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OFFERING A TPSR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CLUB TO ADOLESCENT BOYS LABELED "AT RISK" IN PARTNERSHIP WITH A COMMUNITY-BASED YOUTH SERVING PROGRAM

UN PROGRAMA DE TPSR EN UN CLUB DE ACTIVIDAD FÍSICA PARA CHICOS ADOLESCENTES DENOMINADOS "EN RIESGO" LLEVADO A CABO EN COLABORACIÓN CON UN PROGRAMA COMUNITARIO PARA JÓVENES

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ABSTRACT

Although there has been an increased focus in the literature on the importance of partnerships that frame or support TPSR programs, there are few detailed descriptions of successful, mutually beneficial partnerships. The purpose of this essay is to share my story of a successful TPSR physical activity club I developed in partnership with an existing youth serving organization in Memphis, Tennessee. The youth serving organization I partnered with was comprehensive, effectively run, and based in similar values. The infusion of weekly TPSR lessons increased the effectiveness and coherence of the existing program's physical activity component and aligned it more with their value lessons and other aspects of their program. This partnership allowed me to implement the TPSR model with a high degree of fidelity and to develop ideas that I have been able to share with a wide range of audiences interested in this work. Most importantly, the program's staff and I felt this partnership and our combined efforts had a positive influence on the boys in the program and supported their success in the program and hopefully beyond.

RESUMEN

Aunque se ha incrementado la literatura centrada en la importancia de colaboraciones que enmarcan o apoyan los programas de TPSR, hay pocas descripciones detalladas de colaboraciones exitosas y mutualmente beneficiosas. El objetivo de este artículo es compartir mi experiencia en un club de actividad física que usa TPSR, desarrollado junto con una organización de apoyo a los jóvenes de Memphis, Tennessee. La organización de apoyo a jóvenes con la que colaboré es una organización inclusiva, dirigida de manera eficaz y basada

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en valores similares. La continuidad al impartir sesiones semanales de TPSR incrementó la eficacia y la coherencia del componente de actividad física de los programas existentes y lo alineó más con las sesiones de valores y otros aspectos del programa. Esta colaboración me permitió implementar el modelo de TPSR con gran fidelidad y desarrollar ideas que he podido compartir con numerosas audiencias interesadas en este trabajo. Lo más importante es que el personal del programa y yo sentimos que esta colaboración y nuestros esfuerzos combinados tuvieron una influencia positiva en los chicos del programa y apoyaron su éxito en el programa y es de esperar que más allá también.

KEYWORDS. Service-bonded inquiry; youth development; program evaluation; university-community partnership.

PALABRAS CLAVE. Service-bonded inquiry; desarrollo de la juventud; evaluación de programas; colaboración universidad-comunidad.

1. Introduction

The Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) model is one of the most influential models in the field of physical education pedagogy (Metzler, 2005). However, the literature indicates TPSR may be implemented in after-school and community settings more often than it is in school-based physical education (Hellison, Cutforth, Kallusky, Martinek, Parker, & Stiehl, 2000; Hellison & Martinek, 2006). In either case, much of the writing about the model focuses on what occurs in a TPSR program with a particular focus on the teaching and learning experience and potential benefits for youth participants. While this is clearly an important focus, broader contextual issues are often left unexplored. Many of the TPSR programs described in the literature are the result of university-community collaborations, but there is often little description of these collaborations, how they were formed, and whether they helped or hindered the program's success.

More recently scholars have devoted their efforts to this type of research. Three studies best encapsulate this work. Walsh (2006) was the first to examine common barriers and facilitators that have been faced by TPSR scholars who work in community settings. Exploring ways the broader school culture stood in contrast to the culture they tried to create in a TPSR after-school program was the focus of the most recent study by Lee and Martinek (2009). Beyond a simple description of the setting in their study, Wright and Burton (2008) illustrated how their TPSR program came to be valued and appreciated within the physical education program of an inner-city high school.

Despite the increased focus on collaboration and partnerships, there are still few detailed descriptions of successful partnerships, how they are formed, and how they can be integral to the successful design, implementation, and evaluation of a TPSR program. Such examples are needed to inform future programming efforts, especially those undertaken by community-engaged professors. Therefore, the purpose of this essay is to share the story of a successful TPSR physical activity club I designed, implemented, and evaluated in partnership with an existing youth serving organization in Memphis, Tennessee.

As a professor at the University of Memphis from 2002 to 2011, I conducted action-oriented research working directly with youth from underserved communities. My approach could be classified as service-bonded inquiry (Martinek & Hellison, 1997; Martinek, Hellison, & Walsh, 2004) in part because it was based on my personal values and commitment to fostering positive development among underserved youth. Also, my approach was rooted in real-world settings and focused on answering questions and responding to the needs of a particular setting. It involved implementation and program development through a process of trial and error and did result in dissemination to both scholars and practitioners. In the following sections, I describe the context I was working in, my reasons for seeking out a partnership, a description of the program I partnered with, and the club we developed. I also provide specific examples of the strategies I used to implement TPSR and evaluate the program.

2. The Context, Memphis

Memphis is a mid-sized city in the Southern United States (U.S.). Like many cities in the U.S., Memphis is plagued by a history of social injustice and harsh disparities related to economic, educational, and health outcomes. With a population of 680,768, Memphis is the 18th largest city in the U.S.; however, U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation 2010 crime statistics (see http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/ucr) indicated that Memphis had the sixth highest violent crime rate of all cities in the U.S. A contributing factor to the problems that plague Memphis is a deeply entrenched pattern of racial and economic segregation that is evident in the local public school systems (Bond & Sherman, 2003; Rushing, 2009). In 2009, in the Memphis City Schools (MCS), 85 % of the 103,593 students were African American, 87.2% were classified as economically disadvantaged, and only 62.1% graduated from high school. In the surrounding suburban Shelby County School (SCS) system at the same time, only 37.4% of the 46,284 students were African

American, 33.2% were classified as economically disadvantaged, and 96.3% graduated from high school (see http://www.tn.gov/education/reportcard/).

In communities with high concentrations of crime and poverty, poor health outcomes, and low educational achievement, children and youth are exposed to numerous negative influences that have direct implications for personal and social responsibility. For example, youth growing up in poverty are more likely to find themselves in vulnerable and desperate situations that may lead to criminal activity and violence. Consider data from the 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov) administered to high school students in Memphis by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: 37.8% reported being in a physical fight one or more times during the 12 months before the survey; 61.6% reported having sexual intercourse; 12.8% had carried a weapon on at least one day during the last 30 days before the survey; 11.5% had been hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend during the last 12 months before the survey; 25.9% rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol one or more times during the last 30 days before the survey; 24.2% reported having at least one drink of alcohol on at least one day during the last 30 days before the survey; 39.5% reported using marijuana one or more times during their life; 15.8% were offered, sold, or given an illegal drug by someone on school property; and 10.7% had seriously considered attempting suicide during the 12 months before the survey.

Of course not all youth in Memphis live under the same circumstances. Depending on the neighborhood in which they grow up, some have much higher exposure to these negative influences while other are relatively well shielded from them. The deciding factor and most direct correlate to these risk factors for youth in Memphis, and other large cities in the U.S., is family income (Rushing, 2009). For these reasons, the positive youth development programs I ran in Memphis were directed at youth who came from schools, neighborhoods, and families that were lacking resources and most likely to face the risks associated with urban life head on.

3. Reasons for Seeking a Partnership

Prior to coming to Memphis, I had done most of my work with TPSR as a graduate student under Don Hellison's direction. I primarily worked in voluntary after-school programs with children and youth from low-income neighborhoods in Chicago. During these years, I encountered many of the logistical and administrative

obstacles that Walsh (2006) identified as common barriers in running extended day programs. Having spent several years struggling with student retention, scheduling, facilities, etc., when I arrived in Memphis I was ready to try something different. In an attempt to explore the implementation of TPSR through the school curriculum and increase consistency in my programs, I spent the first several years in Memphis delivering TPSR lessons through a public high school physical education program in one of the most impoverished neighborhoods in the city. Part of my reason for working in this context was that as a young faculty member working to get tenure, I was under pressure to publish traditional research articles in peer-reviewed journals. I decided that working in an inner-city high school's physical education program would allow me to stay true to my core commitments yet have more consistency and structure than I could typically find in an extended day setting. While this was the case to some extent, there were trade-offs. I was able to conduct structured research around my programs with larger sample sizes and that did help me produce the number and type of publications I needed for tenure. However, I found that with greater numbers of students and the involuntary nature of the program, I was not able to implement the model as well as I would have liked. Battles with overcrowding, distractions, and lack of student interest forced me to focus primarily on foundational responsibilities like respect, participation, and effort and limited how far I could go with the students in terms of empowerment, reflection, and transfer (Wright & Burton, 2008). In the end, I felt that despite success on a number of fronts, what I was delivering was a slightly diluted version of the TPSR model (Wright & Burton, 2008; Wright, Li, Ding & Pickering, 2010).

After four years of working primarily in the high school setting, I had learned what I wanted to and accomplished what I felt I could. I certainly gained an appreciation and better understanding for the struggles encountered in urban physical education programs (Cothran & Ennis, 1999; Ennis, 1999). I also gained a better sense of what was possible and could be achieved using TPSR in these settings, even if slightly diluted. At this point in my work with the model, I realized how important it was for me that I work in a setting where I could fully implement TPSR, test ideas, and develop innovations around higher levels of responsibility such as empowerment, leadership, and transfer.

I was searching for a new setting and opportunity where I could find some of the desirable elements of the school setting, such as structure and consistency, as well as some of the best features of an after-school program, such as smaller numbers and more freedom to experiment. I wanted to find or create a situation in which I

could implement TPSR with a high level of fidelity and optimize the experience and potential benefits for the youth participants. Also, I was eager to run a program that was less isolated. Many of the programs described in the TPSR literature, including my own, have been independent rather than connected to or integrated with other programs. Hellison (2011) has noted that he has done this at times to avoid the additional restrictions and expectations that can come, for example, with being part of a formal school curriculum. An advantage of this approach is increased autonomy regarding program design and pedagogy. One disadvantage of working in isolation that I have experienced is a sense of disconnectedness. Many TPSR practitioners coordinate with key individuals at school and community sites to get time, space, and participants but what happens in the microcosm of our programs is not necessarily addressed or reinforced elsewhere (Lee & Martinek, 2009; Walsh, 2006). Knowing that the culture I try to create in TPSR programs is often quite different from what my students experience in other settings, I wanted to form a partnership that would reinforce and bolster the impact I might have.

4. Y-CAP

This search for a partnership led me to the YMCA Community Action Program (Y-CAP) in Memphis. Y-CAP is a comprehensive prevention and early intervention program for young males labeled 'at risk' of dropping out of school due to behavioral and/or academic problems. The Y-CAP program has been operating in Memphis since 1998 and is largely supported by United Way funding. The program model includes several components that are offered throughout the school year during after school hours and also in condensed summer sessions. Pre-adolescent and adolescent (10-15 years old) boys are referred to the program by teachers and/or counselors at six Memphis City Schools. All six of these schools serve primarily African American communities with many students living at or below the poverty level. Almost all referrals to the program are based on behavior problems. Typically, the boys sent to the program are struggling with social skills, impulse control, and in many cases developmental disabilities such as Dyslexia and Attention Deficit Disorder. Most of the boys are also struggling academically. Based on the demographics of the participating schools, almost all youth participants are African-American. Before being admitted to the program, intake interviews are conducted with school personnel, the child, and the child's family. From these intake interviews, individualized goals are established for each boy. As the boys move through the program working toward their individual goals, there is

regular communication between the Y-CAP staff, school personnel, and the family regarding progress, difficulties, and ways to provide effective support. Most boys remain in the program from six to 12 months before "graduating" based on consistent attendance and achievement of their personal goals. Any boy who graduates from the program but wishes to stay involved a bit longer is invited to participate in the summer program after their graduation, but as space and resources are limited, they are not able to remain in the after-school program beyond this point.

At the time I approached the Y-CAP staff about forming a partnership, the program met three days a week for three hours each day after school. All students were picked up at their school by the Y-CAP staff in a mini-bus per state regulations. Students were transported to the YMCA location for the program and then driven directly to their homes afterward. As the program is free of charge to the families and transportation is provided, lack of financial resources and transportation are not barriers to participation in this program as they are in many others (Vandell & Shumow, 1999). The after school component of the program consists of homework, tutoring, snack time, value lessons that typically involve a discussion and/or activity related to a topic such as communication, physical activity, and free time. Also, once a week an art therapist works with the youth. These same core elements are included in the summer session as well as the opportunity to participate in aquatics. The Memphis Y-CAP site is one of two in the region under the administrative authority of a single executive director. The Memphis site that I worked with operates with three full-time and one part-time staff assisted by volunteers and interns. As the program serves no more than 15 youth at a time, the staff to youth ratio is very strong.

Although Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, and Jones (2005) draw a distinction between prevention, intervention, and youth development programs, I would classify Y-CAP as having a positive youth development orientation because their program meets many of the state-of-the-art criteria identified by Hellison and Cutforth (1997). These criteria include appreciating the unique strengths of youth and helping them achieve their potential, focusing on the whole person, respecting the individuality of youth, empowering youth and helping them envision possible futures, setting clear expectations based on a strong and explicit set of values and norms, creating a physically and psychologically safe environment, and providing significant contact with caring adults.

By the spring of 2008, I had been aware of Y-CAP for several years. My first contact with them came when their director called my department at the University of Memphis to see if we had any students interested in doing an internship. Because people in my department knew of my interest in community collaborations, the request was forwarded to me. As it happens, over the next three years I sent two of my university students who were also interested in community work to the Y-CAP program for paid internships. My impression of the Y-CAP staff and what I heard from my students was very positive. I had also worked closely with other programs at this particular YMCA branch and therefore had already established a good rapport before proposing the idea of a collaborative project. In the spring and summer of 2008, I had a series of discussions with the staff about the possibility of partnering. This began with me describing TPSR and the type of program I wanted to create. As I shared my interests and learned more about theirs, one clear area of overlap we identified was the Y-CAP program's focus on value lessons. These lessons relate to their core values of honesty, caring, respect, and responsibility and are clearly aligned with the TPSR model. Each week, they would highlight a specific life skill theme in the daily value lessons drawing from a collection of lesson plans and activities they have developed over the years (see a listing of Y-CAP Program Value Curriculum Topics in Appendix A). This curriculum was developed by the Y-CAP staff and consists of 21 topics representing significant life skills to enhance the mental, physical, and social capacity of youth. Many lessons in the curriculum focus on dealing with real life situations and problems in a positive way. The fact that Y-CAP already had a clear and explicit set of values aligned with TPSR and integrated the discussion of corresponding life skills into their daily programming convinced me we had the potential for a productive partnership based in a common approach and shared goals. After several phone calls and meetings, we reached an agreement and made the commitment to partner.

A specific area of opportunity and platform for our partnership was the physical activity component of the Y-CAP program. Before this project was initiated, the Y-CAP program staff admitted that the physical activity component was simply supervised free play (usually basketball) in the YMCA gymnasium that was not connected to other elements of the program in a meaningful way. The Y-CAP staff and their interns were highly professional and well educated with training in areas like social work; however, they had little awareness of sport and physical education pedagogy. They were very receptive and intrigued to learn that there were field-tested and evidence-based strategies for promoting positive youth development

and teaching life skills through physical activity. Our discussions resulted in a plan to have me deliver weekly TPSR lessons that would be integrated into their existing programming to contribute both to the value lesson and physical activity components. Our shared objectives as we initiated this partnership in the Fall of 2008 were to:

1.increase the overall effectiveness and coherence of the Y-CAP program's physical activity component through the implementation of the TPSR model;

2.increase the physical activity component's alignment with the Y-CAP value lessons as well as other aspects of the program; and

3.support the success of program participants in the program and beyond through our synergistic efforts.

5. Y-CAP Kung Fu Club

The physical activity club I began in Fall 2008 was the Y-CAP Kung Fu Club. The physical activity content of this club was martial arts skills, based largely in my experience with Chinese martial arts commonly referred to as Kung Fu. The club name was jointly decided upon with the first group of students. With the exception of one semester when I was on sabbatical, the club continued for three years, generally meeting for 45 minutes to an hour once per week during the school year. The total number of students in the program generally stayed close to 15 but on a monthly basis there was some transition, i.e. about two students would graduate or leave the program and those openings would be filled with new students. Although I did not run the club continuously through the summer sessions, I did conduct several summer time lessons to maintain continuity. I was the primary instructor in the program for three years but was assisted at various times by graduate students and colleagues in both teaching and evaluation activities. One graduate student worked with me for two consecutive semesters, another for one full semester, and a third made several visits to help out. All these graduate students and the colleague who visited several times during the first year of the program were familiar with TPSR but did not have prior experience implementing it prior to this program. To the extent possible, when I would travel or had scheduling conflicts, the graduate students assisting me would run the program in my absence. Throughout the program, the typical TPSR lesson format and responsibility levels were integrated with martial arts content using strategies that have proven

effective in previous TPSR martial art programs such as peer coaching, student leadership, self-assessment and partner practice (Hellison, 2003; Hellison, et al., 2000; Wright, 2002; Wright & Burton, 2008; Wright, White, & Gaebler-Spira, 2004).

Weekly Lessons. When the program began, we tried to run our lessons in the gymnasium or a large conference room in the YMCA facility. However, as we were in competition for this space with a number of other programs and classes operating at the YMCA, we often encountered scheduling conflicts. For this reason, we shifted to making use of the Y-CAP program's designated space. This was a mid-sized room where they did most of their lessons and tutoring. It was just large enough to use for our lessons providing we folded up and moved the chairs and tables that were typically in place. This became a regular part of the routine by the second year of the club. The students' first responsibility of the day was clearing the space and putting tables and chairs away. Conversely, after the lesson they put everything back in place.

Consistent with what Hellison (2011) calls relational time, we often seized opportunities just before or after lessons to chat individually with participants to build personal relationships and get to know them as individuals. Usually these little conversations had nothing to do with the program. I would ask students how school was going, if they had done anything fun over the past weekend, what they planned to do for the holidays, etc. When we were ready to begin the lesson, we would all sit on the floor facing each other in a circle for the awareness talk. Early in the program, I would lead the awareness talk, highlighting our responsibility goals and discussing plans for the day. I would also use this as an opportunity to give students some choices and opportunities to make suggestions in terms of the activities we planned to undertake. Over the three years of the club's operation, I shifted away from leading the discussions about responsibility. Instead, I started asking students, especially those who had been around longer, to open up the lesson by telling the other students about the focus of this club. Although they would often think first about the martial arts skills we were learning, when I reminded them of the values and life skills they would usually capture the basic message in their own words and from their own perspective, e.g. “be good to people”, “show good leadership”, “don't be fighting”, or “keep your self-control”. I liked taking this approach for the following reasons: 1) students were getting more of a voice in the program; 2) a layer of validation and authenticity is added to the message when they hear it from their peers; and 3) it helped me understand what messages they were absorbing and how they were interpreting them. Any given

week we might not discuss all of Hellison's (2011) levels, but that was fine with me. In my approach, I view the responsibility levels as programmatic goals and values that should be woven into the fabric of the program rather than terms and definitions to be memorized. On the same note, when students used terminology or examples from the Y-CAP values curriculum, I took that as a sign of success that my lessons were integrated with rather than separated from the larger Y-CAP program. I had no desire to interfere with that for the sake of semantics.

Once the awareness talk was complete (usually just three or four minutes), we would transition into the physical activity lesson, which constituted the majority of our time together each week. The transition to physical activity involved everyone standing up in the circle and a student volunteer leading the group in a bow, a traditional gesture used to show respect in Asian martial arts. From that point we would organize the students in lines and spend several minutes doing warm-up exercises, calisthenics, etc. The majority of exercises were led by student volunteers. I used these opportunities to highlight the importance of leadership. For this to be successful, I provided clear expectations for students taking on leadership roles, i.e. having a plan in mind, being able to explain and demonstrate the exercise, using a strong voice, being positive, and giving clear directions. I would reiterate these expectations in most lessons before student leaders began taking turns and would often give feedback relative to these criteria after each student finished, e.g. “Tyrone did a really nice job using a strong voice and explaining what he wanted you all to do instead of just showing you”. Generally, I had plenty of students willing to volunteer for leadership in every lesson. I tried to give each one an opportunity to do something like leading exercises, skill practice, or the group bow at the beginning or end of the class. Even new students were allowed to take on leadership roles provided they were demonstrating good focus, effort, and self-control as participants. Even if they volunteered, I would tell students who were not demonstrating these basic responsibilities that I could not put them in a leadership role yet. However, I encouraged them to ask again the following week provided they could first demonstrate responsibility as a participant. After any student completed a leadership role, I encouraged the rest of the group to give them a round of applause. Some students were uneasy with this tradition early on, but the longer students were in the club the more they accepted it as a norm. After exercising, basic martial arts skills were taught and practiced including proper stances, kicks, punches, knee strikes, and palm strikes. Depending on the number of students, how long they had been in the club, and the flow of a given lesson, I would often let more senior students come to the front of

class to teach and lead basic techniques. Sometimes I would pair them up with newer students to teach them off to the side while I worked with the rest of the group on something else. These and partner practice strategies were employed more as individuals progressed to more complicated skills such as blocking, striking a padded target, and stringing several skills together in combination. Throughout these experiences I would create opportunities for them to practice life skills such as respecting the rights and feelings of others, trying their best, making good choices, leading, and/or helping others, etc. I would directly discuss and reinforce these skills and also look for teachable moments when these issues would arise naturally. For instance, whenever I noticed a student coaching or encouraging a peer without prompting I would often call a brief time out, bring it to the attention of the group and promote that sort of behavior as what I really wanted to see from them in this program and beyond.

Another example of integration came when we played a game I created called "Bruce Lee Says". The rules are essentially the same as the common children's game "Simon Says". Often toward the end of class when I wanted to review skills the students had learned and test their focus, I would have them line up in rows and I would call out techniques for them to perform, e.g. right foot forward fighting stance or front kick with the left foot. The twist was that they were only supposed to execute the skill if the command was preceded with "Bruce Lee says…" -; if they got tricked or performed the wrong technique they had to sit out. Somewhat to my surprise, the students loved this game. It became a bit of a tradition and I had to negotiate my way out of it if I ever tried to end a lesson without playing a couple rounds. While it moved at a fast pace and was very fun for them, students would occasionally get upset when they had to sit out. Every time this happened it was an opportunity to talk about keeping things in perspective, understanding that is just part of playing the game, and the importance of being a "good sport". Once in a while, there would be a dispute among the students as to who won or if someone had made a mistake. In these instances, I would place the responsibility on the students to peacefully come up with a resolution on their own before we would proceed. They enjoyed the game so much and hurt feelings were generally minor enough that problems were usually resolved quickly and uneventfully.

After the physical activity, everyone would gather again in a circle for a *group meeting and reflection time.* These debriefing sessions lasted just a few minutes and provided opportunities for students to express their thoughts on the day's lesson to peers and the instructors. In the group meeting, students could ask

questions and/or comment on the content of the lesson, group performance, or other topics that were on their mind. Next, just briefly, I would ask students to reflect individually or share with the group how they thought they did during the lesson in terms of responsibility. Sometimes I would ask this in a general way (e.g., "How did you do today with taking responsibility as a student and showing respect for others?") and other times I would ask more specific questions (e.g., "How did you do with being helpful and encouraging your partner during the peer coaching practice?"). During these discussions, I would provide feedback and often encourage members to set individual goals or plans to work on transferring these skills outside of the program during the week. Common examples of their plans for transfer included helping with chores around the house, helping other students at school, or making the choice not to do something they knew was wrong even if their friends were doing it. Sometimes we would discuss broader topics that connected to the life skills promoted in the club. For example, in 2009 the holiday commemorating African American civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was on Monday January 19th and President Barack Obama, the first African American elected to that office, was inaugurated the following day on January 20th. The same week on Wednesday January 21st, our club had its first meeting for the semester. This provided a wonderful opportunity to talk with the students not just about leadership in general, but specific examples of African American males like them taking on leadership roles that influenced the world. We discussed some of the qualities the students believed these gentlemen and all good leaders have in common. The lesson concluded each week in the same way as it began, with a student volunteer leading the bow. Once the lesson ended and the students put the tables and chairs back in place, the Y-CAP staff would assume responsibility for the group and usually take them to the gymnasium if it was available for free time as this was the last planned component for the day.

Other Connections. Rather than existing as an isolated component, the club and our weekly lessons were integrated into the broader Y-CAP program. Our lessons were included in the monthly program calendar and newsletters and I was often invited to be part of planning and scheduling decisions. Beyond the normal after-school sessions, I also attended some of the family nights each year and had the opportunity to meet with my students and their families in a different context as part of the Y-CAP team. On three different occasions, I worked with the students to organize and present a brief demonstration of the skills we practiced in the club at family night events. In addition to demonstrating techniques, we also used these

opportunities to explain the purpose of the club and the life skills we were practicing. These connections to other aspects of the program and the students' lives were in line with my original goal of creating a program that was less isolated. Because the Y-CAP staff and I established a functional partnership that was mutually beneficial, there was a high degree of integration and synergy in this program as compared to many I had previously run. As a testament to the level the Kung Fu Club and my work was valued as part of Y-CAP, I was honored to receive one of the regional YMCA's Volunteer of the Year Awards in 2011 for the Y-CAP program. As a community-engaged scholar, this was extremely meaningful. It was validation from full time youth workers in a community agency that my efforts did align with the ideals of service-bonded inquiry.

6. Program Evaluation

From the beginning of the Y-CAP Kung Fu Club, I placed a strong emphasis on evaluation. With the help of graduate students and a colleague from the university, I gathered many sources of information to assess the program at multiple levels. Some data were gathered to assess my implementation of TPSR and other data were gathered to assess the overall functioning and integration of the club within the larger Y-CAP program. Finally, student level data were gathered to assess the impact on youth participants. As the purpose of this essay is to share the story of the Y-CAP Kung Fu Club and my partnership with the Y-CAP program, it is beyond the current scope to report research findings in full detail. The data from this project will be analyzed and reported separately in a subsequent publication. Therefore, my intent in the following paragraphs is to summarize the evaluation activities and highlight how they were an integral part of the program.

TPSR Fidelity. Numerous documents and artifacts that describe the content of my lessons were retained. These included lesson plans and curriculum maps, as well as audio- and video-taped lessons from my teaching and other activities such as family night demonstrations. The most structured data addressing fidelity was collected using the Tool for Assessing Responsibility-Based Education (TARE; Wright & Craig, 2011) direct observation tool as well as the post-teaching reflection version of the same instrument (Hellison & Wright, 2011). The TARE is comprised of several sections that document the background information for a given lesson (such as location, time, number of students), the teacher's use of nine responsibility-based teaching strategies that align with TPSR, a rating of the teacher's overall effectiveness in enacting TPSR themes (as described in Hellison, 2003), a rating of

the student's responsibility that day relative to the five levels of the TPSR model, and finally there is a section for open comments at the end of the instrument.

The primary difference between the direct observation and post-teaching reflection versions of the TARE have to do with rating of the teacher's use of the nine responsibility-based strategies. In the direct observation version, a trained observer watches the lesson and uses a time sampling methodology with five-minute intervals to document which of the strategies s/he sees being implemented. This provides data regarding which strategies were employed throughout the lesson, just at certain points, or not at all. The post-teaching reflection version of the TARE requires the teacher to rate their implementation of each strategy after a lesson on a five-point Likert scale from Extensively to Not At All. After rating the implementation of each strategy the teacher is directed to write comments justifying the rating with specific examples from the lesson.

I completed TARE post-teaching reflections throughout the program to document my implementation each week and also to prompt reflection and continuous improvement in my teaching. On six different occasions throughout the first year of the program, another professor in physical education pedagogy came to observe me teaching using the direct observation version of the TARE. After these lessons, we would debrief and discuss what he saw and the extent to which his observations matched my perceptions. This process was very helpful as it provided a different perspective and kept my thinking fresh regarding the ongoing implementation of TPSR.

As noted above, reporting the results of these evaluation activities is beyond the scope of the current essay, but in summary all these data sources combine to make a case for a robust implementation of TPSR in this program. Various artifacts and documents show that structures from the model such as the lesson plan and responsibility levels were used throughout. Data from the post-teaching reflection and direct observation versions of the TARE indicate that most of the nine responsibility-based teaching strategies were used on a regular basis. It is also worth noting that another external check on fidelity came from Don Hellison. Don served as an external advisor of sorts. We discussed this project several times in detail over the years and on one occasion he was able to visit and participate in one of the club lessons. Based on our ongoing dialogue and this site visit, he affirmed that the model was clearly being implemented with fidelity to its original goals and intent.

Partnership. As explained earlier, a key reason for beginning this particular TPSR physical activity club was partnering with a more comprehensive youth serving

program. Therefore, some evaluation activities were focused specifically on the effectiveness of this partnership, the alignment of the club with the broader program, and ways the integration of this club may have enhanced the overall program. In order to answer these questions, we needed to have a clear picture of the broader Y-CAP program and its operation. To that end we kept notes from our meetings with program staff, retained program-related documents they shared with us, and searched for other publicly available information on the program. Also, I asked two of the graduate students who worked with me in the program to each spend at least one afternoon shadowing the Y-CAP and observing the program as a non-participant. Field notes were taken during these observations, transcribed and integrated with other data sources describing the program. Two of the Y-CAP staff members also agreed to complete a TARE post-teaching reflection based on their normal practice in the program to give us a sense of what responsibility-based teaching strategies they tended to use and which were less common.

To compliment all these other data sources, we conducted one formal group interview with the three core Y-CAP staff members in 2009. This interview was conducted in their office space at a time when the youth participants were at school. A graduate student and I conducted a semi-structured interview which lasted slightly more than one hour. The first half of the interview guide focused on the general operation of the program and topics such as the integration of the club, achievement of our partnership objectives, areas for improvement, etc. The second half of the interview guide focused on the relevance and benefits of the club for participants in general and specifically for selected cases study participants (more will be said about this in the following section).

The Y-CAP staff members had similar and complimentary perspectives on the integration of the club and its alignment with their broader program goals. They were consistently positive and affirmed that the partnership was functioning well and was mutually beneficial. In particular, our objective of increasing coherence and connection of the physical activity component to other aspects of the Y-CAP program had clearly been achieved. Also, the emphasis on student leadership in the Kung Fu Club added a new element to the Y-CAP experience.

Impact. The Y-CAP program site in Memphis and another site in a nearby Mississippi county are recognized by local school and court personnel as an effective program based on a steady stream of referrals. Annually, a combined report of program outcomes for youth participants is issued (see http://www.ymcamemphis.org/programs/community-programs/ycap/). The

following figures represent participant outcomes during the time I have worked with the program: 75% have demonstrated improved behavior choices; 86% have demonstrated improved school attendance; 68% have demonstrated improved conduct in school; 62% have demonstrated an improvement in academic performance; and 70% have demonstrated improved use of the core program values (honesty, caring, respect, and responsibility). These outcomes reflect the overall impact of the program and not necessarily my individual contribution. I share them here simply to provide a sense of the difference the Y-CAP program aims to make and the level of success it appears to have.

Because my TPSR physical activity club was truly integrated into the Y-CAP program, I hope it contributed to individual student outcomes but cannot separate out its relative contribution. Therefore, instead of trying to assess my club's impact on youth using quantified program level outcomes, I decided to use a case study methodology to examine the experience and perceptions of the Y-CAP Kung Fu Club from the perspective of four purposefully selected club members. The results of this nested case study research project will be reported in full in a forthcoming article. All data sources described thus far in this essay were used in the case study project as well as interviews with the youth participants, their parents/guardians, and a detailed review of their Y-CAP records and case files.

Dissemination. In keeping with the service-bonded inquiry approach, I have disseminated information, data, and lessons learned from this project with both academics and practitioners (Martinek & Hellison, 1997; Martinek et al., 2004). The current essay and a forthcoming article represent one of the standard vehicles for academics to disseminate their work, i.e. peer-reviewed publications. I have also been able to use this program as a testing ground for ideas, strategies, and assessment tools that have been included in two book chapters (one published, and another in press). In addition to these academic products, I have shared insights from this project in classes with graduate and undergraduate university students and at in-service workshops for K-12 physical education teachers and administrators. Several of the assessments and rubrics I developed in this program are made widely available on the TPSR Alliance website (http://www.tpsr-alliance.org). In addition to contributing to the academic literature on TPSR, I hope my work also influences practitioners who are using this model or other approaches to promoting positive youth development through physical activity.

7. Conclusion

As stated earlier, the TPSR literature is lacking detailed descriptions of effective partnerships. As Walsh (2006) stresses, the nature of a university-community collaboration can greatly influence the quality and effectiveness of the resulting TPSR program. The partnership I formed with Y-CAP is shared here as an example of ways that a mutually beneficial partnership can support and enhance TPSR programs operated by community-engaged scholars. Relative to our shared objectives, the infusion of weekly TPSR lessons increased the effectiveness and coherence of the Y-CAP program's physical activity component and aligned it more with the Y-CAP value lessons and other aspects of the program. This partnership allowed me to implement the TPSR model with a high degree of fidelity and to develop ideas that I have been able to share with a wide range of audiences interested in this work. Most importantly, the Y-CAP staff and I felt this partnership and our combined efforts had a positive influence on the boys in the program and supported their success in the program and hopefully beyond.

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Appendix A

Y-CAP Program Value Curriculum Topics and Life Skill Lessons

1. ***Anger Management***
2. ***Goal Setting***
3. ***Peer Pressure***
4. ***Consequences***
5. ***Conflict Resolution***
6. ***Diversity***
7. ***Caring***
8. ***Honesty***
9. ***Respect***
10. ***Responsibility***
11. ***Restraint***
12. ***Expressing Emotions***
13. ***Teamwork***
14. ***Problem Solving***
15. ***Communication Skills***
16. ***Self-Control***
17. ***Gratitude***
18. ***Bullying***
19. ***Self-Discovery***
20. ***Family and Nutrition/Exercise***
21. ***Decision Making***