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# *Research News You Can Use*

## *Spring 2008*

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## Where You Stand Depends on Where You Sit: Participation and Reactions to Change.

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Nancy Winemiller Basinger and Jessica Romine Peterson. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, vol 19, no. 2, Winter 2008. P. 243 – 257.

*Submitted by Elizabeth Bolton.*

### Introduction

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This article examines the effects of participation on the implementation of change. It presents the perspectives of stake holders in two nonprofit arts organizations as they seek to merge. The merger of nonprofit organizations is happening frequently as the number of organizations increase and the resources to support them dwindle. In this study a merger is defined as one form of major organizational change.

### Methodology

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The study of the merger of the two art organizations illustrates how the view of the stakeholders was directly influenced by their access to information. Open communications are always thought to be highly desirable, especially during organizational change and the decision to exclude stake holders led to conflict among the two merged groups. Data were gathered through interviews conducted with stakeholder group representatives of the two merging arts organization. The background leading to the merger stemmed from declining revenues for both organizations. Mergers of symphonies and opera organizations are rare and only three have been done in the US. The time line for the merger was rapid. The reaction to the merger was not totally positive and there was conflict between the boards of directors and staff at all levels.

### Findings

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Two perspectives emerged. One perspective, known as insiders, were from those persons who were directly involved in the communications and the decisions. These people were board members and management and had participated in the processes and the decision to merge the two organizations. The other perspective was from those persons, outsiders, who had been excluded from the process and the decision making and were overwhelmingly opposed to the merger. The merger did not make the differences in perspective go away and they lingered long after the two organizations merged.

Participation in the decision making process was the one single factor that related to the differences in perspective with the insiders greatly involved in the processes and decisions and the outsiders not at all involved. The authors conclude that it is clearly inefficient to involve every stakeholder in all aspects of a decision but that the result, although achieved with great efficiency, may well have costs beyond those gained by the efficiency of excluding stakeholders.

### Implications for Practice

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Merger is just one type of major organization change. Other options include closing up and ceasing to exist. Mergers continue to be a popular option and according the Nicole Wallace “nearly one in five charities are considering mergers to help survive hard economic times” (p. 27). Another study showed

that for-profits merge at about the same rate. The merger rates of nonprofits varied by the type of organization. Characteristics that make nonprofits good merger material include a high degree of competition, the need for expensive facilities, financial distress, and a leadership crisis.

This Basinger and Peterson study is particularly timely in view of the recent plan by the Obama administration to set up a \$634-billion reserve fund over 10 years to improve the health care system in the United States. Preston and Perry (2009) reviewed his plan and report that his planned budget for 2010 would pay for \$318-billion of the fund by limiting the tax deductions on families with earnings on more than \$250,000 who choose to itemize their deductions including donations to charitable organizations. "Taxpayers now can save the same percentage as their tax bracket. Those in the highest tax brackets – 33 percent and 35 percent—can save 33 cents or 35 cents in taxes for each dollar donated. Mr. Obama would cap the tax break at 28 percent" (Preston and Perry, p.6).

The nonprofit sector is divided on this proposed plan with those that have chosen to voice their concerns being opposed to this major change in the organizational funding stream. The Obama Administration emphasizes that these changes would not take place until 2011 and the economy will have begun its upturn before that time. Charity leaders are making a strong case against the proposal in view of the economic crisis the country is facing and professional fundraising associations are saying that this is the wrong time to send this message to donors.

The counter to this argument is presented by those who say that while limiting tax deductions may depress giving, the benefit outweighs the cost of ever increasing health insurance plans. Some policy analysts opine that such a plan would help charities by reducing the cost of providing health insurance to 45 million Americans who lack insurance. According to some, this plan would lower the tax liability on the estates of wealthy Americans when they die. Others say this plan would harm their institution because any benefits would not equal the loss of revenue by donors (Preston and Perry, p. 9). This debate is not yet over and both sides make a strong case which illustrates the title of the article reviewed here. One's reaction to change depends on one's particular situation.

This study is timely for many reasons given the current economic crisis in Florida and elsewhere in the United States. Major organizational changes are taking place and many stakeholders – families, employees, employers, for profit and nonprofit entities, will be affected. How involved are the stakeholders in your community in discussions to cut spending on schools, transportation and other critical services? What efforts are being made to inform and involve the stakeholders in decisions that will change their lives and the services they have come to expect? According to the Basinger and Peterson study, the rationale by the insider group to use secrecy in the negotiations and deliberations was to protect the integrity of the process. The outsider group saw this as unfair and unnecessary. What will be the model for change that needs to take place in your agency and organization? This article does not propose to offer a model for organizational change or to suggest that change cannot be positive. It does suggest that when stake holders participate in the process it will have a major effect on the outcome and the acceptance of it.

Preston, S. & Perry, C. (March 12, 2009). A taxing proposition: Nonprofit leaders come out divided on President Obama's plans. *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*. Vol. XXI, No. 10, 6-9.

Wallace, N. (March 12, 2009). One in five charities considering mergers to help survive hard economic times. *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*. Vol. XXI, No. 10, 27.

## Teens Romantic Relationships & Sexual Behavior: Media Influences “Over and Above” Parents and Peers

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*Kate Fogarty*

### Introduction

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Romantic relationships are an active part of teens’ social lives and contribute to their development - both positively and negatively (Giordano, Manning, & Longmore, 2006). Romantic interests usually emerge in the early to middle adolescent years and result in teens’ increased concern with the social image they project to potential romantic partners (Giordano et al., 2006; Kobus, 2003). In molding their social images in order to attract a romantic partner, girls are more likely to focus on physical appearance such as body image whereas boys emphasize their physical achievements such as sports (Michell & Amos, 1997-in Giordano et al., 2006). Forming social images is not only a part of dating and courtship, but adolescent identity formation. Through this process of forming both self and social images, teens have potential to become involved in problem behaviors (Giordano et al., 2006) as well as positive, prosocial ones.

Families, parents and peers are likely to influence teens as they form their social images and perceptions of attractiveness to a potential romantic partner. Fortunately, parents have stronger influence than peers on problematic outcomes in dating (Doyle et al., 2003). Of greater concern, however, is that various forms of media have been found to be a “super peer” in educating teens on romantic and sexual behavior (Chernin & Fishbein, 2007; L’Engle, Brown, & Kenneavy, 2006). In fact, when it comes to teens’ sexual behavior, media has been found to have influence that goes above and beyond that of parents (L’Engle et al., 2006). Young teens may be especially vulnerable to the influence of media due to a lack of direct romantic and sexual experience (Eggermont, 2004). And, media is considered a prime source of “sexual socialization” (L’Engle, Brown, & Keanneavy, 2006) for adolescents as surveys support that 90-95% of teens learn from television and movies about romantic love (deSouza & Sherry, 2006).

### Media and Teens’ Sexual Behavior

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Research on media influence and teens includes findings that exposure to media with sexual content has a ‘causal’ effect on teens’ sexual behavior, this is especially true with exposure to music and movies (Pardun, L’Engle, & Brown, 2005); also, teens who are sexually active tend to seek out media with sexual content (Bleakley, Hennessy, Fishbein, & Jordan, 2008). And, early studies in the 1980s found that teens who spent more time watching television (Ward, Gorvine, & Walker, 2002):

- were less accepting of their lack of sexual experience
- were less likely to enjoy early sexual experiences

- estimated their friends' number of sexual experiences as higher
- reported starting having sex earlier

## Media and Teens' Romantic Relationships

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Beyond sexual themes, teens' exposure to media with romantic tones has powerful effects. Content analyses of prime time television and contemporary music indicate frequent references to dating and intimacy, e.g., about twenty times an hour in TV programs most watched by teens (Eggermont, 2004). A content analysis of prime-time preferred teen television programs revealed that less healthy ways to handle conflict (avoidance and talking to others about a problem) in romantic relationships prevailed, although less than half (46%) of the romantic couples ever experienced conflict and the majority of conflicts (83%) ended in positive resolution (deSouza & Sherry, 2006). Romantic-based media was found to influence teens' unrealistic beliefs about romantic relationships for both males and females (Chernin & Fishbein, 2007). Unrealistic beliefs include the existence of "soul mates" and that romantic partners should intuitively sense one another's thoughts and feelings (Chernin & Fishbein, 2007). A teenage girl, for example, might think the purpose of dating, even in her teen years, is to find a "soul mate". Or an adolescent male might value or perceive a romantic partner as knowing exactly what he is thinking and feeling. Additional media-linked beliefs that teens have about romantic relationships divide the sexes; teen boys who watch a lot of television, in comparison to peers who watch less TV, find physical attractiveness to be most important in a romantic partner, whereas teen girls who engage in heavy TV viewing are less concerned about attractiveness and feel that romantic partners having a pleasant personality matters most (Eggermont, 2004).

Romantic "conceptions" strongly influence a teen's views of romantic interactions and can lead to frustration and relationship dissatisfaction (Eggermont, 2004). Having unrealistic beliefs about romantic relationships and sexuality potentially leads teens to disappointment and problems. We may imagine a teen boy devastated by a breakup for reasons unknown, when his girlfriend seemed to be in tune with his every thought and feeling. If a teen believes her boyfriend is her soul mate, she may become sexually involved with him. Media that is laden with references to dating and intimacy portrays an expectation that soul mates—or any type of dating relationship - be sexually intimate. In fact, teens who perceived media as promoting their sexual activity, in other words granting them permission to do so, were also likely to seek out sexual encounters (L'Engle et al., 2006). An analysis of data from a longitudinal school-based study of over 600 ninth graders indicated that the top three reasons teens engaged in oral sex were: (1) pleasure (primarily for males); (2) to improve the relationship (females); and (3) popularity/reputation (females) (Cornell & Halpern-Felsher, 2006). Although media was reported as the least important reason for teens' having oral sex in the study, we can only speculate that girls' beliefs that a sexual act makes the relationship closer was a result of peer and media influence. The association between romantic relationships and sexual behavior portrayed in the media and the influence of such association on teen relationships needs greater inquiry.

## Positives on Media

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On the positive side, media can be a source of positive and veritable information for teens. Principles of mass media theory support that the more realistic the portrayal of romantic and sexual situations, the

more powerful the influence of that media (Eggermont, 2004). Granted reality television shows such as the Bachelor may not be a good source of dating information for teens! Yet media that expels myths about dating relationships (public service announcements, television shows) and provides accurate information about sexuality (blogs and online teen bulletin boards monitored by public health professionals) provides great promise (Suzuki & Calzo, 2004).

### Suggestions for Parents & Youth Workers/Implications: Limit Teens SMDs

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Overall, parents and youth workers must consider limiting and monitoring the SMD or “sexual media diet” of teens. SMD has been shown to be linked with teens’ intentions to have sex “in the near future” (L’Engle, et al., 2006, p. 191). And in a study of over 1,000 teens in the seventh and eighth grades, about 11% of the media they consumed contained sexual content (Pardun et al., 2005). And in that study, SMD was significantly linked with young teens’ sexual activity or intentions to have sex. Practical advice for parents to reduce teens’ SMD includes:

- Keeping televisions in the living room and out of teens’ bedrooms;
- Limiting online access to computers in central, and less private, locations;
- Allowing your teen to plug her mp3 player into the living room or car stereo for a half hour (or as long as you can tolerate) so you can join in the listening;
- Watching with your teen his or her favorite television shows or movies, and refraining from comments during this time
- Asking thought (but not defense-) provoking questions of your teen, “What does this song seem to say about dating relationships?” “How does this movie represent teens experiences today?” “What healthy messages are you or teens in general learning from this website?”
- Supporting your teen’s consumption of quality print media (reconsider teen magazines that have 50% or more references to dating relationships and “how to get a guy or girl to like you”)

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## Overview of Current Housing Situation in Florida

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[Michael Gutter](#), [Hyun-Jeong Lee](#)

During this economic downturn, Florida has been one of the hardest hit states on many fronts. Tourism has suffered as an industry, personal investments too. However, Florida has been among the worst hit with respect to the housing sector. Here is an overview of current situation of Florida housing and information for foreclosure prevention.

## Home Values

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A recent report issued by National Association of REALTORS™ (2009) showed that home prices in Florida have sustained substantial losses over the last two years. The Miami/Fort Lauderdale/Miami Beach area saw a loss in median sales price of 32.3% from 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2007 through 2008. Similar declines were also seen in other areas. Orlando metro area saw 27.1% decline in median sales price 2007-2008; other major metropolitan areas such as Tampa Bay/St. Petersburg/Clearwater saw similar declines. Other markets such as Gainesville, Jacksonville, and the Panhandle all saw losses but these were less. The declining home values and lack of marketability have contributed to the housing problems in Florida.

## Home Foreclosures

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The decline in home value leads to a decline in equity for many. This price decline and subsequent utilization of Home Equity Lines of Credit have led to numerous families being upside-down in their mortgages; owing more than their homes are worth. In addition, as of early 2008 around 12% of mortgages in Florida were adjustable-rate mortgages. The factors above

combined with a depressed economy, and changes in mortgage payments have led to a record number of foreclosures. Florida had the second highest state total of foreclosures during 2008 with 385,309 properties having a foreclosure filing which comprises 4.52% of total housing units in Florida compared to national average of 1.84 %. (RealtyTrac, 2009). This represented a 133% increase from 2007 and 412% increase from 2006. This was also the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest foreclosure rate with 1 in 22 housing units receiving a foreclosure in 2008 (RealtyTrac, 2009).

## [Housing Market Forecast](#)

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The forecast for Florida's housing markets remains somewhat dismal. Many analysts are predicting a slow recovery. An analyst even predicts that foreclosures in Florida could increase by 50 to 100 percents in 2009 (E Foreclosure Magazine, 2009). Unemployment continues to be a problem and may increase to over 8% by some estimates. Many families have lost substantial capital as a result of the decline in the stock market. Housing demand is not expected to pick up, but that is only part of the issue. Many consumers with Adjustable Rate Mortgages that were fixed for three or five years will now start to see these rates unfreeze and may find themselves facing higher mortgage payments. This will certainly impact families for whom the budget does not have the room for this payment increase.

## [President's Recovery Plan](#)

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President Obama's recovery plan does have a few promising ideas that should help in Florida. Homeowners (with one home) who are upside in their mortgages may be able to refinance because of funds allocated to this purpose. Lenders will be compensated for lowering rates to help stem foreclosure for some families. Other elements included investing in projects and infrastructure which should lead to job growth over the next few years. For more information, please refer to an article that summarizes the President's recovery plan and eligibility to be benefited ([Reference](#)).

## [How to Prevent Foreclosure](#)

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The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides several articles to guide you to prevent foreclosure:

### [Guide to Avoiding Foreclosure](#)

Basically, the keys for foreclosure prevention are learning and practicing financial management skills and timely communication with your lender. For more information how to manage your resources wisely,

Check the following publications or consult with your [local county Extension office](#).

### [How to Prevent Foreclosure on Your Home](#)

### [How to Manage the Foreclosure Process](#)

## [Money and Marriage: A Spending Plan](#)

## [Managing in Tough Times](#)

For information on how to communicate with your lender, please refer to the following publications by the UF/IFAS and Federal Housing Administration (or FHA) at HUD.

## [You and Your Credit Series](#) (UF/IFAS)

You may want to consult HUD approved housing counseling agency near you from [this linked list](#). For further resources for foreclosure prevention in Florida, please refer to this site. [Avoiding Foreclosure Florida](#) (HUD)

## [Explore Loan Workout Solutions with Your Lender](#) (FHA)

You can also consult [Foreclosure-Response.org](#), a website maintained by the Center for Housing Policy, KnowledgePlex, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), and the Urban Institute, for more resources on foreclosures.

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[Foreclosure Activity Increases 81 percent in 2008](#). Retrieved from National Association of REALTORS (2009).

Median Sales Price of Existing Single-Family Homes for Metropolitan Areas Retrieved from [Realtor.org](#)

## [Child Trend's Ten Reasons to Still Focus on Teen Childbearing](#)

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### Joy Jordan

Recent news of the rise of the nation's teenage birth rate in 2006 and 2007 has spurred renewed concerns about the issue of "kids having kids" on the part of parents, policy makers, service providers, researchers and others. For teens becoming parents, they face formidable obstacles on the road to a better life for themselves and their children. *Child Trends* recently gave these reasons to continue to focus on this issue within our communities:

#### **1. The human costs of teen childbearing are substantial, both for the children and for their parents.**

Compared to children born to older mothers, children of teenage mothers are more likely to have a low birth weight and be born prematurely. These children are at higher risk academically and behaviorally in school. Sons of teenage mothers are also more likely to end up in prison.

Compared to women who delay childbearing, teen mothers are more likely to drop out of school and to never graduate. These mothers are more likely to live off public assistance and live in poverty.

**2. The financial costs of teen childbearing are stark.**

In 2004, researchers estimated that the total public cost of teen childbearing was \$9.2 billion a year, including the costs associated with medical care, child welfare, incarceration, and the loss of tax revenue.

Conversely, during the steady decline between 1991 to 2005 saved tax payers and estimated \$6.7 billion in 2004 alone.

**3. Most teens who gave birth did not intend to have a baby.**

In 2001, the data revealed that 82% of teen pregnancies were unintended with 40% of these resulting in an abortion and 42% in live births.

**4. In 2007, 1 out of 10 births (451,263) in the US were to teens, with the majority to older 18-19 year old teens.**

Thirty-one percent of teen births were to 15-17 year olds.

Two percent were to teens under the age of 15.

Births to teens still in school are linked to high rates of school drop-out.

**5. The U.S. continues to have higher teen birth rates than do other industrialized nations.**

**6. Seventeen states, concentrated in the Sun Belt, including Florida, had particularly high teen birth rates in 2006.** Florida, however, was among the lower tier with birth rates range from 45 to 49 per 1000 women compared to the high of 68 per 1000.

**7. One in five teen births is to a teen who has already had a baby.**

In 2007, of the total teen births, 16 percent were teens with one child, and another 3 percent were to teens with 2 or more children.

**8. Having a baby is more common among teens with more family disadvantages.**

On average, the probability of a teen giving birth is 18 percent, based on 2006 data. Teens living in single-parent households, whose family is in a lower socio-economic status, with mother who had her first child as a teenager, are at increased risk to having a baby as a teen.

In contrast, teens from families where parents are still together when the teen was 14 years of age, have a substantially lower risk. In 2002, 15% of teens from two-parent families had a baby compared to 26 percent of those who did not live with both parents.

**9. The vast majority of teen births in the U.S. occur outside of marriage.**

84 % of teen births in 2006 occurred outside of marriage.

Among teens that do marry, their marriages tend to be short-lived. Teens who do not marry, subsequently show higher risk of having a child with another partner later in life and are less likely to marry.

**10. After 14 years of decline, the teen birth rate increased in 2006 and 2007.**

It is unknown whether this current rise is due to statistical blip or is an indicator of a longer-term trend, however, it is proposed that we cannot lose focus on this issue to address the audience and their needs within our communities. In this context, the research brief from Child Trends identified several populations that are at greater risk that could benefit from programs:

Teens coping with family disadvantages ( lower parental education, intergenerational patterns of youth parenthood, growing up within a single-parent family);

Middle school as well as high school teens ( with positive youth development approaches);

Teens who have already had a child;

Teens in racial/ethnic minority and immigrant populations.

Teens in Sun Belt states, including Florida.

For more information on this topic see: [http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child\\_Trends-2009\\_04\\_01\\_RB\\_KeepingFocus.pdf](http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child_Trends-2009_04_01_RB_KeepingFocus.pdf)

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## How Intentional Are Your Program Designs for Youth Outcomes?

Joy Jordan

Applying research to practice is what Extension outreach programs are about. Within youth development programs this means the application of a theory of developmental intentionality (Walker, et al,2005). Simply put, this means you focus on the design and daily implementation of effective learning opportunities for young people. This theory is built on three fundamental precepts--- intentionality, engagement and goodness of fit.

First, *intentionality*---deliberate, strategic decisions to create opportunities to maximize developmental outcomes are your responsibility as the educator, or to instill this process into volunteers' roles as they work with youth. 4-H youth development program outcomes are more than just random occurrences. The programs should be designed with very strategic intent. However, it might not be so unusual to find programs such as an after-school program or a summer camp program that does not have the clearly defined elements that would produce the intended outcomes. For example, if the goal and intent for camp counselors or other young youth leaders is to gain experience in leading and facilitating groups, do we prepare them well and then design the experiences for them to actually practice intended skills? Or, do we provide minimal preparation and then assign them to be a "group leader" for the cabin, camp fire, or bathroom detail. Is this really the roles that will produce the intent? Yes, it takes more time, effort and energy from volunteers and staff to allow youth the opportunities to do more but the outcome is greater. Results from Duda (2009) of the Florida 4-H Camp Counselors revealed that those young people who not only were prepared by training programs for their counselor roles, but had the chance to practice such roles during camp, had higher scores on their perceived skill development than those youth that did not get such practice. Findings also revealed that we often use the same teens that have been actively engaged over time with the program rather than engaging younger, less experienced youth. While this may seem the most obvious to produce the best results for all youth at camp, we miss the intentional results...if we are truly looking for developmental growth and development of all counselors. It also produces retention problems when counselors do not return. If your camp counselors are varied in age and experience, one approach to provide for more intentional development of younger counselors is to define clear and specific roles for them, prepare them for these roles and let them do the job...maybe partner an older counselor in some situations to be there to support the effort if needed. Define other roles for the more experienced counselors.

A very positive example of developmental intentionality is the counties participating in the Engaging Youth, Serving Communities Grants, where teens are partnering with adults to learn to facilitate community forums on issues like childhood of obesity. Results of change in youth assessments of their teaching, leading and other empowerment skills were dramatic as a result of these intentional and intensive programs. Our society often is more supportive of our "do to" or "do for" approaches rather than valuing the more developmental process of "doing with" that may result in the less than perfect bake sale, fair exhibit, or other such event.

*Engagement* is the second key to the higher level outcomes and success of either leaning outcomes ( i.e. subject matter content) or youth developmental outcomes ( confidence to speak in public, decision-making skills). 4-H has intentionally designed opportunities for youth to become engaged within learning experiences. As you prepare for programs think about these best practices to youth engagement:

- Are you maximizing the level of experiential engagement of youth in the learning the subject matter skills and knowledge? Or, are you talking at them a lot more than engaging them in the 4-H "learn by doing" process? Also, did you stop at the end of the

“doing” without processing and helping youth learn from the experiences...what worked, did not work, and why and how?

- Are you intentionally sequencing youth opportunities for multiple levels of engagement? Research evidence supports that the more levels of youth engagement the more likely they attain the skill levels intended. Youth programs need to design and provide the sequenced, multiple opportunities.
- What level of engagement is being provided through interaction with adults in a positive and supportive manner? Again, research evidence supports that the level of support and adult interaction helps develop and build higher skill levels among youth (Forgarty et al, 2008).

*Goodness of fit* among all the program elements and the needs of youth is the third key to success (Walker,2006). Think about these questions relating to best practice:

- Are you building on the basic needs of the youth being targeted? Fundamental needs of middle years include the need to develop self-worth through meaningful contributions, to experiment in a safe and supportive environment to discover self; to develop significant peer and adult relationships, discuss conflicting values to form their own, and feel pride and confidence in their own mastery and independence. Within programs are you intentionally meeting these needs for belonging, mastery, independence and generosity?
- Are you providing choice and flexibility within the program? If program opportunities, recognition or rewards do not offer some choice and flexibility, most likely youth will cease to be engaged.
- Are you creating or partnering with youth? Active and effective youth-adult partnerships encourage valuing the contributions of youth as well as adults within the program. This is the ultimate active learning environment for youth development.
- Are you situating learning in everyday life? Living and learning are not separate and experiences that promote real work, service and contributions to family, community and the organization are most appealing to youth in the middle years.

In summary, our goal is to make the best better for youth developmental outcomes. However, to do this requires us to continue to take the time to put research-evidenced best practices to work as we think about our programs. All programs benefit from scrutiny regarding the content, the process and methods of engagement and the environments that involve and support youth development.

## Resources

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Duda, S. (2009) *Leadership and Group Facilitation Skills in Florida 4-H Camp Counselors*, Masters' Thesis, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, University of Florida.

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Walker, J, Marczak, M. Blyth, D and L Borden, "Designing Youth Development Programs: Toward a Theory of developmental Intentionality" in *Organized Activities as Contexts of Development: Extracurricular Activities, After-school and Community Programs* By Joseph L. Mahoney, Reed Larson, Jacquelynne S. Eccles, Published by Routledge, 2005 ISBN 0805844309

## Presence of Certified Kitchen Managers in restaurant facilities may be protective against certain critical violations during restaurant inspection.

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*Amy Simonne*

According to the CDC, significant numbers of foodborne illness outbreaks in the United States are attributed to restaurants. Many states in the United States have a mandatory requirement for restaurant and food services managers to be food safety certified. Whether or not the mandatory food safety certification of food/kitchen manager is effective in preventing foodborne illness outbreak, the question continues to be debatable. A recent study by Cates et al. (2009) using inspection data in the state of Iowa from 2005-2006 presents another insight into the subject.

### Methodology

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The researchers analyzed data for 4,461 restaurants in Iowa that were inspected during 2005-2006 (8,338 inspections). They classified the inspection outcomes into two categories a) no critical violation, and b) having one or more critical violations. Then they used logistic regression analysis of the inspection outcomes as a function of presence or absence of certified kitchen managers (certified food managers) and other explanatory variables. According to the State of Iowa Department of Inspection and Appeals, the food service inspection routine check list consisted of seven categories with a total of 44 points. The seven categories includes 1) Food Temperature/Time control, 2) Personnel, 3) Food Source/Handling, 4) Warewashing, 5) Plumbing/Water/Sewage, 6) Facility/Equipment Requirements, and 7) Other Operations such as pest control and security plans, just to name a few.

### Results

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Among significant findings for this study, the researchers found that restaurants with a certified kitchen manager present during the inspection were less likely to have a critical violation for personnel, food source or handling, facility or equipment requirements, warewashing, and other operations. However, there was no difference among restaurants in their likeliness to have critical violations for temperature and time control and plumbing, water, or sewage with or without a presence of the kitchen managers (food managers). Within the category of time/temperature control type of violations, it appeared that a presence of food/kitchen manager during the inspection resulted into fewer violations for hot holding, but not other types of holding. In addition, the numbers of critical violations among restaurants also depends on the size and the complexity of the operations; it appeared that the bigger and the more comprehensive the restaurants are more likely for them to have more critical violation due to the fact that they prepared and hold more foods. Certain critical violations can be addressed more easily by simple training of employees, while other critical violations such as plumbing and sewage or other may need modification of infrastructure. Most certified kitchen managers are knowledgeable

about the correlation of foodborne illnesses and risk factors and their presence in the restaurants can improve quality of employee training.

Overall, this study concluded that presence of the kitchen managers/food manager can be protective against most critical violations.

This article is prepared by A. H. Simonne from a recent publication by S.C. Cates, M.K. Muth, S.A. Karns, M.A. Panne, C. N. Stone, J.E. Harrison, and V. J. Radke. 2009. Critical Kitchen Manages: Do they improve restaurant inspection outcomes? *J. Food Protection*. 72(2):384-391.

## Are nonresidential fathers involved with their children?

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*Suzanna Smith*

Amato, P. R., Meyers, C. E., & Emery, R. E. (2009). Changes in Nonresident father-child contact from 1976-2002. *Family Relations*, 58, 41-53.

### Introduction

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Divorce impacts an estimated one million children each year (Amato, 2000; Krieder, 2004), and children “enter new living arrangements” (Kelly, 2006, p. 35) as parents establish new households, custody, and visitation patterns. In decades past, children of divorcing parents as well as children of unmarried parents (Ryan, Kalil, & Ziol-Guest, 2008), often completely lost contact with the nonresidential parent, usually their fathers. However, changing cultural expectations about appropriate father roles carry the expectation that nonresidential fathers will not only offer financial support but also stay involved in their children’s lives (Amato, 2009), and there is some evidence that in recent years, nonresident fathers have been more likely to see their children (Kelly, 2006). This study looked at whether nonresidential fathers’ contact with their children increased in the past three decades, and if so, what accounted for an increase.

### Methodology

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The researchers compiled data from 4 national surveys conducted in 1976 (the National Survey of Children), 1987-1988 (the National Survey of Families and Households), 1996 (the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth), and 2002 (the National Survey of America's Families), collected from over 350 to over 3,300 mothers, depending on the study year. Mothers’ reports of fathers’ involvement with children ages 6-12 included how often the father was in contact with the child, his payment of child support, whether children were born within marriage, and demographic variables. Data were “weighted to be nationally representative [of the study population] within each year” (p. 47).

### Main Ideas

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In the past three decades, nonresidential fathers’ “contact rose significantly” (p. 41). In 1976, 18% of nonresident fathers saw their children weekly, compared to 31% in 2002. The percentage of fathers who not only “saw their children weekly” but “also paid child support” (p. 49) increased, from 8% in the 1970s to 26% in the 2000s. Fathers were more likely to have contact with their children when they paid child support. Being married at the time the child was born also increased the frequency of father contact.

However, although fathers' contact with their children increased, most "nonresident fathers did *not* see their children every week," at least according to reports from children's mothers. Nearly 30% of children (29%) did not see their fathers *at all* in 2002, and 43% "did not receive any child support in the previous year" (Amato, 2009, p. 50). All and all, 22% of nonresident fathers, including those who have divorced or had their children outside of marriage, do not visit their children nor pay child support (Amato, 2009).

Frequent father contact is not always in the child's best interests, when there is a history of abuse, substance abuse, or extreme mother-father conflict, for example. But most children would reap psychological and economic benefits from nonresidential father-contact and child support.

### Implications for Extension Programs

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The researchers point out that a number of policies, programs, and interventions have the goal of strengthening ties between fathers and their children. Looking specifically at Florida, the State's family courts mandate a "parenting plan" (formerly visitation and child custody) to address how parents will share the responsibility for the child's daily care health care, school matters, and other activities; and require parents to agree on a time-sharing schedule. In addition, parent education classes required for Florida's divorcing parents emphasize the importance of continued involvement from both parents after divorce.

Some county faculty offer, or plan to offer, these four-hour programs to divorcing parents in their judicial circuits. (For amendments to language pertaining to parenting arrangements after marital dissolution see Florida Senate Chapter 20 and for statutes regarding parent education see Chapter 21 [http://www.flsenate.gov/cgi-bin/view\\_page.pl?File=sb2532er.html&Directory=session/2008/Senate/bills/billtext/html&Tab=session&Submenu=1](http://www.flsenate.gov/cgi-bin/view_page.pl?File=sb2532er.html&Directory=session/2008/Senate/bills/billtext/html&Tab=session&Submenu=1))

County faculty can also offer parent education programs to nonresidential fathers by working with agencies focusing on Responsible Fatherhood programs (for locations see <http://www.aahmi.net/pdfs/statemaps/Florida.pdf>). For a summary of these programs see the National Fatherhood Clearinghouse and HHS reports, in the links in the references section.

An EDIS publication on nonresidential fatherhood provides suggestions for ways fathers can stay involved: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/HE139>. Another publication summarizes the important roles fathers play in children's lives: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/HE140>

### Conclusion

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In summary, while nonresidential fathers' involvement has increased after divorce and separation in recent decades, most fathers still do not have regular contact with their children. Changes in policies, programs, and divorce agreements can encourage fathers to stay involved, be there for their children, and provide for them financially. Extension education programs offer fathers strategies for staying involved.

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