how to give one’s best effort and to cooperate with others is essential to life. Also, being able to take on unfamiliar tasks opens the mind to be flexible in new situations one may encounter. Trying out new things allows for exposure to things that an individual may have not otherwise attempted to find out.
if she likes them. For example, in the study, the children had never played 'Wizards and Geflings', a tag game that required students to help each other, once tagged and frozen, to become unfrozen by partnering with a peer. This activity was new to the participants, but they seemed to enjoy it because of its continuous nature and it was different than they were used to when playing other tag games. Shernoff and Vandell (2007) suggested in their findings that having non-competitive, non-sport activities enhances participant engagement. Throughout the program, I believe that I was successful in keeping children interested and highly engaged in activities by having a curriculum that consisted of fun, creative cooperative activities, which promoted and enabled an atmosphere for high participation and good effort in a non-competitive manner. This is the first TPSR study to use a cooperative activities approach with participants. I thought it was valuable to use cooperative activities because the activities allowed the opportunity for children to build community in a non-competitive atmosphere without being skill-driven and I would highly recommend using such activities in future research.

I facilitated learning the values of participation and effort by guiding the participants through the five parts of the lesson plan; relational time (5-7 minutes), awareness talk (1-2 minutes), activity (20-25 minutes), group meeting (5-10 minutes), and reflection time (20-25 minutes). Each portion of the lesson had a focus on participation and effort. The time spent on each lesson part was approximately the same for each value covered in the 8-week program. For instance, a few of the activities included games such as ‘Rock, Paper, Scissors Tag’,
‘Crows and Cranes’, and ‘Turnstile’ that helped the children focus on working as a team and trying out new tasks. Working as a team and trying out new tasks were two of my key intentions of developing participation and effort in children. In addition, holding discussions, of approximately 25 minutes, that complimented the activity reinforced the concept of participation and effort and often reinforced additional responsibility values giving children time to construct their own meaning of this value. Spending this amount of time in discussing the values of participation and effort gave children the opportunity to have a deeper understanding of it and also to practice it. Having quality discussions takes time. Giving children plenty of time “to think about answers, then about how they will respond within the context of the group” is an important process (Priest & Glass, 1997, p. 191). It is necessary for the facilitator to listen to participants and be able to respond and progress the thoughtfulness and wisdom of participants (Gass, 1990). As the study progressed the children became more reflective and involved in the group discussions which consequently led to longer, deeper discussions. Children were able to make more meaning of the responsibility values through our discussions when I listened to their comments and responded in a way that pushed their thinking. For instance, I connected participation with helping others by asking them how they had helped each other in a game of ‘Help Tag’ because it facilitated considering another person, cooperating with him or her, one of the underlying notions of participation.

Nevertheless, it is challenging for children of this age (8 and 9 years old) to have a deep understanding of participation and effort from a developmental
At this age children are still socially constructing their values through their experiences and I was helping to do that within my program. The time I spent on the value of participation and effort was limited, due to the nature of an 8-week program with two sessions per week of an hour each. This time frame allowed me to address specific values only four times in the study. The length of my program did fall within the range for the length of time for other TPSR studies which was between 5 and 36 weeks, but it was considerably less than the average of 17.6 weeks. Children need time in a program to experience its effects in order for them to have the opportunities to develop skills (Anderson-Butcher & Fink, 2005; Eccles & Gootman, 2002). Time is a huge limitation in the TPSR literature and my study was similar in this way. Having only 8 weeks gave me limited opportunities to promote the participants’ development of all of the responsibility values. It takes time for children to socially construct and learn values through the social interactions within their environment and unfortunately, this study did not have the luxury of time.

There were a few children who, despite the limited time, were able to move along the affective taxonomy and expand their knowledge of participation and effort. For instance, one student, Edie seemed to depict and explain a slightly more sophisticated interpretation of participation and effort over the 8-week study. She extended her meaning of participation and effort to include not hitting other people, which indicated that her understanding of participation and effort was expanded to encompass respect. Bodrova and Leong (2007) discussed how the size of a child’s
zone of proximal development differs amongst children since children learn at
different rates. Edie seemed to exist further on the continuum of the affective
taxonomy of educational objectives, seemingly at the *responding* stage as it related
to values of participation and effort at the end of the 8-week program. For example,
she had a more comprehensive view over two other students, Annie and Johnny,
depicted participation and effort in their pictures to mean responding to a teacher’s
questions in class and following classroom instructions. Annie and Johnny seemed
to reflect the *receiving* level on the spectrum with their basic understanding of
participation and effort. Edie’s understanding of participation and effort advanced
over the study whereas Annie’s and Johnny’s understanding seemed to stay the
same over the same time frame.

For one child, Antoinette, she fit on the low end of the *receiving* level of the
affective taxonomy because even though she could communicate what participation
and effort entailed, she was not able to consistently demonstrate it. Also, she did not
work well, at times, with two of the girls in the group. Sometimes, she did not act in
a cooperative manner and her dislike for one of the girls seemed to be the
underlying reason. Had I been able to give more individual attention to Antoinette
(e.g. finding out more about her personal life to gain insight to her personality) and
the time of the program was longer, I feel that I could have had an impact on her
behavior towards her peers. Anderson-Butcher et al. (2004) found that the length
of time in a program, in general, was not significant necessarily, but the relationship
with a supportive adult staff made a difference in participants’ behaviors. Vygotsky
(1978) noted that some children need more assistance in learning skills than others. This was a limitation of my program, as I was not prepared to meet the challenges of students like Antoinette with the curriculum I developed, the time allotted to each lesson, and the overall time for the program.

There may have been a few factors which played into Antoinette’s understanding and absorbing the concepts of participation and effort and other responsibility values. I was not aware fully of Antoinette’s experiences prior to entering the program and knowing her entry characteristics may have held significant consequences for programmatic development. Fraser and Galinsky (1997), Lawson and Anderson-Butcher (2000), and Li et al. (2007) noted that identifying and understanding risk factors (e.g. poverty, dysfunctional family, negative neighborhoods) in children should guide the development of a program’s curriculum. If I had identified Antoinette’s risk factors, I could have had a better idea of how to moderate her risks with protective factors (e.g. supportive adult, structure, boundaries), and possibly been able to give her more guidance towards developing responsible behaviors in my program. Nonetheless, most participants in this current study seemed to understand participation and effort from a verbal and practical standpoint, but one was especially challenged in demonstrating these values.

**Honesty.** Honesty was a character value that emerged from the data during the analysis process. One of the strengths of qualitative research is that it is inductive, allowing information to materialize as the researcher collects and
analyzes data. I had no intentions when it came to teaching this particular value, as it was not a core value in TPSR or a focus of the 8-week TPSR program. After the first day in the study, I realized that it would become an inherent focus, especially when I noticed that children demonstrated dishonesty in tag games. Although the TPSR literature does not focus on honesty, there were two studies (Cecchini et al., 2007; Mowling et al., 2011) who mentioned it. Mowling et al. explored their participants’ representation of personal and social responsibility, noting that the girl participants spoke of honesty only as it pertained to telling the truth about how a person looked (e.g. hair was messy or unkempt), and felt it was their responsibility to tell the person that he or she should not come to school looking that way. Cecchini et al.’s study was more in alignment with my study as one of his foci over his two month study was on fair play. I believed that honesty was an important concept to have emerged in this study. In fact, honesty or dishonesty could be seen throughout the program, particularly on days that I focused on respect, participation, and effort and had the children play tag games. However, I only addressed honesty formally in the last interview and on the last day of the program. Benson (1997) outlines honesty as one of the internal developmental assets and as a key component of positive youth development and bringing out the best in all children. I feel that honesty is an important quality in an individual as it reflects personal integrity and consideration of others. Additionally, I consider honesty an essential quality of a relationship, as problems can arise when dishonesty is involved, impacting other people’s lives. Honesty can determine how individuals...
carry out their daily lives by having good character and building lasting relationships. Neither Hellison nor any of his colleagues focused on honesty as a character value in their studies, but it underscores having respect for others.

I taught honesty in an indirect way throughout the program by reinforcing honest behaviors in activities. I held the children accountable for their actions, particularly stopping them from cheating in games. For instance, in tag games, I reminded the participants that if they did not acknowledge getting tagged, then they were exhibiting dishonest behavior. There were some participants who tended to “stretch” the rules at times when they thought I was not paying attention. I called them out on not following the game rules, reinforcing honesty as a respectful and fair behavior to be shown towards others. Although Hellison (2011) did not discuss honesty explicitly in his text, one could argue that honesty is a part of respect. In Hellison’s description of respect, he denotes that one aspect of respect is accepting responsibility for actions, such as following game rules. As the study progressed and with my guidance, participants were able to demonstrate more honesty in games despite the short amount of time formally devoted to it. Similar to this current study, Cecchini et al. (2007) had findings that indicated that their participants reduced the amount of rule infractions significantly over the course of their study. Cecchini et al. conducted a quasi-experimental study and did not gather in-depth information as it related to their children’s verbal understanding of honesty. However, my participants associated honesty with accountability in school, telling on others who were doing the wrong thing, playing fairly in games,
and not cheating on class tests. Their understanding was limited to school and the TPSR program, which was warranted given the time spent on this topic. I cannot say whether or not the honesty of an individual or the group changed over the course of the study since I did not collect data on this value from the beginning of the study. Nevertheless, I do believe that honesty should be added to the TPSR core values and should be taught simultaneously with respect up front at the start of a TPSR-infused curriculum.

It was difficult for me to determine the level of impact I had on the children in developing honesty, even though I constantly reinforced that the participants needed to admit when they were tagged in games, for instance. Nevertheless, I felt like I should have focused on honesty more in the study. I could have made the connection clearer between playing fairly in the games and honesty and possibly even teased out the term more by engaging children in discussions about what honesty looked like, did not look like, sounded like, and felt like. I think that I should have spent time on honesty rather than self-direction, for example, because I felt that honesty is on the same level of importance as respect and participation and effort. If I had to do it all over again, I would have focused on respect, participation and effort, and honesty for the entire 8 weeks, incorporating leadership and helping others under the guise of those three values. I feel that honesty is a key part of respect, participation, and effort and deserves to be on the same level as those responsibility values noted in the TPSR framework. However, honesty is not
mentioned in any of the TPSR literature. Based on my study with 8 and 9 year old
children, honesty does warrant a focus early in a TPSR program.

**Self-direction.** Self-direction was a challenging value to teach children of this age and with limited time. Nevertheless, I intended for children to understand two concepts underlying self-direction as follows: (1) working independently without my supervision and prompting and (2) resisting peer pressure to do the wrong thing and staying on task. Self-direction was addressed first on Day 5 of the study because although this value was important, it had to do with participants monitoring themselves and resisting peer influence, “personal” aspects of the TPSR model. Hellison (2011) indicated that children who show self-direction have already demonstrated their respect for the rights and feelings of others as well as their participation and effort. He stated, “The first step [of self-direction] is to move from the more teacher-directed confines to on-task independence [and] working toward an understanding of one’s needs” (Hellison, 2011, p. 38-39). In this study, I focused the children on behaving independently of their peers and managing their own behavior.

The children did not know the term, ‘self-direction’ when it was first presented to them. They came to learn the term and its meaning through my initial explanation in the awareness talk on Day 5 and subsequent discussions later in the program. Like the other values, I proceeded through the same lesson plan sequencing of explaining the value in the awareness talk, having activities that focused on the children staying on task, then following up the awareness talk and
gym activities with discussions about what self-direction looked like, did not look like, felt like, and sounded like on Days 5 and 6. The conversation post-activity was extended so I could learn how the participants showed self-direction and what showing it looked like to them in the classroom and the YMCA. Further focus on self-direction took place on Days 13 and 14 of the study in which I asked the children how they had shown self-direction and also, how did they know they showed it. This was an extension from Days 5 and 6, when the children were asked what self-direction looked like, did not look like, sounded like, and felt like. Some of the children seemed to have a slightly deeper understanding of the concept by Day 14 when they described their actions in their classrooms, for instance, moving away from others who distracted them from doing school work or doing what they were supposed to do as per the direction of the teacher.

My implementation of self-direction was similar to Walsh et al. (2010) and Wright et al. (2010) which both embedded self-direction into the TPSR curriculum and structured lessons so participants could experience success in learning this value. Similar to Walsh et al. (2010), I used structured pedagogical strategies to promote the learning of self-direction, such as not only embedding the curriculum into the lesson, but also reinforcing expectations and guiding participants through structured discussions at the end of the lesson to enhance their learning. Spending time on this value in various aspects of the lesson allowed for the children to gain a minimal level of understanding by getting self-direction defined for them, playing it out in gym activities, and engaging in discussions to reinforce its meaning.
The participants expressed a basic understanding of self-direction verbally. They understood it as on-task independence and not letting peers dissuade them from completing their work in the classroom. Since self-direction was infused into the entire lesson, I promoted a more thorough understanding of the value. I was successful in getting most of the children to understand and practice self-direction in the way that I had communicated it to them in the lessons that focused on it. However, the children did not practice self-direction on a consistent basis. Self-direction requires a commitment to learning, developing social competencies, and gaining positive identity, which are internal assets that underscore resisting peer pressure, having personal power, and individuality, all of which facilitate positive youth development (Benson, 1997). Attaining these internal assets gives children more protective factors in an environment riddled with many risk factors (Fraser et al., 2004; Garmezy, 1991; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2000; Li et al., 2007; Smith & Carlson, 1997). Showing that some children, in this current study, made strides in learning responsibility values, self-direction in this case, speaks to their enhanced social competencies and thus increased protective factors.

Most of the children were at the responding level of the continuum because of their ability to participate in discussions, particularly being able to respond to questions related to self-direction. They were only able to give a simple definition based on my instruction. However, there was one child, Caitlyn who I felt could have progressed further along the affective taxonomy had the study been longer than 8 weeks. Caitlyn showed a positive trajectory for enhancing her understanding
of self-direction. For example, in her first interview, Caitlyn indicated that she was okay to work independently sometimes, which she described as not copying off of people’s test papers, but in a contradictory manner also said that she tended to follow others. Over the course of the study with my guidance and direction, I noticed some changes in Caitlyn and these changes were evident later in the study. On Day 14, Caitlyn first demonstrated self-direction in ‘Modified Dodge Ball’ by retrieving a fitness card, which meant she acknowledged getting tagged and did not follow some of her peers who did not respond to getting tagged. Then, in the discussion following the lesson, Caitlyn evaluated her behavior and recognized that she showed self-direction by staying on task and not following her peers. This was an indicator of how she had matured over the study with regards to this value. In consideration of the affective taxonomy, Caitlyn seemed to fall into the responding level. She became aware of her inclination to follow others and made a conscious effort to change, but I felt that she was on her way to the valuing level, if the program had been longer. She was just starting to understand and demonstrate how to be independent at the end of the study.

The value of self-direction is a difficult concept to grasp because there were several components (e.g. independence, goal-setting, taking care of own well-being, having a focus on one’s needs and not wants). I think all of these components, except focusing on one’s needs and not wants, are appropriate for second and third graders. I did not feel that this group of participants was capable at this stage of development to have a focus on their needs. Children need assistance in
understanding what their needs are and instructional processes can help them in this development (Bodrova & Leong, 2007). Between 6 and 10 years old, children are just beginning to acquire theoretical reasoning (Bodrova & Leong, 2007) and therefore, I believed that it was not developmentally appropriate to have the children focus on their needs. In addition, there was not enough time in this study to attend to all of the components of self-direction extensively. Therefore, one of the principal limitations in this study was time, time in the length of the study as well as the length of each lesson in only two days of the week.

Several TPSR studies had findings that showed improvements in the self-direction of their participants (Gordon, 2010; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Lee & Martinek, 2009; Martinek et al., 2001; Walsh et al., 2010; Wright et al., 2010). Of these studies, there were only three which had participants who were close in age to the participants in this current study (Lee & Martinek, 2009; Martinek et al., 2001; Walsh et al., 2010). Participants in these studies ranged in age from 9 to 11 years old (4th to 6th grade) and in my study, children were 8 and 9 years old in the 2nd and 3rd grades. In addition, the current study emphasized tracking participants in their understanding of self-direction and noticed improvements in some of the participants. In alignment with my study, Walsh et al. (2010) was the only study that tracked their participants over the time of the study and the findings indicated that most of them acted independently. Walsh et al.’s participants were also able to set short-term and long-term personal goals (e.g. finishing homework, learning and listening in school) over the 6-month study period, unlike this current study which
did not have the capacity, over 8 weeks, to address setting goals with participants. In addition, there were a few participants in this current study who did not show self-direction. Although all of the participants received the same instruction, the children absorbed the information differently and either consciously chose not to or did not understand how to act independently. Through a social constructivist lens, I positioned the children to interact with their peers and me as a means for them to socially construct their understanding of self-direction. Perhaps my instructions, demonstrations, and reinforcements of the concept of self-direction were not taught at a developmental level so that all participants could understand its meaning.

Vygotsky (1978) noted that the zone of proximal development is unique to each child’s individual learning and development. This zone represents the potential for learning with guidance from a knowledgeable person. I taught self-direction in a way that I thought was conducive to children of this age through having a systematic implementation, following a pre-planned curriculum, embedding the responsibility values in the lesson, and reinforcing self-direction in lessons. Most children understood self-direction at a basic level.

**Leadership and helping others.** The responsibility value of leadership and helping others was a culmination of acquiring all of the previous responsibility values up to this point and therefore was tackled last in the sequence of the TPSR values. In teaching leadership and helping others, I intended for the children to learn that this value meant to: (1) model responsible behaviors; (2) lead others in tasks; and (3) practice empathy with others. Hellison (2011) indicated that
leadership and helping others expands an individual’s responsibility because it involves having responsibility and consideration for another individual. The focus in any positive youth development programs should include adults facilitating positive social norms, opportunities to learn social skills, helping children to show personal responsibility and demonstrating integrity (Benson, 1997; Coatsworth & Conroy, 2007; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2000).

Leadership embodies all of these attributes as per the TPSR and broader youth development literature and thus, having some understanding of respect, participation, and self-direction was warranted before I focused on leadership in the current study.

Similar to the other responsibility values, I engaged the participants in a lesson plan that integrated leadership and helping others into all portions of the lesson plan. In the awareness talk on Day 7, I briefly talked about leadership, but defined it in more depth surrounding the contexts of the games they played for the activity segment of the lesson. The activities of the day were ‘Captain’s Calling’ and ‘Fox in the Morning’, both of which were designed to be led by one of the children in each round to give the participants a leadership opportunity. When a child did a good job leading an activity, I pointed it out, usually at the end of the activity to acknowledge that they did a good job and what that looked like to the rest of the participants. Vygotsky’s approach to learning supports that teachers guide and reinforce positive behaviors to learn any type of skill (Bodrova & Leong, 2007). Thus to promote children learning the concept of leadership, I put the participants
in a position to be leaders, mostly pertaining to the activities in various lessons. Also, there were a few children who drove the discussion topics or in one instance a child (Hannah) led the post-activity group meeting with her own line of questioning. Per the typical lesson plan (e.g. Day 7 and Day 8), the children and I discussed what leadership and helping others looked like, did not look like, sounded like, and felt like, as well as how the children showed leadership in the TPSR program, their classroom, and the YMCA.

In the beginning of this current study, the children understood leadership and helping others to mean mostly not following their peers and assisting peers and teachers in tasks, respectively. More characteristics of a leader emerged in our conversations over the TPSR program and some children were able to move from a simple interpretation of leadership to a more advanced level of understanding by the end of the study. For example, in Hannah’s first interview, she noted that a leader meant to never follow another individual and working hard. She expanded her definition of a leader to add that being a leader required one to follow instructions on Day 7 of the study. By Day 15, Hannah provided four more points on leadership and helping others, different from her other responses indicating that the value meant to be caring, respectful, honest and overall a responsible person. Also, Avery was an example of another child in the program who showed an enhanced understanding of leadership over the study period. In his first definition, he simply stated that leadership meant to be responsible. By Day 15 of Avery had expanded his view of leadership and helping to provide a more
sophisticated definition which included among others points such as telling the truth, having self-direction, and being kind. Similar to the participants in this current study, the participants in Walsh et al. (2010) described leadership as not being a follower, helping others in the classroom, and doing the right thing. Other studies (Gordon, 2010; Hammond-Deidrich & Walsh, 2006; Martinek et al., 2006; Walsh 2007) had findings that indicated that participants showed leadership in their empathy, compassion, confidence, maturity, problem-solving abilities, and patience, characteristics not found in the current study. The participants in each of these studies were between the ages of 11 and 19 years old, with only one study (Walsh, 2007) having participants in 4th and 5th grades between the ages of 9 and 11 years old. The ages of the participants in my study were younger, at 8 and 9 years old in the 2nd and 3rd grade. Understanding responsibility values are going to be different between age groups, assuming that the older and more mature a participant is provides them more of a capacity to absorb responsibility concepts at a more advanced level. Higher mental functions or learning more complex concepts involves learning from more knowledgeable others, but also it comes from increasing age and exposure to different experiences within a person’s environment (Bodrova & Leong, 2007). Therefore, in the current study, I exposed children to an experience with me that helped them in understanding responsibility values. I aided these young participants in setting a foundation for them to practice responsible behaviors. I believed that by exposing the children to responsibility
concepts at an early age, I was instrumental in helping them to construct the extent to which they learned responsibility.

At the beginning of this current study, in the first interview, the participants were at the receiving level of the spectrum, becoming aware of what it meant to be a leader and to help others. They were able to understand through listening to me discuss the values and facilitate them within a game setting. Most students actively participated in discussions, but only a few, such as Hannah and Avery were able to verbally respond and provide a deeper meaning surrounding leadership and helping others, putting them at the responding level. In a practical sense, a few participants were able move to valuing on the continuum by the end of the study interpreting leadership as being respectful, caring, honest, and independent, but moreover by demonstrating their ability to lead and help others. For instance, Annie was an example of a participant who indicated that she did not like to help others and demonstrated this in a game of ‘Wizards and Geflings’ (Day 3) in which she did not help Edie even when Edie was asking for her help. However, on Day 10, in the activity ‘Help Tag’, Annie demonstrated her behavior to be at a valuing level, when she helped other participants become unfrozen. Annie, nevertheless, was inconsistent when it came to helping others and reverted back to not showing leadership qualities at times (e.g. VFN D14). This finding as it pertained to Annie was similar to the finding of one of the participants in Martinek et al. (2006), who showed an improvement in his leadership skills (e.g. shift away from self-interests; having consideration for others), but had times in which he reverted back to his old
ways of playing basketball, rather than leading a group. The children, in my program understood the concept of leadership and helping others and some even progressed to a more advanced understanding by the end of the study, but sometimes they did not consistently demonstrate their knowledge of the concepts underlying leadership.

**Seeking responsibility.** Although children demonstrated responsibility in an inconsistent manner, they often sought responsibilities from me. They indicated that they did not get many opportunities in the classroom or YMCA. Thus, the participants were eager to ask to help me with equipment, help me set up the area of play, or record lessons. They were forward with their requests and once given the responsibility, they were successful in following through on the requested responsibility, whatever the task.

I did not encourage children to seek out responsibilities from me. After the first days of the study when I asked them to help me with various tasks, I never had to ask again. The participants volunteered on their own once they knew that I needed some help. Once they volunteered, they took the responsibility seriously. Like most people, I think that most children have the desire to be helpful and make their own contributions in the ways they are capable of doing so. Besides, sharing responsibility with children allows them to take an active role in their development (Benson, 1997; Vygotsky, 1978). I felt that the children sought out responsibilities, especially since they felt they did not get the opportunities to help out in their classroom and the YMCA as much as they would have liked. Allowing children to
help out can be used as a motivator, especially younger children since they are so ready to be the “big kids” or “older kids”. Giving responsibility to children supports their autonomy and enables them to take responsibility (Eccles & Gootman, 2002) and fosters their development in learning skills (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, it is important for teachers and facilitators to give children developmentally appropriate responsibilities so that children can feel not only that they are needed and relevant, but also gives them practice in becoming responsible individuals.

**Counter measures to irresponsible behaviors.** Children understood and for the most part demonstrated responsibility throughout the study. However, there were times in which some children acted irresponsibly. In particular, there were a few children who more frequently did not follow directions, acted immaturely, and showed disrespect towards others. For instance, it seemed that tag games were particularly difficult for some children. On Day 7, when the participants played ‘Fox in the Morning’, Annie and Caitlyn were challenged to acknowledge that they had been tagged. Therefore, I had to constantly remind them to follow directions during the activity and during the post-activity discussion, I let them and the rest of the participants know that not acknowledging getting tagged was a form of disrespect towards the others and we discussed it in more depth (e.g. Day 3, Day 15). I think that some children did not want to acknowledge getting tagged because it represented losing and in traditional tag games meant that an individual was out of the game until the next round. In my cooperative games format, the tag games were
continuous in that an individual would either help another individual or help herself or himself return to the game. I believe that the children had been conditioned to play tag games in which getting tagged meant they were out and that the thought of losing and not having the ability to participate was the main reason that they did not want admit to being tagged. The children made the choice to not following directions.

During the learning process, it is understandable that children will sometimes make bad decisions, one of which may be to not follow a teacher’s instructions. Therefore, it was important that I created a safe space that gave participants the opportunity to make decisions, make mistakes, reflect upon their behaviors, and learn from their actions. Hellison (2011) noted the significance of children having a role in decision-making and shifting responsibility to children. My goal was to have the participants reflect upon their actions so they could understand how to make changes within themselves and moreover socially construct their learning. I accomplished giving the children these opportunities, but I felt that if the program was longer, then I would have been able to give the children more opportunities to practice leadership.

Hence, the TPSR curriculum I developed in terms of the activities and pedagogies used was structured to promote positive behaviors, such as good decision-making. I had considered, in advance, how to get children to behave well, but could not predict the daily obstacles (e.g. bad day at school, home issues) I would encounter that may impact the implementation. Hellison (2011) stated that
TPSR, “walks the fine line between ‘do what I say and you’re being responsible’ and ‘do whatever you please’” (p. 91). I had to be observant and quick on my feet to respond (e.g. reprimands, saying encouraging words, pivoting conversations to represent more positive tones) to the negative behaviors some of the children displayed at times. Several TPSR studies addressed irresponsible behaviors (e.g. disruptiveness, disrespect, arguing) in various ways. They used desist techniques, had a talking bench, had participants sit out of activities, had behavioral contracts with participants, mentored through modeling, provided students with guidelines, and gave feedback on behaviors (Buchanan, 2001; DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Escarti et al., 2010a; Hammond-Deidrich & Walsh, 2006; Hastie & Buchanan, 2000; Martinek et al., 2001, Pascual et al., 2011; Wright & Burton, 2008). Some of the responses to irresponsible behaviors were handled in much the same manner as my study. In order for the participants to understand their behaviors and reflect upon them, the children and I discussed their behaviors at the end of each lesson. Sometimes I had to pull an individual or pair of children to the side immediately following their misbehavior to address the issue immediately. Also, in discussions, the children had the opportunity to share their views of their behaviors as they pertained to respecting themselves and the rights and feelings of others, participating and showing effort, displaying self-direction, and demonstrating leadership and helping others. Through these talks not only were the children given the opportunity to learn from their own behaviors, but also I had the opportunity to better understand the children’s behaviors and simultaneously, build relationships
with them. Other youth development studies noted the importance of participants building relationships with responsible adults, indicating that these relationships not only helped to deter irresponsible behaviors, but also provided important protective factors to mediate risk factors and promote resilience in children (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2002; Anderson-Butcher et al., 2004; Coatsworth & Conroy, 2007; Halpern et al., 2000; Kahne & Bailey, 1999). As the program facilitator, I served as a protective factor for the participants in this study by being a supportive adult and facilitating them to learn responsible behaviors by providing them with the tools to be successful in practicing responsible behaviors.

Children need an environment in which responsible adults can promote responsible behavior in children through modeling, setting expectations, and reinforcing positive behaviors. I acted as the responsible adult in this program and believe I handled situations that arose with flexibility and maturity. Scales et al. (2006) specified, “Caring adults outside of young people’s own families play significant roles in providing a number of the developmental assets and therefore, in the promotion of adolescent well-being” (p. 402). Most children seemed to respond well towards me, but there were two children, Annie and Antoinette, who I felt needed more time and attention devoted to them for them to reach a more advanced level on the continuum of each TPSR core value. Providing more guidance to these two children would have required me not only to give them more individual time, but also I would have had to allot more time to the TPSR program. Having the role of a protective factor was a considerable responsibility for me and I felt that my
impact on some children was more effective than it was on other children in teaching them responsible behaviors.

**Theme 2: Understanding caring and its development in participants.**

Caring is an important life skill that encompasses having consideration and compassion for another individual. Hellison (2011) discussed caring as the foundation for leadership and helping others and said that participants who embody these values acknowledge that others have feelings similar to them (p. 41). When I addressed caring, I mostly did so within the context of the TPSR values of leadership and helping others with an emphasis on participants showing consideration for their peers. Noddings (1992) described caring within the context of a relationship between two individuals deeming it necessary to have both “a special attitude of caring that accompanies the best caregiving if we are to survive and be whole” (p. xi). She further indicated that caring cannot be attained through a specific set of behaviors or series of steps, but that caring requires different responses depending on the situation at hand. Sometimes it calls for sympathy and warmth; other times for toughness (Noddings, 1992). Teaching the concept of caring required me to help participants to think beyond their self-interests, to think of someone else’s feelings, and to consider other people’s perspectives. A teacher’s responsibility is to model care to assist children in developing the capacity to care, which is dependent on “adequate experience of being cared for”, keeping an open dialogue between teacher and student, and giving students the opportunity to practice caring skills (Noddings, 1992, p.22). Therefore, I attempted to model caring by having open and candid
conversations with participants, particularly in our post-activity discussions, where I gave children opportunities to question and evaluate activities as well as take discussions in a direction where I did not know what the outcome would be. I tried to see the world the way the children saw it, understand how they made meaning of and demonstrated caring in the short period of time that we discussed this value.

My TPSR program did not address caring up front as it is not listed as one of the TPSR core values of responsibility as indicated by Hellison. However, across the three editions of Hellison’s book (1995; 2003; 2011), the values of the TPSR framework were presented in an inconsistent manner. For instance, in (Hellison, 2011, p. 7), *caring and helping* were identified as the responsibility values in the most advanced level of TPSR. In a succeeding chapter (Hellison, 2011, p. 21), the most advanced levels of responsibility included *helping others and leadership*. I chose to use the latter framework for this current study, as Hellison’s entire second chapter was focused around the responsibility values within this framework, rather than the figure in the earlier chapter. Although caring was noted as a descriptor for *helping others and leadership*, it was not designated as a level of responsibility. Thus, not much time was spent on caring in this study and it was not the primary focus of any of the lessons. Despite this caring emerged inductively from the corpus of data I had been collecting over the study. The participants and I touched upon caring on Day 7 when the participants talked about it as a characteristic of good leadership. I integrated the value into the curriculum on Day 15, when we focused on caring as a part of the *helping and leadership* values. This integration occurred as
a result of my observations in the gym as well as from previous discussions, like Day 7, when it seemed a deeper discussion on caring was warranted. In inductive studies, such as this one, the researcher seeks patterns from a “bottoms up” approach, embracing information as it emerges and uses the knowledge to possibly adapt and determine how this information will inform the researcher in data collection or practice (Denzin & Lincoln, 2004). As an inductive study, I was able to adapt the lesson as a response to the children’s behaviors in gym activities. This is one of the strengths of qualitative research.

When the children and I discussed caring specifically on Day 15, my intentions were to communicate to the participants that caring meant showing empathy and concern for others. The pedagogical sequence common for the other TPSR values did not occur with caring as I had no plans to teach caring in a formal way. Through the dialogue amongst their peers and me, children were socially constructing what the value of caring meant to them. However, in addition to the post-activity discussions on Days 7 and 15, the meaning of care emerged from interviews and video field notes. Through data analysis, I recognized that most of the children had communicated that they cared about themselves, cared about how they perceived others, and cared about how others perceived them. Moreover, I noticed that a few children practiced caring behaviors while others did not do so.

**Children’s identification of caring.** Participants first described caring as a characteristic of leadership when they were asked what made a good leader on Day 7. Early on, they identified caring as a component of leadership, specifically
indicating that caring involved respecting others personal space and acting in a responsible manner overall (VFN D7). Caring was discussed in greater length and detail on the last day of the study (Day 15), for approximately 15 minutes, as part of a discussion surrounding leadership. By the end of the study the participants expanded their definitions to include helping others, modeling good behaviors, practicing respect, exhibiting trust, and listening to others (VFN D15). As a social constructivist, I relied on the participants’ perspectives of caring and how their meanings were formed through the discussions with their peers and me. Social constructivism is about listening to the data, understanding that participants’ views have been negotiated socially and historically to arrive at the meaning they make of their surrounding world (Creswell, 2007; Somekh & Lewin, 2006). I spent time finding out what students knew so that I could build upon that knowledge to increase their growth in caring for others. A few of the TPSR studies (Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; Martinek et al., 2006; Martinek et al., 2001; Wright et al., 2010) had one of their foci as caring. Each of the studies intentionally taught caring in their programs since they utilized the TPSR framework that denoted caring as one of the responsibility values. Caring did not emerge from their data, dissimilar from my study which did not aim to focus on caring, but had the notion of caring emerge from the data collection and analysis process. In addition, none of the TPSR studies (Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; Martinek et al., 2006; Martinek et al., 2001; Wright et al., 2010) concentrated on what meaning the participants attributed to caring. Instead, they indicated whether or not participants practiced and improved their caring
towards others over the study period. For instance, Martinek et al. (2001) examined
the impact of a six month TPSR-infused sports club program on 16 underserved
elementary students and found that 50% showed their caring for others either most
or some of the time, while the other half of the students only showed caring a little
of the time. Despite the limited time spent on caring in this study, as it was not an
planned focus of the study, some of the participants demonstrated that they cared
about themselves and a few showed their care for others through their discussions
and actions with me.

Caring about self. The participants identified what caring meant to them
not only within the classroom setting after the gym activities of the lesson, but also
they expressed an understanding of care as it pertained to caring about their
classroom work and what their classroom teachers thought of them. Noddings
(1992) stated, “As human beings, we care about what happens to us” (p. 20). In
other words, we are immersed in care on a daily basis; it is the “very being of human
life” (Noddings, 1992, p. 15). Most individuals want to feel that they belong and that
people care about them. This seemed to be evident in most of the participants,
particularly when they spoke of the importance of doing their best work in their
respective classrooms, getting good marks on homework and tests, and not wanting
to get into trouble with their teachers. Additionally, a few of the children mentioned
that it made them feel good that I gave them the opportunity to share their opinions,
even though they did not denote this behavior explicitly as caring. Coatsworth and
Conroy (2007), Eccles and Gootman (2002), and Lerner et al. (2005) indicated that
having a structured program with caring and supportive adults, who give children opportunities to build skills, positively contributes to an individual's development. In addition, such a program enhances children’s protective factors and promotes individuals thriving within society. I felt that I organized my program in a way that demonstrated caring by giving the children skill-building opportunities as well as being a supportive role model for them. Tosolt (2008) stated, “Students benefit both socially and academically when they perceive their teachers as caring” (p. 275). Noddings’ (1992) work agrees with this sentiment noting the need for educators to take the risk of impeding development if it meant developing non-violent, harmonious, sensitive, and reflective individuals. Thus, I hoped that my participants perceived me as caring through my empathetic mannerisms (e.g. group hug) as well as my tough ones when I reprimanded them for not doing the right thing (e.g. talking and not listening in discussions). Caring is relational and I built relationships with this group of participants, although I wished I had more time with them to focus on the importance of this responsibility value.

**Caring about what peers think.** As children move from home where parents are the primary influences to school, their peers mostly and teachers take over as their primary influences, particularly since they spend most hours in a day at school (Payne & Isaacs, 2011). In this study, several children mentioned that they did not care what others thought of them or said about them in a group setting. The participants indicated that they just walked away from adverse situations or when people talked about them in a negative way. A few of the children said something
different when asked in individual interviews the effect peers speaking or acting negatively had on them. Individual responses from children noted their mixed feelings (e.g. sad, angry) about their peers' adverse behaviors towards them and this was an indicator to me that peers were very influential in children's lives, even though the children acted otherwise when we discussed this topic within our group talk. Children's relationships with peers influence their development, depending upon if peers are positive or negative social influences (Eccles, 1999; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998) and having the connection with peers helps children have a sense of belonging (Halpern et al., 2000). Noddings (1992) suggests that if there are no moral reasons for rejecting and customs that govern others, then we must give some respectful attention to those principles. In other words, peers should be able live in a peaceful way even in the face of disagreement and even though everyone who is a classmate may not be a friend, the ethic of care still comes back to the idea that everyone wants someone to care about them. As part of children’s social development, children care about what their peers think of them and this group of participants was no different in this regard (Payne & Isaacs, 2011). Most of the children acted as though they did not care in a group setting, but then a few individually changed what they said to me in personal interviews. For instance, children noted in the group setting that they could care less what others thought of them. However, when I approached the subject in the last interview with the five participants (Annie, Caitlyn, Eddie, Hannah, and Kaleb) who were available for the interview, they indicated their feeling of sadness or hurt when people said negative
things about them behind their backs. This exchange in the interview was an indicator that these children did care even though they said otherwise in a group setting.

Participants' views of caring by teachers, youth care staff, and facilitator.

In addition to the children identifying what caring meant to them and the exchanges the children and I had that indicated they cared about themselves, the participants provided a perspective of caring relative to their teachers and youth care staff. Most participants felt that the teachers and youth care staff were kind and nice, but associated these behaviors with extrinsic rewards (e.g. giving candy, throwing classroom parties). Giving children extrinsic rewards, especially rewards contingent upon behaving appropriately or performing well academically, can be detrimental to children as it undermines intrinsic motivation (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999). Intrinsic motivation is the natural inclination to participate, master a task, and enjoy it (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Based only on the children's accounts in this study, the children seemed to be motivated to behave appropriately in their classrooms and the YMCA because they received rewards for their efforts. Therefore, the children may have felt that their teachers and youth care staff cared because rewards were given to the children when they were well-mannered in the classroom and the YMCA program. I disagreed with this approach and do not feel that children should be given rewards for behaving properly, as behaving well should be expected.
Deci et al. (1999) suggested that rewards not only undermine intrinsic motivation, but also they do nothing to affirm an individual’s confidence. Besides, as children approach late elementary and middle school, they have an increased need for autonomy and a decreased need to rely on authority figures (Corpus, McClintic-Gilbert, & Hayenga, 2009; Lepper, Corpus, & Iyengar, 2005). Thus, if the teachers were providing the participants with rewards for doing the right thing, I feel that it sends the wrong message to them. It sends the message that they only have to behave well when they know they will receive something in return as opposed to teaching them that they should behave in an appropriate manner because it is the right thing to do. Noddings (1992) noted that teachers who do not create an atmosphere of care lead students to feel alienated from school and their teachers and furthermore lack basic human respect. We, as educators, are not modeling the behaviors we want students to embody and are not setting a standard of care in school to warrant children wanting to care. I tried to model empathetic behaviors during the short period I had with the children over the time of the study by not only listening and responding to their needs in the program, but also by developing and implementing a creative curriculum that engaged the participants. The participants were not rewarded for doing the right thing in my program.

**Development of caring in a responsibility-based program.** As the program facilitator, it is my role to share knowledge and create opportunities for children to practice responsible behaviors. Although caring was not part of the TPSR curriculum I developed as previously mentioned, one could argue that I taught
caring covertly under the guise of not only leadership, but also respect and helping others in gym activities and discussions on most days of the study. I did this through modeling empathetic behaviors and getting to know the children. Benson (1997) stated, “Since compassion and caring matter, then they must be modeled” and that these behaviors should be part of a normative structure within society (p. 12). Noddings (1992) said, “If we want children to embody the notion of care and care about things we consider significant, we must first demonstrate caring for each child” (p. xiv). I demonstrated caring behaviors when I asked the children about their day and listened to them review their day to get a preliminary view of how the lesson might proceed. I spent time building relationships with the students because I felt that it was important to build a caring relationship with the participants up front to begin to build trust and rapport with them. When students perceive a non-familial adult as caring about them, the children benefit socially in their behavior towards peers and teachers (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2004; 2002; Kahne & Bailey, 1999; Tosolt, 2008). I believed having a caring attitude would help to promote a reciprocal relationship between the participants and me so more dialogue could take place and individuals could be more receptive to my teaching the values I wanted them to learn. Noddings (1992) stated, “Kids listen to people who matter to them and to whom they matter” (p. 36). I strived to be the person who mattered to the children by showing that they mattered to me through my various interactions with them over the course of the study.
There were four studies (DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Martinek et al., 2006; Martinek et al., 2001; Schilling et al., 2007) within the TPSR literature that evaluated caring. Three of the four studies (DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Martinek et al., 2006; Martinek et al., 2001) identified caring as being empathetic, being a good listener, showing concern for others, giving support, and helping. Each of the four noted an improvement in the group as a whole, but did not discern individual advances in the areas of caring or note how each participant defined caring. Each study only indicated that there was an improvement, albeit slight, by the end of the study period. For instance, Martinek et al. (2001) explored the impact of a TPSR-infused mentoring program on underserved mix-gendered elementary students. The student population in this study was similar to the current study with the school having a 97% Black American demographic and residing in a low socioeconomic community in which mostly all of its students received free or reduced lunch. The researchers found that 50% of the participants showed caring for others either most or sometimes and the researchers felt that the elementary-aged participants lacked the level of maturity to care about others and was the reason cited to explain the low percentage. This study did not indicate trends in the data, only average frequencies of children demonstrating care.

In addition, all of studies did not describe or did not describe well the process of how the researchers promoted caring through systematic teaching methods. Three of the research studies (Martinek et al., 2006; Martinek et al., 2001; Schilling et al., 2007) simply indicated that they had adhered to the TPSR framework
and specifically had a focus on teaching leadership, in which caring was embedded but they did not talk about methods they used to teach caring. Only one study (DeBusk & Hellison, 1989) described their lessons with the participants describing teacher talks and the students sharing in the reflection times. They discussed how they used confrontation and negotiation processes, gave students choices, and had student contracts to implement a TPSR program. I demonstrated caring through my inherent behaviors of compassion and empathy when interacting with the children throughout each lesson. I had an open dialogue with the children in my attempt to understand how they made meaning of the responsibility behaviors I was teaching them. I did not make an attempt to control the outcome of discussions but listened with an interest to adapt the curriculum as necessary to meet the participants’ needs. Noddings (1992) suggested that dialogue “serves [the] purpose in moral education [of] connecting us to each other and helps maintain caring relations” (p. 23). I recommend that practitioners keep an open mind with their students, recognizing that students have something to say, and give children the opportunity to practice caring skills, just as Noddings (1992) suggested in her text. Although I modeled caring consistently throughout the study, I did not discuss caring in any depth with the students until the last day of the study. Therefore, I was unable to track the individual changes in students. As with all of the TPSR literature, there is an overwhelming need to track individual participants over the time of the study, to note trends in responsible behaviors, caring in this case, from the beginning of a study to the end of the study. In addition, explaining the process the researchers
took to promote a change in behavior and how they arrived at their findings is necessary to the line of TPSR research.

Caring is a value important to any study pertaining to youth development, as it transcends the TPSR values of respect and leadership. Essentially, caring is embedded in both of these values. Although caring was not a focus in this TPSR study, it is consistent with the responsibility values outlined in the TPSR framework. The value was not a part of the TPSR framework used in this study as it was not denoted consistently throughout Hellison’s (2003; 2011) texts. I chose the framework that had clear descriptions in the text which included helping others and leadership as one of the core levels of responsibility in Hellison’s responsibility structure. In reflecting about the data around caring in this study, I believe caring is an important value and should be consistently included in the TPSR structure since slightly different models were used in different places in Hellison’s texts. Caring should be included at two points within the framework – at a low level embedded within the value of respect and at an advanced level embedded within helping others and leadership because I feel that it is important to introduce caring early in a program and construct the program participants’ knowledge as the program progresses. Based on my findings surrounding this theme, there seemed to be a need to address caring early in the study especially when I saw individuals not listening to others or having a basic level of respect at times. I think that it would have been important to set the foundation for care by helping students become recipients of it, grow, and learn to care for others, understanding the power of
community (Frank, 2004; Noddings, 1992). Introducing caring is one of my responsibilities as a teacher and making the adjustment in the TPSR model will be of great benefit to the participants as it will set the stage for the other responsibility values. Once I teach caring at the beginning levels of the model and built upon children's knowledge of it, we could move onto more advanced levels of understanding caring as it relates to leadership and helping others. Caring is essential to life as everyone wants to be cared for, but also we also need to be able to teach children how to embrace caring.

**Theme 3: Factors influencing responsible behaviors.** There are several factors that influenced the behaviors of the participants in this study. They included the participants’ existing identities, the effect the teachers, youth care staff, and I had on the participants, and finally the impact of peers on participants. The various individuals either influenced the participants’ responsible behaviors in positive or negative ways, although most seemed to be positive. This section responds to the second research question which focuses on the influence of individual factors on children's learning of the TPSR responsibility values.

**Existing identities of participants.** All children have existing strengths and this group of children was no different. I expected that the participants would come into the TPSR program brandishing various personalities, since all individuals are unique by nature. Mowling et al. (2011) addressed the importance of understanding the entry characteristics of participants to determine the best way to build rapport and develop a program conducive to the participants. There were
some children who had confidence and did not let anyone coax them into doing something they thought to be inappropriate (e.g. talking in class; not acknowledging a tag in a tag game) and then there were a few who let their peers mislead them. Understanding the existing identities of participants was important because it enabled me to better interact with them on an individual basis. Also, building trust with the participants and committing to a program is necessary for productive engagement and a successful program (Anderson-Butcher 2002; 2004; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Kahne & Bailey, 1999). Prior to the study taking place I had been involved with the YMCA after school program for two years, during which time I got to know the students’ personalities. I felt this enabled me to have productive interactions with the participants and build trust with them over that time as well as over the study period. This prolonged immersion contributed to my understanding of how I could better help the participants socially construct the meanings they associated with responsibility values in this responsibility-based program through interactive discussions with their peers and me. Prolonged engagement lent credibility to my narrative account of the program. The more experience a researcher has in an actual setting the more accurate and valid are the findings (Creswell, 2007; 2009).

Furthermore, as a social constructivist, I hold the assumption that individuals seek understanding and try to attach subjective meanings to their experiences based on their interactions with others in their world. Having some time in the field helped me to understand how I could help this group of participants construct their
world through open-ended questioning and actively listening, as denoted by other researchers (Creswell, 2007; 2009; Noddings, 1992). Having a prolonged engagement in the site contributed to my building rapport and trustworthiness with my participants and this is a huge strength of using qualitative methods in my research.

In the process of these post-activity, interactive discussions, I had hoped to assist in the broadening of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD within Vygotsky’s social development theory is considered a stage towards which an individual is able to do or understand something on his or her own with the help of an adult or more knowledgeable other (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). This zone can be quite narrow or quite broad, depending on the individual child. Where a child is in her ZPD determines her level of readiness towards a more advanced level of learning as a result of the interactions within one’s social world (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Campione, Brown, Ferrara, & Bryant, 1984; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1984). Essentially, by understanding where a child is in her development, an educator can build upon this knowledge helping the child to grow within her individual capacity to learn.

Prior to the start of this study, I had gotten to know the children pretty well (e.g. personalities) from my interactions with them. I knew who was shy, who was talkative, who had a good attitude, who was a little aggressive, and who behaved in appropriate ways at times. My assumptions about the participants’ identities were reinforced once we started the responsibility program. Therefore, I knew who I had
to pay more attention to at times, by having stronger words for them and who I needed to encourage more to promote and reinforce responsible behaviors. For instance, Hannah was a mature 9-year old, precocious, yet confident. I saw leadership qualities in her early in the study through her mannerisms with me and with other children. I attempted to help develop this attribute in her by giving her the opportunity to run the discussion on Day 14. So, by having this knowledge of the participants’ identities as well as an understanding of how the children were constructing their knowledge of the responsibility values I was teaching them, I was able to adjust the program’s curriculum as needed for the participants.

Hellison (2011) noted that children are individuals and “want to be recognized and respected for who they are. That’s where recognizing kids’ strengths and potentials comes in” (p. 26). I recognized that each individual in this study had strengths and in learning those strengths over the time of the study, I also had a better understanding of the children’s current status within the ZPD and my roles as the more knowledgeable other (MKO) to guide their learning by scaffolding the process through gradually introducing responsibility concepts and building upon existing knowledge. For instance, Hannah, Edie, and Jessie showed leadership capabilities in their ability not to follow others and model responsible behaviors (e.g. accountability for actions, following instructions, helping others). Those are attributes to build upon in a youth development program and as the program facilitator of this study, I attempted to build upon participants’ uniqueness and strengths of respect, trying out new things, persevering through difficult tasks,
having leadership qualities, and working independently. I strived to do this by pushing their boundaries, stretching their learning through discussions and giving them responsibilities, enabling them to have a deeper understanding of responsibility values and promoting their social construction of knowledge through my interactions with them. The zone of proximal development shifts as the child gains more knowledge (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978) as illustrated by Avery, a child who constantly absorbed information throughout the study when at times I was not even sure he was listening fully. When he began the study, for instance, Avery provided a pithy definition of leadership, indicating it meant being responsible (VFN D7), but later expanded his characterization of leadership to include being kind, helpful, and trustworthy (VFN D15). I interpreted Avery’s identity as one which indicated that not only did he seem to grasp information quickly, but also he gave the impression that he was eager to learn new things by the excitement and positive attitude he portrayed in the post-activity discussions. I made interpretations of all of the children’s identities by gaining an understanding of the participants’ perceptions of themselves and reflecting upon my own perceptions I had developed of the participants.

Participants’ perceptions of self. Knowing how the participants perceived themselves was valuable to how I worked with them and how I implemented a TPSR program with this group of children. In the Mowling et al. (2011) study with elementary students of low socio-economic status, the researchers determined that by having participants identify themselves into socializing groups, they gained
insight into how the children saw themselves as individuals and made them aware of the importance of knowing children's characteristics prior to program development. Gathering perceptions of my participants at the beginning of the study helped me to shape the study by making adjustments to the curriculum as necessary to meet the children where they were in their development. For instance, in the activity ‘Turnstile’ on Day 2, I adapted the activity so the children would not have to jump into a turning rope but instead only jump over a wiggling rope on the floor to build upon existing confidence and to limit frustrations, particularly in those children who had difficulty jumping rope. Thus, when some of the children spoke of how they perceived themselves indicating they had the confidence and perseverance to complete their classroom work independently, the desire to do good work, the aspiration to do well in school, but sometimes quit, I interpreted these perceptions to mean that the children overall wanted to be responsible individuals.

The children's personalities were also reflected in the TPSR program, particularly in how they expressed their true feelings about an activity or responsibility values. Hannah and Kyla were two children who provided full disclosure in a post-activity discussion. I believed this to be part of their existing personalities to share their opinions openly, since they did so from the beginning of the study to the end of it. Vygotsky (1978) stated, “Children’s learning begins long before they attend school. Any learning a child encounters in school always has a previous history” (p. 84). It seemed that Hannah and Kyla had established a level of
confidence prior to entering the program and without my assistance. For these two children, their ZPD may have been different than that of the other children in the study and I attempted to build upon this characteristic by giving Hannah, for example, the opportunity to lead a discussion on Day 14 of the study.

There were a few students who grew to share their viewpoints as the study progressed, like Edie, Jane, Kaleb, and Avery. They were quiet upon entering the study, but opened up as the study proceeded over 8 weeks willingly and honestly telling the group and me what they liked or did not like about activities. For instance, Edie seemed to have the most significant change in speaking up in discussions. Early in the study on Days 2 and 3, she would not finish her thoughts and discontinue her participation in the post-activity discussion if someone interrupted her. However, by Day 8, Edie exercised the confidence to defend herself against her peers when faced with situations that were similar to Days 2 and 3 of the study. I believed this growth was due to the environment I created for the participants, one that was open to them sharing their opinions and inclusive so that everyone felt comfortable doing so. I let the children know up front that their opinion mattered to me and I wanted to hear from each of them (e.g. Day 1, Day 2). O’Sullivan and MacPhail (2010) suggested that by encouraging children to share their understandings and experiences in various physical activity contexts, we as teachers, youth program facilitators, and youth care staff are in a “better position to acknowledge and address how such contexts can most effectively work together to motivate young people” (p. 1). Similarly, Kinloch (2007) spoke of adults listening to
the silenced voices of young people and how paying attention to their voices was important for intergenerational collaboration towards improving communities and promoting youth activism and leadership. In listening to my participants, I adapted my program to meet their needs, established relationships of support, and shared responsibility with the participants.

Specifically, I adapted some of the gym activities, such as ‘Turnstile’ and ‘Blob Tag’. In ‘Turnstile’ I changed the complexity of the task by having children jump over a wiggling rope on the floor rather than jump in the rope, as most of the students were having difficulty jumping in the rope. I changed the activity so they could be successful at it. In ‘Blob Tag’, I decreased the field of play as the two participants who started off the blob were challenged in tagging other participants and making those individuals part of the blob. Again, changing the size of the field of play supported the children’s success in the activity and met their needs.

In addition to changing some of the activities, as necessary, to meet the needs of my participants, I also allowed them to make decisions about playing activities in which they were interested. For instance, the children shared with me that they wanted to play ‘Sharks and Minnows’, ‘Dead Fish’, and ‘Tails Tag’ at different times in the program. They were most interested in these particular activities and therefore, we played them multiple times as a result of them making the collective decision to engage in those activities.

Moreover, I increased the time of the discussion to enhance the depth of the topic at hand (e.g. respect, participation). The discussion was student-centered and
I mostly facilitated the process by asking open-ended questions and making sure that they did not stray too far off task with the discussion. I let the participants take the discussion in directions that I did not expect, for example, when we had the discussion about the “big kids” and the “little kids” and their feelings of having little power in the afterschool program in comparison to the “big kids” (Days 8 and 9). This was a valuable discussion for the children and warranted conversation. So discussions, such as this one, took place often in which the students directed my topic down a different path than I intended. This adaptation of the curriculum allowed the children a voice and hopefully, illustrated notions of care on my part.

_Strategies to get to know participants._ By knowing the students on an individual basis, a facilitator can determine their deficiencies, establish the areas for improvement, and figure out the best approach to take when working with these students, building upon existing strengths. There are several strategies a facilitator can use to get to know her students and make appropriate adaptations to build upon existing strengths. In this program, for instance, relational time was built into the curriculum. During this time, I asked about the children’s day and how they felt about their day, taking the time to listen to their viewpoints. Coatsworth and Conroy (2007) and Eccles and Gootman (2002) suggested that supportive relationships with adults involving connectedness and good communication was important for positive youth development. Therefore, first of all, a facilitator must develop a relationship with the children in her program over time and to give time for the development of the relationship. Another strategy a facilitator can use is to
engage students in interactive discussions. The goal is for children to be able to discuss their behaviors in an interactive setting so they can socially construct knowledge, developing "subjective meanings of their experiences – meanings directed toward certain objects and things" (Creswell, 2007, p. 20). In other words, children need a space to share their individual realities and generate a pattern of meaning through their interactions with others (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 2000). This current study's participants had this opportunity in our daily discussions of their behaviors surrounding the cooperative activities and the impact of those behaviors outside of the gym.

Furthermore, utilizing cooperative activities can be strategic for facilitators in reducing the issues of competition and skill surrounding sports activities with young children. Cooperative activities involve building community, teamwork, trust, and problem-solving (Frank, 2004). Observing participants’ behaviors among their peers within these situations can be enlightening as it gives the facilitator insight into participants’ personalities and how participants work together. By using cooperative activities in this study, I was able to make methodological decisions about the curriculum and adapt it to meet my participants’ developmental capabilities and allow them decision-making opportunities. For example, the children wanted to play ‘Dodge Ball’ on Day 14. I obliged to their request, but modified the game so that it was more developmentally appropriate for them and I could promote engagement and teamwork within the activity. I had multiple foam balls for each team and the children could re-enter the game, once tagged, after
completing a physical activity card. At first, there were two children, Annie and Caitlyn, who would get tagged but not acknowledge the tag. I called them out about their behavior and then it seemed that once it clicked in their heads that they could re-enter the game, they came over to pick up an activity card without me having to prompt them.

By adhering to these characteristics of a high quality youth development program, facilitators can also inspire rapport and trusting relationships with participants as my suggested approaches allow for reciprocal, shared relationships between the participants and the adults with whom they work. The most important impact of these quality youth development program features, however, is that the facilitator becomes a protective factor for her participants. As a protective factor, a facilitator can assist in mediating the risks that children face, especially children who exist in underserved communities and are at-risk for academic failure and maladaptation in society (Fraser & Galisky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001). I had hoped to serve as a protective factor in my TPSR program even though my study was a short 8 weeks by being a responsible adult in my participants’ lives, modeling responsible behavior, and holding children accountable for their actions.

Although I implemented strategies to get to know students and build upon their existing strengths, the best laid out plans did not work with every child. I got to know Antoinette, the one participant I removed from the program with two weeks left, but I did not use the ideal strategy to structure my program to meet her
individual needs. As Noddings (1992) points out, not all children can learn what we are trying to teach them at the time we are trying to teach. This sentiment was in alignment with Vygotsky (1978) when he spoke of the ZPD. Each child's zone is unique to her and in Antoinette's case her zone may been too narrow to accommodate the responsibility values I was trying to teach her. I needed to be able to really listen to Antoinette through her verbal and non-verbal cues and respond differentially to her. I felt that I needed more individual time with her and an extended program of six months or more to find her strengths and build upon them. If given another opportunity, I would have approached the situation differently, by making an effort to talk to her one-on-one even if it meant coming on days when I was not running the program and try and know her in a more individual manner.

**Facilitator and sources shaping behavior.** The teachers, youth staff, and I were known for setting expectations, encouraging positive behavior, praising and reinforcing good behaviors, and reprimanding for not following instructions or acting irresponsibly in all children. Anderson-Butcher et al. (2002) suggested that establishing a community in which children feel comfortable, use open communication, feel connected, and build trusting relationships with peers and adults are important factors in a youth development program. Having an instructional approach that creates an atmosphere that supports inclusivity and develops responsible behaviors is useful in a responsibility-based program (Hellison, 2011). Hellison suggested that facilitators have a strategy that makes children aware that taking responsibility for themselves and others is a top priority.
in the program. Furthermore, he proposed that facilitators use a direct instruction approach, at first, to build a climate that promotes participation, cooperation, and leadership then gradually shift responsibility to children. Finally, Hellison recommended that responsibility values (respect, participation, self-direction, leadership) be embedded within the physical activity portion of the lesson plan. The teachers and youth care staff did this mostly by creating an interactive social environment in which they were able to get to know their students, one in which children could socialize to get to know each other, and one where children could work together by collaborating on projects. For instance, Mr. Gosling created parameters around in-class group projects (e.g. making roller coasters to emphasize force of motion) to promote teamwork, creativity, and decision-making (TI1). Mrs. Rogers did something similar with her class by not only having stations positioned around the classroom and set up for classmates to work together towards a common goal, but also planning times for students to interact socially on a more personal note (TI2). In my responsibility-based program, I created a setting that allowed children to not only get to know each other, but also to get to know themselves through having opportunities to voice their opinions and my helping them to realize their existing strengths. The children knew each other from the after school program and groups of three to four children had the same teachers. I had the children get to know each other through the activities within my program. For example, when they had to collaborate with each other in ‘Blob Tag’ (Day 5), ‘Crows and Cranes’ (Day 11), or ‘Rock, Paper, Scissors Tag’ (Day 14), the children
had to make decisions together, compromise, and voice their opinions. I found that the participants were able to work together for the most part, particularly as we approached the latter half of the study.

In large part, the ability and opportunity that the teachers, youth care workers, and I had to shape the participants’ behaviors came from the attempt to build trusting and respectful relationships with them. However, this was not the case with one youth care staff, Mr. Arthur, who the children did not trust. Therefore, the relationship between the children and him was not well-established or trusting and the children did not speak highly of him. Establishing strong relationships with caring youth care staff is important within youth development programs, as these adults play a critical role in a child's development and resilience (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2004; Anderson-Butcher & Fink, 2005; Anderson-Butcher et al., 2002; Fraser et al., 2004; Garmezy, 1991; Scales et al., 2006). Resiliency is the positive result of the interplay between risk and protective factors, when individuals overcome issues without negative outcomes building up their protective factors (Brooks, 2006; Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001; Smith & Carlson, 1997).

My research findings support that I formed relationships with my participants by spending time with them, expressing interest in their lives, and showing caring attitudes of flexibility, authenticity, and humor with them. Similar findings were noted in other youth development studies (Anderson-Butcher & Cash, 2010; Anderson-Butcher et al., 2004; Anderson-Butcher et al., 2002; Halpern et al.,
2000; Scales et al., 2006; Shernoff & Vandell, 2007; Tosolt, 2008) and TPSR studies (Cutforth, 1997; Gordon, 2010; Hammond-Deidrich & Walsh, 2006; Hellison & Wright, 2003; Schilling et al., 2007; Walsh, 2007; Wright & Burton, 2008; Wright et al., 2010) in which supportive child and staff relationships enhanced pro-social behaviors and sustained the participants’ involvements in the program. My connections with the children in this study also involved empowering children through giving them voice and opportunities to make decisions and of course, recognizing them as individuals. I empowered the children to socially construct the meaning of responsibility concepts through facilitating discussions and giving them multiple opportunities to interact with each other via gym activities and seated conversations in a classroom. I acknowledged that children needed to make meaning of their own behaviors and reconcile that meaning through interactions with their peers and me.

However, as the adults who are helping to contribute to their responsible behaviors, it was also necessary for us to hold the children accountable for their inappropriate behaviors towards others, their insufficient level of respect at times, their lack of independence, and egocentrism. Hellison (2011) indicated that vulnerability, confrontation, intuition, self-reflection, and a sense of humor are needed to teach responsibility in children, as teaching responsibility is multi-dimensional undertaking. When running a responsibility-based program or any youth development program, a facilitator needs to go into the experience knowing that the children will try to test one’s patience and boundaries. But, a facilitator also
needs to recognize that they need to be adaptable and flexible, realizing that
everything may not work out as she planned. Therefore, it is essential to keep a
positive attitude and exhibit patience in implementing a youth development
program. There will be good and bad days over the course of the program. Through
this understanding of the inner workings of a youth development program, I helped
attempted to influence the behaviors of the participants, although the teachers,
youth care staff, and me were not the only influences on the participants. Peers also
had an impact on the participants, some of the influences were positive while others
were negative.

**Positive and negative influences of peers.** Positive and/or negative
influences of peers can assist in shaping the lives of children within any
environment (e.g. neighborhoods, schools). Payne and Isaacs (2011) stated, “The
parent, teacher, and other adults in the child’s life slowly lose their power of
persuasion over the child as a need for peer approval becomes particularly powerful
[and has a] transitory nature” (p. 57). For instance, Annie’s peers had an influence
on her honesty on Day 15 of the study. She admitted on modeling good behavior
only some of the time when a few minutes earlier, she implied that she modeled
good behavior all of the time. I believed the difference in her responses came in the
wake of her peers responding honestly about trying to model good behaviors all of
the time, but did not do so. As active participants in their learning, children build
upon their past experiences by reflecting and integrating new information with
those experiences to arrive at current knowledge (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba,
Children learn more about and adopt what they know about their social worlds mostly through their interactions with peers. The bond with peers becomes stronger and peers have more influence over children’s behaviors as children get older. From a developmental standpoint, friendships help children in middle childhood (ages to gain knowledge and help children learn skills necessary for the transition into adolescence and later adulthood (Parker & Gottman, 1989; Rubin, Coplan, Chen, Buskirk, & Wojslawowicz, 2005). Vygotsky (1978) had similar attributes in his social development theory, in which children’s learned through the help of the MKO, who could be either an adult or a peer. Some participants in this study admired a select few of their peers, approving of their behaviors and admiring them at the same time for the respect they had for these individuals. Jessie was one of the participants revered by her peers and could be characterized as the MKO especially when it came to exhibiting responsible behaviors. As noted by a few of her peers, namely Naomi, Hannah, and Kyla, Jessie did not allow other children to get her into trouble and followed her own convictions to behave responsibly in her classroom and the YMCA (PI2). Peers have the potential to inspire their friends to want to do the right thing, practice respect, follow rules, make the right decisions, and overall model responsible behaviors towards others, as Jessie did for her peers in this study. A facilitator can use positive peers as a MKO to bring other children along by demonstrating positive, responsible behaviors.

Although there were instances in which peers had positive influences on children, there were other situations in which they had a negative or no influence at
all. One child, Caitlyn, was driven to follow her peers on occasion (e.g. Day 3, Day 11), but changed in the latter part of the study to stand on her own and show behavioral independence (e.g. Day 12, Day 13) when Kyla and Annie could not persuade her to talk out of turn during discussions. Ladd (2006) stated,

Attaining acceptance in peer groups is a critical social task for children as they enter grade school and progress through primary grades. Acceptance into the peer society can be seen as a powerful social need that emerges during the 6 to 9-year age period. (p. 825)

Since this age range is a key time for developmental processes to take place with peers and my participants were within this age range, it was important for me to understand the dynamic among peer groups so that programming decisions could be made accordingly. I thought I had a grasp of my groups’ dynamics, but found out that I did not when I paired Jane and Antoinette in an activity. Although it may not have been the best decision for me to make at the time, I wanted all children to be able to cooperate with each other and explained my philosophy accordingly. At first, Antoinette was resistant to Jane leading around in the ‘Robot Safety Operator’ activity on Day 10. Antoinette was the “robot” and Jane was the “safety operator”. Antoinette would not allow Jane to lead her effectively. She would walk ahead of Jane by a few steps when the activity involved having the “safety operator’s” hands on the shoulders of the “robot” and leading them with non-verbal commands (e.g. tap the right shoulder to turn right; press the middle of the back, gently, to move the “robot” forward). Once it was time, however, for the children to switch roles and
Antoinette was the “safety operator” the dynamics changed and Antoinette no
longer complained about her partnership with Jane. In observing these two
participants, I realized how important it is for facilitators, youth care staff, and
teachers alike to not only get to know students on an individual basis, but also get to
know them within their common peer groups and observe their interactions with
others.

**Overall program implementation**

The TPSR program provided me with the opportunity to teach 2nd and 3rd
grade students responsible behaviors through the use of cooperative activities. In
the post-activity discussions, I made connections between the activities and their
behaviors in order to promote the construction of knowledge in the program
participants. I facilitated the participants in making meaning of the responsible
behaviors I taught over an 8-week program.

In reflecting upon the program, I realized that there was a clear separation of
the “knowing” and “doing” aspects of the program. The “knowing” aspect of the
program had to do with understanding the cognitive concepts underscoring the
responsibility values. This involved children being able to verbally provide their
interpretation of what the responsibility values (e.g. respect, self-direction) meant
to them on an individual basis. Of course the “doing” aspect of the program involved
the children practically applying the values that they were taught in the program. It
was considerably easier for the children to grasp a cognitive understanding of
concepts over the practical demonstration of the responsibility values. I expected
that this understanding of values would occur more so over demonstrating the values. However, it becomes more difficult when an individual has to practice the concepts too.

Overall, I feel that the lesson plan structure worked pretty well. I increased the group meeting and reflection time of the lesson plan to give more time for the children to construct meaning of the responsible behaviors. This time was increased to approximately 27 minutes over the 15 to 20 minutes that was originally planned in the lesson’s curriculum. Furthermore, for children to construct meaning of the TPSR core values, I facilitated the discussion with participants of what respect, participation, self-direction, and leadership looked like, did not look like, sounded like, and felt like. By operationalizing the values using these consistent questions, the children assisted me in understanding just how they made meaning of these values as individuals and as a group of second and third graders.

Originally I thought I would follow the set guidelines outlined by Hellison (1995; 2003; 2011) in my TPSR program and developed and implemented the 8-week program accordingly. However, after careful consideration and reflection, I would have changed a few things in the framework I implemented with my participants. The TPSR framework is appropriate for a variety of ages, but for young children it was necessary to adapt how I approached the values. I focused on one value per week and attempted to build upon their knowledge from the previous week’s value that was taught to them. Scaffolding children’s development is central to the teaching process (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). It allows the
teachers to take a role in the learning process, yet also allows the children the individuality in learning (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978) and thus, I challenged them to construct meanings of the responsibility values through my methods of teaching them. Also, I felt with such a short amount of time in the study and with this age group, the key values for focus should have been respect, participation, effort, and also honesty. I would also add caring as a key programmatic focus for young children. I think caring should be addressed in two stages. It should be attended to when the teaching focus is on respect, then addressed again at the more advanced level of leadership. Moreover, I do not believe that self-direction and leadership should have been addressed with this group over such a short period of time. It was too much ground to cover, potentially overwhelming this age group when from a developmental standpoint they most likely were not ready to receive and understand all the information I taught to them. Out of the box, the TPSR structured program is not ready made for children of this age. Adaptations to the model must be made to accommodate younger children. Therefore, by not giving them all of the responsibility values up front in the awareness talk, as noted in Hellison’s (1995; 2003; 2011) texts, I made an adjustment to the TPSR lesson plan. I made the decision to focus on one responsibility value per week to allow the children to grasp one value, not five.

However, I do believe that the decision to use cooperative activities was a wise one. These activities encouraged participation without competition, and focused naturally on responsibility behaviors that I wanted to teach and the
children to learn. Additionally cooperative activities do not require high levels of motor skills as many young children who are underserved demonstrate motor delays (Goodway & Branta, 2003; Goodway & Rudisill, 1997; Robinson & Goodway, 2009). I would recommend using a cooperative approach in future research with underserved second and third graders. In summary, I liked what I did in teaching the TPSR core values and other values that materialized in the study (respect, participation, honesty, self-direction, leadership, and caring). The expectations I had for the program mostly met the reality of the outcomes. Most of the children showed improvements in responsible behaviors over the short 8 week study, although they were inconsistent in demonstrating such behaviors. With this group of children, the focus needed to be on the early levels of TPSR to set a foundation for them. I felt that I was moving too fast through concepts, at times, and should have saturated them with respect, honest, caring, and participation over the 8 weeks and then maybe they would have been able to demonstrate those behaviors on a more consistent basis.

**Response to last research question**

*To what extent are the four core values of TPSR transferred to areas outside of the program, namely the classroom and traditional YMCA program?*

Hellison (2011) conveyed that transferring responsibility values to areas outside of the gym (e.g. school, neighborhood) was the most important aspect of a TPSR program since children live their lives mostly outside of the gym. However, in the TPSR empirical literature and in Hellison’s text, the issue of transfer has not
been addressed in depth in terms of its process, particularly how facilitators plan for it and structure the post-activity discussions (group meetings and reflection times) to promote transfer. Similar to other TPSR literature, I was unable to answer this research question as I was not able to gather the necessary data to know whether or not the children transferred the responsibility behaviors they learned with me to the classroom and typical YMCA program. Transfer under the TPSR umbrella has been limited to self-reported journal entries and questionnaires for the most part, as this is where most of the time is spent with participants. In the case of this study, I used informant journals and interviews to seek information about transfer. However, the time for the interviews was limited and only X journals were completed by the teachers and youth care workers, thus I was unable to get the depth of data necessary to get at this important issue. This study mirrored other studies in the literature in this regard. For instance, there was one study (Walsh et al., 2010) that claimed to transfer TPSR values to the school environment, but the process of transfer and the evidence for it was not well described. The study made an attempt at transfer by allowing participants the time to discuss their perceptions of the program and how to improve upon it, but then settled on the bulk of the transfer process to occur during journaling, during which time participants could evaluate themselves and provide examples of transfer outside of the gym. There was no interaction with other participants in the group or the facilitator, which could have guided and contributed to the enhancement of children's knowledge,
helping them to grow in their understanding of what it meant to be responsible individuals.

In my responsibility program over 8 weeks, I set up conditions around which children would have the ability to transfer responsible behaviors and was hopeful that I would be able to track this transfer to the classroom and the typical YMCA program. Gass (1990), Priest & Gass (1997), and Sutherland (2012) suggested that there needs to be clear strategies for debriefing experiences and facilitating transfer of the learning objectives set forth in individual programs. Specifically, there are a set of discussion techniques outlined by researchers (Gass, 1990; Knapp, 1990; Priest & Gass, 1997; Sutherland, 2012; Sutherland, Ressler, & Stuhr, 2011) surrounding transfer from the pre-planning stage to the follow-up experiences that sustain transfer. In the discussion times after the activities of the lesson, I facilitated talks around transfer by reviewing the activity with the children, asking for their reflection as it pertained to the activity and their behaviors in the activity, and linking the gym activities with future experiences outside of the gym. I prodded the children to think how they could be and how they have been responsible in their classrooms and YMCA and how their behaviors would change going forward. Priest and Gass (1997) noted that facilitators needed to “guide participants to discover their own learning through asking effective questions” so that participants have the opportunity to share personal observations and “own their behavior” (p. 194). I maintained flexibility in the post-activity discussions by allowing the discussions to
be organic, allowing issues to arise and probing the participants for further analysis of their own behaviors.

Transfer is difficult to facilitate and even more difficult to evaluate and document. However, to be able to respond to this research question in a more complete manner, I think that I would have had children take home journals with targeted questions about their experiences in the program and how those experiences impacted them. Also, I would try to make observations in the classroom to discern what the teachers were doing as compared to what I was doing with the participants. I think employing these two methods would have contributed to documenting transfer and being able to respond more affirmatively that transfer took place.

Nevertheless, in light of the limited transfer process noted in TPSR studies, I would suggest integrating a clear set of strategies into TPSR programming to promote the transfer of responsible behaviors to areas outside of the gym. These strategies are a combination of this current study and literature (Gass, 1990; Knapp, 1990; Priest & Gass, 1997; Sutherland, 2012) that focuses on the debrief process. The strategies should be as follows:

1. Design conditions for transfer prior to activities actually occurring so that facilitators have set the stage for the transfer discussion to take place (Gass, 1990). For instance, be sure that the curriculum designed has elements in it so that the learning environment can be applicable to future learning experiences (Gass, 1990; Sutherland, 2012). Also,
discussions should take place in an area with limited distractions to allow for focus in participants.

2. Develop a pre-planned set of open-ended questions and set objectives for the lesson for direction and flow of the discussion. Additionally, plan enough time for the group to be able to process what happened in the lesson and have the opportunity to transfer learning (Gass, 1990; Sutherland, 2012).

3. Understand the needs of the group per the observations made during the gym activity by either keeping written or mental notes on the participants behaviors, how they interact with each other, and any situations that take place during that time (Priest & Gass, 1997).

4. Establish rapport with the participants and set the ground rules for group processing (e.g. no put downs, one person speaking at a time, welcome all points of view, choice in participation, safe and supportive atmosphere) (Knapp, 1990; Priest & Gass, 1997; Sutherland, 2012). Participants should be set up in a circular design so all participants can see each other with the facilitator as part of the circle guiding the group discussion (Priest & Gass, 1997).

5. Listen actively to participants’ responses to build the discussion around their statements. Allow these discussions to emerge from the participants. As the facilitator, one has to remain engaged in the discussion and facilitate the participants’ social construction of
knowledge, but be cognizant of each participant’s body language and energy level to determine the length of the discussion (Priest & Gass, 1997; Sutherland, 2012).

6. Use a funnel approach to guide discussions. Priest & Gass (1997) identified a funneling approach with six filters to guide the discussion from participants’ experiences in the activity to the focus on change by the time the participants reach the end of the discussion. This approach engages the participants in the discussion process beginning with the first filter of asking questions surrounding the review of the activity (e.g. What were our goals in the activity today? How did you show respect today?). The second filter, recall and remember, engages participants with questions that identify specific situations from the gym experience (e.g. Was respect present in this activity? Give me an example of a situation in which someone showed respect.). The third filter, affect and effect, addresses the impact the experience had on an individual participant by asking questions surrounding emotions (e.g. How did it make you feel when your peer did not show respect towards you in this activity?). The fourth funnel, summation, involves deriving from the participants what they learned from the experience (e.g. What have you learned about respect in this situation?). The fifth funnel, application, focuses on how participants can apply what they have learned in the gym experience to situations in their experiences outside of the gym (e.g. Can
you make the connection between what you have learned in the gym to what you do at home? How can you show respect at home?). The sixth and final funnel, commitment, engages the participants in questions surrounding change based on the conversations leading up this point (e.g. What will you do to show respect in your classroom? How will you make a commitment to change your behavior?).

7. Incorporate the Sunday Afternoon Drive Debrief model (Sutherland, 2012; Sutherland et al., 2011), which is a more concise version of group processing than the funneling technique, particularly if a facilitator is limited in the time she has with her participants. The value of this model is that it has specific steps to it and can be used by novice facilitators to run a debriefing session with students using specific prompts to guide the discussion. Despite the value of the model, even with training, novice facilitators will often have difficulty implementing this model as debriefing is a complex skill and requires both practice and feedback to develop the skill (Ressler, 2012). The Sunday Afternoon Drive Debrief model can be completed in the 20 to 25 minutes that I had with my participants. The model involves the experience itself, then proceeds through the steps of reflecting upon experience and generalizing the experience to areas outside of the experience. During the phases of reflecting and generalizing, participants are constantly recalculating or analyzing their thoughts so that eventually they can apply what they have
learned in the experience to other areas of their lives. This model allows the participants to construct learning through their interactions with each other and the facilitator during the debriefing session. Questions noted in the section of the funneling technique can be utilized with this debriefing model.

The funneling approach and the Sunday Afternoon Drive debrief can be practical solutions to the process of promoting transfer in TPSR programs. They are specific and clear methods, but require planning ahead, experience, and time to have success with them. If TPSR facilitators infused one of these techniques in their programs, I believe that they would be successful at not only promoting transfer, but also have students demonstrate transfer in areas outside of the gym.

However, tracking transfer is what proved to be difficult for me, as I could not determine with certainty that my program impacted the children outside of the program. I saw changes in the participants, but it seemed to be a combination of my work with them over 8 weeks and the teachers and youth care staff’s work with the children over the entire school year. All of us reinforced positive behaviors through our time with them. Thus, I cannot confirm or deny that my program had a direct impact on their behaviors in their classrooms or the YMCA. Similarly, the TPSR literature has limited information on tracking and ultimately determining the transfer of responsible behaviors from the gym to areas outside of the gym.
Strengths of study, limitations to methods, and issues with a responsibility-based framework

In this section I discuss the strengths of the study and how they substantiate my work and the beneficial mechanisms of a TPSR program. In addition, I note the limitations of the methods used in this study. Lastly, I consider the issues underscoring the use of a TPSR framework in a short-term study.

Strengths of study. There were several strengths to this study. First, prior to my beginning this research study, I situated myself in the YMCA after-school program for two years. In high quality qualitative studies, prolonged engagement is one of the key characteristics for a successful qualitative study (Creswell, 2009). Prolonged engagement in a site allows for the researcher to build rapport, develop trust, and learn the culture of the participants (Creswell, 2009; Glesne, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; 2000). My involvement in the site for two years prior to the study allowed me to build rapport with the staff and with the children. Developing trusting relationships with all of the parties in the site allowed me to go into the study with the ability to gather the pertinent data I needed to determine the outcomes of my responsibility-based program.

Prolonged engagement was a source of trustworthiness, which is also a strength of this case study. Trustworthiness was attained not only by prolonged engagement, but also through persistent observation over 15 sessions of data collection, triangulation of multiple data sources (e.g. children, teachers, youth care staff, facilitator), and triangulation of the methods of data collection (e.g. interviews,
observations, youth care staff journals, grading reports, picture illustrations). I provided a detailed or thick description of my methodological process implementing a TPSR program. Credibility was established by seeking out and reporting disconfirming evidence throughout the study, for example when speaking of children like Annie and Antoinette, who often times did not demonstrate responsible behaviors (e.g. Day 6; Day 10; Day 11).

Also, before starting the 8-week program, I designed several sample lesson plans and tested them out on a group of 2nd and 3rd grade children prior to implementing the study protocol. Piloting the curriculum prior to full implementation allows for the simulation of the actual data collection process on a small scale to get feedback, determining if adjustments need to be made and reducing unanticipated problems (van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). I wanted to be assured that the curriculum I had outlined with cooperative activities would be conducive for this group of children and that I would be prepared to run this study for 8 weeks.

Once I began the program, I followed the TPSR lesson plans of cooperative activities coinciding with TPSR core values, but made adjustments to the lessons as was required on some days. I created a plan that was adaptable, fun, and developmentally appropriate for this age group of children, recognizing that the TPSR framework was developed with the middle school aged youth in mind. However, Hellison (1995; 2003; 2011) indicated that the TPSR framework was
designed to be adaptable so that it can meet the facilitator’s style and the students’ needs.

Also, throughout the program, I conducted programmatic fidelity checks alongside one of my fellow graduate students to ensure that I was doing what I said I was going to do in each of my lessons. Only one of the 27 TPSR studies (Pascual et al., 2011) focused in implementation fidelity. The researchers found in a comparative case study that fidelity of the implementation was directly related to children meeting the TPSR responsibility levels. In this current study, I ensured that I did what I said I would do in the study by completing a lesson plan checklist and adhering to the methods outlined in the tool for assessing responsibility-based education (TARE; Wright & Craig, 2011). Lack of fidelity checks was a major limitation in the body of TPSR research and therefore, I believed that it was essential to address this issue.

For the program, I met with the group of participants two times per week for 8 weeks, each time for 45 to 60 minutes. Each lesson was video-taped so that I could observe the behaviors of the participants. It was difficult for me to see everything that took place in the program as an active participant in the research. For the most part I followed the protocol outlined in the TPSR framework (relational time, awareness talk, activity, group meeting, reflection time) (Hellison, 1995; 2003; 2011), but needed to make adjustments to it. Dissimilar to the TPSR framework, I extended the relational time to have more time to get to know the students. Additionally, I expanded the time for the group meeting and reflection
time after the activity portion of the lesson. In order for me to assist the students in constructing their knowledge and contribute to their learning of responsibility values, I needed more time devoted to my interactions with them and their interactions with their peers. The social development theory and social constructivism support these views of the organic construction of knowledge and notes the importance of building knowledge through meaningful social interactions (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Creswell, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). Lengthening the discussion time allowed me to the opportunity to listen to the children express their thoughts, opinions, and ideas, which typically go unheard, and to promote transfer of responsibility values from the gym to the classroom and typical YMCA program.

Finally, in this study, I tracked students individually over the program, determining their enhanced understanding and practice of respect, participation, self-direction, and leadership; although I feel that I did not track students very well. I had difficulty tracking the participants individually because I did not organize this study in this way from the beginning. The information emerged from the data without my intention. With this age group of 2nd and 3rd graders, a group unstudied in the TPSR empirical literature, it was important for me to determine how they made meaning of the responsibility values and to what extent they made meaning. Children at this stage in their lives are at an important developmental crossroads for learning (Ladd, 2006; Rubin et al., 2005). Thus, it was important for me to know where each child was in their learning so that I could build upon what they already knew. Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development is constantly changing in children
as they gain higher levels of knowledge (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). Higher levels of knowledge are gained through a combination of assisted and independent learning. Tracking the participants gave me insight to this understanding.

**Limitations to methods.** The major limitation in this study was time. Ideally, a high quality positive youth development program would be sustained over long period of time (a year or years) rather than be reduced to a temporary program for a dissertation study. A high quality program would continue to expose its participants to “positive experiences, settings, and people” (Eccles & Gootman, 2002, p. 301). The time for the study was short, only 8 weeks. The TPSR studies (Cutforth, 1997; Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b; Gordon, 2010; Martinek et al., 2001; Pascual et al., 2011; Walsh et al., 2010) which seemed to have the most notable changes in their participants’ responsibility behaviors were those that were conducted for six months or more. I think programs need at least six months to develop responsibility in children, especially of this age, as the model needed to be broken down into simpler components for the participants to develop the knowledge necessary to practice responsible behaviors. Despite the recommendation for more time, it is important to note that one cannot come up with an arbitrary amount of time as necessary for a youth development program.

Each program, set of children and setting is unique and what might take a short period of time to accomplish in one setting may take much longer in another setting. The most important thing is to provide the necessary time to help children construct
meaning of their experiences. Moreover, facilitators need to be well versed in
debriefing techniques and have had experience working with children. It takes time
and experience facilitators to change behaviors, especially those behaviors
ingrained in an individual since birth. Vygotsky (1978) believed that adults scaffold
the learning process gradually for children, but notes that the adults have to sustain
their interaction with the children within their individual learning zones. I needed
more time to scaffold the learning process for the children in this current study in
order for them to be better able to practice responsible behaviors.

Although various methods were used to collect data for this study and
contributed to the trustworthiness, a couple of the methods had its limitations. In
particular, the live field notes that I took were gathered mostly after the lesson.
Therefore, the notes were confined to what I remembered after the lesson was
completed. To recall various circumstances and the context surrounding those
situations was a challenge for me, at times. I think that having a small digital voice
recorder to record my thoughts on each lesson, as I felt necessary, would have been
helpful to my study to gather information in the moment.

In addition, I felt that I needed to do a better of job in interviewing the
teachers, youth staff, and the participants. I did not feel that I did a great job of
using follow up questions in the moment of the interviews, especially the first
interviews with each of the participant groups. Probing in interviews for clarity and
elaboration in topics is necessary to gain depth in information gathered from
participants (King & Horrocks, 2010; Patton, 1990). Prior to future interview
sessions, I would practice my interviewing techniques with individuals several times as I realize interview skills get better with time. Additionally, I think that I was distracted at times during some of the interviews because I was unable to be in fully quiet place with each child on my own. It was a YMCA policy and therefore, I had to sit on a bench in the school’s hallway or on a staircase and sometimes people would interrupt the interview. The solution to this issue may be to conduct the child interviews in pairs of children.

There were times that the phrasing of my questions in interviews was unclear and I realized that they may have been too complicated for the children to understand. I found myself trying to define what a word meant, which led to some flow issues in the interview. It took a little away from the conversation aspect of an interview, the way that an interview should be conducted with individuals. Interviewing was a good method, but at times, I needed to re-tool my questions to meet the developmental needs of the participants.

The participants drawing pictures of what responsibility values looked like to them was a good method for children of this age. I think that I would have incorporated more drawings if I had more time in the study as I think the children were able to convey clearly their meanings of responsibility through their illustrations. To extend the method of drawing, I would have liked to organize this activity around group discussions, like a “show and tell” to promote social interaction within the group and possibly help others in the group have deeper or different understanding of responsibility values.
A photo journal would have been another method to implement with children of this age. It would require that children take photos in the YMCA or at school (e.g. classroom, recess) of peers practicing responsibility. This experience would help me to understand what the participants deemed to be responsible behaviors.

Lastly, I may have cut down on the discussion structure as I had implemented with this group. There was too much talking at times, which can become stale. Instead, I would include creative debriefing strategies (e.g. group drawings or posters, dramatic interpretations of responsibility) to make discussions more lively and fun.

**Issues with the TPSR framework.** There are a few issues with the TPSR framework that warrant discussion. One of the issues with the TPSR framework is that the model does not denote explicitly the responsibility levels of TPSR. The levels vary in each version of the text. For example in Hellison (2011), there is one table that denotes responsibility level IV as helping whereas in another place the text defines the same level as caring, and in still another place helping others and leadership. Even though caring and helping others can be characteristics of leadership, as indicated in my study, these array of definitions can be confusing to the TPSR practitioner. There have been no conflicts noted in any of the TPSR literature about the layout of the levels within the framework. However, I would suggest changing the levels to reflect the following: Level 1: Respect, caring, and honesty; Level 2: Participation and effort; Level 3: Self-direction and setting goals;
Level 4: Leadership, helping and caring for others. In making these changes to the framework, the TPSR model would provide more clarity to the practitioner.

A second concern with the TPSR structure is that programmatic fidelity and transfer of responsible behaviors had been limited in all previous TPSR studies, except Pascual et al. (2011) which had a sole focus on implementation fidelity. All of the other TPSR studies claim there was a change in some of their participants’ responsibility behaviors, but the researchers did not denote the process to arrive at their findings. Ensuring programmatic fidelity would allow practitioners to follow a specific protocol in running a TPSR program so they can be confident in the curriculum they have developed for their students. Additionally, implementation of fidelity checks also enhances trustworthiness in data findings.

In terms of transfer, there is much work to be done in this area as it is difficult to track transfer without making a direct connection from the responsibility program to the areas outside of it. Not only does a process to promote transfer of responsibility values should be put into place in order to have a clear set of guidelines, but also having a clear procedure to track transfer is necessary. This is a most difficult feat in TPSR, as well as other noteworthy programs such as cooperative learning and adventure based learning (Dyson, 2001; Hattie, Marsh, Neill, & Richards, 1997) and is in need of improvement. Therefore, for tracking purposes, I suggest that children be questioned about how the program impacted them in other areas of their lives, and then a follow up with teachers, parents, and/or youth care staff to corroborate the children’s perspectives to truly track the
transfer of responsibility values. For young children, I would advocate for verbal journals with questions surrounding the responsibility program, specifically inquiring how the program has impacted them in addition to speaking with teachers, parents, and/or youth care staff.

As a final point, within a TPSR framework, the facilitator behaviors determine the outcomes in participants. Specifically, the facilitator has to believe in the program, follow the lesson, but be able to determine the needs of the participants and adapt the program to fit the developmental needs of the children, accordingly. The TPSR program was designed for middle school youth at risk of deviant behaviors (e.g. office referrals, school absences, academic failure, drugs, jail). Nevertheless, the constructs of the framework can be conducive to any age with some tweaking. I adapted the program to make it developmentally appropriate for my participants. As a social constructivist, using a TPSR program with children of this age is the perfect age from a developmental standpoint to help them construct learning. Vygotsky (1978) discussed the importance of meeting children within their individual zone of proximal development and aiding the children in getting towards the level of learning of which they are capable. I believe that if I had more time and the children had sustained interactions with me over a longer period than 8 weeks, the children may have been more consistent in practicing responsible behaviors. Only Walsh et al. (2010) described in detail how the children, ranging in age between 9 and 11 years old, in their study made meaning of the TPSR responsibility values. The participants not only seemed to have a more advanced
understanding over the two year study, but also appeared to practice those responsible behaviors in the gym as well as the classroom. Thus, with time and through consistent interactions of explaining the core values of this model, facilitators can build a more sophisticated understanding of the responsibility behaviors in early elementary students.

**My reflections and ethical dilemmas**

In this area, I discuss the methodological decisions I made in this study to enhance the trustworthiness and subsequent transferability of the study. I follow up my theoretical discussion with my reflection upon my interactions with the participants. Finally, I talk about my ethical dilemma with one child in this study.

**Methodological decisions.** My methodological decision to collect data from various sources was beneficial to my study as it enhanced the study's trustworthiness. Therefore, I gathered data from various sources, which included interviews from child and adult participants, live and video-taped observations, youth care staff journals, a researcher journal, participant drawings, and teachers' grading reports. The first interview with the children began with getting to know them and gain their perspective of the TPSR responsibility values prior to the start of the program. The second and third interviews served to gather more in depth information and I asked questions surrounding factors that influenced their learning (PI2) and their character (PI3). The interviews with the adult participants, both teachers and youth care staff, focused on how the child participants interacted with peers and how the adults guided their learning. Interviews allow participants to tell...
their stories, to give perspectives of their experiences and provides the researcher with an insight to those experiences (Kings & Horrocks, 2010; Kvale, 1996). The interviews were complimentary to the observations and other methods of data collection to provide me with a well-rounded understanding of the participants' experiences and how they viewed those occurrences.

In the limitations section of this discussion, I denote that in the first interviews with the children, I did not go good job of actively listening to their statements to provide relevant follow-up questions. I mostly stuck to the script of my pre-planned questions as I think I was just a little nervous about going off-script not knowing where it would take me. However, as I conducted more interviews and became more comfortable in my interviewing skills, my interviews with the children were more insightful.

In addition to interviews, observations were at the heart of my data collection methods. Observations allow for objectivity and privilege the researcher to the interactions occurring between the participants as well as capture the overall environment (Glesne, 2006; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Live site observations and video-taped observations allowed me to capture the essence of the entire lesson. Since I was teaching the lesson, it was important for me to video-tape each lesson. Otherwise, it would have been difficult for me to report accurately on the occurrences within the lessons each day. One caveat of the live observations was that they were limited in content because at times when I did not record them directly after the program was over, I had difficulty recalling the details of what
happened in the site that day. Most times, I recorded field notes immediately after
the conclusion of the program, but there were times I became distracted with
talking to participants or parents and did not write any notes until I got into the car
or got home. This was also noted as a limitation in this study as I needed to be more
diligent about taking notes directly afterwards and it may have been more
convenient and efficient to record my notes into a voice recorder. Nevertheless, this
form of data collection was still informative and provided support for other data
collected over the time of the study.

Journals from the youth care staff were collected over the 8-week study
period. Participant journals are useful in that they record the participant’s
perceptions and can be complimentary to the interviews and observations gathered
in the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2004; Giraud, 1999). Self-reported information can
be limiting if it cannot be corroborated with other data. The journals were
informative in this study as they gave me insight to the youth care staff’s
perspectives of the children in their afterschool care. However, I was only able to
collect two journals from two youth care staff over the course of 8 weeks for 8 of the
12 participants. One staff member was released from her position prior to the start
of the study and she was never replaced with a consistent youth care staff member
at the site. So, I accepted that I would only receive journals from two staff members.
In asking the youth care staff to complete journals, I gave them deadlines to return
the journals, but they did not adhere to them, even though the journals should have
collectively taken them 10 minutes to complete for their small group of children. I
am not sure if I would have done anything differently in this situation as I provided them with the journal about a week prior to the deadlines I gave to them and reminded them constantly about submitting them to me. It just did not work for these youth care staff members. Despite receiving only two sets of journals from each of the two staff members, the journals supplemented other data and provided me with limited insight to the child participants. Using audio journals with the YMCA staff and even with the teachers may have been an option in providing more information on the participants from the youth care staff and teachers’ perspectives. Using this method may have led the youth care staff to complete the journals more often and in a timely manners and it may have led to the teachers agreeing to complete journals.

A reflective journal was utilized in this research study as a tool to capture my opinions of each lesson as it pertained to the children’s behaviors, their interactions with each other, and their overall character. A reflective journal allows for the researcher to be reflective about the study and examine personal assumptions, value systems, and subjectivities (Glesne, 2006; Patton, 1990). I think that the researcher journal was done well as I attached my thoughts to the field notes so that I could track exactly the contextual situation that warranted the comment. I found that by recording my notes in this way helped me to make sense of what was happening at this point in the study.

Participants drew pictures to illustrate how they made meaning of the TPSR responsibility values. Researchers can use drawings as representations of how
individuals interact with each other and expressions of their experiences in terms of communication, cooperation, or teamwork, adapting the exercise to meet the needs of study participants (Backett-Milburn & McKie, 1999). I found that by having the participants draw pictures of responsibility behaviors (e.g. respect, honesty, participation), I could better understand their perspectives of responsibility. If time had permitted me, I would have had the participants draw pictures for each of the TPSR responsibility values each week and discuss them in front of a group to charge the discussion about a value, hopefully getting contributions from all of the participants to help all of the children grow in their understanding of the responsibility values.

Grading reports for the participants were another source of data collection. I collected this information at the end of the study period to determine students’ behaviors over the study period from the teachers’ perspectives. This information was collected because the teachers did not want to take the time to complete the journal I had given to the youth care staff. Nevertheless, I do not feel that I would collect this data again as it was not very useful. The teachers’ interviews were much more valuable to this study in providing me with pertinent information about the participants. I would try to collect audio journals from the teachers as I think it would be much more effective in getting their weekly perspectives and they could complete them in their own time.

The methodological decisions I made in terms of data collection in this study was sufficient and there is little that I would change. However, if I had one more day
of data collection per week over the 8-week study period, I may have had given the students disposable cameras and had them take pictures of life outside the program, giving them voice through photos, like researchers such as Azzarito & Katzew (2010). In addition, I may have had the students do either voice recorded journals or written journals to get their perspective on what they learned about responsibility values for the week. I would have made these changes because I feel that it would have added to the information I already collected in the study. In I think that I could have gotten a better idea if children were transferring the responsibility values I was teaching them to areas outside of my program.

Moreover, I conducted informal member checks, peer reviews, and negative case analyses throughout the study. Lastly, in writing the methodology and findings chapters, I discussed my prolonged engagement in the site and provided thick description. In conducting a thorough investigation, triangulating my data, and documenting the study process in detail, I am able to provide credibility to my work as well as provide future researchers with the possibility of using my methodology and process to seek answers to similar research questions and/or engage in similar contextual situations.

**Interaction with participants.** The TPSR curriculum afforded me the opportunity to hold individual and group conversations with participants throughout the 8-week study. When I talked with students, I was caring at all times, but spoke to them frankly, letting them know what I expected of them. For instance, the way I talked to the children was in a way that would not allow them to take
advantage of me and lose the structure of the lesson. I meant business in our interactions, but I attempted to strike a balance between having a structure and allowing the children to make decisions when it was deemed appropriate. As Delpit (2006) indicated, language denotes power in children's views and being explicit, firm, and honest are necessary, particularly in Black American children. I think the organization of the lessons, as well as the built rapport, allowed for us to have honest conversations throughout the study enhancing the opportunity for reciprocal learning for both parties. For the most part, the teachers and youth care staff also seemed to talk with students in a similar manner when I held interviews with them and the interactions between the adults and the children were in a way that indicated care.

**Ethical dilemmas.** Although the teachers, youth staff, and I mostly presented a united front in giving critical guidance and stern teachings to children, there was one child who I had to excuse from the study. I had mixed feelings about removing Antoinette, as the program was about learning responsible behaviors and she was one of the children who needed TPSR the most. However, I could not in good conscience allow her to impact the other children's learning process and I had a responsibility to the entire group. Antoinette disrupted the learning process by disrespecting a few of the other children in the program, namely Jane, Hannah, and Kaleb. Specifically, she bothered them both verbally (e.g. Day 10, Day 11) and physically (e.g. Day 11). Jane and Hannah responded to her verbally by standing up for themselves. When Antoinette hit and pushed Kaleb, he did not respond to her
physically, and essentially walked away with saying a few words to her, words I could not hear. Antoinette also talked back to me, was defiant, and showed rebelliousness. I expected to get adverse responses from children at times and had to develop strategies to deal with smart-mouthed children. I attempted to modify her behavior by talking to and re-directing her (e.g. Day 7, Day 9) when she interrupted children while they were talking about their day. I also tried a different approach in giving her responsibilities (e.g. carrying the video camera, video-taping post-activity discussion). These gestures did not work and she consistently created an unsafe emotional environment for the other children and hence, I felt that she was liability. It is my responsibility to create an emotionally and physically safe environment for program participants and Antoinette violated this environment on numerous occasions. Removing her from the program helped her and others take heed that there are consequences for their actions. This is life. Nevertheless, had this program not been part of a dissertation, but part of a long-term program in which I tracked children over multiple years, then I would have had a different solution. I may have had more relational time, one-on-one, with Antoinette and I definitely would have more time to trouble shoot the problems with which Antoinette was faced. The situation would have been entirely different if we had a longer program which seemed to be case in other TPSR studies (Cutforth, 1997; Escarti et al., 2010a; Escarti et al., 2010b; Gordon, 2010; Martinek et al., 2001; Pascual et al., 2011; Walsh et al., 2010) six months or longer where participants showed notable changes in responsible behaviors.
Implications

The evidence from this study suggests that a responsibility-based program is relational and this relational aspect is the basis for all types of youth development programs. Additionally, to enhance the possibility of the way children understand and practice responsibility takes considerable time. Thus, there are several implications from this study in the following areas: 1) running a responsibility-based youth program; and 2) training youth care staff and physical educators. Each of these areas of implications poses an interesting and promising future for physical activity and sports driven youth development programs.

Implications to running responsibility-based youth program. Teaching responsibility to children is a messy process and takes a lot of time. A responsibility-based program such as TPSR needs to be adapted to fit the needs of its participants. Therefore, the first implication for practice is for practitioners to consider from a developmental standpoint how to develop a responsibility-based curriculum and deliver TPSR programming to specific age groups. Vygotsky believed that children construct their own understandings and with age, assistance, and experience, those understandings will be restructured (Vygotsky, 1978; Bodrova & Leong, 2007). I considered the children’s level of cognitive development and ability at their age of 8 and 9 years old, thereby putting them in a position to communicate to me how they interpreted the meanings of the responsibility values I was teaching them. The children drew pictures to illustrate what responsibility values looked like in their perspective. In addition, in our post-activity debriefings, I
facilitated the discussion on what respect, participation, self-direction, and leadership looked like, did not look like, sounded like, and felt like for children to convey their meanings of the TPSR responsibility values. In doing these types of exercises with participants, the children were constructing their knowledge of responsible behaviors, making sense of what it meant to be responsible. The zone of proximal development (ZPD) is a construction zone and is meant to be an active process of children learning concepts through inquiries, analyses, and actions (Bodrova & Leong, 2007). I would suggest to facilitators the importance of developing creative ways to determine children’s understandings of responsibility during the lessons and look to some of the adventure based learning literature for assistance in being creative (Frank, 2004; Kopestonsky, McBane, & Smith, 2008; Panicucci et al., 2003) to promote concepts that she/he wants to teach and children to learn.

Moreover, in structuring my TPSR program with the understanding of my participants’ demographics, mostly Black American and underserved second and third graders, I acknowledged that these children may be developmentally delayed from a motor skills standpoint according so some researchers (Goodway & Branta, 2003; Goodway & Rudisill, 1997; Robinson & Goodway, 2009). Therefore, the second implication is for facilitators to sequence activities in a developmentally appropriate manner for their participants to increase the probability of success in a responsibility-based youth development program. Consequently, I structured my program around cooperative activities, non-competitive activities that did not
require a proficiency in motor skills and had responsibility values embedded within them. I sequenced the activities to align with the TPSR core values and it was similar to the scheme in adventure based learning of community building through communication and cooperation, trust, and problem-solving (Frank, 2004; Panicucci et al., 2003). In my program, the activities were based mostly in the areas of communication and cooperation, although I had the children engage in a few trust activities (e.g. Robot Safety Operator, Trust Circle) later in the study (Day 11 and Day 12). These activities worked well with this young group of children and I would recommend this curriculum to promote TPSR, as the framework for responsibility is well established within the cooperative activity structure.

A third implication focuses on setting the rules, routines, and expectations at the beginning of the program and reinforcing this structure constantly makes for efficient and successful lessons. Rules, routines, and expectations (RREs) need to be established at the beginning of the school year to sustain the learning environment (Luke, 1989; Fink & Siedentop, 1989) as it was directly related to a teacher’s effectiveness (Brophy & Good, 1986). In fact, Fink and Siedentop (1989) found that teachers who establish RREs at the beginning of the year maintained orderly environments and misbehavior was almost non-existent. I established RREs at the beginning of my program by letting them know that I expected them to play fairly, respect the psychological and physical space of others, and what the plan would be for each day (e.g. Day 1, Day 2). However, I did not communicate the consequences of not following the rules and imposed what I thought was fair based on the
circumstance (e.g. having Antoinette sit out of an activity for two minutes on Day 11). Practitioners should set the RREs at the beginning of the program, possibly even give the children the opportunity to be instrumental in developing them so the children have a vested interest and a stake in their own responsibility. Giving children the opportunity to collaborate with each other and develop the RREs will allow the program to run smoother and help the practitioner manage their participants and be more effective in facilitating a responsibility program.

The *fourth* implication encompasses getting to know the students in one’s program as it is necessary for any successful youth development program. Mowling et al. (2011) suggests that understanding entry characteristics can assist a facilitator in programming for specific group of students. I was involved with the YMCA after school program for two years prior to collecting data in the site. I used this time to better understand the demographics and culture of my students as well as the environment in which I would be collecting data. This allowed me to develop the appropriate curriculum for this particular group of second and third grade students. Once I began the program, I used the relational time in TPSR lesson plan, which allows the space for building relationships with students and opens the lines of communication (Hellison, 2011). At the center of any teaching is a personal relationship between the participant and the facilitator and that matters over content (Cuban, 1993). I built rapport with my participants through not only relational time, but also spent time talking with them before and after the time of the program, discussing their interactions with each other, and their thoughts about
themselves and others during the group meetings and reflection times. In holding discussions with the participants, I determined what adjustments, if any, I needed to make to the program, whether it was changing the activity altogether or just a small nuance of it (e.g. rules, level of activity). I would advise that instructors take the time to get to know their students through whatever means are available to them, whether it means arriving early to the site or staying late, but it is imperative to know students on an individual basis. This may not only build rapport with them, but also it may make for an efficient, very manageable, and successful program.

The fifth implication is that the transfer of responsibility behaviors takes time and a structure conducive for promoting transfer. Developing a structure in which the discussion is student-centered, promotes face-to-face interactions, has rules surrounding the discussion (e.g. one person speaking at a time, no put downs, participation is by choice), and orders the questions in a way that leads to making behavioral connections between the participant’s experience in the activity and real-life situations are strategies favorable in stimulating the transfer of responsibility behaviors outside of the program (Gass, 1990; Priest & Gass, 1997; Sutherland, 2012). I attempted to promote transfer using these methods by increasing the time of the group meeting and reflection from the typical 5 to 10 minutes to a 20 to 25 minute discussion, probing the students and asking questions concerning the connections they made between their behaviors in the activity and how they could replicate those behaviors, if appropriate ones, in the classroom and the YMCA. I prepared questions ahead of the lesson to provide me with the
direction, but then listened to the students so I could respond to their comments and extended my questions to promote their thinking.

Although I followed these practices, I was still unsure if I had increased the transfer of responsibility in participants, but do believe I set the groundwork to promote transfer through my methods. I would suggest that practitioners have a set of procedures to promote transfer and moreover, have a structure in place to measure transfer. Transferring responsible behaviors is the most important issue within TPSR as children do not live in the gym (Hellison 2003; 2011) and therefore, having a structure in place to promote and assess transfer is crucial. I would recommend creating a self-report for children to report how they made connections with the responsibility-based program and also making observations in the classroom, as these are two things that I did not do in my study and may have been helpful in determining if transfer had occurred as a result of my TPSR implementation.

Using a developmental approach that promotes positive behaviors in the early years of childhood makes sense, particularly for those who are underserved and at-risk for negative physical and social outcomes (Theriot & Dupper, 2010). Therefore, the sixth implication embraces investing in children early in their lives to build responsibility was of the utmost importance to me, hence the age of this study’s participants. Children are human capital (Lawson, 2005) and assets (Benson, 1997) to the community. I believed that by instilling responsible behaviors and being a responsible, support adult in their lives in these young
children, they would have more protective factors in their lives to mediate the risk factors (e.g. peer pressure; poor neighborhoods, dysfunctional family) they are currently facing and will face in the future. Enhancing protective factors in children’s lives can provide barriers to risks, although not all protective factors will cancel out risks (Fraser & Galinsky, 1997; Fraser et al., 2004; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001; Smith & Carlson, 1997). I provided protective factors by equipping children with the tools for practicing responsible behaviors, developing a supportive relationship with the children, and being a responsible adult in their lives. Practitioners need to understand that providing this type of backing has important consequences for children and I recommend that practitioners understand what it means to be a protective factor and be that person for children. They can do this by listening to the voices of children, allowing the children to speak their opinions, encouraging positive behaviors and interactions with others, confronting children when they are not behaving in an appropriate manner, and overall, building positive, supportive relationships with the children.

The seventh implication involves the understanding that running any type of youth development program requires long-term engagement with features that maximize youth development in a site with children to see change in them. The characteristics of a positive youth development program include the following: 1) physical and psychological safety; 2) appropriate structure; 3) supportive relationships; 4) opportunities to belong; 5) positive social norms; 6) support for efficacy and mattering; 7) opportunities for skill building; and 8) integrations of
family, school, and community efforts (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Coatsworth & Conroy, 2007).

In my program, I provided physical and psychological safety by creating an environment that was safe for peer group interactions and had consequences for children who did not make it a safe environment for others. The structure of the TPSR program met the developmental needs of the participants by introducing the children to non-competitive cooperative activities that did not require a proficient skill level. I demonstrated caring and provided guidance to the children in this study by setting expectations, reinforcing positive behaviors, and addressing negative behaviors (e.g. time out, talking to parents, admonishing the participant). There were several opportunities to belong as the participants, who were of mixed ethnicities (e.g. Black American, Hispanic, and Caucasian) engaged with other peacefully and successfully for the most part in activities and discussions. I promoted positive social norms by having rules, routines, and expectations for the participants on the daily basis, communicating these practices at the start of the program. Finally, there were plenty of opportunities for skill building as the children were constructing knowledge with my assistance of understanding and practicing responsible behaviors. I addressed the support for efficacy and mattering which includes empowering students and enabling them to be responsible by holding discussions in a space that allowed them to voice their ideas and make decisions, but felt that I could have given them more opportunities over the 8-week study. In terms of the integration of family, school, and community efforts, I was
limited in promoting this characteristic. I attempted to do it through my communications with the school and the YMCA program, but did not feel that it was as successful as it could have been if I had more days at the sight or more time in the program. A facilitator of a positive youth development program should be creating a program with these features of positive developmental settings noted in the literature (Coatsworth & Conroy, 2007; Eccles & Gootman, 2002) in mind for a success program. Practitioners need to think about how to create a structure with these considerations and create a program beneficial to both the facilitator’s style and the children’s needs.

The eighth implication for facilitators, but specifically teachers, is that they cannot run a TPSR program with the sole idea of using direct instruction. TPSR compels teachers to shift gradually from a direct instruction model to empowering students in a student-centered model and simply providing them with guidance to make good decisions (Hellison, 2011). Furthermore, implementing a TPSR program with cooperative activities required different content and pedagogical content knowledge over traditional teaching strategies. Content knowledge (CK) is focused on what to teach while pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) connects CK and how to teach it (Shulman, 1987). Sophisticated PCK is the result of having expertise in the content area by training in the area, practicing the implementation of the content repeatedly to be able to discern and correct teaching errors, and deliver the content in meaningful way using varied teaching strategies (Ayvazo & Ward, 2011; Shulman, 1987; Tsangaridou, 2002).
My CK was acquired from the extended amount of training in TPSR and cooperative activities over the past four years and my PCK from the amount of time I have spent practicing the delivery of TPSR programming and adventure based learning programming with various school and adult groups. Although I was very knowledgeable in both CK and PCK, I still made mistakes and needed to be constantly reflective of my teaching so that I could make adaptations to the curriculum as necessary to meet the participants’ needs and developmental capabilities. Therefore, in order for practitioners to be successful at delivering this content, they need to immerse themselves in it by training and practicing delivery in the content area and getting to know the area well prior to implementation. I would suggest reading the TPSR literature for content, attending the annual TPSR Alliance conferences to gain a better understanding of pedagogical content knowledge, and get trained in cooperative activities and/or adventure based learning and delivery of the content in an organization or school that trains individuals in initiatives.

The ninth and final implication of this study is for facilitators to understand the time I spent learning and understanding both TPSR and its delivery as well the time I have spent learning and delivering cooperative activities and overall adventure based learning programming and techniques. I have had over four years of training in both areas and thus had considerable knowledge and good experiences coming into this study. So, it is important for practitioners to know that investing time in learning in teaching responsibility was not something that I took lightly or just walked in the door with and started teaching children. I made the
effort to learn my craft and am still tweaking my practice through my interaction with colleagues of similar interests and current research.

**Training youth care staff and PE teachers.** For any youth development program, the youth care staff and physical education teachers have to have a commitment to children, first and foremost. They have to be willing to relinquish some of their power, which means to give up familiar teaching behaviors and actively listening to students, not easy feats. Researchers have questioned physical education’s ability to recognize children’s constructed realities when doing student-centered research that focuses on improving teaching practices and suggested a change in behavior to incorporate student perspectives (Dyson, 2006; Erikson & Shultz, 1992; Smith, 1991). Lee (2010) found that by listening to young people’s voices about physical activity and sport, she learned about their identities, culture, and views of physical activity and sport. Although listening to children’s opinions and ideas is embedded in the TPSR framework, I found at times that I used a direct approach to teaching (e.g. giving a directive instead of asking an open-ended question in response to behaviors) for management purposes. For teachers, it is most likely even more difficult since they have been trained in direct instructional practices rather than practices based in social constructivism (Dyson, 2006; Tsangaridou, 2002) in which children’s learning is constructed by their engagement in dialogue with peers and the teacher or facilitator.

In order to promote a more facilitated, constructivist approach to working with children, training needs to occur within physical education teacher education
programs or youth care staff or in-service physical education professional
development training. This training needs to assist teachers in moving beyond their
own beliefs and existing pedagogies to a more student centered approach.
Therefore, in training youth staff and teachers in TPSR programming and
cooperative activity content, it is important for them to work with real students to
practice their skills and understand the process of TPSR and be able to implement
the framework.

In addition, with a responsibility-based program, such as TPSR, having time
to hold discussions after the activity is critical to the goal of TPSR, which is for
children to transfer responsibility behaviors learned in the gym to other areas of
their lives. The Sunday Afternoon Drive debrief model is a proven technique that is
a viable option for inexperienced facilitators (Sutherland, 2012). The model
provides specific tools and strategies that allow teachers and facilitators to guide
facilitate meaningful debriefs (Sutherland, 2012). It is important when teaching
youth care staff and physical education teachers that they understand that
developing and becoming proficient in a debriefing technique for transferring
responsibility behaviors is not an easy skill to grasp. Lots of practice is necessary to
gain the skill. In fact, Ressler (2012) noted that even with extensive training,
mastering the skill of debriefing is still a challenge and practitioners may have a
difficult time being successful at it. Thus, the typical one-shot professional
development for a responsibility-based program is not a blueprint for success.
Typical development may include one-shot workshops or tend to make an attempt
at accomplishing more than what is possible and that does not work to sustain learning a skill (Armour, 2006; Armour & Duncombe, 2004). Continuing professional development is necessary for teachers to be successful in implementing a responsibility-based program.

**Future research**

The current findings contribute to a growing body of literature on TPSR. However, the exploration of the TPSR curriculum using cooperative activities needs to be expanded to the following areas:

- Ethnographic studies looking at the culture of the participants will serve to understand the students’ entry characteristics into the program, how these characteristics interact with the way students make meaning around the TPSR program, as well as determine the participants’ barriers and facilitators to transferring the core values from the program to other parts of his/her life.

- Longitudinal studies that evaluate the influence of the TPSR-structured program across time. Such a study might track the progress of individual participants as well as overall outcomes of the program.

- Examine the TPSR framework from a risk and resiliency perspective. Understand the extent to which a TPSR program can be a protective factor mediating the risk factors children and youth face in their lives.

- More research should be conducted with young elementary-aged children. In doing so it will be necessary to implement developmentally
appropriate data collection methods that accommodate the child’s developmental characteristics. Beginning research at an early age can serve to embed responsibility values early in life and build upon those values throughout their childhood.

- Future research should focus on programmatic fidelity to ensure that TPSR program facilitators are doing what they said they were going to do.

- Future research need to focus on a specific approach to examine the transference of responsible behaviors to areas outside of the gym to determine how facilitators are promoting transfer and if, in fact, transfer is taking place.

- Have more research focused on children’s existing identities to understand the attributes with which they enter a program and understand how understanding identities guides teachers and facilitators towards the development of a curriculum that meets the children’s needs.

- Conduct research projects that center around the influences peers have on program participants, determining how these influences, positive or negative, can impact children practicing responsible behaviors.

- Teachers creating a caring atmosphere as Noddings (1992) noted in her text is important for children. Therefore, having more research that creates and emphasizes a caring climate for children and modeling caring and the impact these behaviors have on children practicing caring behaviors can be of noteworthy consequence.
• Other research should include training program leaders in TPSR programming over time and checking with them periodically to determine the skills they have retained by observing them with participants. Also by holding meaningful discussions with program leaders, teacher educators or TPSR program experts can understand how they have made meaning of the TPSR program and implemented it.

• Including video recall sessions in which participants review their behaviors on video, can be useful in future research for program facilitators to understand how participants make meaning and evaluate their own behaviors.

• Finally, future research should include extending the data collection method of picture illustrations by having children discuss their pictures in a group setting and holding discussions surrounding the pictures to enhance children’s constructed meanings of responsibility through the interactions with their peers.

Conclusions

The TPSR framework has relevancy in physical education. It is a standard model in PE that serves to improve the responsible behaviors in school-age children. TPSR also can serve a vehicle to move the field of PE forward to address physical activity and social needs, thus focusing on the needs of the whole child. The model has been shown to have a positive impact on its participants, but most of the literature is limited in the explicit descriptions of the curriculum and
implementation process. Nevertheless, I believe this model to be the future of physical education and physical activity practices as it is essential for our children to learn life skills and grow up to become responsible citizens of their communities while simultaneously being healthy individuals.

There are many examples in society where there is need for people to be more personally and socially responsible. We need to start with young children. After school programs can be sites for transformation in children, similar to the classroom, as they spend 2 to 3 hours each day at an after school site. If youth care staff can be equipped with the knowledge to promote youth development in a systematic manner and evaluate their program through journaling with students, surveys, or short informal conversations with individual students or groups of students, then positive youth development can be attained and society can produce responsible and healthy individuals.
References


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Reed, V.A., McLeod, K., & McAllister, L. (1999). Importance of selected communication skills for talking with peers and teachers: Adolescents’ opinions. Language, Speech and Hearing Services in Schools, 30, 32-49.


Wright, P.M., Li, W., Ding, S., & Pickering, M. (2010). Integrating a personal and social responsibility program into a wellness course for urban high school students:


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

YMCA APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH
November 4, 2010

To the IRB Social & Behavioral Board,

This is to certify that the YMCA is willing to participate in the project:

*Exploring perspectives of children after implementation of a responsibility-based program*

Dr. Jackie Goodway, the Principal Investigator and Robin Dunn, the Co-Investigator, of The Ohio State University have indicated to me that they would like to begin collecting data on the perspectives of youth care workers and children of the YMCA program in Winter 2010. We, the YMCA, are in full support of their research and happy to work with them with respect to this project.

Sincerely,

Becky Ciminillo
Executive Director of Child Care
YMCA of Central Ohio
APPENDIX B

IRB APPROVAL LETTER
January 14, 2011

Protocol Number: 2010B0443
Protocol Title: EXPLORING PERSPECTIVES OF CHILDREN AFTER IMPLEMENTATION OF A RESPONSIBILITY-BASED PROGRAM, Jackie Goodway, Robin Dunn, Physical Activity and Educational Services
Type of Review: Initial Review—Expedited
IRB Staff Contact: Jacob R. Stoddard
Phone: 614-292-0526
Email: stoddard.13@osu.edu

Dear Dr. Goodway,

The Behavioral and Social Sciences IRB APPROVED BY EXPEDITED REVIEW the above referenced research. The Board was able to provide expedited approval under 45 CFR 46.110(b)(1) because the research meets the applicability criteria and one or more categories of research eligible for expedited review, as indicated below.

Date of IRB Approval: January 14, 2011
Date of IRB Approval Expiration: December 29, 2011
Expedited Review Category: 7

In addition; the protocol has been approved for the inclusion of children (permission of one parent sufficient).

If applicable, informed consent (and HIPAA research authorization) must be obtained from subjects or their legally authorized representatives and documented prior to research involvement. The IRB-approved consent form and process must be used. Changes in the research (e.g., recruitment procedures, advertisements, enrollment numbers, etc.) or informed consent process must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented (except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects).

This approval is valid for one year from the date of IRB review when approval is granted or modifications are required. The approval will no longer be in effect on the date listed above as the IRB expiration date. A Continuing Review application must be approved within this interval to avoid expiration of IRB approval and cessation of all research activities. A final report must be provided to the IRB and all records relating to the research (including signed consent forms) must be retained and available for audit for at least 3 years after the research has ended.

It is the responsibility of all investigators and research staff to promptly report to the IRB any serious, unexpected and related adverse events and potential unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

This approval is issued under The Ohio State University’s OHRP Federalwide Assurance #00006378.

All forms and procedures can be found on the ORRP website – www.orrp.osu.edu. Please feel free to contact the IRB staff contact listed above with any questions or concerns.

Shari R. Speer, PhD, Chair
Behavioral and Social Sciences Institutional Review Board
APPENDIX C

PARENTAL PERMISSION
The Ohio State University Parental Permission
For Child’s Participation in Research

Study Title: Exploring perspectives of children after implementation of a responsibility-based program

Researcher: Jacqueline D. Goodway and Robin J. Dunn

Sponsor: N/A

This is a parental permission form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you permit your child to participate.

Your child’s participation is voluntary.

Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to discuss the study with your friends and family and to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to permit your child to participate. If you permit your child to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and will receive a copy of the form.

Purpose:

Your child currently participates in the YMCA after school program at Fairwood Elementary School. As part of this study we will be implementing a responsibility-based physical activity program during the 45 minutes of physical activity and/or free time your child gets during the YMCA program. The responsibility-based program will incorporate a responsibility-based curriculum to promote and develop more responsible behaviors in children (e.g. respect, self-direction, caring, helping others). This research will attempt to understand how best the responsibility program addresses teaching responsibility to children. In addition, the researchers would like to know what it means to children to be responsible as well as to what extent children display responsible behaviors, not only during the program, but also during the rest of the YMCA program and in their classroom.

Therefore, the two purposes for this study are: (1) To explore responsibility program outcomes in 2nd and 3rd grade students participating in an after school program; and (2) To understand how children create meaning in a responsibility-based structure and transfer core values (e.g. respect, self-direction) to the rest of the YMCA program and in their classroom.
Procedures/Tasks:

An 8-week responsibility-based program will be implemented in the YMCA after school elementary program. The program centers on empowering children to take control of their lives by infusing core values of responsibility into physical activities that are commonly taught in physical education or after school programs. This responsibility-based model program uses physical activity as a means to develop responsibility by embracing the four core values: participation/effort; respect for self and others; self-direction; and leadership. Transfer is the ultimate goal of a responsibility-based program as students are expected to transfer values of the program to areas outside of the program setting (e.g. classroom, home, typical YMCA program).

Ms. Dunn will spend one week in the site prior to the 8-week responsibility-based program conducting pre-program observations, eight weeks in the site during the program, and 12 weeks in the site after the program, conducting post-program observations. The entire research project will last 21 weeks.

During the 8 weeks in the site, Ms. Dunn will implement a responsibility-based curriculum that uses physical activity to teach responsibility and provide opportunities for children to enhance their personal and social capacities for future purposes. As part of the regular physical activity portion of the YMCA program, two days per week for 8 weeks will engage your child in physical activities that include tag, team-building, and problem-solving games. All 2nd and 3rd graders, who have received parental permissions, will receive the activity portion of the responsibility-based program.

There will be several ways that data will be collected from your child as follows:

- **Observations** – For one week prior to the 8-week program, Ms. Dunn will spend two times in the site observing existing behaviors and recording notes to document such behaviors. During the 8-week program, Ms. Dunn will take notes three times per week, every week during the after school program. After the 8-week program, she will spend the next 12 weeks, one time per week, in the after school setting conducting observations. Notes from observations will discuss the daily happenings in the program and what kids may say about the program. Your child’s real names will not be used when taking notes and study personnel will be the only people who see the notes.

- **Videotaped Lessons** – All lessons during the 8-week responsibility-based program will be videotaped to ensure consistency in each of the lessons and verify the teacher is following the outlined curriculum. Upon review of videotapes, notes will be taken to record the behaviors and interactions among the students and between the students and the teacher. With permission, videotapes will be kept after the study for further research, or to be used in research presentations.

- **Interviews** – Your child will be interviewed 3 times and this interview will be audio-taped. Some questions include the following:
  - What are some things you like about the program? Things you do not like?
  - What does respect mean to you? Give me an example of respect.
  - How are you respectful in the classroom?
What happens if people are not respectful towards you? How does that make you feel?

The interview will take place in a quiet location at the after school program. Your child will not be interviewed more than three times from January 2011 to March 2011. Interviews will last approximately 15 minutes. The real names of children will not be used.

- **Journals** – Your child will be asked to complete 4 picture journals from January 2011 to March 2011. A picture journal involves drawing a picture to illustrate the core values in a responsibility-based program. These pictures will be drawn during the program and will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Your child will be asked to explain his/her picture and video-recorded while doing so.

- **Focus Group Interviews** – Your child will be involved in no more than 2 focus group interviews consisting of small groups of 3-4 children interviewed together. Focus group interviews will involve discussions about how children make meaning of responsibility and exhibiting responsible behaviors. The interviews will take place in a quiet location at the after school program during the time allotted for free time in the program. The real names of children will not be used. Interviews will last approximately 20 minutes.

**Duration:**

The responsibility-based intervention will last 8 weeks from January 2011 to March 2011, during which time observations, interviews, and picture journals will be completed. For 12 weeks after the intervention, from April to June 2011, observations will be conducted at the YMCA program.

Your child may leave the study at any time. If you or your child decides to stop participation in the study, there will be no penalty and neither you nor your child will lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with The Ohio State University.

**Risks and Benefits:**

There are minimal risks to conducting this type of research. The risks are the same as those of a physical education class. The benefits include learning behavioral skills that your child may be able to use in life and obtaining information that can contribute to making positive changes to the after school youth development program to better meet your child's needs.

**Confidentiality:**

Your child will not be named in any report. Information provided to me by your child will have his or her name removed from it. Any information shared to the after school youth development staff will be a summary of all the children interviewed and not have any names associated with it.

Efforts will be made to keep your child’s study-related information confidential. However, there may be circumstances where this information must be released. For example, personal information regarding your
child’s participation in this study may be disclosed if required by state law. Also, your child’s records may be reviewed by the following groups (as applicable to the research):

- Office for Human Research Protections or other federal, state, or international regulatory agencies;
- The Ohio State University Institutional Review Board or Office of Responsible Research Practices;
- The sponsor, if any, or agency (including the Food and Drug Administration for FDA-regulated research) supporting the study.

**Incentives:**

Small motivators such as pencils or stickers may be provided to children to reinforce positive behaviors.

**Participant Rights:**

You or your child may refuse to participate in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you or your child is a student or employee at Ohio State, your decision will not affect your grades or employment status.

If you and your child choose to participate in the study, then you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. By signing this form, you do not give up any personal legal rights your child may have as a participant in this study.

An Institutional Review Board responsible for human subjects’ research at The Ohio State University reviewed this research project and found it to be acceptable, according to applicable state and federal regulations and University policies designed to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research.

**Contacts and Questions:**

For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact Dr. Jackie Goodway at (614) 292-8393 or Ms. Robin Dunn at (510) 589-9077.

If your child is injured as a result of participating in this study or for questions about a study-related injury, you may contact Dr. Jackie Goodway at (614) 292-8393.

**Please check YES or NO to each of the following statements:**

- I consent to my child’s participation in this study: YES ☐ NO ☐
- I consent to videotaping of my child during this study: YES ☐ NO ☐
- I consent to the investigator keeping the videotapes after the study is completed for use in classes for training other teachers: YES ☐ NO ☐
- I consent to the investigator keeping the videotapes after the study is completed for presentations to other researchers and teachers: YES ☐ NO ☐

I have had a chance to ask questions and to obtain answers to my questions. For questions about my child’s rights as participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or
complaints with someone who is not part of research team, I may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251. I have read this form or I have had it read to me. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Print the name of the participant: ________________________________

Date: __________________________________________

Signed: __________________________________________

(Parent or Guardian)

Signed: __________________________________________

Date: __________________________________________

(Principal Investigator or his/her authorized representative)

(Note: Please return this entire form into either Dr. Jackie Goodway or Ms. Robin Dunn on Monday or Wednesday, the days on which one of them is present at the research site.)
APPENDIX D

ADULT PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM
The Ohio State University Consent to Participate in Research
Youth Care Staff and Teacher Consent

Study Title: Exploring perspectives of children after implementation of a responsibility-based program

Researcher: Jacqueline D. Goodway and Robin J. Dunn

Sponsor: N/A

This is a consent form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate.

Your participation is voluntary.

Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and will receive a copy of the form.

Purpose:

As youth care staff and teachers (Informants), you interact with children on a daily basis and inevitably develop relationships with them, understanding how they make meaning from your program or in the classroom through the behaviors they exhibit. This study will implement a program that will be conducted within the existing YMCA program at Fairwood Elementary School and will incorporate a responsibility-based curriculum to promote and develop more responsible behaviors in children. There is a need to understand to what extent children display responsible behaviors, not only during the responsibility-based program, but also outside of the program (e.g. typical YMCA program and the classroom). Therefore, there are two purposes for this study: (1) To explore responsibility program outcomes in 2nd and 3rd grade students of an underserved community participating in an after school program; and (2) To understand how underserved children create meaning in a responsibility-based structure and transfer core values (e.g. respect, self-direction) to areas outside of the gym.

Procedures/Tasks:

An 8-week responsibility-based program will be implemented in a YMCA after school elementary program. The program centers on empowering children to take control of their lives by infusing core values of responsibility into physical activities that are commonly taught in physical education or after school programs. This responsibility-based model program uses physical activity as a medium to develop responsibility by embracing the four core values: participation/effort;
For one week prior to the 8-week program, Ms. Dunn will spend two times in the site observing existing behaviors and recording notes to document such behaviors. After the 8-week program, Ms. Dunn will spend the next 12 weeks, one time per week, in the after school setting conducting observations, collecting informant journals, and/or holding informal interviews with informants. The entire research project will last 21 weeks.

As a Youth Care Worker or Teacher you are a key informant, and we hope to gain a broader perspective from you about the extent to which children are demonstrating responsibility when they are outside of the responsibility-based program. Therefore, you will be asked to participate in the study in the following manner:

- **Journals:** You will be asked to reflect weekly on children’s behaviors through use of structured informant journals. Structured informant journals will involve your evaluation of individual student behaviors with regards to exhibiting responsible behaviors. Each journal will take you approximately 20 minutes to complete and will encompass evaluations for not more than 4 students. After the 8-week intervention, you will be asked to complete journals to evaluate children every 2 or 3 weeks for 12 weeks to complete another 5 journals. A total of 13 journals will be completed from January to June, 2011.

- **Interviews** – Informal interviews lasting approximately 10 minutes will be completed from January 2011 to June 2011. There will be a total of 7 informal interviews. Two will take place during the 8-week responsibility-based program intervention and the other 5 will take place every 2 or 3 weeks after the study has been completed. All interviews will be audio-taped, and once transcribed real names will not be used. Examples of questions include, but are not limited to the following:
  - What are some examples that show you that children are demonstrating respect in your program or classroom?
  - How has this program assisted children in displaying responsible behaviors?
  - How will you reinforce and promote responsible behaviors after the intervention is finished?

For each procedure/task, your real names will not be used in any documents to maintain confidentiality.

**Duration for each method of data collection:**

- Weekly reflections for the 8-week responsibility-based program implementation and reflections every 2 or 3 weeks for 12 weeks after the program.
- Seven (7) informal interviews – Two (2) during the 8-week program implementation and five (5) during the 12 weeks after the program.
The study will be conducted from January 2011 to June 2011 and you will be responsible for the aforementioned data over a 20-week period.

You may leave the study at any time. If you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with The Ohio State University.

**Risks and Benefits:**

There are minimal risks to conducting this type of research, especially as you will not be referred to by name. The benefits include obtaining information that can contribute to making positive changes to the after school youth development program to better meet your needs, as well as the needs of the children in the program.

**Confidentiality:**

Your name will not be identified in any report. Information you provide to me will have your name removed from it. Any information shared to the after school youth development staff and administration will be a summary of all the youth care workers interviewed and not have any names associated with it.

Efforts will be made to keep your study-related information confidential. However, there may be circumstances where this information must be released. For example, personal information regarding your participation in this study may be disclosed if required by state law. Also, your records may be reviewed by the following groups (as applicable to the research):

- Office for Human Research Protections or other federal, state, or international regulatory agencies;
- The Ohio State University Institutional Review Board or Office of Responsible Research Practices;
- The sponsor, if any, or agency (including the Food and Drug Administration for FDA-regulated research) supporting the study.

**Incentives:**

There are no incentives to participate in this study.

**Participant Rights:**

You may refuse to participate in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you are a student or employee at Ohio State, your decision will not affect your grades or employment status.

If you choose to participate in the study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. By signing this form, you do not give up any personal legal rights you may have as a participant in this study.
An Institutional Review Board responsible for human subjects’ research at The Ohio State University reviewed this research project and found it to be acceptable, according to applicable state and federal regulations and University policies designed to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research.

Contacts and Questions:

For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact Jackie Goodway at (614) 292-8393 or Robin Dunn at (510) 589-9077.

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

If you are injured as a result of participating in this study or for questions about a study-related injury, you may contact Dr. Jackie Goodway at (614) 292-8393.

Signing the consent form

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this form.
Printed name of person authorized to consent for subject (when applicable) | Signature of person authorized to consent for subject (when applicable) | AM/PM

| Relationship to the subject | Date and time |

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Investigator/Research Staff**

I have explained the research to the participant or his/her representative before requesting the signature(s) above. There are no blanks in this document. A copy of this form has been given to the participant or his/her representative.

Printed name of person obtaining consent | Signature of person obtaining consent | AM/PM

| Date and time |

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APPENDIX E

CHILD ASSENT FORM
Exploring perspectives of children after implementation

of a responsibility-based program

Jacqueline D. Goodway and Robin J. Dunn

N/A

- You are being asked to be in a research study. Studies are done to find better ways to treat people or to understand things better.
- This form will tell you about the study to help you decide whether or not you want to be part of it.
- You should ask any questions you have before making up your mind. You can think about it and discuss it with your family or friends before you decide.
- It is okay to say “No” if you don’t want to be in the study. If you say “Yes” you can change your mind and quit being in the study at any time without getting in trouble.

1. What is this study about?

In your after school program you do some physical activity. This study is about getting your opinions on the physical activity part of your after school program and what it means for you to be responsible. You will be taught responsibility through the use of physical activity.

2. What will I need to do if I am in this study?

All kids will participate in the physical activity part of the program as part of the physical activity portion of the YMCA program. All lessons will be videotaped. Also, you will be asked to talk about what you think makes you a responsible person.
individually and in small groups. For example, I want to get your opinion on what respect means to you and how you show respect in the classroom. These talks will be audio-recorded to make sure everything you said is understood. Also, you will be asked to draw pictures to show what responsibility means to you and asked to explain your pictures on video. Everything that we do will happen during the time when you would be doing physical activity or have free time in the YMCA program.

3. **How long will I be in the study?**

   You will be in the study from January to June.

4. **Can I stop being in the study?**

   You may stop being in the study at any time.

5. **What bad things might happen to me if I am in the study?**

   No bad things will happen to you if you are in the study. We will be doing typical physical education activities, such as playing tag and parachute games, for example.

6. **What good things might happen to me if I am in the study?**

   You will get to have fun by doing some new and fun activities. Also, you will learn about how to be more responsible kids.

7. **Will I be given anything for being in this study?**

   You may be given pencils or stickers for participating in this study.

8. **Who can I talk to about the study?**

   For questions about the study you may contact **Dr. Jackie Goodway or Ms. Robin Dunn**.

   To discuss other study-related questions with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

   **Signing the assent form**

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form. I have had a chance to ask questions before making up my mind. I want to be in this research study.
Signature or printed name of subject ________________________________ Date and time

Investigator/Research Staff

I have explained the research to the participant before requesting the signature above. There are no blanks in this document. A copy of this form has been given to the participant or his/her representative.

Printed name of person obtaining assent ________________________________ Signature of person obtaining assent ________________________________

AM /P
PM

Date and time

This form must be accompanied by an IRB approved parental permission form signed by a parent/guardian.
APPENDIX F

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR CHILD PARTICIPANTS
CHILD PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Demographic Information

1. How old are you?
2. What grade are you in?
3. Are you a girl or a boy?
4. Who do you live with?
5. Do you receive free or low price lunch?

Respect for Self and Others

1. What does respect mean to you?
2. Do teachers give you chances to practice respect in the classroom?
3. In what ways do you feel your teacher respects you? How about the staff at the Y? Peers?
4. What things make you feel good about yourself?
5. Do you like who you are? Tell me one thing that is special about you?
6. Are there times when you make fun of others? If so, how do you think that makes them feel? How would you feel if people made fun of you?
7. Are you a good friend? How do you know you are a good friend?
8. Do you feel that it is ok when people are different from you? Why or why not?
9. Do you feel the Y staff cares about you? Do you feel that your teachers care about you? Tell me why you feel this way? What things do they do to make you feel that they care?

Participation/Effort

1. What does giving your best effort mean to you? How can you show your best effort? Give me some examples.
2. Do you always give your best effort when doing homework? When working in the classroom? How do you know? What makes you think you gave your best effort?
3. Do you give your best effort in tasks at the Y? Tell me why you think you give your best effort at the Y?
4. What things get you frustrated? What do you do when you get frustrated?
5. When you have to do things that are hard, how do you do it? Do you quit? Do you keep going and know that you can get through it?
6. How well do you follow the rules in school? At the Y program?

Self-Direction

1. Are you okay working by yourself?
2. What helps you to be able to work by yourself?
3. How is working by yourself good for you?
4. When you argue with one of your friends, what do you do to fix things between you?
5. If you make a mistake, do you admit it? Do you feel it is okay to make mistakes? Why or why not?
6. Do your friends encourage you to do things that you are not supposed to be doing? If so, what makes you do those things you shouldn't? If not, what makes you do the right thing?
7. Do you feel that you make good decisions most of the time? Why do you think so? Why don't you think so?
8. Do your teachers allow you to make decisions in the classroom? Does the Y staff allow you to make decisions in the Y program? What types of decisions are you allowed to make?

Leadership/Helping Others

1. What does leadership mean to you? Are you a leader? How do you know?
2. What does helping others mean to you?
3. Have you helped one of your peers in the classroom or at the Y program? Teachers? Y Staff?
4. Name 3 ways you have helped someone this week?
5. Do you feel that you could be a positive role model to younger students and to peers? What qualities do you have that will make you a good role model?

Learning

1. Do you feel that you learn from your peers? Give me one example of what you have learned from a classmate?
2. Do you like your teacher? What do you like about him or her?
3. Do you like the Y Staff? What do you like about each of them?
4. Do you feel that you are learning from your teacher? What do you feel that you are learning from him/her?
5. Tell me one thing that you like about your classroom teacher teaching you. Name one thing that you feel could be improved about him/her teaching you.
6. Do you feel that you are learning from the Y staff? What do you feel that you are learning from them?
7. Who do you feel is a role model for you? What makes that person a role model for you? Do you respect them? What makes you respect them?
8. Who teaches you manners? How do you know when you have learned them? Do you always practice manners? If you do not practice manners, what are the consequences? Are there any consequences?

TPSR Program

9. What do you like best about my program? If you could change one thing about it, what would it be? What would you like me to do differently?

Self-Identification/Acceptance

10. How would you describe yourself?

11. Are you a confident about yourself? Why do you think so or why don’t you think so?

12. Do you feel that your friends accept you for who you are? What about others, like your teachers, classmates, Y staff?

13. Do you feel that people talk about you in a negative way? If so, do you care? How does it make you feel?

Doing the right thing (Self-Direction)

14. What makes you not do the right thing some time? What happens when you do not do the right thing?

15. Is it hard for you to listen sometimes? Why do you think that it is hard for you to listen sometimes?

16. Tell me how it feels when you get a bad grade on your report card or your name gets written on the board, you have a time out, have to go to PEAK, your friend says something behind your back. How do you deal with those situations?

17. Is it ever ok to cheat? Why or why not? What does it mean to cheat? Do you have to win all the time? Is it ok to lose?
18. Do you feel that you are able to do the right thing even when everyone else is not?

Responsibility (General)

19. In what ways have you shown responsibility?

20. You know how you always ask me if you can do something for me, like carry the camera, take attendance, or help with equipment. Do you ask to take responsibility from your teachers? What about from the Y staff?
APPENDIX G

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – ADULT PARTICIPANTS
Interview Questions #1 – Sources

1. Which children do you have in your group or class that participate in the after school program?
2. Please provide me with examples of how each of them have exhibited responsible behaviors.
3. In what way does each student demonstrate leadership? Do you give them opportunities to lead? How so?
4. What types of decisions do you all your students to make? What responsibilities do you give your students?
5. It is important for children to interact with adults to learn progressively over time. It obviously depends on the social environment in which the interaction takes place, an environment supportive of learning. In what ways do you feel each student learns from you? How is your class/program structured to enhance learning? Social interaction between students?
6. Do you feel that each student one of these students is an independent thinker? Why or why not? Please speak to each student. How do you encourage independent thinking and working independently? In what ways do you allow the student to share responsibility with you as the teacher or youth staff?
7. Finally, what measures do you feel you can take to enhance responsibility in your students, particularly each one of these students we are talking about for this interview?

Interview Questions #2 – Sources

Demographic

1. How long have you been a teacher? How long have you been a teacher at Fairwood? (Mrs. Wristmiller only)
2. How would you describe yourself?

Student-Teacher Relationship

3. How important do you feel it is to cultivate relationships with students?
4. What measures do you take to get to know your students?
5. What type of relationship do you feel you have with your students?
Responsibility (General Questions)

6. How do you feel that you promote self-confidence in your students? Do you feel that each of these students is confident in himself/herself? Why or why not?

7. When you allow your students to have choices, how do the children respond when they are given that opportunity?

8. To what extent do you feel that each student socially accepts others? How do you feel that you contribute to children accepting each other?

9. To what extent do you feel that each student's behavior is influenced by external factors?

10. Have you noticed any changes in the behaviors of these students – confidence, assertiveness, respectfulness, taking initiative, accountability, showing responsibility?

11. Last time we talked about ways that you have contributed to enhancing children’s responsible behavior, such as having jobs for them or leading a group. You also said that for some of the children, you did not give them any responsibility. In what ways have you contributed to enhancing each participant’s responsible behavior, especially those who you consciously chose not to give responsibility the last time we talked?

12. When the group of children was with me a couple of weeks ago, we held a long discussion about how they do not get to lead anything and are overlooked to do so because of the big kids in the Y. So, they are always asking me if they can do various tasks for me whether it is carrying my video camera, setting up the equipment, recording the lesson, etc. In what ways do you feel that children seek responsibility from you?
Participant Name _____________________________    Grade ____________________

Teacher/Youth Staff Name _____________________________

Please respond to the following questions. This evaluation of participants should take approximately 5 minutes.

1. How has the participant exhibited responsible behaviors (e.g. respecting self and others, participation/effort in activities, demonstrating self-control, setting goals for herself/himself, demonstrating leadership behaviors such as role modeling) in the classroom/YMCA program this week? Please provide examples.

2. How often is the participant exhibiting these responsible behaviors, if at all (e.g. 1 time per week, 2 times per week, 3 times per week, more than 3 times per week)?

3. Describe the measures you take to empower the participant. How do you share responsibility with the participant?

4. In what ways do you exhibit respect towards, allow choices to, and listen to the voices of this participant?

5. What responsibilities did you give the participant this week?
APPENDIX I

TARE INSTRUMENT
TARE Observation Record

Observer Name: ______________________________ Date: _______________ Day of Week: M  T  W  Th  F

Start Time: _______  End Time:_______

School Information

School Name:_______________________________  School District:_______________________________

Locale:  Urban  Suburban  Rural  Private  School Level:  Elementary  Middle  High  K-12  Other______
Teacher Information

Teacher Name: ___________________________  Teacher Gender: ___________________________

Teacher Race/Ethnicity: _______________________  Is teacher certified/licensed in PE?: _________

Observation #: _________ of ___________ for this teacher

Student Information:

Approximate Number in Class: ____________  Gender: All male  All female  Coeducational

Race/Ethnicity: all white  all minority  mixture of white and minority

Special Education Included: Yes  No  Not sure
## Part One: Observable Teaching Strategies

For each 5-minute interval, observe for the teaching strategies listed above and circle the applicable code(s) for any that are observed in that time and to record contextual comments such as key events, lesson content, examples of how strategies were used. Check off each completed interval. After the observation period is complete, tally each column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Intervals</th>
<th>Responsibility – Based Strategies</th>
<th>Contextual Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 5</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – 10</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – 15</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 – 20</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 – 25</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 – 30</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 35</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 – 40</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
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<tr>
<td>40 – 45</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
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<tr>
<td>45 – 50</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 – 55</td>
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<tr>
<td>55 – 60</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Part Two: Personal-Social Responsibility Themes

After the observation period and interval coding is completed on the first page, provide a holistic rating for these general themes. Consider the overall tone and content of the lesson as well as the Responsibility-based Strategies observed. Interval contextual comments can also guide this qualitative summary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interval</th>
<th>Codes: Modeling Respect; Setting Expectations; Opportunities for Success; Fostering Social Interaction; Assigning Tasks; Leadership; Giving Choices and Voices; Role in Assessment; Transfer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60 – 65</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 – 70</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 – 75</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 – 80</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
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<tr>
<td>80 – 85</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
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<td>85 – 90</td>
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<td>90 – 95</td>
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<tr>
<td>95 – 100</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 – 105</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>105 – 110</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>110 – 115</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115 – 120</td>
<td>M E S SI T L V A Tr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tallies

Codes: (M)odeling Respect; Setting (E)xpectations; Opportunities for (S)uccess; Fostering Social (SI)nteraction; Assigning (T)asks; (L)eadership; Giving Choices and (V)oices; Role in (A)ssessment; (Tr)ansfer
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4-Extensively</th>
<th>3-Frequently</th>
<th>2-Occasionally</th>
<th>1-Rarely</th>
<th>0-Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration:</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(extent to which responsibility roles and concepts are integrated into the physical activity)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                      | 4            | 3            | 2              | 1        | 0       |
| **Transfer:**       | 4            | 3            | 2              | 1        | 0       |
| (extent to which connections being made to the application of life skills in other settings) |

|                      | 4            | 3            | 2              | 1        | 0       |
| **Empowerment:**    | 4            | 3            | 2              | 1        | 0       |
| (extent to which the teacher shares responsibility with students) |
### Teacher-Student Relationship:

| extent to which students are treated as individuals deserving respect, choice, and voice | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

*Extensively* – Theme is seamlessly addressed directly and evidenced in multiple ways throughout the lesson through the words and actions of the teacher.

*Frequently* - Theme is addressed directly and evidenced at several points in the lesson through the words and actions of the teacher.

*Occasionally* – Some of the teachers’ words and actions connect to this theme either directly or indirectly during the lesson.

*Rarely* – This theme is not generally integrated into the teaching but may be reflected in some isolated words or actions on the teacher’s part.

*Never* – Throughout the entire lesson, none of the teacher’s words or actions clearly convey or align with this theme.
Part Three: Student Responsibility

After the observation period and interval coding is completed on the first page, provide a holistic rating for these general areas of student responsibility. Consider observed student behavior and interaction throughout the lesson. This rubric assesses the group overall and not individual students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4-Very</th>
<th>3-Strong</th>
<th>2-Moderate</th>
<th>1-Weak</th>
<th>0-Very Weak</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Control:</strong> Student does no harm to others verbally or physically; includes/works well with others; resolves conflicts peacefully if they emerge</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation:</strong> Student will try every activity and take on various roles if asked</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effort:</strong> Student tries hard to master every task and focuses on improvement</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Direction:</strong> Student will stay on task without direct instruction or supervision whether working alone or with others; does not seem to</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
follow bad examples or peer pressure

| Caring: Student will help, encourage others, and offer positive feedback | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

*Very Strong* – All students displayed this responsibility throughout the lesson with no observed exceptions.

*Strong* – Most students displayed this responsibility throughout the lesson with only minor and/or isolated exceptions.

*Moderate* – Many students displayed this responsibility but many did not; several exceptions were observed.

*Weak* – Some students displayed this responsibility, but many did not; exceptions were frequent and/or serious enough to impede learning.

*Very Weak* – Few, if any, students displayed this responsibility while the majority struggled to do so; exceptions were frequent and/or serious enough that at least some portions of the lesson were rendered ineffective.

**Part Four: Additional Comments or Contextual Notes**

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Appendix: Extended Description of Responsibility-Based Teaching Strategies

Modeling Respect (M): Teacher models respectful communication. This would involve communication with the whole group or individual students. Looks like: appropriate communication and instruction and unconditional positive regard. Does not look like: rolling out the ball, losing temper, or embarrassing students.

Setting Expectations (E): Teacher explains or refers to explicit behavioral expectations. These could relate to skill performance, safe practices, rules and procedures, or etiquette.

Opportunities for Success (S): Teacher structures lesson so that all students have the opportunity to successfully participate and be included regardless of individual differences.

Fostering Social Interaction (SI): Teacher structures activities that foster positive social interaction. This could involve student-student interaction through cooperation, teamwork, problem solving, conflict resolution or debriefing. [This only counts if it is structured by the teacher; rolling out the ball does not count.]

Assigning Tasks (T): Teacher assigns specific responsibilities or tasks (other than leadership) that facilitate the organization of the program or a specific activity. This could look like taking attendance, setting up equipment, keeping score/records, or officiating a game.

Leadership (L): Teacher allows students to lead or be in charge of a group. This could look like demonstrating for the class, leading a station, teaching/leading exercises for the whole class, or coaching a team.
**Giving Choices and Voices (V):** Teacher gives students a voice in the program. This could involve group discussions, voting as a group; individual choices, students asking questions, making suggestions, sharing opinions, evaluating the teacher or program.

**Role in Assessment (A):** Teacher allows students to have a role in learner assessment. This could take the form of self- or peer-assessment related to skill development, behavior, attitude, etc.; it could also involve goal-setting or a negotiation between teacher and student on their grade or progress in the class.

**Transfer (Tr):** Teacher directly addresses the transfer of life skills or responsibilities from the lesson beyond the program. This could include links such as: the need to work hard and persevere in school; the importance of being a leader in your community; keeping your self-control to avoid a fight after school; setting goals to achieve what you want in sports; the need to be a good team player when you grow up and get a job; or the value of thinking for yourself to avoid peer-pressure.
APPENDIX J

TPSR FEEDBACK FORM
TPSR FEEDBACK FORM

Date:

Program Leader:

Supervisor:

What's worth doing? Is it working?

Daily Format (chapter 4)    YES-SOMewhat-NO    FEEDBACK

1. Relational time (chapter 7):
   Teacher shows effort to relate
   positively to students

2. Awareness talk: Teacher
   reminds students of their goals*:
   With student participation

3. Physical activity lesson: Teacher
   integrates student goals* into the
   lesson (chapter 5) & problem-
   solves as needed (chapter 6)

4. Group meeting: Teacher listens to
   students' positive & negative
   comments about the lesson, as well
   as suggestions to improve the lesson

5. Self-reflection time: Students self-
   evaluate how well they carried out
   their goals, including "Outside the
gym"*

   ______
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>AO</td>
<td>Accepting Others (e.g. ideas, looks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AOH</td>
<td>Asking others for help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR</td>
<td>Accepting Responsibility/Following Through/Accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL</td>
<td>Blaming Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BR</td>
<td>Building responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CH</td>
<td>Chances given to demonstrate responsible behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONF</td>
<td>Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DM</td>
<td>Decision-Making</td>
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<td>Doing the right thing</td>
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<tr>
<td>DTWT</td>
<td>Doing the wrong thing</td>
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<tr>
<td>DV</td>
<td>Disconnection from values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBC</td>
<td>Encourage/Building Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMP</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENJ</td>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXB</td>
<td>Exhibiting responsible behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>EXT-B</td>
<td>External Influences on behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB</td>
<td>Feedback - Extrinsic or Intrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOL</td>
<td>Follower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GATT</td>
<td>Getting the attention of others</td>
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<tr>
<td>GC</td>
<td>Demonstrating good citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLT</td>
<td>Guilt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HON</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISE</td>
<td>Interactive Social Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCV</td>
<td>Modeling core values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MKO</td>
<td>More Knowledgeable Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSK</td>
<td>Masking/Faking Core Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPB</td>
<td>Other People’s Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Overt or Over reactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC</td>
<td>Resolving Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RF</td>
<td>Researcher Frustration</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Self-centered</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEC</td>
<td>Sense of control/defiant/delayed responses</td>
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<tr>
<td>SI</td>
<td>Sustained interest in program</td>
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<td>SR</td>
<td>Seeking Responsibility</td>
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<td>TRF</td>
<td>Transfer/Critical Thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>TSR</td>
<td>Teacher/Student Relationship</td>
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<td>TW</td>
<td>Teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VC</td>
<td>Voices &amp; choices</td>
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<td>WC</td>
<td>Winning/Competition</td>
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