ED 375 955                                              PS 022 737

AUTHOR          Dennison, Martha Jo S.
TITLE           Providing Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum for
                Kindergarten-Age Girls in an Informal Education
                Setting.
PUB DATE        94
NOTE            67p.; Ed.D. Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern
                University.
PUB TYPE        Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers (043) --
                Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE      MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS     Childhood Attitudes; Community Centers; *Curriculum
                Development; *Females; Inner City; *Kindergarten
                Children; Leadership Training; Primary Education;
                Program Effectiveness; Volunteers; *Volunteer
                Training; Youth Clubs
IDENTIFIERS     Developmentally Appropriate Programs; *Girl Scouts of
                the USA

ABSTRACT
        This practicum sought to provide a model for a local
affiliate of the Girl Scouts of the USA, offering a developmentaily
appropriate curriculum for inner-city kindergarten-age girls at a
community recreation center. A hands-on training program was
developed and implemented with a group of community volunteers.
Program activities were designed to allow girls to choose activities
within the framework of the recreation center. Books, stories, songs,
and games were used to teach the girls the abstract concepts behind
the philosophy of the Girl Scouts organization. Interviews and
questionnaires were used to assess the effectiveness of the program.
The results of these assessments revealed that the program produced
mixed results. Although the number of girls participating was not as
high as expected, the data revealed that the seven girls who
completed the program possessed a clear understanding of the
philosophy of the Girl Scouts and were interested in continued
involvement. However, frequent changes in volunteer leadership and
ineffective coordination with the recreation center adversely
affected the program. (Four appendixes contain the Girl Scout Promise
and Law, a participant questionnaire, a participant interest survey
form, and a weekly report form of meeting activities. Contains 53
references.) (MDM)

Providing Developmentally Appropriate
Curriculum for Kindergarten-Age Girls
in an Informal Education Setting

by

Martha Jo S. Dennison

Cluster 43

A Practicum II Report presented to the
Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

1994

2

PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

Verifier: _Lynn Pace_____

Lynn Pace

Lynn Pace        Field Executive
                 _____
                 Title

                 Connecticut Trails Council of Girl Scouts
                 _____

                 Waterbury Branch, Waterbury, Connecticut
                 _____
                 Address

July 20, 1994
    Date


    This practicum report was submitted by Martha Jo S.
Dennison under the direction of the adviser listed below.
It was submitted to the Ed. D. Program in Child and Youth
Studies and approved in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova
Southeastern University.


                              Approved:

_August 11, 1994_             _June S. Delano_____
Date of Final Approval of     June Delano, Ph.D.,Adviser
         Report

                                        June Delano


3

# ABSTRACT

Providing Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum for
Kindergarten-Age Girls in an Informal Education Setting.
Dennison, Martha Jo S., 1994: Practicum Report, Nova
Southeastern University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth
Studies. Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum/Early
Childhood Education/Community Collaboration/ Training/Youth
Programs

This practicum sought to provide a model for a local
affiliate of a major organization serving girls, to offer
developmentally appropriate curriculum in the inner-city in
a long-term program. Previous efforts had only been short-
term and provided by paid staff. This project attempted to
use volunteers from the community to deliver the program.

The writer provided hands-on training to several volunteers
who included a young adult, a senior citizen, and teenagers
at an inner-city recreation center. Program activities were
designed to girls to choose activities within the framework
of the writer's organization. Books, stories, songs, and
games were used to teach girls the abstract concepts behind
the philosophy of the organization.

An analysis of the results indicated mixed results. While
the number of girls participating was not as high as the
writer expected, the data revealed that these girls had a
clear understanding of the concepts and were interested in
continuing with the program. Frequent changes in leadership
affected program delivery, indicating that long-term
commitments by volunteers in this setting may have been too
much to expect. The collaboration with the recreation
center also had an effect on program delivery, leading to
the conclusion that a stronger collaborative plan was
necessary.

*  *  *  *  *  *  *

Permission Statement
        As a student in the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth
Studies, I do (✓) do not ( ) give permission to Nova
University to distribute copies of this practicum report on
request from interested individuals. It is my understanding
that Nova University will not charge for this dissemination
except to cover the costs of microfiching, handling, and
mailing of the materials.

August 17, 1994
    (date)

Martha Jo S. Dennison
            (signature)

4

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to thank Lynn Pace, without whom this project would not have been possible; the leaders who so enthusiastically participated; and of course, the girls, who made it all worthwhile.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

## Description of the Setting

The writer works in the membership and program group for the national headquarters of an informal education, non-profit organization, the largest in the country that serves girls. The writer also volunteers in the local affiliate of this organization. The local council, located in a northeastern state, covers a territory that includes rural, urban, and suburban communities, and provides program for girls ages 5-17, from all cultures, races, and socioeconomic groups.

The setting for the project was an urban community of approximately 120,000. The economy in this city has declined in recent years due to the loss of several manufacturing companies. As a result, there has been a

loss in the tax base, and thus services, as has been true in other cities in the region. The inner-city area has been plagued by a rise in the crime rate, with drugs, gangs, and prostitution common. There is a recreation center that serves all ages within this area, only blocks from one of the highest areas for crime. It was here that the writer focused efforts in a program for young children.

The neighborhood surrounding the recreation center is populated mostly by African-Americans, some in single family dwellings and some in housing projects. The children in these families make up the bulk of the participants in the activities at the center. There are, however, a number of senior citizens who attend activities at the center who are white. Some Hispanic families also live in the area. The staff at the recreation center have tried to encourage activities that promote participation across racial and ethnic lines, but success has been limited.

## The Role of the Writer

The writer serves as a consultant in child development to the council. This has usually consisted of periodic training in age level program activities or

disability awareness.  In the past, the writer

developed a number of resources appropriate for use

with kindergarten-age children.  This led to an

expanded role in assisting the council in working with

girls and the adults who lead them.

Chapter II

PROBLEM

## Problem Description

The writer noted a problem surrounding
participation of girls at the youngest age level (five
and six year olds).  There has always been a basic
requirement of membership that girls accept certain
fundamental principles, even though they are abstract
concepts.  Activities should be based on the needs and
interests of girls, but leaders have usually decided on
the activities.  In addition, past efforts at providing
a consistent, year-round program for young girls in the
inner city were limited.  Therefore, Girl Scouts, ages
5-6, were unable to understand Girl Scout concepts and
enjoy Girl Scouting.

Problem Documentation

Evidence of the problem was supported by published material, membership statistics and informal surveys. The Girl Scout Promise and Law, printed in all publications for girls and leaders, were stated in abstract terms too difficult for girls this age to really understand (see Appendix A for official text of Girl Scout Promise and Law). However, membership is contingent upon each girl's acceptance of these concepts.

Membership as a Girl Scout is granted to any girl who:

- has made the Girl Scout Promise and accepted the Girl Scout Law;
- has paid annual membership dues;
- meets applicable membership standards

(Girl Scouts of the United States of America, 1993a).

The organization, both nationally and locally, depends heavily on adult volunteers to provide program activities for girls. However, in an informal survey of local field executives, the writer found that in the three inner city areas served by the council, almost

all programs were provided by paid staff because they were not able to get parents and others in the community involved as program leaders. These paid staff usually ran a series of short-term programs (usually six weeks or less) so that they could reach a greater number of girls. Thus, girls who might not otherwise have participated were able to enjoy good activities for a while, but few were able to participate in a consistent, on-going program.

In the city where the writer serves as a consultant, a total of 278 kindergarten-age girls participated in all programs offered in 1992. The numbers in Table 1 show the breakdown of participation.

Table 1

Participation in Calendar Year 1992

| | |
|---|---:|
| Year round | |
| Total city | 131 |
| Inner city | 55 |
| Short Term | |
| Total city | 147 |
| Inner city | 129 |
| Total city participation | 278 |

In calendar 1993, 251 girls participated in activities throughout the city (excluding summer programs). Table 2 shows the participation figures.

Table 2

Participation in Calendar Year 1993

| | |
|---|---|
| Year round | |
| Total city | 136 |
| Inner city | 70 |
| Short term | |
| Total city | 115 |
| Inner city | 114 |
| Total city participation | 251 |

It was evident from the figures of the last two years that most girls at the kindergarten-age level participated in short term programs, particularly in the inner-city area. This meant that the girls who were most likely face the social problems in this inner city area and who could have benefited from a

structured program experience were least likely to get it.

## Causative Analysis

The writer identified several causes that contributed to the problem. In the past, most girls in the inner-city area participated in short-term programs and therefore did not receive the benefits of consistency and progression that a long-term program could offer. In addition, leaders for girls this age usually have been novices at the position, and often unfamiliar with what is considered developmentally appropriate practice. Training for leaders at the local level frequently involved how to handle the business aspects, such as filling out forms, and often neglected program issues, particularly as they pertain to developmental needs for each age level. In fact, the council recently phased out the basic training in program and child development for this age level. Training sessions traditionally have been held in central council locations or rural campsites, making it difficult for those with transportation and child care concerns to attend.

The field executive for this particular community
stated that parents in the economically depressed
inner-city have historically had more immediate needs,
such as food and shelter, and have not been available
for participation in activities for their children.
The director of the inner-city community center, one of
the sites where girls have been served short-term,
stated that she had to turn away 10-15 kindergarten-age
girls in her 1992 summer program because there was no
one qualified to work with this age group.  In
addition, several political corruption indictments in
1993 led to a freeze in spending, affecting programs
city-wide.

## Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

Many experts have written about the problem of an
inappropriate curriculum.  In a preliminary literature
review, several observations related to this issue.
Elkind (1987), and Peck, McCaig, & Sapp (1988)
explained that children of kindergarten age do not
think like older children and therefore should not
participate in the same kinds of activities expected of
other age levels.  In addition, adults may not have

attended to or even understood the unique learning styles and abilities of young children in determining the types of activities in which they participate (Bredekamp, 1987; Moses-Zirkes, 1992). This has often led to program activities based on the goals of adults, rather than the needs and interests of children (Bredekamp, 1987; Kagan, 1991).

Other literature also documented the problem. Moses-Zirkes (1992), Schweinhart (1988), and Vann (1991) maintained that the lack of a developmentally appropriate curriculum can lead to an experience that may be unsatisfactory. Greenberg (1990) and Hymes (1981) pointed out that the kindergarten year may be the most important year in a child's life, in that children must develop a love for learning, curiosity of their environment, and how to work with others, concepts that can be lost with an inappropriate curriculum. In addition, a program that incorporates progression in activities allows children to build on previously learned skills as they grow older. There is no need for five-and-six-year-olds to know everything they will need to know when they are older.

Adult-directed activities were criticized by several authors. Many times adults lead children in an

activity simply because they can do it or seem to enjoy it. The value of an activity should not be based on whether or not children can do it, since they frequently try to please adults, but rather on what is best for their development in the long run (Greenberg, 1990; Katz, 1987; Katz, 1988). Also, adult-directed learning seldom achieves intended goals, while child-centered, experiential learning is consistent with independence and self-reliance, characteristics valued by our society. (National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC] & National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education [NAECS/SDE], 1991; Schweinhart, 1988).

Many authors cited this lack of knowledge about child development as problematic in curriculum planning. When curriculum development has not been based on current theory and practice about how children develop, but instead planned around some arbitrarily established criteria, attention may not have been given to individual needs in relation to program goals (Bredekamp, 1987; Kagan, 1991; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1991; Schweinhart, 1988). In addition, curriculum based on what children can't do, rather than what they can, and

using what they know in a meaningful context, was presented as inappropriate (Hymes, 1981; Greenberg, 1990; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1991; Schweinhart, 1988). Any program strictly reflecting adult planning, instead of allowing children to see themselves and their ideas in the activities, was also criticized (Casey & Lippman, 1991; Hymes, 1981).

A number of authors referred to a specific body of knowledge about how children this age learn, even though it has not always been taken into consideration in program development. Five-year-olds think in concrete terms. They confuse fantasy and reality, and do not understand permanent properties of objects when something is changed (Seefeldt, 1989). They are just entering into an age of intuitive thought, where they begin to move from a dependence on how things look (perception), to an ability to see more than one factor at a time (logic) (Piaget, 1950). Children this age do not yet understand abstract concepts, but learn best when they are actively engaged in their environments with real objects (Elkind, 1986; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989; Katz, 1992; Seefeldt, 1989). This means they learn best by experience and example, not instruction or drill (Katz, 1987, 1988; Piaget & Inhelder, 1969).

Play, in particular, allows children to understand
their world(Erikson, 1977; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989).
Activities such as dramatic play, stories, arts and
crafts, and particularly cooperative activities help
children discover who they are in relation to the world
and to each other (Dyson, 1990; Elkind, 1987;
Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989; Katz, 1988; Katz & Chard,
1989; Seefeldt, 1989). In the writer's organization,
extrinsic rewards, called "recognitions," have
traditionally been given to girls at older age levels
upon completion of particular activities. It has been
difficult to convince the adults (including many
parents) who work with kindergarten-age girls that such
rewards are not appropriate for this age group.
Research has shown that when children are given
extrinsic rewards for activities in which they are
interested, they eventually lose interest, and may
ultimately experience "burnout" (Katz, 1988).

Several causes for the problem were revealed in
the literature. Too often, American standards for
educational practice have been determined by political,
economic, and social considerations rather than by what
is known to be good pedagogy for children (Elkind,
1986). Frequently, concerned adults have applied adult

standards of learning to early childhood programs and
emphasize activities that are developmentally
inappropriate for young children (Bredekamp, 1987;
Cassidy, Myers, & Benion, 1987; Day, 1991; Elkind,
1987; Hymes, 1981). Parents and those who work with
children at older age levels have often expected
children to achieve certain goals or reach some
established criteria to prepare them for later work
(Elkind, 1987). In fact, young children learn in a
different manner from older children and adults, and to
assume their learning abilities are comparable to older
children and that they can use the same materials and
procedures ignores this reality (Elkind, 1987; NAEYC &
NAECS/SDE; 1991; Seefeldt, 1989). Many adults have
also been under the false impression that children's
exposure to modern technology makes them brighter and
more sophisticated, and thus able to handle activities
intended for older children, when-what technology
really does is strengthen their potential (Elkind,
1986; Seefeldt, 1989).

There needs to be an understanding that one
program delivery system and structure do not fit in all
situations. Activities for girls and support systems
for adults must be meaningful and effectively delivered

to the population group being served (Girl Scouts of
the United States of America, 1993b). Likewise, when
activity leaders are not held responsible, the program
suffers (Spann, 1992).

Several topic areas were researched, including
early childhood education, child development,
curriculum development, kindergarten activities,
developmentally appropriate practice, adult training,
and psychology.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

## Goals and Expectations

The following goals and outcomes were projected for this practicum:  Kindergarten age girls should be able to participate in a program that meets their needs.  The goal of the writer is that Girl Scouts, ages 5-6, will be able to understand Girl Scout concepts and enjoy Girl Scouting.

## Expected Outcomes

The writer established three outcomes that would occur as a result of this practicum:  First, at least ten kindergarten-age girls will be able to understand the concepts in a simplified version of the Girl Scout

Promise and Law (see Appendix A for simplified
version). Second, an on-going program in an inner-city
area will be led by a team of two or more volunteers,
rather than any paid staff. And third, at least ten
kindergarten-age girls will indicate intent to continue
to the next program age level.

## Measurement of Outcomes

To measure the effectiveness of the project's
implementation, the writer developed evaluation
procedures specific to the setting. For the first
outcome, a questionnaire was designed that leaders
could easily administer (see Appendix B for list of
questions). For the writer's record keeping, this was
a written form, but leaders were allowed to be flexible
in its administration (see Appendix B for full
instructions). The writer developed this questionnaire
because it asked questions specifically pertaining to
the Girl Scout Promise and Law (see Appendix A for
original and simplified versions of the Girl Scout
Promise and Law). The wording of each question was
considered carefully to allow leaders to elicit
specific information at a level easily understood by

girls. Two administrations, one near the midpoint of
the project, and another near the end, were planned so
that girls' progress in learning the concepts could be
determined.

After girls entered the program, the number of
volunteer leaders needed was determined. When the
leadership team was in place, a roster of names was
developed to indicate that the outcome was met. Since
the national organization has specific guidelines on
adult/child ratios, the roster helped ensure ratios
were met. It was also planned for use by the
recreation center staff to use to refer any questions
about the program to appropriate personnel.

To verify the third outcome, an interest survey
was given to girls near the end of the implementation
schedule (see Appendix C for survey form). The writer
felt that the age of the girls warranted a simple
method of determining interest. This form was designed
so that it could be administered in a matter of minutes
by either a leader or parent.

# CHAPTER IV

## SOLUTION STRATEGY

### Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

The writer noted a problem surrounding
participation of girls at the youngest age level (five
and six year olds). There has always been a basic
requirement of membership that girls accept certain
fundamental principles, even though they are abstract
concepts. Activities are supposed to be based on the
needs and interests of girls, but leaders have usually
decided on the activities. In addition, past efforts
at providing a consistent, year-round program for young
girls in the inner city have been limited. Therefore,
Girl Scouts, ages 5-6, were unable to understand Girl
Scout concepts and enjoy Girl Scouting.

The literature offered several solutions to
problems delivering appropriate curriculum to

kindergarten age children. The preschool and

kindergarten years were described as the best time to

help children develop positive social skills a: : group

identity as part of their personality development (Katz

& McClellan, 1991; Erikson, 1977). Allowing children

to plan and choose their own activities was seen as

integral to the learning experience (Casey & Lippman,

1991; Cassidy, Myers, & Benion, 1987; Dennison &

Sparks, 1993). Hands-on activities were preferred for

giving children the opportunity to manipulate objects

and explore their environments (Elkind, 1987;

Greenberg, 1990; Hymes, 1981; Katz, 1987, 1988;

Seefeldt, 1989). For example, Dennison (1993),

Kantrowitz and Wingert (1989), and Katz (1988) felt

that children should be working on projects,

experimenting and playing, dictating and writing

stories, reading real books, and creating their own

artwork, rather than using adult-designed models.

Activities such as poetry were shown to help children

develop memorization skills, play with words in the

world around them, and develop feelings of self

confidence as they learn factual information along with

social issues (Andrews, 1988; Glazer & Lamme, 1990;

Erikson, 1950). In the writer's organization, girls at

older age levels have always had their own book, called

a handbook, that uses activities such as stories,

songs, games, diagrams, and role-play to present

information . Many adults requested such a book for

kindergarten-age girls, more in the form of a workbook

or coloring book. Often, adults think workbooks are a

good idea for children to learn skills, but this format

has been shown to be inappropriate, since it

contradicts children's developmental characteristics by

presenting a menu rather than a framework. Workbooks

also ignore individual differences (Elkind, 1987;

Hymes, 1981; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989; Marzollo,

1988; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1991). Some authors felt

that, rather than workbooks, children should be working

on a collection of activities, more in the style of a

portfolio or activity book that allows them to include

artwork, writing, and other interests with a minimum of

adult influence (Meisels & Steele, 1992; Peck, McCaig &

Sapp, 1988; Spiegel, 1991).

## Description of Selected Solution

After reviewing solutions offered in the

literature, the writer came to understand the
importance of providing leaders with more guidance on
what constitutes appropriate activities for
kindergarten age children. It was apparent that
program activities need to account for the lack of
expertise of the typical leader, while reflecting what
is known to be sound developmental practice (NAEYC &
NAECS/SDE, 1991; Schweinhart, 1988). Council support
was seen as critical in helping leaders deliver the
program more easily.

To meet the needs of all concerned, the writer
developed activities for a group of kindergarten-age
girls while training those who worked with them to use
developmentally appropriate practice. This approach
was effective because it allowed girls to initiate
their own activities while providing more support to
the leaders who work with them (Casey & Lippman, 1991;
Cassidy, Myers, & Benin, 1987). The local council was
supportive of the writer's efforts. The project was
facilitated through the use of an inner-city recreation
center site where the writer was able to develop
program activities. The director of the center
expressed support of the project. The writer worked
with one inner-city teenager hired by the city, as well

as other teenage girls hired by the local council and

adult volunteers as trainees in developmentally

appropriate practice.

The writer proposed several steps in implementing

the solution. First, to meet the needs expressed in

research and in council goals, the writer implemented

recently developed resources for girls and adults in an

introductory program at the recreation center. These

resources provided the framework for the kinds of

activities children this age enjoy, such as working on

projects, dictating stories, creating their own artwork

(Dennison, 1993; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989; Katz,

1988), learning poetry, and developing feelings of

self-confidence (Andrews, 1988; Glazer & Lamme, 1990;

Erikson, 1950). As part of the program, the writer

trained adults and teenagers from low-income areas in

the use of developmentally appropriate activities for

kindergarten-age girls. After guiding these adults and

teenagers into their own leadership roles, the writer

assumed more of the role of consultant. The adults and

teenagers took over the primary leadership of these

girls' activities. Contact continued through weekly

report forms submitted by the leaders to the writer

(see Appendix D for complete form). The writer

continued with site visits, and also planned
initiatives for contacting potential sponsors,
acquiring supplies, and fostering relationsnips with
parents.

## Report of Action Taken

Throughout the project, the writer attempted to
deliver developmentally appropriate meeting activities
in an on-going program for girls who otherwise would
not have such an opportunity. Before meetings, the
writer placed on tables such items as books, puppets,
clay, or puzzles for girls to enjoy until everyone nad
arrived. Each meeting lasted about two hours and began
with an opening ceremony, usually The Pledge of
Allegiance and a song. A Kaper Chart, or job chart,
was used to help girls in selecting activities they
would lead. These included responsibilities such as
line leader, snack helper, game leader, closing
ceremony leader, and clean-up helpers. Typical program
activities included one quiet activity, such as arts
and crafts or making snack, and an active game. During
the meetings, the writer or one of the other leaders
read the big book version of Who is a Daisy Girl Scout?

to help girls learn a simplified version of the Girl
Scout Promise and Law (see Appendix A for simplified
version). The leader and girls would discuss the story
and illustrations to review the concepts.
Occasionally, parents would drop in and were encouraged
to participate in activities with their daughters.

For the first month, the writer began the program
by working with a group who met at the recreation
center one day a week. Assisting in the beginning were
two teenagers, one employed by the city and one by the
local council. The teenagers were responsible for
planning the games and closing ceremonies with the
girls each week.

After several weeks, the teenager employed by the
council felt ready to take over the responsibility of
leadership. She showed excellent leadership skills and
initiative, and had good rapport with the girls. Since
organizational standards require adult leadership for
any group under age eighteen, the writer helped her
decide on an adult who would be willing to participate.
She finally decided to ask one of the senior citizens
who met for Bingo at the same time as the girls'
meeting. This woman had expressed a great deal of
interest in the activities the girls were doing and

seemed a likely candidate.  She readily accepted and the next phase of the project was in place. Unfortunately, the worst winter in over a decade led to the cancellation of some meetings.  Attendance also dropped off at this time.  The new leaders were anxious over their responsibilities, so through consensus, the decision was made to hold the girls' meetings every other week, instead of weekly.  This seemed easiest for the leaders and fit better with the schedule at the recreation center.  Notices were sent home to parents reminding them of meetings and activities.

Often, the group was larger than anticipated and included girls up to the age of seven, as well as some boys.  These children were taken into the group because they were otherwise unsupervised.  Some were dropped off without any adults checking them in; others were simply too young for the activities planned at the recreation center.  The writer felt that even though the project was designed for five and six-year-old girls, the first obligation was to the safety and needs of any children in the building.  Some adaptations to the activities were made; however the basic structure remained the same.  Some girls even began using the

story book to teach the concepts of the Girl Scout

Promise and Law to the boys.

During this time, the second and third months, the

writer began to step back from a leadership role and

began collecting supplies from home, parents, schools,

and any other available donors so that the girls and

leaders would have necessary materials for activities.

The recreation center director was unable to provide

any resources for the girls. The writer also began to

develop materials to be used for public relations

within the community, such as posters and fliers. Each

week, one of the leaders completed the Weekly Report

Form for meeting Activities (see Appendix D for

complete form), and submitted it to the writer. The

writer was in contact with the leaders weekly, either

in person or by phone, to offer support and suggestions

as needed.

Unfortunately, in the third month, the teenager

hired by the council had to drop out of the project due

to family problems. At almost the same time, the young

woman hired by the city decided to quit to concentrate

on her school work. The older woman who was involved

was not comfortable in planning and leading activities,

so she decided to wait until other leaders could be

found before continuing her participation. Thus, the
writer once again began to lead activities. The
council provided another teenager to help, but this
young woman stated from the beginning that she was only
interested in working short-term.

By the fourth month, the writer had been referred
to a woman in the community who was interested in
becoming a leader. This woman was a volunteer parent
with Head Start and had a good understanding of
kindergarten-age children. Her own daughter, who was
about seven, participated with another group affiliated
with the writer's organization, so she already had a
positive image of the group and was aware of what was
involved in leadership. She was able to jump in with a
minimum of direction from the writer.

Almost immediately, she experienced some
roadblocks from the council. She wasn't allowed to
undertake certain responsibilities, like taking girls
on field trips, without basic leader training, but when
she tried to sign up for courses she was told most of
them were full. The trainings were offered only at a
location some distance from her home, making
transportation and child care difficult. The writer
decided to supplement the weekly hands-on experiences

with videos and leader resource publications developed
by the national organization pertaining to its
philosophy, requirements, and program so that the
leader would still get this information, even without
formal training.

This leaders' enthusiasm was high, and her ideas
and instincts for this age group were excellent,
although she tended to rely on arts and crafts in the
beginning.  She was introduced to the senior citizen
who had been involved earlier, and plans were made to
work together.  Meanwhile, the writer worked with the
council to make sure that she was "officially trained."
The Field Executive arranged transportation to another
town for basic leader training one evening each week
during the fifth month.  Upon completion of this
series, the leader was recognized by the council and
received a certificate.

During the sixth month, this leader began having
the first of several family crises that impeded her
participation.  Besides her children, she also
financially supported her mother and boyfriend.  Her
plans to further her education began to revolve around
what she could do to financially support a family of
six.  She had wanted to pursue Early Childhood

Education, but was discouraged by her public assistance counselor from doing so. It was suggested she try something that would ensure a higher income. The writer began looking into scholarship possibilities for her, but she eventually decided to move to another state where other family members live. She met a final time with the girls and was presented with a gift by the writer.

Throughout these stops and starts with so many leaders, the writer was still able to ensure that at least some girls remained interested in the activities, although the group had dwindled to a core group of seven girls. The seventh month was the last of the school year, and activities were planned that provided closure, as well as prepared girls for the possibilities at the next age level. A farewell party, with parents invited, was held for the final meeting.

During the eighth month, the writer met with the Field Executive and the director of the recreation center to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the project. The writer also met with the supervisor of the Field Executive, as well as some long-time volunteers, to discuss the project. The writer

presented the project, and made plans to follow-up with
information included in this report.

CHAPTER V


RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS


The writer noted a problem surrounding
participation of girls at the youngest age level (five
and six year olds). There has always been a basic
requirement of membership that girls accept certain
fundamental principles, even though they are abstract
concepts. Activities should be based on the needs and
interests of girls, but leaders have usually decided on
the activities. In addition, past efforts at providing
a consistent, year-round program for young girls in the
inner city were limited. The writer felt that by
working with leaders who were themselves from the
community, a sound program could be developed. By
showing the leaders ways to provide program activities
in a developmentally appropriate manner, the writer was

39

able to facilitate the implementation of a long-term
program in an area where such had not happened before.

## Results

The writer developed methods for determining
results for the project.  Three outcomes were
established to present the results.  The first outcome
stated that at least ten girls in the program will be
able to understand the concepts in a simplified version
of the Girl Scout Promise and Law (see Appendix A for
original and simplified versions of the Girl Scout
Promise and Law).  This numerical outcome was not met,
since fewer than ten girls were in the program at that
point.  However, a questionnaire administered at the
midpoint and the conclusion of the project shows that
the girls who were in the program were able to answer
at least ten questions correctly, and thus understood
the concepts (see Appendix B for list of questions).
Table 3 compares girls' understanding of concepts at
the midpoint and conclusion of the project.

Table 3

Comparison of Girls Making Correct Responses at

Midpoint and Completion of Project

|                    | Midpoint | Completion |
|--------------------|----------|------------|
| Girls in Program   | 9        | 7          |
| Correct Responses  | 2        | 7          |

The second outcome stated that an ongoing program
in an inner-city area will be led by a team of two or
more volunteers, rather than any paid staff.
This outcome was met, though not in the manner the
writer had anticipated, since no one leader
participated the entire time.  Table 4 lists the roster
of leaders and the length of time they participated.

Table 4

Roster of Leaders and Time Spent in Project

| L.B  | Adult | 3 months |
|------|-------|----------|
| M.B. | Adult | 2 months |
| B.H. | Youth | 3 months |
| S.P. | Youth | 3 months |
| M.S. | Youth | 3 months |

The third outcome, that at least ten kindergarten-
age girls will indicate intent to continue to the next
program age level, was also not met numerically, since
only seven were still participating at the end of the
year. All seven girls, however, indicated an interest
in moving to the next age level in their responses to
an Interest Survey Form (see Appendix C for survey
form). In fact, two girls have already been placed in
existing troops.

## Discussion

The mixed results of this project and the possible
causes of unmet outcomes led the writer to examine the
planning, design, and implementation of the project.
The first outcome, that at least ten girls would be
able to understand the concepts in a simplified version
of the Girl Scout Promise and Law (see Appendix A for
simplified version) was a reasonable expectation given
the length of time of the project and the anticipation
that more than ten girls would participate. The report
from the director of the recreation center that in the
past she had had to turn away ten to fifteen girls in

this age group led the writer to believe that at least that many girls were available.  There are two obvious reasons the numerical outcome may not have been met: 1) the frequent change in leadership may have led to less cohesion of the group, less of a sense of "belonging"; and 2) the severe weather early in the project interfered with meeting times, which in turn may have confused girls and parents about continued attendance.  Other factors may certainly have entered into the loss of girls from the program.  Starting the project sooner might have pulled more girls in in the beginning, although it is not unusual in the writer's organization for girls of this age to begin the program well into the school year.  Perhaps in this setting an earlier start would have fostered a routine for participants.  The Field Executive had told the writer that previous attempts at establishing long-term programs were difficult because families have more immediate survival needs to consider.  Gretz (1993) has said that taking care of these basic survival needs takes priority over seeing that children participate in activities.  It is important to note, however, that the girls who remained in the program until its completion were able to understand the concepts as presented,

indicating that the methods of presentation were indeed sound.

The second outcome, that at least two or more volunteers would lead an on-going program, was achieved, though not as the writer envisioned. While five leaders participated in the project at one time or another, no one leader was involved from start to finish, other than the writer. The foundation for establishing a volunteer base in the inner-city area was and still is important in developing a youth program such as this one. Children who grow up in what are sometimes called "at-risk" environments can benefit from the support of compensatory adults (Craven, 1990; Linquanti, 1992). Volunteerism is an excellent way to establish connections within a community. However, recognition of the diversity of volunteers and their needs for diverse volunteer opportunities is important (McCurley, 1993; Taylor, 1992; Zeldin & Farlov, 1993). The writer attempted to facilitate the process for leaders through modeling and mentoring in the use of developmentally appropriate curriculum. "On-the-job" training was seen as one way of providing this support, since most adults are unable to provide such a

curriculum without appropriate training (Hart, 1992; White-Ciraco, 1993; Zeldin & Tarlov, 1993).

The numerical measurement for the third outcome was probably not achieved for the same reasons that the first was not. The fact that the girls who participated until the end of the project were all interested in moving to the next level shows that a developmentally appropriate curriculum, even when delivered by non-professionals, meets the needs and interests of young children in informal settings.

Perhaps a stronger collaboration in the beginning, with a well-developed plan, would have ensured stronger follow-through and results. The recreation center provided the site, but all other aspects of the project, such as leadership, materials, training, and financial commitments were the responsibility for the writer, with some support from the parents and the council. The writer and other leaders were often not informed when off-site activities had been planned. This meant no other adults were around to supervise children who were not a part of this project but had been dropped off at the center. While the leaders in this project tried to be flexible, the shift to accommodate boys, as well as girls older than the

target age group, was obviously frustrating. Often, collaborations fall short of their expected goals because the participating groups are not clear on their responsibilities and the support each is to bring to the project. A definite, written plan is necessary from the beginning(Melaville, Blank, & Asayesh; National Assembly of National Voluntary Health and Social Welfare Organizations, 1993; SERVE: SouthEast Regional Vision for Collaboration, 1993; White & Wehlage, 1994). This does not mean, however, that plans are inflexible. On-going evaluation is necessary to see a collaboration as a process, with growth and change a part of any plan (Melaville, Blank, & Asayesh, 1993). At the same time, it may be necessary to plan for more short-term commitments from volunteers from the beginning (Taylor, 1993).

Even though the results were not as anticipated, the writer has concluded that this model has the potential to be successful because it:

- Uses available community resources.
- Facilitates the delivery of needed services acting as a referral source able to do the necessary follow-up.

- Recruits and uses community volunteers through
  active outreach and provides them with a
  comfortable structure and a rewarding
  experience.

  (Hispanic American Career Educational Resources,

  Inc. [HACER], 1992, p. 4).

The model likewise applied other characteristics of

successful collaborations in that it allowed youth to

take on leadership roles (National Assembly of National

Voluntary Health and Social Welfare Organizations,

1993) while it offered older people meaningful

participation within the community (Struntz & Reville,

1985). In addition, the model provided methods for

gaining community ownership, developing and using

people's strengths, and actively engaging children

(Linquanti, 1992; White & Wehlage, 1994). A well-

written plan, defining the roles and commitments of

each person and organization involved, should probably

have been developed well before any girls were admitted

to the program. This would have defined the

expectations and limitations of each individual and

group. Development from the top down, meaning that

adults were in place before the girls began, might have

counteracted the frequent changes in leadership by

anticipating them.  Future projects should consider short-term assignments for leaders.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are suggested concerning the project:

1.  Develop a written plan for any collaboration that defines and delineates the roles of all involved.

2.  Offer options to leaders other than long-term obligations, so that they can make commitments they can manage easily and still feel a sense of accomplishment.

## Dissemination

The premise of this projects has been shared with several colleagues, as well as council staff.  The writer has identified strengths and weaknesses of the project, and hopes to refine the model for replication. The Field Executive in the council is hoping to be a part of a grant funded project involving teaching leadership skills to substance abusing mothers, and has asked the writer to be a part of the project if it is implemented.

References

Andrews, J. H. (1988). Poetry: Tool of the classroom magician. Young Children, 43, 4, 17-25.

Bredekamp, S. (1987). Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age 8 (exp. ed.). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Casey, M. B. & Lippman, M. (1991). Learning to plan through play. Young Children, 46, 4, 52-58.

Cassidy, D. J., Myers, B. K., & Benion, P. E. (1987). Early childhood planning: A developmental perspective. Childhood Education, 64, 1, 2-8.

Craven, D. (1990, Summer). The need for supportive adults in a child's life. Girl Scout Leader, p. 21.

Day, B. (1991). Excellence in early childhood education: A call for leadership. In Designing a developmental program for four-to-six-year-olds. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Dennison, M. J. (1993, Fall). Custom-made for five-
year-olds. Girl Scout Leader, p. 19.

Dennison, M. J. (1993). Who is a Daisy Girl Scout?
New York: Girl Scouts of the U. S. A.

Dennison, M. J. & Sparks, K. U. (1993, Fall). New
adventures for Daisy and Brownie Girl Scouts. Girl
Scout Leader, pp. 15-18.

Dyson, A. H. (1990). Symbol makers, symbol weavers:
How children link play, pictures, and print. Young
Children, 45, 2, 50-57.

Elkind, D. (1986). Formal education and early
childhood education: An essential difference. Phi
Delta Kappan, 67, 9, 631-636.

Elkind, D. (9187). Miseducation: Preschoolers at
risk. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Erikson, E. (1950). Childhood and society. New York:
Norton.

Erikson, E. (1977). Toys and reasons. New York:
Norton.

Girl Scouts of the United States of America. (1991a).
Blue book of basic documents. New York: Author.

Girl Scouts of the United States of America. (1991b).
    [Survey of Daisy/Brownie Girl Scouts and their
    leaders]. Unpublished raw data.

Girl Scouts of the United States of America. (1993a,
    February). Management Report of the National
    Executive Director to the National Board of
    Directors.

Girl Scouts of the United States of America. (1993b).
    Spotlight on success: Serving the Mexican-American
    community. New York: Author.

Glazer, J. I., & Lamme, L. L. (1990). Poem picture
    books and their uses in the classroom. The Reading
    Teacher, 44, 2, 102-109.

Greenberg, P. (1990). Why not academic preschool?
    (Part 1), Young Children, 45, 2, 70-80.

Gretz, R. (1993, Fall). Carnegie report strikes a
    chord. American Humanics, pp. 3-4.

Hart, R. (1992). Children's participation: From
    tokenism to citizenship. Florence, Italy: UNICEF.

Hispanic American Career Educational Resources, Inc.
    (1992). Las Madrinas/Los Padrinos mentoring program
    guidelines. New York: Author.

Hymes, J. (1981). Teaching the child under six (3rd
    ed.). Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill.

Kagan, S. L. (1991). A profession growing up:
    Painting our think. In C. Copple (Ed.). Quality
    matters: Improving the professional development of
    the early childhood workforce (pp. 17-27).
    Washington, DC: National Association for the
    Education of Young Children.

Kantrowitz, B., & Wingert, P. (1989, April). How kids
    learn. Newsweek, pp. 50-56.

Katz, L. G. (1987). What should young children be
    learning? ERIC Digest. Urbana, IL: ERIC
    Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood
    Education.

Katz, L. G. (1988). What should young children be
    doing? American Educator: The Professional Journal
    of the American Federation of Teachers, 12, 2, 28-
    33, 44-45.

Katz, L. G. (1992). Readiness: Children and their
    schools. The ERIC Review, 2, 1, 2-6.

Katz, L. G. & Chard, S. C. (1989). Engaging
    children's minds: The project approach. Norwood,
    NJ: Ablex.

Katz, L. G. & McClellan, D. (1991). The teacher's
    role in the development of young children (ED 331
    642). Urbana, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary
    and Early Childhood Education.

Linquanti, R. (1992). Using community-wide
    collaboration to foster resiliency in kids: A
    conceptual framework. Portland, OR: Western
    Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and
    Communities.

Marzollo, J. (1988). Do worksheets work? Parents'
    Magazine, pp. 108-112.

McCurley, S. (1993, October-December). Positioning
    your volunteer program for the 21st century.
    Leadership, pp. 6-8.

Meisels, S. J. & Steele, D. M. (1992). The early
    childhood portfolio collection process. Ann Arbor:
    University of Michigan, Center for Human Growth
    and Development.

Melaville, A. I., Blank, M. J., & Asayesh, C. (1993).
    Together we can. Washington, D. C.: U. S.
    Department of Education, Office of Educational
    Research and Improvement.

Moses-Zirkes, S. (1992, October). Path to
    kindergarten can be treacherous. APA Monitor, p.
    52.

National Assembly of National Voluntary Health and
    Social Welfare Organizations. (1993). The
    community collaboration manual. Washington, D. C.:
    Author.

National Association for the Education of Young
    Children & National Association of Early Childhood
    Specialists in State Departments of Education.
    (1991). Guidelines for appropriate curriculum
    content and assessment in programs serving children
    ages 3 through 8. Young Children, 46, 3, 21-38.

Peck, J. T., McCaig, G., & Sapp, M. E. (1988).
    Kindergarten policies: What is best for children?
    Washington, DC: National Association for the
    Education of Young Children.

Piaget, J. (1950). The psychology of intelligence.
    London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Piaget, J. & Inhelder, B. (1969). The psychology of
    the child. New York: Basic Bocks.

Schweinhart, L. J. (1988). How important is child-
    initiated activity? Principal, 67, 5, 6-10.

Seefeldt, Carol. (1989). How good is your
kindergarten curriculum? Principal, 68, 5, 11-15.

SERVE: SouthEast Regional Vision for Education.
(1993). Leadership for collaboration:
Participant's workbook. Greensboro: University of
North Carolina School of Education.

Spann, M. (1992, Winter). Volunteers who give their
best. Girl Scout Leader, p. 14.

Spiegel, D. L. (1991). Children's activity books.
The Reading Teacher, 44, 8, 594-596.

Struntz, K. A. & Reville, S. (1985). Growing
together: An intergenerational sourcebook.
Washington, D. C.: American Association of Retired
Persons.

Taylor, M. E. (1992, August). Demographics and
motivations of volunteers: Implications for
effective volunteer management. Paper presented at
the meeting of the American Society of Association
Executives National Conference.

Vann, A. S. (1991). Let's not push our kindergarten
children. Principal, 70, 5, 27-28.

White, J. A. & Wehlage, G. (1994). Community
collaboration: If it is such a good idea, why is it
so hard to do? Madison, WI: Center on Organization
and Restructuring of Schools.

White-Ciraco, C. (1993). Training adults working with
girls (ages 5-11) in an informal education program.
Unpublished practicum report, Nova University, Ft.
Lauderdale, FL.

Zeldin, S. & Tarlov, S. (1993). Enhancing the
professional development of youth workers:
Recommendations from the field. Washington, D. C.:
Academy for Educational Development, Center for
Youth Development and Policy Research.

APPENDIX A

THE GIRL SCOUT PROMISE AND LAW

ORIGINAL AND SIMPLIFIED VERSIONS

THE GIRL SCOUT PROMISE

On my honor, I will try;
To serve God and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.


THE GIRL SCOUT LAW

I will do my best:
to be honest
to be fair
to help where I am needed
to be cheerful
to be friendly and considerate
to be a sister to every Girl Scout
to respect authority
to use resources wisely
to protect and improve the world around me
to show respect for myself and others through
my words and actions

# WHO IS A DAISY GIRL SCOUT?

Who is that girl they're all talking about?
Why, don't you know?
She's a Daisy Girl Scout.
That Daisy is honest--she knows what is true.
She tries to be fair when she's playing with you.
She helps where she's needed-she'll get the job done.
She's happy and cheerful to everyone.
She's friendly and kind whenever she's out,
and acts like a sister to every Girl Scout.
She listens to parents and leaders as well.
She tries not to be wasteful and that you can tell.
She takes care of her world and gives back what it
needs.
She shows others she cares through her words and her
deeds.
Now you don't have to wonder who that Daisy can be.
You knew all along that Daisy is ME!

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE ON GIRL SCOUT PROMISE AND LAW

Questionnaire for Daisy Girl Scouts' Understanding of
the Girl Scout Promise and Law

The following questions can be asked to find out girls'
understanding of the Girl Scout Promise and Law.  These
questions can be answered orally and informally, or
girls can draw a picture or tell a story.  There are
also activity pages in My Girl Scout Activity Scrapbook
that can be substituted (see items with a * below) for
questions about the Promise.  The book, Who is a Daisy
Girl Scout?, can be used to elicit responses concerning
the Girl Scout Law.

**The Girl Scout Promise**

1.  Tell me what it means to try.

2.  How do you serve God?
    *p. 3, "This is how I try to serve God:"

3.  What does it mean to serve your country?
    *p. 4, . . . And my country"

4.  How do you help people?
    *p. 5, This is how I try to help people . . ."

**The Girl Scout Law**

1.  Tell me what it means to be honest.

2.  Tell me what being fair means.

3.  Tell me ways you help where you are needed.

4.  What does it mean to be cheerful?

5.  How do you try to be friendly?

6. What does it mean to be a sister to every Girl Scout?

7. Tell me what it means to respect (listen to) adults.

8. What can you do to use resources wisely?

9. How do you take care of the environment?

10. What are some things that you do well? How can you let other people know you like them?

APPENDIX C

INTEREST SURVEY FORM

Interest Survey Form

The Daisy Girl Scouts from the North End
Recreation Center have had a busy year full of
activities.  All girls who participated this year are
eligible to become Brownie Girl Scouts next year.  To
help us plan, we want to make sure we know who will be
participating.  This form can be completed by girls
with adult assistance.

I liked Daisy Girl Scouts.

Yes              No              I don't Know

What did you like best?

_____

_____

_____

I want to be a Brownie Girl Scout.

Yes              No              I don't know

What do you want to do as a Brownie Girl Scout?

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX D

WEEKLY REPORT FORM FOR MEETING ACTIVITIES

## Review of Daisy Girl Scout Meeting Activities

The Guide for Daisy Girl Scout Leaders describes twelve tips for planning a meeting. The following checklist expands on those tips to help you review the consistency of meeting activities. Brief descriptions are sufficient for those items requiring explanation.

Date of meeting_____

1. Preparation
   materials were set up ahead of time____
   leaders and co-leaders discussed the flow ahead of time____
   day's activities were discussed with girls before the meeting____

2. Pre-meeting activity (hands-on activity for girls to do as they arrived)_____.

3. Connected with each girl____.

4. Used the five-and one-minute warnings for transitions____.

5. Established routines.
   discussed kaper chart before the meeting____
   other_____

6. Girls helped plan opening ceremonies____.
   Activity:_____

7. Sharing time.
   What issues needed to be resolved?_____
   _____

8. Involved girls in planning activities.
   kaper chart_____
   activity cards or other resources_____
   other_____

9. Used Daisy Girl Scout Circle (once a month)
   What ideas have girls had for this month?  Note
   any changes that may occur.

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

10. Enjoyed an organized, relaxed snack time.
    Girls were involved in making and/or setting out
    snacks____.
    Snacks were simple and relaxed but didn't take too
    much time____.

11. Clean up is everyone's responsibility.
    Activities were cleaned up as they were
    completed____.
    Clean-up checkers helped make sure areas was
    clean____.

12. Closing ceremony.
    Briefly describe the ceremony._____
    _____
    _____
    Girls helped plan_____
    The day's activities and each girl's part were
    discussed before the end of the meeting_____

List any issues or concerns you may have or any
assistance that may be required for future meetings.

_____
_____
_____
_____

Name of person completing this form_____

Date of next meeting_____