
AZUSA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

**Teen Center: A Qualitative Study Examining the Developmental
Process and Adult Stakeholder Perceptions of an After-school,
Church-based Program Targeting the Academic and Social
Needs of At-risk Youth**

by

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Abstract

At-risk children and their accompanying academic and social needs continue to be a societal epidemic plaguing the United States. This study examined the role of one local church in its attempt to address the academic and social needs of the at-risk children in their community through an after-school tutorial and social program. The middle-class church designed a program, Teen Center, to be housed in the heart of a low-socioeconomic neighborhood in the city. The church entered into a lease agreement with the local city government to utilize a city-owned building located in the neighborhood targeted for the Teen Center program.

A case study was conducted that examined the processes the church went through in the establishment of the Teen Center program, the role mediating structures played in the development process, and adult stakeholder motivation for involvement in the Teen Center project. Adult stakeholder expectations for Teen Center were also studied to identify any patterns between the church, local government, and adult volunteers who worked together in the program.

The study identified 4 findings that can lend insight into other joint social service endeavors between churches and local government agencies:

1. Churches can form nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporations for social service endeavors that allow them to work with local governments and other funding

agencies without the potential conflict that is inherent when working as a church.

2. Mediating structures and the trust they engender are vital in bridging the gap that exists between individual need and large institutional services.
3. People are most prone to support a social service endeavor if they believe in the expressed purpose of the effort and if it also serves an identified need of their own.
4. People believe in the positive effect of a program if they believe in the program's mission and they are invested in the program.

The findings should engender confidence in churches and local governments to work collaboratively to create sustainable programs that target the academic and social wellbeing of the at-risk children in their community.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my loving and gracious God who saw me through this process when I often wanted to quit. His sustaining strength was necessary and His promise that our efforts do not go out empty because He blesses them for His glory and for the extension of His kingdom. And thank you to my wife for all of her loving support and encouragement. This process began its incubation on our 10th anniversary getaway and we can celebrate its completion on our 15th anniversary this June. I am sorry for the time and attention that this process has periodically taken away from our family and thank you for being the glue that has held our family together as I have had to abdicate nights and weekends in the process to finish this task. And to my two children, Brandon and Alyssa, thank you for your support and understanding during these five years of study. You have both been a sustaining blessing to me as I have watched you grow during this process. God, you have been good and I now ask you to bless this work for your glory. Amen!

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I give my heartfelt thanks and admiration to all of the individuals responsible for establishing and carrying out the ongoing efforts of Teen Center. You are truly *Good Samaritans* to your community, and hopefully through the efforts of this study, a model for other communities as well.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	iii
Dedication.....	v
Acknowledgements.....	vi
List of Tables.....	x
Chapter	Page
1. Introduction.....	1
Statement of Problem.....	3
Purpose of Study.....	6
Research Question.....	7
Definition of Terms.....	7
Conclusion.....	8
2. Literature Review.....	10
Literature Search Process.....	11
Poverty-Induced Educational Issues Facing Children in Poverty.....	12
Social Services to Children Living in Poverty.....	19
Berger and Neuhaus’s “Mediating Structures”.....	30
Creation of the Federal Office of Faith-based Community Initiatives...35	
Church Programs Focused on At-risk Children.....	40
Conclusion.....	44
3. Methodology & Data Collection.....	46

Chapter	Page
Teen Center Program.....	46
The Study.....	49
Research Approach.....	49
The Researcher.....	51
My Biblical Mandate to Serve.....	53
Procedures.....	57
The Setting.....	57
Participants.....	61
Data Sources.....	62
Data Analysis.....	64
Conclusion.....	65
4. Findings.....	66
Historical Development of the Teen Center.....	66
Stakeholder Aspirations for and Perceptions of the Teen Center Program.....	76
Comparison of Stakeholder Social Service Delivery Approach Related to Cowger’s Four Models of Social Service and Ladson-Billings’ Four Social Service Motivations.....	83
Stakeholder Perceptions of Program Effect.....	91
Stakeholder Program Improvement Suggestions.....	96
Conclusion.....	96
5. Analysis & Discussion.....	98

Chapter	Page
Mediating Structures: A Borrowed Trust.....	98
Benefits of Nonprofit Status vs. Church Endeavor.....	102
Independent Effort vs. Coalition.....	104
Stakeholder Motivations and Aspirations for the Teen Center Program.....	106
Duty vs. Desire.....	111
Perceived Program Effectiveness.....	114
Conclusion.....	115
6. Conclusions & Recommendations.....	116
Significance of the Study.....	116
Recommendations.....	117
Areas of Further Research.....	120
Conclusion.....	120
List of References.....	122
Appendixes.....	129
A. Teen Center Volunteer Application Packet.....	130
B. Study Participant Information Letter.....	152
C. Participant Consent Form.....	154
D. Church Leader Protocol.....	156
E. Community Leader Protocol.....	158
F. Teen Center Volunteer Protocol.....	160

List of Tables

Table	Page
1. Ethnic Breakdown of the Hillside Church Pictorial Directory (N = 1,521) and the Neighborhood Elementary School Most Proximate to Teen Center (N = 369)	58
2. Social Service Model (Cowger, 1977) and Worker Motivation (Ladson-Billings, 1994)	87

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

At-risk children and their accompanying academic and social needs continue to be a societal epidemic plaguing the United States. Devine and Wright (1993) regarded the poverty rate among children as a “national disgrace” (p. 5). The Children’s Defense Fund reported from the 2000 Census Data that roughly 12 million of the 71 million children under the age of 18 were living in poverty in the United States (Children’s Defense Fund, 2002, p. 1). The same report states that the 12 million children represent 16.2% of all children living in the United States at the time of the Census. There is no hiding from the fact that our at-risk children need help. Individuals and organizations need to continue to find innovative ways to care for the fundamental academic and social needs of at-risk children in the United States.

Churches, because of their central location and accepted status in communities, are in a potentially strategic position to aid in serving the academic and social needs of the at-risk youth in their surrounding community. Sole reliance on schools and social programs to address the needs of at-risk children in the community overlooks the potentially powerful role churches could play in addressing the ongoing educational and societal issues facing at-risk children.

Churches have historically functioned as centers of activity and social service for their congregation and the surrounding community. However,

congregations occasionally break down along racial and socioeconomic status (SES) lines, becoming a microcosm of their surrounding neighborhoods. When this dynamic occurs in a church that is located in a middle-class neighborhood, it is possible for the church to avoid ongoing contact with the neediest areas of its community. Although problems exist in each community, academic, economic, and social issues for children are more profound in areas marked by families living in poverty. The role of the church in the community can be seen as that of a safe harbor for children, as Dryfoos observes in her book *Safe Passage*:

Church buildings are excellent places for after-school and evening programs. And often they are the only safe havens left in the neighborhood for children and their families. Church leaders definitely have “bully pulpits” from which they are in a position to influence the thinking of their parishioners and congregants. They can help people understand the importance of assisting all children to overcome social, economic, racial, and gender barriers to success. (1998, p. 262)

Church leaders have the ability to create and sustain a vision for service and the responsibility to challenge their congregations to serve and be involved in loving acts to others. Although I agree with Dryfoos’s (1998) assertion that churches can be a *safe haven* within the community, I disagree with her when she refers to church leadership’s ability to guide and direct a congregation’s thinking as a *bully pulpit*. The concept of a bully pulpit conjures up visions of coercion and leverage; however, the role of church leadership is to challenge a congregation to respond in loving acts to others as their personal offering of service to a loving

God. The difference between the two ideas is the motivation driving the act, duty versus desire. Duty says we serve because we should, and desire says we serve because we want to. Both duty and desire need to be addressed as potential motivating factors for individuals willing to work in serving the academic and social needs of at-risk youth.

Statement of the Problem

At-risk children continue to struggle disproportionately in academic and social areas when compared with their fellow students who live at a higher socioeconomic status (SES). The harsh reality is that at-risk children are likely to experience: a lack of educational success, a decreased earning potential, and an increased likelihood of criminal involvement (Simeonsson, 1994). All predictors indicate the need for individuals and organizations to make service to their at-risk children a top priority in their community. Historically, schools and other public service agencies have been looked to as the responsible parties for addressing the needs of at-risk children. Current efforts are not adequate to address the roughly 12 million children who were previously mentioned as living in poverty. Churches have a unique opportunity to use their influence and strategic location in the community to help address the ongoing academic and social needs of at-risk children.

The needs of at-risk children are too diverse and too pervasive for schools and other child-focused social service organizations to bear the entire financial and programmatic burden of meeting their needs. Schools are strategically placed to assist in providing the extended social services needed to address the ongoing

academic and social needs of at-risk children, but the breadth of responsibility and economic realities prohibit schools from addressing the scope of the problem effectively.

Schools have historically been unsuccessful in securing the necessary financial support to run extended-day programs to address student academic and social needs that exist beyond the final bell. According to the U.S. Department of Education, only 3.4% of all public elementary and middle school students were involved in before- or after-school programs as of 1997 (Community Learning Centers, 1997, p. 1). The Community Learning Centers report also notes more than 70% of all elementary and middle schools have no extended-day program (p. 1).

New legislation and higher federal funding levels have put in place the ability to run more governmentally funded 21st-Century Community Learning Centers, which are after-school programs schools can provide. The federal government's budgetary appropriation for 21st-Century programs rose from \$40 million in 1998 to \$1 billion in fiscal year 2002. Although more programs were opened as a result of increased funding levels from the national government, the findings of the 21st-Century program showed that money alone was not sufficient to meet the needs of all at-risk children (U.S. Department of Education, 2003).

If money were the only gauge to measure meeting the after-school needs of children, then it could be said the 21st-Century program was a rousing success. Unfortunately, a dissonance existed when comparing the funding increase with the actual report of findings on the first year of 21st-Century programs. The U.S.

Department of Education’s 2003 report, *When Schools Stay Open Late: The National Evaluation of the 21st-Century Community Learning Centers Program*, had less than promising information to share in their Key Impact Findings. The report stated,

The first-year findings reveal that while 21st-Century after-school centers changed where and with whom students spent some of their after-school time and increased parental involvement, they had limited influence on academic performance, no influence on feelings of safety or on the number of “latchkey” children and some negative influences on behavior. (U.S. Department of Education, 2003, p. xii)

The Key Implementation Findings of the *When Schools Stay Open Late* (U.S. Department of Education, 2003) report listed three findings related to the lack of success in the first year of the program:

Low levels of student participation—Attendance in the program was low, averaging less than 2 days a week, despite the fact that programs typically were available to participants 4 to 5 days a week.

Programs staffed predominantly by day-school teachers—A third of the program coordinators and three out of five program staff members were day-school teachers. To accommodate the varying schedules and requirements of teachers, staff members often worked only a few days a week and for short periods.

Limited efforts to form partnerships and plan for sustainability—Programs did not collaborate much with other community organizations.

In general, centers contracted with community agencies to provide specific after-school sessions. Programs were slow to begin planning to sustain themselves after the 21st-Century grant ends. (p. xiii)

The federal and state governments are not able to address all of the needs of at-risk children through governmentally-funded programs. In response to the issue of poverty, Berger and Neuhaus (1977) state that three public policy choices exist related to the problems of the disadvantaged: “(a) we can ignore them, (b) we can attempt to dismantle them and spread their problems around more equitably, or (c) we can try to transform the bad into the better on the way to becoming good” (p. 9). Therefore, churches and individuals have an opportunity to operate as *mediating structures* to work with the local city governments to find ways to creatively pool resources in attempting to serve the academic and social needs of the at-risk children in their community.

Purpose of the Study

This study endeavors to explore the efforts of one church in its attempt to establish a program targeting the academic and social needs of at-risk youth in its community. Insights can be gained by carefully studying the history of the program’s development and the perceptions of the adult stakeholders from the leadership of the church, the leadership of the city, and the volunteers who assist in running the program.

Research Questions

The two questions the research will address relate to the historical development of the teen program and the motivation for involvement in the establishment and operation of the teen program. The adult stakeholder perspectives sought for this study were the adult church and civic leadership responsible for the establishment of the program and the adult volunteers who donate their time to staff the operation of the program. The two research questions are

1. What were the developmental processes necessary for the church to establish the after-school, at-risk teen program?
2. What were the motivating factors for the participation of the adult stakeholders involved in the establishment and ongoing operation of the teen program?

Definition of Terms

The terms listed are utilized in this study and defined below:

At-risk youth—Children who live under environmental forces that have a negative impact on their development by producing an increased vulnerability to future problems in the family, school, or community (Burt, Resnick, & Matheson, 1992, p. 2)

Children's Defense Fund (CDF)—A private, nonprofit organization supported by foundations, corporation grants and individual donations that provides a voice for all children of America who cannot vote, lobby, or speak for themselves. The

organization pays particular attention to the needs of poor and minority children and those with disabilities. (Children's Defense Fund, 2002)

Dropout—One who has left school or who is predictably in danger of leaving school without the skills to be a productive and self-reliant citizen and to succeed in today's workplace and hence in society. (Smith & Lincoln, 1988, p. 13)

Mediating Structures—Those institutions that bridge the gap that exists between an individual in his or her private need and the large institutions of public life that allow for connections to be made and services to be rendered (e.g., non-governmental advocacy or service groups for the elderly, disabled, impoverished) (Berger & Neuhaus, 1977, p. 2)

21st-Century Community Learning Centers—Governmental sponsored after-school program targeted at low-SES public elementary schools to extend the learning day by providing funds to schools to stay open later

Conclusion

This chapter noted the plight of the at-risk child and the educational and social hardships that predictably await at-risk children without some form of intervention in their life. The first annual report of the federal 21st-Century Community Learning Centers effort was reviewed and discussed related to governmental ineffectiveness in addressing issues related to children attending the after-school, at-risk program. The local church was mentioned as a potential mediating structure that could utilize its strategic position in the community and possibly create focused programs addressing the needs of at-risk children in their community.

The next chapter will focus on the insights needed for me to study one church's attempt to create an after-school tutorial and juvenile diversion program focusing on the needs of the at-risk children in its community. The research areas I studied consisted of poverty, social service, mediating structures, the federal Office of Faith-Based Community Initiatives, and church programs focused on serving the needs of at-risk children.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The 16.2% of the nation's children who presently live in poverty (Children's Defense Fund, 2002) are in desperate need of extra service and assistance if they are to break free of the cycle of poverty and low academic achievement that is predicted for them. Helping at-risk children overcome apathy and indifference that leads to low academic performance, higher dropout rates, and decreased earning potential (Simeonsson, 1994) will continue to be an ongoing need for the society as a whole. Finding people who care and the required funding to reach out to those in need will continue to be an issue necessitating the commitment of people willing to give of their time, talents, and treasure to address the issue.

The literature reviewed in this study focused primarily on churches located in low-SES areas serving the needs of the surrounding community, using the church facility as the hub of academic and social service. No research literature was located examining white, middle-class, church-sponsored programs addressing the ongoing academic and social needs of at-risk youth within their own community, but not housed at the actual church campus. Because no research was located related to a middle-class church crossing SES lines and taking an after-school tutorial and juvenile diversion program to an area of higher poverty

and greater need in their community, the literature search on this topic had to start out very broadly and work toward the more specific.

A review of the literature salient to the study of church programs that serve the academic and social needs of at-risk children in their community led to five areas of inquiry that I needed to become more aware of before studying such a program. The five areas are

1. poverty-induced educational issues facing children in poverty,
2. social services to children living in poverty,
3. Berger and Neuhaus's "Mediating Structures,"
4. effect of the federal Office of Faith-Based Community Initiatives on religiously sponsored programs, and
5. church programs focused on at-risk children.

Literature Search Process

The search process for the study began by identifying the Library of Congress Subject Headings that were pertinent to my study. I utilized those terms to locate available works at two accessible university libraries. I had access at both universities to interlibrary loan for books I was able to find on WorldCat that neither university had in their collection. I utilized ERIC through FirstSearch to locate other research related to my topic. FirstSearch was also used to access various databases to locate information on my selected topic. Keywords and descriptors were *teen* and *center*, *at-risk*, *youth*, *poverty*, *social service*, *after school*, *community center*, *religion*, and *church*. Working in ERIC, WorldCat, and American Theological Library Association (ATLA), I found nothing related

specifically to a middle-class church taking an after-school tutorial program away from the more affluent neighborhood location of the church and to a location in the city of greater economic and academic need. I then looked at *Dissertation Abstracts* to see if any dissertations had been written on my topic. I found two dissertations that focused on African-American churches running neighborhood, afterschool programs from their church campus. I purchased the two dissertations and began going back through their bibliographies and continued to find racially-specific studies that were similar to what I wanted to do, but were programs local to their own neighborhood.

Ultimately, I took the approach of breaking down what I wanted to study, starting from the most general of facts and information and moving to the more specific. Issues like poverty, social services, and mediating structures became my areas of study and reading. Because I could not locate specific studies that had been done in my area of interest, I needed to become educated in multiple areas related to this topic.

Poverty-Induced Educational Issues Facing Children in Poverty

Understanding Two Types of Poverty

It became clear, in studying the causes and effects of poverty, that the dynamics at work were varied and the likelihood of recovery of a family had a great deal to do with the cause of the poverty and the duration of time the family had been living in poverty. Payne, De Vol, and Smith (2001), in their book *Bridges Out of Poverty*, make an interesting distinction between two types of

poverty: *generational* and *situational*. Payne et al. (2001) describe the differences as primarily attitudinal approaches to life.

Generational poverty has its own culture, hidden rules, and belief systems. . . . Often the attitude in generational poverty is that society owes one a living. In situational poverty the attitude is often one of pride and a refusal to accept charity. Individuals in situational poverty often bring more resources with them to the situation than those in generational poverty. (Payne et al., 2001, p. 65)

Payne et al. espouse a belief that those dealing with children living in poverty must identify the child's experiences before a program is simply applied to a problem. Each child living in poverty is as unique as his or her own life experiences. Payne et al.'s insights are in accordance with Simeonsson's (1994, p. 114) assertions that successful programs targeted at serving at-risk youth must be (a) individualized and (b) relationship-based.

Trends in Poverty

I desired to know what trends were prevalent in the United States related to either the growth or decline of the population living in poverty. Devine and Wright (1993), in a three-year study of poverty in the United States, developed a working definition of family poverty as follows: "We may wish to consider a family poor if it had to survive on half or less of what the average family survives on" (p. 5). The study sought to examine trends, causes, and effects of poverty. As noted earlier, Devine and Wright labeled the poverty rate among children a "national disgrace," with roughly one in five children living below the poverty

line and children making up 40% of all those living in poverty in the United States. They identified three key risk factors in their study as contributing to the cycle of poverty: (a) being raised in poverty, (b) race, and (c) female headship in the family (p. 69).

According to the 2000 U.S. Census data, roughly 94% of the nation's population was comprised of three ethnicities: (a) White non-Hispanic (46.1 %), (b) Black (25.9 %), and (c) Hispanic (21.8 %). Declines were registered in both numbers of poor people and in the percentage of each ethnic population in poverty. The poverty rate for Blacks was registered as the lowest ever recorded—the rates for the category *Black* have been kept by the Census Bureau since 1959. The encouraging signs of financial improvement were still tempered by the realization that the poverty rate for Blacks remained about three times higher than that of the White non-Hispanic population. Hispanic poverty rates also fell to their all-time low—the Census Bureau has been keeping records of the ethnic category *Hispanic* since 1972. The White non-Hispanic poverty rate and poverty population fell, but unlike the Black and Hispanic numbers, they were not an all-time low.

Despite these encouraging numbers, children continue to be the age group most often living in poverty—including roughly half of all Black children and two fifths of all Hispanic children. Percentage points noting slight economic improvements are encouraging, but when we talk of the lives of children in poverty, we are dealing with millions of children.

Poverty-Induced Educational Issues

Knowing potential behavioral characteristics of children in poverty enables us to deal more effectively with children and to better understand their actions and their needs. The following four sections—disillusionment and despair, risk factors and characteristics of dropouts, dropout increase, and poverty and I.Q.—will be examined as consequences that enter into a child’s life as a result of poverty.

Disillusionment and despair. Poverty impacts children’s abilities to learn because it creates a sense of disillusionment and despair. Cafel (1993) noted the helpless predicament into which the children of poverty find themselves born:

Children exemplify a powerless constituency whose lives are profoundly affected by social conditions that they did not create and political decisions that are beyond their control. Vulnerable and without voice, they are dependent on others to speak for them. Among the most vulnerable are children in poverty. . . . Blending public and private resources with political tools, advocates can prompt social action. (p. 297)

The three most frequently reported characteristics of low-SES students were apathy, inattention, and laziness, according to a survey of elementary school teachers conducted by Katz (Allen, 1970, p. 94). Katz found that the teachers he surveyed complained less frequently about student hostility and rebelliousness and more often about student disconnection from school. These findings were further confirmed in the work of Caldwell and Ginther (1996) in a study they conducted with academically successful and unsuccessful low SES students. They

found that motivation was the component that existed in academically successful low SES students and the component missing in unsuccessful low SES students.

Risk factors and characteristics of dropouts. According to Simeonsson (1994) “Children who drop out seem to share one characteristic: They lack a vision of the role of education in their present and future lives,” (p. 104).

Organizing the sea of information related to the study of dropouts, Simeonsson (1994) organized risk factors for academic failure in to three predictive risk factor categories: (a) demographic, (b) family, and (c) with-in student factors. Among these categories low-SES, minority status, single-parent family, and academic failure were the leading predictive risk factors contributing to dropout status.

Devine and Wright (1993) concur with Simeonsson regarding dropout characteristics. Their list contains: (a) child currently living in poverty, (b) female headship in the home, and (c) minority status as the three leading predictors of a child repeating both the cycle of poverty and placing the child at risk of becoming a dropout. In every study I reviewed on the topic, poverty and low academic achievement went hand-in-hand (Allen, 1970; Auletta, 1982; Cafel, 1993; Coen, 1993; Devine & Wright, 1993; Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack, & Rock, 1986; Peters, 1991).

Six recurring characteristics were disproportionately high among dropouts, Ekstrom et al. (1986) report in their study of the national *High School and Beyond Database*:

1. low SES,
2. racial and ethnic minority,

3. male,
4. public school in urban area,
5. lacking educational study aids in the home, and
6. parents who lacked interest or participation in their education. (p. 356)

The four most frequent performance characteristics common to students who were classified as dropouts in the *High School and Beyond Database* were arrived at through the work of Ekstrom et al. (1986):

1. Students achieved lower grades.
2. Students achieved lower test scores.
3. Students did less homework.
4. Students showed deficiencies in basic academic skills. (p. 359)

Dropout increase. The concept of *dropout* is hard to define due to the many alternative educational programs that attempt to recapture students who have left the educational system or are apparently headed in that direction. Smith and Lincoln (1988) attempted to create a better understanding of what is meant by dropping out. They arrived at an operational definition of those at risk of dropping out: “One who has left school or who is predictably in danger of leaving school without the skills to be a productive and self-reliant citizen and to succeed in today’s workplace and hence in society” (p. 13). Having an operational definition of dropout helps identify traits common in individuals that lead to becoming a dropout.

In *The Condition of Education* (U.S. Department of Education, 2001b), the National Center for Educational Statistics reported the national dropout rate

averages for the three most prevalent ethnic populations in the United States: White 7.3%, Black 12.6%, and Hispanic 28.6% (p. 142). The Hispanic dropout rate reduces to 16.1%, however, if one removes the 44.2% of Hispanic dropout population that is comprised of students who were born outside of the United States and immigrated to the United States during their schooling years.

Simeonsson (1994) observes,

The origins of school failure and subsequent dropouts are deeply buried in our society, as a complex web of interconnecting influences. No single factor predicts this unfortunate outcome. At first glance, the data seem to indicate that the taproot is poverty. . . . Adolescents of low SES are five times more likely to fail to complete high school than are children from middle- and upper-class families. (p. 104)

Simeonsson observed the cyclical nature of poverty, similar to Payne et al.'s (2001) generational poverty, and a lack of educational success as leading to a "rough existence" (p. 105). They described the unfavorable job market, likelihood of criminal involvement, reliance on public assistance, and the drain on the tax base as outcomes that can be expected to increase as a result of the confluence of poverty and dropouts.

The ongoing financial consequences for individuals who fail to earn their high school diploma are dramatic. The United States 2000 Census Bureau data reported the average annual income for those 18 years of age or older who have completed high school as \$24,572, while those completing a bachelor's degree earned \$45,678. The discrepancy is further compounded with high school

dropouts' annual earnings at the level of \$18,864 (U.S. Department of Education, 2001a).

Poverty and I.Q. A study of 900 children born with low birth weight was conducted by Duncan to examine the effects low birth weight and poverty had on the development of a child's I.Q. (as cited by Coen, 1993). Duncan compared I.Q. scores of the children, at age five, living in persistent poverty with those of other children, not living in persistent poverty. He found that those who lived in persistent poverty averaged 9.1 points lower on an administered I.Q. test. The status Duncan refers to as persistent poverty equates to what Payne et al. (2001) referred to earlier as generational poverty. Coen (1993), commenting on the findings of the study, concurs in stating, "There is little doubt that child poverty . . . is scarring the development of our nation's children"(p. 3). The mere presence of poverty continues to be a leading indicator in predicting the continuation of the cycle of poverty and decreased educational attainment.

Social Services to Children Living in Poverty

Reading in the field of social service was important to gain insights into the components that comprise social service and the stages that are inherent in the social service process. Because the program I desire to study is an at-risk youth targeted social service, I needed to gain insights into the field.

Promising Practices in Assisting the Poor

Components of effective programs focused on assisting the poor were identified in numerous studies (Auletta, 1982; Chrislip & Larson, 1994; Simeonsson, 1994). The studies focused on community-based efforts at

addressing the needs of the poor, rather than large-scale governmental efforts. The studies found that the most effective initiatives focused on the individual needs of each program participant and the initiatives were championed by the community.

Community-based solutions. The United States government continues its attempts to address the needs of those in poverty. Chrislip and Larson (1994) canvassed the country to locate the “best practices” of collaborative leadership that typified the collective work of the government and the local citizenry. They found that the impetus for the most successful programmatic changes “welled up” from within people, not the government. Chrislip and Larson’s (1994) conclusion was

the revival of community would have to be a revival accomplished mainly by the community itself. It would have to be done not from the outside by the instruction of visiting experts, but from the inside by the ancient rule of neighborliness, and by the love of precious things. (pp. 147-148)

Target populations and individuals. Auletta (1982), in his book *The Underclass*, observed that “bumper-sticker generalizations” (p. 84) are the enemy of understanding. In the face of people’s need to make sense of the world, it becomes very easy to oversimplify complex problems, try rudimentary solutions, and then affix blame or responsibility on something or someone outside of their own personal responsibility. In an attempt to identify effective solutions for dealing with the poor, and trying to get away from simply placing blame, Simeonsson (1994) offers three general principles for genuine progress toward effective prevention programs related to at-risk youth:

1. Successful programs are individualized.
2. Successful programs target at-risk sub-groups.
3. Successful programs focus on relationships. (pp. 114-117)

The work of Chrislip and Larson (1994), Auletta (1982), and Simeonsson (1994) restores hope that positive inroads can be made in the lives of low-SES, at-risk children. The hardships and negative predisposition that are caused by poverty provide the impetus for more studies of programs desiring to make an impact in this area.

Social Service Philosophy

All social service endeavors adhere to a philosophical approach that drives decision-making. Awareness of the assumptions behind the practices is essential if the service is to be focused. The scope and potential impact of a social service program are enhanced or limited, based upon the operating assumptions of the endeavor.

Assumptions and models of worker-client relationships. For comparing and contrasting motivation on the part of a social service worker, it is necessary to classify each individual's motivation to serve in a particular category. A classification of social service motivation was done succinctly by Ladson-Billings. She posits that the assumptions carried by the social service worker regarding the potential effects the work will have on at-risk students will place the worker into one of four categories: *tutor, general contractor, custodian, or referral agent* (1994, p. 21). *Tutors* believe that all children can grow in their present condition and that it is their responsibility to work toward that end.

General contractors also believe that improvement is possible, but they “sub” the job out to support personnel, instead of taking on the job themselves. *Custodians* do not believe strides can be made; therefore, they work to maintain the status quo in the lives of those they purport to help. And lastly, *referral agents* do not feel growth can occur; as a consequence, they release themselves from the responsibility of helping and they simply redirect individuals to other people or places of no real assistance.

Understanding an individual’s concept of the role of social service in the lives of the needy or at-risk will help determine in advance the degree to which he or she is willing to serve and work in mitigating the obstacles facing a client. An individual classified as a *referral agent* will typically be much less willing to spend time, money, and effort on someone than a *tutor* because the former’s belief leads him or her to think little growth can occur for the individual regardless of the intervention.

Service delivery models. The field of social service has several examples and terminology for the various models of service delivery, but Cowger (1977) summarized the groupings most succinctly. Each social service endeavor identifies most closely with *advocate*, *counselor*, *regulator*, or *broker* as its main focus of service.

1. Advocate—The social worker assumes that there is conflict between the group in need and the dominant institutions of society. The role of the individual is to mediate and work to bring about change on behalf of the client.

2. Counselor—The social worker focuses one-to-one on the client's specific problem in helping him or her see the issues and make better choices regarding feelings and behaviors.
3. Regulator—The social worker acts as an extension of society, attempting to alter the behavior and attitudes of the client to bring about conformity that reflects societal norms (this form is most often accused of attempting to promote the status quo).
4. Broker—(A combination of Advocate and Counselor) The social worker enters into a symbiotic relationship in which the practitioner can assist the individual client with resolutions to his or her problems while working to try and change the society and environment as well.
(pp. 26-28)

Sensitivity to the client. Social service efforts must have some general guiding beliefs related to the work that goes on with the client. Vacc, DeVaney, and Whittmer (1995) offer five operating assumptions related to working with individuals within a social service setting:

1. Individuals themselves (the worker), rather than mass methods of working with individuals, are important.
2. The individual (the client), not the subgroup, is the unit of consideration. The individual is a person primarily and secondarily, an African-American, Mexican-American, etc.

3. The social aspects of an individual's life, including relationships at home, work, and school, are as important as the person's body and mind.
4. Accurate information is necessary as a foundation for providing services for the individual.
5. Staffing of services by professionals adequately trained in pre-service and in-service programs of preparation and skill development is essential. (p. 7)

Cultural sensitivity. In his two-year process of restructuring the curriculum in the school of social work at the University of Washington, Green (1999) determined that effective social work corresponds to needs felt by the client. He states that social services should be dispensed in ways that empower people and that the services are culturally sensitive in accentuating and enfolded the community and its culture. Green warns,

That obligation is most difficult to meet where the worker, the agency, its policies, and its educational programs are representative of the interests of only one of the significant groups in our society, namely English-speaking whites of predominantly middle- and professional-class origins. (1999, pp. 4-6)

Green's (1999) insights were particularly germane to this study, as they call into question the merit of any social service program that seeks to cross racial, cultural, or socio-economic boundaries. Green (1999) illustrates Cowger's (1977) earlier point of social servant in the role of the *regulator*, or the one

promoting the status quo. Green (1999) lists three related observations from his two years of restructuring the social work curriculum at the University of Washington:

1. Ethnic and minority group clients are entitled to competent, professional social services.
2. There exists a history of gross insensitivity to cultural differences in working with clients.
3. Observing cross-cultural encounters will allow the organization to better conceptualize its goals of involvement with the varied ethnic community. (p. 7)

Understanding Social Service

The body of literature related to social service had common beliefs regarding the best approach to social service endeavors: understanding the community, challenging the affluent, esteeming the client, learning through acts of service, clarifying objectives, and realizing that social service is finite in duration. All of these topics are addressed in detail below in order to identify best practices in the field of social service.

Understanding the community. When a social service individual or agency enters a community that is unfamiliar, a community scan or profile is recommended. According to Green (1999), the key ingredients to becoming aware of the community before beginning a predetermined program involve:

1. studying local documents, papers, and other published materials related to the area;

2. talking with and getting to know the influential people within the community;
3. preparing a social map of all significant cultural resources within the community (ethnic group areas, social organizations, ideological beliefs of a community, mobility, wealth distribution, access to human and social services already in existence); and
4. participating in observations. (p. 9)

The completion of a community scan allows for a deeper understanding of a community and assists in providing a clear vision of the needs, assets, and current programs that exist in a given area. A thorough community scan provides insight to an area that is not familiar to a group or organization desiring to begin a new social service endeavor.

“Challenging the affluent.” In an attempt to keep away from areas of greater need, families have continued to move from areas marked by urban poverty and to relocate to the suburbs, taking with them skills and resources that could be used to revitalize low-income areas. In an article entitled “Challenging the Affluent,” Dryfoos (1999) explains the necessity of getting the people in the suburbs to interact with youth-serving agencies in poor communities (p. 55). Her belief is that those who do not have to face daily issues that invade the lives of children in poverty should be working with children for whom poverty is a reality. She feels that the suburban community should be challenged to engage in the lives of less fortunate children. Dryfoos offers her vision of effective youth work:

Youth work at its best tries to equalize comfort levels in the lives of millions of American children by enhancing cognitive development, teaching social skills, offering support, and exposing them to culture and creativity. Advantaged children get these benefits from their educated families, effective schools and safe communities. Youth work addresses the gap and makes sure that all children have access to these important assets. (p. 55)

Esteeming the client. The literature related to social service was unanimous in the commitment to respect toward the client and the understanding and appreciation of the community values and its culture. The idea of esteeming the client was expressed clearly by Coles (1993) in his book *The Call of Service* as he recounted the life of Dorothy Day and her work as a leader in civic social service.

The story of Dorothy Day, the leader of the 1930s Catholic Worker movement, was told by Coles (1993) through the memories of many of her co-workers during the early days of the movement. Coles, being proud of his efforts in reaching many volunteers and leaders in the movement, was humbled and shamed by Ms. Day's response to his inquiry regarding what other important people he should talk with to help tell her story:

I asked her for further suggestions and told her I hoped I'd contacted most of the people who were important in her life but that I'd be glad to seek out others. She replied that she much appreciated my interest in the Worker, but that I had not, so far as she knew, connected with the "most

important people” in her life and in the lives of others there at 36 East First Street: “our guests.” (p. 234)

The stated or implied reason for social sensitivity and personal regard for the client is due to the power and influence one carries as the provider of social services. Whether a client is listened to and how personal or community time, talents, and treasures are doled out have a direct effect on the opportunities another human being may have for an improved situation in life. The danger in social services is inherent within its power. The power to provide or withhold is not lost on the recipient of the service.

Learning through acts of service. Often lost on the individual who has not served in the capacity of working with those in poverty or individuals labeled as *at-risk* is what the servant receives back from his or her time of service. Coles (1993) refers to this in his book *The Call of Service* as he recounts his work with children in Africa and Latin America, “Some of these kids have taught me a million times more than I’ve taught them” (p. xxi). And later in the book he writes:

I remember certain children I tutored long ago; I remember how they addressed pieces of their mind to me, the proverbial full-of-himself teacher who had no idea how very much he had to learn from these ‘troubled’ children in need of ‘help’. Not that those of us who extend a hand to others ought to deny the usefulness of our efforts or condescend by setting up those we help as secret seers who offer anyone and everyone a moment of revelation. Those are the sad uses of sentiment. Back then,

actually, I was too naïve to know how to romanticize others. . . . Rather, I was teaching and teaching, but I was also exploring worlds I knew little about and gradually knowing more about certain people. I was more inclined to hear them out and to feel grateful for what they told me rather than recite with assurance how much they needed to keep hearing me. (p. 286)

Clarifying objectives. It is important to have a clear understanding of the maturational stages of social service before engaging in the social service process. Goals can be created for clients as they work their way through the five-step process. Lum (1992, p. 90) identified five key stages of effective social work: contact, problem identification, assessment, intervention, and termination.

Realizing that social service is finite in duration. It is important to remember that social work by nature is finite in its endeavors. Social service is not continuous, and the goal is to move individuals along the path toward wholeness, self-reliance, and empowerment. Social service begins with an end in mind.

The charge. The power divide between the upper class and the disadvantaged was noted in the observation of Jacobs and Bowles (1988) that even the studies, findings, and agendas that are followed socially are cast by those in power (p. 114). The ability to put forth or withhold information is power at its most basic level because what we think, how we feel, and what we do is driven by information. The apparent charge for those desiring to engage in social service

seems to be to care deeply, understand thoroughly, listen intently, serve passionately, report honestly, and tread lightly.

Berger and Neuhaus's "Mediating Structures"

In their work *To Empower People: The Role of Mediating Structures in Public Policy*, Berger and Neuhaus (1977) discuss five separate public institutions that benefit from individuals playing the role of a mediating structure between two entities. Two of those institutions will be reviewed in this study, "the neighborhood" and "the church." These two were chosen due to their specific relevance to this study. The basis of the need for mediating structures is the belief that there exists a power divide between those not able to help themselves and societal structures that hold the power. Berger and Neuhaus believe that mediating structures, caring individuals or groups, are needed to act in a role that brings these two entities together for the sake of those individuals that have less power.

A chasm exists between individuals in need and a public bureaucracy that prevents help and services from being delivered, according to Berger and Neuhaus (1977). The state and federal governments, known by Berger and Neuhaus as *megastructures*, actually create agencies counter-productive to their own purposes. Due to their structural and organizational detachment from individuals, the governmental entity is devoid of the human element necessary to care compassionately for the needs of people. Berger and Neuhaus offer the concept of mediating structures as the mechanism that works best in caring for individuals or small communities by bridging the gap between public help and private need. In their book, Berger and Neuhaus examine five mediating

structures as mechanisms to assist the impoverished: the two reviewed for this study were the *neighborhood* and the *church*.

The Neighborhood

It is not always easy to determine what comprises a neighborhood and much more difficult to determine its boundaries. Kotler (1996), in *Neighborhood Government* states,

The most sensible way to locate the neighborhood is to ask people where it is, for people spend much time fixing its boundaries. Gangs mark its turf. Old people watch for its new faces. Children figure out safe routes between home and school. People walk their dogs through their neighborhood, but rarely beyond it. (p. 8)

Realizing the nonspecific nature of the idea of the *neighborhood*, Berger and Neuhaus (1977) attempt to define one function of the neighborhood as a mediating structure within the community. They describe the neighborhood as a place of relative security and cohesiveness, providing a place of respite from the greater world “out there.” Within the neighborhood there lies an ongoing hope for community among its inhabitants. The authors believe that empowered communities are the answer to advancing justice for all inhabitants in all communities. They note that, foundationally, the development of a community must deal foremost with the needs of its people.

The authors believe structures and values that have existed in a community need to continue to be a focal point of the neighborhood. Neighborhoods that have lost their moral compass along the way need to

reestablish a community ethic to be sought after and emulated. Berger and Neuhaus (1977) noted, “In recent years an unbalanced emphasis upon individual rights has seriously eroded the community’s power to sustain its democratically determined values in the public sphere” (p. 11).

Berger and Neuhaus (1977) feel strongly about the rights of the collective community. They believe when civil liberties compete against the values of a community and people are embattled against each other, communities decay. When communities discontinue caring acts toward the greater good of the whole and seek individual advancement solely, communities decay. When communities lose their moral certainties, communities decay. Mediating structures are individuals or a group within the community that help illuminate issues and provide service for people stuck in need. Mediating structures are necessary because those entrapped in the morass of needy neighborhoods and communities are typically stuck with no structures seeking their input to help deliver them out of their present situation.

Mediating structures identify and address the greatest needs of the community. The process begins by people engaging within the community in service. Berger and Neuhaus (1977) believe when people encounter “bad neighborhoods,” they can respond in three ways: (a) they can ignore them, (b) they can attempt to dismantle them and spread their problems around more equitably, or (c) they can try to transform the bad into the better on the way to becoming good (p. 9). Mediating structures see the third option as the only real option and set out to make a positive impact.

Individuals or groups desiring to become a mediating structure within a community must first become an invited participant in the solution process. To come into an environment and presuppose a solution to community problems without invitation or input from the community could hamper a growing level of trust and understanding.

The Church

Religious organizations, although sometimes overlooked as a part of the solution for social service to the poor, make up the largest network of volunteerism in the United States, according to Berger and Neuhaus (1977). Two reasons for society overlooking the role of religion in serving the poor are given. First, Berger and Neuhaus believe religion was viewed as an integral part of society prior to the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment brought about the advent of education and modernization for the masses, theoretically leaving man in less need of religion, because he can rely on himself instead of leaning on religious beliefs to solve issues. Secondly, the authors explain a collective misunderstanding related to the potential impact religion can have on an entire society. Berger and Neuhaus believe society thinks religion serves the needs of an individual, rather than serving societal needs as a whole.

A misunderstanding of the role church and religion play in this country has grown since the Supreme Court ruled that public agency-sponsored acts related to religious practices, including prayer in schools, were unconstitutional due to the necessary “separation of church and state.” Individuals who are

opposed to any religious voice in matters of societal practice cite the Jeffersonian principle of “separation” without any concept of its source.

Berger and Neuhaus report that Thomas Jefferson, while President of the United States, wrote a letter in response to one he had received from the Danbury Baptist Association, relieving their fears regarding a rumor they had heard about the country possibly adopting a national religion. Their concern stemmed from the fact they would lose their religious autonomy if such a national adoption were to occur. Jefferson wrote back that he concurred that the legislature should “make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,” (as cited in Berger & Neuhaus, 1977, p. 28) thus building a wall of separation between church and state.

The intent was never to protect the government from religious ideas, but rather to protect individuals from a mandated religion of the state. Berger and Neuhaus (1977) believe, “Where there is neither favoritism nor coercion by the state, there is no violation of the separation of church and state” (p. 29). This understanding and interpretation leaves wide open the option for churches to be mediating structures for individuals, families, and communities while enjoying governmental support and financing.

The “Kurland Rule,” named after Philip Kurland of the University of Chicago, states that “if a policy furthers a legitimate secular purpose, it is a matter of legal indifference whether or not that policy employs religious institutions” (as cited in Berger & Neuhaus, 1977, p. 29). No institution has been as staid in its commitment to serving the society at-large as religion. Seemingly, everything the

government takes over as a service agency bogs down in bureaucracy related to funding, certification, and licensing. Recognition and support of religious organizations and individual churches would seem an appropriate response to their desire to become mediating structures in the lives of people.

Creation of the Federal Office of Faith-Based Community Initiatives

The cultural climate related to social service in American society was experiencing a change at the time of this study. President George W. Bush established an office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives that provided a governmental funding source for social service endeavors that were faith-based initiatives that had previously been disallowed to receive any federal financial assistance. The timing of the change in federal social policy was germane to the program I desired to study.

Presidential Perspective

On January 29, 2001, President George W. Bush fulfilled a campaign promise by establishing a new White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. John J. DiIulio, Jr., was named to head the office, leading to his resignation as professor of religion, politics, civil society, and political science at the University of Pennsylvania. President Bush acted within his authority to establish new offices under his administration, rather than submitting a proposal to Congress and having them debate the merits of such a position. The President stated at the announcement of the office, “This is one of the most important initiatives that my administration will implement” (Henderson, 2001, p. 1).

Remarks by President Bush to the 2001 United States Conference of Mayors National Summit on Investment in the New American City set the theoretical justification for committing governmental funds to support private, faith-based, community initiatives.

The continued renewal of our cities requires five commitments: better education, broader home ownership, faster economic growth, easier environmental cleanup, and stronger communities and charities. . . . My budget aids community and faith-based groups that help our cities take on the worst of our social problems. . . . We support local efforts to fight illiteracy, teen pregnancy, and drug addiction. We promote mentoring programs, especially for the large number of children with a parent in prison. . . . We will support the caring acts of caring people, and not turn them away because they are inspired by the Bible or the Koran. (U. S. Conference of Mayors, 2001, p. 2)

President Bush, addressing the press while visiting Union Bethel A.M.E. Church in New Orleans, had this to say about federal support of faith-based initiatives focused on serving the needs of at-risk children and communities.

The miracle of salvation is the key to solving some of society's most intractable problems. . . . My attitude is the government should not fear faith-based programs and we ought to fund faith-based programs. . . . Faith-based programs are only effective because they practice faith. It's important for our government to understand that. . . . Problems that face our society are oftentimes problems that require something greater than

just a government program or a government counselor can solve.

(Reichmann, 2004, p. B1)

President Bush was in New Orleans to draw attention and support to the efforts of one faith-based organization and their efforts to serve the at-risk youth in their neighborhood through the financial support of the Office of Faith-Based community Initiatives. Reichmann (2004) summarized examples mentioned by President Bush during his speech of appropriate expenditures of governmental funds for the sake of at-risk youth, “Church efforts such as feeding the homeless, teaching neighborhood children karate, and running a day-care center were perfect examples of the kind of programs the federal government should fund” (p. B1).

Issues of Church and State

Policy concerns. The issue of “separation of church and state” and its implications for public policy is an ongoing debate in the United States. The creation of the federal Office of faith-based Community Initiatives is a recent example of the national confusion regarding the question of the constitutionality of using federal funds to support faith-based service endeavors. Gerson (1996), a conservative author on issues related to the “separation of church and state,” observed, “In a democracy that is free and robust, an opinion is no more disqualified for being ‘religious’ than for being atheistic, or psychoanalytic, or Marxist, or just plain dumb. . . . Religion in public is but the opinion of those citizens who are religious” (p. 386).

Clarity will certainly need to be addressed in the “dos and don’ts” of the acceptable activities of groups or organizations that receive funding. Some evangelical groups have concerns that because their religious beliefs are so tied in with their overall services or treatments, they will be discriminated against. DiIulio (American Atheists, April 8, 2001, p. 1) recognized the potential quagmire of compliance and accountability issues related to funding; therefore, he began to discuss the need that federal funds not support sectarian worship, instruction, or proselytization. Other ideas that he has espoused surround the establishment of “segregated accounts” to track expenditures, resulting in clear accounting trails for federal money received and expended by religious organizations.

Funding issues. Captain John Cheydleur, Social Service Secretary for the Eastern Territory of the Salvation Army, observes, “It’s already happening; about 15% of the Salvation Army’s funding comes from government contracts. The big players (The Salvation Army, Goodwill, Catholic Charities, Lutheran Social Services, Jewish Family Services, and Volunteers of America) are already there” (as cited in Mitchell, 2001, p. 1). Cheydleur further articulates his support of the program by observing, “The government can raise money the religious groups cannot, but the government is not good at service delivery” (as cited in Mitchell, 2001, p. 2).

Salvation Army National Commander John A. Busby released a news brief from National Headquarters following President Bush’s establishment of the

Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives to show his support of the fundamental ideas the office will attempt to support:

Amid the atmosphere of a robust economy, our greatest challenge is to continue to develop relevant programs and services that address the needs of our communities. The Salvation Army helped more than 33 million people last year. This record number of Americans received food, shelter, clothing, and disaster relief assistance. We do not seek exemption from accountability and evaluation as the Army establishes programs and services. No funds will be used to undergird our denominational budgets. (as cited in Mitchell, 2001, p. 2)

Not all Americans are in support of the establishment of the Office of Faith-Based Community Initiatives. The group Americans United for the Separation of Church and State has already threatened to file a lawsuit against the plan. Ellen Johnson, President of American Atheists, stated

This is way beyond just trying to display the Ten Commandments or have prayer in public schools. Bush is pushing a \$10 billion-a-year entitlement program for religious organizations that is coming out of wallets and purses of Americans, including millions of Atheists who have no need for religion. (American Atheist, January 29, 2001, p. 2)

Worries exist on the part of faith-based groups in regard to the funding and accountability of the federal program. Cheydleur's (as cited in Mitchell, 2001, p. 2) concern about the program is the potential for some religious groups to become "overzealous" and break some rules that would ultimately sully all

organizations, including those that were following all rules and protocols. The potential abuses could fuel the argument of those opposed to all funding for faith-based organizations.

Church Programs Focused on At-risk Children

The studies I located regarding “churches as social servants” in the lives of at-risk youth have focused on the role of the African-American church in the academic and social life of the black family (Billingsley, 1988; Peters, 1991; Tolliver, 1993; Westmoreland, 1996). Although the studies determined the African-American church to be a redemptive force in black family life, more work needs to be done in reviewing the redemptive role a single church can have in the life of at-risk children by crossing racial and socioeconomic lines within a community.

Coalitions

The most common examples of faith-based social service receiving national recognition at the time of this study were coalitions, not single church-sponsored ministries. The coalitions were typically sizeable enterprises that consisted of churches, community service agencies, and local governmental entities working together to address community needs. The coalitions were typically large in scale and attempted to bring various areas of strength together with multiple agencies to better meet the needs of the community. The push of the larger coalition model seemed related to potential governmental funding opportunities from the state and federal governments. Both the Clinton and Bush administrations pushed for utilization of the religious community in delivering

social services. Each administration enacted legislation, Clinton with the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, and Bush with the Office of Faith-Based Community Initiatives, that eased the working relationship of the government and the religious community, allowing funding to flow to faith-based organizations for specific social-service-related programs.

President Clinton, in his Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA), sought to promote religious charity as a “safety net” that will help society fulfill its responsibility to itself. The “charitable choice” provision in Section 104 of the PRWORA was an attempt to establish the legal validity and credibility of the religious arm of the societal safety net. Pipes and Ebaugh (2002) clarify the role of the legislation:

This provision requires that states treat religious organizations as any other non-government provider when contracting for services funded under this legislation. Specifically, the charitable choice clause establishes a statute that protects the religious character of faith-based organizations that receive these funds, without diminishing the religious freedom of program beneficiaries. (pp. 49-50)

In a survey of U.S. congregations, Chaves (1999) found that although 57% reported being engaged in some form of regular social service, only 3% were receiving any governmental funding (p. 838). In a study of the roles of religious institutions in creating and sustaining community coalitions for children and families, Keith, Covey, and Perkins (2000), concluded that “current literature

indicates that little research of any kind has been done regarding religious institutions and their involvement in community coalitions” (p. 3).

President Bush, while Governor of the state of Texas, oversaw the first state-wide adoption of the charitable choice idea with his own “compassionate conservatism.” Pipes and Ebaugh (2002) chose to focus their study on Harris County, Texas (which includes Houston), because it had the largest and most developed faith-based coalitions in the country. The study examined 14 faith-based coalitions in Harris County, many of which focused on the needs of the immigrant population. Pipes and Ebaugh sought to determine how the coalitions began and how they operated. The coalitions blended the collective efforts of local congregations, social activists, nonreligious organizations, and the local government to provide large-scale ministries that individual congregations would be ill-equipped to handle on their own.

Early interest existed between the state and the religious community to form coalitions, according to the research of Pipes and Ebaugh (2002). The desire for the state and coalitions to work together became strained because their interests were not identical. It was difficult for the faith-based coalitions to deal with the issues of compromise related to partnering with the state without giving up the religious character of the faith-based organization. Pipes and Ebaugh (2002, p. 65) note that faith-based volunteer workers are motivated by their own spiritual beliefs, and when they are asked to “check their beliefs at the door,” the essence of their motivation and effectiveness is sapped.

Unreliable Record-keeping

An ongoing concern exists related to reports filed by faith-based coalition programs due to poor record-keeping by these organizations. Cnaan (1997) and Printz (1998) both expressed concerns over the reliability of data collected and reported by the coalitions on their own work. Both authors believed the accuracy of the data suffered due to the project taking precedence over thorough record-keeping and administrative tasks. Cnaan's point that self-reported coalition data do not provide a very reliable source of knowledge related to faith-based social service findings is further exacerbated by the scarcity of rigorous study of faith-based social work. Cnaan (2000, p. 53) conducted a survey of 887 congregations in Philadelphia and found only 7% of the congregations were even aware of charitable choice and the potential for governmental funding assistance. The general conclusion of Cnaan was the same as Chaves's (1999) earlier finding that congregations are busy serving their communities, with little reliable research related to faith-based social service efforts and effects.

Limited Research

The information that was found regarding church, para-church, and nonprofit, child-focused social work was free internet-based Web resources. The Interfaith Community Ministry Network was founded in 1988 and tracks the development of roughly 1,400 faith-based coalitions. Similarly, the Association of Gospel Rescue Missions lists 143 organizations in its Urban Youth Workers Resource Directory that range in services from publication, homeless shelters, and literacy to prison work, discipleship, and work skills training.

The common thread in the identified ministries was that they were either the professional endeavor of an individual who makes his or her livelihood within the ministry, or they were organizations or businesses that existed to pursue and promote their ministry. None of the identified organizations were simply run as volunteer organizations sponsored and orchestrated by a single local church. Although local churches typically engage in social service, their activities were not listed in national databases of youth social service efforts, nor did they appear to draw attention from national funding sources. The lack of studies and accompanying documentation of church-sponsored youth social service programs motivates me to study one local church's attempt to address the educational and social needs of at-risk youth in their community.

Conclusion

Children in poverty need help because future academic, social, and economic opportunities are predictably diminished for them if their academic deficiencies are not addressed and their performance does not improve. Because no research was located related to predominantly white, middle-class church work in after-school tutorial and at-risk youth social programs focusing on this need, I decided to study one such program. By studying the development of one program, operated by a church-sponsored foundation that mobilized its services to a low-SES neighborhood in the city and away from the church campus, I hoped to gain insights on the dynamics of a local church partnering with the city government to serve the academic and social needs of at-risk youth in their community. I wanted to understand the development of the program and the perceptions of the adult

stakeholders (church leaders, community leaders, and adult volunteers). I chose to focus solely on the adult stakeholders in this study because they were the necessary catalysts for initiating the program, and I was interested in their motivation to be involved with the program.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

I chose to explore a program that appeared to address my interest in the needs of at-risk children living in an economically depressed area, because I knew statistically what awaits them without some form of intervention in their life. I was interested in studying one church's program that targeted the very kids whom I had a desire to see served. I was encouraged to proceed in a study that would tell the story of the program conception and development and share the perceptions of the program in the words of some of the adult stakeholders responsible for the program (church leaders, community leaders, and adult volunteers).

Teen Center Program

The Teen Center (pseudonym) is a neighborhood, after-school, tutorial program supported by a local Christian church, focused on assisting children in academic improvement and providing positive social interaction. The church, located in an affluent area of the city, needed assistance in securing a facility that was proximate to the neighborhood targeted for the program. To locate the Teen Center in one of the most needy areas of the city, the church sponsoring the program approached the city with a proposal to lease a city-owned building for little or no cost to house the Teen Center. Ultimately, the city provided a five-year lease on a property for \$1.00 a year for the church to operate the program with the understanding that the church would fund and staff the program without

further assistance from the city. The actual lease agreement with the city was entered into by the Teen Center Community Foundation (pseudonym), a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established by the church to separate the functions of the church and the business of the Teen Center.

The Church

The church involved in this study was a predominantly white, middle-class Christian church located in an affluent area in the southern part of the city. The church leadership desired to have a presence in the northern, more impoverished side of the city by running a program that addressed the after-school academic and social needs of at-risk youth in the community. Because the church was not located in the neighborhood where it desired to establish the program, the church had a dilemma related to securing a facility.

The church model used by Dryfoos (1998) would not apply directly to Teen Center because the program was not housed at the actual church property. However, Teen Center did utilize her theory of the “safe haven” in the community as a goal of the program. The desire for the Teen Center program to be open and accessible for young people was in accordance with Dryfoos’s assertion that adolescents need “places that are accessible to young people at all hours and that are not associated with school; many high-risk youngsters have an aversion to classrooms because of negative experiences in the past” (p. 144).

The Program

The Teen Center’s roots had been established with a program that began in 1999 as the Teen Club in the north side of the city. Using just one room at the

Salvation Army headquarters, a group of volunteers from the church posted fliers in the immediate neighborhood announcing the program and opened the doors three days per week to youth from the neighborhood. During that time, the Teen Club operated as a free “drop-in” center, providing games, crafts, and homework help to approximately 25 to 30 students per week. In addition, the members of the Teen Club participated in recreational activities such as Christmas parties, sledding trips, and movie nights.

A little over a year later, due to a change in leadership and philosophy at the Salvation Army, the Teen Club lost its access to the facility. Families of students being served by the Teen Club contacted the local paper and city government officials to seek their help in keeping the club open. It took nine months for the city to find an appropriate relocation site for the center. The city then contracted with the Teen Center Community Foundation to lease the former Red Cross building for \$1.00 per year for five years with a second five-year option to house the Teen Center. In September of 2001, Teen Center held its grand opening at the newly acquired Red Cross building.

At the December 3, 2002, City Council meeting, a second property was offered to the Teen Center Community Foundation to expand its Teen Center program to a second neighborhood in the northern part of the city. Teen Center II held its grand opening on April 19, 2003. An identical five-year lease was agreed upon with a second five-year option held by the Teen Center Community Foundation. The opening of Teen Center II allowed the first center to focus its

services on children 8 to 11 years old and the second center to focus on youth 12 to 17 years of age.

Both centers shared the same focus of service to the children who attended. The program services offered were available each week Monday through Thursday. The director who oversaw the operations of the two houses and each of the house coordinators administered the program and was responsible for screening new volunteers (see Appendix A). The schedule of the daily program was as follows:

Snack & Free Time	2:00-3:00
Homework & Tutoring	3:00-4:00
Story Time (moral lesson)	4:00-4:20
Recreation	4:20-5:15
Clean-up	5:15-5:30

The Study

Research Approach

The case study method that was chosen for this qualitative research project is best utilized when the desire is to study a program or process in its natural setting. Creswell's (1998) explanation of a qualitative case study describes the process followed in this study.

A case study is an exploration of a "bounded system" or case . . . over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context. This bounded system is bounded by time

and place, and it is the case being studied—a program, an event, an activity, or individual. (p. 61)

The study is descriptive, not predictive, in nature, resulting in insights and findings that may not be generalized to other settings. The study began by examining the developmental process leading to the establishment of the Teen Center, using interviews and document review to reconstruct the events and relationships necessary to create and establish the Teen Center. The second part of the study which sought answers to the research question, “What were the motivating factors for the participation of the adult stakeholders involved in the establishment and ongoing operation of the teen program?,” focused on the three adult stakeholder groups (church leaders, community leaders, and program volunteers) and their motivation for participation in the Teen Center project. Understanding and insights were gained through identifying the perspectives of the adult stakeholders in the program, observing activities at the center, and reviewing all relevant documents related to the Teen Center program.

Case study elements. The case study process develops in stages as the researcher develops insights and knowledge relevant to the study. Marshall and Rossman (1995) delineate four major stages in the case study process: (a) participation, (b) direct observation, (c) interviewing, and (d) document review (p. 17). I interviewed church leaders, civic leaders, and volunteers involved at Teen Center. I also utilized informal participation and observation while at Teen Center, taking fieldnotes on the interactions of the volunteers and the clients. Document review was conducted of all church documents, Teen Center records,

and City Council records, focusing on the origination, purpose, and evolution of the program.

The Researcher

Since the researcher is a key instrument in a qualitative study, I describe my interest in the study and relevant personal background in this section.

Interest in the study. In August 2001, while attending Hillside Church (pseudonym) one Sunday morning in Southern California, I became interested in an announcement made by the pastor from the pulpit. The City Council had approved a five-year lease with the Teen Center Community Foundation (a pseudonym) to occupy and utilize a government-owned building for \$1.00 per year for five years. The building was to house the Teen Center, a program designed to serve children in the community who were not at that time involved with the church and who lived in one of the most economically depressed areas of the city. Teen Center would run an after-school program focused on tutoring and study skills and provide a safe haven for positive social interaction.

I have worked in the educational field for 15 years, the last 10 as an administrator, and I was encouraged to see organizations outside of schools and the local school district addressing the educational and social needs of children living in identified low-socioeconomic status (SES) areas. My interest in examining the local church and city government's roles in modeling possible programs targeting the academic and social needs of at-risk youth grew out of budgetary frustration in trying to solve all unmet needs of students at the school site with limited funding and limited success.

Relevant background. I am a white, Christian male and at the time of the study in my mid-30s. I grew up in a divorced home where my physical needs were met, with little financial excess. My mother and my maternal grandfather and grandmother provided emotional support for me when I was a child. In my adolescence, the role of emotional support was expanded to include various youth workers at my church. I needed to be cognizant of my own beliefs and values developed from experiences I had growing up white within a lower-SES family. Values I developed provided the motivation for me to delay gratification into the future. Although I could not then articulate the values, looking back I can see they were ideas such as: hard work and industry allow people to overcome their obstacles; a good education is your ticket to a better station in life; and there are no real limitations, only excuses. I could not project my experiences and values onto the relationships of the volunteers and participants at the Teen Center.

I have been involved in working with children on a voluntary basis for most of my adult life. I served as a small group leader for the high school youth group; I led high school Bible study groups; I was a camp counselor, Sunday school teacher, and coach. I served as a result of having been so profoundly loved and supported in my youth by people who served in these roles.

Prior to the outset of my study, I had limited knowledge of the Teen Center program. I was aware of the idea of taking tutorial and positive social interaction opportunities to the needier north side of the city. It was not until the news of the five-year lease was mentioned at church that I felt the program could experience any stability, since the program would no longer rely on borrowed

facilities. My interest in the program grew with the new opportunities a dedicated facility offered, coupled with the church's stated commitment to the growth and expansion of the Teen Center program. It was at that time that there began to incubate in my mind the possibility of examining the establishment, development, and growth of the Teen Center program for my dissertation work.

Although, as a child, I had shared some SES realities with the clients attending the Teen Center, I knew I must be careful not to assume I knew the experiences of any of the children being served at the center, especially children of color. Tatum (1997) asserts, "Dominant groups, by definition, set the parameters within which the subordinates operate. The dominant group holds the power and authority in society relative to subordinates and determines how that power and authority may be acceptably used" (p. 23). Tatum's insights allude to the fact I may simply have had it easier because, being a white male, I was part of the dominant group.

I determined the participants necessary for an inclusive perspective of the dynamics of establishing Teen Center. My goal was to serve as an aperture through which light and insight were shed on the program development process. Just as an open aperture affects the amount of light allowed to capture the image of an object on film, my job was to be open and reflective of all perspectives gained in the data collection and analysis portion of the study.

My Biblical Mandate for Social Service

There are certain teachings and biblical examples that have profoundly affected my thinking as a result of growing up in the Christian church. No story

has had more impact on my perception of others and how I am supposed to respect and honor them than the story of the “Good Samaritan.”

Good Samaritan. The Bible is full of stories highlighting behaviors, teachings, and directions related to loving and serving those in need. Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:30-37 (New International Version),

Jesus replied and said, “A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went off leaving him half dead. And by chance a certain priest was going down that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise, a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, and came to him, and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return, I will repay you.’ Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robber’s hands?” And he said, “The one who showed mercy toward him.” And Jesus said to him, “Go and do the same.”

The role of service as an act of obedience. I find accounts of others’ sacrifice and service to God compelling and an encouragement for me to respond

in similar ways as I seek to please God. Mother Teresa is arguably the icon of servanthood in the 20th century.

When Poplin (1997) traveled to Calcutta, India, to examine the life of Mother Teresa, she spent her time observing Mother Teresa and noting her methods of service to others. Mother Teresa reminded Poplin on many occasions that she was doing religious work, not social work. Poplin observed that the hallmark of the work Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity exhibited was the sacredness with which they treated every individual. Mother Teresa related how she saw Christ in each of her dealings with the “poorest of the poor” (p. 3). Motivation became the greatest difference in her rationale for serving the poor. Many serve out of pity, empathy, or for what joy it brings them, whether temporary or sustained. When Mother Teresa referred to herself as merely “a pencil in the hand of God” (p. 5), she was stating that she was a conduit for the work of her Lord, and that knowing she was being used was the sustenance of her service.

Most social servants maintain a distance between themselves and those they are serving. Many buffers are created in the helper-helpee relationship. Buffers can come in many forms: living outside of the community, the establishment of regulations and rules, or the mounds of paperwork accompanying most services—all manage to create distance. Poplin (1997) noted Mother Teresa swore off worldly trappings and the temptation to raise funds, fearing that at some point they would lead to compromise due to indebtedness to someone. Mother Teresa wanted no distance between herself and those she came

to serve. It was in that genuine simplicity that those who observed her could recognize her authentic care and compassion.

Courage to serve. The “Go and do the same” mandate is the clarion call for all who want to live and serve in a manner worthy of their model, Jesus Christ. The desire to be faithful to the challenge of living Christ-like lives has stirred both churches and individuals to be “Good Samaritans” to those in their community who have been passed over through avoidance and indifference.

Mother Teresa is described as having a specific call from God to serve Jesus by serving the poor, as noted by both Muggeridge (1971) and Le Joly (1977) in their biographies on her. What she refers to as her “primary call” is to not be confused with being a nurse, a teacher, a doctor, or a social worker; she was in Calcutta to love Jesus by loving the people God brought to her. Mother Teresa’s words provide a good litmus test for the potential success of an endeavor and the confidence with which individuals can proceed in knowing they are called to a task where they are being asked to serve. She said

I was so sure then, and I’m still convinced, that it is he and not I. That’s why I was not afraid; I knew that if the work was mine it would die with me. But I knew if it was his work, that it will live and bring much good.
(as cited in Muggeridge, 1971, p. 88)

These core beliefs were at the heart of why I was drawn to do this study. I have a firmly held belief that God inspires us and directs us to follow His lead in obedience. Acts of service and love, one to another, are more significant than the single act of kindness. Mother Teresa referred to herself as a “pencil in the hand

of God,” (Poplin, 1997, p. 5) and I believe as she does that we truly are called to become the hands and feet of Christ as we serve on His behalf to those in need of our care and compassion. I desired for the Teen Center to be successful before I studied it because I wanted to find a program operated by a local church that targeted the at-risk children in the community. Because I wanted the program to be successful from the beginning, I needed to be open in my observations and reporting if the program did not seem to achieve the goals of serving the social and academic needs of the at-risk youth attending the center. My awareness acted as a check on my bias, and I was intentional in my efforts to be objective.

Procedures

The Setting

Church demographics. To determine the ethnic demographics of Hillside Church (pseudonym), I spoke to a church leader to see if the church kept records regarding the ethnic distribution of the church congregation. I learned that such records were neither solicited nor kept. Therefore, I used the church’s pictorial directory to count family members (adults and children) in each photo who appeared to fit into one of four ethnic categories: (a) White, (b) Hispanic, (c) Black, and (d) Asian. The directory contained photos of 1,521 people. Following, in Table 3.1, are the resulting estimates of the number and percentage of the church’s ethnic population for each of the four represented ethnic groups. The directory was one year old at the time of my counting and represented roughly 75% of the entire congregation.

Table 1

Ethnic Breakdown of the Hillside Church Pictorial Directory (N = 1,521) and the Neighborhood Elementary School Most Proximate to Teen Center (N = 369)

Ethnicity	Number	Percent
	Church (School)	Church (School)
White	1,436 (118)	94% (32%)
Hispanic	31 (192)	2% (52%)
Black	25 (30)	2% (8%)
Asian	29 (11)	2% (3%)
Other	0 (18)	0% (5%)
Total	1,521 (369)	100% (100%)

Demographics of the community surrounding Teen Center. The neighborhoods surrounding the two Teen Centers were economically depressed areas in the city. The area immediately surrounding Teen Center I was comprised of apartments and low-income housing. The area immediately surrounding Teen Center II was comprised of what was known in the city as “the Projects”—in reality they were four city blocks of government-subsidized apartments. The housing surrounding Teen Center I was inhabited by the working poor. Families who were receiving governmental housing and income allowances inhabited the housing surrounding Teen Center II. Payne et al.’s (2001) definition of situational poverty, poverty as a result of a life circumstance and not generational in nature, would describe most closely the neighborhood surrounding Teen Center I. Her

definition of generational poverty, poverty that has existed over generations in a family, would most closely resemble the neighborhood surrounding Teen Center II.

Dawson (pseudonym) Elementary School was the neighborhood elementary school serving the immediate area surrounding Teen Center. Standardized Testing And Reporting (STAR) data from Dawson Elementary School, as reported to the California Department of Education for the spring 2002 testing cycle, was used to create a profile of the area served by Teen Center. Of the approximately 400 students who comprised the second through fifth graders being reported to the state from Dawson Elementary, 12% were English Language Learners, 62% received free or reduced lunch, and 20% were new to the school and the school district in the 2001-2002 school year. The average parent education level was reported as 18% not a high school graduate, 42% high school graduate, 27% some college, 9% college graduate, 4% graduate school.

Ethical safeguards. All participants were provided careful consideration for their protection and anonymity related to their participation in the study. I gave them a letter that explained the study (see Appendix B) and a consent form (see Appendix C) that they needed to sign before they could be in the study. The informed consent form explained that pseudonyms were used in the study to assure anonymity. The informed consent form clearly stated that participants were free to leave the study at any time for any reason and that their comfort with the process was most important to me as the researcher. The form stated that it was

not anticipated that any harm would come to an individual involved with the study.

Timeline. The study was conducted from April 2003 through July 2003. I first reviewed all pertinent documents, followed by interviewing the church leaders responsible for oversight of the Teen Center program. I then interviewed community government leaders who had lent support to the establishment of Teen Center and other city leaders who had direct involvement with the five-year lease agreement with the foundation. I then made informal observations, gathering field notes, by attending Teen Center's daily programs and special functions. Following the process of familiarizing myself with the operation of the program, I interviewed volunteers participating at Teen Center.

All church-related interviews were scheduled and held in the respective office of the individual being interviewed. All city officials were interviewed in their office through prior appointment. All Teen Center-related interviews (staff and volunteers) were conducted by appointment at Teen Center, utilizing the center's office facilities. The duration of the interviews varied from 15 to 45 minutes, based on the depth of knowledge each stakeholder had related to Teen Center or the degree with which each was involved with the program. I interviewed each participant individually and tape-recorded the interview so the responses could be reviewed for closer scrutiny. I chose to send the tapes out for transcription, rather than transcribing them myself. I communicated to the transcriber the confidential nature of the material she was transcribing.

Participants

Selection process. The method I used to select participants in the study is referred to by Patton (1990) as “typical case sampling,” with the goal to “illustrate or highlight what is typical, normal. The purpose is to be illustrative, not definitive” (p. 173). The approach required me to look for people who were routinely involved and a regular part of the program. I chose to interview volunteers who were involved at Teen Center at the time of the study. The church leaders I chose as participants were the creators and maintainers of the ongoing Teen Center program. I chose community leaders on the basis of their involvement and responsibility related to the lease agreement between the foundation and the city for the facility that became the Teen Center.

Church leaders. Four individuals from the church were interviewed for their insights related to the establishment and ongoing operation of the Teen Center and their membership on the board of directors of the foundation overseeing its operation. In this report I refer to the church leaders as Church Leader #1, Church Leader #2, Church Leader #3, and Church Leader #4 to protect their identity.

Community leaders. Seven individuals were interviewed in this category; all were either elected or hired to work in local government positions. The community leaders provided assistance and the civic authority necessary to establish and carryout the favorable lease agreement with the foundation to establish the Teen Center. In this report I refer to the seven community leaders as

Community Leader #1 through Community Leader #7 in order to protect their identity.

Teen Center volunteers. Volunteers from the program interviewed for this study consisted of 7 church members and 7 college students. The 7 college students attended a local university that required 80 hours of mandatory community service as a partial requirement toward graduation, and the university students interviewed in this study chose to serve their community service hours at Teen Center.

Data Sources

Interview protocols. I developed protocols of open-ended questions for each of the three specific groups that were interviewed.

1. Church Leader Protocol (see Appendix D)—The *Church Leader* protocol focused on the individual's involvement with Teen Center, any issues related to working closely with a government organization in the Teen Center effort, his or her goals for the program, and his or her opinion as to how the program met the academic and social needs of the participants.
2. Community Leader Protocol (see Appendix F)—The *Community Leader* protocol focused on the individual's involvement with the establishment of Teen Center, his or her goals for the program, any issues related to working closely with a religious organization in the Teen Center effort, and his or her perceptions regarding the academic and social effect the program was having on the participants.

3. Teen Center Volunteer Protocol (see Appendix F)—The *Teen Center Volunteer* protocol focused on the individual's motivation to work at Teen Center and his or her perceptions regarding the academic and social effect the program was having on the participants.

Documents. I reviewed all documents on file at the church that pertained to Teen Center. I received written permission from one of the church leaders to copy all of the documents related to Teen Center, and his secretary provided me with access to both the files and a copy machine. The documents I reviewed consisted of contracts, grant proposals with accompanying mission statements and goals, elder meeting minutes, budget printouts, fliers and news clippings related to Teen Center activity, and city council meeting minutes wherein the lease was approved. I reviewed documents that created a historical paper trail of the establishment of Teen Center. I also identified the interagency cooperation necessary to establish Teen Center, budgetary expenditures necessary to establish the program, and stated goals and objectives the church hoped to address in establishing Teen Center. I made copies of all pertinent documents and retained them in a secure place for future reference.

Informal observations and field notes. During the months of March, April, May, and June of 2003 I made periodic visits to Teen Center to engage in informal observations of the interactions of clients and volunteers during the regular operation of the daily Teen Center program. I observed snack time, computer center, reading time, homework hour, arts and crafts, story time, and game time. I attended other major activities during the time of the study: a clean-

up day, a carnival, and a bike rodeo and picnic. I also attended organizational and volunteer training meetings at Teen Center during my observation period.

I used field notes to capture my observations during my interactions at Teen Center. I desired to observe the Teen Center program and to gather my own opinions of the operation of the program. I wanted to form some of my own perceptions of the Teen Center program before interviewing the adult stakeholders in regards to their perceptions of the program's effectiveness. I was interested to see if the stakeholder responses to the protocol questions seemed to coincide with my informal observations of the program. I was looking for congruence or disharmony between the individuals' responses and my own observations.

Data Analysis

Following the completion of all interviews, observations, and their subsequent transcription, I began the data analysis process. I looked for repeated phrases and concepts and sought to identify themes in the reasons for which members of all three groups supported the Teen Center program. I charted their answers to similar questions and looked for patterns in their answers. I found both similarities and differences as I compared the answers of individuals within groups and when comparing groups one to another. I utilized Cowger's (1977) four models of social service delivery—*advocacy, counseling, regulation, or brokerage*—to identify most closely the aspirations individuals in each of the three groups had toward the work of the Teen Center.

I also cross-referenced the responses with Ladson-Billings's (1994) four categories of social service motivation—*tutor, general contractor, custodian, and referral agent*—to better identify individual and group motivation for involvement with the Teen Center program. And I explored the degree to which stakeholders felt the program was successful in meeting their objectives.

Conclusion

Since this was a qualitative study, I, the researcher, was the key research instrument in the study of the Teen Center program. I used the case study method of research and reviewed documents, conducted interviews, and made informal observation. The process allowed me to address both research questions: (a) What significant historical stages and relationships were necessary to establish the Teen Center? and (b) What were the individual and group motivations for involvement with the Teen Center? and What were the stakeholder perceptions of the program's effectiveness?

The following chapter reports the findings related to the historical development of the Teen Center program, stakeholder motivation for program involvement, and stakeholder perceptions of the program's effectiveness.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This study sought answers to research questions regarding two areas: (a) historical development of the Teen Center program, and (b) stakeholder aspirations and perceptions of the Teen Center program. Findings on historical development are presented here first. Secondly, the stakeholder findings are presented in four subcategories: (a) stakeholder aspirations for the Teen Center program, (b) comparison of stakeholders' social service delivery approach to Cowger's (1977) four models of social service and Ladson-Billings' (1994) four social service motivations, (c) perceived program effect, and (d) church and state issues among church and community leaders. Both Cowger's and Ladson-Billings' categories identify themes and patterns that arose from the review of interviews and documents examined for this study.

Historical Development of the Teen Center Program

Through interviews with church leaders and the document review, I learned that the Teen Center emerged in four definite phases. The four phases were (a) program conception developed by church leaders, (b) Salvation Army partnership, (c) eviction and community outcry, and (d) community partnership. Drawing on the accounts of the study participants and documents reviewed for this study, I describe the Teen Center's phases of development below.

Program conception developed by church leaders. Four church leaders from Hillside Church (pseudonym) led an effort to create a teen program focused on the needs of at-risk children in the community. Three of the church leaders spoke specifically of focusing their service on the north side of the city. Church Leader #4 expressed it this way:

A group of leaders here at the church saw the need to minister and to reach out to the north side of the city. They saw the need in particular with children; such a disproportionate amount of them were in need—economically, socially, and in relation to gang activities and crime and all of that—including broken homes.

Prior to the establishment of Teen Center, Hillside Church had had no ongoing presence in the north side of the city. Church Leader #1 told me that the church leadership was concerned with the spiritual, social, and educational issues confronting the at-risk students on the north side. The same leader expressed a desire to establish an inroad to positively impact the families in the community. He stated that dealing with the children would be the most immediate way of establishing a relationship with families on the north side of the city.

Chapter 2 presented Berger and Neuhaus's (1977) belief that mediating structures needed to be invited participants of the community before creating structures designed to administer social service to individuals in need. The following quotation illustrates the two-tiered approach the church envisioned for involvement in the north side community. The Teen Center was both a stand-alone project and a *bridge-building* opportunity for the church to gain the trust of

the community that they would need for future social engagement, including a proposed church plant.

Initially, we had a concern to be involved in a community program, and we did a lot of evaluating among the church resources we had, and it was determined then that we were going to do an after school program. . . . On an immediate level we wanted to meet the needs of at-risk kids, both socially and educationally. We also wanted to reach families, not just kids. The kids provided the most obvious and immediate need, and so that was really the motivation behind it. (Church Leader #1)

The church leaders expressed their beliefs that the highest priorities for the program were the spiritual needs of the individual children and establishing caring relationships with families located in the north side of the city. Because the children targeted for the program were not coming to the church, the church leadership mobilized the services and took them to the neighborhood chosen for the program. The entire Teen Club concept was originally designed as a purely voluntary ministry, staffed and run by church-member volunteers. Due to the administrative tasks required to run the program, an individual was chosen to coordinate and oversee the establishment of the Teen Club project.

Alyssa (pseudonym), a college student and four-year member at Hillside Church, became the volunteer director of the Teen Club. Alyssa had recently returned from a summer mission trip with Reign Ministries to Boness, Scotland, where she served for three weeks in a youth center. She stated that her experience there gave her the desire and vision for what the center could accomplish in her

old neighborhood. Alyssa had grown up near the desired location for the Teen Club, and she seemed to understand the needs and problems of the neighborhood. Her understanding, compassion, and desire to help seemed to motivate her to take on the leadership role with the Teen Club.

God really burned in my heart to continue working with a youth center.

Just being a part of something that God's hand is in is enough. That, and knowing we make a difference for these kids. (Alyssa)

The next process was getting the Teen Club idea from the concept phase to the mobilization phase with a trained, fingerprinted, and background-checked staff. The request for volunteer helpers went out from the pulpit in the late spring and summer of 1999. Roughly 50 volunteers comprised of adults and college and high school students responded to the request for help. With a nucleus of volunteers in place and a desire to move forward, the next step the church leadership faced was finding a location to house the Teen Club in the north side of the city.

Salvation Army partnership. On November 8, 1999, the Teen Club opened its doors as a joint venture between the church and the Salvation Army. Salvation Army Leader #1 stated, "Our facility is in the location where at-risk children are served. It made a good location for collaborative efforts."

The Salvation Army provided Hillside Church space upstairs at the Salvation Army facility, at no charge, to run their program. The understanding was that the church would supply the volunteers to run the program, but the

operational costs would be split equally between the two entities. The club operated from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

The response to the Teen Club program was impressive, as reported by Salvation Army Leader #2 who oversaw the operation of the Salvation Army facility:

I have seen transformation in kids' lives that proves they see the open door of opportunity and that there is hope. The future can be brighter; there's light at the end of the tunnel. You're not locked into the disadvantage of the situation you're presently experiencing. With a little hard work on your part and a good measure of God's grace, you can be transformed by the Holy Spirit's power.

The Teen Club was averaging 25 to 30 students each week, with the age of the participants ranging from 11 to 17 years. Church Leader #2 reported that students were enthusiastic about their involvement at the Teen Club. The services provided every day consisted of a snack when the children arrived, a hot dinner provided by the Salvation Army, homework help, and lots of games and social interaction. Church Leader #2 stated,

We thought the kids would come and go, but they're coming at 3:00 p.m. and staying until 7:00 p.m. In talking with the kids, it doesn't sound like their parents are a big part of their lives. These kids are starved for adult attention. They're craving adult interaction because they are not getting it at home. The adults have become mentors more than supervisors. That's what we wanted, but we didn't know it would happen so naturally.

The Teen Club had operated for a little over a year when there was a leadership change at the Salvation Army. Church Leader #1 reported to me, “Some changes at the Salvation Army meant that we got asked to leave from there.” Despite the early successes of the Teen Club, the church was given three months to close down and relocate its program. The church leadership desired to keep the program running, but they were without a facility to operate it. The church leadership decided to approach the city to seek assistance in finding a new location for the Teen Club.

Eviction and community outcry. The eviction in December 2000 of the Teen Club from its location at the Salvation Army facility started a process that solidified the Teen Club’s significance and permanence in the city. Community Leader #1 relayed the community response as a result of the eviction,

The parents of the kids who were involved complained both to the press and to the city and especially to Community Leader #2. He was aware of the program, believed in it, was committed to it, and he came and said he would find us space. And so, the city made a commitment to us that they would find the space.

Community Leader #2 attended Hillside Church, and he reported that he was aware of the Teen Club situation, both as a leader in the community and because the homeless nature of the Teen Club was announced from the pulpit on Sunday mornings. Many discussions took place between city government leaders and members of the church, including the church leadership. People tried to

facilitate the process of finding a new location for the Teen Club, but the process was not quick to reach a resolution.

In my conversations with members of Hillside Church and the Teen Center Community Foundation, I think I knew that they were looking for a place because housing is part of our department responsibilities. We have very distinct faith-based initiatives on the way we try to link up the faith community to community policing and those kinds of things: adolescent problem prevention and juvenile delinquency prevention. (Community Leader #2)

The families of children served by the Teen Club also entered into the program relocation discussion. Both church and community leaders mentioned contacts they had with parents and grandparents of students served by the Teen Club. They recounted the families' messages about the necessity of reestablishing the program in the north side community.

The parents and grandparents of the kids appreciated our work with them. They contacted the newspaper, and the Community Leaders #1 and #2 wanting us to—wanting the city to help us find a new home for the Teen Club. (Church Leader #2)

Meetings were held between Community Leader #2 and Church Leaders #2 and #3. Community Leader #2 was working with the Department of Housing for the city to locate a suitable spot for the relocation of the Teen Club. In my interview, Community Leader #2 expressed his belief that the Teen Club was assisting the city's community-policing efforts that focused on prevention, as

opposed to suppression, of crime. Community Leader #2 explained why he supported finding a solution, both as a member of the church and in his role in the local government.

My role is frequently to serve as a catalyst of community actions. So if there is a community group that is fairly willing to do something, but has some roadblock between their willingness and their desired contribution to the community, within the framework of juvenile delinquency prevention and crime control, my job is to try to remove those barriers if I can and help them do whatever it is they want to do.

The partnership that arose became the nexus of a faith-based organization and a city government working in coordination to better serve the needs of the community. Berger and Neuhaus (1977) would call this moment of private and public cooperation for the empowerment of an independent endeavor, with the support of the local government, mediating structures.

Community partnership. In March of 2001, following the Teen Club's eviction from the Salvation Army building, Hillside Church made an organizational move that provided more flexibility in dealing with the city. The move also allowed the Teen Club more flexibility in seeking outside funding sources to help support the program. The church reorganized the Teen Club from a "church-sponsored" program and established it under the Teen Center Community Foundation, a 501(c)(3) California nonprofit religious corporation. The move provided more flexibility for the City Council members because the city was not technically working with a church, but rather, a nonprofit

organization. The nonprofit organizational status allowed church leadership the freedom to continue the oversight of the Teen Club without the church being directly responsible for the program. The foundation became the organization the city and other outside funding sources dealt with in supporting the efforts of the Teen Club.

It took nine months to relocate the Teen Club, but on August 7, 2001, the City Council voted unanimously to enter into a five-year lease agreement that allowed the Teen Club to reopen its doors under a new name, Teen Center. The old Red Cross headquarters were vacated during the months of searching for a new location. Although not in the exact location as the previous center, the new site was close enough to the desired location to move forward on the project. The lease with the city was set at \$1.00 a year for five years with an optional five-year renewal, payable each year on September 1st.

The initial partnership with the city went well and, as a result, at the December 2, 2002, City Council meeting, a second property was leased to the Teen Center Community Foundation by the city. The second lease agreement would allow the foundation to open Teen Center II in another needy north side neighborhood. The facility was a government-subsidized housing fourplex that had been owned by the county. Church Leader #3 reported that the county expressed no interest in dealing directly with the foundation, so the community leadership undertook efforts to have the county turn the property over to the city. When the transfer of ownership was complete, the city turned the property over to the foundation to open Teen Center II.

The goal was that Teen Center I serve kindergarten to sixth graders and Teen Center II focus its services on seventh to twelfth graders. At the time of the study, both centers struggled to transport children to the age-appropriate center. The solution was to serve kindergarten to sixth graders at Teen Center I (Monday-Thursday) and have a daily split schedule at Teen Center II, with kindergarten to sixth grade being served in the early session and seventh to twelfth grade, at the later session (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday). At the time of the study, Teen Center II's second session was attended each day by middle school children. Although the Center desired to serve students from seventh to twelfth grade, the program participants' age group topped out at middle school. The Teen Center Community Foundation continued to seek funds to purchase a bus or transportation van to easily transport children to the age-appropriate house.

An issue that was not raised in the interviews but surfaced in the document review was the process Hillside Church went through in creating the Teen Center Community Foundation, a 501(c)(3) religious nonprofit organization. The foundation was created to oversee the Teen Center program. The Board of Directors for the corporation was comprised of the four church leaders who had overseen the Teen Club. The creation of the foundation established a legal separation between the church and Teen Center that allowed the foundation to work independently of the church and seek additional outside funding sources.

It was not clear whether the city council was aware that they were actually dealing with an independent entity, the Teen Center Community Foundation, or whether they thought they were actually dealing with the church. I believe, from

interviewing the community leaders that the two separate entities blended in their minds because the church and the foundation were so closely associated. The lease agreement they entered into was clearly with the foundation, but in the interviews, all of the leaders made references to the church and not the foundation. Regardless of the understanding of the city leadership, the 501(c)(3) status allowed Teen Center to apply for grant funding that would not have been available to a church-sponsored ministry. The largest single grant award at the time of the study was \$50,000.

Stakeholder Aspirations for and Perceptions of the Teen Center Program

I identified four separate categories of findings as a result of this study. The four areas were: (a) stakeholder aspirations for the Teen Center program, (b) relationship of stakeholder approach to Cowger's (1977) four models of social service delivery and Ladson-Billings's (1994) four social service motivations, (c) stakeholder perceptions of program effectiveness, and (d) church and state issues among church and community leaders.

Stakeholder aspirations for the Teen Center program. The four stakeholder groups consisted of church volunteers, university volunteers, church leaders, and community leaders. I interviewed members of each group and included, in all the interviews, questions to elicit their aspirations for the Teen Center program. The Teen Center volunteer group was comprised of 7 church-affiliated volunteers and five university volunteers. Each individual was asked an identical question regarding his or her motivation for working with the Teen Center program (see Appendix C, Question 4).

The church-affiliated volunteers were purely voluntary helpers, whereas the university volunteers used the Teen Center to satisfy an 80-hour mandatory community service requirement for graduation. Therefore, their responses were analyzed separately because I anticipated that their aspirations might be dissimilar.

The Church Leadership group had the most diverse aspirations and was the most passionate about the program transforming the lives of the students who attended the program. The Church Leadership group emphasized impacting the children spiritually as the leading aspiration for the Teen Center program. Church Leader #3 also mentioned a long-term aspiration of establishing a church in the neighborhood served by the program. The group also mentioned academic and behavioral improvement as aspirations for the children involved in the program; however, academic and behavioral aspirations remained secondary to spiritual aspirations for the children.

There are several pertinent goals and one of them is not spoken and not written down anywhere, but it is to expose non-Christians to Christians, and in that way being salt and light to our community. Another one is to provide, to link the strengths of Hillside Church, as a resource, to needs of our community . . . having some kind of structure to put the two together.
(Church Leader #2)

There are two or three different layers here. One is we want to meet some immediate needs of kids and families, kids in helping them stay in school and providing hope and some success and perhaps they can see themselves

as accomplishing more than they could before. . . . Then we want to start home Bible studies and one of the other goals is to eventually plant a church in the north side that reaches the Hispanic people. (Church Leader #3)

We want to transform the lives of the children that come to Teen Center, and we want to teach them how to be healthy and responsible adults. . . . We want to teach them how to be healthy in their marriages and in their parenting. (Church Leader #4)

On an immediate level we wanted to meet the needs of the part of the community that were not going to come to us; we had to go to them. They are at-risk socially, at-risk academically, and for us obviously at-risk spiritually, which is our primary concern. We want to reach them with the Gospel of Christ, but we also wanted to reach families, not just kids. (Church Leader #1)

The seven Community Leaders involved in the interview process were interested in healthy child development, crime prevention, and academic improvement as their aspirations for the Teen Center program. Community Leader #3 stated:

My leadership role in the city and my position in terms of the ongoing community involvement with Teen Center is simply my interest in children and keeping them active. . . . I think mostly it's been my background in working with youth issues. . . . I keep myself interested because it is something I am very concerned about. So, probably first and

foremost, I would like to see their success measured in how it has benefited the children in school and secondly the juvenile crime problems in town.

Community Leader #5 stated:

I would like to see Teen Center . . . parallel some of the work that we're trying to do with our resource coalition.

Community Leader # 1 remarked:

I would like to see that the basic concept of giving kids a place where they can go after school, where they can receive help, and also socialize in a positive way is realized. That's something we spend a lot of money on the city doing, so if we have a religious group, or a private group. Or whomever fulfilling that same function, then there is no downside.

The aspirations the Community Leaders set were limited to the children attending the program and, unlike the Church Leaders, their aspirations for the program were more limited in scope. Community Leader #2 was the one Community Leader who shared the spiritual hope for transformation in the lives of the children and their families with the Church Leadership. His greatest concern was to use the Teen Center program to restore hope to the lives of the children who attended the program. He was the only community leader who had attended a function or volunteered at Teen Center

The greatest disparity among Community Leaders regarding aspirations for the Teen Center existed between Community Leader #1 and Community

Leader #2. Community Leader #1 saw the program as a mechanism to keep the area of the city being served under control:

I would like to see that the basic concept of giving kids a place to go after school. . . . The other thing I would like to see quite frankly is, I would like it to be quiet, if you know what I mean. . . . You don't want a bunch of nails popping out of the board. You want it to just work so that it doesn't require or command a lot of your time or effort.

Community Leader #2, based on his role as a city government official, could have looked solely at the potential benefit of crime reduction in the city. Instead, he chose to focus on the potential benefit to the life of the child who attended the program.

I hope that it provides young people the possibility of a positive social place to go in those critical after-school hours, a place where kids that don't have a lot of love, care, and compassion in their lives find that. . . . I hope that it also helps them find God. . . . It makes a lot of sense to help kids achieve a spiritual state and a firmly held belief that there is a purpose in their life. . . . So I guess that the real meaning of this, it's about saving kids' lives. . . . I believe that Teen Center and the people that work for it have and will save some children's lives.

The Teen Center volunteer group of 12 was divided into two separate categories, church volunteers and university volunteers. The five university students seemed to enjoy their involvement at the Teen Center as a means to serving their 80-hours of community service. They said they chose to work at

Teen Center because they liked working with children and they thought they could help the children with academics and positive social interactions. The finite nature of the university student involvement in the Teen Center program may have been the reason their responses were limited in insight and vague. A sampling of their responses indicates their enjoyment of children, yet a lack of specific long-term aspirations for the program.

What motivates me? I guess my passion for children. Making a difference in their life, being a role model to them. . . . Having them say, ‘You know, I want to be like this person.’ (University Volunteer #1)

I just like working with the kids. . . . A lot of them come from families where they’ve been abused or neglected. . . . So it’s kind of rewarding. (University Volunteer #2)

The kids need us to come volunteer because without us it’s kind of hard because they just have three people running it. (University Volunteer #3)

The staff is really great, they really appreciate us. They’re happy that we’re here. They encourage us to do what we want to do and they don’t tell us, ‘Do this or do that.’ . . . It is just a good experience to work here. (University Volunteer #4)

The church volunteers, like the church leaders, included the spiritual component with the academic and social needs of the students attending Teen Center as the primary motivating factors in their involvement. It seemed to me that their commitment level and plan for continuing involvement with Teen Center was higher than the university volunteers and it caused their answers to

have greater depth and to be more forward-thinking. Samplings of their responses show the child-centered focus of their aspirations for the Teen Center program:

Teen Center's a place where I feel I can help them, where they can better themselves. (Church Volunteer #1)

I feel I've been blessed with the teaching career that I have and this is a chance to do something for the Lord and these kids instead of the local school district. (Church Volunteer #2)

Though my work through life was not with children, I always had a keen sense of their value. When there was this need to help out, I said I'd do what I can. (Church Volunteer #3)

Church volunteers' responses seem to indicate a deeper level of empathy related to the issues the children were facing, as compared to the university volunteers. University Volunteer #1 was the only university volunteer to express having "a passion for the children." But her comments then shifted to herself, "Having them say, 'You know, I want to be like this person.'"

The greater depth of care and duration of commitment to the children and the program seems to indicate that the two groups differed in their level of ownership of the program and the duration they were willing to serve. No university student stayed on serving at Teen Center beyond the required 80 hours of service. The differences in expressions of care and duration in the program could have been due to the fact that the church volunteers were serving out of desire, and the university volunteers were serving out of duty. The church

volunteers had no obligation to serve; therefore, there was no specific end to their involvement with the program.

The two groups responding most similarly were the church leaders and the church volunteers. These groups shared a focus on transforming the current spiritual, academic, and social situation of the children attending Teen Center. The community leaders were most like the university students in that they both stated an interest in working with children and it seemed they both felt an obligation and desire to serve. The Teen Center provided the means toward both ends. The college students stated that they chose to work at Teen Center to fulfill their 80-hour requirement for community service because they liked working with children. The city leaders expressed a desire to serve the north side community by addressing quality of life issues, education, and crime prevention as a function of their personal desire and as a result of their leadership roles in the city. They seemed to believe quality of life for the city would improve if the kids at Teen Center had a place to go after school for positive social interaction and homework help, instead of just hanging out in the neighborhood.

Comparison of Stakeholder Social Service Delivery Approach Related to Cowger's Four Models of Social Service and Ladson-Billings' Four Social Service Motivations.

I categorized each of the respondents (church leader, community leader, church volunteer, and university volunteer) into one of Cowger's (1977) four models of social service delivery. The four categories represent the beliefs an individual has about the purpose for and potential effect of social work. Cowger

(1977) created four social service delivery categories he believes all social service endeavors fall into: advocate, counselor, regulator, or broker. The four respondent groups were also matched to one of Ladson-Billings' (1994) four categories of individual motivation for social service involvement: tutor, general contractor, custodian, or referral agent.

In chapter 2 Cowger's (1977) and Ladson-Billings' (1994) social service delivery categories and motivations were discussed. The categories are used as a cross-reference to identify the type of social service delivery and motivation each respondent most closely identifies. A brief review of Cowger's and Ladson-Billings' categories is as follows:

Ladson-Billings

1. *Tutor*—all children can grow in their present condition.
2. *General Contractor*—improvement is possible but they *sub* the job out.
3. *Custodian*—do not believe strides can be made so they attempt maintain status quo.
4. *Referral Agents*—do not believe strides can be made and release themselves of any responsibility.

Cowger

1. *Advocate*—assumption that a conflict exists between the client and society and the goal is to bring about change in the individual.

2. *Counselor*—social worker focuses one-on-one with a client to try and address specific issues by helping the client see the issues and help him or her make better decisions regarding feelings and behaviors.
3. *Regulator*—the social worker is an extension of society attempting to alter client behavior and attitudes to bring about conformity, promotes status quo.
4. *Broker*—social worker assists the individual with resolutions to their problems while attempting to change society and the environment as well.

Church leadership. I classified in Table 2 each of the four Church Leaders' responses regarding aspirations they had for the Teen Center program and their personal motivation for involvement. The category I placed them in most closely reflects the nature of their responses. A quote from Church Leader #1 represents the collective desire of the group to work with the individual child in need, while still attempting to address the larger problems of the community:

We wanted to meet the needs of the community, the kind of people who were not coming to us, we had to go to them. . . . There were at-risk kids and we wanted to reach them—we also wanted to reach families not just kids.

All Church Leaders chose to focus on the impact the program could have as a two-fold process. There was equal concern for the lives of the children that participated in the program and for the neighborhood in which they lived, both marks of the *broker-tutor* approach, according to Cowger (1977) and Ladson-

Billings (1994). The program was not viewed solely as a community enhancement endeavor, although community enhancement was not ruled out as a potential byproduct of the Teen Center. The focus of the Teen Center was the individual life of each child involved, the spiritual life of the child in particular. The program was designed to transform the lives of individual children while gaining the trust of their families and the neighborhood to spearhead other outreach endeavors in the future. One example, expressed by Church Leader #3, was the church leadership's desire to use the Teen Center project as a springboard for a future church plant opportunity in the neighborhood.

Community leadership. In Table 2, each of the seven Community Leaders' responses regarding what they wanted the Teen Center to accomplish and their personal motivation for involvement is classified in the category most closely reflecting the program goals they espoused. The following quotes show the Community Leadership's focus was on the management of people, and not on the individual lives of the children attending the Teen Center.

There is a difficult window (she was referring to the time period of the middle school years). Once the kids get into high school, some of them have programs and activities through the schools. It's channeling the others, because middle school kids are a real challenge for us.

(Community Leader #6)

I would love to be able to measure how it has reduced juvenile crime because that's a huge part of the hours between when a child gets out of school until evening time. (Community Leader #3)

Table 2

Social Service Model (Cowger, 1977) and Worker Motivation (Ladson-Billings, 1994)

Cowger's Social Service Model				
Ladson-Billings Worker Motivation	Advocate	Counselor	Regulator	Broker
Tutor	University Volunteer #2 University Volunteer #3 University Volunteer #4 University Volunteer #5 University Volunteer #6 University Volunteer #7	Church Volunteer #1 Church Volunteer #2 Church Volunteer #3 Church Volunteer #4 Church Volunteer #5 Church Volunteer #6 Church Volunteer #7 University Volunteer #1		Church Leader #1 Church Leader #2 Church Leader #3 Church Leader #4 Community Leader #2
General Contractor				
Custodian			Community Leader #1 Community Leader #3 Community Leader #4 Community Leader #5 Community Leader #6 Community Leader #7	
Referral Agent				

I would like it to be quiet, if you know what I mean. You don't want a bunch of nails popping out of the board. (Community Leader #1)

The most common responses of the Community Leaders fell into the category of *regulator-custodian*. The regulator-custodian category tries to manage people and situations. The model works toward keeping individuals conformed to the status quo, or as referred to by Community Leader #1, attempting to keep

community problems from “popping up, like nails in a board.” The Teen Center was viewed as a means of containment of problems and issues without having to change the existing structure.

Community Leader #2 (like the Church Leaders) saw the program operating in the role of a *broker-tutor*, because he focused on the possible transformation the program could bring about in the life of the individual participant and recognized the need for community-wide change. Broker-tutors see problems in the community, just as regulator-custodians do, but they choose to focus on the individual in need, rather than the management of community concerns. The broker-tutor also works on identifying and addressing the problems that need to change community-wide (e.g., illiteracy, crime) to meet the ongoing needs of the at-risk population. The focus is the individual and his or her need from the community, rather than the community’s need for the individual to come into compliance.

I hope that it provides young people a positive social place during those critical after school hours . . . a place where kids that don’t have a lot of love and caring and compassion in their lives find it. On a personal note, I hope that it also helps them find God. . . . One of the more dangerous things I’ve seen are young people that have no hope. . . . I believe that Teen Center and the people that work for it have and will save some children’s lives. (Community Leader #2)

Church volunteers. I classified each of the seven Church Volunteers’ responses regarding what motivated them to work with the Teen Center program

in Table 2. I made the assumption that what motivated them to work with the program was in line with what they thought the program could accomplish in the lives of the students. The following quotations illustrate the value the Church Volunteers placed on the individual children and the care and compassion with which they approached their interactions.

I feel it's a need for our community where some of these kids don't have a place to go after school . . . a place where they can come and not be out on the street . . . a place where I feel I can help them where they can better themselves. (Church Volunteer #1)

Even though my work through life was not with children, I mean I always had a keen sense of their value, and when there was this need to help out I said, "You know, I'd do what I can." (Church Volunteer #2)

The kids captured my heart. I just delight seeing them have a good time. (Church Volunteer #3)

With an approach similar to that of the Church Leaders, the Church Volunteers saw the individual needs of the participants as the motivating factor for their involvement with the Teen Center program. Unlike the Church Leaders, the Church Volunteers did not seem to feel a sense of ownership for the transformation of the neighborhood. The group recognized that the community had needs, but they focused the scope of their work on the individual lives of the children in the program.

It seems the difference in perceived scope of the program between the Church Leaders and Church Volunteers was directly related to their connection

with the Teen Center program. The Church Leadership desired to have a long-term commitment to the north side of the city and viewed the Teen Center program as the first step in making lasting inroads in the neighborhood. The Church Volunteers evaluated the effectiveness of the Teen Center program by the impact it had on the lives of the children with whom they worked. The proximity of the Church Volunteer to the lives of children who attended Teen Center seemed to cause them to focus on the lives of individuals, and not the community.

University volunteers. I classified in Table 2 each of the seven University Volunteers' responses regarding what motivated them to work with the Teen Center program. Unlike the Church Volunteers, the University Volunteers were compelled to spend 80 hours of community service to fulfill one of their graduation requirements.

Four of the five of the University Volunteers made reference to the children who attended the program needing them as role models to help combat their impoverished or disadvantaged background. None of the respondents mentioned any long-term goals of the Teen Center program on the lives of the participants. This shortsighted approach to the potential program effects seemed to be in direct relationship to the limited involvement all of the University Volunteers had with the program; their involvement would be concluded at the completion of their 80 hours of service. All of the university volunteers seemed to feel that the Teen Center participants were at a societal disadvantage and that the children were better off due to their participation at the Teen Center.

Stakeholder Perceptions of Program Effect

Perceived academic program effect. All 23 individuals interviewed, representing all four of the stakeholder groups, believed that the tutorial and homework program had a positive effect on the students involved in the program. One person noted having been presented with an improved report card by a student. Another individual noted the improvement he noticed in a child he had worked with on an ongoing basis. Lastly, one volunteer mentioned a good grade a girl received on a report that they had worked together on completing. No other respondent mentioned any specific examples of student academic performance improvement related to the Teen Center tutorial program support.

The confidence with which individuals believed the program was effective varied to some degree. It seemed the desire for empirical evidence of program effect was strongest for stakeholders who did not have personal experience in working with children at Teen Center. Interestingly, none of the respondents withheld judgement of the program's positive effect awaiting some form of empirical data. All respondents were convinced of the positive effect of the academic component of the Teen Center program. Volunteers who had actually worked with children at Teen Center held the strongest beliefs.

Although the collective belief was unanimous that the program was positively impacting children in their academic pursuits, it should also be noted that some individuals called for quantitative data to prove the program's academic merits. Others called for increased numbers of volunteers to make sure children were getting all the help they needed academically. Listed below is a sampling of stakeholder responses to a protocol question common to all 23 individuals

interviewed regarding whether the Teen Center program was helping students improve their grades in school (see Appendix D, Question 7; Appendix E, Question 5; and Appendix F, Question 5).

Stakeholders stated their support of the positive academic impact the program was having on the student participants of the Teen Center program:

I think we are. But I think we're doing it in a limited fashion. . . . If we had more qualified tutors we would most definitely be able to say, emphatically declare, that we are helping every child improve their grades.
(Church Leader #4)

I would say *I hope* so and it would be nice to have some empirical data and report cards before and after and we could probably judge that.
(Church Leader #3)

Yeah, although I haven't followed it close enough to have a good opinion.
(Community Leader #1)

I believe it is helping them academically. (Church Volunteer #4)

My sense is yes. (Community Leader #2)

The italicized word in each response is highlighted to show the qualified support shown by the volunteers and the church and community leaders interviewed in this study. The respondents did not require any data evidence to convince them the program was an effective and worthwhile endeavor. But, the qualification that some stakeholders expressed and the call for empirical data to support the academic impact the program is having shows a need for further study in this area.

Perceived behavioral program effect. The 23 respondents were unanimous in their belief that the Teen Center had a positive impact on participant behavior both at school and in the community. It was interesting to see the confidence the respondents had when commenting on the positive behavioral impact of the Teen Center on the children attending the program. Apparently, the belief in the worth of the program and the accompanying belief in its effectiveness were enough to convince the 23 respondents in this study of the actual effectiveness of the program.

Individuals stated a desire for data in the area of grade-point improvement to show the academic effect the program had on the student participants. There was no call for empirical data in the realm of improved behavior. It seemed as though it was enough for the respondents to believe the program made a difference in students' actions. Listed below are emphatic responses to the common protocol question, *Do you think Teen Center is helping students stay out of trouble in school and in the community?* (see Appendix D, Question 8; Appendix E, Question 6; and Appendix F, Question 5)

That is an *absolute*. (Church Leader #3)

Yes, first of all because they are at Teen Center and not out in the street with a group of potential trouble-makers. (Church Leader #4)

Yes. The fact that there are students that are attending there tells me the program is a success. (Community Leader #3)

Absolutely! When kids are comfortable and they learn about respect and things like that they are more inclined to stay out of trouble. (Community Leader #6)

Oh yes, absolutely. These children aren't out there getting into things that they shouldn't be, and with the Teen Center there's a place that they can come to and get away from that. (Church Volunteer #3)

Yes, simply because of the sense of camaraderie and fellowship that there is and that there are people that they haven't known that are interested in them and value them. (Church Volunteer #4)

Yes indeed. I have seen changes in attitudes in kids that are here. (Church Volunteer #6)

It was interesting how definitive (words in italics) the respondents' answers were in regards to the Teen Center's ability to positively affect the behavior of the children in attendance. No data had been kept related to behavioral information at the Teen Center program, let alone in the schools or in the community. But, the stakeholders seemed convinced of the positive impact of the program on the behaviors of the participants, both while at Teen Center and at school and in the community. As with the perceived academic effect, it was enough for the stakeholders to feel that the program was worthwhile. None of the respondents requested statistical data to substantiate their beliefs that the program improved student behavior.

Church and state issues among church and community leaders. A common question regarding church and state concerns was addressed in the

Church Leader Protocol, “*Do you have any concerns having such close ties to the local government and being reliant upon them for your facility? Any concerns regarding conflict or compromise?*” (see Appendix B Question 5) and the Community Leader Protocol “*Do you have any concerns with the Teen Center being sponsored by a religious organization?*” (see Appendix B Question 4). No respondents expressed current concerns, although stakeholders mentioned scenarios that expressed potential concerns. The majority of the potential concerns were on the side of the Community Leaders. A theme that arose repeatedly with the seven Community Leaders was the idea that they felt that they knew the other entity, Hillside Church, well and that the church’s reputation was trustworthy.

Community Leader #1’s words echoed the support and reservations that seemed to be held by the rest of the six Community Leaders. The confidence he espoused in pursuing the relationship was based solely on his belief that he knew the character of the church that backed the project.

Before going into it we looked. I mean, I know who Hillside Church is. You’d have to be from Mars rather than this city to not know that this is a very significant church . . . and so I was convinced ahead of time we wouldn’t have problems, but still there is a concern. The concern would be proselytization, using it as a religious front to indoctrinate kids into particular beliefs or a religious model that maybe their family isn’t aware of or would be concerned with. And the fundamental fairness—are there

other churches that want us to do the same thing for them and that would criticize us for picking this particular religion? (Community Leader #1)

Church Leader #1 summarized most succinctly the feelings of the four Church Leaders interviewed. His response was positive, yet qualified in terms of the church's working relationship with the city.

The answer—it sounds naïve; on one level it may be—but at this point the answer is no. We don't have any concerns. They leased the building to us.

It is a kind of hands-off kind of arrangement. (Church Leader #1)

Stakeholder Program Improvement Suggestions

All 23 interview participants were consistent in three areas in response to what they would like to see added to the Teen Center program. The three recurring themes were: increased staff, better and more flexible facilities, and program expansion. All of the respondents desired the program to grow. It seemed that the respondents believed that for the program to grow beyond its size at the time of the study, more staff and larger, more flexible facilities would be needed. Three specifics were mentioned to help expand the capabilities of the Teen Center program: a bus, a gymnasium, and an increased number of staff.

Conclusion

The four stages of the development of the Teen Center program and the stakeholder perceptions of the effectiveness of the program in positively impacting the academic and social behavior of the participants were described in this chapter. The individual aspirations for the Teen Center program were identified and classified in groups (church leaders, community leaders, church

volunteers, and university volunteers) to determine how each group envisioned the work of the Teen Center, according to Cowger's (1977) model of social service delivery and according to Ladson-Billings' (1994) concept of motivation for social service.

It was interesting to note that Hillside Church never appeared to identify or connect with any existing leadership in the neighborhoods targeted for either Teen Center I or Teen Center II. All of Hillside Church's apparent attempts at coordination and partnership were with community government leaders who could help establish the physical structure to house the Teen Center programs. No work appeared to have occurred in making neighborhood connections with the existing leadership nor with the families of the children the Teen Center program desired to serve. The lack of connection calls into question Green's (1999) concerns regarding culturally insensitive social service. He was concerned with the social service efforts of English-speaking, white, middle-class individuals that ignored the ethnic and cultural diversity of low-SES of communities as programs became white-dominated social service efforts. Green was concerned that this type of social service endeavor simply exacerbated the power divide that exists between the middle- and upper-class and those in need.

The following chapter will analyze and discuss these findings in more detail with the desire to add insight into understanding the dynamics of establishing the Teen Center program.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This study examined the history of the Teen Center and stakeholder aspirations for and perceptions of the Teen Center program. In the analysis of findings, six topics are addressed related to either program development or stakeholder perceptions. The six topics are: (a) mediating structures: a borrowed trust, (b) benefits of nonprofit status vs. church endeavor, (c) individual effort vs. coalition, (d) stakeholder motivation and aspirations for the Teen Center program, (e) duty vs. desire, and (f) perceived program effect. Each of the categories provides insight into either the relational and organizational dynamics that were necessary to establish and operate the Teen Center program or stakeholder perceptions of the effects of the Teen Center program.

Mediating Structures: A Borrowed Trust

Discussed earlier was Berger and Neuhaus's concept of mediating structures. They defined a mediating structure as an institution or structure that intercedes for someone in their private need, assisting them in accessing the governmental bureaucratic resources that have previously failed to meet their need. I expanded the definition of a mediating structure in this study to include the role of a single individual. The inclusion of a single individual as a mediating structure adds a category to the four categories—neighborhood, family, church, and voluntary association—discussed by Berger and Neuhaus (1977).

I also found the definition missing the component of trust in the interceding relationship between the mediating structure and the two entities that need to be brought together—the individual or group needing assistance and the governmental organization that has the power to facilitate the needed social service. In both cases of mediating structures that occurred in this study—the city and the church, and the foundation and the community— there was a familiarity and yet a distance between the group needing assistance and the city government that had to be bridged by a mediating structure. The individual and church, acting as mediating structures, provided the trust relationships necessary to facilitate the interaction between the individuals in need and the governmental entity that had failed to meet the need. The mediating structure worked with both groups to bridge the need and service gap that existed prior to the mediating structure’s involvement.

The first example of a mediating structure was the role Community Leader #2 played in negotiating the lease agreement between the city and the foundation to reopen the Teen Center program. The second example was the foundation’s work with the city to open both Teen Center programs for the benefit of the north side children.

Community Leader #2 as a mediating structure. During my interview with Community Leader #2, he described his role as a “catalyst for community action.” He said he functioned as the “connector” of groups with the city as he “tried to remove barriers so I can help them do whatever it is they want to do.” It appeared to me that the foundation’s ability to work with the targeted group of children was

reliant upon cooperation from the city to supply a facility to house the program. In this circumstance, the goodwill and trust necessary for a partnership between the foundation and the city were catalyzed by the trust and faith both sides had in a single individual, Community Leader #2.

Just as co-signers to loans leverage their financial track records, assets, and liability for a less trusted party, Community Leader #2, in the role of a mediating structure, did the same for the foundation and the city. It seemed the city leadership's trust in Community Leader #2's recommendation to partner with the foundation was based on the authority of his leadership role in the city and his track record of having the best interest of the city at heart. It appeared the foundation trusted their Teen Center project to Community Leader #2 because he attended the church sponsoring the Teen Center and understood the program's mission and purpose. There was no indication in my interviews with church leadership or community leadership that any lease would have been pursued or agreed to without the mediating structure role of Community Leader #2. The trust the Teen Center Community Foundation borrowed from Community Leader #2 provided the leverage they needed with the city to move their project forward.

The foundation as a mediating structure. Following Community Leader #2's role as a mediating structure between the foundation and the city, the foundation itself assumed that role between the city and the neighborhood designated for the Teen Center program. The city maintained the responsibility to enhance the lives of its citizenry, including the north side neighborhood targeted

by the foundation for the location of the Teen Center. What existed in that neighborhood was a gap between need and service.

The foundation gained the trust it needed from the neighborhood where it wanted to establish the Teen Center because of the year it spent operating the Teen Club program at the Salvation Army. It was only after the church demonstrated its commitment to the north side community, through the Teen Club, that the community rallied behind the program at the time of its eviction from the Salvation Army facility.

The foundation gained trust from the city government based upon a variety of previous endeavors by the church that established it as a valuable and trustworthy contributor to the city. City leaders interviewed for this study cited the approach most churches take in working with the city as looking for a handout. The same city leaders noted how unique and refreshing it was to see Hillside Church making a substantial commitment to addressing the ongoing needs of one of the economically disadvantaged neighborhoods in the city. The church had laid a solid foundation of being a positive, contributing member of the community. The words of Community Leader #1 quoted previously in chapter 4, illustrate the confidence the city leaders had in partnering with the foundation to bring about the Teen Center program.

Before going into it we looked. I mean, I know who this church is. You'd have to be from the moon rather than the city to not know that this is a very significant church. (Community Leader #1)

Based on my interviews with both church and city leadership, I believe it was necessary for the foundation to earn the trust of both the north side community and the city leadership in order to establish the Teen Center program. I also believe, based on my interviews, that the five-year lease agreements would not have come about without the intervention of a mediating structure, because the trusting relationship that was necessary to navigate the lease agreement process did not exist between the church and the city. The Teen Center program stood as a two-tiered example of trust in the mediating structure process.

Benefits of Nonprofit Status vs. Church Endeavor

Based on the organizational and financial benefits experienced by the Teen Center and identified in this study, churches involved in social service would gain a competitive advantage in working with local, state, or national government, as well as outside funding sources, if they moved their ministry under the authority of a religious-based nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation. When the Teen Club operated as a collaborative effort between the church and the Salvation Army, the church was comfortable leaving the program informal from an organizational perspective. It was evident that the church leaders believed they had no need for a formal structure to run the Teen Club program. It appeared that the church leaders realized, following their eviction from the Salvation Army facility, that approaching the city for assistance in relocating the program would require that they formalize their program, both legally and organizationally. The church leaders seemed to understand the benefits of re-forming their ministry as a faith-based nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation. I found the benefits of reorganizing

the Teen Center program under the authority of a nonprofit organization were in the areas of flexibility, finances, and freedom.

Flexibility. The Teen Center Community Foundation was created as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation to operate Teen Center independently of the church. The same church leaders who had overseen the program prior to the eviction from the Salvation Army became the Board of Directors that oversaw the operations of Teen Center. Moving the program under the authority of the foundation provided more flexibility for the church and the city to deal with the program.

Community Leader #1 was quoted in chapter 4 expressing concerns about other churches throughout the city desiring the same favorable lease that was signed with the Teen Center. The city was able to avoid the “favorable lease” dilemma with other churches when the church established the foundation to oversee the Teen Center program. The city had more flexibility in working with a nonprofit organization than it did in working directly with a church. The church also benefited from the quality control of having the church leaders as the Board of Directors for the foundations, yet the flexibility to operate independent of a church-operated program.

Finances. Moving the program to a nonprofit organization allowed the foundation to apply for grants and funding that would not have been allowed if the money had to be donated to the church for the funding of the program. Because none of the expenses at the Teen Center were church-related, the money received from grants and other outside funding sources had no restrictions other

than those imposed with the grant award. At the time of the study, money had been awarded to Teen Center by both the public and private sector to help fund the program's ongoing expenses. The largest single award at that time was \$50,000 from a private national grant.

Freedom. The church benefited from its legal separation from the program because the church was free of ultimate responsibility for the Teen Center. The church could enjoy the benefits of parenting a ministry within the city by providing the leadership, vision, and support necessary to carry on Teen Center without bearing the legal obligation and liability for the program. The freedom the church experienced as a result of the Teen Center program operating as a nonprofit organization was both financial and programmatic.

The ultimate financial burden for the program was not borne by the church's general budget, and the money that went to the Teen Center was free to be allocated at the discretion of the Program Director under the direction of the foundation's Board of Directors. Also, the program at the Teen Center was allowed to develop without church-wide approval. The program was free to be more fluid and responsive to the needs of the children and the neighborhood because it did not require church-wide governance.

Independent Effort vs. Coalition

The Teen Center program was an independent endeavor carried out through the efforts of one church. The independent effort allowed the church to avoid the problem of conflicting purposes, a problem that was identified in the literature review regarding coalitions and the rivalry of purposes that occurs when

multiple organizations partner in a social service endeavor. The Teen Center stayed true to its initial goals and objectives because the church did not partner with an outside organization.

Coalitions were identified by Pipes and Ebaugh (2002) as the preferred approach to faith-based social service at the time of this study, as service groups, government agencies, and faith-based organizations pool their efforts in search of governmental grant dollars. Both the Clinton and Bush administrations opened financial opportunities for federal funding of certain faith-based social service endeavors. Because the multi-agency coalition programs were run on a grand scale, they received more national attention and federal funding.

Pipes and Ebaugh (2002) noted that the relationships in the coalitions they studied became strained as the individual interests of the participating parties conflicted. They noted that faith-based organizations and their participating volunteers were motivated by their own spiritual beliefs, and when they were asked to compromise or “check their beliefs at the door,” the essence of their motivation and effectiveness was sapped (p. 65).

The church was able to avoid conflicts that can occur when one organization partners with another organization in a social service endeavor because it created its own nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation. The church leaders did not need to compromise their vision for the Teen Center program to appease a second party because they operated the Teen Center independently. Church Leader #1 alluded to this potential concern when he talked about the foundation’s

partnership with the city in the lease agreement; “They leased the building to us. It is a hands-off kind of arrangement.”

Stakeholder Motivation and Aspirations for the Teen Center Program

In every social service endeavor, individuals come together with potentially competing personal goals for a program. These goals need to be identified and discussed to avoid potential conflicts in running a program. The four groups of stakeholders included in the study (church leadership, community leadership, church volunteers, and university volunteers) each expressed aspirations for Teen Center that represented one of Cowger’s (1977) four categories for all social service efforts: (a) advocate, (b) counselor, (c) regulator, and (d) broker. I used Ladson-Billings’s (1994) four definitions of worker-client relationships (a) tutor, (b) general contractor, (c) custodian, and (d) referral agent to describe the aspiration each stakeholder spoke about to explain his or her involvement in the program, and the reasons they gave for participation with Teen Center.

Community leadership. Community leaders’ responses were most closely associated with the social service approach of *regulator-custodians*. Community Leader #2 was the only community leader who fit into the category of *broker-tutor*. All other community leaders were in the regulator-custodians category. The community leaders’ responses regarding their individual aspirations for the Teen Center program focused on both helping the at-risk children receive extra academic assistance and how the program makes it easier to manage problems

created by the children served at the center. Community Leader #2's response was the only one that sought transformation in the life of the child.

My finding was that the recurring theme in the community leaders' responses centered on the program easing the managerial tasks of the city leadership in mitigating issues dealing with the neighborhood being served. The community leadership seemed to believe that the area around Teen Center would be easier to manage by closing academic performance gaps and curbing delinquent behavior exhibited by the children from the north side of the city. It seemed a belief existed with the city leadership that the neighborhoods being served by the two Teen Centers were fraught with academic, social, and criminal issues. Community Leader #3 communicated the multiple concerns of the leadership in regard to issues having to be dealt with by the city council and their resources:

Well, my leadership role in the city . . . and my position in terms of ongoing community involvement with Teen Center is simply my interest in children and keeping them active. . . . So probably first and foremost I would like to see their success measured in how it has benefited the children in school, and secondly, the juvenile crime problems in town.

The city leadership's goals for the Teen Center seemed to be a management approach to the children in the neighborhood being served. It appeared to me that the community leaders desired that the program extend services that currently existed and to provide structure and order to the north side children of the city. It seemed that the Community Leaders responded most

favorably to the Teen Center lease agreement because they saw it as serving their needs as custodians of the city's wellbeing. Community Leader #5 states, "I would like to eventually see the Teen Center parallel some of the work we are trying to do on the resource coalition." This idea was echoed by Community Leader #1,

I would like to see the basic concept of giving kids a place where they can receive help and also socialize in a positive way is realized. That's something that we spend a lot of money on the city doing.

Community Leader #2 seemed to have a different perception of the potential effect of the Teen Center program, when compared to the other community leaders who saw the Teen Center as merely an extension of what they were already doing. He seemed to view the work of the Teen Center as transformational, and his aspirations were lofty. He fit into the social service category of *broker-tutor*, because of his expressed desire for the program to address the individual needs of the children who attended Teen Center while attempting to impact their family structure as a whole. Community Leader #2 seemed to share, with the church leadership, a profound desire that the lives of the children attending the Teen Center be transformed, not simply improved. He and the church leadership shared the broker-tutor approach in their expectations for the work of Teen Center, both in the life of the child and in the center's ability to impact and change the neighborhood.

Church leadership. All four church leaders interviewed for this study fell in the *broker-tutor* category of social service approach. All four of the church

leaders used words that showed they took a long-term perspective on the work of Teen Center. Spiritual impact, including long-term plans of planting a church in the north side of the city and caring for the community on the north side of the city were the primary foci of the church leadership. The Teen Center provided an avenue for meeting needs of the kids in the community, but Church Leader #3 stated that Teen Center was not an end unto itself. Teen Center served as the first step for the church in a long-term investment in the people living in the north side of the city. The church leaders expressed a desire to deepen their ties with the north side of the city, and their words reflected a vision of the Teen Center as a bridge-building effort.

Teen Center volunteers. I divided the Teen Center volunteers into two separate groups for interview data analysis. The university students cited as motivators in their working at the Teen Center their, enjoyment in working with children and the close proximity of Teen Center to the university. The *advocate-tutor* category fit the university students most closely because four of the five students referred to the at-risk youth's need to have the college students work with them to address the neglect or abusive situations stemming from their home environment. It seemed to me that the university students believed that they could encourage the Teen Center participants both socially and academically in the time they spent together. The brevity of the university students' involvement with the Teen Center program seemed to limit their attention to what the program could accomplish in a longer period of time. The university students had a time frame for the length of their involvement with the Teen Center children, and it appeared

to me that they were looking to be an encouragement and role model for the kids for the duration of their 80 hours of involvement, but no longer.

I placed the seven church volunteers in the *counselor-tutor* category of social service focus. Four patterns arose in their response to the interview question inquiring about their motivation to work with the Teen Center program: (a) desire for community involvement, (b) desire to respond to the call of God and to share His love, (c) desire to provide hope and love to the kids, and (d) desire to provide academic and social help to children at the center. It was evident in the responses that all seven of the respondents viewed their involvement at the Teen Center as a long-term commitment. The focus of the church volunteers' service seemed to be the individual lives of the children attending the Teen Center.

A similarity existed with all of the university and church volunteers. All of the volunteers expressed their enjoyment of working with children. It was evident to me that all of those volunteering their time felt they were receiving back benefits from their time invested in the lives of the Teen Center children. All of the volunteers seemed to believe that the children attending Teen Center needed time and attention in a positive social environment, as well as the volunteers' assistance with schoolwork.

It was apparent that each group approached their involvement with Teen Center with different mindsets and different social service aspirations (the two exceptions were Community Leader #2 and University Volunteer #1). But, in the end, all parties were needed to carry out the program and the kids of Teen Center benefited from each person's contribution regardless of the differing motivations.

Duty vs. Desire

In chapter 1 a question was raised regarding the motivation to serve and it seemed necessary to determine the difference between duty and desire. Dryfoos (1998) referred to the need for church leaders to utilize their “bully pulpit” to coerce their congregations into acts of service. I questioned whether the role of a church leader was coercion or inspiration in motivating congregations in acts of service. Dryfoos seemed to indicate that coercion (duty) was a primary tool in church leaderships’ arsenal of motivational techniques to lead their congregations in acts of service. In chapter 3 I looked at Christ’s example of the *Good Samaritan* (desire) as my motivation to serve, and wondered if there were any patterns in the nature of each individual group’s motivation. It was clear in the study that two of the stakeholder groups were duty-driven in their service and two groups were desire-driven.

In general, the community leaders seemed to be duty-driven based on their elected or appointed leadership roles in governing the city. The Teen Center project made professional sense to support because it furthered a cause under their supervision—to care for the health and welfare of the people living in the city. The desired outcomes for the program were both managerial and child-centered in nature. The city leadership desired to extend academic and social services to a needy north-side neighborhood and to provide positive social programmatic choices for children in the neighborhood to lessen the risk of delinquency.

The university volunteers also seemed to be duty-driven as a motivation for being involved with Teen Center. The students were compelled to serve 80

hours of community service as partial fulfillment of their graduation requirement. None of the students stayed on serving at Teen Center beyond their required number of hours. Although they spoke in favor of the program and expressed enjoyment while being involved, they still appeared to be serving as a requirement by not staying on as volunteers with the program any longer than required. The university students may have only envisioned being an encouragement to the children for the duration of their 80 hours in the program. Like the community leaders, the university volunteers did assist the Teen Center program for a time, but they seemed to lack ongoing ownership of the program's success, as witnessed by none of the university volunteers staying on in service beyond their required hour allotment.

Community Leader #2 was an exception to the rest of the community leaders because he saw the potential for the Teen Center to transform the life of a child who attended the center. He was the only community leader who actually had attended the program and had assisted there on occasion. None of the other leaders had ever attended a function or volunteered at Teen Center. The extent of the other community leaders' involvement was the passing of the two five-year lease agreements.

Church volunteers were one of the two groups that seemed desire-driven in their involvement with the Teen Center program. The ongoing commitment to the children attending the program and an ownership of the need to reach out and care for the needs of others were the driving forces behind their involvement. I witnessed a desire among the church volunteers for love and care to transform the

lives of the children at the center. Unlike the community leaders who were no longer involved with the program after the five-year lease was signed or the university volunteers who saw their involvement as a temporal arrangement, the church volunteers had ownership of the program. The church volunteers I interviewed had all been serving at Teen Center for over one year.

The church leadership, like the church volunteers, had a desire to serve as their motivating factor in their involvement with the Teen Center program. A desire to serve and have an ongoing impact in a neighborhood that had previously been untapped by the church seemed exciting to the church leadership due to the opportunities they saw to care tangibly for needs in that community. The church leadership expressed the broadest vision for what could happen in the lives of the children attending the program and in the families and neighborhood surrounding the Teen Center. The church leadership seemed to look at the Teen Center as the initial program that could spawn other services that met the needs of the community, ultimately leading to the planting of a church that would become a center of service for the community.

Desire, as opposed to duty, seemed to be the more transformational approach to social service. The words of two of the church leaders illustrates their desire to serve their community:

Another one (goal) is to provide, to link the strengths of Hillside Church as a resource to needs of *our community* and that was one way we felt like we had volunteers available and a need of having some kind of structure to put the two together. (Community Leader #2)

On an immediate level we wanted to meet the needs of the part of the *community* that were not going coming to us. (Church Leader #1)

Just as Chrislip and Larson (1994) found, “The revival of community would have to be a revival accomplished mainly by the community itself” (p. 147), desire appeared to be the motivating force in sustaining the Teen Center program. The commitment necessary to sustain the Teen Center program appeared to come from individuals serving out of a desire to transform the lives of children.

Perceived Program Effectiveness

All 23 participants agreed that the Teen Center program had a positive effect on both the academic performance and behavior of the children who attended Teen Center. One person noted having been presented with an improved report card by a student. Another individual noted the improvement he noticed in a child he had worked with on an ongoing basis. Lastly, one volunteer mentioned a good grade a girl received on a report that they had worked together on completing. Outside of these three examples, there was no empirical evidence that the Teen Center program had a positive effect on the children’s schoolwork. Participants seemed to use their feelings to arrive at their opinion regarding academic improvement. It appeared that they believed that because children were required to do one hour of homework a day at Teen Center and because it was being stressed as being important, that it must create a positive effect.

Likewise, it was assumed that the two hours children spent at Teen Center each day limited their ability to get into two hours of more trouble if left on their

own. All 23 participants agreed that Teen Center made a positive impact on the children involved with the program in relation to their behavior at school and in the community. No evaluation had been done regarding any behavioral issues related to students before, during, or after their involvement with the Teen Center program. No data existed to substantiate the unanimous belief that the Teen Center was having a positive behavioral effect on the children involved in the program.

Conclusion

The four most significant findings that arose from this study can add to the understanding of the development of the Teen Center program and may be helpful to other endeavors that seek to create similar programs. The four findings are

1. Churches can form nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporations that can have a positively impact the academic and social lives of at-risk children in their community.
2. Mediating structures and the trust they bring are vital in bridging the gap that exists between those in need and the services they cannot access on their own.
3. People are most prone to support a social service endeavor if they believe in the expressed purpose of the effort and if it also serves their needs in some way.
4. People believe in the positive effect of a program if they believe in the program's mission and are invested in the program in some way.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Significance of the Study

I am impressed, as a result of this study, by the efforts of one middle-class Christian church to affect the lives of at-risk children in their community. I am convinced that opportunity abounds for other churches to create partnerships with the local city government to house programs targeting the social and academic needs of the at-risk youth in the community. A spiritual benefit could accompany further endeavors, as children find new groups who extend love toward them and seek to empower them. Coles' (1993) observations regarding the benefit to the individual involved in service will also be seen in the life of the volunteers as they learn from the children whom they purport to help.

Previous studies have looked at ethnic-specific churches helping ethnic-specific children and determined the significant role the church played in the community. Although ethnic specificity was a focus of previous studies, no participant mentioned ethnicity as an issue in this study. Rather, it appeared in this situation that the issues of distance, ethnic difference, and difference in socio-economic status (SES) did not create conflicts when a predominantly white middle-class church served in a predominantly low-SES Hispanic community.

In an era of increasing needs and decreasing dollars to address those needs, creative collaborations such as Teen Center need to be explored and

implemented for the sake of our at-risk youth. Schools and cities alone will not be able to create and sustain empathetic programs that nurture children during after-school hours. As mentioned earlier, over 70% of all elementary and middle schools have no before or after-school programs for children (Community Learning Centers, 1997). Many attempts at such programs have tried and failed, and it was encouraging to see one church attempt to establish itself as a responsible party in serving the needs of the at-risk children in its communities. City governments also bear the responsibility of assisting the process by making available facilities for responsible faith-based groups that choose to serve the needs of the at-risk children in their community.

Recommendations

Teen Center recommendations. The participant interviews illuminated three recurring recommendations for the Teen Center program to institute for improvement to the program: (a) more staff, (b) larger and more varied facilities (gymnasium, bus), and (c) expanded hours of operation. My observation of the Teen Center program, interviews with stakeholders of the program, and study of the history and operation of the program lead me to agree with these observations and add a few of my own.

For a program desiring to serve 1st through 12th grade students it will be imperative to strategize ways to attract the older students. In my interactions and observations with the Teen Center program, I never saw children older than middle school students in attendance. Work would need to be done to devise a

program that would cater to the interests of high school students. No such program existed at either Teen Center at the time of the study.

Facility limitations were addressed in the stakeholder recommendations for the program due to the constraints that the facilities placed on program offerings. The limited space and configuration of both Teen Centers (converted houses) limited the size and flexibility of activities in each location. I recommend that the Teen Center Community Foundation continue to look for improved facilities to increase the flexibility, scope and impact of its Teen Center program, particularly as related to program offerings targeted at the high school age student.

On the basis of the study results, I recommend that both Teen Centers keep running records of the academic performance of students involved in the program. The foundation was vigilant during the formulation stages of the program to seek outside grant funding sources. The foundation needs to continue seeking outside funding sources to expand the funding base of the Teen Center programs. In a very competitive market, grant funding will be difficult to secure without convincing data to show the positive effects the Teen Center program is creating in the lives of clients.

Stakeholders need to create a method to track behavioral data to show improvement in that area for the children attending the Teen Center program. At the time of the study, all stakeholders expressed a belief that a child's involvement in the Teen Center program was beneficial as related to his or her

social behavior. It would be advantageous in grant writing to have some form of empirical data to support that belief.

Other organizations. The study also leads to three recommendations for other individuals who may want to pursue a faith-based social service program in partnership with a city or government organization. First, have an individual or group in place to act as a *mediating force* between the needy who are to be served and the bureaucracy that may stand in the way. The *mediating force* should already have the trust of the organization before attempting to move the project forward. Give the mediating structure a clear vision of what you want to accomplish through the program so he or she can be a worthy advocate for the project.

Secondly, have a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation already formed so the governmental agency or outside funding source can deal with a nonprofit organization, rather than a church. Conflict will be avoided, both real and perceived, on the part of the governmental or funding source representative, if they deal directly with a nonprofit organization.

Determine the pertinent stakeholders and people needed to operate the program and tailor the project proposal to what would be most meaningful to them and their personal or professional responsibilities. For this purpose, refer to Cowger's (1977) and Ladson-Billings's (1994) four categories of social service motivation and approach. As evidenced by the community leaders' responses as to their expectations for the Teen Center program, they seemed to feel that the

program existed to make their jobs easier. It is imperative to find such a selling point.

Lastly, I would add as a recommendation the need to include neighborhood stakeholders as a part of the planning and strategizing of a program prior to implementation. This is one area that Hillside Church neglected in the formation of the Teen Center program. Just as Coles (1993) recollected forgetting to include the *guests* as the most important people in retelling the story of Dorothy Day's life at the Catholic Worker, it appears Hillside Church also seemed to have overlooked their guests in the planning stages of the Teen Center program.

Areas for Further Research

Two areas need to be researched further as a result of this study. A quantitative study needs to be done looking at the academic and behavioral effects of participation in the Teen Center program on the students attending the program. A second study should focus on the effectiveness of Teen Center in the thoughts and opinions of the students attending the program and the families that allow them to participate.

Conclusion

This study should add to the understanding of one church's effort to work with the city government in establishing a program designed to address the ongoing academic and social needs of the at-risk children in their community. The findings should engender confidence that these groups can work collaboratively in seeking to create sustainable programs that target the academic and social wellbeing of the at-risk children in their community.

The Community Learning Centers (1997) reported findings that sustainability and developing community buy-in to continue programs after federal support dollars stopped was one of the main failures to the program. That report made the sustainable effort and commitment of Hillside Church all the more impressive and promising as a continued solution for one neighborhood.

I began this study with a desire to examine a church program designed to embrace the academic and social needs of at-risk children in the community. I end this study encouraged by Hillside Church's efforts to address the academic and social needs of at-risk children in their community. I am also convinced that more research needs to be done in this area as churches choose to embrace Christ's call to be *Good Samaritans* to their communities through outreach programs focused on at-risk youth. At-risk students stand to benefit from the individual and the collective efforts of the community as people turn their time, talents, and treasures toward meeting the academic and social needs of the at-risk youth.

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Appendix

Appendix A (1-16)

Teen Center Volunteer Application Packet

Appendix A-1

Teen Center Community Foundation

**Teen Center
Volunteer Application Packet**

Note: This form is to be completed by all applicants (employee and volunteer) for any position involving supervision or custody of minors. This application is used by XXXXX Church to help promote a safe environment for the children and youth that participate in our programs or use our facilities.

Statement of Intent

- Any applicant who has ever been convicted of a felony including, but not limited to, child sexual abuse, physical abuse, or domestic violence should not volunteer for service in any church sponsored activity or program for children or youth. Applicants with criminal records of other types will be evaluated at the discretion of the church administrator.
- All applicants must study and agree to obey the guidelines that are provided for their program and position within the church's or youth ministry.

Please answer each question. Consistent with relevant law, the information on this application will not be disclosed to unauthorized persons.

Date _____

Name _____
Last First MI

Have you used any other name? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, please list complete name and dates of use on the reverse side of this application.

Present

Address _____
Street City State Zip

Home Phone: (____) _____ Work Phone:
(____) _____

Cell/Mobile: (____) _____

Email: _____

Appendix A-1 (continued)

On what date will you be available?

How long have you lived in California?

Appendix A-2

Let's get to know you information...

Why do you wish to volunteer at Teen Center?

What will the program gain from your participation?

What do you hope to gain from participation in our program?

**What age youth do you prefer to work with? _____ 5-12 yrs
_____ 13 & up**

Describe any previous experience working with youth.

What special skills or hobbies do you have?

What degrees or certifications do you have, if any?

Are you currently a student? Yes No If yes, what school do you attend and what is your field of study?

If working, full time or part time?

Appendix A-2 (continued)

Where do you work and what do you do?

What languages do you speak other than English?

Do you regularly attend church? Yes No

Where?

Pastor's Name:

Notify in case of emergency:

Name_____ Name_____

Phone_____ Phone_____

Address_____ Address_____

Relation_____ Relation_____

Insurance Company_____

Policy #_____ Phone#_____

Do you have any medical condition(s) that we should be aware of? If so, please list and give details either in the space below or on the backside of this paper.

Date of last Tetanus shot: _____

Appendix A-4

Answer Questions

Please answer each question. You may use the back of this paper for explanations or you may attach extra pages. The information on this application will not be disclosed to unauthorized persons.

YES NO

- ___ ___ As a Teen Center worker, do you agree to observe all guidelines and policies regarding working with children and/or youth?
- ___ ___ Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense (felony or misdemeanor, except for minor traffic violations)?
- ___ ___ Have you ever been reported to a social services agency, law enforcement authority, child abuse registry, or similar organization regarding abuse or misconduct involving children?
- ___ ___ Have you ever been subjected to expulsion, reprimand, or other discipline by a church, denomination, or other religious organization?
- ___ ___ Do you have any physical or emotional limitations that would limit your involvement with the youth at Teen Center?
- ___ ___ Were you abused as a child? (If you prefer, you may wish to refuse to answer this question, or you may discuss your answer in confidence with the appropriate staff pastor rather than answering it on this form. Answering “yes” or failing to answer will **not** automatically disqualify an applicant for child/youth work.)
Please explain the circumstances involved if YES was marked for any/all questions
-
-

Appendix A-5

**Children and Youth Worker
Release for References**

I hereby authorize all employers, organizations, churches, and other entities and persons identified in this form to release any information contained in their files or records concerning me.

In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application by Hillside Church, I hereby release Hillside Church and any individual, church, youth organization, charity, employer, reference, or any other person or organization, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family on account of compliance, or any attempts to comply, with any person or organization identified by me in this application. I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FOREGOING RELEASE AND KNOW THE CONTENTS THEREOF, AND I SIGN THIS RELEASE AS MY OWN FREE ACT.

I understand and agree that it is critical to the mission and ministry of Hillside Church that all employees and volunteers conform to the highest standards of safety, interpersonal conduct and sexual morality. I affirm that I will strictly comply with Hillside Church's child and youth ministry policies and procedures including those concerning child safety and protection, sexual abuse and misconduct, and interpersonal relationships. I understand and agree that failure by me to abide by such policies and procedures may result in my immediate dismissal or disciplinary action, all at the discretion of the church.

My responses above are truthful and accurate. I understand and agree that if they are not truthful and accurate, Hillside Church may determine that I am no longer qualified to be associated with its programs as a church worker, employee, or volunteer in any capacity.

Applicant Signature _____

Date _____

Print Name _____

Witness _____

(to be witnessed by a church staff member)

Appendix A-6
Children and Youth Worker

Authorization for Criminal/Court Records Check

RELEASE AUTHORIZATION

1. In connection with my application for placement, I understand that an investigative report will be requested that will include information as to my character, work habits, performance and experience, along with reasons for disciplinary action or termination of past employment. I understand that as directed by policy and consistent with the job described, you may be requesting information from public and private sources about my criminal record, driving record, education and previous employment.
2. The fact that applicants have a criminal record will not be an automatic bar to employment or work as a volunteer. Factors such as age at the time of the criminal offense, seriousness and nature of the violation, time elapsed and subsequent rehabilitation will be taken into account.
3. I acknowledge that a telephone fax or photographic copy shall be as valid as the original. This release is valid for most federal, state, and county agencies.
4. I hereby authorize, without reservation, any law enforcement agency, court, institution, information service bureau, school, employer, or other organization or person contacted by the employer or its agent to furnish the information described in Section 1.
5. I permit XXXXX Church to take my fingerprints and authorize the church to use any Federal, State or local agency's records to review and report their results.

Please Complete the Following:

Signature

Today's Date

Please print your full name

The following is information required by law enforcement agencies and other entities for positive identification purposes when checking records. It is confidential and will not be used for any other purpose.

Please print any other last names you have used

Home address
Zip

City

State

Social Security #

Date of Birth

Driver's License #

State

Name as it appears on license

Appendix A-7

VOLUNTEER RECOMMENDATION FORM

To be completed by someone such as: employer, teacher, counselor, pastor, friend or neighbor (not a relative).

Name of applicant: _____

Date: _____

The individual named above has applied to become a volunteer at Teen Center. Due to the special needs of working with children, it is necessary to carefully screen volunteer applicants who will be interacting with them. Please complete the following as honestly as possible to aid us in our screening process. The above applicant will not be allowed to begin training to our programs until we have received this form, so please return it to the prospective volunteer or mail it to the address on reverse as soon as possible.

Thank you,
Program Coordinators
Teen Center

1. How long have you known this applicant?
2. What is the nature of your interaction with this applicant?
3. What do you feel are this applicant's strengths?

Appendix A-7 (continued)

4. In what areas could this applicant benefit from growth and/or development?

5. How would you describe this applicant's interaction:

a. With children

b. With adults

6. Would you describe this applicant as:

Reliable? Yes___ No___

Demonstrating initiative? Yes___ No___

Dependable? Yes___ No___

An independent worker? Yes___ No___

7. Is there anything more you would like to share with us regarding this applicant's suitability as a volunteer with children?

Your

Name_____

Phone # (day)_____

(evening)_____

If you would like to mail your recommendation directly to our office, please mail it to:

Teen Center

C/O Program Directors

Hillside Church

XXXXXX

We appreciate your input and your time.

Appendix A-7 (continued)

Office use Only:

Applicant: _____

Application review by: _____ Date: _____

Follow up needed: Yes _____ No _____

If yes, by whom: _____

Follow up completed by: _____ Date: _____

Applicant Approved: Yes _____ No _____

Approved by: _____

Background check: Needed: _____ Waived: _____

Fingerprints completed: _____ Date: _____

Copy of driver's license: Yes No

List any special conditions:

Appendix A-8

AGREEMENT:

I understand that while I am performing the duties of a volunteer my actions, my dress and even my lifestyle reflect upon my image and reputation of Teen Center and Hillside Church. I agree to conduct myself in a manner that enhances and does not compromise the impression and expectations that people have of the high moral, ethical, and spiritual standard of Hillside Church.

I agree to treat all persons (staff and children) in a manner that protects their dignity, preserves their feelings of self worth and fosters in them a good attitude toward Teen Center and Hillside Church.

I acknowledge that I have received training on Policies and Procedures for Teen Center. I agree to all of the Policies and Procedures of Teen Center and will abide by them.

I understand all the responsibilities and duties as a volunteer staff member and agree to follow all protocols listed.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix A-9

VISION & GOALS OF TEEN CENTER I & II

OUR GOALS

- ☺ To demonstrate love and compassion
- ☺ To encourage and help the hope the children achieve academic success
- ☺ To build their self-esteem
- ☺ To help them develop hidden or undiscovered talents
- ☺ To make a difference and have a positive impact in the lives of the children and their families
- ☺ To encouraged and guide in love the children to achieve their goals, follow the right path, and value themselves, their family and their community
- ☺ To provide a healthy snack, encourage healthy eating and assist their families, when in need, with food items
- ☺ To provide guidance by teaching a lesson time on values
- ☺ To provide a recreation time where kids can be kids, have fun, learn team work, and social skills
- ☺ To provide a safe environment for kids
- ☺ To keep kids out of the streets or alone in their homes
- ☺ To guide by example
- ☺ To provide a structured and organized environment
- ☺ To provide a complete program free of charge
- ☺ To welcome boys and girls of all races, cultures and religion
- ☺ To provide loving, caring, patient and friendly staff and committed volunteers
- ☺ To work with and help at-risk youth overcome their struggles
- ☺ To build the family unit by aiding with behavior problems and parent child conflicts
- ☺ To establish a sense of belonging to a community of their peers
- ☺ To mentor and guide
- ☺ To allow them to experience activities that significantly broaden their horizons
- ☺ To expand their knowledge, by teaching them new computer technology and software
- ☺ To lower criminal activities and other “risky” behavior
- ☺ To help kids succeed in life and become active and productive members in society

THE NEED

“How students spend their out-of-school time affects their success in school as well as their success in life. Some activities support learning; others siphon off valuable time from studies. Some activities enrich students’ lives, help prepare them for the responsibilities of citizenship, and enhance students’ self image.”

Teen Center I & II seeks to provide activities that enrich students’ lives by addressing their academic, social, and emotional needs.

Appendix A-10

Teen Center

PROTOCOLS

1. A staff member is not permitted to be alone with a minor at any time. This includes bathrooms and on or off site.
2. Check in and out with supervising staff.
3. All ambient music should be Christian; all genres accepted.
4. Report all discipline problems and injuries to the supervisor. The designated supervisor will determine the appropriate course of action.
5. Theological/Spiritual questions can (if desired) be referred to the supervisor or pastors on staff at XXXXX Church.
6. Punctuality and attendance are encouraged.
7. Monthly or bi-monthly training sessions will be provided.
8. No illegal drugs, weapons, or alcohol are permitted on the premises.
9. No smoking allowed anywhere near the area of Teen Center.
10. Only respectful language is allowed in Teen Center.

Appendix A-11 Something For Everyone!

Romans 12:4-8 "A body is made up of many parts, and each of them has its own use. That's how it is with us..."

Please put a check by the area(s) in which you are interested and available to serve in.

During Operating Hours

- ___ 1. *Setup/Snack -- 2:00-3:00*
 - Set up House for the day
 - Oversee & clean up daily snack
- ___ 2. *Homework & Tutoring Hour - 3:00-4:00*
 - Literacy Tutoring
 - General Homework Tutoring
 - Reading Groups
 - Supervise Educational Games
- ___ 3. *Story/Theme - 4:00-4:20*
 - Lead 20-minute lesson
- ___ 4. *Recreation - 4:20-5:30*
 - Indoor = Lead or Assist with Craft, Games, Computer Lab
 - Outdoor = Mon-Thurs—Outdoor Games
Wed—Bike Club
- ___ 5. *Clean Up = 5:15-5:30*
 - Assist with daily clean up
- ___ ***Car Pool!**
Car-pool kids back and forth from Teen Center to Teen Center 2 & vice versa

Misc. Flexible Items—During & Off Operating Hours

- 1. *Office work:*
 - ___-Computer Work
 - ___-Filing, etc.
 - ___-Copying
- 2. *Miscellaneous:*
 - ___-Bulletin Boards
- 3. *Outreach to Families:*
 - ___-Stock Food Boxes
 - ___-Wash & hang clothes in closet
 - ___-Deliver dinners
- 4. *Once a Month:*
 - Store:
 - ___-Donate items for store
 - ___-Assist w/Store Day
 - Unbirthday Celebration:
 - ___-Assist w/details
- 5. *Maintenance of Facility:*
 - ___-Minor Fix-its!
 - ___-Major Fix-its!
 - ___-Mow & edge lawns
 - ___-Once a week cleaning
- 6. Shopping:
 - ___-Pick up items as needed at various stores. Ex: Wal-Mart, Office Depot, etc.

When is a good time in your week to serve in the flexible item area(s)?

Day(s) _____

Hours _____

TEEN CENTER

**VOLUNTEER SIGN UP FORM
FOR OPERATING HOURS NEEDS**

Name: _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Home #: _____ Cell Phone: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Area(s) of Interest to Serve:

Please put an x in the box on the day(s) and areas you are interested and available to serve.

Time	2:00-3:00	3:00-4:00	4:00-4:20	4:20-5:15	4:20-5:15	5:15-6:00
AREA	Set up & Snack	Homework Tutoring	Theme Teaching	Indoor Craft/Game Recreation	Outdoor Recreation	Clean Up/ Lock Up
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						

Please list the experience and ideas you have for each area you are interested in serving in.

Signature

Date

Appendix A-13

TEEN CENTER RULES

Respect Teen Center = 100 points

1. Enter and exit only through the front door.
2. Use of phone only with staff permission.
3. Food and drink only in dining room.
4. Do Not enter kitchen.
5. Do Not adjust thermostat settings.
6. Snacks served before 3:00 p.m. and during Rec. time only.

Respect others = 100 points

1. No cursing or foul language
2. No name calling
3. No fighting

Respect Program = 100 points

1. Bring school assignments daily.
2. Call if you are going to be absent.

CONSEQUENCES

1ST: Warning and name on the board. Loss of 50 points

2nd: Program Coordinator notified. Loss of 100 points

3rd: Parent/Guardian notified. Loss of 200 points

4th: Removed from program for _____ days. Loss of all points

Failure to follow the stated rules will be dealt with according to the Biblical guidelines of discipline laid out in Matthew 18:15-17

TEEN CENTER POINT SYSTEM:

Points are earned in the following ways:

Sign-in & out = 50 points

Homework = 200 points

Participate in non-homework activities = 50 points

Literacy = 100 points

Story time = 50 points

Recreation/arts & crafts = 50 points

Extra Points:

Given out according to good behavior & actions.
-i.e. being helpful, working diligently on schoolwork,
setting a good example, etc.

*** Please mark an X on daily Sign-In Sheet
for child to receive extra points***

-At the end of each month the students may spend
their points at the Student Store and/or use them to go
on fieldtrips

FIELD TRIPS:

February: Aquarium of the Pacific, Long Beach
2/15

March: Whale Watching, Newport Beach 3/22

April: Living Desert 4/26

May: San Diego Wild Animal Park 5/24*

June: Bike Trip, Yucaipa Regional Park 6/28*

August: Lake Gregory Water Park 7/26*

*Tentative Dates

**Please check your calendars and let us know
of the trips you are interested in attending as
our guest.**

Appendix A-16

How to Report A Suspected Child Abuse

This is the policy and procedure for Teen Center in reporting a suspected Child Abuse or sexual misconduct.

1. All employees and volunteers are to be familiar with the definitions and descriptions of child abuse. (see below)
2. These steps are to be followed if any an employee or volunteer suspects or learns that an incident of sexual abuse, sexual misconduct or child abuse has occurred. The following administrative procedures are our methods of responding to any allegations.
3. Report the suspected abuse to your supervisor immediately. Allegations of known or suspected child abuse will be reported to the appropriate child protective agency immediately followed by a written report. The written report must be completed within 36 hours.
4. Do not interview the child regarding the suspected abuse. Trained personnel will handle the interview process.
5. Do not discuss the suspected abuse. It is important that all information of the suspected child abuse be kept confidential.
6. The complaint must be put in writing. It is the policy of the church that before any claim of abuse, sexual abuse, or sexual misconduct can be acted up on the claim must be submitted in written form. The Program Coordinators and/or Program Director are available to answer questions and assist in completing this.
7. All complaints will be taken seriously. Every effort will be made to deal with this painful sensitive area in a caring, thorough manner.
8. As early as possible in the process, the alleged victim shall be provided pastoral and any other support deemed appropriate and necessary by the Program Director.
9. Once it has been determined that a child abuse incident has occurred we will report it in compliance with the California State law to one of the Child Protective Services listed below.
 - a. 24 hour Child Abuse Reporting 1-800-827-8724
(local San Bernardino County 350-4949)
 - b. Sheriff's Department 790-3105 (Call 24hr number first)
10. The appropriate civil agency will provide a full and complete investigation of the allegations. Teen Center will take appropriate action based upon the findings of this authority.

Appendix A-16 (continued)

Definitions of Child Abuse:

As defined by “The National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse”

A non-accidental injury which may include beating, violent shaking, human bites, strangulation, suffocation, poisoning, or burns can be considered child abuse. The result may be bruises and welts, broken bones, scars, permanent disfigurement, long-lasting psychological damage, serious internal injuries, brain damage, or death. Child abuse may also be the failure to provide a child with basic needs, including food, clothing, education, shelter, and medical care. Abandonment and inadequate supervision also may qualify as child abuse.

Appendix B

Study Participation Information Letter

Appendix B

TITLE OF STUDY: Teen Center: A Qualitative Study Examining the Developmental Process and Adult Stakeholder Perceptions of an After-school, Church-based Program Targeting the Academic and Social Needs of At-risk Youth

INVESTIGATOR: Brad Mason PHONE:
ADDRESS:

RE: Study Participation DATE: April—July, 2003

Dear Potential Participant,

Teen Center sponsored by Teen Center Community Foundation has agreed to participate in my dissertation research project in which I will investigate and describe the creation and operation of the Teen Center. I would like to talk with church representatives, community leaders, and volunteer staff members of Teen Center concerning their experiences with the program.

Because you have been successful thus far in the program as participants, staff members, and other interested parties, I am requesting your participation in my research project. Your contribution will help establish a better understanding of the development of church sponsored tutorial and juvenile diversion programs, such as Teen Center. Your participation in this research project is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. It will involve:

- 1) Completing and returning the attached Consent Form; then
- 2) Setting up an appointment to be interviewed and/or observed by me between April, 2003 and July, 2003.

I can assure you complete confidentiality. Information from this study will be reported anonymously and no information will be included in the final report that would allow participant identification. Participation in this study is not anticipated to be harmful to you in any way. Participation is voluntary. You may leave the study at any time. You also do not have to answer any questions you are not comfortable answering.

Questions about any part of this study or your protection as a participant, can be referred to me, or to Beverly Hardcastle-Stanford Ph.D., Director of the Center for Research on Ethics and Values, Azusa Pacific University, 901 East Alostia Avenue, Azusa, CA 91702, (626) 815-5363.

Please sign and complete the attached Consent Form and return it in the provided stamped envelope.

I thank you in advance for your cooperation, and I look forward to working with you during this research project.

Sincerely,

Brad Mason, Azusa Pacific University

Appendix C
Participant Consent Form

Appendix C

-Azusa Pacific University-

Consent Form

Instructions:

Please complete this form which identifies your willingness to participate in this research project.

YES, I agree to participate in this research project. I understand that all information gained in this study will be used solely in connection with the research project. I understand my name and address will not be linked to any information reported and my identity will be protected by the use of a pseudonym. I understand that participation is completely voluntary and I can withdraw from the study at any time.

I understand and agree to make an appointment to be interviewed with the researcher, Brad Mason for roughly 20 minutes and/or be observed while participating in the program.

Name	_____
Address	_____
City	_____
State	_____
Zip	_____
Phone	_____
Signature	_____
Date	_____
Please Print	

Appendix D

Church Leader Protocol

Appendix D

Church Leader Protocol

1. How did the Teen Center program get started?
2. What did you want to accomplish with this program?
3. If you recruited someone new to become involved in this work, how would you let him or her know what it is that the program is trying to accomplish? Is this written down anywhere?
4. How are new staff trained and monitored?
5. Do you have any concern having such close ties to the local government and being reliant upon them for your facility usage? Any concerns regarding conflict or compromise?
6. What does this program offer clients? How do you document that you have done something for a client?
7. Do you feel that the Teen Center program is helping students to improve their grades?
Yes _____ No _____ Why?
8. Do you think Teen Center is helping students to stay out of trouble in school and in the community?
Yes _____ No _____ Why?
9. When you were developing the program, you wanted to accomplish _____, is that still your focus? (If changed) How has your focus changed?
10. If you could do it all over again, what would you do differently?
11. If money were no object, what else would you like to see changed or added to the program?

NAME TITLE OF PERSON RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS:

Modified from Tolliver (1993). At the point of need: A model for church based social services for the ghetto poor.

Appendix E
Community Leader Protocol

Appendix E

Community Leader Protocol

1. How did you first become aware of the Teen Center?
2. What leadership role do you have in the community? What connection is there between your role and the ongoing efforts of the Teen Center?
3. What would you hope to see as a result of the Teen Center effort in your community?
4. Do you have any concerns with the Teen Center being sponsored by a local church?
Yes _____, What are your apprehensions?
No _____, Do you see any inherent benefits? (if so, what are they)
5. Do you feel that the Teen Center program is helping students to improve their grades?
Yes _____ No _____ Why?
6. Do you think Teen Center is helping students to stay out of trouble in school and in the community?
Yes _____ No _____ Why?
7. What feedback, if any, have you heard from the community regarding the Teen Center?
8. If money were no object, what else would you like to see changed or added to the program?

NAME AND TITLE OF PERSON RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS:

Appendix F

Teen Center Volunteer Protocol

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Teen Center Volunteer Protocol

1. How did you find out about Teen Center?
2. In what capacity do you work with Teen Center?
3. What is the grade level of students you typically work with at Teen Center?
1-3 _____ 4-6 _____ 7-9 _____ 10-12 _____
4. What motivates you to work with Teen Center?
5. Do you feel that the Teen Center program is helping students to improve their grades?
Yes _____ No _____ Why?
6. Do you think Teen Center is helping students stay out of trouble in school and in the community?
Yes _____ No _____ Why?
7. If money were no object, what else would you like to see changed or added to the program?

Modified from Peters (1991). The balm in Gilead: A descriptive study of two after-school tutoring models sponsored by African American churches and the nurturing tradition within the African American church.