POSITIVE YOUTH-DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES AMONG FLORIDA 4-H MEMBERS

By

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To Florida 4-H members

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Youth development was defined by the Minnesota Extension Service as "the process of growing up and developing one's capacities in positive ways." Youth-development organizations' primary task is to promote the socialization of youth by providing challenges, experiences, and support, so that young people develop to their fullest potential.

The main purpose of 4-H when it first began was "the development of boys and girls so that they may become responsible and capable citizens." Florida 4-H creates supportive environments for diverse youth to reach their fullest potential. Florida 4-H provided programming to a total of 241,487 youth in the 2002-2003 program year (September 1 to August 31).

The purpose of my study was to determine if Florida 4-H participants are attaining positive youth-development outcomes through the 4-H club experience. Five counties were intentionally selected to represent the state: Duval, Escambia, Glades, Miami-Dade,

and Sumter. The sample was youth between the ages of 13 and 18 years who were enrolled in a 4-H club or members at large as listed in the Blue Ribbon database in the five selected counties.

Independent variables measured were degree of 4-H participation, non-4-H time, and participant demographics. Dependent variables for measuring positive youth-development outcomes consisted of the following constructs that were determined by using factor analysis: relationships, safe environment, belonging, service and leadership, self development, and positive identity.

Surveys were sent to 621 youth, with 79 surveys returned because of an incorrect address (making 542 participants eligible to be included in the population). There were 88 respondents, providing a response rate of 16.2% of the eligible population.

When correlated to the degree of 4-H participation, all constructs showed a positive correlation (with belonging, service and leadership, self development, and positive identity showing a significant correlation). Regression models were also examined, which determined the independent variables of degree of 4-H participation, non-4-H time, age, and gender (in relation to each of the constructs derived from factor analysis). In conclusion my study provided a good picture of the Florida 4-H program. The results also show that 4-H members who responded to this survey tend to agree that Florida 4-H provides positive relationships, a sense of belonging, a safe environment, an opportunity for service and leadership, for self-development, and creates a positive identity.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Background

Youth-development was defined as "the process of growing up and developing one's capacities in positive ways" (Walker & Dunham, 1994). Youth-development organizations' primary task is to promote the socialization of youth by providing challenges, experiences, and support; and helping young people to reach their full potential (Pittman, 1993). In the early 1990s a shift from a reactive to a proactive approach to youth-development occurred. The proactive youth-development approach is more focused on the basic needs and stages of a youth's development; while a reactive approach focuses on fixing problems. The proactive approach concentrates on youth's needs for "positive, ongoing relationships with both adults and other youth," for "active involvement in community life," and for a "variety of positive choices in how they spend their non-school time" (Pittman, 2004, p. 3). The purpose of this proactive approach is to build on the strengths of the current program and to reduce its' weaknesses (Center for 4-H Youth-development, 2000).

One approach to proactive youth-development was based on the Search Institute's developmental assets model. Developmental assets are defined as "the positive relationships, opportunities, competencies, values, and self-perceptions that youth need to succeed" (Scales & Leffert, 1999, p. 1). Forty developmental assets are grouped into eight categories, representing the many influences on the lives of young people. These developmental assets also are divided into the categories of external and internal assets.

External assets (relationships and opportunities that adults provide) includes: support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time. Internal assets (competencies and values that young people develop internally) includes: commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity. Internal assets are used to help youth become self-regulating adults (Scales & Leffert, 1999, p. 5). These 40 developmental assets (Appendix A) are the building blocks all youth need to become healthy, caring, principled, and productive.

The Search Institute described the critical influences that developmental assets have on youth-development. They showed that those youth with the most assets are less likely to participate in various high-risk behaviors (Search Institute, 1996). Disturbing findings showed that the average adolescent surveyed had "fewer than half of the 40 assets" (Scales & Leffert, 1999, p. 7).

Youth provided with developmentally appropriate practices in programming are more likely to have positive attitudes and behaviors (Targeting Life Skills, 2002B). Research findings show that developmentally appropriate programs produce long-term gains in children's "intellectual development, social and emotional skills, and life-coping capabilities" (Kostenlnik, Soderman & Whiren, 1999, p. 26). Overall, youth who participate in a youth-development program that uses holistic, age-appropriate approaches are more likely to develop appropriately (Eccles & Barber, 1999). These same youth are also more likely to become more productive members of society (Pittman, Yohalem & Wilson-Ahstrom, 2002).

Problem

Many negative circumstances put today's youth at a disadvantage in becoming a productive adult. Many Americans have a negative view of young people; and often

have imbalanced and inaccurate views of what youth need, to be successful. Youth being at-risk is seen as a "dilemma" by American society; and as a problem that needs to be corrected (Astroth, 1993). America's children are at risk for a variety of problematic outcomes, including high rates of substance use, delinquency, violence, school failure, risky sexual involvement at a young age, and teenage pregnancy (Peterson, 1995). An estimated "25% of our nation's youth engage in high-risk behaviors," such as substance abuse, delinquency, violence, and risky sexual involvement (Boyd, Herring & Briers, 1992).

It may be assumed by the average individual that only poor children are at risk; however, this may not be true. Adults are neglecting children across all economic levels (Hechinger, 1992). Oftentimes, neglecting children can be more harmful to a child than physical abuse, or undernourishment (Arnett, 1999). Even children whose parents are well-off financially can be emotionally neglected. Those adolescents often get lost in their own families, attend schools where their needs are ignored, and are lost in the crowd. This same child then returns to an empty home when the parents are at work; and unfortunately, no one was paying attention to what that child was doing.

A second assumption may be that only youth living in urban areas are at risk. Again this may be an untrue assumption (Guthrie, Scott, Guthrie & Aronson, 1993 as derived from Smith, Hill, Matranga & Good, 1995). Many youth who grow up in rural areas are more economically poor than those in urban communities. As a result, youth in rural areas often experience the same problems as youth in urban areas. However, these rural communities do not have the programs or the resources needed to help at-risk youth (Smith, Hill, Matranga & Good, 1995).

Deteriorating social conditions led Dryfoos (1990) to conclude that "25% of children in the United States are at a high risk for becoming adults who will never be effective parents, be productive employees, or participate effectively as citizen voters" (Peterson, 1995). Many social factors (dual-earner families, single-parent homes, poverty, unsafe neighborhoods, peer pressure, and media influence) present barriers that adolescents must overcome (ChildStats, 2002). These barriers are "an increasingly complex, technical, and multicultural world; and an extended length of adolescence where pathways to adulthood are less clear and more numerous" (Eccles & Gootman, 2002, p. 2). Conditions under which children are at serious risk for behavior problems include "less parental monitoring, self-care (having no parental or adult care provider in the home) (McKenry & Price, 2000), residing in a high crime neighborhood, or living in a low-income household" (Pittman, Yohalem, & Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2002, p. 3). The Department of Education and Justice in 2000 estimated that 69% of married couple families with children between the ages of 6 and 17 have both parents working outside the home, and in 71% of single mother and 85% of single father families, the parent works outside of the home (Marczak & Morequ, summer 2002). For youth to develop as productive citizens they must overcome these barriers that lead to problematic outcomes and be provided with the appropriate developmental outcomes that are necessary for success (Haugaard, 2001).

Recent incidents of youth violence (American Psychological Association, n.d) (such as the Columbine massacre in 1999) have increased community interest and commitment to organizing and implementing a "positive youth-development approach for young people" (Center for 4-H youth-development, 2000). The conclusions of many

researchers state that youth need access to high-quality community-based programs. This need for quality community-based programming is promoted by the following organizations leading youth-development research: National Research Council (NRC)/ Institute of Medicine (IOM), Forum for Youth Investment, The Center for 4-H Youth Development and the Search Institute (Chapter 2). More programming that does not meet quality standards will most likely not make a big difference.

To provide a high quality program, youth-development agencies must provide research-based programming and include elements that promote positive development. To promote positive development youth organizations should use several practices. These criteria (Vandell, as derived from Pittman, Yohalem & Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2002) are to give youth the following opportunities:

- Constructive use of time
- Learn skills and values
- Voluntarily participate
- Contribute to the community and world
- Challenging experiences
- Develop personal responsibility and purpose
- Fun experiences.

A second criteria for successful youth-development programs is that the programs must be proactive not reactive. This means that programmers must address the problem before it occurs and try to prevent a problem from occurring. In reaction to crime in 1999, the Federal, State, and local government spent over $146 billion in the United States for civil and criminal justice, which was an eight percent increase from 1998 (US Department of Justice, 1999). Reacting to criminal activity can be expensive, and proactive measures are not as costly (American Psychological Association, 2002). Proactive programming can be used in the 4-H organization, specifically by starting at the

county level and addressing the specific needs of youth in the community. This type of programming also starts early and continues throughout development. In each county 4-H program, extension 4-H agents utilize advisory committees that consist of members of the community and youth. This committee determines specific needs for that county upon which the 4-H agent builds his or her programs to address. Proactive programming is planned in response to a foreseen need and occurs before a problem occurs. Reactive programming, on the other hand, often happens after a problem has been declared, such as the problem of crime among youth. As a result, the government has to then try and correct these problems, in comparison to the problem not occurring.

The community has a responsibility to take care of its youth and to promote positive development in order to ensure a productive future society (Benson, Galbraith & Espeland, 1995). Adolescents are at a stage in their life where they are not developmentally prepared to make, nor should they have to be responsible for all of the decisions in their lives (Hechinger, 1992). Adolescents are not immune to circumstances beyond their control such as low parental involvement, poverty, and other environmental factors. Adolescents receive many diverse messages from society, the media, their peers and other potentially misleading sources; consequently, communities need to stand up and take responsibility for our future leaders.

The process of developing youth into productive citizens must include making youth a part of the solution. Developing a partnership between youth and adults helps youth have a voice in the programming efforts. This view was also expressed in the research on youth and adult partnerships. Young people and adults must work together in order for successful development of youth, their peers, families, and communities

(Pittman, May 2004). The adolescents of today are the future of tomorrow, and it is critical to provide them with an opportunity for success. Consequently, quality programming for young people is a must in today's society.

Programming in 4-H

The main purpose of 4-H when it first began was "the development of boys and girls so that they may become responsible and capable citizens" (Kelsey & Hearne, 1963 as derived from Russell, 2001). All 67 counties in Florida offer 4-H programming, as does every state in America. Florida 4-H provides programs through many diverse methods. Programs are offered through community clubs, school enrichment, and after school programs. Florida 4-H creates supportive environments for diverse youth in order for them to reach their fullest potential (Norman, 2002, not retrievable).

The Cooperative Extension Service and 4-H is an equal opportunity organization. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). "The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status" (Seevers, Graham, Gamon & Conklin, 1997). This helps to ensure that 4-H is accessible to all youth. As a result, 4-H is positioned in a way that it can be an ideal organization for making a difference in the lives of children.

Florida 4-H provided programming to a total of 241,487 youth in the 2002-2003 program year which runs from September 1st to August 31st (UF/IFAS 4-H, 2003). Florida 4-H serves children of all racial and ethnic backgrounds (Table 3-2). These youth also are from all different economic backgrounds as well and have diverse interests that the 4-H program strives to address (UF/IFAS 4-H, 2002). The Florida youth population,

or the potential audience (Table 3-1) provides a comparison between who 4-H serves and who 4-H has the potential to serve. Curriculum and programming efforts in 4-H are available in the following areas: citizenship and civic education, communications and expressive arts, consumer and family sciences, environmental education and earth science, healthy lifestyle education, personal development and leadership, plants and animals, and science and technology (UF/IFAS 4-H, 2003).

Research Problem

The 4-H youth-development program strives to meet the developmental needs of youth and foster positive youth-development and life skills. Based upon research done in both Pennsylvania and Texas, the 4-H program prepares youth for adulthood by promoting life skills (Heinsohn & Cantrell, 1986; and Boyd, Herring & Briers, 1992). Other researchers have shown that 4-H provides youth with necessary life skills (Fox, Schroeder & Lodi, 2003). As reported by Ladewig and Thomas (1987), skills and attitudes such as goal setting, decision making, and communication are formed during youth and are carried over into adulthood.

Florida 4-H needs to be able to show that not only are life skills being attained as a result of the 4-H experience but that positive youth-development outcomes also are being attained. Because of significant cuts in the IFAS budget in recent years (Martin, 2003, non retrievable) county, state, and national governments need to see that 4-H youth-development programming can be successful and taxpayer money is being well spent so that they will continue to fund our programs. Extension 4-H agents currently report the success in their individual county programs; however they often have a hard time comparing 4-H outcomes with those of other youth-development programs, which are measuring different outcomes.

A gap in youth-development research exists because of a lack of research pertaining specifically to the attainment of positive youth-development outcomes as derived from the Florida 4-H program. The 4-H program strives to meet many of the components that are necessary in a youth-development program. Examples of several practices currently implemented in the 4-H program are: developmentally appropriate practices; a holistic teaching approach through the head, heart, health, and hands; and promotion of family and community linkages. As previously stated, research has shown that 4-H programming promotes the attainment of life skills. However, research showing that the 4-H program promotes positive youth-development outcomes as compared to other youth organizations is lacking. Research on youth-development has not closely examined the impact of 4-H on society and youth. Therefore, the problem my research addresses was the lack of research on the 4-H program within the criteria stated by leading youth-development organizations. These leading youth-development organizations include: Forum for Youth Investment, National Youth-development Information Center (NYDIC), The Search Institute, and the Annie Casey Foundation.

Purpose

The purpose of my study was to determine if Florida 4-H participants are attaining positive youth-development outcomes through the 4-H club experience based on their degree of 4-H participation.

Objectives

The objectives of this research are:

1. To determine the demographic makeup of 4-H participants surveyed.
2. To determine the degree of 4-H participation among survey respondents.
3. To determine the degree of Non-4-H time among 4-H participants surveyed.

4. To determine if the 4-H experience meets the developmental outcomes that promote positive development, which are:

    a. Positive and Supportive Relationships between Adults and Peers

    b. Emotional and Physical Safety

    c. Belonging and Inclusive Environment

    d. Contribute through Service and Leadership

    e. Youth are Actively Engaged in Self-Development

    f. Youth Develop a Positive Identity (self-efficacy, self-esteem, autonomy, and empowerment).

Limitations

The limitations of my study are found within the methodology. A potential bias exists among those youth who were selected to participate in the survey. Although a census of the youth within each county was surveyed, as attained from the Blue Ribbon enrollment database, the counties that were selected may not be entirely representative of the State of Florida. To address this potential limitation the counties were selected to fit a framework similar to the 4-H population in the state of Florida based on geographic region, rural/urban, poverty, race, and age.

A second limitation was non-response. This non-response may be due to lack of parental consent, a lack of interest, faulty mailing lists, and other unforeseen factors. Because demographic data will be available on these youth through the Blue Ribbon enrollment database, it can be determined if there was a difference between 4-H'ers who returned surveys and those who did not.

A third limitation to my study regards the use of time data for both 4-H time and non-4-H time spent. It may be difficult for youth to recall their use of time over the past

year. This limitation can be present in ant self-reported data and can only be noted as a potential measurement error.

The fourth limitation of my study was that the Blue Ribbon database may not be entirely accurate because of poor record keeping. Youth enroll in 4-H in September of each new 4-H year. However, they are often not entered into the data base until mid November. Those youth provided to the researcher may have been 4-H'ers who were enrolled last year and not yet removed from enrollment records and other youth may not have been entered into records. This error can only be acknowledged.

The fifth limitation was that my study was not based upon an experimental design, i.e. there was no control or comparison group. Therefore, the findings of my study can only be inferred to Florida 4-H participants in the counties surveyed and generalizations are limited.

Operational Definitions

- **At risk:** A broad concept that describes youth who are more likely to participate in negative behaviors. This concept avoids blaming the child and instead points toward the environmental hazards that put a child in danger of becoming *at-risk* (Brendtro, Brokenleg, & Van Bockern, 1992).

- **Autonomy:** For youth to learn to be independent and self-sufficient, while thinking for themselves, and to take responsibility for their own behavior (Arnett, 2001, p. 194).

- **Blue ribbon database**: The national reporting database where 4-H enrollment, participant demographics, and project achievement is documented.

- **Developmental assets:** The positive relationships, opportunities, competencies, values, and self-perceptions that youth need to succeed (Scales, & Leffert, 1999).

- **Life skills**: The necessary skills for success in adulthood, for example, skills that involve working with others, understanding self, communicating, making decisions, and leadership (Boyd, Herring, & Briers, 1992).

- **Outcomes**: Benefits or changes for individuals or populations during or after participating in program activities, they are influenced by a program's outputs

(United Way of America, 1996). For this research youth-development outcomes include: adult and peer relationships, emotional and physical safety, belonging and inclusive environment, contribution through service and leadership, active engagement in own self-development, and youth develop within a positive identity (self-esteem, autonomy, and empowerment).

- **Risk behavior:** These behaviors generally include risky sexual behavior, risky driving behavior, substance use, and criminal acts (Arnett, 2001, p397).

- **Self-concept:** A collection of beliefs about one's own nature, unique qualities, and typical behavior (Weiten, 1998).

- **Self-efficacy**: One's belief about one's ability to perform behaviors that should lead to expected outcomes (Weiten, 1998).

- **Self-esteem:** A person's overall sense of worth and well-being (Arnett, 2001, p. 163).

- **Social capital**: The development of "relationships, networks, and organizations that provide for community well-being, primarily composed of social institutions" (Wilkinson, 1991)

- **Social institution**: Consists of "persistent, on-going activities that provide structure and function for communities" which can be both informal and formal (Jacob, fall 2001, as derived from Wilkinson, 1991).

- **Non-4-H time**: The activities and ways in which an individual spends his or her time, this variable was made up of school activities, non-4-H activities, and work time. This was a score developed by the researcher for the purpose of my study.

- **Youth-development**: The process of growing up and developing one's capacities in positive ways (Walker &Dunham 1994).

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Support of Social Organizations

The process of youth-development is contingent upon biological influences, and environmental influences. This argument, known as nature versus nurture, has long been discussed. Although communities cannot impact the biology of a child they can influence the environment. The environment affects the development of an individual in many ways. Theories supporting this statement includes theories of youth-development (Identity: Erickson, Social Learning: Bandura, Sociocultural: Vygotsky, Ecological Systems: Broffenbrenner), theories of community derived from sociological research (Status Attainment: Coleman), as well as more recent research on positive youth-development (Reclaiming Youth: Brendtro, Developmental Assets: Search Institute, and Targeting Life Skills: Iowa).

The development of a positive identity is one essential component of a successful transition to adulthood. Identity includes issues of who you are, where your life is going, what you believe in, and how your life fits into the world around you. (Arnett, 2001, p. 170). Erik Erickson's theory of human development stresses that during adolescence the central issue facing youth is that of identity versus identity confusion. An identity is attained through establishing a healthy path and creating a clear and definite sense of who you are and how you fit into the world around you. This theory of human development states that distinct periods in the life of a child are characterized by distinctive developmental issues also known as a crisis (Arnett, 2001). A crisis describes the intense

period of struggle that adolescents may experience during the process of forming an identity (Arnett, 2001). Erickson claimed that identity formation was established in the relationships formed with others that the adolescent has accumulated during childhood. Erickson was one of the first theorists to recognize the impact that social interaction has on human development, and he notes that, "ego strengths develop from trusting relationships" (Coughlan & Welsh-Breetzke, 2002). This makes a case for establishing connections, which are maintained throughout childhood and into adolescence. Secondly an identity is established through experimenting with various possible life options. Providing youth with a safe place to experiment with and an opportunity to practice making decisions enables youth to establish a secure identity versus being confused about the choices that are available and being unable to decide. Erickson (1950) suggests that society plays a role in the development of a child. Having a secure identity provided a basis upon which decisions in early adulthood can be made (p. 173). This, along with other theories presented, shows the importance of the interactions that are provided through the 4-H program.

Society can affect a young person's life in many ways, both positively and negatively. According to the Ecological Systems Theory, a child's environment is composed of four layers: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem (Berk, 2000, p27) (Figure.2-1). Bronfenbrenner (1979) views the child as developing within a complex system of relationships affected by multiple levels of the surrounding environment. The microsystem is the central most layer containing relations between the developing child and their immediate environment and this is the primary environment in which a child interacts. For example, this may include parents, siblings,

or other immediate family with which the child interacts on a daily basis. The mesosystem was defined as the "interrelationships between two or more settings in which the developing person should be an active participant" (Campbell, & Muncer, 1998). The mesosystem was comprised of the school, neighborhood, child-care centers, and any organization that fosters child development. Organizations, such as 4-H, are considered part of the mesosytem, as are day care centers, friends, schools, and neighborhoods. The exosystem was composed of the social settings that do not contain the child but do affect their experiences in immediate settings. For example, the parent's workplace, the county government, extended family members, parent's friends, and other social institutions that exist in the community which affect the family. The macrosystem was composed of the social norms, values, customs, culture, and laws that exist in a state and country, which indirectly affect the life of the child and influence experiences and interactions at inner levels of the environment. The interactions between these different levels are discussed in Vygostskys sociocultural theory. Increased interaction leads to increased development. The interactions between these different layers of the ecosystem were what Vygotsky stressed as promoting positive development. The 4-H organization also can be a channel through which interactions between these levels occurs.

A social institution consists of persistent, on-going activities that provide structure and function for communities, and these activities meet important human needs. Social institutions can be formal or informal (Wilkinson, 1991). Formal organizations are those such as the public school system where the environment is structured. Informal learning, such as that in 4-H, is where there is planned learning objectives. These different levels of the Ecological Systems Theory discussed above contain social institutions. A report

on at-risk adolescents proposes that social institutions are "overstressed and deteriorating" (Adams, 1999, p. 1). However, Extension, specifically 4-H, can be an ideal social institution for addressing the needs of youth (Seevers, et al, 1997).

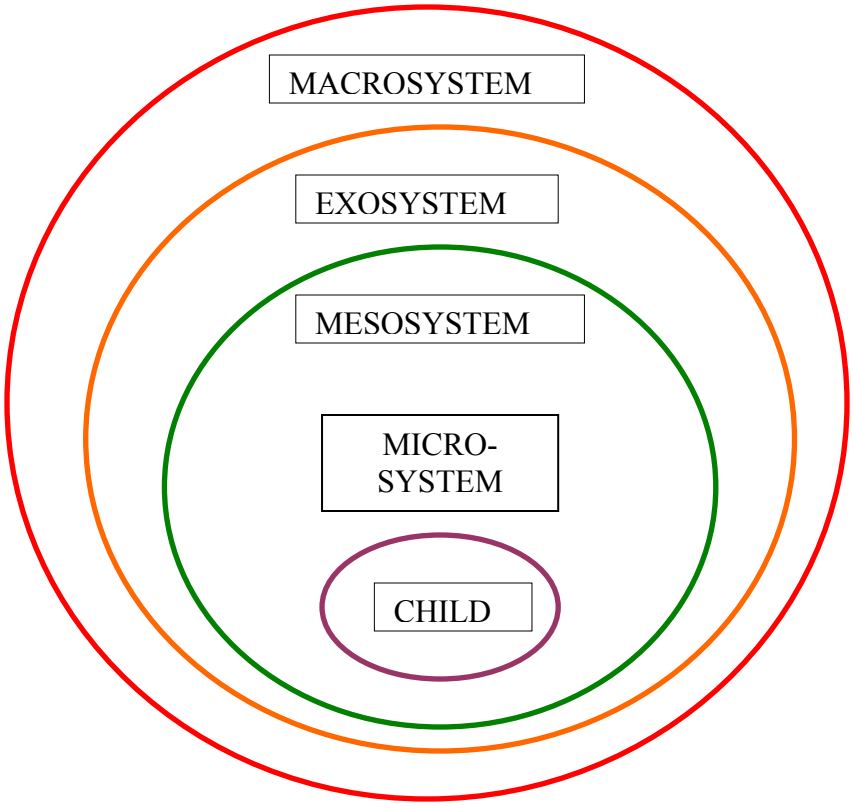

Figure 2-1. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (Adapted from; Berk, 2000)

The Sociocultural Theory focuses on how culture is transferred from one generation to the next. Vygotsky states that this transfer of culture was made through the interactions of children with expert members of society. Culture is the values, beliefs, customs, and skills of a social group (Berk, 2000). This theory ties in with the Ecological Systems Theory in that these interactions between adults and peers are made through the different levels discussed above. In the 4-H organization, adult mentors such as 4-H agents, leaders, and volunteers all interact directly with and influence the lives of youth with which they work. Youth involved in 4-H also interact with community leaders,

politicians, and leaders in different industries that relate to the members projects. Vygotsky also mentions the importance of peer influence helping children to learn culture. In the 4-H organization, teens are often asked to volunteer as leaders by being camp counselors, club and council officers, and to mentor their younger 4-H peers.

The Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1986) was a social-cognitive approach that states that children's behaviors are often developed by "modeling, imitation, or observational learning" (Berk, 2000, p 20). This theory states that as children become more mature they cognitively perceive how another's behavior is reinforced either positively or negatively. Children cognitively process these situations and in turn their own behavior is influenced. The theory also suggests that upon reflection of the observation, adolescents will imitate or modify his or her own behavior (Birkenholz, 1999). In the 4-H organization, participants have many opportunities to experience negative or positive reinforcement of behavior. More importantly, participants also experience positive modeling by their peers and by adults.

Research presented by Brendtro, Brokenleg, & Van Bockern (1992) focuses on reclaiming youth at risk. The reclaiming environment was "one that creates changes that meet the needs of both the young person and the society" (p. 3). The purpose of reclaiming is to recover and redeem, to restore value to something that has been devalued. Many youth who are at risk need the following components (Brendtro, Brokenleg, and Van Bockern, 1992, p. 4) offered in a reclaiming environment:

1. Experiencing belonging in a supportive community, rather than being lost in a depersonalized bureaucracy.
2. Meeting one's needs for mastery, rather than enduring inflexible systems designed for the convenience of adults.

3. Involving youth in determining their own future, while recognizing society's need to control harmful behavior; and.

4. Expecting youth to be caregivers, not just helpless recipients overly dependent on the care of adults.

This research also states four ecological hazards in the lives of children who are at risk. These are factors or transitions that are present in the environment. These transitions can also be compared to the crisis that Erickson discussed as part of the process of forming an identity (Arnett, 2001). According to the "ecological hazards" idea, destructive relationships occur when a child's most basic needs go unmet. Children learn to mistrust adults and become resistant to relationships to avoid further rejection. Second, climates of futility are the negative environments and expectations that lead to feelings of failure and uselessness in young people. Third, learned irresponsibility is when adults train children to escape authority and only follow the direction of others. These practices do not teach youth how to be responsible but only how to try and please others. Fourth, a loss of purpose, youth need to feel a sense of value and need opportunities to be of value to others. These are environmental factors that are present to some degree in all youth and need to be recognized (Brendtro, Brokenleg, and Van Bockern, 1992).

The status attainment theory (Wilkinson, 1991) places the community as a factor in social capital gain, and specifically mentions social capital as an input in the development of an individual's overall human capital value. Coleman (1988) presented the idea that social resources such as school values, networks and trust constitute influential social capital gain (derived from Dyer & Preston, 2003). Social capital is the development of "relationships, networks, and organizations that provide for community well-being, primarily composed of social institutions, human resources base, and social networks"

(Jacob, fall 2001 as derived from Wilkinson, 1991). This idea relates to the attainment of external assets that youth need to gain in order to succeed.

Youth-development Programs

The theories and research shown in the above section documents the influence of societal interactions on youth-development. This section describes the importance of youth-development programming and explains youth-development programming.

Youth-development has become popular over the last decade. There are several ways of looking at and defining youth-development. For the purpose of this research, positive youth-development will be defined as the "process in which all young people are engaged to meet their needs, build skills and find ways for opportunities to make a difference in all areas of their lives – personal/ cultural, social/ emotional, moral/ spiritual, vocational, cognitive and civic" (Forum for youth investment, 2003). Research regarding youth-development refers to the processes, tasks and expectations that youth face during adolescence and the institutions and practices that are designed to support youth.

Youth may be referred to as young people, adolescents or teenagers. These youth face many struggles during adolescence that they must overcome in order to successfully reach adulthood. Adolescence is the time when young people need to develop the attitudes, competencies, values, and social skills that will prepare them for a successful adulthood (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). Development is an ongoing, complex, and uneven process that all youth must move throughout on their life journey. Although programs that try to prevent problems from occurring are positive, many have come to believe that "being problem-free is not fully prepared (for adulthood)" (Eccles & Gootman, 2002, p. 3). Therefore, the idea that more youth-development programming may be helpful was

not as supported as the idea that those programs offered should be of high quality and supported within society. However, several programs with the potential to be of high quality do exist because of current programming practices.

The 4-H program is a social institution that provides opportunities for youth-development programming. The 4-H program consists of many different delivery modes such as: after-school programs, club activities and community programs. For the purpose of this my study, literature in all areas of programming will be discussed. All 4-H programs offered may not be of equal quality; however, because of the teaching methods utilized and the ideas behind 4-H programming positive outcome attainment is possible. Research has documented a correlation between participation in youth-development organizations and an adolescent's adult education, occupation, and even income. Participation also predicts a decline in engaging in delinquent activities and shows that those adolescents who participate in 4-H have high positive outcomes including: "high academic achievement and low rates of involvement in risky behaviors" (Eccles & Barber, 1999, p. 3). Eccles and Barber clearly state that a link between an individual's self-identity, the activities that the individual participates in, their social networks, and their friends do exist. Pitman, Yohalem, and Ahlstrom (as derived from Forum for Youth Investment, 2001, p. 1) state that participating in "out-of-school time programs are associated with positive cognitive, physical, social and civic development." They also state that these types of programs can "prevent or reduce" risky behavior (Forum for Youth Investment, 2001, p. 1).

Positive Youth-development Outcomes

There are several key criteria that a youth-development program must incorporate in order to be successful and to foster positive outcomes among participants. This section

will describe the necessary criteria and the outcomes that when provided by a youth organization can lead a child through adolescence and into productive adulthood.

Programs must be initiated at early ages before the onset of risky behaviors, and they must be sustained across a child's life span at multiple levels in order to enhance the future health of children and adolescents (Ethier & Lawrence, 2002). This provides a continuous and ongoing stable relationship, which is a crucial step that some organizations overlook. A continuous relationship leads to the ability of building a relationship between the youth and adults as well as other peers. Successful youth-development programs include: quality curriculum, staff development, peer resources, parent and parent-surrogate educational programs, school-community linkages, and interventions at the parent, school and community levels (Ethier & Lawrence, 2002). Along with these preliminary criteria other important criteria are equally important.

It is also important for youth-development programs to offer opportunities that foster positive development. Essential criteria that a youth-development program should have are: physical and psychological safety, appropriate structure, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, support for efficacy and mattering (or feeling that the are important and are a part of the group), opportunities for skill building, and integration of family, school and community efforts (Eccles & Gootman, 2001). It is also important to engage young people in their own development, so that they feel a sense of inclusiveness and belonging (Pittman, 2003). These outcomes are provided in further detail below.

Appropriate structure ensures that youth are both physically and emotionally safe. This includes making sure that the adults and peers that youth interact with are neither

bullies nor condescending and do not unduly criticize. Having a safe place to meet is also important so that youth feel they have an opportunity to learn. Supportive relationships include both peer and adult relationships. As mentioned above, these relationships need to be continuous and sustained over a long period of time to become meaningful. Youth need to interact with and be supported by adults where they can have an opportunity to observe and model in order to learn from them (Vygotsky as derived from Berk, 2000). Youth also need opportunities to form relationshiops with peers. Friends often take the place of parents during adolescence in regards to communication (Damon, 1977). However, this again needs to be in a safe environment where youth do not feel criticized and cannot be harmed in anyway.

An opportunity to feel a sense of belonging and inclusiveness is when youth are encouraged and excited about being a part of an organization. When youth are valued and feel needed then they feel like they belong and are more likely to stay involved (MES, 1996). Youth also feel like they belong when they are rewarded for their accomplishments, specifically when recognized by leaders of the program and adults and peers who matter (National 4-H Impact Assessment, n.d). Positive social norms provide a comfortable environment and youth develop a positive outlook on life. An example of a positive practice is for staff working with youth to have high expectations and encourage and model positive behaviors. The program must provide support for efficacy and mattering. For example, the program must be challenging based upon input and interest of youth, and their progress is individually assessed. Programs and staff must provide opportunities for skill building including beneficial skills over an extended period of time (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). Family, school, and community efforts with

adequate communication between the three are important to form and maintain a working relationship.

The *Search Institute* has also done considerable research on youth-development programs, and it has developed 40 developmental assets that children must have in order to succeed. The fundamental premise was that, the more of these assets that youth are provided with, the less likely they are to be involved in risky behavior (Search Institute, 1996). These 40 developmental assets are grouped into eight categories and represent the many influences on the lives of young people. External assets are the relationships and opportunities that adults provide and are divided into the categories of: support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time. Internal assets are competencies and values that young people develop internally and that are used to help them become self-regulating adults, these are divided into the categories of: commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity (Scales & Leffert, 1999, p. 5). These categories represent the breakdown of the 40 developmental assets that are the building blocks all youth need to become healthy, caring, principled, and productive (Appendix A) (Search Institute, 2004).

Five major categories for enhancing positive youth-development were identified by 4-H members as part of the National Youth Conversation. The National Youth Conversation was started at the local county level, leading to a state level and ultimately a national level conversation. These conversations provided youth an opportunity to voice their views on how to develop a positive future for youth in our communities (National 4-H Council, 2000). These strategies that were identified are to:

1. Enhance the power of youth
2. Enhance access, equity and opportunity

3. Create extraordinary places to live and learn
4. Bring exceptional people and innovative practices to youth-development
5. Create effective organizations for positive youth-development

Young people specifically ask for programs that offer time to spend with caring adults, opportunities to enhance peer relationships, having time that is not overly structured, as well as, organized activities and age-based programs (Saito & Roehkepartain, 1995). There are also barriers of resistance that are identified by Saito and Roehkepartain (1995). These are barriers of not having an interesting and diverse program, youth not having knowledge about the program, which includes inadequate advertisement and poor availability regarding location and time. Lower income families specifically noted lack of transportation and high cost, while higher income families mentioned a lack of interest and time (Saito & Roehlkepartain, 1995).

The last outcome that my study has attempted to measure was that of two important life skills, which are communication and decision-making. Florida 4-H life skills are based on the Targeting Life Skills model (2002A). Life skills are "abilities individuals can learn that will help them to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life." In the Targeting Life Skills (TLS) Model, categories of life skills are identified and divided into categories representing the four H's from the 4-H Clover that represent Head, Heart, Hands, and Health (Appendix B) (Targeting Life Skills, 2002B). The goal of youth programming is for youth-development organizations to provide developmentally appropriate opportunities for youth to experience life skills, to practice these life skills until they are learned, and be able to use them as necessary throughout a lifetime. Through the experiential learning process, youth internalize the knowledge and gain the ability to apply the skills appropriately to their own lives (Barkman, 2003).

The following youth-development outcomes are criteria found in quality youth-development programs. These outcomes are derived from the research presented in the field of youth-development. The outcomes studied in this research were:

- Supportive Relationships between Adults and Peers
- Emotional and Physical Safety
- Belonging and Inclusive Environment
- Contribute through Service and Leadership
- Youth are Actively Engaged in Own Self Development
- Youth develop a Positive Identity (self-esteem, autonomy, and empowerment).

Florida 4-H Program

The 4-H youth-development program is a non-profit youth-development organization, and it is a branch of the Cooperative Extension System. Cooperative Extension exists in every land-grant institution in every state in the nation. The beginning history of extension can be traced back to the Morrill Act of 1862 (Morril Act, 1862). The Morrill Act of 1862 provided a donation of federal land to each state and territory to establish one college in each state. The primary subject taught being agriculture, the mechanic arts and military tactics. Although, during the initial stages of establishing these colleges, the idea of having a college for common people to teach vocational subject matter proved to be a struggle (Seevers, et al, 1997).

During the beginning history of extension, Boys' and Girls' clubs were created, now known as 4-H clubs, to teach the latest practices in agriculture to youth. The original purpose behind teaching new practices to youth was that they would, in turn, pass along their newfound knowledge to their parents. Finally, the Smith-Lever Act was passed in 1914, and this provided federal funding for the Cooperative Extension Service in order to disseminate research-based information to the public. Today, both extension and 4-H provides education in more than just agricultural practices (Seevers et al, 1997).

The 4-H program strives to help youth help themselves in becoming productive citizens or self-directing, contributing members of society (National 4-H council, 2000). The national 4-H mission aims to provide a "supportive environment for culturally diverse youth and adults to reach their fullest potential" (Seevers, et al, 1997, p. 79). Extension also focuses on youth at risk through initiatives that focus on prevention and intervention rather than treatment after the problem has occurred. Educational 4-H programs are designed to specifically meet the developmental stages that youth go through before becoming adults (Seevers, et al 1997).

As mentioned previously, there are 40 developmental assets that youth must have to succeed (Search Institute, 2000). Based on these stated developmental assets, 4-H programming currently provides the following assets: committed to learning, carefully planned curriculum, occurs anywhere in a community, based on interests and needs of youth, trained professionals and volunteers who are screened to ensure safety, and recognition of accomplishments. Youth 4-H programs also encourage family, and school linkages with the 4-H program (Russell, 2001).

The 4-H program is designed to meet eight critical elements necessary for positive youth-development. They are: "positive relationships with caring adults, opportunities for self-determination, an accepting and inclusive environment, opportunities to contribute through community service, a safe environment, opportunities to develop and master skills, engagement in learning, and opportunities to be an active participant in life" (Astroth, 2001).

Outcomes that result from youth-development programs are both short-term and long-term. Short-term changes that occur are behavior changes, work and study habits,

and grade achievement (Forum for youth investment, 2003). Long-term outcomes such as development of life-skills and more positive development are often more difficult to measure. Based on a study by Kirk Astroth (2001) in Montana, findings noted that the youth who "participated in 4-H for more than a year are significantly better off than youth who did not participate in the program," because they were more likely to "give money or time to a charity, help the poor or sick, get more A's in school, become more involved as leaders in school and community, and talk to parents about serious issues (Bozeman, 2001).

Outcomes in general, more specifically long-term outcomes can be difficult to measure. Without proper follow-up, it is often hard to determine if a life changing behavior has occurred. Therefore, long-term and continuous evaluations must be conducted in 4-H programs across the state.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

Purpose

My study was applied research that was used to further develop 4-H programming. This was a quantitative study which assessed the views of youth participating in Florida 4-H. The purpose of my study was to determine if Florida 4-H participants are attaining positive youth development outcomes through the 4-H experience. Research findings were correlated with demographic and self-reported degree of 4-H participation and degree of non-4-H time data. Non-4-H time refers to other activities that the individual participates in other than 4-H including work, homework, and school activities. By using the non-4-H time score it was determined if outcome attainment was also influenced by other non-4-H interactions and experiences.

Research Design

The design of this research was an exploratory study that examined if positive youth development outcomes are derived as a result of Florida 4-H participation. My study was a quantitative evaluation of 4-H participants in the state of Florida that represented the Florida 4-H population.

Five counties were intentionally selected to represent the state of Florida within the parameters of geography, rural/urban character, poverty, race, and age. The data provided on the counties was the most recent available from the US Census Bureau (Table 3-1). The summarized demographic data available from the 2001-2002 4-H year as presented through Blue Ribbon enrollment database (Table 3-2). The five counties

that met the selected criteria providing a cross-section of Florida 4-H were: Duval, Escambia, Glades, Miami/Dade, and Sumter.

Unit of Analysis

The population used in my study was Florida 4-H participants between the ages of 13 and 18 as of September 1st of the current 4-H year who was enrolled in a 4-H club or members at large as listed in the Blue Ribbon database. Members at-large are those youth who participate in the program at the county level and complete project books; however, they are not enrolled in a 4-H club. This sample does not include youth who are reported under group enrollment, such as those youth who participate in the school enrichment program, and are not individually enrolled in 4-H. My study was designed to provide a picture of enrolled Florida 4-H'ers within the counties selected.

Table 3-1: County statistics of population (U.S.Census Bureau, 2000)

	Florida	**Duval**	**Escambia**	**Glades**	**Miami/Dade**	**Sumter**
Population	**15,982,378**	778,879	294,410	10,576	2,253,362	53,345
% Race-White	**78.0%**	65.8%	72.4%	77.0%	69.7%	82.6%
% Race-Black	**14.6%**	27.8%	21.4%	10.5%	20.3%	13.8%
% Race-Hispanic	**16.8%**	4.1%	2.7%	15.1%	57.3%	6.3%
Persons below Poverty	**12.5%**	11.9%	15.4%	15.2%	18.0%	13.7%
Rural/ Urban		Urban	Mix	Rural	Urban	Rural
High School Graduates	**79.9%**	82.7%	82.1%	69.8%	67.9%	77.3%

Table 3-2: Statistics of county 4-H members (Blue Ribbon, 2002)

	Florida	**Duval**	**Escambia**	**Glades**	**Miami/Dade**	**Sumter**
Number of 4-H members	**271,077**	1,222	284	110	1,195	189
Number of Clubs	**23,244**	68	22	2	53	18
% Race-White	**67%**	47%	54%	98%	20%	78%
% Race-Black	**21%**	48%	41%	0%	31%	19%
% Race-Hispanic	**10.5%**	3%	1%	2%	48%	2%
Percent male	**49%**	49%	30%	39%	33%	38%
% 4-H'ers living in rural area	**28%**	4.6%	12%	100%	0%	100%

Instrumentation

The instrument used for my study was a modified replication of a survey developed by Kirk Astroth of Montana State (Astroth, 2001). The researcher cross-indexed the following surveys in order to ensure that the instrument was both valid and reliable: The National Impact Assessment, the Program and Activity Assessment Tool (Zeldin & Matysik, 2001), North Carolina State University 4-H, New York life skills, NELS 88, Cornell Member's Only, University of Illinois Eight Critical Elements, Iowa State Life Skills, Montana State University life skills, Pennsylvania State University life skills, Texas A & M life skills, and the Search Institute. An initial list of questions was developed which showed different questions asked in the above survey instruments. This list of questions was categorized according to the outcome that the question represented. The researcher then compared questions in the Montana survey to determine if those questions were asked in other studies as well. If a question was not used in more than one study, the researcher did not use the question unless it was not measured at all in the different surveys. A list of questions used and their sources are provided in Appendix L. The process of cross-indexing these surveys helped to ensure that all outcomes have valid and reliable measures. Other researchers might have chosen different questions based on

their perspectives. Therefore, to minimize measurement error by the researcher, factor analysis was also used to establish the internal consistency and unidimentionality of each construct. The results of factor analysis are shown later in Chapter 3.

A panel of experts consisting of four graduate students and four faculty members in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at the University of Florida reviewed the survey and provided feedback. Feedback regarding formatting of the survey and questions asked were proposed and the researcher revised the survey accordingly.

Both the expert panel review and the cross-indexing of several leading research studies used in the field of youth development and 4-H programming helped in ensuring the reliability and validity of this survey instrument. Utilizing the survey administration methods presented by the Tailored Design Method (Dillman, 2000) helped to ensure that an appropriate sample was selected and also increased the reliability of my study.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was sought and attained (Appendix D). IRB approved the consent letters for the 4-H member and their parent, the research protocol as well as the survey instrument.

Data Collection

The first step of data collection involved the selecting of selecting the five counties of Duval, Escambia, Glades, Miami-Dade, and Sumter was reviewed in the research design section of this chapter. Permission and support was then obtained from the 4-H Agent from each of these five counties. The Blue Ribbon database provided the names, address, ages, and other demographic information about the 4-H members from each of these counties. A census of the enrolled members between the ages of 13 and 18 was selected to use as the sample for my study.

The Tailored Design Method (Dillman, 2000) was used to conduct the survey administration portion of my study. The first contact consisted of a pre-notification (Appendix E) that a survey would be forthcoming for members between the ages of 13 and 18. This contact was inserted in the 4-H newsletters by the agents in each of the five counties. Although this contact was made in a recognizable format, which was in a newsletter which was sent to all youth, it may have been overlooked. A separate letter might have had a larger impact on the response rate. The second contact consisted of a packet of information that was sent to the 4-H'ers in each county. This packet consisted of a cover letter (Appendix F), a parental consent form (Appendix G), a participant consent form (Appendix H), two plain white envelopes (one for each consent letter), a survey (Appendix I), and a pre-paid addressed envelope to be returned to the researcher. A third contact was sent to non-respondents two weeks later which consisted of a reminder postcard (Appendix J). The fourth and final contact to non-respondents came three weeks later and consisted of a new cover letter (Appendix K), a new survey, and new consent letter. As data was collected it was entered into an Excel database by county and identification number in order to maintain the demographic material provided by the county. The identification number was then removed and the database was imported into SPSS for data analysis (SPSS, 2002).

A census count of each of the five counties included 621 eligible youth who received survey packets. Of those surveys, 79 were returned with the wrong address making 542 participants eligible to be included in my study. These wrong addresses were a result of faulty mailing lists as reported through the blue ribbon database. This may be because some counties do not keep accurate reporting of their 4-H members after

they enter them at the beginning of the 4-H year, September 1st. The request for database records was made in mid October; however, several counties did not respond until the beginning of December. There were 88 survey respondents, providing a response rate of 16.2% of the eligible population.

Due to a low response rate, these results should not be generalized to the population of Florida 4-H'ers. Additionally, the results might not be representative of the counties in which the 4-H'er was enrolled due to non-response bias. For each individual county, the response rates were as follows: Duval county: 6.7%, Escambia county: 22.8%, Glades county: 35.9%, Miami-Dade: 10.5%, and Sumter county: 37.8%.

Respondents versus Non-Respondents

As presented previously in Chapter 3, permission and data were obtained from County 4-H agents prior to the onset of this research being conducted. All 4-H agents were to send their Blue Ribbon data sets from the 2001-2002 4-H year since this data had already been collected by the state 4-H office. This was done to provide convenience to agents with already busy schedules and keep them from having to re-create reports. Agents were asked to send their reports with the following information: age, race, and sex, place of residence, name, and mailing address. Although all counties did respond to this request for information, not all counties provided the full information on the 4-H members, nor were all mailing addresses correct.

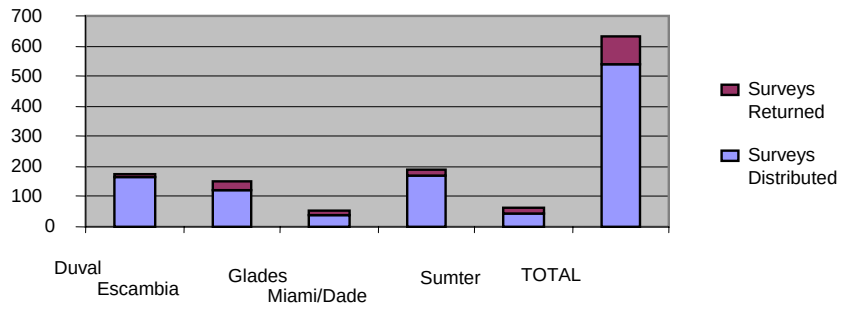

Figure 3-1: Response Rates by County

Demographics of Sample

Because a complete set of data was received only from Glades and Sumter counties there was missing data on race and place of residence for Escambia, Duval, and Miami/Dade. For race, 458 cases are missing, and for place of residence 163 cases are missing. As reported in Table 3-2 all three counties have a very low percentage of rural 4-H members and varied degrees of race. This data was missing as a result of the selected counties not sending the proper blue ribbon report to the researcher. This provides a limitation in the demographic data of both respondents and non-respondents and prohibits comparison in regards to race, and place of residence.

By viewing the names of non-respondents it can be determined that a large portion of the Hispanic sample in Miami-Dade did not respond. Therefore, there was a possibility of non-response bias in regards to race. Because only age and sex are available in the database received from each county for all youth who are part of the actual sample, it can be determined if a non-response bias does exist in regards to these demographic traits.

It can be shown if a difference in regards to sex does exist. First, overall there were more female youth who received surveys. Thirty-eight more females returned their survey than did males. Twenty percent of females responded but only 11% of males did so. Also as suggested regarding race, the majority of respondents were white. By comparing the mailing list to identification number very few Hispanic youth returned their surveys. For residence, more youth who resided in rural areas returned their survey (35%) than did urban youth (14%).

Table 3-3. Demographics of 4-H Survey Respondents and Non-Respondents.

		Survey Respondents	
	Sample	Frequency	Percent
RACE*			
White	81	30	37
Other	3	1	33
Total	84	31	37
GENDER			
Male	229	25	11
Female	313	63	20
Total	542	88	16
RESIDENCE*			
Urban	271	39	14
Rural	108	38	35
Total	379	77	20

* there are missing cases for these variables

Data Analysis

Data analysis for my study consisted of descriptive statistics on the data collected. Factor analysis was used to ensure the reliability of the dependent variable constructs. Correlations were then made between positive youth development outcomes, and the degree of 4-H participation, non-4-H time, gender, and age among respondents.

The independent variables measured are the degree of 4-H participation, Non-4-H time, and participant demographics. For the independent variables a composite score was calculated to determine both a degree of 4-H participation score and Non-4-H time score.

The degree of *4-H participation* was determined by combining the time spent in 4-H and the degree of involvement in 4-H. This score was created by averaging the time spent in 4-H, (variables UT5-UT8) and the Participation in 4-H (P1-P6). These two scores were then averaged to create an overall degree of 4-H participation score (Table 3-4).

Table 3-4. 4-H participation variables used in factor analysis

Variable	Factor loading
UT5: Weekly time spent doing 4-H activities.	.406
UT6: Years enrolled in 4-H.	.495
UT7: Projects completed during the past year.	.534
UT8: Offices held in the past year in 4-H.	.889
P1: Attend club meetings.	.441
P2: Attend county council meetings.	.819
P3: Attend district council meetings.	.818
P4: Attend state executive board meetings	.855
P5: Serve on special committees.	.829
P6: Serve as chair or co-chair on special committees.	.715

The factor analysis yielded an Eigenvalue of 4.95, which explained 49.5% of the model variation. Alpha index reliability = .875. Mean participation score of the model = 19.8, SD = 8.6.

The degree of *Non-4-H Time* score was calculated in very much the same way. The variables used to measure Non-4-H time are: out-of-school time, school activity, and work. Both the out-of-school time and school activities variables questions were binary with a yes = 1, and no = 0, except the homework variable which asked for how many hours. The number of hours reported are coded as follows: zero hours = zero, one to three hours = one, four to six hours = two, seven to nine hours = three, ten to twelve hours = four, and 13 hours plus = five. In regards to the work variables, one variable was a binary response item and the other was number of hours worked. Number of hours worked was coded as follows: zero hours = zero, one to five = one, six to ten = two, eleven to fifteen = three, sixteen to twenty = four, and twenty-one plus hours = five. The

complete code sheet (Appendix C) shows how each variable was composed to determine these scores. These variables were also averaged to show the degree of time spent in non-4-H activities.

The following variables were binary response variables and measure school activities:

- Band, orchestra, chorus, choir, or other musical group
- School play or musical
- Student government
- National Honor Society or academic honor society
- School yearbook, newspaper
- Service clubs (AFS, KEY)
- Academic clubs
- Hobby clubs (photography, chess, etc.)
- FFA chapter
- Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), Future Teachers Association (FTA), Future Homemakers Association (FHA), or other vocation education clubs

The following variables measured out of school time and are binary response items:

- Boy or girl scouts
- Religious youth group
- Hobby clubs
- Neighborhood club or program
- Boys' club or Girls' club
- Non-school athletic team
- YMCA/YWCA
- Other

The following were fill in the blank questions which measured use of time:

- In a typical week, about how many hours do you spend doing homework?
- Do you work?

- If you work, in a typical week, about how many hours do you work?
- In a typical week, how much total time do you spend in out of school activities?

For the above questions, codes were developed to measure the time spent that respondents self reported (Appendix C).

The third set of independent variables are demographics which consist of age, sex, race, place of residence, type of school attended, grade level, and parent/ guardian. The above demographic variables can be found in the code sheet in Appendix C. The demographic information collected prior to the survey consisted of age, sex, race, and place of residence. However, as discussed, race and place of residence data was missing due to errors with the initial database. The other demographic data that was self-reported by survey respondents was asked by the following questions.

- What type of school do you attend? Public, Private, Home School or Not in School.
- What grade of school are you in?
- Which statement best describes your family? I live with my two parents, I live with only my mother, I live with only my father, I live with one natural parent and one stepparent, Sometimes I live with my mother and sometimes I live with my father, I live with my grandparents, I live with a guardian, relative, or other person, and Other.

The dependent variable being measured was the evidence of possessing positive youth development outcomes. The constructs that make up the positive youth development outcomes that were measured are: relationships, safe environment, belonging, service and leadership, self development, positive identity, and skills needed for success in work and family life. These variables are fully explained in Chapter 2. Dependent variables were reported through a 6-point Likert response, a binary response, and a ranking response for time spent in service and leadership. The codes for all variables are shown in the Code Sheet (Appendix C).

Factor analysis was used to develop constructs and ensure that the questions asked appropriately measured the intended constructs (Santos & Clegg, 1999). Using factor analysis ensured that constructs were appropriately measured. Reliability also was determined by calculating Chronbach's Alpha on items (Norusis, 2000). The following sections report the results of factor analysis by construct. (The variables that were reverse coded are noted in the tables by "REV").

Relationships

A construct for youth to have both positive and supportive relationships with adults and peers proved to be the most difficult to measure. The researcher previously discussed the process of cross-indexing many survey instruments to attain the questions asked in this survey. The construct of positive relationships was initially divided into five constructs (Table 3-5). After removing one variable and re-running factor analysis only three constructs were derived with the first having an Eigenvalue of 5.722 which explained 44% of the variation within the model. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability for this index was .88. The summated mean for positive relationships was nearly 4 (3.76) with a standard deviation of 8.0, which means that for the 13 items, respondents tended to *agree* with each item.

Table 3-5. Positive relationship variables used in factor analysis.

Variable	Factor loading
R1: I trust the adults in the 4-H program.	.703
R2: I trust other 4-H members.	.610
R3: I have "good friends" in 4-H.	.595
R4: If I had an important concern about drugs, alcohol, sex, or another serious issue I would talk to an adult in 4-H about it.	.628
R5: Adults in 4-H listen to what I say.	.803
R6: Adults in my community make me feel important.	.399
R7: Adults in 4-H expect too much from me. "REV"	.596
R8: Adults in 4-H make me feel good about myself.	.705
R10: Youth participate equally with adults in planning club activities.	.732
R11: Youth participate equally with adults in implementing or carrying out club activities.	.727
R12: Youth participate equally with adults in evaluating or determining the success of 4-H activities.	.731
R13: In 4-H I get to know everyone.	.543
R14: In 4-H I often feel "put down" by adult leaders and agents. "REV"	.746

The factor analysis yielded an Eigenvalue of 5.72, which explained 44 % of the model variation. Alpha index reliability = .888. Mean relationship score of the reduced model = 3.76, SD = 8.04

Safe Environment

Providing youth with a safe environment both physically and emotionally is an important component of any youth development organization. This construct measured five variables that make up a safe environment which are shown along with their factor loadings (Table 3-6). In the factor analysis of safe environment, only one component was removed with an Eigenvalue of 2.38, and it explained 46.74% of the variance within the model. An overall mean of 4.13 was determined with a standard deviation of 2.80.

Table 3-6: Safe environment variables used in factor analysis.

Variable	Factor loading
SE1: 4-H provides a safe place for learning and growing.	.729
SE2: In 4-H I often feel embarrassed or put-down. "REV"	.718
SE3: I don't feel safe at 4-H activities. "REV"	.737
SE4: In 4-H I can try new things without worrying about making mistakes.	.559
SE5: I feel safe when I attend 4-H activities.	.660

The factor analysis yielded an Eigenvalue of 2.337, which explained 46.74% of the model variation. Alpha index reliability = .81. Mean relationship score of the model = 4.13, SD = 2.8

Belonging

Having a sense of belonging and an inclusive environment in a youth development organization was a construct that was measured with the use of four variables. The initial factor analysis derived one component with an Eigenvalue of 2.38 and explained 59.5% of the variation in the model. The component had an average mean of 4.18 with a standard deviation of 2.36. The Chronbach's alpha measured the reliability of the index at .80. Table 3-7 shows the variables used to make up the construct of belonging.

Table 3-7. Belonging variables used in factor analysis

Variable	Factor loading
B1: 4-H clubs are supportive environments where I feel accepted for who I am.	.860
B2: All kinds of kids are welcome in 4-H.	.641
B3: In 4-H I have learned to treat people who are different from me with respect.	.730
B4: I feel like I belong in 4-H.	.835

The factor analysis yielded an Eigenvalue of 2.38, which explained 59.54 % of the model variation. Alpha index reliability = .80. Mean relationship score of the model = 4.18, SD = 2.36

Service and Leadership

Providing youth with an opportunity to contribute to their own life and that of others and to be a leader for younger peers falls into the construct of service and leadership. This construct was somewhat different from the others in that the survey

items were mixed response items. This proved to be an unforeseen limitation of the research results. However, the response item in question still measured the construct intended. In factor analysis, (and 3-9) two components were derived from the set of seven variables. The first variable was a binary response item; this variable was pulled out and alone explained 20.32% of the variation in the model (Table 3-8). The first component with the other six variables explained 46.45% of the variation. The first variable was removed to determine reliability of the index and the summated mean and standard deviation.

Table 3-8. Service and leadership variables used in factor analysis

Variable	Factor loading
SL1: 4-H teaches me to help other people.	.620*

The factor analysis yielded an Eigenvalue of 1.422, which explained 20.317% of the model variation. Mean relationship score of the variable = .93, SD = .254
*this factor loading represents the second component created by factor analysis.

Table 3-9. Service and leadership variables used in factor analysis

Variable	Factor loading
SL2: During the last 12 months how many times have you…been involved to make life better for other people?	.753
SL3: During the last 12 months how many times have you…given money or time to charity or organization that helps people?	.618
SL4: During the last 12 months how many times have you…spent time helping people who were poor, hungry, sick, or unable to care for themselves?	.587
SL5: I feel other kids look up to me and follow my example.	.793
SL6: I do my share to make my school and community better.	.820
SL7: I enjoy volunteering in class to lead activities.	.753

The factor analysis yielded an Eigenvalue of 3.25, which explained 46.44 % of the model variation. Alpha index reliability = .806. Mean relationship score of the model = 2.89, SD = 5.06.

Self Development

Youth being actively engaged in their own development and being able to provide input and feel that their opinion matters are all a part of the component of self-

development. Self-development questions were asked regarding critical thinking, goal setting, communication, and decision making since these are assets that youth have control over. Two components were derived from factor analysis to represent the construct of self development. Both of these components will be presented because of the uniqueness of the variable that alone makes up the second component. Component one has an Eigenvalue of 3.46 and explains 43.3% of the variance in the model (Table 3-10). Component two has an Eigenvalue of 1.078 and explains 13.47% of the model (3-11).

Table 3-10. Self-development variables used in factor analysis

Variable	Factor loading
SD1: I am good at planning ahead.	.766
SD2: I think through all of the good and bad results of different decisions before acting.	.705
SD4: I set goals.	.705
SD5: I am responsible for my own actions.	.700
SD6: 4-H teaches me to do things on my own.	.588
SD7: I listen carefully to what others say.	.746
SD8: I can clearly state my thoughts, feelings, and ideas to others.	.589

Component one: The factor analysis yielded an Eigenvalue of 3.464, which explained 43.295% of the model variation. Alpha index reliability = .804. Mean relationship score of the model (excluding SD3) = 4.01, SD = 3.87

Table 3-11: Self-development variables used in factor analysis

Variable	Factor loading
SD3: I know how to say "no" when someone wants me to do things I know are wrong and dangerous.	.813

Component two: The factor analysis yielded an Eigenvalue of 1.08, which explained 13.47% of the model variation. Mean relationship score of the variable = 4.44, SD = .69

The variable SD3 was significant because of what the question asked. This component alone explained 13.47% of the self-development construct with a mean response of 4.44. The other variables all had negative loadings in this component. Fifty-

two percent of respondents responded that they strongly agreed with the statement. Meaning that the majority of respondents tended to agree that they were able to withstand peer pressure.

Positive Identity

The construct of positive identity measures the feelings of oneself, for example self efficacy, self-esteem, autonomy, and empowerment. After running factor analysis on this set of variables one component was derived. The component had an Eigenvalue of 3.696, and it represented 41.1% of the variation within the model (Table 3-12).

Table 3-12. Variables of positive identity in factor analysis

Variable	Factor loading
PI1: 4-H rewards me for being successful.	.578
PI2: At times, I think I am no good at all. "REV"	.651
PI3: All in all, I am glad I am me.	.736
PI4: I feel I do not have much to be proud of. "REV"	.675
PI5: When things don't go well for me, I am good at finding a way to make things better.	.611
PI6: I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking. "REV"	.582
PI7: 4-H has helped me expect good things from myself.	.822
PI8: I feel very happy when I am successful at something.	.430
PI9: My participation in 4-H has been critical to my success in life.	.606

The factor analysis yielded an Eigenvalue of 3.464, which explained 43.295% of the model variation. Alpha index reliability = .804. Mean relationship score of the model = 4.01, SD = 3.87

The final steps of data analysis included conducting a Pearson R correlation and a regression model for each construct including degree of 4-H participation, non-4-H time, age, and gender for the independent variables. The regression model was used to double check the correlation model and determines if a significant correlation existed. All correlation and significance levels are presented in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH RESULTS

Demographics of Sample

Objective one was to determine the demographic makeup of survey respondents. As stated previously age, race, sex, and place of residence demographics were collected by youth prior to survey distribution the demographics of survey respondents (Table 4-2). Other demographic information was collected via self-reporting only on survey respondents to provide the researcher with a better picture of the sample. The questions that they were asked are listed in Chapter 3.

The ages of survey respondents tend to be skewed to the right with the majority of respondents being at the younger ages targeted (Table 4-1). The average age of survey respondents was nearly 15 (14.6).

School attendance was determined for survey respondents (Table 4-3). The majority of survey respondents attended public school, followed by home school. The grade in school was self reported by respondents and the mean grade of survey respondents was 10th grade (9.8). For the grade attending responses ranged from no grade to grade 14. These respondents noted that they were attending college classes.

Table 4-1. Age of survey respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
13	28	31.8
14	19	21.6
15	19	21.6
16	9	10.2
17	11	12.5
18	2	2.3
TOTAL	n=88	100.00

Mean = 14.6 Standard Deviation = 1.5

Table 4-2. Demographics on survey respondents

Survey Respondents n=88	Frequency	Percent
RACE*		
White	30	96.8
Other	1	3.2
Total	31	100.0
GENDER		
Male	25	28.4
Female	63	71.6
Total	88	100.0
RESIDENCE*		
Urban	39	50.6
Rural	38	49.4
Total	77	100.0

* Missing cases

Table 4-3. School attendance of survey respondents

School Attendance	Frequency	Percent
Public	70	79.5
Private	4	4.5
Home school	13	14.8
Not in School	1	1.1
TOTAL	88	99.9

The third demographic variable was family living arrangements. The majority of survey respondents (63.6%) reported living with two parents, and this was somewhat higher than the overall population which was at about half. The second most reported living arrangement was living with only the mother closely followed by living with one natural and one step parent.

Table 4-4. Family living arrangements of survey respondents

Family Living Arrangement	Frequency	Percent
2 parents	56	63.6
Mother only	15	17.0
1 natural parent, 1 step parent	11	12.5
Split living arrangement between mother and father	3	3.4
Grandparents	0	0.0
Other guardian	1	1.1
Other	2	2.3
TOTAL	88	99.9

4-H Participation

This section presents the results to answer objective two: To determine the degree of 4-H participation among survey respondents. The degree of 4-H participation was determined by examining the time spent in 4-H, followed by examining the level of involvement in 4-H. The variables are listed in Chapter 3 and a code sheet showing how these responses are scored was provided in Appendix C. An overall degree of 4-H participation score was determined. There was a minimum score of two and a maximum score of 44 (Figure 4-1). The mean degree of 4-H participation score was 19.8 with a standard deviation of 8.6.

The degree of participation was also shown by county (Table 4-5). By observing the degree of participation score for each county one can see that the range of 16-20 was common among the five counties. Table 4-6 shows the mean, median and standard deviation of the degree of participation for each county. All counties showed similar degrees of participation with Glades being the lowest and Duval being the highest.

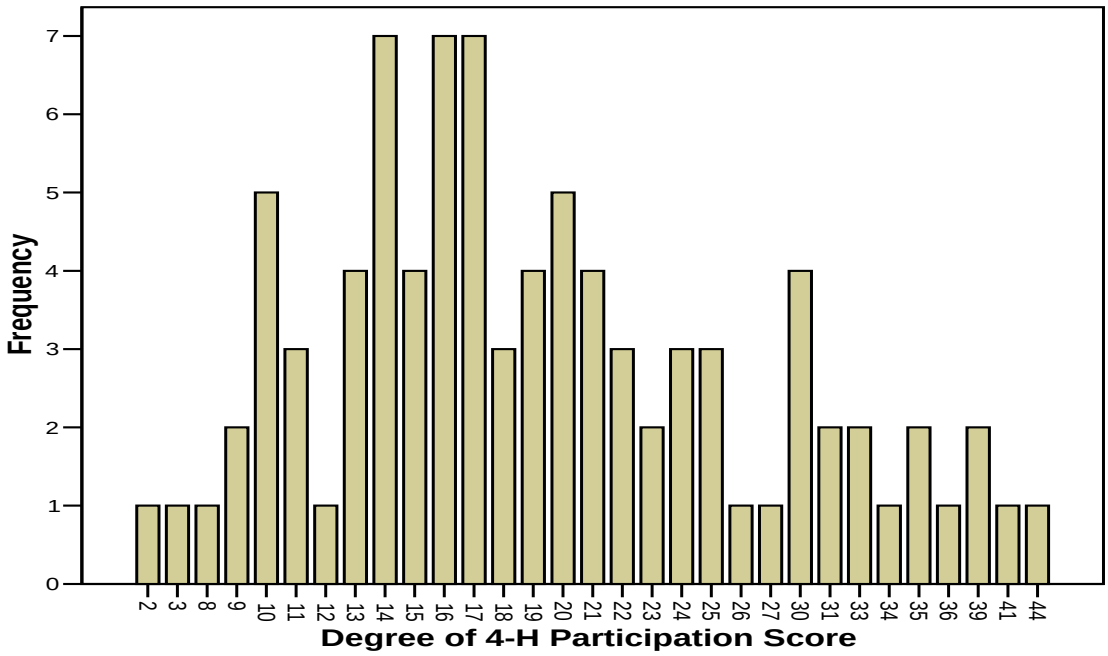

Figure 4-1: The degree of participation of 4-H members surveyed

*The degree of 4-H participation was the average of each individual's time spent in 4-H activities and level of involvement in the 4-H program.

Table 4-5. Degree of 4-H participation by county

Degree of 4-H Participation	Duval	Escambia	Glades	Miami-Dade	Sumter
2-5	1	1	0	0	0
6-10	0	3	1	4	0
11-15	2	7	4	2	4
16-20	2	6	6	6	6
21-25	2	4	2	3	4
26-30	0	4	0	2	0
31-35	3	2	1	0	1
36-40	1	1	0	0	1
41-44	0	0	1	1	0

Table 4-6: 4-H degree of participation by county.

County	N	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.
Duval	11	22.0	21.0	11.1
Escambia	28	19.8	18.0	8.9
Glades	14	17.3	16.5	5.2
Miami-Dade	18	18.9	18.5	8.5
Sumter	17	21.5	19.0	21.5
TOTAL	88	19.8	18.0	8.6

Non-4-H Time

This section reports the results from objective three: To determine the degree of non-4-H time among participants surveyed. The non-4-H time among 4-H participants was measured by examining the activities and ways in which an individual spends his or her time, this variable was made up of school activities, non-4-H activities, and work time. The variables which made up this measurement are explained in Chapter 3. This was a score developed by the researcher for the purpose of the study. This was an important measurement because it shows if the findings in objective four are related to the 4-H experience or if other extraneous factors are affecting attainment of the dependent variables.

The degree of non-4-H time score has a minimum of zero and a maximum of 23 with a mean of 9.53 and a standard deviation of 4.9. Table 4-7 shows the breakdown of the non-4-H time among survey respondents, the range of non-4-H time was shown in Figure 4-2. The highest percentage of survey respondents fell between the ranges of 7 and 9 on non-4-H time. The overall mean for non-4-H time was 9.5.

Table 4-7. Non-4-H time of survey respondents.

Non-4-H Time Score	Frequency	Percent
0	2	2.3
1-3	10	11.0
4-6	13	14.8
7-9	21	23.9
10-12	17	19.3
13-15	14	15.9
16-18	7	8.0
19-21	3	3.4
22-23	1	1.1

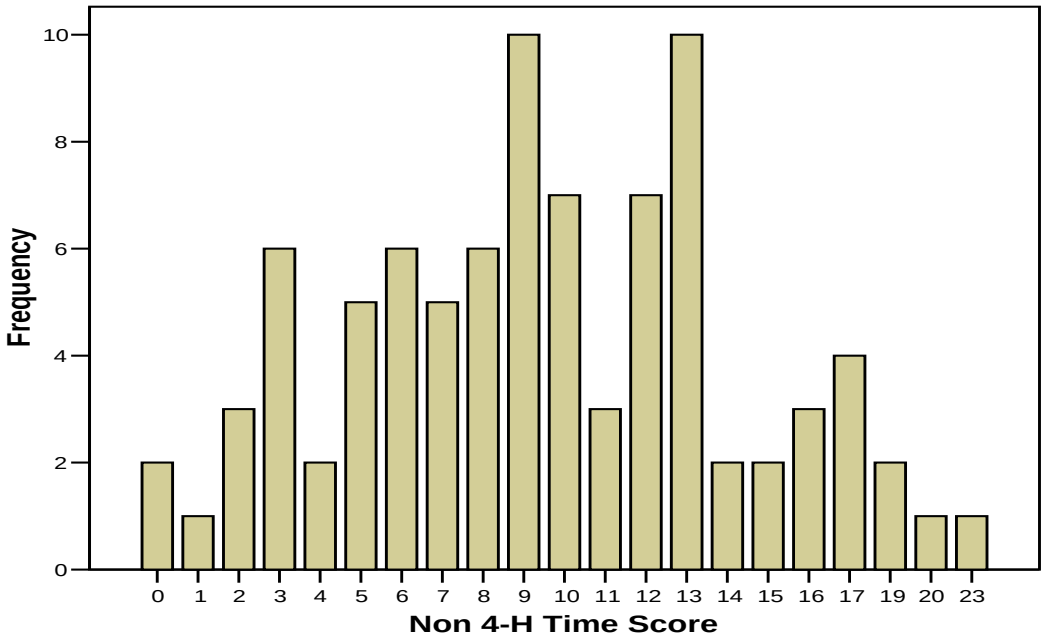

Figure 4-2 Degree of Non-4-H Time

* Non-4-H time was the activities and ways in which an individual spends his or her time, this variable was made up of school activities, non-4-H activities, and work time. This was a score developed by the researcher for the purpose of the study.

The degree of non-4-H time was also divided by county for survey participants (Table 4-8). By observing the mean for the different counties one can see that the lowest non-4-H time was from Glades County and the highest mean reported was from Miami-Dade County (Table 4-8).

Table 4-8. Non-4-H time by county

County	N	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.
Duval	11	10.0	9.0	4.1
Escambia	28	9.3	9.0	5.4
Glades	14	7.6	8.5	5.2
Miami-Dade	18	10.7	11.5	3.7
Sumter	17	10.0	10.0	3.7
TOTAL	88	9.5	9.0	4.9

Positive Youth Development Outcomes

This section of the results sets forth to answer objective four: To determine if the 4-H club experience meets the developmental outcomes that promotes positive development:

1. Positive and Supportive Relationships between Adults and Peers;
2. Emotional and Physical Safety;
3. Belonging and Inclusive Environment;
4. Contribute through Service and Leadership;
5. Youth are Actively Engaged in Self-Development; and,
6. Youth Develop a Positive Identity (self-efficacy, self-esteem, autonomy, and empowerment).

The following constructs were measured in my study: Relationships, Safe Environment, Belonging, Service and Leadership, Self Development, and Positive Identity. The above constructs were presented in Chapter 3 and proved both reliable and valid. As shown, (Table 4-9) the majority of the constructs have a mean of approximately four, meaning that respondents tended to agree with the statements making up each construct. This, of course, was excluding both Service and Leadership constructs. Service and Leadership 1 was a binary response item with 1 = yes and 0 = no, and the mean for this item was nearly 1 (.93). Therefore, it can be said that self-assessment of service and leadership qualities was answered yes most frequently. For Service and Leadership construct 2 the variables consisted of an interval scale, and this meant that the higher the mean the more likely respondents self-reported participating in service and leadership activities.

Each construct was derived as a result of factor analysis: Relationship, Belonging, Safe Environment, Service and Leadership 1, and 2, Self Development 1 and 2, and Positive Identity. Each construct was averaged for each individual to determine an overall score. These overall scores were then correlated with degree of 4-H participation and non-4-H time. The following sections will present the correlation and regression results for each construct measured. Table 4-10 presents the Pearson R correlation and significance level for each construct compared to Degree of 4-H Participation.

Table 4-9. Mean and standard deviation of dependent variable constructs

Construct	Mean	Std. Dev.
Relationships	3.8	8.0
Safe Environment	4.1	2.8
Belonging	4.2	2.4
Service & Leadership 1	.93	.25
Service & Leadership 2	2.9	5.1
Self Development 1	4.0	3.8
Self Development 2	4.4	.69
Positive Identity	4.0	3.9

Table 4-10. Correlations of outcomes with degree of 4-H participation

Correlation	Pearson R	Significance
Relationship to 4-H Participation	.144	.180
Safe Environment Score to 4-H Participation	.115	.285
Belonging to 4-H participation	.286	.007*
Service and Leadership 1 to 4-H Participation	.232	.030*
Service and Leadership 2 to 4-H Participation	.505	.000*
Self Development 1 to 4-H Participation	.230	.031*
Self Development 2 to 4-H Participation	.192	.072
Positive Identity to 4-H Participation	.225	.035*

* shows these correlations were significant at a p-value $\leq$.05.

The correlations that are significantly correlated with the degree of 4-H participation are: Belonging, Service and Leadership 1 and 2, Self Development 1, and Positive Identity. Self Development 1 consists of variable SD3 which created its own construct in factor analysis. The results of the correlations show that no negative

relationships existed between any of the constructs and the degree of 4-H participation. However, a negative correlation of -.031 did exist between the construct of Safe Environment and non-4-H time. Showing that when non-4-H time was compared to the degree of 4-H participation survey respondents felt safer in 4-H.

A regression model was also created in order to ensure that the correlations were significant and not impacted by age or gender. The regression model included degree of 4-H participation, non-4-H time, age, and gender along with the mean score for each construct as derived from factor analysis.

Table 4-11. Youth development outcome regression results

		Beta			
	Y-intercept	Degree of 4-H Participation	Non-4-H Time	Age	Gender
Relationships	2.5	0.004	0.008	0.04	0.12
Safe Environment	2.9	0.006	-0.008	0.008	-0.04
Belonging	2.7	0.02	0.002	0.08	0.02
Service & Leadership 1	0.725	0.008	-0.003	0.007	-0.02
Service & Leadership 2	-0.393	0.04	0.07	0.13	0.23
Self Development 1	4.9	0.01	0.04	-0.07	-0.06
Self Development 2	2.6	0.006	0.02	0.08	-0.11
Positive Identity	2.4	0.02	0.01	0.03	-0.12

*for gender a negative slope means that males scored lower and a positive slope means that males scored higher.

Sense of belonging was the first construct which showed a significant correlation with Degree of 4-H Participation. This was a highly significant correlation at the .05 level. The Regression model shows that the slope for Degree of 4-H Participation was 2.7 ($p \leq .001$). This shows that an increase in degree of 4-H participation leads 4-H members to feel a sense of belonging and inclusiveness.

The constructs of Service and Leadership were also significantly correlated to Degree of 4-H Participation. Service and Leadership 1 reported a Pearson R of .232 at a significance level of .030. The y-intercept for Service and Leadership 1 was .725 at .012.

Service and Leadership 2 also reported a positive correlation with a Pearson R correlation of .505 at a significance level of .000. Therefore, as degree of 4-H participation increases so does the opportunity to contribute through Service and Leadership. The regression model reported a negative slope for the construct of Service and Leadership 1 when related to non-4-H time at -.003.

The construct of Self Development 1 was positively correlated with a Pearson R of .32 at significance level of .031; Self Development 2 was also positively correlated at .192 with a significance level of .072 at the .05 level. Even though Self Development 2 was not highly significant it was still a positive correlation that shows as the degree of 4-H participation increases so does the outcome of self development.

The final construct showing a positive correlation was that of Positive Identity which reported a Pearson R of .225 and a significance level at .035. The regression model showed the y-intercept at 2.35 at a significance level of .010. These results show that as degree of 4-H participation increases so does the attainment of a positive identity.

The overall conclusions were that as the degree of 4-H participation increases so does the attainment of positive youth development outcomes. Further conclusions and recommendations will be presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Study

The purpose of my research study was to determine if Florida 4-H participants were attaining positive youth development *outcomes* through the 4-H experience. This quantitative study assessed the views of youth participating in Florida 4-H. The unit of analysis was youth between the ages of 13 and 18 who were enrolled in a 4-H club or members at large as listed in the Blue Ribbon database. Surveys were sent to 621 youth, with 79 surveys returned with the wrong address making 542 participants eligible to be included in the population. There were 88 respondents, providing a response rate of 16.2% of the eligible population. Due to a low response rate, the results cannot be generalized to the population of Florida 4-H'ers, only to the counties in which the 4-H'er participated. However, this was also somewhat limited due to the potential of non-response bias.

The independent variables measured were the degree of 4-H participation, non 4-H time, and participant demographics. The dependent variables measured were evidence of possessing positive youth development outcomes. Data collection procedures were followed precisely as stated in Chapter 3.

Limitations

Several limitations existed within the methodology of the research and the data collected. A potential bias may have existed among those youth who were selected to participate in the survey. Although an effort was made to select counties that would be

representative of the state, the larger more urban counties did not provide an impressive response rate. This leaves room for improvement in the methodology of my study. Perhaps agents in their own county can use the survey since they have more of a relationship with the youth and can better encourage them to participate in the survey. The researcher also could have asked for more direct involvement of the agents during the whole process and not just in attaining mailing lists. This assumption was based on the actions of the agent in Sumter County who contacted 4-H'ers to make sure that they received and filled out their surveys.

A second limitation was the low response rate of youth. This low response rate may be due to lack of parental consent, a lack of interest, faulty mailing lists, and other unforeseen factors. This limitation may also have been a result of a lack of support from agents in some counties. In Sumter County, the agent made an extended effort to encourage 4-H members to return their surveys through personal calls. This effort paid off in receiving a 37.8% response rate. A recommendation for correcting this limitation was to enlist the help of 4-H club leaders who may have more of a continuous contact with the members.

A third limitation to my study was in regards to use of time data for both degree of

4-H participation and non 4-H time spent. It may be difficult for youth to recall their use of time. To account for this potential error it has been noted that this was self-report data and needs to be considered as such.

The fourth limitation of my study was that the Blue Ribbon database may not be entirely accurate and may not have shown all the youth who are impacted by the 4-H program. Many youth re-enroll each year in September, however at the time the mailing

lists were collected these youth may not have been re-entered into the database. Also, some youth may have provided the wrong address or changed their address after the beginning of the previous year. The impact on those youth who did not receive surveys due to faulty mailing lists was an unforeseen limitation to my study. Therefore, the 4-H program may have impacted these youth but were not surveyed. In the same regards many minority youth were listed as having wrong mailing addresses which prevented them from receiving a survey.

The fifth limitation was recognized during data analyses. In regards to the survey instrument one section, Service and Leadership had mixed response questions, which caused difficulties during analyses. It was recommended that all questions should be asked in the same format. The other part of the limitation recognized during data analyses was the researcher not asking race, sex, and age on the survey. It was assumed that the correct database would be received from county 4-H agents. A possibility may be to obtain this information from the State 4-H office from the previous year or to wait until mid-year when all data should be input in the Blue Ribbon database.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions regarding the objectives are presented followed by recommendations derived from these results by the researcher.

Demographics

Objective one: To determine the demographic makeup of 4-H participants surveyed. This objective set forth to tell us more about the 4-H members who were being surveyed.

Among those participants whose race was available, 96.8% of respondents were white. However, the more urban counties of Duval, Escambia, and Miami-Dade did not

provide the race in their data sets, which according to the state report from 2002 these counties do serve a large African-American and Hispanic population. Therefore, it can be assumed that these counties are reaching these youth. Another conclusion regarding race was that in Miami-Dade county the majority of wrong mailing addresses returned had names of Hispanic descent. This provided the researcher with the opportunity to make the assumption that those youth may change location frequently or did not provide the correct mailing address at the beginning of the year. This should educate 4-H agents that 4-H members need to be contacted in multiple ways to ensure that the line of communication is not broken, specifically with minority youth.

Regarding gender among survey respondents 71.6% were female and 28.4% male. Overall, the 4-H program tends to attract more female participants than male. As shown above substantially more females responded to the survey than did male 4-H'ers. This may be due to preconceived notions about the population that 4-H serves or that boys tend to participate more in sports and other extracurricular activities, especially as they get older. This was only an assumption based on trends viewed within the 4-H program both as a 4-H'er and as a 4-H agent.

Regarding place of residence 50.6% of survey respondents lived in an urban area and 49.4% lived in a rural area. Within the state of Florida only 28% of 4-H members live in a rural area. Also according to this same data a very small percentages of Duval, Escambia, and Miami-Dade counties serve rural members.

Regarding the age of survey respondents and the population of 4-H members, younger youth tend to out-number older youth. Among survey respondents 31.8% were age 13. The percentage of respondents decreased as members got older. The

recommendation of targeting older youth and encouraging their responses to future research regarding 4-H is crucial to understanding if 4-H makes a difference. Among non-respondents the trend was exactly the opposite with the percentage of youth not responding increasing steadily. This shows that although older members are enrolled they did not respond to the survey; however, the trend still shows that as youth get older they drop out of 4-H. In 4-H, older youth need to be targeted to participate and remain in the 4-H program. Because involvement in a youth development organization needs to be sustained over a continuous and extended period of time youth need to stay enrolled in order for them to be impacted.

Because of changing trends in school enrollment the researcher was interested to see where the respondents to this survey attended school. Most survey respondents attended public school. Though 79.5% of survey respondents attended public school, a significant number, 14.8% were home schooled. Home schooling, according to the results of this data among 4-H members is increasing and, therefore, needs to be recognized by 4-H agents and volunteers when planning 4-H programs. In the same respect, 4-H agents cannot forget that the majority of youth still attend public school and cannot attend functions during school hours.

The mean grade reported by survey respondents was 9.8, showing that the average respondent was in the 10th grade. This was a little higher than the average age reported, however some youth who are home schooled may be in the ninth grade at a younger age. This information also shows the need to provide curriculum and age appropriate programs for youth. Since 4-H serves teenage youth, agents and club leaders need to make sure to maintain their interest and provide age-appropriate programming.

The last question asked of survey participants was about their family living arrangements. It is always important for 4-H agents to be aware of their population and to know those whom they are serving. However, because of today's quickly changing environment and the importance of the role of family, it is even more crucial to understand the changes among the population with which 4-H agents are working. Although a little over half the 4-H youth surveyed live with both parents (63.6%), the remaining youth do not live in a traditional family. Seventeen (17) percent of youth live with only their mother and 12.5% live with one natural parent and one stepparent. This data supports the growing trend that more and more youth are in need of strong adult relationships that may be found outside of the home. This data also provides reaffirmation that not all youth are able to attend all 4-H functions and providing alternate meeting times and transportation will help that 17% of youth who only live with a single parent.

According to demographic information on the 4-H population in Florida, it was clear that further efforts need to be made to obtain responses from a more diverse population, specifically in regards to race, and sex and also to ensure that demographic and family trends be taken into consideration to provide equal access for all youth.

Respondents versus Non-Respondents

Although this was not a stated objective, after data was collected, a need to determine if a difference between respondents and non-respondents arose. Because age was provided for the whole population a statistical test was possible. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if there was a difference between respondents and non-respondents in regards to age. The F-test of 1.895 and a significance level of .08 showed little statistical significance that a difference did exist between the two groups.

In regards to race there was a greater percentage of white youth (96.8%) who responded. Unfortunately, the counties that have greater potential to serve a more diverse audience did not provide data on the race of their 4-H members. In regards to place of residence among respondents the two groups were nearly even. For urban residents 50.6% of youth returned their survey and 49.4% of rural youth returned their survey, which was a balanced response.

Participation in 4-H

This section presents the results for the degree of 4-H participation among survey respondents. There was a minimum participation score of two and a maximum score of 44 with a mean score of 19.8 with a standard deviation of 8.6. For those unfamiliar with the 4-H program, they can look at the varying degree of participation levels: club, county, district, and state and see that members have many available options. The highest degree of participation was in Duval County followed by Sumter County. The mean degree of 4-H participation was fairly balanced across counties showing similar participation patterns.

Non 4-H Time

This section reports the results for the degree of non 4-H time among 4-H participants surveyed. This score was measured by looking at school activities, out of school activities, and time spent working. The degree of non 4-H score had a minimum of zero and a maximum of 23 with a mean of 9.53. This score shows the average non 4-H time as being relatively low compared to the maximum score.

Positive Youth Development Outcomes

The results are reviewed for determining if the 4-H experience meets the developmental outcomes that promote positive development, which are:

1. Positive and Supportive Relationships between Adults and Peers
2. Emotional and Physical Safety
3. Belonging and Inclusive Environment
4. Contribute through Service and Leadership
5. Youth are Actively Engaged in Self-Development,
6. Youth Develop a Positive Identity (self-efficacy, self-esteem, autonomy, and empowerment).

This objective was divided into different constructs: Relationships, Safe Environment, Belonging, Service and Leadership 1, and 2, Self Development 1 and 2, and Positive Identity. Factor analysis was conducted on these constructs to ensure the reliability of the survey instrument and to determine if the items actually did compose a true construct. The factor analysis data was presented in the data analysis section of Chapter 3.

The overall conclusion made regarding the data attained in my research study was that as the degree of 4-H participation increases so does the attainment of positive youth development outcomes. By having all positive correlations it was safe to assume that 4-H members who responded to the survey are attaining the above outcomes.

As presented in Chapter 4 all correlations were positive, with the constructs of Belonging, Service and Leadership 1 and 2, Self Development 1 and Positive Identity having significant correlations.

Positive relationships had an overall mean of nearly four (3.8) and a standard deviation of 8.0. This means that the average respondent tended to agree that they had a positive relationship with adults and youth. This construct however did not report a significant positive correlation with Degree of 4-H participation.

Providing and ensuring that youth are provided with a physically and emotionally safe environment is a particularly important component of an effective youth development agency. An overall mean of 4.13 with a standard deviation of 2.80 was reported for the construct of safe environment. This means that the average youth who participated in the survey tended to agree that 4-H provided them with a safe environment. This component also failed to be significantly correlated with the Degree of 4-H participation; however the construct of safe environment had a negative correlation with degree of non-4-H time. Meaning that survey respondents felt safer in 4-H that non-4-H activities.

Having a sense of belonging and an inclusive environment in a youth development organization was a construct that was measured with the use of four variables. The construct of belonging had an overall mean of 4.18 with a standard deviation of 2.36. The average respondent tended to agree that 4-H in their county provided them with a sense of belonging and inclusiveness. Providing youth with an environment where they feel that they are part of the program and welcome to attend is crucial to developing positive outcomes among youth. Even though youth reported that they tend to agree with this construct, 4-H agents and volunteers still need to be observant at club and county activities to ensure that all youth are included and participate. This correlation did prove to be highly significant in relation to Degree of 4-H participation. Belonging was also significantly correlated to the construct of positive relationships and safe environment showing that as sense of belonging increased so did feeling safe at 4-H activities and building positive relationships among peers and adults.

Providing youth with an opportunity to contribute to their own life and that of others and to be a leader for younger peers falls into the construct of service and leadership. Giving youth an opportunity to show their worth and to help others is not only an important part of 4-H, but it also gives youth a sense of accomplishment. As discussed in Chapter 3 this construct was divided into two components. The mean response for the first variable "4-H teaches me to help other people" had a mean of .93 and a standard deviation of .25. This was a binary response item explaining 20.3% of the variance. The second component explaining 46.44% of the variation had an overall mean of 2.9 at standard deviation of 5.1. This implies that respondents reported that they were either neutral or did not know if 4-H gave them the opportunity to provide service and leadership in their community. However, both Service and Leadership constructs showed a significant positive correlation to Degree of 4-H participation. The limitation of this component was that responses were mixed type.

Youth being actively engaged in their own development and being able to provide input and feel that their opinion matters are all a part of self-development. To measure the component of self-development, questions regarding critical thinking, goal setting, communication, and decision-making were asked because these are criteria youth have control over. Two components were derived from factor analysis to represent the construct of self-development. For component one, the overall mean was 4.0 with a standard deviation of 3.9. This means that the average respondent tended to agree that

4-H provided them with an opportunity for self-development. This construct had a significant positive correlation to degree of 4-H participation. The second component was significant because of the variable that made up the component. This variable asked

"I know how to say no when someone wants me to do things I know are wrong and dangerous." This variable had a mean of 4.4 with a standard deviation of .69. Fifty-two (52) percent of respondents responded that they strongly agreed with the statement. This means that the majority of youth agreed that, they can resist peer pressure. This finding alone was significant because it showed that youth perceive themselves as having good self-development. The second construct also proved to be positively correlated with the Degree of 4-H participation. The construct of self-development was important because youth learn many skills that ensure they have a productive adulthood.

The construct of positive identity measures the feelings of oneself, for example self-efficacy, self-esteem, autonomy, and empowerment. After running factor analysis on this set of variables one component was derived. The mean score of the model was 4.0 with a standard deviation of 3.9. Survey respondents tended to agree that they had developed a positive identity. This construct also had a significant positive correlation to degree of 4-H participation. Meaning as youth increase their degree of 4-H participation they also increase in their perceived positive identity. For youth to perceive themselves as having a positive identity means that not only do they have confidence in their ability to succeed, they also believed that they have control over where their life was heading. The recommendation as a result of this conclusion was that 4-H has been able to help bring about positive self-identity through implementing practices that bring about this positive outcome. This was a key finding because of the importance of this outcome to the positive development of youth.

These findings presented led the researcher to make the recommendation that further research of this type should be carried out among Florida 4-H members. It was

suggested that this research instrument, because of the reliability and theoretically derived constructs, be used by county 4-H agents who are interested in determining how their 4-H members and their 4-H programs are performing.

It was also recommended to implement strategies that will gain a better response rate so as to receive input from more 4-H members, which will make my study more reliable and give the ability to increase the confidence level upon which these findings are based.

Implications for Florida 4-H

The low response rate attained in the completion of this research cannot allow the researcher to generalize the findings to the Florida 4-H program, only to the counties specifically involved. This however, was limited because of the possibility of a non-response bias. However, this research does provide a good picture of Florida 4-H. All constructs measured, not including service and leadership, showed that members tended to agree that they perceived the statements to be true. Also all constructs were positively correlated to the degree of 4-H participation. With an increased response rate these correlations could have became more significant.

These findings show that many Florida 4-H programs are offering youth the opportunities needed to make a difference in the attainment of positive youth development outcomes. Florida 4-H members should be empowered to participate and contribute in 4-H programs at all levels. Members in 4-H should also be actively involved in making important decisions that affect themselves and their 4-H programming. Florida 4-H agents and volunteers should allow youth the opportunity to have a voice in all aspects of 4-H programming. Youth need a safe environment where they can try new things out and not be afraid to fail.

The results of this research also showed interesting demographical trends among the respondents, one being family living arrangements and the other being school attendance. Because of the diverse population served, 4-H agents and volunteers need to be aware of the importance of programming efforts. Programming in 4-H also needs to be aware that youth are participating in other programs. It is important that organizers of county 4-H programs collaborate with other youth organizations to more effectively help youth. Youth also need opportunities for sustaining long-term relationships with adults, older youth who remain in 4-H have more of an opportunity to enhance a long-standing relationship. Regarding the age of 4-H members, there was a definite lack of older members as compared to younger members as shown in the age of members enrolled and among survey respondents. Florida 4-H needs to find ways to keep 4-H members involved in the program longer. This may be done through additional incentives through scholarships and programs specifically designed for older youth, however these youth must have the opportunity to contribute to these new programs. Ways that youth can contribute to programming is involving them in the planning and implementing of programs and ensuring that they are relevant and applicable to older youth.

The final recommendation for Florida 4-H was that 4-H agents must include volunteers when implementing the above recommendations. Many volunteers are willing and able to play a more meaningful role than just being a chaperone at camp or helping set up tables at the county fair. The results of youth development research should be shared with 4-H volunteers since many of the implications and recommendations discussed above can be implemented by volunteers in their clubs. Although 4-H agents tend to think that they alone are responsible for the success of their county 4-H program,

volunteers also play a huge role in this success. This of course does call for training of both agents and volunteers.

Recommendations for Further Research

The first recommendation was based on a limitation of my study. The researcher hopes to see further use of this instrument because of the high reliability of the constructs that were developed, as well as the positive correlations that were presented. With a larger response rate the findings could be more generalizable and have a higher confidence level. The researcher would encourage further research on county and even other state programs to utilize this survey instrument to determine if 4-H programs are promoting the attainment of positive youth development outcomes and providing a quality experience. Proper evaluation of our programs and members is important to the future of 4-H. However, consideration of the low response rate would need to be addressed. As previously discussed, involving agent support would be beneficial to increasing the response rate. Also, presenting the survey at a setting where youth would have to complete and turn in would prevent the loss of the survey and having to return the survey by mail.

The second recommendation for further research was to determine why older 4-H members tend to move to other organizations and leave 4-H as presented in Chapter 4. This was a concern of the researcher not only being a past 4-H member, but also as a 4-H agent.

Evaluation of Research

Looking back on this research project there are many errors and countless hours that could have been prevented. Despite the already mentioned limitations of my study the researcher did develop a readily usable instrument that other 4-H professionals can

use. The findings presented are also useful for the counties involved in my study. With more experience, however, the researcher can hopefully contribute further to the future of 4-H evaluations and provide insight to county 4-H agents.

APPENDIX A
40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

Search INSTITUTE — Practical research benefiting children and youth

40 Developmental Assets™

Search Institute™ has identified the following building blocks of healthy development that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES HEALTHY YOUTH®

	Category	Asset Name and Definition
External Assets	Support	1. Family Support-Family life provides high levels of love and support. 2. Positive Family Communication-Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents. 3. Other Adult Relationships-Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults. 4. Caring Neighborhood-Young person experiences caring neighbors. 5. Caring School Climate-School provides a caring, encouraging environment. 6. Parent Involvement in Schooling-Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.
	Empowerment	7. Community Values Youth-Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth. 8. Youth as Resources-Young people are given useful roles in the community. 9. Service to Others-Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week. 10. Safety-Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.
	Boundaries & Expectations	11. Family Boundaries-Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts. 12. School Boundaries-School provides clear rules and consequences. 13. Neighborhood Boundaries-Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior. 14. Adult Role Models-Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior. 15. Positive Peer Influence-Young person's best friends model responsible behavior. 16. High Expectations-Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.
	Constructive Use of Time	17. Creative Activities-Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts. 18. Youth Programs-Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community. 19. Religious Community-Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution. 20. Time at Home-Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.
Internal Assets	Commitment to Learning	21. Achievement Motivation-Young person is motivated to do well in school. 22. School Engagement-Young person is actively engaged in learning. 23. Homework-Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. 24. Bonding to School-Young person cares about her or his school. 25. Reading for Pleasure-Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.
	Positive Values	26. Caring-Young person places high value on helping other people. 27. Equality and Social Justice-Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty. 28. Integrity-Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs. 29. Honesty-Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy." 30. Responsibility-Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility. 31. Restraint-Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.
	Social Competencies	32. Planning and Decision Making-Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices. 33. Interpersonal Competence-Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills. 34. Cultural Competence-Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds. 35. Resistance Skills-Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations. 36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution-Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.
	Positive Identity	37. Personal Power-Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me." 38. Self-Esteem-Young person reports having a high self-esteem. 39. Sense of Purpose-Young person reports that "my life has a purpose." 40. Positive View of Personal Future-Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

APPENDIX B
TARGETING LIFE SKILLS MODEL

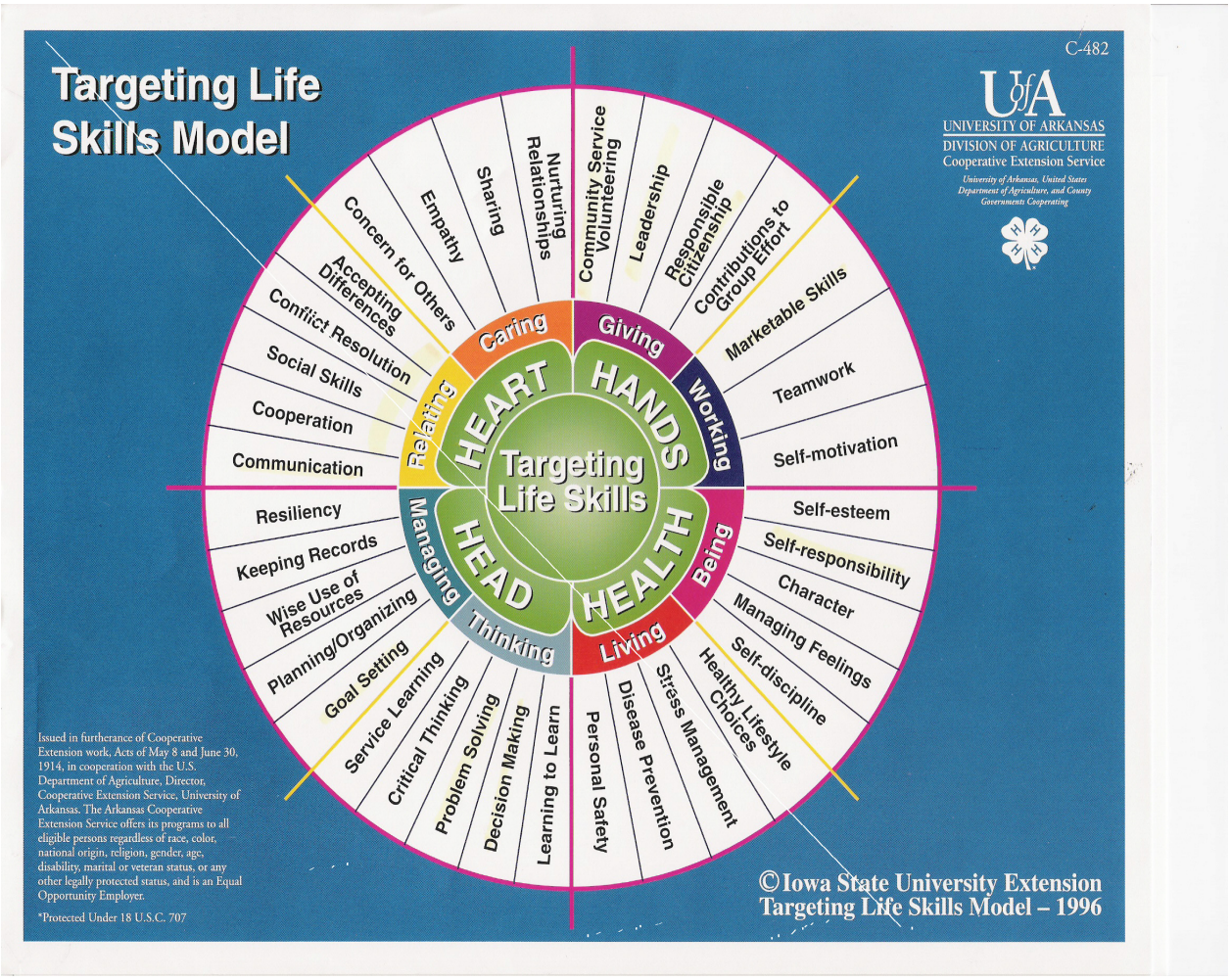

Figure B-1. Targeting Life Skills Model (Targeting Life Skills Model, 2002A)

APPENDIX C
CODE SHEET

Table C-1. Code Sheet

R1		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
R2		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
R3		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
R4		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
R5		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
R6		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
R7	REVERSE	S. DISAGREE=5	DISAGREE=4	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=2	S. AGREE=1	DON'T KNOW=3
R8		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
R9	REVERSE	S. DISAGREE=5	DISAGREE=4	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=2	S. AGREE=1	DON'T KNOW=3
R10		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
R11		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
R12		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
R13		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
R14	REVERSE	S. DISAGREE=5	DISAGREE=4	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=2	S. AGREE=1	DON'T KNOW=3
SAFE ENVIRONMENT							
SE1		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
SE2	REVERSE	S. DISAGREE=5	DISAGREE=4	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=2	S. AGREE=1	DON'T KNOW=3
SE3	REVERSE	S. DISAGREE=5	DISAGREE=4	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=2	S. AGREE=1	DON'T KNOW=3
SE4		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
SE5		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
BELONGING							
B1		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
B2		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
B3		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
B4		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
SERVICE & LEADERSHIP							
SL1		Y=1	N=0				
SL2		NEVER=0	1	2	3	5	
SL3		NEVER=0	1	2	3	5	
SL4		NEVER=0	1	2	3	5	
SL5		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
SL6		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
SL7		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
SELF DEVELOPMENT							
SD1		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
SD2		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3
SD3		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3

SD4		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3		
SD5		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3		
SD6		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3		
SD7		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3		
SD8		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3		
POSITIVE IDENTITY									
PI1		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3		
PI2	REVERSE	S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3		
PI3		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3		
PI4	REVERSE	S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3		
PI5		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3		
PI6	REVERSE	S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3		
PI7		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3		
PI8		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3		
PI9		S. DISAGREE=1	DISAGREE=2	NEUTRAL=3	AGREE=4	S. AGREE=5	DON'T KNOW=3		
ABOUT YOU: DEMOGRAPHICS									
D1		PUBLIC=1	PRIVATE=2	HOME S=3	NOT IN=0				
D2		GRADE							
D3		FARM=1	RURAL AREA=2	TOWN=3	BIG CITY=4				
D4		2 PARENTS=1	MOTHER=2	FATHER=3	1 PARENT, 1 STEP=4	SPLIT=5	GRAND PARENTS=6	GUARD=7	OTHER=8
COUNTY									
DUVAL=1	ESCAMBIA=2	GLADES=3	MIAMI/DADE=4	SUMTER=5					

OUT OF SCHOOL TIME							
ST1	Y=1	N=0					
ST2	Y=1	N=0					
ST3	Y=1	N=0					
ST4	Y=1	N=0					
ST5	Y=1	N=0					
ST6	Y=1	N=0					
ST7	Y=1	N=0					
ST8	Y=1	N=0					
SCHOOL ACTIVITIES							
SA1	Y=1	N=0					
SA2	Y=1	N=0					
SA3	Y=1	N=0					
SA4	Y=1	N=0					
SA5	Y=1	N=0					
SA6	Y=1	N=0					
SA7	Y=1	N=0					
SA8	Y=1	N=0					
SA9	Y=1	N=0					
SA10	Y=1	N=0					
USE OF TIME							
UT1	HOURS	0=0	1-3=1	4-6=2	7-9=3	10-12=4	13+ =5
UT2	Y=1	N=0					
UT3	HOURS	0=0	1-5=1	6-10=2	11-15=3	16-20=4	21+ =5
UT4	HOURS	0=0	1-5=1	6-10=2	11-15=3	16-20=4	21+ =5
UT5	HOURS	0=0	1-5=1	6-10=2	11-15=3	16-20=4	21+ =5
UT6	YEARS	1-2 = 1	3-4 =2	5-6=3	7-8=4	9+ =5	
UT7	PROJECTS	1-2 = 1	3-4 =2	5-6=3	7-8=4	9+ =5	
UT8	CLUB=1	COUNTY=2	DIST=3	STATE=4	NONE=0		
4-H PARTICIPATION							
P1	NEVER=1	V. SELDOM=2	SELDOM=3	REGULAR=4	V. REGULAR=5		
P2	NEVER=1	V. SELDOM=2	SELDOM=3	REGULAR=4	V. REGULAR=5		
P3	NEVER=1	V. SELDOM=2	SELDOM=3	REGULAR=4	V. REGULAR=5		
P4	NEVER=1	V. SELDOM=2	SELDOM=3	REGULAR=4	V. REGULAR=5		
P5	NEVER=1	V. SELDOM=2	SELDOM=3	REGULAR=4	V. REGULAR=5		
P6	NEVER=1	V. SELDOM=2	SELDOM=3	REGULAR=4	V. REGULAR=5		
RELATIONSHIPS							

APPENDIX D
IRB CONSENT FORM

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

Institutional Review Board

98A Psychology Bldg.
PO Box 112250
Gainesville, FL 32611-2250
Phone: (352) 392-0433
Fax: (352) 392-9234
E-mail: irb2@ufl.edu
http://rgp.ufl.edu/irb/irb02

DATE: August 14, 2003

TO: Sarah Thomas
Calhoun Co. Extension 20816
Central Ave East, Suite 1
Blountstown, Fl 32424

FROM: C. Michael Levy, PhD, Chair IF/TF
University of Florida
Institutional Review Board 02

SUBJECT: **Approval of Protocol #2003-U-659**

TITLE: Positive youth development outcomes attained through the 4-H Youth Development experiences.

SPONSOR: Unfunded

I am pleased to advise you that the University of Florida Institutional Review Board has recommended approval of this protocol. Based on its review, the UFIRB determined that this research presents no more than minimal risk to participants. Given your protocol, it is essential that you obtain signed documentation of informed consent from each participant. Enclosed is the dated, IRB-approved informed consent to be used when recruiting participants for the research.

> It is essential that each of your participants and/or parents of minors sign a copy of your approved informed consent or parental consent that bears the IRB stamp and expiration date.

If you wish to make any changes to this protocol, including the need to increase the number of participants authorized, you must disclose your plans before you implement them so that the Board can assess their impact on your protocol. In addition, you must report to the Board any unexpected complications that affect your participants.

If you have not completed this protocol by August 6, 2004, please telephone our office (392-0433), and we will discuss the renewal process with you. It is important that you keep your Department Chair informed about the status of this research protocol.
CML:dl/tf

APPENDIX E
PRE-NOTICE

ATTENTION 4-H MEMBERS 13-18

BE WATCHING YOUR MAILBOXES

YOU WILL BE RECEIVING A 4-H SURVEY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS!

Please return your survey as soon as possible after receiving.
Your input in the Florida 4-H Program is very important.

University of Florida
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

APPENDIX F
INITIAL SURVEY COVER LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
EXTENSION
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Agriculture Education & Communication
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611-9988

December 27, 2003

Dear 4-H member,

My name is Sarah Thomas I am a graduate student at the University of Florida and former 4-H member. I currently work with the state 4-H program as a 4-H/Agriculture agent.

I would like to ask for your participation in a survey of 4-H members throughout the state of Florida. 4-H'ers have been randomly selected from five counties in the state. This survey is very important to the future of Florida 4-H and 4-H throughout America. The results of this study will help the 4-H program better serve youth and meet the needs of 4-H'ers. It is crucial to this study that we know the views of you the 4-H member, and that we receive as many surveys back as possible. Therefore, please return your survey by January 16th.

Contained in this packet you will find; one consent form for you, one consent form for your parent or legal guardian, one survey, and one brown pre-addressed postage paid return mailing envelope. If you decide to participate in this research study you will need to follow these steps.

1. Sign and separate the participant consent form, keep one copy for you and place the other in the return envelope.
2. Provide your parent or legal guardian with their consent form. They will keep one copy and place the other in the return envelope.
3. Complete the survey and place it in the return envelope.
4. Seal the envelope and drop it in the mail.

Again this study is very important to Florida 4-H, as is providing you a Florida 4-H'er with a quality 4-H experience. I hope to hear from you soon!!

Sincerely,

Sarah Thomas

Sarah Thomas
University of Florida
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
4-H/Agriculture Extension Agent I

APPENDIX G
PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent
Please read the following, sign and return. Please keep the attached copy for your records.

Dear 4-H member Parent/Guardian,

My name is Sarah Thomas, graduate student, in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication at the University of Florida. Dr. Nick T. Place is an Assistant Professor in the department of Agricultural Education and Communication. Together we are conducting a research study with 4-H members in the state of Florida.

The purpose of this study is to determine if Florida 4-H participants are attaining positive youth development outcomes through the 4-H club experience. The study will also determine if 4-H club participants are attaining specific Florida Life Skills. These findings will be correlated with demographic and "use of time" data obtained by survey participants. Use of time refers to other activities that the individual participates in to determine if outcomes are being met by the 4-H experience or extraneous factors. The results of this study will benefit future 4-H program planning in that 4-H youth development agents and state specialists will be aware of the impact that the 4-H club experience has on the positive development of youth. With your permission we would like to ask for your child's participation in this research.

Five counties will be chosen based on their geographic and economic makeup. Within each County 4-H members will be randomly selected to participate in the study. Selected 4-H members will complete a survey instrument that has been developed based on 4-H studies throughout the literature as well as other youth development surveys. Participants will also be asked to complete demographic questions. No participant's identity will be disclosed, and their identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law.

Participants have the right to withdraw consent from participation at any time without consequence. Participating or not in this survey will not effect 4-H membership in any way. There are neither risks nor benefits associated with participation in the study. The results of this study can be requested. If you have any questions about this research please contact the graduate student Sarah Thomas or her committee chair Dr. Nick Place. To contact Sarah Thomas please send an e-mail to szthomas@mail.ifas.ufl.edu or call her 850-674-8323 (work), send mail to 20816 Central Ave. East, Suite 1, Blountstown, FL 32424. To contact Dr. Nick Place call (352) 392-0502 or 305 Rolf's Hall, PO Box 110540, Gainesville, and Fl 32611-0540, or send an e-mail to nplace@ufl.edu. Questions about your concerns or rights can be directed to the UFIRB office, PO Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, and Fl 32611-2250.

I have read the procedure described above. I agree to participate in the procedure, and I have received a copy of this information.

_____

Parent/ Guardian Signature Date

APPROVED BY
University of Florida
Institutional Review Board (IRB 02)
Protocol# 2003-U-659
For Use Through 8-6-04

APPENDIX H
PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent

Please read the following, sign and return. Please keep the attached copy for your records.

Dear 4-H member,

My name is Sarah Thomas, graduate student, in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication at the University of Florida. Dr. Nick T. Place is an Assistant Professor in the department of Agricultural Education and Communication. Together we are conducting a research study with 4-H members in the state of Florida.

The purpose of this study is to determine if Florida 4-H participants are attaining positive youth development outcomes through the 4-H club experience. The study will also determine if 4-H club participants are attaining specific Florida Life Skills. These findings will be correlated with demographic and "use of time" data obtained by survey participants. Use of time refers to other activities that the individual participates in to determine if outcomes are being met by the 4-H experience or extraneous factors. The results of this study will benefit future 4-H program planning in that 4-H youth development agents and state specialists will be aware of the impact that the 4-H club experience has on the positive development of youth. With your permission we would like to ask for your participation in this research.

Five counties will be chosen based on their geographic and economic makeup. Within each County 4-H members will be randomly selected to participate in the study. Selected 4-H members will complete a survey instrument that has been developed based on 4-H studies throughout the literature as well as other youth development surveys. Participants will also be asked to complete demographic questions. No participant's identity will be disclosed, and your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. It will take approximately 15 minutes to complete this survey.

You have the right to withdraw consent for your participation at any time without consequence. Participating or not participating in this study will not effect you're membership n 4-H. There are neither risks nor benefits associated with your participation in the study. The results of this study can be requested. If you have any questions about this research please contact the graduate student Sarah Thomas or her committee chair Dr. Nick Place. To contact Sarah Thomas please send an e-mail to szthomas@mail.ifas.ufl.edu or call her 850-674-8323 (work), send mail to 20816 Central Ave. East, Suite 1, Blountstown, FL 32424. To contact Dr. Nick Place call (352) 392-0502 or 305 Rolf's Hall, PO Box 110540, Gainesville, and Fl 32611-0540, or send an e-mail to nplace@ufl.edu. Questions about your concerns or rights can be directed to the UFIRB office, PO Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, and Fl 32611-2250.

I have read the procedure described above. I agree to participate in the procedure, and I have received a copy of this information.

_____

4-H member Signature Date

APPROVED BY
University of Florida
Institutional Review Board (IRB 02)
Protocol# 2003-U-659
For Use Through 8-6-04

APPENDIX I
SURVEY INSTRUMENT

FLORIDA
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES SURVEY

Sarah Thomas: For Masters Thesis in Agriculture Extension

This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. Your participation in this survey is strictly voluntary. Your answers will be kept confidential so please answer questions truthfully. If you do not feel comfortable answering a question leave it blank. Your name will not show anywhere on the survey and your answers will not be identified with you. Thank you for completing this survey.

OUT OF SCHOOL TIME

►Have you or will you or have participated in any of the following outside-school activities this year, either as a member, or as an officer. (Circle your answer)

- ❑ Boy or Girl Scouts YES NO
- ❑ Religious Youth group YES NO
- ❑ Hobby Clubs YES NO
- ❑ Neighborhood club or program YES NO
- ❑ Boys' Club or Girls' Club YES NO
- ❑ Non-School Athletic Team YES NO
- ❑ YMCA/YWCA YES NO
- ❑ Other _____ YES NO

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

►During the school week will you or have you participated in any of the following activities this year, either as a member, or as an officer. (Circle your answer)

- ❑ Band, Orchestra, Chorus, Choir, or other music group YES NO
- ❑ School Play or Musical YES NO
- ❑ Student Government YES NO
- ❑ NHS or Academic Honor Society YES NO
- ❑ School Yearbook, Newspaper YES NO
- ❑ Service Clubs (AFS, KEY) YES NO
- ❑ Academic Clubs YES NO
- ❑ Hobby clubs (photography, chess, etc) YES NO
- ❑ FFA YES NO
- ❑ Future Business Leaders (FBLA), Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), FTA, FHA, or other vocation education clubs. YES NO

USE OF TIME

►In a typical week, about how many hours do you spend doing homework? _____ hours.

► Do you work? YES NO

►If you work, in a typical week, about how many hours do you work? _____ hours

►In a typical week, how much total time do you spend in out of school activities? _____ hours

►In a typical week, how much total time do you spend doing only 4-H activities? _____ hours

►How long have you been or were you in 4-H? _____ years

►During the past year how many different projects did you complete (beef, citizenship, public speaking etc.)? _____ projects

►During the past year I was, or currently am an officer in: (circle all that apply)

Local Club County Council

District Council State Council

4-H PARTICIPATION

For the following questions think about your participation in the 4-H Program… (circle your answer).

- Do you attend club meetings?

  Never Very Seldom Seldom Regular Very Regular

- Do you attend County Council meetings?

  Never Very Seldom Seldom Regular Very Regular

- Do you attend District Council meetings?

  Never Very Seldom Seldom Regular Very Regular

- Do you attend State Executive Board meetings?

  Never Very Seldom Seldom Regular Very Regular

- Do you serve on special committees?

  Never Very Seldom Seldom Regular Very Regular

- Do you serve as chair **or** co-chair on special committees?

  Never Very Seldom Seldom Regular Very Regular

RELATIONSHIPS

For the following questions think back to the past year and answer each of these questions… (circle your answer).

- I trust the adults in the 4-H program (leaders, agents).

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I trust other 4-H members.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I have "good friends" in 4-H.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- If I had an important concern about drugs, alcohol, sex, or another serious issue I would talk to an adult in 4-H about it.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- Adults in 4-H listen to what I have to say.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- Adults in my community make me feel important.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- Adults in 4-H expect too much from me.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- Adults in 4-H make me feel good about myself.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- My parents are usually unhappy or disappointed with what I do.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- Youth participate equally with adults in planning club activities.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- Youth participate equally with adults in implementing or carrying out club activities.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- Youth participate equally with adults in evaluating or determining the success of 4-H activities.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- In 4-H I get to know everyone.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- In 4-H I often feel "put down" by adult leaders and agents.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

- 4-H provides a safe place for learning and growing.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- In 4-H I often feel embarrassed or put-down.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I don't feel safe at 4-H activities.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- In 4-H I can try new things without worrying about making mistakes.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I feel safe when I attend 4-H activities.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

BELONGING

- 4-H clubs are supportive environments where I feel accepted for who I am.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- All kinds of kids are welcome in 4-H.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- In 4-H I have learned to treat people who are different from me with respect.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I feel like I belong in 4-H.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP

- 4-H teaches me to help other people. YES NO
- During the last 12 months how many times have you….
  - Been involved in a project to help make life better for other people?

    never once twice three-four times five or more

  - Given money or time to a charity or organization that helps people?

    never once twice three-four times five or more

  - Spent time helping people who are poor, hungry, sick or unable to care for themselves?

    never once twice three-four times five or more
- I feel other kids look up to me and follow my example.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I do my share to make my school and community better.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I enjoy volunteering in class to lead activities.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

SELF DEVELOPMENT

- I am good at planning ahead.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I think through all of the good and bad results of different decisions before acting.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I know how to say "no" when someone wants me to do things I know are wrong and dangerous.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I set goals.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I am responsible for my own actions.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- 4-H teaches me to do things on my own.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I listen carefully to what others say.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I can clearly state my thoughts, feelings, and ideas to others.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

POSITIVE IDENTITY

- 4-H rewards me for being successful.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- At times, I think I am no good at all.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- All in all, I am glad I am me.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- When things don't go well for me, I am good at finding a way to make things better.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- 4-H has helped me expect good things from myself.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- I feel very happy when I am successful at something.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

- My participation in 4-H has been critical to my success in life.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree don't know

ABOUT YOU

- What type of school do you attend?

Public Private Home School Not in School

- What grade of school are you in? _____ grade
- Where does your family live? (circle one answer)

Farm Rural Area Town Big City

- Which statement best describes your family? (check one answer)
  - ❑ I live with my two parents.
  - ❑ I live with only my mother.
  - ❑ I live with only my father.
  - ❑ I live with one parent and one stepparent.
  - ❑ Sometimes I live with my mother and sometimes I live with my father.
  - ❑ I live with my grandparents.
  - ❑ I live with a guardian, relative or other person.
  - ❑ Other

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY YOUR RESPONSES ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO THE FLORIDA 4-H PROGRAM ☺

APPENDIX J
THANK YOU / REMINDER POST CARD

UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA
EXTENSION
IFAS
Calhoun County
20816 Central Avenue East
Blountstown, FL 32424

Don't mean to bug you! This is just a reminder to send in your youth development outcomes survey. If you have already sent in your survey thanks so much, if not it should only take a few minutes to fill out and drop in your postage paid envelope.
If you need another survey please call or e-mail me. (850) 674-8323, or szthomas@ifas.ufl.edu.

Sincerely,
Sarah Thomas

APPENDIX K
FOLLOW-UP COVER LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
EXTENSION
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Agriculture Education & Communication
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611-9988

January 30, 2004

Dear 4-H member,

My name is Sarah Thomas I am a graduate student at the University of Florida and former 4-H member. I currently work with the state 4-H program as a 4-H /Agriculture agent.

Previously I sent you a packet requesting your participation in a research study being conducted by myself, and the University of Florida 4-H program. In hopes that you lost or forgot to fill out your first survey I am sending you a second one. I would like to stress the importance of this survey to the Florida 4-H program and 4-H'ers like you.

I would again like to ask for your participation in a survey of 4-H members throughout the state of Florida. 4-H'ers have been randomly selected from five counties in the state. This survey is very important to the future of Florida 4-H and 4-H throughout America. The results of this study will help the 4-H program better serve youth and meet the needs of 4-H'ers. It is crucial to this study that we know the views of you the 4-H member, and that we receive as many surveys back as possible. Therefore, please return your survey **As Soon As Possible**.

Contained in this packet you will find; one consent form for you, one consent form for your parent or legal guardian, one survey, and one brown pre-addressed postage paid return mailing envelope. If you decide to participate in this research study you will need to follow these steps.

1. Sign and separate the participant consent form, keep one copy for you and place the other in the return envelope.
2. Provide your parent or legal guardian with their consent form. They will keep one copy and place the other in the return envelope.
3. Complete the survey and place it in the return envelope.
4. Seal the envelope and drop it in the mail.

Again this study is very important to Florida 4-H, as is providing you a Florida 4-H'er with a quality 4-H experience. I hope to hear from you soon!!

Sincerely,

Sarah Thomas

Sarah Thomas
University of Florida, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
4-H/Agriculture Extension Agent I

APPENDIX L
SURVEY QUESTION MATRIX

Table L-1. Survey Question Matrix

Outcome	Question	Source
Positive relationship: Adults	adults in 4-H always listen to what I have to say	N I A
Positive relationship: Adults	adults in 4-H expect too much from me	N I A
Positive relationship: Adults	adults in 4-H make me feel good about myself	N I A
adult relationships	Do you get to work with adults to plan activities?	PAAT
adult relationship	Do volunteers and youth trust each other?	PAAT
contact with adults	If you had an important concern about the following issues, would you talk to an adult in 4-H about: drugs, alcohol, sex, any other serious issue	NY 4-H Modified for MSY
adult (parent) relationship	My parents are usually unhappy or disappointed with what I do (likert)	NELS 88 (follow up)
Communication With Parents	Would you talk to your parents about drugs, alcohol, sex, or some other serious issue? (Yes, probably, not sure, probably not, no)	Cornell, members only survey
positive relationship with caring adult	Do youth participate equally with adults in planning, implementing and evaluating the club program?	Illinois, 8 critical elements
Peer relationships	My best friends are in 4-H	N I A
relationships	In 4-H I get to know everyone	N I A
relationships	In class (4-H) I often feel "put down" by my teachers	NELS 88 (follow-up)
communication	to listen carefully to what others say	Iowa, Life skills (4-12)
communication	to clearly state my thoughts, feelings and ideas to others.	Iowa, Life skills (4-12)
communication	listen carefully to what others have to say	MSU, life skills
communication	Clearly state my thoughts, feelings, and ideas to	MSU, life

	others	skills
social interaction skills	to listen when others are talking	Iowa, Life skills (k-3)
Safety		
Emotional safety (feelings about 4-H)	In 4-H I can try new things without worrying about making mistakes.	N I A
safety	I feel safe when I do 4-H activities	N I A
safety	I don't feel safe at this school (in 4-H)	NELS 88
belonging, safety	In 4-H I often feel embarrassed or put-down	N I A
impact of 4-H	4-H provides a safe place for learning and growing	MSU
Physically and Emotionally Safe Environment	Do youth feel safe while at our club meetings and events?	Illinois, 8 critical elements
Physically and Emotionally Safe Environment	Are the opinions of each 4-H club member valued and respected by all participants in the group?	Illinois, 8 critical elements
Physically and Emotionally Safe Environment	Do all 4-H members feel comfortable sharing ideas at 4-H club meetings?	Illinois, 8 critical elements
Belonging, Inclusive Environment		
Belonging	I feel like I belong in 4-H	N I A
Belonging	Do youth and adults work together to plan and implement group programs and activities	PAAT (a)
feel accepted	4-H clubs are supportive environments where I feel accepted for who I am	MSU
belong	In 4-H I can explore my own interests	MSU
Belonging	Do youth and adults work together to plan and implement group programs and activities?	PAAT (a)
welcoming and inclusive environment	Do youth feel a sense of belonging?	Illinois, 8 critical elements
welcoming and inclusive environment	Are members actively involved in planning and implementing the club program?	Illinois, 8 critical elements
-positive and specific feedback: belonging, inclusive reward	4-H rewards me for being successful	N I A
diversity	All kinds of kids are welcome in 4-H	N I A
accepting differences: To recognize and welcome factors that separate or distinguish one person from another	treat people who are different from me with respect	MSU, life skills
Contribute through		

service and leadership		
Helping Others	4-H teaches me to help other people	N I A
Service and Leadership		
volunteer work	How many hours per week do you spend doing volunteer work to help other people?	Cornell, member's only survey
community engagement	During the last 12 months how many times have you...? (never, once, twice, 3-4 times, 5 or more)	Cornell, member's only survey
Community service	-Been involved in a project to help make life better for other people -Given money or time to a charity or organization that helps people -Spent time helping people who are poor, hungry, sick or unable to care for themselves.	
Social Competency: leadership	I volunteer in class to lead activities	Montana
Social Competency: leadership	I feel other kids look up to me and follow my example	Montana
Social Competency: leadership	Did you hold any leadership positions in your school this past year	Montana
Social Competency: leadership	Did you serve as a committee chairperson in your school this past year	Montana
Social Competency: leadership	Did you serve as a committee member this past year.	Montana
Social Competency: leadership	Did you help others in y our school this past year? If yes, how often	Montana
citizenship - recognizing and living up to obligations to society and community	do my share to make my school and community better	Illinois, life skills
decision making (LS)	think about what might happen because of my decision	MSU life skills
decision making	to think about possible alternatives before making a decision	Iowa, Life skills (4-12)
decision making	to consider the consequences of decisions I make	Iowa, Life skills (4-12)
decision making	to evaluate the decisions I made to see if they work	Iowa, Life skills (4-12)
Critical thinking, decision-making	4-H helps me to think through all choices when making a decision	N I A

decision making	I think before making a choice	Penn State
decision making	I consider the risks of choice before making a decision	Penn State
decision making	I think about all the information I have about the different choices	Penn State
perception of the future (planning)	I am good at planning ahead (likert)	Cornell, member's only survey
planning and decision-making	I am good at planning ahead	MSU, Search Institute
planning and decision-making	I think through all of the good and bad results of different decisions before making a decision	MSU, Search Institute
Goal-setting: engaged in own development	4-H helps me set goals	N I A
self-responsibility	have control over my own personal goals and future.	MSU, life skills
responsibility	set a good example for others to follow	Illinois
Engaged in own development	4-H teaches me to be responsible for my actions	N I A
control over own life	helped me *expect good things from myself*	NC 4-H
personal power	when things don't go well for me, I am good at finding a way to make things better.	MSU, Search Institute
personal power	I have little control over the things that will happen in my life	MSU, Search Institute
internal locus of control	I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking (likert)	NELS 88
engaged in own development: autonomy	helped me *do things on my own (independently)*	NC 4-H
wise use of resources (goals)	I set goals for my future	Iowa, Life skills (4-12)
Self-Determination; Positive Identity self-directing, autonomous, empowerment, and self-worth (4H impact, 57)		
Self-esteem	at times, I think I am no good at all	MSU, Search Institute
Self-esteem	all in all, I am glad I am me	MSU, Search Institute

Self-esteem	I feel I do not have much to be proud of	MSU, Search Institute
Self-Confidence	I set goals	Arizona, MSU survey
resistance skills	I know how to say "NO" when someone wants me to do things I know are wrong or dangerous	MSU, Search Institute
Character	I am responsible for my actions	Arizona, MSU survey
Empowerment	adults in my town or city make me feel important	Search Institute, MSU
Empowerment	adults in my town or city listen to what I have to say	Search Institute, MSU
Caring about Others	during the past 12 months have you been involved in a project to help make life better for other people?	NY 4-H, modified for MSU
Caring about Others	during the past 12 months have you given money or time to a charity or organization that helps people	NY 4-H, modified for MSU
Caring about Others	during the past 12 months have you spent time helping people who are poor, hungry, sick or unable to care for themselves.	NY 4-H, modified for MSU
Self Esteem, Values, Beliefs	At times, I think I am no good at all (likert)	Cornell, Member's only survey
Self Esteem, Values, Beliefs	All in all, I am glad I am me (likert)	Cornell, Member's only survey
Self Esteem, Values, Beliefs	I feel I do not have much to be proud of. (Likert)	Cornell, Member's only survey
Impact of 4-H		
impact of 4-H	My participation in 4-H has been critical to my success in life.	MSU
Use of Time		
Participation in other activities	Have you or will you have participated in any of the following outside-school activities this year, either as a member, or as an officer	NELS (88)

	scouting religious youth groups hobby clubs neighborhood clubs or programs boys' clubs or girls clubs non-school team sports 4-H (FFA) Y or other youth groups summer programs such as workshops or institutes in science, language, drama, and so on Other *(all have columns; did not participate, participated as a member, participated as an officer)*	
Participation in extracurricular activities	Likert with options of: school does not offer, did not participate, participated, participated as an officer for each of the questions. band, orchestra, chorus, choir, or other music group school play or musical student government NHS or other academic honor society school yearbook, newspaper or literary magazine service clubs (AFS, KEY) academic clubs (art, computer, engineering, debate, forensice, foreign languages, science, math, psychology, philosophy, etc) hobby clubs (photography, chess, frisbee, etc) FFA, florida business leaders association (FBLA), Florida christian athletes (FCA), FTA, FHA, or other vocation education or professional clubs	NELS 88 (follow-up)
time spent	In a typical week, how much total time do you spend in all SCHOOL-SPONSORED extracurricular activities?	NELS 88 (follow-up)
Time spent	In a typical week, how much total time do you spend in OUT OF SCHOOL activities?	ST
Time spent	Of the above, in a typical week, how much total time do you spend doing ONLY 4-H activities.	ST
Time spent	How often do you spend time on the following activities outside of school? (Rarely or never, less than once a week, once or twice a week, every day or almost every day)	NELS 88 (follow-up)
	visiting with friends at a local hangout	NELS 88 (follow-up)
	using personal computers	NELS 88 (follow-up)
	working on hobbies, arts, or crafts on my own	NELS 88

		(follow-up)
	reading for pleasure	NELS 88 (follow-up)
	going to the park, gym, beach, or pool	NELS 88 (follow-up)
	playing ball or other sports with friends	NELS 88 (follow-up)
	attending youth groups or recreational programs	NELS 88 (follow-up)
	volunteering or performing community service	NELS 88 (follow-up)
	driving or riding around (alone or with friends)	NELS 88 (follow-up)
	talking with friends on the telephone, talking or doing things with your mother or father	NELS 88 (follow-up)
	talking or doing things with other adults	NELS 88 (follow-up)
	taking classes; music, art, language, dance.	NELS 88 (follow-up)
	Taking sports lessons: karate, tennis, etc.	NELS 88 (follow-up)
	attending religious activities	NELS 88 (follow-up)
use of time	during the school week, do you spend time: in drama, art, dance, band, choir, orchestra, music lessons, practicing voice or an instrument playing on or helping with sports teams at school or in the community in other school clubs or organizations (for example, school newspaper, student government, school plays, language clubs, hobby clubs, debate, etc.)? In 4-H club activities or projects? In clubs or organizations (other than sports) outside of school such as Scouts, boys and girls clubs, YMCA,	MSU

YWCA, etc.)? FFA
attending services, groups, or programs at a Church, Synagogue, or Mosque?
With your friends without anything special to do?

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Sarah Zettie Thomas was born in Brooksville, FL in 1979. While growing up, she attended Hebron Baptist Church, in Brooksville, FL, where she became a member in 1995. She grew up on a beef-cattle ranch and watermelon farm. Sarah was a member of both 4-H and FFA for 7 years. She continued to volunteer for both 4-H and FFA after graduating from Citrus High School in 1998. Sarah attended both Santa Fe Community College and Central Florida Community College (where she received her Associate of Arts degree with honors). She then attended the University of Florida where she graduated with her Bachelor of Science in Family, Youth and Community Sciences; and a minor in Extension with honors. Sarah then began graduate school in order to receive her Master of Science degree in extension.

While working on her master's degree, Sarah accepted a position as an Agriculture/ 4-H Agent in Calhoun County, where she worked for one year. She then transferred to Lake County, where she is currently the 4-H agent, providing guidance to over 800 4-H members. This position has given her great joy, and she is very excited about continuing her employment with Lake County 4-H.

Sarah is engaged to be married in May 2005, to Cody B. Hensley of Wahoo (in Sumter County, Florida). Cody and Sarah plan to combine their faith, and their love of nature and cattle herds, and to work in, and support, the agriculture industry.