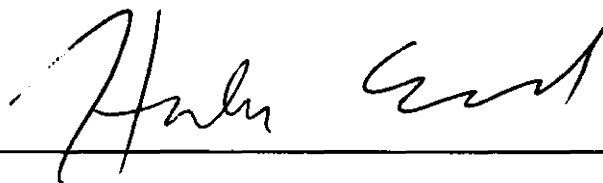


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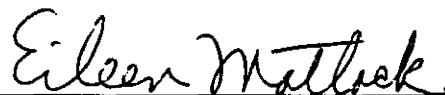
Adventure Counseling with At Risk Students: A Manual for the C.A.R.E.S. Program Component of "Beyond the Limits"

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PART I
Thesis Proposal

Thesis Proposal
Adventure Counseling with At Risk Students: A Manual for the C.A.R.E.S. Program
Component of "Beyond the Limits"

For my undergraduate honor's thesis I will create a manual for implementing an Adventure Counseling Program with at-risk adolescents. This guide will primarily be for use with Wicomico County's "Beyond the Limits" program. This is a cooperative learning program with an adventure counseling base which includes a ropes course experience. The focus of "Beyond the Limits" is on improving socialization skills and self-esteem. (Wicomico County Board of Education, 1996) This program serves many students throughout the county, especially those at the middle school level. One group in particular that it serves is those middle school students who have been identified as educationally and socially at-risk.

One component of "Beyond the Limits" incorporates the Children At Risk Emotionally and Socially (C.A.R.E.S.) program. "The goal [of C.A.R.E.S.] is to assist students at the middle school level who are at risk of dropping out [of school] or becoming involved in personally debilitating behavior. The purpose is to assist development of a more positive attitude toward school and to improve school achievement." (Matlack, 1994) Participants in the C.A.R.E.S. program can be referred to the "Beyond the Limits" program for additional intervention. This component of "Beyond the Limits" is organized and facilitated by a Salisbury State University social work intern with the help of the "Beyond the Limits" directors.

This manual is to be used as a guide by future social work interns with the "Beyond the Limits" program. It is intended to be a "working manual" in that it can, and should, be updated yearly as more information, suggestions, and ideas are created and obtained. It is **not** intended to be a strict, step-by-step list of instructions to be followed. The success of this program is based

upon creativity and ingenuity. This manual is only to be used as a starting point.

The manual will consist of a number of different sections, including an introduction to the program, reference materials, suggestions based upon my personal experience as a Salisbury State intern with "Beyond the Limits" and information from my research with the program.

Specifically, the introduction will include a brief history of adventure counseling, the theory behind adventure counseling, the history of "Beyond the Limits," and the history of the C.A.R.E.S. program. The body of the manual will include examples of activity worksheets, permission slips and resources used with the program in the past. It will incorporate information on how to select the participants and form groups, including a listing of the participants from the 1996-97 school year for follow-up. The guide will also include information about the point system. Because this program involves the use of a ropes course, information on how to tie a Studebaker wrap and information about the high elements will also be included. A copy of my research paper and the curriculum I used throughout the program will be included, as well. Finally, the manual will conclude with a qualitative analysis of the program's effectiveness in the past, as well as suggestions for improvements in the future.

PART II
Introduction to “Beyond the Limits” and the C.A.R.E.S. Program

Introduction to "Beyond the Limits" and the C.A.R.E.S. Program

A. "Beyond the Limits"

"Beyond the Limits" is an experiential, adventure-based education, counseling and conflict resolution program operating within the Wicomico County School System, located on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Through participation in different challenge and initiative activities, students and other participants learn skills that will help them in the academic and social areas of their lives. These include reducing aggressive behavior; building interpersonal skills such as cooperation, compassion, respect and communication; raising academic performance; enhancing self-concept; and creating a stronger bond between the student and the school. Through a cooperative learning approach, participants learn to work together and to trust each other. Individuals also learn problem-solving skills and learn to reach beyond their perceived "limits" and strive for excellence. The main focus of the program, however, is on cooperation and enhancement of social skills.

The "Beyond the Limits" program takes place in many different arenas and includes participation in a variety of activities. Challenge and initiative activities may take place in the classroom, in a gymnasium, out-of-doors, or elsewhere on the school campus. Participants travel to the challenge ropes course located behind Mardela Middle and High School where they are additionally challenged with both low rope elements and high rope elements. Furthermore, the climbing wall facilities at Salisbury State University are utilized by the program.

"Beyond the Limits" is operated by and for the Wicomico County School System. For the most part, then, the program services students within this system. One component of the program works with 7th and 8th grade teams of students. Additionally, 7th and 8th grade students who

are members of the C.A.R.E.S. program (Children At Risk Educationally and Socially) can participate in a special program. "Beyond the Limits" offers a Mentor-Mentee program at one school which matches a high school student with a middle school student. Similarly, at another school, the program offers a peer leadership program that matches a middle school and high school student. Many other Wicomico County elementary and high school students participate in the program, as well. Furthermore, to enhance the students' learning experiences, "Beyond the Limits" conducts training sessions for educational personnel. In addition to working within the Wicomico County school system, "Beyond the Limits" offers adventure days to other school systems, corporations and community organizations, including scouts, youth groups, and sports teams. The participants in the program, then, are quite variable. They range anywhere from competent professionals to dysfunctional middle school students.

B. Historical Basis

"Beyond the Limits" is a Project Adventure Accredited Program, which takes place in a public school system, and is based on the Outward Bound concept developed by Dr. Kurt Hahn during the 1930's. His work is rooted in reaction to the classical private schools of Germany and Great Britain and stimulated by his concern that the "classical school curriculum was not enough for the development of the total child." (Schoel, Prouty & Radcliffe, 1988) The highly desired Moray Badge, also known as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, was presented to students in the private schools founded by Hahn who greatly reflected the values of Outward Bound. In order to earn this award, students must "1) Perform to standards in a range of athletic events, 2) Undertake expeditions by sea or land, 3) Carry through successfully some long term project of skill, craftsmanship or research, of personal choice, and 4) Demonstrate preparation for some kind

of public service.”(Schoel et al, 1988) In other words, Hahn professes that elements of athletics, adventure, and public service were all necessary for a proper education.

Because Hahn’s work began during World War II, the Outward Bound principles were formed around the need for “high intensity survival training.”(Schoel et al, 1988) As such, the first courses were oriented around sea training and had the development of seamen as a practical application. Later, independent schools were formed to support the principles of Outward Bound.(Schoel et al, 1988)

It is important to remember that Hahn’s original belief was that these principles needed to be incorporated into the traditional educational system. Yet it was not until 1971 that the groundwork was laid to meet this goal. It was during this year that Jerry Pieh sought to bring the theories of Outward Bound into the traditional school system.(Schoel et al, 1988) Pieh, the principal of a Massachusetts high school, was the son of Bob Pieh who was actively involved in the Outward Bound movement. Pieh felt that Outward Bound was “not able to reach many because of the intensity, cost and duration.”(Schoel et al, 1988) In reaction, Pieh strived to fulfill Hahn’s original dream by beginning the movement which later became known as Project Adventure.

Although there had been earlier examples in which Outward Bound had been utilized within the school system, it had always been isolated from the traditional curriculum by various methods, such as restricting its role to that of a club or organization.(Schoel et al, 1988) Pieh wanted the Outward Bound *process* to be a standard part of the curriculum. In order to follow through on what was now his dream as well as Hahn’s, Pieh sought and received a large three year grant from the Federal Office of Education.(Schoel et al, 1988) This grant was used to hire

staff with an Outward Bound background and to plan a new curriculum. Once this was underway, Project Adventure had officially begun.

C. Theoretical Basis

In order to conceptualize the differences between Outward Bound and Project Adventure, it is useful to examine the environments and activities incorporated by these organizations. The Outward Bound model encompasses adventure activities such as rock climbing, hiking and sailing *in the wilderness*.(Schoel et al, 1988) Project Adventure, on the other hand, uses challenge activities in the classroom, on the playing field, or on a challenge ropes course, all within the traditional education setting.(Beyond the Limits, 1996) These two movements do, however, still share the same theory base.

Outward Bound, Project Adventure, and "Beyond the Limits," all reflect the philosophies of experiential education and adventure education. The roots of experiential education and adventure education can be traced back to Plato and the times of the Ancient Greeks.(Eagle, In press) Experiential education is based upon the belief that learning best occurs through participation in the experience. In other words, experiential learning is "an educational approach in which participants draw from personal experiences and where conceptual, linguistic and perceptual elements are blended with direct impressions of the environment."(Moorefield, 1994) The experiential education movement in its present form began in the late 1930's with the publishing of John Dewey's book Experience and Education.(Kraft, 1995 as cited in Eagle, In press) Currently the movement is headed by the Association for Experiential Education (AEE). The movements main goal remains to impact the mainstream education system by adding the essential element of experience.(Eagle, in press)

The adventure education movement has been greatly influenced by the theories of experiential education. In fact, it has been stated that "Adventure learning has its roots in experiential education, but speaks about a specific type of experience. Adventure learning seeks to provide remarkable experience, an experience of the unknown, where the risk is to learn and grow."(About Project Adventure, 1997) In other words, the adventure education movement relies on learning through *new* experiences, and placing participants in a position where they must confront the unknown.

In order to understand how these experiences promote learning, it is essential to examine the underlying theories. Primarily, these theories focus on the concept of eustress. Eustress is the positive form of stress that results from being placed in a challenging, yet safe, environment with the appropriate "tools" and mind-set to solve the problem causing the stress. According to Hans Selye, this is a more "balanced physiological stress response which tends to promote physical and mental health."(Schoel, Prouty & Radcliffe, 1988) Theorists believe that by placing individuals in challenging situations, eustress is created, and in order to reach a desired state of equilibrium, individuals must use positive problem solving skills, such as trust, cooperation, and clear and healthy communication. (Gass, 1993) In other words, "Experiential learning is . . . predicated on the belief that change occurs when people are placed outside of positions of comfort and into states of dissonance. In this state, participants are challenged by the adaptations necessary to reach equilibrium. . . [which] necessitates change with its resultant growth and learning."(Gass, 1993) Thus, by placing individuals in challenging situations, and thereby creating eustress and dissonance, adventure education creates an ideal environment for change, and learning, to occur.

The definitions of Experiential Learning and Adventure Education/Counseling are based upon this theory. For example, "The experiential learning model posits that optimal learning can take place when individuals participate in relevant experiences, make observations about behaviors that occurred during the activities, make generalizations about the behaviors, and have opportunities to apply and practice insights and skills gained through participation in the activities." (Hatala, 1992) This process is known as the Experiential Learning Cycle. It is also suggested that "Change takes place in individuals and groups due to their participation in challenging problem-solving tasks. These activities cause positive changes which help participants' personal growth and development, ultimately enabling them to overcome limits that are self-imposed." (Eagle, in press) Furthermore, these models "Incorporate an element of perceived risk, thereby encouraging participants to move beyond their comfort zones and face their issues and fears." (ERIC Digest, 1996) Adventure counseling, with its basis in experiential learning, thus creates an optimal environment for growth.

It is necessary to remember these historical and theoretical bases while examining "Beyond the Limits." As a Project Adventure accredited program, it reflects the ideas inherent in experiential education, adventure education, Outward Bound, and Project Adventure. This can be seen by examining the key concepts of "Beyond the Limits" as a Project Adventure accredited program. These concepts are the Adventure Wave, Challenge by Choice, and The Full Value Contract.

The Adventure Wave refers to the pattern with which activities are planned in order to enhance learning. First, an activity is framed by the facilitator; then the participants engage in the activity; finally it is debriefed. (Schoel et al, 1988) Framing an activity refers to the way in which

the facilitator asks the group to think about the activity. It could be interpreted simply as a challenge or it could be a metaphor for a challenge in life, or anything in between these two extremes. Debriefing, on the other hand, is asking the participants how they can apply what they learned during the activity to real life, usually within the prescribed framework. The Adventure Wave, when viewed at the micro- level then, refers to the sequence of steps necessary for each activity to result in learning. When viewed on a broader scale, the Adventure Wave is a blue print for how the entire adventure program should be planned. This process is what allows "Beyond the Limits" participants to relate the program to daily life, and to learn and grow from their experiences.

As stated by Project Adventure, all "Beyond the Limits" activities are "Challenge by Choice." This means that participants are only asked to engage in activities to the extent to which they feel comfortable. One of the most important ingredients for the success of the program, then, is that participants are having fun. Rather than believing that they are being "forced" to learn something, this allows them to willingly grow as a result of "Beyond the Limits." It is important to note that this does not mean that participants can completely withdraw from the activity. It simply means that they must find some level of participation with which they feel comfortable, whether that may be watching from the sidelines, or leading the group. (About Project Adventure, 1997) It is also important for participants to realize that their choices within this framework will be respected, giving them the power of self-determination.

The Full Value Commitment is the final required element of "Beyond the Limits" which helps it to achieve the goals of Project Adventure. This contract, which is signed by the participants, asks them to agree to: 1) give 100% effort toward the goals, 2) respect others and

themselves, 3) follow all safety rules, and 4) give and receive honest feedback. This contract is necessary to create the safe environment that is needed for participants to be able to be effectively challenged by a means that will lead to growth. This contract deals with both the personal and interpersonal levels. It causes participants to think about the group and their relationship to it, and about the interaction between their goals and the group's. Also, it is hoped that by following this commitment within the program, the behavior will extend into their everyday life.

D. History of "Beyond the Limits"¹

In the Spring of 1989, Harlan Eagle, a physical education teacher at Mardela Middle and High School within the Wicomico County School System, was inspired to create a Project Adventure Program. He began by proposing to the principal that the physical education program incorporate into the curriculum trips to the local ropes course in Cambridge, Maryland. With the endorsement of his plan, the seeds for "Beyond the Limits" were sown. Soon after, a small grant was won which allowed the new program to train facilitators and to begin building its own ropes course. At this point, the vision for "Beyond the Limits" had not extended its scope beyond the physical education department of Mardela Middle and High School.

Claire Spillane, a social worker with experience in adventure-based counseling, moved to the Eastern Shore in the Fall of 1989. She learned about the budding program while talking to her future sister-in-law, Sandy Greer, a key administrator in opening doors for "Beyond the Limits." At this point, Spillane began to work with Eagle on the program. Together they planned the first phase of the ropes course. Spillane used her knowledge and experience to train Eagle to

¹This information was obtained during a personal interview with Harlan Eagle on October 10, 1996.

facilitate groups using adventure-based counseling. The program was expanded to include other teachers in January of 1990 when the first teacher training was held.

Spillane incorporated the students at the Alternative School into the program in the Spring of 1990. At this point Cindy Schiffler, the Drug Prevention Coordinator for Wicomico County, learned about the program from Harlan Eagle while attending a SHOP (Students Helping Other People) convention with him. She showed a definite interest in the program after observing Spillane's work and proceeded to write, and be awarded, a state grant for the program. This grant created an official two year job for Spillane working with high risk county students using adventure-based counseling. It also allowed the program to further the work on the ropes course and obtain training for the facilitators through Project Adventure. Thus, Spillane and Schiffler officially began the "Beyond the Limits" program; at the same time, Eagle and a group of dedicated teachers continued the project adventure program at Mardela with the physical education classes.

During the 1991-92 school year, Spillane was focusing on her work with Bennett Middle School's high risk students. Bud Elzey, also a physical education teacher, became interested in the program and began to assist Spillane. He expanded the program by including the general school population, in a format which was more similar to that used by Eagle at Mardela.

Harlan Eagle filled a full-time position with the program for the 1992-93 school year which was funded by the state grant. Under this position he was able to expand "Beyond the Limits" to encompass the combination of the program he had begun with the physical education classes at Mardela with that which Spillane and Elzey had begun at Bennett Middle School. The following year, the Board of Education sponsored Eagle's position as well as a second position

which Bud Elzey filled. Together Elzey and Eagle were able to continue to expand the program.

To further enhance the program, in 1994 "Beyond the Limits" made an agreement with Salisbury State University's physical education department exchanging the use of the ropes course for the use of Salisbury's indoor facilities, including that of the climbing-wall.

From this point, "Beyond the Limits" has continued to grow and develop rapidly. In this past year alone, a number of new low and high elements were added to the ropes course, curriculum was completed and a new assistant facilitator position was funded by the Board of Education.

E. The C.A.R.E.S. Program

One facet of the "Beyond the Limits" program works with the C.A.R.E.S. (Children At Risk Educationally and Socially) program at Bennett Middle School in Wicomico County. In order to better understand the relationship between these two programs, it is necessary to understand the theoretical and historical basis for the C.A.R.E.S. program.

C.A.R.E.S. is an "ongoing, comprehensive, multi-faceted self-referral program designed to provide support services."(Matlack, 1994) This program began in 1989 to provide support to at-risk students "in the areas of attendance, academic counseling and planning for improvement, referral to tutoring, etc., and behavior management counseling . . . , individual behavioral contracts. . . , and conflict resolution assistance and training."(Matlack, 1994) The goals of the program are to decrease absenteeism, improve academic achievement, and decrease the disciplinary problems of these students. The long term goal of the program is to retain students so that they will be able to complete high school.

The C.A.R.E.S. program was designed as services to middle school students at-risk of

dropping out of school or at risk of becoming involved in delinquent behaviors. (Matlack, 1994)

The definition of youth at risk, as utilized by this program, is

“Children of school age, who because of one or more factors in a syndrome of disadvantage traits, behaviors and circumstances, are in danger of being unsuccessful in school and/or in danger of becoming meshed in personally debilitating social, emotional, physical or economic difficulties currently or in the near future. (Sartain, 1989 as cited in Matlack, 1994)

These behaviors are correlated with dropping out of school, absenteeism, poor or failing grades and disciplinary problems.

A social cognitive approach is utilized by the C.A.R.E.S. program such that nurturance of self regulation of behavior and self development are stressed. The program encourages students to take responsibility for problem solving, their academic performance and interpersonal behaviors. Furthermore, C.A.R.E.S. helps to improve students' self-esteem through valuing them on an individual basis.

In order to participate in the C.A.R.E.S. program, students must choose to seek assistance. The program focuses on those students who are showing that they are prepared to take responsibility for themselves, as it is indicative of self regulation of behavior and problem solving skills. Students can be self-referred to the program, or can be referred by another student or faculty and staff, but they cannot be required to participate.

The C.A.R.E.S. program is more than a counseling service for the students. One of its main goals is to coordinate community services and to act as a referral service for the students.

One program that C.A.R.E.S. refers students to is the "Beyond the Limits" program. "Beyond the Limits" helps to further C.A.R.E.S. work with its focus on problem solving, conflict resolution, and interpersonal interaction skills, as well as improving self-esteem. The ultimate goal of both programs is to improve the students' relationships with school and to assist them in gaining the most possible from their educational experience.

Part III

**Directing The C.A.R.E.S. Program Component
of "Beyond the Limits"**

Directing The C.A.R.E.S. Program Component of "Beyond the Limits"

A. The Calendar

September	-	Receive Orientation to "Beyond the Limits" (BTL)
	-	Receive Orientation to C.A.R.E.S.
	-	Form C.A.R.E.S./BTL Student Groups through the Intake Process
October	-	Conduct 2 Classroom Sessions
November	-	Trip 1 (to Mardela Middle and High School's Ropes Course)
December	-	Conduct 2 Classroom Sessions
January	-	Trip 2 (to Salisbury State University's Climbing Wall)
February	-	Conduct 2 Classroom Sessions
	-	Carry out research (optional)
March	-	Trip 3 (to Mardela Ropes Course)
April	-	Conduct 2 Classroom Sessions
May	-	Trip 4 (to Mardela Ropes Course)
	-	Beach Trip (if earned)

B. Orientation

The Salisbury State University social work student interning with the "Beyond the Limits" program and the C.A.R.E.S. program ("the intern") will begin the internship with two orientation programs. The C.A.R.E.S. orientation program will explain the procedures for suspected suicidal tendencies and child abuse, and all the procedures and related forms for the daily operation of the C.A.R.E.S. office. This orientation is helpful for the intern, giving insight into how to operate "Beyond the Limits" within the C.A.R.E.S. program. Mediation training, as taught by Michael McCormick, is also included in this part of the orientation. The different skills used in mediation are used in adventure counseling, and are also taught to the students.

Meanwhile, the intern will be participating in an informal orientation with "Beyond the Limits." This orientation will allow the intern to experience the different elements as a participant, and also observe the facilitation of a number of groups. The intern will learn how to belay, how to tie studebaker and swiss seat harnesses, and will learn information about safety

procedures.(See Appendix A & B) The intern will also receive a staff training checklist which should be used to monitor competency in facilitating elements and following safety and daily procedures. Throughout the year the intern will gradually progress from observing the facilitation of a group to completely planning and facilitating the C.A.R.E.S. group.

C. Intake Process

After the orientations are completed, the intern will need to begin the intake process in order to form the C.A.R.E.S./“Beyond the Limits” groups. “Beyond the Limits” allows 30 C.A.R.E.S. students to participate in the program. These students are divided into three or four groups of between 8 - 10 participants. Although Dr. Eileen Matlack, Director of the C.A.R.E.S. program, will make suggestions as to who would benefit the most from the program, the intern and Harlan Eagle, “Beyond the Limits” co-director and facilitator, make the final decisions regarding who will participate.

The intern should begin the intake process by making a decision regarding the inclusion of last years participants. The participants from 7th grade, and the participants from 8th grade who did not progress to high school, could be offered the opportunity to continue with the program, however this will be the intern’s decision. (See Appendix C for a listing of last years participants.) In the past, this option has been provided to past participants, and one group of “veterans” has been formed. One drawback to this option is that it limits the number of “new” participants that can be offered the opportunity. It is very important, if this option is provided, that the intern is positive that these “veterans” have a real desire to continue in the program. These students need to understand that they will have different experiences from the previous year, but that the quality of their experience will depend on the effort and interest put into the program and what they want

to get out of it. It is important that the students have a clear goal for their continued involvement. If the intern decides to consider including these veterans, they will need to be interviewed in order to address these concerns.

After this process is completed, the intern should begin to look for “new” participants. These names should be gathered from the waiting list from the previous year (See Appendix D), and from any students that Dr. Matlack may suggest. A complete list of possible students should be formulated and counted. A grand total of 30 students can be involved in the program, including any returning participants, so the intern will most likely need to decide which of these students should be offered the opportunity. Dr. Matlack will be able to offer advice about who will benefit the most from the experience, who needs the experience the most, and who will interact well in a small group format.

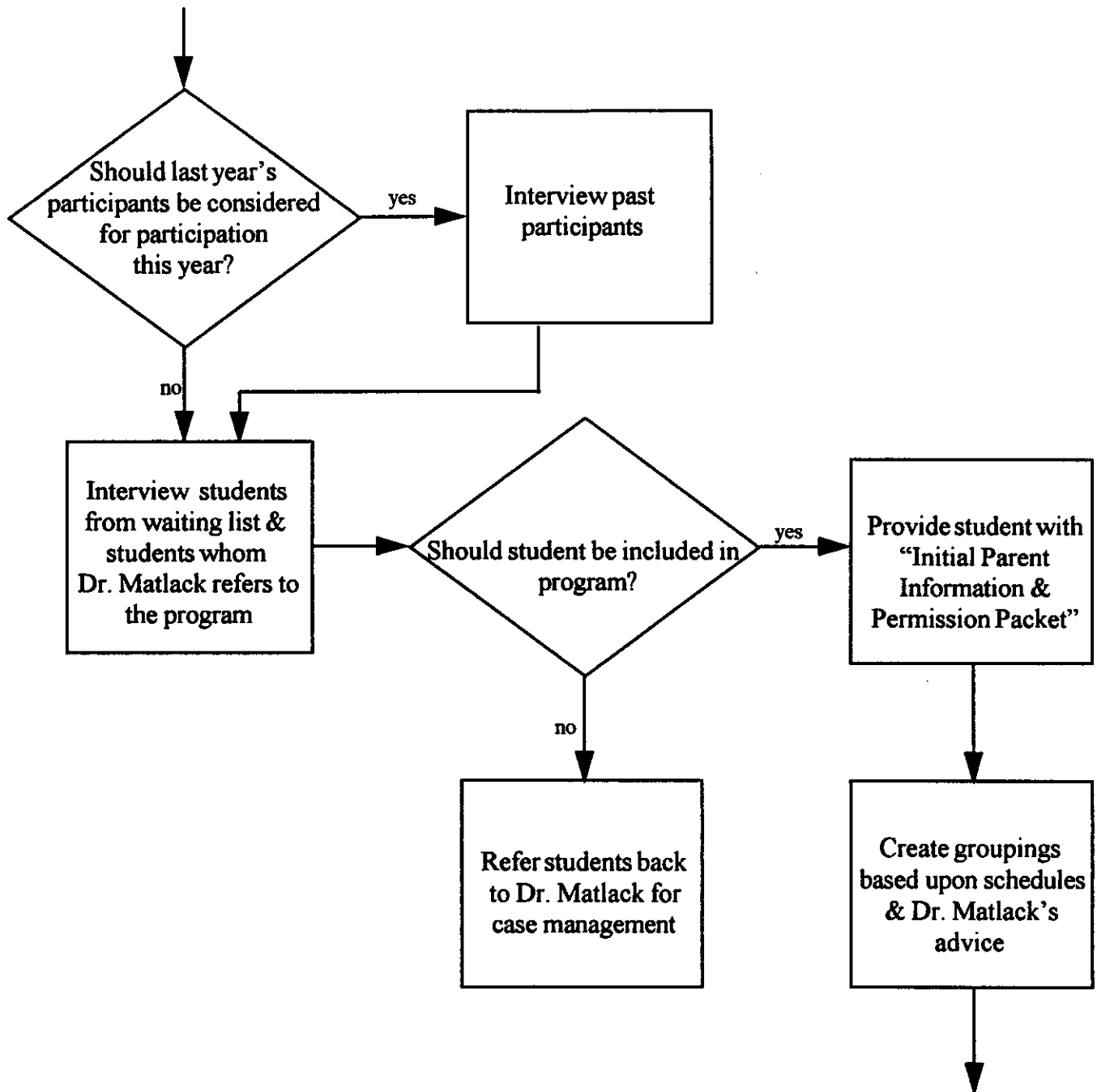
With this advice, the intern will need to begin interviewing the potential participants. Participants can be pulled from their classes, preferably a non-academic class, to meet with the intern. The intern can choose to see the students individually or in small groups. During the interview, the intern will need to provide information about the “Beyond the Limits” experience to the potential participants, as well as question them regarding their interest in the program. Islands of Healing, a guide to Adventure Based Counseling by Schoel, Prouty and Radcliffe (1989) offers some good suggestions about the intake process and more specifically about the format of the interview. The authors suggest that interviews follow the “what,” “so what,” and “now what” process, much like a debriefing. During the “what” stage, the intern will ask the students what they already know about the program and fill in any information they are missing. The C.A.R.E.S. program has pictures and videotapes of some of the past experiences at the ropes

course that could be shared with the students. The “so what” stage encourages the interviewer to ask the students, based on the information just obtained, why they want to participate. Finally, in the “now what” stage the intern should ask the students what they hope to gain from an experience with “Beyond the Limits.” The intern should be cautioned that some students see “Beyond the Limits” as merely a legal way to miss class; although this is obviously neither the ideal, nor the intended outlook, it is hoped that students with this outlook will learn something from their experience, even if they do not intend to.

At the conclusion of the interviewing process, the intern should decide which students will both benefit from participation, and be an asset to a group. These students should then be provided with a letter to their parents, a permission slip and a release of liability form. (See Appendix E for an example.) The students should be provided with an approximate date of the first meeting and advised that this meeting will be a trial to see if they really want to be in the program and to determine how well they will work with the group. The permission slips should be turned in by this meeting.

The final step of the intake process is to determine how to group the participants. The intern will need to pull the schedule cards of each student to determine when they have their “non-academic” classes. Although it is not always possible, it will be best to schedule their meeting time for this period. The intern may want to keep a copy of the student’s schedule, so that they will be able to be found at any time during the course of the day if the intern needs to meet with them. The intern will also need to decide if the groupings will keep same-sex students together, or allow for heterosexual groups. In past experience, it has been determined that same-sex groups often accomplish more than mixed groups because the students are less concerned about

Figure 1 - Intake Process



what the opposite sex is thinking about them. Using the schedule information, as well as Dr. Matlack's advice about who should and should not be in the same group, and decisions about same-sex vs. heterogeneous groupings, the intern will be able to assign each student to a group that will meet during a specific period. The intern will also need to take into consideration that scheduling a group to meet during the lunch period may create some additional difficulties because all of the students in the group may not eat at the same time. Also, the intern should check with Mr. Eagle about other time constraints during the day; in the past, pre-existing classes have participated in the "Beyond the Limits" program and have had their group meetings on the same day as the C.A.R.E.S. meetings. If this is the case, the intern will not be able to schedule the C.A.R.E.S. groups to meet during the periods of these classes. Once the periods have been decided upon, Dr. Matlack should assign one of her C.A.R.E.S. interns to each group for assistance. (See Section D)

D. Planning the Sessions

Once the intake process is complete, the intern will need to begin meeting with the groups. The general pattern for the rest of the year will consist of two classroom meetings in one month, followed by a trip to either the Mandela Middle and High School ropes course, or the Salisbury State University Climbing Wall the following month. The pattern continues by alternating between a month for the two classroom meetings and a month for the trip. By the end of the year, the students should have participated in four trips and 8 classroom meetings. The intern should be advised that in most cases the students will need to be divided in half, and assigned to one of two trip dates for the month due to group size limitations. At the very end of the year, a trip to the beach can be provided for those students who have earned it. (See Section E)

In order for students to be aware of classroom meeting dates, the intern should post a calendar outside the door of the C.A.R.E.S. office.(See Appendix F) Also, announcements should be made over the loud speaker to remind the students. Teachers will need to be aware of the meetings so that they will dismiss students from class. This can be accomplished by sending them a note with the students names and the respective periods in which they will be meeting.(See appendix F) To attend each trip the students will need to have a signed permission slip.(See appendix F) Reminders will need to be made to the students to return these permission slips over the loud speaker. The intern may also need to find the students to remind them. For each trip, a list of students attending should be given to the secretaries in the main office of Bennett Middle so that the students can be included on the attendance list for the day. The day before the trip, an announcement should be made reminding the students to dress appropriately and to pack their lunch. An announcement on the day of the trip should be made so that students and teachers know when students should be dismissed from class and where they should meet.

In the past, all of the above has been carried out solely by the "Beyond the Limits" intern. Because of the limited amount of time the intern spends at Bennett Middle School, it has been difficult to remind students of upcoming events. Because of this and because the C.A.R.E.S. interns have not felt that they have had much responsibility for the group, it has been suggested that the C.A.R.E.S. interns become responsible for the communications with the students, teachers, and school. Under this format, the C.A.R.E.S. intern would take a greater responsibility for the group, and the "Beyond the Limits" intern would be left with the responsibility to plan and facilitate the sessions. Also, it is hoped that students would be more aware of upcoming sessions and trips, and would be more prompt in returning permission slips. The C.A.R.E.S. interns can

also feel more responsibility for the group by meeting individually with the students, as needed. In order for these changes to be successful, Mr. Eagle and Dr. Matlack must agree on the change and the new C.A.R.E.S. interns must have their responsibilities explained to them.

The "Beyond the Limits" intern should continue to monitor the students attendance to each classroom session and trip, as well as to monitor the return of permission slips. (See Appendix G.) This will aid the intern in tabulating each student's total points (see Section E). It will also be helpful in case a teacher questions where a student was during class.

At the beginning of the year, Mr. Eagle will plan the sessions and the trips with assistance from the intern. As the year progresses, however, Mr. Eagle's role will decrease and the intern's role will increase, such that by the end of the year the intern will be completely planning the sessions and trips, and will be capable of running these independently.

Selections from the curriculum used last year can be found in Appendix L, in the Research Paper, beginning on page L-27. These can be used by the intern as examples of how a typical classroom session or trip should be planned. The intern should note the format with which these are prepared, and follow this format when preparing new plans. Also, Appendix H lists a series of resources that can be used to obtain ideas for activities and games.

One way that has proven successful to prepare a lesson plan is to begin by choosing a skill or topic, such as communication or cooperation, to focus on for that session. Then, select a number of activities that utilize this skill that can be used to "teach" the participants about that subject. Often a skill needed to be successful in an activity, is also necessary to be successful in life; the debrief of the activity can assist the participants in drawing this parallel. Thus, the debrief should highlight the important lessons that can be learned from the activity. In this way, the

students learn experientially and have fun.

During the classroom sessions it will also be necessary to discuss some of the logistics of the program, such as meeting dates, and to hand out or collect permissions slips. The point system should be part of each meeting, as well. (See Below) This will require the intern to explain the system to the students and keep them aware of their progress.

Trips are an opportunity for students to utilize what they have been learning in the classroom session, and to expand on it. Low elements provide opportunities to work on interpersonal skills, such as communicating and cooperating, while high elements allow students to work on self-esteem and self-concept with the support of the rest of the group. All trip days begin with students filling out a short worksheet before boarding the school bus. (See Appendix I) Once students arrive at the ropes course or the climbing wall, rules should be reviewed, as well as the full value contract. Deinhbitizers/Initiative activities will follow these in order for the students to "warm-up" for the day. Finally, the students will be led through a series of low and high elements. Debriefing should occur periodically throughout the day, if not after every activity. When the students return to school, they should be given a number of worksheets to complete before the end of the day. (See Appendix I)

E. The Point System

One way that "Beyond the Limits" fulfills its goal to help the students gain as much as possible from their educational experience is by encouraging them in the academic and interpersonal areas of their life. The point system is a tool used by the program to address this. This system should be presented to the students at the beginning of the year and utilized throughout the year. (See Appendix J for the point system chart and Appendix K for the point

recording system.)

Just like in a typical token economy system used by behavioral therapists, points are awarded to students for certain positive behaviors, thereby reinforcing the behavior so that it will occur more frequently in the future. Negative behaviors are not reinforced (no points are awarded), and thus should be extinguished. Under the point system, students earn the following points for each of the following behaviors within the program:

Attending Classroom Session	-	10 points each
Attending Trip	-	50 points each
Returning Trip Permission Slip	-	5 points each

Furthermore, each term the intern should request a copy of the student's grades, attendance and their intervention report. The intervention report lists behaviors that have caused the student to be referred to the office. Based on these three reports students also could earn points.

The students may earn points for **grades** under one of the following categories:

4.0 GPA for the term	-	40 points
3.0 GPA, or better, for the term	-	30 points
2.0 GPA, or better, for the term	-	20 points

The students may earn points for **attendance** under one of the following categories:

0 days absent for the term	-	25 points
1 day absent for the term	-	15 points
2 days absent for the term	-	10 points

The students may also earn points for behavior:

0 office referrals for the term	-	50 points
---------------------------------	---	-----------

Under this system, each student can also earn 10 points a term for proving to the intern that he/she knows the four parts of the full value contract. Finally, each term at the minimum, the intern should have the students set a personal goal to achieve. For each goal that they reach they

should be awarded 25 points. At the end of the year, students who have earned a predetermined number of points are rewarded with a field trip to Assateague and Ocean City. In the past, this amount has been set at 200 points.

This system is excellent in theory, however it needs some work. Although the system was implemented throughout the whole year in the past, students have not completely understood the system and what they needed to do to be rewarded. For instance, although grades, behavior and attendance were monitored, students were not completely aware of it and thus were not aware of the need for improvement. Furthermore, the beach trip was made too easy for students to achieve when they where only required to earn 200 points.

In order for this system to work most effectively, it is imperative that students understand the point system and are aware of their progress continuously throughout the year. It might also be beneficial to the students if they set short-term goals for themselves (i.e. a goal to be reached before the next meeting.), rather than setting a goal for the whole term. In this way, the students will be more likely to concentrate on achieving the goal, as it will be less likely to be forgotten. They will also have a greater number of opportunities to earn points and to learn how to use goals to improve themselves. Another suggestion would be to give the students points for the worksheets that they fill out before and after each trip. These points could either be part of the total points awarded for each trip, or additional points.

F. Research Option

During the first semester of the field placement, the intern will be required to write a research proposal. The intern will have the option of carrying this research out during second semester for additional credit. This research can then be presented at the National Conference on

Undergraduate Research. For an example of a research project that was carried out, please see the research paper located in Appendix L. This paper contains ideas for further research that the intern may find helpful. Other topics that could be researched include improvements in self-concept or self-esteem, the effectiveness of generalizing skills learned within "Beyond the Limits" back to "real life," progress of students who are repeating participation in "Beyond the Limits," a qualitative study of some sort, etc.

Part IV

Qualitative Analysis of Program's Effectiveness

Qualitative Analysis of Programs Effectiveness

A. Administration and Program

In order for an organization to best serve its clients and meet the needs of its staff, the administration must be functioning at an optimum level. One of the important roles of the administration is to create an environment that enhances the work of its staff so that the clients will benefit. In order to enhance the work of the staff, the environment must be conducive to harmonious relationships among staff members, and between staff and clients. The administration of "Beyond the Limits" has created such a working environment. On almost a daily basis the administration debriefs the staff about the day and the way the program has been running lately. They ask questions, receive feedback, allow for the exchange of ideas and give everyone a chance to communicate their needs. They also have staff development days in which the entire staff and administration have the opportunity to experience the ropes course activities, which helps alleviate burn-out by reminding everyone of the benefits of the activities for the participants. "Beyond the Limits" has a very personal and open environment which helps to enhance the productivity of the staff. Opportunities for staff-enhancement activities are seized by the administration at every possible moment in order to keep the positive environment that is necessary for the functioning of "Beyond the Limits."

The "Beyond the Limits" administration goes to great lengths to make sure that everyone is treated appropriately. If participants or employees are experiencing a difficulty, the administrators will do anything they can to help, including advocating on their behalf. The administration authors and distributes a newsletter in order to communicate and improve the relationship with the public. They effectively represent staff at meetings with the Board of

Education and other agencies by presenting concerns, needs and ideas for change. Participant's needs are well represented in this arena, as well as in the relationships with the administration of each school. The "Beyond the Limits" staff does a great job of functioning in all of these roles, and in this way meet the goal of treating everyone well.

Ideally, an administration would have a personal relationship with both the staff and clients; one in which they are seen as being accessible, supportive and nurturing. The "Beyond the Limits" staff could not meet this standard at a higher level. They are always interacting with the staff and the participants and are definitely seen as accessible. This can be illustrated by the "first-name basis" that all participants and staff use. Secondly, the administration is extremely nurturing in the personal arena of both the participants and the staff. They show a great interest in everyone's personal life by remembering important events, asking questions and listening. Finally, the administrators are also incredibly supportive. The environment is such that it is not difficult to ask for help. Furthermore, the administration is constantly asking staff members and participants what they need, in order to facilitate this communication. They also continuously follow the progress of the participants and the staff in the program and encourage them every step along the way. The "Beyond the Limits" administration has created such a personal environment that the staff feels as if they are a team with the administrators, rather than being a separate entity. Operationally, this allows the staff and administrators to help each other whenever possible, by filling in for each other, pairing-up or, most importantly, by motivating each other and pulling together. The participants benefit greatly from the energetic, motivated and close staff that results from the personal environment created by the administration. The service received by the participants is improved because the staff is able to "put more into" their work and as a result the

participants have a more positive and effective experience with the program.

Although "Beyond the Limits" does not yet have a formally stated mission, they have stated their goals and objectives. In short, these goals are "to improve interpersonal skills, reduce aggressive behavior, increase academic performance, increase student's bond to the school and provide a positive role model for middle school students." (Wicomico County Board of Education, 1996) These goals are reflected in the actual practices of this agency. This can best be illustrated by the use of the "Full Value Contract" and the point system. Both of these aspects of the program, as well as the focus on enhancing self-esteem, illuminate the "micro" level of functioning of the agency. The program is designed such that almost all interventions take place within a group setting. This allows the program to address interpersonal interaction skills most effectively, and helps the individuals learn to operate as a group. Although no interventions presently take place within the family setting, the administration often discusses the feasibility of this idea. Thus the program addresses one aspect of the "mezzo" level of functioning (groups) and is considering ways of incorporating another aspect (families.) Finally, on the "macro" level the program's role is not as clearly defined. Although the program at this point is not taking an active stance on state or county policy issues, it is active at the community level. The program is available so that community organizations and corporations can receive services; it also operates in close interaction with the entire educational system, in order to enhance the educational experiences of all students. Finally, the newsletter distributed by the administration addresses the community's needs by providing a line of communication between the program and the community.

Within an organization, both the formal and informal communication networks have a

great impact on the daily operations. "Beyond the Limits" has an open and two-way communication network. Communication occurs between all staff members and all administrators almost continuously. Most communication takes place in person, however when this is impossible, the telephone is utilized. This very personal communication style helps to keep "everything under control," in that if something needs to be addressed, it can be taken care of immediately. More formally, the administration writes reports for the public and the Board of Education. These reports include a description and evaluations of the program and are utilized in order to argue for funding and to communicate the agency's "raison d'être." As discussed earlier, the administration also distributes a newsletter to the community and all those involved in the program, including staff members, volunteers and other interested parties. This newsletter helps to maintain support for, and interest in, the program.

In order for an administration to be effective, they must be able to adeptly deal with conflict. The open communication network utilized by "Beyond the Limits" allows conflicts to be addressed before they become a problem. If there is a disagreement, the issue is discussed until an agreement is reached.

In order to continue to be effective with the passage of time, an organization must be capable of adapting to meet the changing needs of the population which it serves. The administration of "Beyond the Limits" is always open to, and in fact usually seeks out, new ideas. Furthermore, they are always encouraging staff members to try new activities and ideas, and publish those that are effective in their news letter. The administration also is continuously brainstorming and evaluating the program, and usually seek the staff's assistance in these activities. Informally, this preparation for change is carried out through conversations and

through debriefs. More formally, the program evaluations are used to illuminate the changes that should be made.

Based on these observations, a few recommendations for changes and improvements can be made. To begin with, the program needs to continue to expand in order to address the great need within the community. At this point, only a portion of the potential participants are being reached. Furthermore, the program should coordinate its efforts with the other programs in the schools, so that they are not overlapping each other and so that all of the needs are met. It does not seem that anyone is doing any "case management" for the majority of these students and there is a definite need in this area. The first step that "Beyond the Limits" may want to take to address this concern is to research what programs a potential participant is already involved in. Then, when deciding if one participant or another should be included, it would be easy to identify which students' needs are already being met with another program and which is in need of a program like "Beyond the Limits." Finally, the program needs to begin thinking on the "macro" level; "Beyond the Limits" is simply "band-aiding" the problem and is not addressing the source. In other words, "Beyond the Limits" is only treating the symptoms of being labeled an "at risk" student. If the program was offered at an earlier age, it is possible that "Beyond the Limits" would be able to increase the self-concepts of these at-risk students before they showed the symptoms. In this way, "Beyond the Limits" would become a preventive tool for these at-risk students. The administration of "Beyond the Limits," however, is doing a wonderful job at guiding the growth of the program. As the program continues to grow and mature, I feel that it will address these weaknesses and build on its strengths.

B. Participants

"Beyond the Limits" is an excellent program and it serves its participants very effectively. Although an extensive quantitative analysis of the program has not been carried out, qualitative observation shows that "Beyond the Limits" is effective in meeting its goals for the participants. Intrapersonally, the program does enhance the self-esteem and confidence of the participants. This change can be noticed in the participants over the course of the year both on the ropes course and in the school. "Beyond the Limits" also enhances interpersonal relationship skills and encourages team building. Groups of students by the end of the year have learned how to work *together*.

Additionally, "Beyond the Limits" teaches both groups and individuals to utilize problem-solving techniques to accomplish the tasks before them. The program also teaches individuals that they can help others by being supportive and encouraging, and that they too can benefit by obtaining this help from others. Furthermore, "Beyond the Limits" shows participants that learning is enjoyable!

As stated earlier, there are many participants whom the program has not yet reached. With the continued growth of "Beyond the Limits," this concern should be addressed. An extensive quantitative evaluation of the program should be carried out to prove both the immediate and long-term effectiveness of the program. This evaluation should examine changes in the areas of self-concept and interpersonal relationships. The evaluation will most likely need to commence at the beginning of the school year in order to measure the progress of the participants throughout the year. If this is the case, the evaluation will need to be planned during the school year before which it is to take place.

Appendix A
High Element Information

High Element Information²

The rope used to tie the Studebaker (or Swiss Seat) harness is 9mm kernmantle rope and can hold up to 1500 lbs. The outside sheath is the mantle; the inside is the kern. The kern consists of 9 plies of rope, each consisting of thousands of strands of rope. The belay rope is also kernmantle rope, however it is 11mm rope and it has been tested and has held up to 3850 lbs. The ropes can be damaged if stepped on because this grinds dirt into the rope and weakens it.

The belay system can best be explained by beginning at one end of the belay rope, and following it through the hardware that creates the belay system. The climber is connected to the belay system by a locking carabiner, which is attached to the belay rope by a knot called a "bowline on a bight" ("bite"), followed by a safety knot. The rope then goes up through the pulley system, which consists of a rosa-gold, two rapid links, and a spin-static pulley. The rope goes through the spin-static, which is attached to the rosa-gold by way of the rapid links. The rosa-gold sits on top of the wire of the element, the belay cable, and smoothly slides across the cable while the climber traverses the element. This whole system can hold up to 60,000 lbs. At this point, the rope comes back down and runs through a stitch plate which is attached to the belayer by way of another locking carabiner. The stitch plate is what allows the belayer to prevent the climber from falling, or to slowly let the climber descend. In order to function, this system utilizes friction.

² For more information, please see the "Beyond the Limits Curriculum Guide." Wicomico County Board of Education, 1997.

Appendix B

Studebaker Harness and Swiss Seat Harness Information

Studebaker Harness and Swiss Seat Harness Information

A. Tying a Studebaker Harness

1. Put both ends of the 9mm kernmantle rope together in your left hand.
2. Slide your right hand down both pieces of rope until you reach the other end (the middle of the whole rope). At this point, it should look like you are holding a doubled-up jump rope.
3. While holding the middle in your right hand, drop the two ends from your left hand.
4. Place the middle of the rope on your right hip.
5. Reach your left hand behind your back and pull one of the two pieces of rope, from your right hand, around your waist like a belt.
6. Tie a Surgeon's knot:
 1. Cross the right rope over the left rope to form an "X."
 2. Wrap the top rope around the bottom rope and pull it up through the hole created between your body and the "X." (This is just like the first part of tying your shoes.)
 3. Repeat step B one more time and pull tight.
 4. To check to make sure you did this correctly, see if 4 "bumps" or "twists" have been created.
7. After tightening this knot as much as possible, let both ends of the rope dangle and stand with your feet spread apart. Notice that one rope hangs in front of each leg.
8. Reach your left hand behind your back and through your legs. Pull the left rope back through your legs and up to your hip, "outlining" your butt.

9. Tuck this rope under the part that extends from the surgeon's knot and goes between your legs. Pull tight!!
10. Repeat steps 7-9 for the right side.
11. Holding the left rope in your left hand, and the right rope in your right hand, squat down and pull tighter.
12. Continue to hold the ropes, one in each hand. Take them each around to your back, and meet in the middle. They should not cross each other in front of you.
13. Tie a Surgeon's knot (see step 6). It may be helpful to have someone else tie this part for you since it is behind you.
14. Let both ropes dangle behind you and stand with your feet spread apart.
15. Reach behind you and hold on to the left rope with your left hand.
16. Reach through your legs, from front to back, with your right hand and grab the left rope. Do not let go with your left hand. Pull it through your legs to the front.
17. Now, tuck the piece in your right hand through the loop created between your butt and the piece in your left hand. You can now let go with your left hand. Pull tight!!
18. Repeat steps 15 - 17 for the right side.
19. Squat down and pull tighter still!
20. Wrap the two pieces of rope around your waist until there is about a foot or two left of each. Hold these two pieces on one of your hips.
21. Tie a square knot:
 1. Cross the right rope over the left rope to form an "X."
 2. Wrap the top rope around the bottom rope and pull it up through the hole created

between your body and the "X." (This is just like the first part of tying your shoes.) Pull tight.

3. Cross the rope now on the left over the right rope to form an "X."
4. Wrap the top rope around the bottom rope and pull it up through the hole created between the first part of the knot and the "X." (Again, this is just like the first part of tying your shoes.) Pull tight.

22. Tie a safety knot on one side of the square knot:

1. Hold the square knot in your left hand. Place your pointer-finger along the piece of rope that extends from the square knot and goes around your waist.
2. Pick up the piece that is dangling from the left side of the square knot in your right hand. Wrap it around your finger and the piece of rope that is along-side your finger and goes around your waist, to create a loop.
3. Repeat this to form an X (over your finger and around the piece of rope).
4. Pull the rope between this X and the rope around your waist in the direction that your finger is pointing. Tighten. (The safety knot should be right next to the square knot.)

23. Tighten your harness by pulling on the rope that is hanging from the square knot on the left side.

24. Tie a safety knot on this side (see step 22.) (Steps 23 and 24 may be done by the facilitator.)

25. Make sure that you have: 2 "Xs" on each hip, a surgeon's knot in the front and back (identify the 4 twists), a square knot and 2 safety knots. Make sure that the harness is

tight.

26. Have a facilitator double check your harness for safety.

B. Tying a Swiss Seat Harness

A Swiss Seat Harness is actually “half” of a Studebaker Harness. While the Studebaker Harness will allow you to climb with the belay rope connected to either your front or back, the Swiss Seat only allows you to connect in the front. In order to tie this harness, follow steps 1 through 11 of the Studebaker Harness instructions. Then, skip to step 20 and continue through the end.

Appendix C

Listing of Participants from 1996-97 School Year

Listing of Participants from 1996-97 School Year

Montez Ballard
Aiesha Beaty
Crystal Bonovich
Thomas "Andy" Burke
Stephanie Clark
Chris Clayborne
Michael Cole
Ivy Cooper
Ann Corry
Brendia Deshield
Nathan Duffy
Pearlisha Edwards
Heather English
Emile Fratus
Kieonna Hall
Kelly Jackson
Justin Marcos
Tyrell Marine
Dawan Muhammed
Jon Nelson
Anthony Richardson
Brandon White
Joshua Williams
Antonia Williams

Appendix D

Waiting List from 1996-97 School Year

Waiting List from 1996-97 School Year³

Keith Bailey
Dekeia Cole
Steve Easley
Steven Ellis
Rhae Hart
Candice Holland
Kenneth Johnson
Adam Lewandowski
Jemian Maycock
Brian McCann
Scott McCann
Don Noble
Sarah Osborne
Mary Osborne
Latiah Polk
Sherry Shalodian
Shawana Smith
Ayana Tilghman
Curtis Tubbs
Tracey Waters
Don Juan Wessels

³ Note: This list may not be complete. Please see Dr. Matlack for more information.

Appendix E

Initial Parent Information & Permission Packet

Initial Parent Information & Permission Packet

September 26, 1996

Dear Parents,

We are very excited to inform you that during this school year your child will have the opportunity to participate in Beyond the Limits. Beyond the Limits is a special program designed to enhance their middle school experience.

Beyond the Limits involves activities designed to challenge students physically, emotionally, and intellectually. Beyond the Limits is a year long program. Students participate in eight small group activity sessions at Bennett Middle School and four all day trips to the Mandela Challenge Ropes Course.

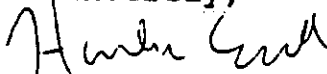
The leaders will be Harlan Eagle, Beyond the Limits Coordinator, and Lori Frei, Salisbury State University Social Work Beyond the Limits Intern.

Our goals for this year include learning how to express and share feelings; developing problem-solving and goal setting skills, learning to give and receive positive feedback, and learning alternatives to aggression.

We hope all students can participate. If you have any concerns, please call us at school at 749-1283 and ask for Harlan Eagle.

Please read and complete the enclosed information and release form. Students should return the completed form to the C.A.R.E.S. room at Bennett Middle School.

Sincerely,



Harlan Eagle
Beyond the Limits Coordinator
Bennett Middle School



Lori Frei
Beyond the Limits Intern
Bennett Middle School

WICOMICO COUNTY FULL VALUE COMMITMENT

I WILL GIVE 100% EFFORT TOWARD THE GOALS.

I WILL FOLLOW ALL SAFETY RULES.

I WILL GIVE AND RECEIVE HONEST FEEDBACK WHEN APPROPRIATE.

I WILL RESPECT MYSELF AND OTHERS.

signature of student

signature of parent

signature of witness



RELEASE OF LIABILITY

I understand the program will include trips to the Challenge Ropes Course at Mardela Middle/High School and the Climbing Wall at Salisbury State University. I affirm that my child's health is good and that my child is not under a physician's care for any undisclosed condition that bears upon his fitness to participate in Beyond the Limits activities. I recognize the possible risk of injury or disability in Beyond the Limits activities. I've been advised that efforts will be made to conduct these activities safely and that safety policies and procedures developed by Beyond the Limits staff and Project Adventure, Inc. will be followed at all times. I understand that participation in this program is intended to build trust, self esteem and confidence, group support, and may encourage a sense of responsibility and a spirit of cooperation. I release Beyond the Limits staff, Project Adventure, Inc.; Wicomico County Government, Salisbury State University and Wicomico County Board of Education, its schools, teachers and employees from any liability for injuries or property damage that may occur as a result of my son/daughter's participation in this program and I give my full consent for _____ to participate in this program. (Student's Name)

DATE: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

HOME TELEPHONE: _____ BUSINESS TELEPHONE: _____

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE: _____

PHOTO/MEDIA RELEASE

I, _____, understand that Beyond the Limits will take photographs and videotapes of many of the activities and I grant permission to Beyond the Limits the right to use, reproduce, assign, and/or distribute photographs, films, videotapes and sound recordings of my son/daughter for use in the classroom and in materials they may create.

DATE _____ Signature: _____

DISCLOSURE

Beyond the Limits is a program that involves a variety of activities that often include warm-ups, games, group initiative problems, high and low ropes course elements. The level of participation in a Beyond the Limits program activity is at all times completely up to the individual's choice. The participant will agree to follow all safety policies provided by the instructor.

Policy for participation in the Beyond the Limits program requires that every participant have health/accident insurance coverage or waiver. In addition, certain health/medical information must be made known to the instructor(s) conducting the programs, so that they are prepared to respond appropriately if the need arises. This information will be held in confidence. Please complete the form and return it to your Beyond the Limits instructor.

STUDENT INFORMATION

SCHOOL: _____ DATE _____

1. NAME: _____

2. Does your son/daughter have health/accident insurance?
____ No ____ Yes

If yes, name and address of company: _____

3. Does your son/daughter have any limiting physical disabilities or handicaps (temporary or permanent)? ____ No ____ Yes

If yes, identify and explain: _____

4. Is your son/daughter currently taking medication (prescribed or otherwise, e.g. cold medicine)? ____ No ____ Yes

If yes, state what he/she is taking, and what condition it is for: _____

5. Does your son/daughter have any allergies, reactions to medications, or any other medical limitations: ____ No ____ Yes

If yes, identify and explain: _____

Appendix F

Correspondence with Students and Teachers

"Beyond The Limits"

See the C.A.R.E.S. Office if you have any questions!!

October 1996

F-1

A. Calendar

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 B.I.L. Classroom Meeting!	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22 B.I.L. Classroom Meeting!	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31 Pd. 2 B.I.L. Group to Ropes Course		

November Dates: 11/12 - Pd. 4, 6 & 7 B.I.L. Groups to Ropes Course



* Lori Frei
* Harken Eagle

B. Note to Teachers Regarding Classroom Sessions

C.A.R.E.S. BTL GROUPS

Teachers -

Please excuse the following students from class during the period indicated on Tuesday, April 22, 1997. They are to report to the C.A.R.E.S. room to participate in "Beyond the Limits." Please remind these students if necessary. This will be our last meeting this year; I would like to thank you for your cooperation and support!!

Lori Frei, BTL

Second Period

Nathan Duffy - Grade 7

Montez Ballard - Grade 8

Thomas "Andy" Burke - Grade 7

Ivy Cooper - Grade 7

Anthony Richardson - Grade 8

Fourth Period

Justin Marcos - Grade 8

Brandon White - Grade 7

Tyrell Marine - Grade 7

Jon Nelson

Emile Fratus

Sixth Period

Chris Clayborne

Dawan Muhammed - Grade 8

Joshua Williams - Grade 7

Michael Cole - Grade 8

Kelly Jackson - Grade 8

Aiesha Beaty - Grade 8

Heather English - Grade 8

Crystal Bonovich - Grade 8

Seventh Period

Antonia Williams - Grade 8

Brendia Deshield - Grade 8

Kieonna Hall - Grade 7

Pearlisha Edwards - Grade 8

Stephanie Clark

Ann Corry

C. Trip Permission Slip

BENNETT MIDDLE SCHOOL

MEMO TO: PARENTS AND STUDENTS

FROM: HARLAN EAGLE AND LORI FREI
BEYOND THE LIMITS COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: BEYOND THE LIMITS ROPES COURSE TRIP

YOUR CHILD IS SCHEDULED TO TRAVEL TO THE MARDELA
CHALLENGE ROPES COURSE ON MARCH 20TH.

- WE WILL LEAVE AT 8:30 AM AND RETURN BY 2:30 PM
- PLEASE DRESS APPROPRIATELY. WE WILL BE *OUTSIDE* ALL DAY. LAYER YOUR CLOTHES. IN THE WINTER BRING GLOVES, HATS, EXTRA COATS, ETC.
- PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THE "CREATURES OF THE WOODS" (MOSQUITOS AND TICKS) BY WEARING LONG PANTS/LONG SLEEVES AND BRINGING BUG SPRAY (ESPECIALLY IN THE SPRING).
- PLEASE PACK A "HEARTY" BAG LUNCH.
- **REMEMBER ALL SCHOOL WORK MUST BE MADE UP.
- PLEASE SIGN THE PERMISSION SLIP
BELOW AND RETURN TO
DR. MATLACKS ROOM BY MARCH 4TH

I GIVE MY CHILD _____ PERMISSION TO TRAVEL TO THE
MARDELA CHALLENGE ROPES COURSE ON A WICOMICO COUNTY BOARD OF
EDUCATION BUS OR IN A SCHOOL BOARD EMPLOYEES VEHICLE.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN

Appendix G
Attendance Sheet

Attendance Sheet

ATTENDANCE - C.A.R.E.S. B.T.L. GROUPS																	
	Slips	10/8	10/22	tripslip	trip 1	12/3	12/17	2/4	tripslip	trip 2	2/18	2/25	tripslip	trip 3	4/3	4/22	tripslip
Student 1	10/8	X	X	X	X	X	absent	X	2/4	absent	X	X	3/6	---	X		
Student 2	10/24	X	X	X	X	X	X	gym	2/3	X	X	X	nowant	---	X		
Student 3	10/22	X	X	X	absent	absent	X	X	2/3	X	X	absents	3/6	X	---		
Student 4	10/8	X	X	X	X	X	X	susp.	2/10	X	X	absent	3/6	X	X		
Student 5	10/3	X	absent	X		X	X	X	2/3	X	X	X	3/6	X	---		X
Student 6	10/24	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	2/4	X	X	X	3/4	X	---		
Student 7	10/1	X	X	X	X	X	absent	X		--	absent	---	susp	---	---	---	---
Student 8		X	X			X	X	susp.		--	X	X	grades	---	susp	---	---
Student 9	X	---	---	---	---	---	X	X	2/3	susp	X	X	3/10	X	X		
Student 10	12/16	---	---	---	---	---	X	X	2/3	susp	X	X	3/4	X	X		X
Student 11	11/7	---	---	X	X	X	X	X	2/3	X	X	X	3/7	X	X		X
Student 12	10/24	---	---	X	X	X	X	X	2/3	X	X	X	chorus	chorus	X		X
Student 13	10/8	X	X	X	X	X	X	absent	2/3	X	--	X	3/11	absent	---		
Student 14	11/11	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	2/3	susp	X	---	3/6	X	X		
Student 15	10/1	X	X	X	X	absent	X	X	--	--	X	X	X	X	X		X
Student 16	10/1	X	X	X	X	gym	---	X	1/30	X	X	X	3/4	X	---		
Student 17	10/3	X	X	X	X	X	---	X	1/30	X	X	X	3/6	other	---		X
Student 18	10/8	X	X			absent	gym	X	2/5	X	X	X	3/4	X	---		X
Student 19	10/8	X	X		sick	X	movie	X	---	---	X	X	3/4	X	X		
Student 20	10/30	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	2/5	X	abs	X	3/4	X	---		
Student 21	10/1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	2/4	X	X	X	3/4	X	X		
Student 22	10/1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	2/4	X	X	X	3/4	X2	X		
Student 23	10/3	abse	X	X	X	X	X	X	2/3	X	X	X	3/6	absent	X		X
Student 24	11/11	---	---	X	X	X	X	X	2/4	X	X	X	3/6	X	X		
Student 25	11/7	---	---	X	X	absent	X	X	2/4	X	abs	X	3/6	hurt	X		

Appendix H
Resource List

Resource List

These resources can be used to learn about new games, activities, or elements:

“Beyond the Limits Curriculum Guide.” Wicomico County Board of Education, 1997.

“Beyond the Limits Information Guide.” Wicomico County Board of Education, 1996.

“Beyond the Limits Ropes Course Safety Manual.” Wicomico County Board of Education, 1996.

Butler, S. & Rohnke, K. (1995). Quick Silver. Dubuque, IO: Kendall/Hunt.

Rohnke, K. (1989). Cowstails and Cobras II. Dubuque, IO: Kendall/Hunt.

Rohnke, K. (1984). Silver Bullets. Dubuque, IO: Kendall/Hunt.

Schoel, J., Prouty, D. & Radcliffe, P. (1988). Islands of Healing: A Guide to Adventure Based Counseling. Hamilton, MA: Project Adventure, Inc.

All issues of “On Belay” (produced and distributed by the staff of “Beyond the Limits”) will be helpful, as well. Each of the resources listed above may also contain an additional listing of resources. The facilitators and staff of “Beyond the Limits” will be able to share additional activities, games and ideas with the intern.

Appendix I
Examples of Worksheets

Name _____

Date _____

IT'S ALL IN YOUR HEAD (SM-69)

DIRECTIONS: What do you spend your time thinking about? The picture of the head is divided into sections. In each section, write or draw what you spend the most time thinking about. Compare your paper to a classmate's.



Examples of Worksheets

B71 ADVENTURE #2

1. LIST THE FOUR PARTS OF THE FULL VALUE CONTRACT?
2. IN YOUR OPINION WHICH PART OF FULL VALUE HAVE YOU IMPROVED SINCE THE FIRST TRIP?
3. SELECT THE PART OF FULL VALUE YOU NEED TO WORK ON THE MOST?
4. SPECIFY YOUR GOAL FOR TODAY
I WILL:
6. APPLY WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT FULL VALUE AND MAKE A JUDGEMENT ABOUT WHAT THE GROUP GOAL SHOULD BE?
7. EVALUATE HOW YOU DID WITH YOUR GOAL?
8. WHAT HELPED YOU ACCOMPLISH YOUR GOAL?
9. WHAT GOT IN THE WAY OF ACCOMPLISHING YOUR GOAL?
10. WHO IN YOUR GROUP ACCOMPLISHED THEIR GOALS?
11. HOW DID THE GROUP DO WITH THE GROUP GOAL? EXPLAIN!
12. WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED DURING THE DAY ABOUT YOURSELF, YOUR GROUP, OR THE BEYOND THE LIMITS PROGRAM?

BEYOND THE LIMITS
GOAL SHEET

1. WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH? (SET A SPECIFIC REALISTIC GOAL) (WRITE THE GOAL AS AN I STATEMENT)

2. WHAT DO YOU NEED TO ACCOMPLISH THIS?

3. WHO CAN HELP YOU ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL?

4. HOW WILL YOU KNOW YOU ACCOMPLISHED THE GOAL?

INDIVIDUAL GOAL ASSESSMENT SHEET

PLEASE WRITE THE GOAL YOU SET (NUMBER 1 ABOVE) ON THE SPACE PROVIDED:

1
COMPLETELY
FALSE

2
MOSTLY
FALSE

3
PARTLY TRUE
AND PARTLY
FALSE

4
MOSTLY
TRUE

5
COMPLETELY
TRUE

PLEASE CIRCLE THE RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONS BELOW USING THE ABOVE ANSWER KEY AS YOUR GUIDE.

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I ACHIEVED THE GOAL I SET FOR MYSELF | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I USED THE SUPPORT OF THE GROUP TO
ACHIEVE MY GOAL | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I ACHIEVED THE GOAL ON MY OWN | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. THE GOAL SET WAS IMPORTANT TO ME | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I TRIED MY BEST TO ACHIEVE MY GOAL | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. I FOLLOWED THE FULL VALUE CONTRACT | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I FELT GOOD WHEN I ACHIEVED MY GOAL | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. BEYOND THE LIMITS IS IMPORTANT TO ME | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

CREATE A
PICTURE, POSTER,
OR BUMPER
STICKER
EXPRESSING HOW
YOU FELT ABOUT
THE WALL AND
THE VALUE OF
CHALLENGING
YOURSELF!

BEYOND THE LIMITS REFLECTIONS

NAME _____
OF BTL TRIPS _____

1. The best part of Beyond the Limits is?
2. My favorite classroom activity was?
3. The teacher facilitator's were good at?
4. My favorite ropes course activity was?
5. My favorite high element was?
6. My favorite low element was?
7. One change I would make in the program is?
8. The teacher facilitator's need to improve?
9. The most important thing I learned was?
10. The thing that stands out the most for me is?

A. What have you learned that you can take with you to high school?

B. What teachers facilitators would you like to thank? Why?

C. Who in your class represents what the full value commitment is all about? why?

D. Has Beyond the Limits had any effect on your relationships with others?

E. Please draw or describe the time you felt the best during Beyond the Limits?

Appendix J
Point System Chart

Point System Chart

BEYOND THE LIMITS STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT FULL VALUE CHART

ACHIEVEMENT	POINTS	TOTAL POSSIBLE	QT.1	QT.2	QT.3	QT.4	TOTAL
PERMISSION SLIPS TURNED IN ON TIME	5 per trip	20 points					
ROPES COURSE TRIPS	50 per trip	200 points					
FULL VALUE COMMITMENT	10 per quarter	40 points					
ACADEMIC PROGRESS (points awarded for academic achievement at the end of quarter) 4.0 = 40 points 3.0-3.999 = 30 points 2.0-2.999 = 20 points	20-40 per quarter	120 points					
BEHAVIOR/SOCIAL SKILLS (points awarded for excellent behavior as a result of no office referrals by end of quarter)	50 per quarter	150 points					
ATTENDANCE (points awarded at end of quarter) All days present - 25 points 1 day absent - 15 points 2 day absent - 10 points	10-25 per quarter	75 points					
SUCCESSFUL BEYOND THE LIMITS CLASS SESSION	10 per session	60 points					
ACHIEVEMENT OF PERSONAL GOAL	25 per quarter	100 points					

Appendix K
Point Recording System

TEACHER RECORDS																	
	BTL CLASS ATTENDANCE									PERMISSION SLIP				ROPES TRIP			
STUDENT	10/8	10/22	12/3	12/17	2/4	2/18	2/27	4/3	4/21	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Student A	10	10	0	10	10	10	10	10	0	5	0	5	5	50	0	50	0
Student B	10	10	10	10	0	0	10	0	10	5	5	5	5	50	50	0	50
Student C	10	10	10	10	10	10	0	10	0	5	5	5	5	50	0	50	50
Student D	10	10	10	0	10	10	10	0	10	5	5	5	5	50	50	0	50
Student E	10	10	10	0	10	10	10	10	10	0	0	5	0	0	0	50	0
Student F	20	10	0	0	10	10	10	10	10	0	5	5	0	0	0	50	0
Student G	10	10	0	0	10	10	10	0	10	5	5	5	5	50	50	50	50

Point Recording System

TEACHER RECORDS CONT'D														
	FULL VALUE			ACADEMICS			BEHAVIOR			GOALS				TOTAL
STUDENT	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Student A	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0		0				220
Student B	0	0	0	50	50	50	25	0		0				425
Student C	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	0		0				285
Student D	20	0	20	50	0	50	0	0		0				400
Student E	20	20	20	50	50	50	15	0		25				405
Student F	20	0	0	50	0	0	0	0		0				230
Student G	20	20	20	50	50	0	25	0		0				485

K-1

Appendix L
Research Paper

Research Paper

**The Effects of Facilitation Technique on Group Interaction
Within an Adventure Counseling Program for Adolescents**

Lori Frei

1996-1997

The Effects of Facilitation Technique on Group Interaction Within an Adventure Counseling Program for Adolescents

Abstract

According to both Stanley Hall and Erik Erikson, adolescence is a particularly stressful developmental stage because of the rapid physical changes and the transition from childhood to adulthood. Some adolescents find this stage especially difficult due to a lack of resources that would help them cope with the extra stress. These adolescents are then unable to develop their social skills at a normal rate, causing them to struggle in their interpersonal interactions. Adventure Counseling, which employs experiential learning and challenges participants' physical, psychological and social limits, is a current alternative to traditional social skill development programs that can be used to promote successful interpersonal interactions. Participants learn problem-solving, social and interpersonal skills through their attempt to reach a state of equilibrium after being in a positive state of stress as a result of the challenges they face in an Adventure Program. In order to help participants process this learning experience so that it can be applied to future situations, a variety of facilitation techniques can be employed. These differ in the amount of reflection they require from the participants. According to Jean Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development, many adolescents are still in the stage of Concrete Operation. As such, they frequently need assistance in processing experiential knowledge. Therefore, in this study it was hypothesized that there is a relationship between the facilitation technique used and the degree of positive interpersonal interaction demonstrated. That is, the amount of reflection demanded by a technique is directly related to the degree of success participants will experience in their interpersonal interactions, as indicated by an increase in cooperative and supportive behavior and a decrease in aggressive behavior. Four groups of at-risk 7th and 8th grade students were randomly assigned to one of two different facilitation techniques; one requiring a low degree of reflection, and the other requiring a high degree. Pre-tests and post-tests of interpersonal interactions were given at the beginning and end of a two month Adventure Counseling Session. Assessment methods included self-evaluation and experimenter observation. No significant difference could be found in any of the groups, possibly due to the large attrition effect experienced. Research is inconclusive as to the effectiveness of the two facilitation techniques.

Introduction

The ability to interact positively with a group depends on an individual's level of social skills, including those of cooperation, respect and communication. From a very young age, we are expected to learn these skills so that we can relate positively with others and be successful in this society. As defined by its very nature, our society requires individuals to be capable of interacting positively. Without this ability, individuals may resort to violence or other socially unacceptable behaviors. This, then, may result in harm to others in the society, the society itself, or the perpetrator of the behavior. In order to protect ourselves and our society, it is imperative that we teach individuals how to interact with others.

Usually, children are gradually socialized as they progress through the natural developmental stages. This process, unfortunately, is not always successful. Some children, who may be identified as "at-risk socially," do not learn these social skills and are incapable of interacting positively with others. Many times these children are labeled as failures and society gives up on them. They are left to try to survive in this world without the skills to do so. Whether out of compassion for these children, or for the protection of ourselves and our society as described above, we must step in and try to teach these children the necessary skills, since normative socializing forces, including the family, have failed to be successful with them.

"Beyond the Limits," a program offered through the Wicomico County Board of Education in Maryland, represents one possible way to meet these children's needs. This program is a cooperative learning, ropes course experience with an adventure counseling base. In fact, "the focus (of 'Beyond the Limits') is on the enhancement of socialization skills (cooperation, compassion, respect, and communication)." (Wicomico County Board of

Education, 1996) This program works with many students throughout the county, including those at the middle school level who have been identified as educationally and socially at-risk.

There are many different techniques for facilitating, or guiding, a group's ropes course experience. The purpose of facilitation is to aid the participants in processing the knowledge they have gained. In other words, facilitation helps participants to recognize what they have learned in this experiential program and also helps them to relate it to real life. Gass (1995) identifies six different facilitation techniques, including: (1) letting the experience speak for itself, (2) speaking for the experience, (3) debriefing the experience, (4) directly frontloading the experience, (5) framing the experience and (6) indirectly frontloading the experience. These techniques require a continuum of reflection, with that requiring the least reflection listed first. The differences in the effectiveness of these techniques, however, still needs to be researched. (Gass, 1993)

Problem Statement

The purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of two different ropes course facilitation techniques in promoting successful interaction among socially at-risk students. The two techniques to be used are *Letting the experience speak for itself* which requires very little reflection and the *Beyond the Limits* technique, which requires a higher degree of reflection and is a mixture of *Debriefing the experience* and *Directly frontloading the experience*.

Literature Review

The developmental stage of adolescence has been characterized as a very stressful period.

Stanley Hall named this period as a time of "Storm and Stress" (Berman & Davis-Berman, 1994) because he believed that the physical changes of puberty also led to psychological changes. Furthermore, Erik Erikson theorizes that there are 8 stages of development in life, each of which represents an intrapersonal conflict. (Berman & Davis-Berman, 1994) Adolescence, for Erikson, is the stage of identity versus confusion; unsuccessful resolution may lead to role confusion or the creation of a negative identity, such that an individual identifies with that which society deems undesirable. (Berman & Davis-Berman, 1994) Although Erikson and Hall disagree over the exact content of this stage, they both agree that it is a time of great change, conflict, and stress.

There are also many cognitive, physiological, and social changes during the adolescent years. Thinking, for example, becomes more complex and abstract. (Bierman & Montminy, 1993) This results in an ability to think about themselves and their relationships in a more multi-dimensional, differentiated, and well-integrated fashion. (Bierman & Montminy, 1993) At the same time, "Communication surfaces as a major focus of peer relationships and friendship expectations focus on issues of intimacy, self-disclosure, trust-worthiness, and loyalty." (Bierman & Montminy, 1993) These changes can obviously be very stressful, as Erikson and Hall theorized, and they effect every aspect of an adolescent's life.

In particular, these many changes have a great influence on the interactions between adolescents. As Christopher, Nangle & Hansen (1993) suggest, "Many of the developmental events that occur during the transitional period of adolescence have a significant impact on an adolescent's interpersonal interactions. For example, more advanced cognitive, verbal and reasoning abilities influence social interactions among adolescents. The physical and emotional

changes associated with puberty may also alter the adolescent's interactions with both same-sex and opposite sex persons." The changes in each individual adolescent, then, combine to create a much greater change in the way that the adolescent peer group interacts.

Positive peer interactions, however, are very important, especially during this stressful time. It has been suggested that problems interacting during this period will "have implications for current and future adjustment." (Christopher, Nangle & Hansen, 1993) Furthermore, it has been found that "Many children with social interaction difficulties who are unaccepted by their peers are at risk for social-emotional difficulties and poor academic performances." (Elliott & Gresham, 1993) It seems, then, that successful interactions during the adolescent period are necessary for a person to develop appropriately. Christopher, Nangle & Hansen (1993) describe this more specifically, stating that:

"Social interaction may be critical for an adolescent's adjustment in a number of ways, such as (a) establishing support systems for emotional and social needs; (b) developing moral judgement & social values; (c) improving or maintaining self-esteem; (d) promoting interpersonal competence and adult-like social behavior; (e) developing independent assertion to aid in separation from the family; (f) recreation, including entertainment and sexual stimulation; (g) enhancing status within the peer group; (h) developing sexual attitudes, interests, and sex role behaviors; (I) experimentation, particularly with sex-role behaviors and sexual activity; and (j) courtship and mate selection."

Positive peer interaction among adolescents must be promoted, then, if we want them to live a successful life.

In an attempt to address this issue, researchers have examined the process of social skill acquisition. It has been found that there is a very definite relationship between social skills and the success of peer interactions; in fact, "Perhaps one-half or more of the children rejected by peers are best characterized by the high rates of aggressive behavior that they exhibit in their peer

interactions”(Biermon, & Montming, 1993) In other words, negative social skills lead to rejection by peers, a form of negative interaction. This relationship seems to be a reciprocal one. First, Biermon, & Montming (1993) have found that “positive peer interactions may be critical to foster the development of social skills.” Furthermore, it has been found that social skills facilitate interactions; in particular, cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy and self-control have been found to have a positive effect on interaction.(Elliott & Gresham, 1993) Social skills, therefore, seem to be necessary for successful interactions to occur and they also seem to be reinforced by these interactions.

With this knowledge, theories have been advanced to explain the significance of social skills and the belief that intervention is necessary. Biermon & Montming (1993) for example explain that the importance of these skills rests upon several assumptions, including that: “(a) individuals who have difficulty establishing or sustaining mutually rewarding relationships have not learned to behave in the ways that their peers judge to be appropriate and rewarding, (b) these individuals can be taught how to behave differently and (c) unaccepted individuals will elicit more positive reactions and evaluations from peers as they acquire and perform more socially approved behaviors.” Based upon theories like this and the findings in research, it has become commonly accepted that intervention is needed.

This has resulted in social skills training for adolescence. During social skills training, individuals are “Taught to give positive and negative feedback, accept negative feedback, resist peer pressure, follow instructions and use problem solving skills.” (Christopher, Nangle & Hansen, 1993) It is hoped that through this training adolescents “may become increasingly capable of accurately reporting their social behavior and its effect upon others and may be better

able to use the behavior standards acquired in skill training to evaluate and modify their own behavior.”(Bierman & Montminy, 1993) Social skills training has become a well-established means of treating those adolescents who are having difficulty interacting.

More recently, however, it has been suggested that adventure-based counseling, with an emphasis on experiential learning, may be more appropriate than these traditional techniques for meeting the needs of adolescents.(Marx, 1988) In fact, it has been found that “Traditionally structured treatment systems have difficulty reaching needy or at-risk teenagers.”(Marx, 1988) On the other hand, Marx (1988) has noted that “Outdoor adventure programs can help these troubled youths to gain some needed development in fundamental areas because of the natural settings where important interactions can take place,” and because it can be “intense, physical and emotional, just like the teens.” Gass (1993) also observed that “experiential learning asks that the learner be placed as close as possible to that base of origin because this process is often more valuable for the transmission of knowledge than other forms of learning.” One example of the relationship between social skill acquisition and adventure counseling is the Full Value Contract which participants must sign in order to participate in the program. It requires individuals to 1) Respect themselves and each other, 2) Give 100% effort, 3) Give and receive honest feedback when appropriate and 4) Follow all safety rules.(Wicomico County Board of Education, 1996) This contract requires behavior that is the goal of other social skill acquisition programs (see Christopher, Nangle & Hansen, 1993). Research is suggesting, then, that adventure counseling programs are an alternative to traditional social skills training programs, and may even be more effective.

In order to understand the basis for this claim, it is necessary to examine the underlying

theories behind Experiential Learning and Adventure Education. Primarily, these theories focus on the concept of eustress. For instance, theorists claim that “[Eustress] places individuals into situations where the use of certain positive problem-solving abilities (e.g., trust, cooperation, clear and healthy communication) is necessary to reach a desired state of equilibrium.” (Gass, 1993) In other words, “Experiential learning is . . . predicated on the belief that change occurs when people are placed outside of positions of comfort and into states of dissonance. In this state, participants are challenged by the adaptations necessary to reach equilibrium. . . [which] necessitates change with its resultant growth and learning.” (Gass, 1993) In other words, by placing individuals in challenging situations, and thus creating eustress and dissonance, adventure counseling creates an ideal environment for change, and thus learning, to occur.

The definition of Experiential Learning and Adventure Education/Counseling is based upon this theory. For example, “The experiential learning model posits that optimal learning can take place when individuals participate in relevant experiences, make observations about behaviors that occurred during the activities, make generalizations about the behaviors, and have opportunities to apply and practice insights and skills gained through participation in the activities.”(Hatala, 1992) Also, it is suggested that “Change takes place in individuals and groups due to their participation in challenging problem-solving tasks. These activities cause positive changes which help participants’ personal growth and development, ultimately enabling them to overcome limits that are self-imposed.”(Eagle, in press) Furthermore, these models “Incorporate an element of perceived risk, thereby encouraging participants to move beyond their comfort zones and face their issues and fears.”(ERIC Digest, 1996) Adventure counseling, with a basis in experiential learning, then creates an optimal environment for growth.

Specifically, adventure education has been defined as “being concerned with two relationships, the interpersonal (relationships with others) and the intrapersonal (self- concept); . . . [the interpersonal] refers to how people get along in a group (2 or more). . . and includes communication, cooperation, trust, conflict resolution, problem-solving, and leadership.”(Eagle, In press) As such, these methods are definitely applicable to adolescents with social skill deficits.

Adventure counseling and experiential learning promote successful interactions among group members by encouraging interdependence.(ERIC Digest, 1996) Participants “Learn to respect and support each other by working in racially, culturally, sexually, economically, socially and physically diverse groups to solve problems so that group members must utilize their combined skills in arriving at a solution.”(Schoel, Prouty, Radcliffe, 1988) Thus, group members learn to successfully interact.

Research on adventure counseling, though somewhat limited has been very supportive. A meta-analysis study carried out by Carson and Gillis (1994) found that “Adolescents who attend adventure programming are 62% better off than those who do not,”and there is “a 12.2% improvement for the average adolescent participating in an adventure program.” A study by Marx (1988) of an adventure counseling program for parents and their teenage children found that “Parents and teens rated the program positively as measured by graduation questionnaires (nominal),” such that 59% rated behavioral goal progress as good or excellent and 89% felt good about themselves while in the program. Furthermore, Moorefield (1994) reported that his study on experiential learning found that improvements in group behavior (group awareness, group effectiveness, and interpersonal communication) do occur in both indoor and outdoor training sessions. He summarized this by saying that “Group variables are positively influenced through

outdoor training programs.”(Moorefield, 1994) More generally, it has been reported that adventure based programs create “increases in interpersonal skills, cooperation and a decrease in acting-out and aggressiveness.”(Eagle, In press) In summary it can be suggested that “generally, the research on outdoor programs has been sparse and has had some methodological difficulties. Yet, enough anecdotal evidence exists to warrant positive statements about the usefulness of outdoor programs in addressing the needs of this complex and challenging group of young people.”(ERIC Digest, 1996) It seems, then, that adventure counseling and experiential education do offer a successful alternative to traditional social skills training for the encouragement of positive interpersonal interaction.

In order to transfer this learning back to “real life” situations, the experience must be processed appropriately. Actually, “A critical element of adventure programming is a facilitator’s ability to help clients process their experiences. Processing can be defined as those techniques that are used to augment the qualities of the adventure experience based on an accurate assessment of the client’s needs, and has been called the cornerstone of effective adventure-based learning experiences.”(Gass & Gillis, 1995) Thus, processing is the method the facilitator uses to help participants draw meaning from their experiences. Further, “Its purposes are to enhance the quality of the experience, assist clients in finding directions and sources for functional change, and create changes that are lasting (i.e. transferable).”(Gass & Gillis, 1995) Processing the experience is important for personal meaning to be obtained from the experience.

As described earlier, Priest and Gass (1993) have identified several different techniques for facilitating the groups processing of the experience. The first of these, *Letting the experience speak for itself* (learning and doing), “Provides excellent experiences and leaves learners to sort

out their own personal insights.”(Priest & Gass, 1993) The second technique, in which the “Instructor interprets the experience on behalf of the learners, informing them of what they had learned and how they should apply their new knowledge in the future,”(Priest & Gass, 1993) is known as *Speaking for the experience* (learning by telling). One problem with this is that everyone is different and learning is personal. *Debriefing the experience* (learning through reflection), the third technique, is one in which “Learners are asked to reflect on each adventure activity and discuss points of learning that they believe took place.”(Priest & Gass, 1993) This takes place after the experience. Using the fourth technique, which is known as *Directly frontloading the experience* (direction with reflection), “The instructor directs the learners to act in a certain manner by: 1) achieving prescribed objectives, 2) performing the activity in accordance with the explained incentives, 3) behaving functionally and 4) carrying through on their personal commitments.”(Priest & Gass, 1993) As opposed to debriefing, this emphasizes up-front the key learning points. *Framing the experience isomorphically* (reinforcement in reflection), the fifth technique, is “often more appropriate in counseling and therapy or training and development programmes, where specific prescriptive changes may be desired rather than in the more general education adventure programmes.”(Priest & Gass, 1993) This technique involves the use of isomorphs, which are “the parallel structures added to the adventure experience by the instructor so learners are encouraged to make certain metaphoric linkages.”(Priest & Gass, 1993) Finally, the sixth and newest technique is that of *Indirectly framing the experience*. (Gass, 1995) This is for use with “clients with continuing problematic issues.”(Gass 1995) These techniques are in order of the amount of reflection they require of the participants, with that requiring the least discussed first.

With so many possible techniques, the problem becomes knowing which to use. As Gass & Gillis (1995) observe, "The key to achieving success with processing techniques often depends on the facilitator's approach." In particular, "Some facilitators believe that the experience does not require elaborate verbalization to be conscious, useful and transferable. . .Also, there are those who believe [debriefing] is essential." (Brackenreg, 1993) Or in other words, "While it is true that with some activities the 'experience speaks for itself,' with others additional interventions may be necessary. There is some evidence to suggest that the way in which an activity is introduced to a group can influence the result. For example, the use of metaphors in describing an upcoming activity may enhance the value of the experience for the individual or group."(Gillis & Dagley, 1985) No definitive answer to this problem has surfaced, but there has been a great deal of support for and against *Letting the experience speak for itself*.

In support of this technique, Brackenreg (1993) has reminded us that "learning can take place without verbalization" and "experience takes time to sink in and is the key to learning." In other words, he believes that only the experience needs to be provided by the facilitator, the learning must take place overtime in the individual. Further argument reminds us that:

" . . . there is so much that goes on that we will never see no matter how much we talk about it, things that take years to sink in. We are, after all, dealing with powerful life metaphors. When students come to grip with themselves on a rock face, or have a profound insight into how they work with other people during Blindfold Square, that's their own experience, one that they will continually refer back to. Students are not stupid. . .they tend to know when things work and when they don't. Just because it is not always fed back to them doesn't mean it didn't happen." (Schoel, Prouty & Radcliffe, 1988)

Letting the experience speak for itself seems to have its merits, according to these views.

However, there are also those who argue against this technique and argue for debriefing

and the more reflective techniques. In response to the arguments above, Brackenreg (1993) states that "Experience itself is not growth, and while any individual may learn from an experience, the question still remains as to how we can maximize learning." Debriefing, it is argued, makes "awareness and insight . . . more conscious" because "giving students opportunities to reflect on and explain the meaning of the experiences can help them integrate and retain new learning." (Brackenreg, 1993) One important aspect of debriefing may be the cognitive rehearsal involved in discussing what happened during the experience; it seems that may be a significant factor in enhancing learning. (Brackenreg, 1993) One argument is that alone, participants often do not look beyond the content of the activity to the process; on the other hand, "Debriefing aims at helping participants interpret meaning for themselves, so that meaning is clarified, integrated, and transferred to new experiences. It seems apparent that the degree of insight and learning will vary with each individual and that the debriefing process will tend to increase the benefits of the experience." (Brackenreg, 1993) The arguments for debriefing, and higher levels of processing, also seem to have their worth.

Although it has been stated that research needs to be conducted to determine which techniques are appropriate for which clients, thus far research into this topic has been very limited. Priest (1996) conducted research "To determine the different effects that two forms of debriefing had on the development of self-confidence after participation in a ropes course experience. One form was the specific debrief, with discussion targeted solely at the desired outcome. The other form was the general debrief, with discussion on any and all issues arising from the experience." (Priest, 1996) He found that "Neither form of debrief appeared to be better than the other at doing so." (Priest, 1996) Gillis (1986) carried out research which compared

using “traditional” introductions with “metaphorical” introductions in an adventure program designed for couples enrichment. This would be similar to comparing the *Beyond the Limits Technique* with a technique requiring even more reflection. He found that there was no difference immediately following the program between these two techniques in the resulting perception of relationship satisfaction, the couples’ communication, personality characteristics, and the amount of trust and support received. However, he did find that 6 weeks after the program, the group which heard the metaphorical introductions rated the enrichment as more effective. He concluded, though, that there was no significant difference in the results based on these two styles. (Gillis, 1986) More research certainly is needed in this area.

“Beyond the Limits,” the program offered through the Wicomico County Board of Education in Maryland that was discussed earlier, would be a suitable program to use to carry out this much needed research. The C.A.R.E.S. (Children at Risk Educationally and Socially) portion of the program, more specifically, would be ideal because it focuses on adolescents (7th and 8th grade middle schoolers) who are having difficulty interacting successfully. “Beyond the Limits” uses a combination of *debriefing the experience* and *directly frontloading the experience*.

According to Jean Piaget’s Theory of Cognitive Development, many adolescents are still in the stage of Concrete Operation and have not progressed to the stage of Formal Operations. (Fox, 1995) This means that they have not yet mastered abstract thought and hypothetical reasoning. (Fox, 1995) Because of this, it is hypothesized that they will require more help in processing their experiences.

Hypothesis

There is a relationship between the facilitation technique used and the degree of positive interpersonal interaction demonstrated. That is, the amount of reflection demanded by a technique is directly related to the degree of success participants will experience in their interpersonal interactions, as indicated by an increase in cooperative and supportive behavior and a decrease in aggressive behavior. The two techniques to be used are *Letting the experience speak for itself*, which entails self-motivated reflection, and the *Beyond the Limits Technique*, which entails directed reflection.

Method

Definition of Terms

Adventure Program - A program in which "participants are presented with problems-solving tasks which are both stressful and challenging. The design of most . . . is to sequence adventure activities and challenges to build upon successes. These group and individual successes are thought to translate into a stronger sense of self. This heightened sense of self is thought to transfer to the 'real world' . . ." (Gillis, 1986)

Beyond the Limits Facilitation Technique - This is a mixture of *Debriefing the Experience* and *Directly Frontloading the Experience*, it requires participants to reflect on what they have experienced in response to questions posed by the facilitator.

Experiential Learning - "An educational approach in which participants draw from personal experiences and where conceptual, linguistic and perceptual elements are blended with direct impressions of the environment;" (Moorefield, 1994) A participative approach to

learning.

Letting the Experience Speak For Itself - This facilitation technique allows participants to process the experience on their own. The facilitator does not give any additional aid to this processing.

Positive (Successful) Interpersonal Interaction - Utilizing the appropriate social skills so that ones needs are met as indicated by an increase in cooperative and supportive behavior and a decrease in aggressive behavior

Subjects

The population from which subjects are drawn consists of 7th and 8th grade students in the C.A.R.E.S. program, which consists of students who have been identified as at-risk educationally and socially. Students from one middle school within this population were recommended by the coordinator of the program based upon their need for additional intervention. After being recommended, students were interviewed by the coordinators of "Beyond the Limits" to explain the program to them and check their interest level. Once permission for participation in the program was received from their parents, subjects were randomly assigned within blocks to one of five groups on the basis of their gender. (Class schedule conflicts did limit the randomization in a few cases.) There are three groups for males, and two for females, as indicated below:

Group 1 - 5 males
Group 2 - 8 males
Group 3 - 5 males

Group 4 - 5 females
Group 5 - 7 females

Groups were randomly assigned, again within blocks, to treatment conditions. Groups 1, 3 and 4 will receive the *Beyond the Limits* Technique, and Groups 2 and 5 will receive the *Letting the Experience speak for itself* Technique. Groups 3 and 4 will be combined and used as 1 group.

Instruments

Two different instruments will be utilized to assess the interpersonal success of the participants. The first of these will be a measure devised specifically for the "Beyond the Limits" program which examines Interfering and Enhancing Behaviors (Wicomico County Drug/Alcohol Prevention Office, 1994). Behavior will be videotaped during an experiential ropes course activity for later observation. The following subsets of overt behavior are measured:

- "Interfering Behaviors - physical aggression (hitting, pushing, kicking, etc.)
 - verbal aggression (swearing, name calling, put downs, threats, bullying, etc.)
 - refusal/defiance (moving away from group, noncompliance, etc.)
- Enhancing Behaviors - physical support of teammates (hands on assisting, helping, spotting, etc.)
 - verbal support (encouraging, cheering, praising, appropriate confrontation, etc.)
 - task strategies (voicing ideas, problem solving strategies, brainstorming, etc.)" (Wicomico County Drug/Alcohol Prevention Office, 1994)

Group behavior will be examined for up to 15 minutes or as long as the challenge activity lasts. During every 30 second period, the observer will record the occurrence of the above overt behaviors. If a behavior occurs more than once in a 30 second period, it will only be recorded once. Occurrences of interfering behaviors will be totaled and divided by the total number of

minutes scored. The same will be done with enhancing behaviors in order to create a score for each. A third score will be the sum of the score for the interfering behaviors and that for the enhancing behaviors. All three scores will be compared both between groups and between pre- and post-tests. Pre- and post- measures will be completed by the same person within one day to control reliability. Face Validity has been achieved for this instrument.

A second measure will be an evaluation by the group members of themselves and their interaction with their peers. This measure, The Index of Peer Relations (IPR), is one of the WAS scales, within the WALMYR Assessment Scales Collection. It measures the "degree, severity, or magnitude of a problem the person has in relationships with peers."(Krysik, Hoffart & Grinnell, 1993) This will also be used as a pre-test and post-test.

The IPR consists of 25 items and will produce a score within the range of 0 - 100; 0 indicates the relative absence of a problem, while 100 indicates a most severe problem. The "clinical cutting score" is 30, meaning that scores above 30 establish some evidence that the person has a clinical problem with their peer relations. The standard error of measurement, however, is approximately 4 -5 points, so scores in the range from 25 - 35 have questionable implications. Scores over 70 indicate that the person is experiencing extreme distress in their peer relations.(Krysik, Hoffart & Grinnell, 1993)

Reliability for the IPR has been established at .90 or better levels (using alpha-coefficients.) Validity has been investigated with respect to content, construct, concurrent known-groups and factorial validity; all have good to excellent validity coefficients. One weakness with this scale is that it is highly vulnerable to impressions management responding, including malingering and social desirability. * *A copy of both the IPR and the Interfering and*

*Enhancing Behaviors Instrument can be found in Attachment 2. **

Procedures

This research is part of an on-going program. All participants have already received the identical treatment, and will continue to do so after this research. As such, all subjects can be seen as having had the same experiences thus far. This research will take place from February 1, 1997 through April 3, 1997. During this time, participants will meet in the classroom for one period (50 minutes - 2/4/97), will travel to the ropes course for a whole day (2/6/97 or 2/11/97), will meet back in the classroom twice for one period each day (2/18/97 and 2/25/97) and will then take one final trip to the ropes course for a whole day (3/18/97 or 3/20/97). Post tests will then take place on 4/3/1997 in the classroom.

Schedule of Pretests: During the first meeting, peer evaluations will be measured. The Interfering/Enhancing Behaviors Instrument will be utilized at the beginning of the first trip to the ropes course during an initiative activity.

Schedule of Post-tests: During the last meeting both instruments will be utilized.

Facilitation will be by the researcher and another facilitator, one of the coordinators of the "Beyond the Limits" program. Each will facilitate half of the day for each group to control for the interaction of the facilitator with the group. (i.e. To make sure that it is the technique effecting the outcome rather than the person facilitating.) The facilitator will be randomly assigned to each part of the day.

Each group will do the exact same activities and challenges throughout the program. The only difference will be the way in which these activities will be facilitated. The *Letting the experience speak for itself* facilitation technique group will be told the rules for safety during each activity and given their challenge, without any further information. The *Beyond the Limits* facilitation technique group will be given this same information, plus they will be asked to reflect on the activity through debriefing questions and frontloading (suggesting that they think about cooperation, for example, while completing this challenge).

Please see the curriculum in Attachment 1 for more information about specific activities used.

Limitations

One of the major limitations of this study is that the subjects are part of an on-going program. This has two negative implications for this study. To begin with, a follow-up program cannot be used to measure the long-term effects of the two facilitation techniques. This design only allows for measuring the short-term effects. Furthermore, subjects have previously been exposed to the *Beyond the Limits* facilitation technique which may mean that those who are assigned to the *Letting the experience speak for itself* facilitation technique will expect the debrief which is not a part of this technique. This expectation may effect their behavior in some way.

A second limitation of this study may be the spread of the meetings across two months. If these meetings were concentrated in a shorter period of time (i.e. 3 meetings in three days) participants may be better able to remember what they have learned and be more likely to utilize

it. However, research needs to be carried out to determine the effect of the time between adventure program sessions before it can be determined how this will effect this study.

Also, the subjects are not "required" to participate in Beyond the Limits. Their attendance at school, and therefore their attendance at Beyond the Limits meetings, is sporadic. This has a severe effect on the results obtained. In fact, attrition was probably the biggest limitation in this study. Due to suspensions, the factors discussed above, and being sent to another school, a number of participants did not complete the program and others simply missed a number of the activities, including the pre- and/or post-tests. Group 1 fell from 5 to 3 members, Group 2 fell from 7 to 5 members, Groups 3 and 4 from 10 to 3 members and Group 5 from 7 to 5. In fact, only 4 students out of all of the groups attended each meeting: Three of these students were from group 5, while one was from Group 2. (For more information, please see attendance chart in Attachment 3.)

The instruments utilized in this study, furthermore, present their own limitations. The Index of Peer Relations, as discussed earlier, does not control for impression management responding. The Interfering and Enhancing Behaviors Index is relatively new and its limitations have not been fully discovered.

Finally, all subjects in this study were drawn from one middle school. This severely limits the degree to which this study can be generalized. It would be advisable in the future to carry out research with a sample representative of a larger population.

Results

Index of Peer Relations:

Group	Mean Pre-Test Score	Mean Post-Test Score	Difference*
1	22.67	21.56	1.11
2	41.07	41.06	0.01
3/4	28.34	33.34	5
5	28.13	29.34	1.21

** Because there is a standard error of measurement between 4 to 5 points, a difference less than 5 points will not be considered a significant change. **

Interfering and Enhancing Behaviors:

Pre-test Scores:

Group	Interfering Behavior Scores	Enhancing Behavior Scores	Combined Scores
1	-0.8	+2.0	+1.2
2	-1.0	+2.6	+1.6
3/4	-0.8	+2.6	+1.8
5	-.9	+3.4	+2.5

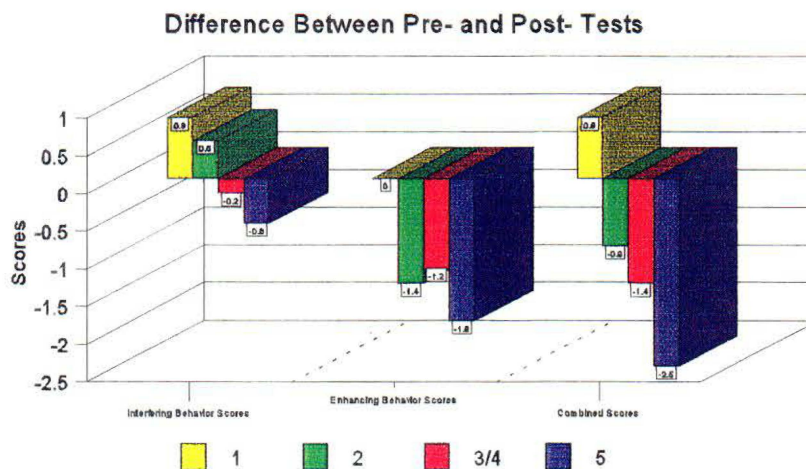
Post-test Scores:

Group	Interfering Behavior Scores	Enhancing Behavior Scores	Combined Scores
1	0.0	+2.0	+2.0
2	-0.5	+1.2	+0.7
3/4	-1.0	+1.4	+0.4
5	-1.5	+1.5	0.0

Difference between Pre- and Post-test Scores:*

Group	Interfering Behavior Scores	Enhancing Behavior Scores	Combined Scores
1	0.8	0	0.8
2	0.5	-1.4	-0.9
3/4	-0.2	-1.2	-1.4
5	-0.6	-1.9	-2.5

* Negative numbers indicate a decrease in the behavior from pre-test to post-test, while positive numbers indicate an increase.



Analysis of Results

The Index of Peer Relations clearly show that there was no significant change in any of the groups. Any of the limitations discussed previously may have contributed to this. Most importantly however, is the attrition effect. Because only a small group continued from the pre-test through the post-test, the results cannot be expected to be representative. Without the whole group experiencing the whole treatment (i.e. attending each session), it is impossible to know exactly what the post-test is measuring.

The Interfering and Enhancing Behaviors Index also shows that there was not a

significant change in any of the groups. Once again, the previous discussion of limitations should help to explain this. More importantly with this index, however, is that although it appears that the same groups are being compared, due to the attrition effect, the make-up of each group was different during the pre-test and the post-test. The simple variations among personality present can greatly effect the ways in which the group interacted.

On closer examination, the groups facilitated with the "Beyond the Limits" Technique (groups 1, 3 and 4) did not decline as much as the other "Letting the Experience Speak for itself" groups (groups 2 and 5). It is possible, then, that some outside influence caused all of the group behavior to deteriorate and the "Beyond the Limits" Technique was slightly better at preventing this occurrence. However, it is important to emphasize that this effect was very small and not significant.

Conclusion

It appears, then, that this research cannot make any definitive claim as to which facilitation technique is more appropriate with at-risk adolescents. Future research should be carried out to find a better answer to this question. In order to be more effective, research should be done in a more controlled setting so that attrition is not such a large issue. To whatever extent possible, attendance and participation should be mandated in order to reach a valid and useful conclusion.

Although no definitive answer could be reached with regards to the research question, this research does provide some other interesting information. To begin with, the "Beyond the Limits" Program needs to seriously consider whether its program is effective with the at-risk

population considering the attrition effect. This study cannot be used exclusively to illuminate this point because it studied group behavior rather than that of the individual. "Beyond the Limits" should examine each individual involved in the program to determine if the "average" participant (with average attendance) is able to gain anything from the program.

Furthermore, this research re-emphasizes the difficulty with measuring the effectiveness of adventure counseling. Research has been limited thus far due to the difficulty in quantifying the results. Although, qualitative data supports adventure counseling's effectiveness, quantified data has been limited. This research illustrates some of those difficulties and points towards some improvements that can be made in the future.

Attachment 1

Curriculum

I. Day 1

50 minutes

A. Description

Students will become re-oriented with the “Beyond the Limits” program. During an ice breaker activity, the group members will have the opportunity to interact with each other so that they will be prepared to work together. They will also complete the Index of Peer Relations pre-test.

B. Objective

By the end of this experience, students will:

1. Know what to expect of their upcoming adventure day
2. Be able to explain all four parts of the Full Value Contract
3. Be comfortable working with each other

C. Activity

1. Form circle and discuss the schedule for the month.
2. Review the four parts of the full value commitment.
3. Challenge the group with the following trick. Have them work alone for a few minutes and then in pairs. The challenge is to “Try to place five pennies so that they all make physical contact with each other.”
3. Introduce and explain the Index of Peer Relations (IPR). Make sure that everyone understands the meaning of the word “peer.” Ask them to fill it out carefully and take their time.
4. “Who are You?” (Rohnke & Butler, 1995). Brainstorm with the group about ten creative questions that they would like to ask the other group members. (Suggestions: “If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and what would you do there?” or “What is the most embarrassing thing that has happened to you in the last month?”) Have the group limit the list to two or three of their favorite questions, making sure that they require more than a “one-word” answer. Direct the students to have each member of their group answer each of the questions they chose. If time permits have them individually “interview” each other. Discuss what they learned about each other (with groups 1, 3 and 4).

D. Assessment (with groups 1, 3 and 4)

In a group debriefing circle, ask the group if they followed the full value contract today. Also, ask them how working together helped them to complete the challenges.

E. Resources

pennies, paper and pencils, large paper and marker for brainstorming.

II. Day 2 Adventure Trip 6 hours

A. Unit description

The group will travel to Salisbury State University's gymnasium and climbing wall to test themselves and their group. They will be challenged individually on the climbing wall and as a group with initiative activities and games. During the first initiative activity the "Interfering and Enhancing Behaviors" instrument will be utilized. The overall goal for the day is to build interpersonal interaction skills.

B. Objective

By the end of this experience, participants should be able to:

- 1) Practice Goal Setting and working towards their goals.
- 2) Challenge themselves.
- 3) Encourage and support each other and recognize the importance of doing so.
- 4) Work well in groups.

C. Activities

- 1) Review the four parts of full value and the plan for the day.
- 2) Ask each group member to state a personal goal for the day and make a suggestion for the group goal. Then ask the group to decide upon a group goal.

*****Groups 1 and 2 should proceed to number three, groups 3, 4 and 5 should skip to number four. After between 1.5 and 2.0 hours, the groups should switch. *****

- 3) a. Moon Ball. (Rohnke, 1989) This game will act as a deinhbitizer for the group. Ask the group to form a circle and then challenge them to hit the beach ball as many times as they can in a row. A player can not hit the ball twice in a row. After a practice round, ask the group to set a goal for themselves. If the group seems to be dominated by one or two members, institute a new rule that a

player can only hit the ball a second time after EVERY member of the group has had a turn.

- b. Debrief (groups 1, 3 and 4 only):
 - Have the group rate themselves on all four part of the full value contract and give examples to explain their ratings.
 - Have the group rate themselves on their work towards achieving their goal and how they accomplished this. Ask them what else they need to do to help them accomplish their goal.
 - Ask the group to give examples of cooperative behavior that they exhibited. Ask them how it benefited them to cooperate and what would have happened if they had not.
- c. Marshmallows. Each student is provided a dot, and the group receives one extra. The dots are “marshmallows”. Their challenge is to get from their safety zone across the vat of “hot chocolate” to the other safety zone. The trick is that if any “marshmallow” is in the hot chocolate without being touched by some body part, it is “swept away.” And, of course, the participants will “melt” if they touch the hot chocolate. This challenge encourages brainstorming, cooperation, teamwork, planning, and communication, among other skills.

During this activity, the students will be videotaped so that the Interfering and Enhancing Behaviors Instrument can be utilized.

- d. Debriefing - (groups 1,3 and 4)
 - Again, have the group evaluate their progress towards their group goal and have them give examples. Have them compare their work during this activity with that during Moonball.
 - Ask the group what behaviors helped them to achieve their goals and what interfered with them achieving their goal.
 - Have them evaluate their cooperative behavior again. Ask them if there are ways this type of behavior could help them in school.
- e. Lateral Climbing Wall (optional, depending upon time)- This wall requires the students to work in pairs spotting each other. The goal is to work your way horizontally across the wall, holding on to the protrusions at all four points (both hands and feet). Make sure to review safety measures. If the group is small enough, begin with a challenge to get the whole group up on the wall and sing a verse of “Row, Row, Row your boat.”
- f. Thinking Tag (optional)- Give each participant two playing cards. All numbered cards are worth their face value, face cards are worth ten points, and aces are worth eleven. The goal is to have the largest sum possible. In order to get a higher point total, participants must tag another player, and decide if they want the

other players cards. Both cards must be traded at the same time. Whether the players trade cards or not, the transaction should end with a handshake and "thank you." The other player must tag someone else before tagging the first player (No "tag backs.") All players must walk and stay within the boundaries (should be relatively small.) At the end of the game (which is to be determined by the facilitator -- long enough to trade a number of times, but short enough that participants do not suffer from boredom.), players should be recognized and applauded for their "grand total."

- g. Hoop-it-Up (Optional) - This game involves two teams and a ring. The object is to have the most successful throws/catches in a row between team members. If one team drops the ring, the other team gets it.
- h. Trash Ball (Optional) - This game is played on a basketball court. The group is divided into teams - each team must try to defend their basket and earn a basket on the other end of the court. However, before a shot can be taken, EVERY member of the team must have had possession of the ball. In this way, it becomes a true "team" game!
- I. Debriefing - (groups 1, 3 and 4) This should be included after the "optional" activities. Follow the same questioning sequence as used after "Marshmallows," but have them compare their work during the different activities. Hopefully, they will be applying something they learned from the previous activity.
- 4) a. Climbing Wall. Review safety procedures with the students. Review tying Studebaker harnesses and double check each participant's for "correctness" and tightness. Remind students that this part of the program is "Challenge by Choice," meaning that they must each personally set their own goal which can change in any direction at any point during the activity. In order to encourage group work during this activity which focuses on building individual self-concept, remind the group that while each person is climbing the rest of the group has different "jobs" to do (i.e. - encouraging, helping the belayer, etc.). Review what these jobs are and ask them to think of some ways that they can help each other to reach their goals.
- 5) Debriefing (only with groups 1, 3 and 4).
 - Ask the group if they met their individual goals.
 - Ask them if they worked as a group to help each other and have them give examples.
 - Have them once again evaluate their progress towards their group goal.
 - Ask the students if they used anything they learned earlier in the day to

help them be successful.

- Have the group relate what they have learned back to "the real world" and think of ways that they can use it to help them there.

6) Lunch Break

7) Campus Tour/"Scavenger Hunt". Before leaving for the tour, break the students into smaller groups of 3-4 (have one facilitator with each group). Give them each a list of things to find and questions to find answers to during the tour. Make sure during the tour to allow sufficient time for them to complete the scavenger hunt. After the tour, have the groups present what they found.

8) Debrief (for groups 1,3 and 4)

- Ask how cooperating helped them during this activity. Ask what would have happened if they had each had to find out all the information by themselves.

- Relate this to school/the "real world".

9) Have students complete Beyond the Limits trip #2 reflection sheet. (Groups 1, 3 and 4 only)

D. Resources

Belay ropes

Studebaker wraps

Belay System

Beach Ball

"Dots"

Reflection Sheets

Scavenger Hunt Sheets

Video Camera

Video Tape

"Trash ball"

Ring

Deck of Cards

Pencils

III. Day 3

Communication

50 minutes

A. Unit Description

Students will review the definition and the different forms of communication. Through problem solving and initiative activities, the students will practice communicating with each other. They will also discuss ways to improve communication. This activity will take place in the classroom.

B. Unit Objectives

By the end of this experience, students should be able to:

1. Recognize and use the different forms of communication

2. Solve initiative and challenge activities by effectively communicating with each other.
3. Explain ways to improve 2-way communication.

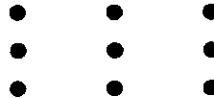
C. Activities

1. Discuss the "Adventure Day" with the group. Ask for any feedback, reactions, feelings, etc. (With group 2 and 5 this conversation should not include any "reflection" on what they learned. It can include things like "Was it fun?" or "What was the best part?" Groups 1, 3, and 4 can discuss these as well as questions about what they learned and accomplished during the day.)
2. Review the plan for the day.
3. Review the four parts of the full value contract.
4. Play "What Goes Where?" (Rohnke, 1989) The object of this game is to describe to the group a "geometrical abstraction" such that they can draw it **without** seeing it. The first round should be presented (by a member of the group) verbally but with his/her back to the group. The second round (and with a new presenter), is also played verbally but with the presenter facing the group. Gestures are allowed in this round. During the third round, yet another presenter should use **only** gestures to describe the abstraction - no verbal communication can be used. Questions cannot be answered in these first three rounds. Finally, the fourth round is played also with gestures, but this time the (new) presenter can respond to the group's questions. After all four rounds let the group compare their pictures to each other and to the "originals." Discuss which method created the most accurate representations and why the group thinks this is so.
5. Let this game lead into a conversation about the different types of communication, especially verbal and nonverbal. Have the group begin by creating a definition of "communication." [A text book definition is "a process where one individual conveys information - either intentionally or unintentionally - to another person." (Sheafor, Horejsi, and Horejsi, 1994)] Discuss the problems with verbal communication - especially incorrectly perceiving the intent of the message. Have them brainstorm ways to avoid this, including asking clarifying questions and repeating the information you received. Then, move on to nonverbal communication. Have the group brainstorm different forms. (A partial list could include posture, body orientation, facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, touching and clothing.) Explain that 90% of all of our face-to-face communication is non-verbal so it is very important that we are expressing what we intend to.
6. With the remaining time, play **Telephone** with the group. Telephone is

played by whispering a message from person to person until the whole group has heard it. The message can only be said once (i.e. no repeating it!) and the listener cannot ask clarifying questions. The last person to receive the message repeats it out-loud to the whole group; This usually creates a good laugh because the message has usually changed from it's original format.

7. Have the group apply everything they have learned about effective communication to create the "best" way to communicate. (It should probably combine both verbal and nonverbal communication and allow for clarifying questions.) Challenge them to pick one drawing and describe it using this method to either another facilitator or a teacher (someone who has not seen the drawings before.) Discuss the effectiveness of this as compared to their success earlier.
8. Debrief. With groups 1,3 and 4, have them discuss what they learned today and how they saw it operating during the game. Also, have them evaluate their behavior according to the Full Value Contract.
9. *Optional (depending upon time, fit this activity in wherever necessary – i.e. early if participants are straggling in or late if there are a few minutes remaining.)* Challenge the group with the following "brain teaser:"

Draw four straight lines, without picking up the pencil, to connect all the dots:



D. Resources

Four "Geometrical Abstract" Drawings

Paper

Pencils

IV. Day 4 Cooperation 50 minutes

A. Unit Description

Students will review the meaning of cooperation and teamwork. Through problem solving and initiative activities, the students will practice cooperating and observe the ways in which it helps them to reach a goal. This activity will take place either in the classroom or outside. They will also practice tying their harnesses.

B. Unit Objectives

By the end of this experience, students should:

1. Understand how cooperation and teamwork are beneficial.
2. Be able to cooperate with their other group members in order to successfully complete a challenge.
3. Know how to tie a studebaker harness.

C. Activities

1. Handout the permission slips for the next trip to the ropes course and explain the importance of bringing them back promptly. Review the plan for the day.
2. Studebaker Harnesses. Explain to the group that the challenge is for them to be able to tie their harnesses on the next trip without the help of a facilitator. Remind them that they can help each other. Have everyone practice tying their harnesses; this will probably mean walking them through it step-by-step, but ask before each step if anyone remembers what happens next (unless you know that they do not have any idea!).
3. The Maze. [The maze is actually a tarp divided into squares by strips of duct tape (4 rows x 8 columns). Ahead of time, plan a "safe" path through the maze.] Explain to the group that they must stand on one side of this giant "swamp" and that their challenge is to get their whole group to the other side by way of the one "safe" path through the swamp. If they step on the wrong square, they will have to retrace their steps, and try again later. Also, only one person can be in the swamp at a time and they must wait for everyone to have had a turn before they go again. In order to maneuver through the swamp, they must step from one square to another square which is next to, diagonal to, or above the square they are originally standing on. Finally, explain that the game must be played without talking. (This should encourage them to practice the non-verbal communication methods they learned during the last meeting.) The facilitator should snap whenever the group steps onto an unsafe square (or if they go out of order, or do not retrace their steps, etc.)
4. Debrief (groups 1, 3 and 4 only). Discuss how cooperation and teamwork played a part in this game. How did the group members exhibit this behavior during the game? Did it help them? Could they have done it without each other? How did they communicate with each other?
5. Ball Carry. [Prior to this activity, put a small bowl on the ground and the ball carrier about 20 feet away from it. The ball carrier should consist of a ring (the right size for a tennis ball to balance on) with 8 strings (approx. 4 feet long) attached to it. Place the tennis ball on the ring.] Explain to the group that the ball is very fragile and cannot be touched by human hands. The groups challenge is to place the ball in the bowl without it dropping on the ground. (If it does, they must start over with the ball carrier and the ball on the ground.) In order for the group to move the ball, each member must be touching one of the strings.

6. Debrief (groups 1, 3 and 4 only). Ask the group how they managed to complete this seemingly-impossible task. Did they use anything they learned from the Maze? How could this (cooperation) help them in real life?

D. Resources

Ropes
Maze (tarp, with grid pattern)
Tennis ball
Ball Carrier (Ring with strings attached)
Permission Slips

V. Day 5 Adventure Day #2 6 hours

A. Unit Description

The group will travel to Mardela Middle and High School's Ropes Course to test themselves individually and as a group. Their group will be challenged on the low elements and individually on the high elements. The overall goal is to continue building their self-esteem and interpersonal interaction skills.

B. Objective

By the end of the experience, participants should be able to:

1. Demonstrate their knowledge of the safety rules.
2. Continue their use of goals to challenge themselves both as a group and individually.
3. Physically and emotionally support each other while refraining from behaviors that are harmful to the group.
4. Recognize how their behavior influences each other.

C. Activities

1. Review Full Value Commitment and the safety rules.
2. Have each member set an individual goal and have them set a goal as a group, as well.
3. Deinhbitizers/Initiatives:
 - a) **Fran Says/Lori Says** - This is just like Simon Says, except you start with two circles. If a person does something that "Simon didn't say to do," they must switch to the other circle. This reduces the fear of failure and creates movement among the group members.
 - b) **Twizzle** (Butler & Rhonke, 1995) - Players are instructed to walk

counter-clockwise when commanded to "go", stop when told to "stop", jump when told to "jump," jump around 180 degrees when told to "turn," and jump 360 degrees when told to "twizzle." The object is to "stick" the landings of the jumps -- any fumbling and the player has to switch into the inner circle, where the continue to participate. A few practice rounds should be played first, however. This game continues the momentum from the first game and increases the amount of movement.

- c. **Everybody's It** (Rhonke, 1984) - In this tag game everyone starts out as "it." The object is to tag everyone else before they can tag you. Once tagged, a player must kneel down and are temporarily out of the game. As things begin to slow down, the facilitator can yell "everybody's it" and the game will continue.
- d. **Harness Challenge** - The group members are challenged to tie their own studebaker harnesses without the help or instruction of any of the facilitators. They are allowed to help each other (and encouraged to do so!) This activity should encourage them to work together and practice what they have learned.

4. Low Elements

- a. **Trolleys** - The trolleys are two boards with 10 ropes attached to each board. Each participants must stand with one foot on each board holding on to a rope in each hand (plus any extra ropes if there are less than 10 people.) The group is challenged to move from one point to another without anyone touching the ground. When a member does touch the ground, they must go to the end of the trolleys. If the majority of the group touches the ground, they must move the trolleys back to the last tree they passed and try again. This activity requires a great amount of group cooperation and communication.
- b. **Debrief** - (with groups 1,3 and 4 only)
 - * Have the group evaluate themselves on their group goal and give examples.
 - * Ask them to identify behaviors that helped them to accomplish this challenge and those that hindered their progress.
 - * Ask them from this to decide what else they need to work on for the day and what they need to continue to do well.
- c. **Mohawk Traverse** - This element consists of several wires stretching from tree to tree a few feet off of the ground. In this case, the group was challenged to get across two of the wires without touching the ground. Safety must be emphasized with this element. In order to accomplish this challenge, the group must work together - brainstorm, plan, cooperate, communicate, etc. This is a difficult challenge and definitely forces the group to come

together.

d. Debrief - (with groups 1,3 and 4 only)

*Most groups give up to some extent at some point during this activity; Ask them what turned them around and created their renewed interest or made them think they could do this activity

* Ask the group to evaluate themselves on their original goal and anything else they decided that they needed to work on after the last activity.

* Have the group identify how they were helped by other members of the group and how they helped others.

* Discuss the factors that enabled the group to be successful during this challenge.

5. High Elements (each group should do activity "a" plus either "b" or "c")

a. **Multi-Vine** - This element consists of a cable extending between two trees approximately 30 feet off of the ground. Above this is another cable with 5 different lengths ropes hanging down from it at varying intervals between the two trees. The challenge is to climb the tree (which has staples in it), and walk across the lower cable, using the ropes to balance. The difficult part is that the ropes are not long enough to easily allow you to reach the next rope, so participants have to take a chance, or think of an ingenious means to get to the next rope.

b. **Dangling Duo** - "A vertically oriented log ladder is suspended from an overhead cable. The rungs of the ladder get progressively farther apart during ascent. The logs are approximately 8 feet in length."(Wicomico County Board of Education, 1996) The challenge is for two participants to climb to the top rung of the ladder. In order to do this, they can only use the ladder and each other to reach their goal. This challenge encourages the pair to cooperate and work together.

c. **Vertical Playpen** - This element consists of "vertically oriented playpen equipment suspended from cables. Four cables are connected to two trees and on each cable different obstacles are hung. This series of obstacles consists of a circus ladder, firecracker ladder, rings, dowel ladder, three tires, and a rope swing. The element is approximately 40 feet high."(Wicomico County Board of Education, 1996) Again, the challenge is for two participants to climb up the series of obstacles to reach their goal. They should only use the obstacles and each other.

d. Debrief (with groups 1, 3 and 4 only)

* Use the "Snake Debrief" - Have a volunteer (person 1) stand in the center of the circle and then have someone else (person 2) thank person 1 for something that they did for them during the

day. Person 2 then stands behind the first person, putting their hands on the other's shoulders. This continues until the whole group joins the chain. The circle is completed by the first person thanking the last. Then, have them each pat the person in front of them on the back, and then turn around and pat the other person on the back.

- D. Resources
 Belay ropes
 Studebaker Wraps
 Belay System
 Low and High Elements

VI. Day 6 Post-Test 50 minutes

A. Unit Description

The group will complete the Index of Peer Relations post-test. The "Interfering and Enhancing Behaviors" instrument will be utilized while they complete a challenge activity.

B. Objectives

By the end of this experience, the group will have

- 1) Completed both post tests.
- 2) Utilized the cooperative and supportive behaviors that they have learned.
- 3) Reinforced the positive interpersonal interaction skills that they have learned.

C. Activities

1. Re-introduce the Index of Peer Relations. Make sure that everyone remembers the definition of the word "peer." Ask them to fill it out carefully.
2. Magic Carpet - Have the group stand within a circle (made by a rope.) Give them to carpet squares and instruct them that their challenge is to get to the third carpet square which should be about 50 feet away. In order to get there though, they must use the magic carpets -- because the ground between them and the third carpet is actually a cloud, and thus if they touch it they will fall through and the group will have to start over again. The Carpets cannot slide. The challenge is complete when the entire group is standing on the third carpet.

During this activity, the students will be videotaped so that the Interfering and Enhancing Behaviors Instrument can be utilized.

3. Debriefing (groups 1, 3 and 4) - Ask the group some of the following questions, or similar ones:
 - How many different ideas did you try before you found one that "worked?"

- What was your role in this activity? What did you do to help the group?
 - What helped your group to accomplish your goal?
4. Juggling - With any extra time, teach the group how to juggle and let them practice.

D. Resources

Index of Peer Relations

Pencils

3 Carpet Squares

Juggling Balls

Attachment 2

Instruments



INDEX OF PEER RELATIONS (IPR)

Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

PEER GROUP _____

This questionnaire is designed to measure the way you feel about the people you work, play, or associate with most of the time; your peer group. It is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Place the name of your peer group at the top of the page in the space provided. Then answer each item as carefully and as accurately as you can by placing a number beside each one as follows.

- 1 = None of the time
- 2 = Very rarely
- 3 = A little of the time
- 4 = Some of the time
- 5 = A good part of the time
- 6 = Most of the time
- 7 = All of the time

-
1. ____ I get along very well with my peers.
 2. ____ My peers act like they don't care about me.
 3. ____ My peers treat me badly.
 4. ____ My peers really seem to respect me.
 5. ____ I don't feel like am "part of the group".
 6. ____ My peers are a bunch of snobs.
 7. ____ My peers understand me.
 8. ____ My peers seem to like me very much.
 9. ____ I really feel "left out" of my peer group.
 10. ____ I hate my present peer group.
 11. ____ My peers seem to like having me around.
 12. ____ I really like my present peer group.
 13. ____ I really feel like I am disliked by my peers.
 14. ____ I wish I had a different peer group.
 15. ____ My peers are very nice to me.
 16. ____ My peers seem to look up to me.
 17. ____ My peers think I am important to them.
 18. ____ My peers are a real source of pleasure to me.
 19. ____ My peers don't seem to even notice me.
 20. ____ I wish I were not part of this peer group.
 21. ____ My peers regard my ideas and opinions very highly.
 22. ____ I feel like I am an important member of my peer group.
 23. ____ I can't stand to be around my peer group.
 24. ____ My peers seem to look down on me.
 25. ____ My peers really do not interest me.

INTERFERING / ENHANCING BEHAVIORS

Video Tape Observation Record Form

* Pre and Post Observation should be completed by the same person.

Group Name _____

Date of Activity _____

No. of Students in Group _____

Racial Composition Whites _____

Gender Composition Female _____

Circle One:

PRE POST

People of Color _____

Male _____

CHECKLIST INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Rate each of the six behaviors every 30 seconds.
- 2 Check each box only once even if the same behavior occurs during the same time block.
- 3 If the behavior does not occur, leave blank.
- 4 Check if the behavior is exhibited by any group member.

CHECKLIST

Minutes		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
B E H A V I O R S	PA															
	VA															
	RD															
	PS															
	VS															
	TS															

PA = Physical Aggression (hitting, pushing, kicking, etc...)

VA = Verbal Aggression (swearing, name calling, put downs, threats, bullying, etc...)

RD = Refusal / Defiance (move away from group, non compliance, etc...)

PS = Physical Support of Teamates (hands on assisting, helping, spotting, etc...)

VS = Verbal Support (encouraging, cheering, praising, appropriate confrontation, etc ...)

TS = Task Strategies (voicing ideas, problem solving strategies, brainstorming, etc...)

Was group goal met? Yes _____ No _____

Comments _____

*Observer _____

Date _____

Attachment 3

ATTENDANCE CHART

ATTENDANCE - CARES B.T.L. GROUPS						
	2/4	trip 2	2/18	2/25	trip 3	4/3
Group 1 - Member 1	X	absent	X	X	---	X
Group 1 - Member 2	gym	X	X	X	---	X
Group 1 - Member 3	susp.	X	X	absent	X	X
Group 2 - Member 1	X	X	X	X	X	---
Group 2 - Member 2	X	susp	X	X	X	X
Group 2 - Member 3	X	susp	X	X	X	X
Group 2 - Member 4	X	X	X	X	X	X
Group 2 - Member 5	X	X	X	X	chorus	X
Group 3/4 - Member 1	X	susp	X	---	X	X
Group 3/4 - Member 2	X	---	X	X	X	X
Group 3 /4- Member 3	X	---	X	X	X	X
Group 5 - Member 1	X	X	X	X	X	X
Group 5 - Member 2	X	X	X	X	X	X
Group 5 - Member 3	X	X	X	X	absent	X
Group 5 - Member 4	X	X	X	X	X	X
Group 5 - Member 5	X	X	absent	X	---	X

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