A SELF-ADVOCACY TRAINING PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

ADULT OUTCOMES AND ADVOCACY INVOLVEMENT ONE TO SIX YEARS AFTER PARTICIPATION

A Dissertation

By

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May 2013

Major Subject: Educational Psychology

ABSTRACT

The Texas Statewide Youth Leadership Forum (TXYLF) provides self-advocacy training to high school youths with disabilities. TXYLF is an enhanced version of the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) that is comprised of an initial five day training, a nine month support phase, regional YLFs, and the opportunity for participants to return to the five day training to serve as a mentor to their peers. This study's purpose was to examine the TXYLF participants' post-training outcomes and the relationships among advocacy involvement and adult outcomes. To achieve this purpose, former TXYLF participants were surveyed between one and six years after their participation in TXYLF. The correlational study analyzed descriptively the participants' outcomes and inferentially, through logistic regression, the relationships among participants' adult outcomes, self-advocacy involvement, and the various TXYLF participation components.

The results demonstrated that TXYLF participants' post-training postsecondary education attendance was higher than the national average for adults with disabilities. Participants with low incidence disabilities were involved in inclusive employment more often than the national average. A minority status increased the likelihood of involvement in secondary education advocacy, having a high incident disability increased the likelihood of post-training employment, and being under 21 years old increased the likelihood of living independently post-training, involvement in postsecondary education advocacy, and involvement in employment advocacy. Involvement in TXYLF for one full year, including involvement as a mentor, increased

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the likelihood of post-training employment; involvement in TXYLF's nine month support phase and involvement as a mentor increased the likelihood of post-training postsecondary education attendance, postsecondary education advocacy, and employment advocacy. Attending a regional YLF further increased the likelihood of postsecondary education and postsecondary education advocacy. Furthermore, involvement in TXYLF as a mentor increased the likelihood of post-training employment, postsecondary education, and independent living. No significant relationships were observed for self-advocacy and adult-outcomes. Future research is needed that takes the findings of this study and establishes a causal relationship through a randomized group experimental design.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the participants, volunteers and staff who made TXYLF exceptional.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people have supported me along this journey, but none so much as my wife. Therefore, I would first like to thank Bre for her constant love, support, and friendship. Furthermore, I would like to thank her for her empathy when I was frustrated, tolerance when I was stubborn, and for getting angry on my behalf when she believed I had been wronged.

Secondly, I would like to thank family and friends who, by the examples they set, have inspired me to achieve something I never believed possible. Thank you, mom, for teaching me that stepping out of the box was a good quality. Thank you, dad, for always encouraging me to go after whatever I wanted. Mark Gibson, thank you for teaching me that when I face seemingly unsolvable problems there are always solutions, and often I already have what I need to find those solutions. Thank you to all my friends from *At the Waters Edge*. You have inspired me to follow with enthusiasm each path that God has laid before me. Furthermore, a very heartfelt thank you to all the friends I have made through TXYLF. You have inspired me to see that life holds more possibilities than I am often brave enough to see.

Next, I want to thank my Chair and the members of my committee. Thank you, Dr. Zhang, for believing in me and for providing me with numerous opportunities to learn and to succeed. Thank you, Dr. Hagan-Burke, for your kindness, encouragement, and wisdom. Thank you, Dr. Willson, for helping me to realize that I do know a little about statistics. Thank you, Dr. Peterson, for not asking easy questions.

Finally, I want to give thanks for all of those things that are greater than us. I want to give a huge thanks for all of the situations that have taught me that life rarely happens smoothly and that getting knocked down only means it is time to get back up with greater determination. Foremost, I need to thank God for finding me, and for providing the strength and fortitude I have needed.

NOMENCLATURE

AD/HD   Attention Deficit-Hyperactive Disorder

AU   Autism

EBD   Emotional Behavioral Disorder

HI   Hearing Impairment

ID   Intellectual Disability

LD   Learning Disability

Multi   Multiple Disabilities

OI   Orthopedic Impairment

OHI   Other Health Impairment

TBI   Traumatic Brain Injury

VI   Visual Impairment

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study investigated the relationships between participation in the Texas Statewide Youth Leadership Forum, a self-advocacy training program for high school students with disabilities, and post-training adult outcomes and self-advocacy involvement. Additionally, this study investigated the relationships between participant post-training, self-advocacy involvement, and their adult outcomes. Chapter I presents key background information regarding self-advocacy and the Youth Leadership Forum, as well as the proposed study's problem statement, purpose, research questions, hypothesis, and significance. Important terms and definitions, delimitations, limitations, and the proposal's organizational framework are also presented in this chapter.

Overview of the History of Self-Advocacy

Disability rights

Self-advocacy, a disability rights movement, gradually developed in the United States from the first disability advocacy organization, the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) (Scotch, 2009). NAD began advocating for the rights of the deaf and hard of hearing in 1880. Advocacy organizations have allowed people with disabilities the opportunity to explore their group identity, gain a sense of empowerment, and learn how to stand up for equal rights (Browning, Thorin & Rhoades, 1984). The development of self-advocacy organizations reached a critical turning point after the People First movement held their first convention in Salem, Oregon, in 1974 (Longhurst, 1994;

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Williams & Shoultz, 1982). The convention was initiated by a small group of people

with disabilities who attended a conference in Canada promoting the notion that persons

with disabilities could live self-determined lives: a viewpoint put forth by the

Normalization Principle (Rhoades, Browning & Thorine, 1986). The group attending the

conference was inspired by the Normalization Principle, but they were disappointed to

discover that people without disabilities ran the conference (Hayden & Shoultz, 1991).

Shortly after returning home, they founded People First (also inspired by the

Normalization Principle, as well as the idea that people with disabilities should take

responsibility for their own organizations) (Brunk, 1991). People First eventually both

inspired and created a nationwide collection of chapters providing a network within

which people with disabilities could advocate for both individual and group rights

(Halpern, 1991). Further, the disability rights movement not only served as a source of

empowerment for people with disabilities, it also influenced overall societal beliefs

(Miller & Keys, 1996).

Social change

Before the People First movement, society tended to view persons with

disabilities as requiring treatment in medical facilities (Wehmeyer, Bersani & Gagne,

2000). According to this world view, people with disabilities were considered to be

people with physical deficits or defects (Danforth, 2008). This outlook was labeled the

"Medical Model," and held that the medical field should institutionalize and "treat"

people with disabilities to insulate society and to protect those with disabilities from

themselves (Yankauer, 1986). In the early 1900s, accompanying a reemergence of

Mendel's Law of Inheritance, people with disabilities occasionally were euthanized and, often with the support of legislation, sterilized in order to "contain" the spread of their conditions (O'Brian, 2011). In the 1950s, following lessons learned from the atrocities committed by the Nazis in World War II, societal views regarding people with disabilities grew more humane but continued to include isolating and "treating" people with disabilities inside institutions (Grossberg, 2011).

In the 1970s, People First ushered in a movement modeled after the Normalization Principle, a concept that began in the 1960s in the Netherlands (Williams & Shoultz, 1982). Bengt Nirje of Sweden developed the Normalization Principle while working with a government-appointed committee tasked with finding ways for people with disabilities to live self-supporting lives (Perrin & Nirje, 1985). Outside of advocacy organizations circles, Wolf Wolfensberger of Syracuse University popularized the movement in the United States through his book entitled *The Principle of Normalization in Human Services*, as well as through workshops and publications, many of which were authored with principle's founder, Nirje (Shapiro, 1993).

The Normalization Principle held that people with disabilities should have the right to live whatever life they desire and to experience the same risks as typically-developed adults (Brunk, 1991). Normalization promoted people with disabilities living typical lives according to typical developmental cycles (e.g., following typical daily routines); experiencing typical home, school, and leisure environments; following typical calendars (i.e., holidays, special occasions, vacations); and living within the general community (Nijre, 1976). Efforts inspired by the Normalization Principle led to

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many changes in special education, including the mandating of self-determination development, transition initiatives, and the inclusion of people with disabilities in least-restrictive environments (Furney & Salembier, 2000).

Legislation

Inspired by the advocacy movement and other social changes, legislation began to mandate that students with disabilities learn the skills required to transition from school to self-supported adulthood (Wehmeyer, Bersani & Gagne, 2000). This was first addressed in the 1968 amendment to the Vocational Education Act of 1963 that required states to use 10% of federal vocational education funds to teach students with disabilities essential employment skills (Test, Aspel & Everson, 2006). In the 1980s, students with disabilities became entitled to career and technical education programs via the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act (1984), a piece of legislation that directed schools to include vocational training in students' IEPs and to teach work skills in the least-restrictive environment (i.e., to the greatest extent possible with their non-disabled peers) (Halpern, 1991).

Additionally, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) of 1975, the precursor to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), more broadly addressed the education of students with disabilities, entitling such students to early intervention, special education, and related services. However, the initial iteration of the law did not include transition services (i.e., services that aid the students' transition into post-secondary life) (Halpern, 1991). Amended in 1983, Congress used the Act to introduce the concept of transition, authorizing but did not requiring federal funding for

states "to assist in the transitional process to postsecondary education, vocational training, competitive employment, continuing education, or adult services" (96 Stat. 1322. 29 USC 1501 (1); Wiliams & O'Leary, 2001). Congress, via the reauthorization of the EHA (later renamed the IDEA in 1990), made important changes regarding transition services. These changes included a formal definition of transition services and a mandated transition component to the IEP requirements (Baer et al., 2003). The 1990 IDEA reauthorization further included a mandate that students take an active role in their transition planning, a requirement that effectively mandated that schools teach students self-determination and self-advocacy skills (Wehmeyer & Ward, 1995).

Self-advocacy as an educational outcome

In light of the increased attention given to self-determination and self-advocacy following the 1990 educational mandates, Field (1996), in an effort to conceptualize self-determination as an educational outcome, concluded that self-determination and self-advocacy are two terms often used interchangeably. In fact, several attempts were made to conceptualize self-advocacy as an educational outcome (Johnson, 1999). Williams and Shoultz (1982), in their book promoting self-advocacy, wrote that self-advocacy should be understood as people with ID working on their own behalf or on the behalf of others to create social change for people with ID. In their self-advocacy development study, Sievert, Cuvo and Davis (1988) associated self-advocacy with assertiveness in order to redress discrimination. Zubal, Shoultz, Walker and Kennedy (1997) studied the opinions of people with disabilities and determined that self-advocacy

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should be understood as people with disabilities making their own decisions and choosing the types of services they receive.

Self-advocacy ultimately has become associated with a component skill of self-determination. Self-advocacy was first addressed as a component skill of self-determination in Nirje's (1972) conceptualization of self-determination (Wehmeyer, 1998). In 1997, Wehmeyer developed an operational conceptualization of self-determination that included self-advocacy as a component skill; this conceptualization has become the most frequently cited self-determination conceptualization. Self-advocacy, according to Wehmeyer, includes students speaking up for or defending themselves within a system that often made choices for people with disabilities. Wehmeyer's conceptualization of self-advocacy as a self-determination component further includes theorized instruction components. The teaching components include students knowing their rights and responsibilities, understanding their strengths and weaknesses, and learning effective communication skills.

Test, Fowler, Wood, Brewer and Eddy (2005a) expanded on Wehmeyer's (1997) self-advocacy concept in their conceptualization of self-advocacy developed through stakeholders' input and a review of self-determination literature. Test and colleagues conceptualized self-advocacy, for the purposes of educational outcomes, as people with disabilities advocating for their own supports or the supports of others. The conceptualization framed self-advocacy with four major components: (a) knowledge of self, (b) knowledge of rights, (c) communication, and (d) leadership (see figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1

Conceptualization of self-advocacy as an educational outcome
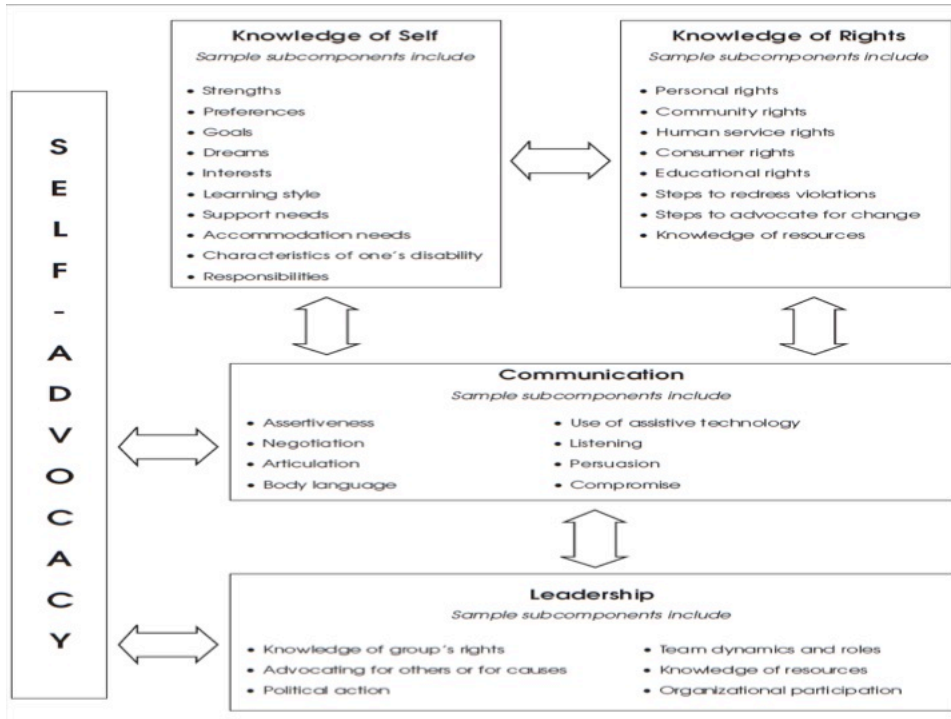
Note: From **"A Conceptual Framework of Self-Advocacy for Students with Disabilities"** by D. W. Test, C. H. Fowler, W. M. Wood, D. M. Brewer & S. Eddy, 2005. Remedial and Special Education, 26, p. 49. Copyright 2005 Sage Publications and Hammill Institute on Disabilities.

Recognized as foundational components, knowledge of self and knowledge of rights involve students understanding themselves and their needs before requesting support (Test et al., 2005a). Knowledge of self includes a student knowing his or her strengths, preferences, interests, needs, learning style, and the impact of his or her disability. Knowledge of rights includes students knowing their rights and responsibilities as a community member, a person with a disability, and a person receiving special education services. The remaining two components, communication

and leadership, involve students effectively gaining support. Communication entails interacting in groups or with other people individually, and includes negotiation, persuasion, compromise, and assertiveness, as well as understanding body language and developing listening skills. Leadership skills occurs after a student can advocate effectively for him or herself and include taking part in group activities as a team member, as well as understanding leadership roles, group organization, group dynamics, and the general political process. Self-advocacy evidence guided by the Test et al. (2005b) conceptualization will be discussed further in the Chapter II literature review.

Self-Advocacy Theoretical Framework

Following the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) and educators' prioritizations of self-determination as a key transition goal in the late 1980s, self-determination became a skill mandated by education law in 1990 (Ward, 2005). Wehmeyer (1997) conceptualized that self-determination for educational purposes would use elements of the field of psychology Motivation Theory, introduced by Deci & Ryan (1985; Weymeyer, 2004). Subsequent literature has indicated that self-advocacy, a component of self-determination (Wehmeyer), is an important skill for achieving successful adult outcomes (Test et al. 2005a).

Motivation theory

Motivation Theory, used in the development of Wehmeyer's (1997) self-determination conceptualization, is rooted in the early 20th century, at a time when psychologists began questioning whether extrinsic or intrinsic forces motivated people (Wehmeyer, 2004). The behavior analysts Deci and Ryan (1985) concluded that self-

determination is a basic psychological need and an essential intrinsic motivator. According to Deci and Ryan (2008), self-determination is the psychological need to move from dependence to autonomy. This theory theorizes that using someone's innate need for self-determination (i.e., their sense of autonomy) stimulates their intrinsic (i.e., self-rewarding) motivation and not their extrinsic resentment (i.e., controlling) motivators (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Ryan and Deci's (1985) theory of motivation further argues that self-determination is not allowed to develop when a student's behavior is unduly controlled. Grolnick and Ryan (1990), writing on the theory's implications for students with disabilities, concluded that many interventions for students with disabilities involve controlling students. Student behavior is controlled by teacher-imposed deadlines, rewards, and punishments (Deci & Chandler, 1986). Further, at home and in other environments, self-determination often is not promoted because people are more controlling of others who behave or learn differently from themselves. Studies investigating the Motivation Theory support this hypothesis. Pocock et al. (2002), reviewing the results of a self-determination curriculum, concluded that promoting students' autonomy is an important motivator leading to self-advocacy development. Deci, Hodges, Pierson and Tomassone (2001) surveyed 450 students with disabilities regarding their self-perception and concluded that education should not control students' behavior, but rather should work with students' interests and needs in order to promote self-determined behaviors.

This theory, additionally, hypothesizes that promoting self-determination leads to improved adaptive behaviors in people with disabilities (Neibert, Dozier, Iwata & Hafan, 2010). Studies exploring the Motivation Theory's efficacy conducted with people without disabilities also support this theory. Self-determination leads to greater job satisfaction (Lam & Gurland, 2008) and job performance (Vansteenkiste et al., 2007). Students with higher levels of self-determination achieve better overall academic results (Black & Deci, 2000) and have higher levels of social competence (Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2005).

Self-determination

Prior to Wehmeyer's (1997) conceptualization, the idea of self-determination for people with disabilities was introduced in the early 1970s through the Normalization Principle (Ward, 2005). However, self-determination was not mandated and was not an educational priority until the 1990s.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, a debate arose within the disability community regarding whether the job of advocacy for the right of self-determination put forth by the Normalization Principle fell to the parents, or to the people with disabilities themselves (Daniels, 1982). In the meantime, self-advocacy organizations in the late 1970s and early 1980s began teaching people with disabilities self-determination skills in order to enable self-advocacy (Rhoades, Browning & Thorin, 1986) and in the late 1980s and early 1990s educators began focusing on self-determination as an educational goal (Stroman, 2003). Further, OSERS, in the late 1980s, began to support self-determination as an essential transition skill (Ward, 2005). This debate culminated in 1989, when OSERS

held a self-determination conference to collect input regarding essential self-determination components both from experts in the field and from people with disabilities (Wehmeyer, 2004). The conference points included the notion that people with disabilities should self-advocate and that schools ought to teach self-determination skills (OSERS, 1989). Self-determination became recognized in education literature as an essential transition skill in the early 1990s, following IDEA's mandating of student involvement in their transition planning (Abery, Rudrud, Schauben &Eggebeen, 1995; Field & Hoffman, 2002; King, Baldwin, Currie & Evans, 2006: Wehman, 2006; Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1997).

Following the IDEA mandate, OSERS funded a self-determination initiative from 1990 to 1996 that resulted in ten educational self-determination conceptualizations (Wehmeyer, 1998). The more frequently-recognized conceptualizations include 1) the person with the disability should command his or her own motivation and self-efficacy (Powers et. al, 1996); 2) the person with the disability should utilize self-knowledge and self-created values to determine and accomplish their own goals, learning from such experiences in order to increase their independence and better determine and accomplish future goals (Field & Hoffman, 1994); 3) the person with the disability should use self-knowledge to set goals, pursue those goals, and evaluate their own performance towards achieving those goals (Martin & Marshall, 1995); and 4) the person with the disability should act as the primary force in making his or her own life decisions (Wehmeyer, 1997). Weymeyer's (1997) conceptualization, the most frequently accepted conceptualization of self-determination, incorporated Deci & Ryan's (1985) self-

determination theory, and includes nine components; self-advocacy is one of these

components (see Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2

Wehmeyer's self-determination conceptualization
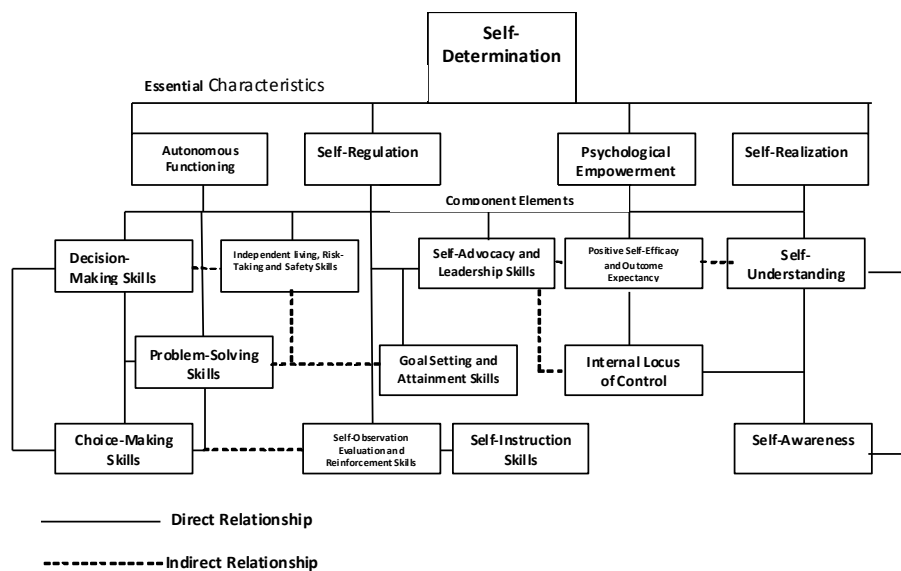
Note: From "Self-Determination as an Educational Outcome: A Definitional Framework
and Implications for Intervention" by M. Wehmeyer. *Journal of Developmental and
Physical Disabilities*, 9, p. 179. Copyright 1997 Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.

Research evaluating the self-determination conceptualization demonstrates that

both adults and students who are more self-determined enjoy a higher quality of life in

adulthood (Martorell, Gutierrez-Recacha, Pereda & Ayuso-Mateos, 2008; Wehmeyer &

Palmer, 2003; Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1997) and achieve better academic results in

school (Lee, Wehmeyer, Soukup & Palmer, 2010). Several literature reviews have

compiled self-determination intervention studies to illustrate the effects of self-determination. A list of such reviews is as follows:

> 1) Algozzine, Browder, Karvonen, Test and Wood (2001) investigated self-determination intervention studies used for students in any disability category. Self-advocacy was the skill most often taught to students with LD or mild ID, while choice-making was the skill most often taught to students with more severe ID. Promising outcomes were seen in students' development of social skills, problem-solving skills, self-regulation, and self-knowledge. Interventions conducted over a longer period of time and including a greater number of self-determination components resulted in the greatest positive effects.
>
> 2) Wood, Fowler, Uphold and Test (2005) continued the investigation performed by Algozzine et al. (2001), but limited the search to interventions conducted for students with severe disabilities. These interventions included choice-making more than any other self-determination component, and the most significant outcomes involved an increased ability to make choices. Interventions conducted over a longer period of time and including a greater number of self-determination components resulted in the significant effects.
>
> 3) Chambers et al. (2007) investigated interventions that used a developed self-determination curriculum, a multi-component process, or a systematically implemented instruction model to teach self-determination.

All included studies measured global self-determination (not only one or more self-determination components); outcomes included greater levels of independent community living and a better quality of employment. Interventions that resulted in the significant effects on self-determination included increased opportunities for making choices and increased support for developing self-determination.

4) Fowler, Konrad, Walker, Test and Wood (2007) investigated self-determination interventions' effects on academic outcomes for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Self-management and self-determination were taught most often with certain studies teaching choice-making, self-advocacy and goal-setting. The investigation demonstrated that academic organizational skills were affected by the self-determination interventions. Teaching self-management, goal-setting and problem-solving conjointly were the most effective methods used.

5) Konrad, Fowler, Walker, Test and Wood (2007) investigated self-determination intervention studies and their effects on academic outcomes for students with LD. Self-management (often in combination with goal-setting or self-advocacy) was the skill most often taught and the investigation found that the significant effects resulted from combining self-management with goal-setting. The effects were seen most prominently in productivity skills such as problem-solving and choice-making.

In summary, self-advocacy is the component most often included in self-determination interventions; only one review did not find a significant number of interventions that included self-advocacy. Self-advocacy was most often used with groups of students with less severe disabilities, which also may explain why Wood et al. (2005) found few interventions that included self-advocacy. The significant effects were seen when self-determination interventions used multiple components and took place over an extended period of time. Participant problem-solving, choice-making, and adult outcomes were effected most significantly by the interventions.

Self-advocacy evidence

To effectively teach students with disabilities self-advocacy skills, evidence-based practices should be implemented (NASET, 2005; Wagner et al., 2003). Several methods have been used to enhance self-advocacy skills in students with disabilities. Research literature includes information on the use of published curricula (Levin & Rotheram-Fuller, 2011), teaching students to lead their own Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings (Arndt, Konrad & Test, 2006; Danneker & Bottge, 2009; Martin et al., 2006; Neale & Test, 2010), peer tutoring (Bobroff & Sax, 2010), writing strategies (Cuenca-Sanchez, Mastropieri, Scruggs & Kidd, 2012), employment skills training in college-based transition programs (Krajewski, Wiencek, Brady, Trapp & Rice, 2010), transition knowledge teaching strategies (Lee et al., 2011, 2012; Wehmeyer, Palmer, Lee, Williams-Diehm & Shogren, 2011; Woods, Sylvester & Martin, 2010), and weeklong training programs (Bauer, 2003; Gragoudas, 2006; Grenweldge & Zhang, in press; Hall & Starrett, 2006; Rothman, Maldonado & Rothman, 2008). Furthermore,

research has demonstrated that students with disabilities can be taught all four self-advocacy components (Test et al., 2005b).

Students have made important gains in self-determination (Cuenca-Sanchez, 2012). A significant difference was observed in participants' transition-planning knowledge, self-determination (particularly in self-realization), self-efficacy, and students' expected outcomes (Lee et al., 2011). When assessed by the American Institutes for Research's (AIR) Self-Determination Scale, the Lee et al. (2012) study found that outcome expectancy, efficacy, and prior transition-planning knowledge all predicted self-determination, while age, gender, and IQ were not significant predictors of self-determination; students' self-determination levels, higher IQ levels, and amounts of intervention received all predicted their transition-planning knowledge. In the Wehmeyer et al. (2011) study, however, age, gender, IQ level, and time spent on intervention all contributed significantly to gains in self-determination.

Participants' increased their IEP knowledge and leadership skills, and were able to generalize these skills for use during real IEP meetings (Arndt et al., 2006). IEP meetings became student-led (Danneker & Bottge, 2009). Students also were able to increase and maintain their verbal contributions to IEP questions, and generalize these skills in mock IEP meetings (Neale & Test, 2010). A significant difference was observed for participants in their leading IEP meetings, expressing goals, learning IEP leadership steps, taking action towards goals, demonstrating IEP knowledge, and overall IEP behavior (Martin et al., 2006). Gains also were observed in transition-planning knowledge and self-efficacy (Woods et al., 2010).

Students demonstrated an increased sense of responsibility and improved work performance skills, leadership, team building, and team-membership skills; furthermore, students have reported an improved sense of empowerment (Krajewski et al., 2010). Study participants increased their knowledge of their rights and responsibilities, and postsecondary education accommodations (Wood et al., 2010).

Participants in the Campbell-Whatley (2008) study: 1) increased their self-esteem, 2) found learning about LD, attending IEP meetings, and meeting with successful people with LD all to be useful experiences, 3) learned how to explain their disability to others, and 4) learned how to identify their own needs and request assistance as necessary. Students also made significant gains in self-awareness (Kotzer & Margalit, 2007) and self-advocacy (Mishna et al., 2011).

In a survey conducted as part of a follow-up study of a program similar to that of the Youth Leadership Forum's (YLF) week-long self-advocacy program, it was found that most respondents were employed, in college, in college and employed, or had completed college and were employed (Rothman et al., 2008). The majority further reported that the program positively influenced their success in college, that the most important topic for future success learned in the program was self-advocacy, that they benefited from learning about disabilities and their own strengths and weaknesses, and that the most useful aspects of the program were learning about college, meeting others with disabilities, and meeting role models.

Studies conducted on YLF programs have shown many similar positive effects. YLF studies will be discussed in the following section.

Youth Leadership Forum

The YLF, created in 1992 by the California Governor's Committee on the Employment of Disabled Persons, provides research-based week-long youth development training in an effort to increase leadership and advocacy skills in youths with disabilities (Foster, Gieck & Dienst, 2005). Thirty states have registered with the Association of Youth Leadership Forums and 14 have reported active programs during the summer of 2012 (AYLF, 2012).

Traditional YLF models provide three to five-day leadership training, free of charge, to groups of 30 to 60 youths with disabilities; programs are usually held on a college or university campus in the state's capital city (Epstein, Eddy, Williams & Socha 2006). High school juniors and seniors with disabilities, between the ages of 16 and 22 and often located all over the state, apply to attend through a competitive application process (Edelman, Gill, Comerford, Larson & Hare, 2004). The Texas Statewide Youth Leadership Forum (TXYLF) operates under an enhanced self-advocacy development model (see Figure 1.3) in an effort to increase the impact of the traditional YLF model (Grenwelge, Zhang & Landmark, 2010). The TXYLF expands the traditional model with a nine-month long support phase, follow-up training, and regional YLFs where participants may attend multiple regional forums throughout the year (Grenwelge, 2010). TXYLF elements will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter III: Methodology.

Figure 1.3

Texas Statewide Youth Leadership Forum model
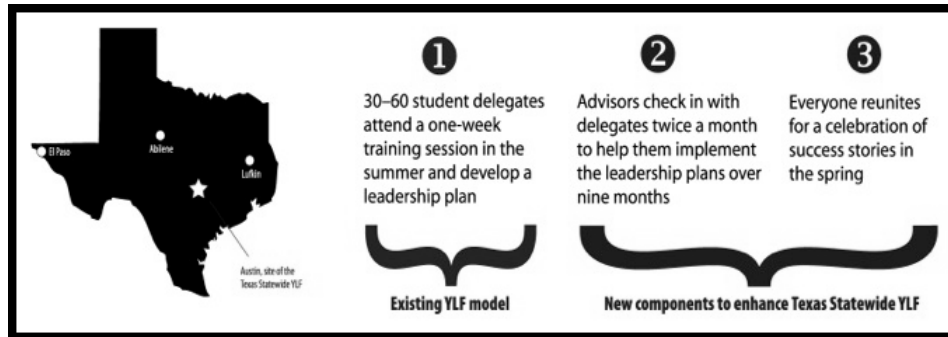
Note: From "Comprehensive Leadership Training for Youth With Disabilities: A New and Improved Youth Leadership Forum Model" by C. Grenwelge, D. Zhang & L. Landmark. Teaching Exceptional Children, 42, p. 64. Copyright 2005 Council for Exceptional Children.

Four studies have investigated YLF programs, including YLFs in Ohio, Kansas, and Texas. The study methods included a mixed qualitative and quantitative approach (Bauer, 2003), qualitative observations and interviews (Gragoudas, 2006; Hall & Starrett, 2006), and a pre/post quasi-experimental design (Grenweldge & Zhang, in press). These studies evaluated past participants in the 1999 to 2001 forums as well as (at that time current) 2002 participants. The studies gathered participants' views on YLF's impact on their personal lives and self-knowledge (Bauer), and their views on YLF's impact on their personal lives five years following their attendance in the program (Gragoudas). These studies also followed up with participants six years following their participation in order to qualitatively evaluate YLF's impact on their health and community living outcomes (Hall & Starrett), as well as YLF's effects on their self-advocacy knowledge (Grenweldge & Zhang).

Bauer's (2003) dissertation study found that the Ohio YLF positively affected participants' views of themselves as people with disabilities, as well as their appreciation of the disability culture and community, their ability to verbally self-advocate, their overall sense of pride, purpose and direction, their knowledge of leadership and self-advocacy, their leadership and advocacy confidence, their overall leadership skills, and recognition as a leader by peers. Gragoudas' (2006) study was also conducted for dissertation purposes and concluded that the Kansas YLF helps participants gain a positive self-image, increase their perception as a person empowered to self-advocate, learn of resources for successfully living independent lives, and gain a sense of community. For program evaluation purposes Hall and Starrett (2006) interviewed 30 participants and found that they lived in a college dorm (10%), lived with parents (73%), shared an apartment with a roommate (10%), lived alone in an apartment or home (7%), worked full time (20%), worked part time (50%), were afraid to work more for fear of losing disability insurance or benefits (20%), and 30% were not satisfied with their current level of social activity. The participants who attended the Texas YLF in the Grenweldge and Zhang (in press) study made significant gains in self-advocacy knowledge, as compared to the control group. Those with developmental disabilities made the greatest gains as compared to youths with learning disabilities and physical disabilities, and no significant effect was observed in terms of gender.

Studies to investigate leaders with disabilities and the influence of interventions provided further evidence of YLF's impact. Carter, Swedeen, Walter, Moss and Hsin (2011) qualitatively interviewed leaders with disabilities in order to gather their views on

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what programs developed leadership qualities; participants identified YLF as a program where people with disabilities could develop leadership skills through opportunities to demonstrate their effective communication skills, enhance their leadership skills, and realize their ability to advocate. In a conference paper, Triano (2003) provided a self-report on the California YLF's influence on her adult outcomes. Triano reported that she increased her self-confidence and self-determination as a result of attending the California YLF. Wolf-Branigin, Schuyler and White (2007), in a longitudinal study, over a two year period investigated the effects of interventions on participants' physical health, psychosocial functioning, and attitudes toward employment. In post-intervention measures, Wolf-Branigin et al. observed significant differences in physical health and school functioning for all students who participated in one or more of nine different transition-related interventions; YLF was one of these interventions.

The Problem

The problem, however, was that little post-training evidence existed that quantitatively supported the effectiveness of self-advocacy programs. Researchers of self-advocacy interventions (Test et al. 2005b) and YLF studies (Grenwelge, 2009; Wolf-Branigin et al., 2007) have indicated that there was a need for future studies to investigate post-training outcomes. The Post-School Outcomes Center reviewed 100 outcomes studies and found that only 19 collected data to evaluate a particular school or program (Alverson, Naranjo, Yamamoto & Unruh, 2010). Nearly all studies designed to assess the effectiveness of self-advocacy programs post-training did so through qualitative means (Bauer, 2003; Carter et al. 2011; Gragoudas, 2006; Triano, 2003) and

did not investigate the participants' outcomes in employment or postsecondary education. Studies to quantitatively investigate post-training outcomes evidence (Rothman et al., 2008; Hall & Starrett, 2006), however, did not explore the relationships among the outcomes and demographic or program components. Exploring the relationships among the outcomes and demographic and program components was an area in need of research. Researchers of self-advocacy interventions (Test et al., 2005a) and YLF (Grenwelge & Zhang, in press) have indicated that there was a need for future research studying these relationships. Further, few (if any) studies have investigated the relationship among outcomes and program components, and the few that investigate the relationship among outcomes and demographics produced conflicting results (Grenwelge & Zhang; Lee et al., 2012; Wehmeyer et al., 2011). Lastly, few (if any) studies have investigated the relationships among self-advocacy involvement and adult outcomes. However, much theoretical evidence supports the assumption that self-advocacy leads to more positive outcomes (Field, 1996; Fielder & Danneker, 2007; NSTTAC, 2012; Test et al. 2005a; Wehmeyer, 1997).

Purpose of this Study

This study's purpose was to examine TXYLF participants' post-training outcomes and the relationships among advocacy involvement and outcomes. More specifically, this study surveyed TXYLF participants from one to six years after their participation in the program in order to study the relationships among TXYLF participation, post-training outcomes, and advocacy involvement.

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Research Questions

To support this study's purposes, the investigation was designed to answer four research questions:

1) What are the TXYLF participants' post-training outcomes?

2) What are the relationships among TXYLF participant demographics, and post-training adult outcomes and self-advocacy involvement?

3) What are the relationships among TXYLF program components, and post-training adult outcomes and self-advocacy involvement?

4) What are the relationships among post-training self-advocacy involvement and adult outcomes?

Question three had one sub-explanatory research question: Do participant demographics have an interaction effect on post-training adult outcomes and self-advocacy involvement?

Hypothesis

This researcher proposed that the study would support previous research by finding positive relationships among self-advocacy training and adult outcomes. Furthermore, although there was limited research on this topic, this researcher proposed that the study would find a positive relationship between self-advocacy training and self-advocacy involvement, as well as among self-advocacy involvement and adulthood outcomes.

Significance of this Study

This study addressed research needs. Researchers of YLF (Grenwelge & Zhang, in press; Wolf-Branigin, Schuyler & White, 2007) recommended that future research investigate post-training adult and advocacy outcomes, test for the impact of the program on different disability types (Wolf-Braniginet al.), and investigate the impact of YLF using extant measures (Gragoudas, 2006). Additionally Test et al. (2005b), in their review of self-advocacy literature, recommended that future studies investigate post-training outcomes and the component parts of self-advocacy interventions. Furthermore, the literature review conducted by this researcher (a review that continues Test and colleagues' study, which will be discussed in Chapter II: Literature Review) supports the notion that there was a need for research investigating post-training adult outcomes and advocacy involvement, and self-advocacy involvement's effects on adult outcomes. This study contributed further to the mounting evidence of self-advocacy training's effects on student outcomes, and provided empirical support for the theory that self-advocacy involvement improves adult outcomes.

Key Terms and Definitions

Advocacy: arguing for, supporting or defending one's rights or the rights of others.

Autism: "a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and

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unusual responses to sensory experiences" (IDEA, 2004, 20 U.S.C. 1401(3) -

1401(30)).

Community advocacy: arguing for, supporting or defending one's rights or the rights of

others in community settings.

Disability: "a child evaluated in accordance with Sec. Sec. 300.304 through 300.311 as

having mental retardation, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech

or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), a serious

emotional disturbance (referred to in this part as "emotional disturbance"), an

orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, another health

impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities,

and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services" (IDEA,

2004, 20 U.S.C. 1401(3) - 1401(30)).

Education advocacy: arguing for, supporting or defending one's rights or the rights of

others in education settings.

Employment advocacy: arguing for, supporting or defending one's rights or the rights of

others in employment settings.

Hearing impairment: "a hearing impairment so severe that a child is impaired in

processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification,

that adversely affects a child's educational performance" (IDEA, 2004, 20 U.S.C.

1401(3) - 1401(30)).

Independent living advocacy: arguing for, supporting or defending one's rights or the

rights of others in independent living settings.

Intellectual disability: "significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning, existing

concurrently [at the same time] with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested

during the developmental period, that adversely affects a child's educational

performance" (IDEA, 2004, 20 U.S.C. 1401(3) - 1401(30)).

Learning disability: "a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes

involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may

manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or

to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual

disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental

aphasia . . . [A] specific learning disability does not include learning problems

that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental

retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic

disadvantage" (IDEA, 2004, 20 U.S.C. 1401(3) - 1401(30)).

Motor disability: "a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's

educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by a congenital

anomaly, impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis),

and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and

fractures or burns that cause contractures) (IDEA, 2004, 20 U.S.C. 1401(3) -

1401(30)).

Self-advocacy training: a program or intervention that teaches students about advocacy

and/or self-advocacy, and/or instructs the students to argue for, support or defend

his or her rights and/or the rights of others.

Transition: "a change in status from behaving primarily as a student to assuming

emergent adult roles in the community. These roles include employment,

participating in postsecondary education, maintaining a home, becoming

appropriately involved in the community, and experiencing satisfactory personal

and social relationships" (Halpern, 1994, p. 117).

Visual impairment: "an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely

affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight

and blindness" (IDEA, 2004, 20 U.S.C. 1401(3) - 1401(30)).

Delimitations

This study uses Test et al.'s (2005b) four conceptualization components (i.e.,

knowledge of self, knowledge of rights, communication, and leadership) to frame self-

advocacy. Furthermore, the study frames quality of life with the theoretical components

advanced by Halpern (1985) (i.e., employment, postsecondary education, independent

living, and recreation). These theoretical frameworks used for instrument development

and data interpretation may not reflect the phenomenon under investigation.

Furthermore, this study is limited to high school students with disabilities who applied to

attend the self-advocacy training program.

Limitations

The findings of this study should be interpreted with caution because of the

following limitations. 1) This study intends to study self-advocacy through a self-

advocacy program whose participants applied to attend and was conducted on a

university campus. It is not intended to investigate self-advocacy from a school setting

intervention perspective and the participants may possess qualities atypical to the population. 2) This study will explore demographic interaction variables, but not other potential interaction variables such as prior self-advocacy exposure or motivations that may affect the study's internal validity. 3) Participants will self-identify their disability and answer the survey questions to the best of their knowledge. Therefore, the participants could inaccurately label their disabilities or answer questions inaccurately.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter I includes a review of self-advocacy and a brief history and description of the YLF. The study's problem statement, purpose, research questions, hypothesis, and significance are all described in this chapter. Important terms and definitions are also presented. Lastly, delimitations, limitations, and the study's organizational framework are presented. Chapter II includes a literature review that provides a background of the problem to be addressed, as well as the study's significance, theoretical framework, research questions, and hypothesis. The literature review includes an historical background, YLF evidence, self-advocacy evidence, and implications of the study. Chapter III discusses the research design and methods. The participants, design, instrument, procedures, dependent variables, and analysis are all discussed. Chapters IV and V present the results and discussion.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Historical Background

A shift in the way society views people with disabilities, the disability rights movement, and legislative mandates associated with disability rights has led to people with disabilities being seen as able to live self-directed lives. These multifaceted influences have prepared society to accept that people with disabilities can take charge of their lives, has increased the importance of programs helping people with disabilities to have self-advocacy skills, and has encouraged the creation of systems ready to support self-advocacy training.

Social perspective

Medical model

In the early 20th century, physicians such as Itard, Sequin, Howe and Wilbur all established practices designed to assist people with disabilities (Yankauer, 1986). These early specialists worked under the assumption that people with disabilities required specialized care in order to live independently within the community. This viewpoint (so named because the medical field adopted the practice) was later known as the medical model (Culham & Nind, 2003). The medical model shaped society's opinions regarding people with disabilities. In the initial stage of the adoption of the medical model, society generally believed that people with disabilities required institutionalizing in order to prepare them to live self-supported lives (Ericsson, 1985). However, opposing theories

influenced public, medical, and political opinions such that often the public became afraid of people with disabilities and concluded that such people required institutionalization in order to protect both themselves and society (Grossburg, 2011).

In the first decades of the 20th century, with the growing popularity of the laws of inheritance, the belief that people with disabilities could learn to live autonomous lives began to change (O'Brian, 2011). The laws of inheritance, put forth by Gregor Mendel, theorized that society could be improved through controlled breeding practices. In conjunction with of the laws of inheritance several research studies, headed primarily by Henry Goddard, the founder of the Vineland Training School, concluded that people with disabilities were a cause of crime and of society's overall declining standards (Grossburg, 2011).

Institutionalizing people with disabilities became a standard medical practice (Grossburg, 2011). In fact, medical professionals in the early 20th century, citing the law of inheritance, recommended isolation, sterilization, and some even recommended eugenics (Wehmeyer, 2002). Legislation was passed that allowed states to sterilize involuntarily those people labeled "feeble minded" (i.e., anyone with a disability that affected their ability to learn, such as ID, VI, HI, speech impairment, or anyone with a physical disability (Pfeiffer, 1993; O'Brian, 2011). These policies, influenced by societal fear, were intended to protect both children and parents from their children (Grossburg). Caring for people with disabilities became a medical specialization, and those with such a specialization were given full reign to recommend and enforce policies that rendered

people with disabilities and their families powerless to make many choices about the person with the disability (Wehmeyer).

In the second half of the 20th century, as a result of several influential events, society's opinion regarding people with disabilities changed once more. Medical professionals acknowledged that large numbers of people labeled with an ID were, in fact, incorrectly labeled due to cultural influences (O'Brian, 2011). The US received reports of Hitler mirroring US sterilization and eugenics policies in order to purge German society of "undesirables." The book *The Child Who Never Grew*, written by a popular non-fiction writer, described the conditions under which the author's child lived in Goddard's well-known Vineland Training School (Grossburg, 2011). Lastly, public opinion became more humane as large numbers of WWII veterans with disabilities refused to be treated as incapable (Wehmeyer, 2002). These influences culminated in the rejection of the medical model and allowed for a new viewpoint, the Normalization Principle, to take hold (Yankauer, 1986).

Normalization principle

The Normalization Principle, adopted in the 1970s and developed by Bengt Nirje, maintained that people with disabilities should have the opportunity to live lives typical of any member of society and within the same environments as everyone else (Ward, 2005). The normalization principle reintroduced the idea that people with disabilities should be able to govern their own lives and must be entitled to equal treatment. Society no longer treated people with disabilities as children who could not hold a job or live independently (Wehmeyer et al., 2000).

Nirje's philosophical belief that everyone had the right to equal treatment and his anthropological theory that no human could fully develop without participation in his or her culture influenced the development of the normalization principle (Nirje, 1985). He developed the principle in 1943 while on a Swedish government committee appointed to find the means for deinstitutionalizing people with disabilities; Nirje (1969) presented eight implications of his Normalization Principle, which are as follows:

1) Normal rhythm to the day. People with disabilities should have daily patterns that include getting out of bed, getting dressed, eating, and going to bed based on preferences not controlled by service requirements or others' beliefs.

2) Normal routine of life. People with disabilities should experience work, leisure, and home life in typical settings and in meaningful ways that foster personal growth and reflect personal preferences.

3) Normal rhythm of the year. People with disabilities should celebrate events and holidays they find significant, and go on regular vacations to places of personal interest.

4) Normal developmental cycle. a) Children with disabilities should have a sense of security, opportunities to learn from and experience a variety of stimulating environments, and live in a stable environment where they can develop caring relationships; b) youths with disabilities should learn their strengths and weaknesses, gain a sense of self and self-worth, and have opportunities to socialize with typically-developing peers; c) people

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with disabilities transitioning into adulthood should move out on their own and experience life; and d) adults with disabilities should live independent lives and retire to appropriate settings near where they spent the majority of their lives.

5) Normal treatment. People with disabilities should have their desires and preferences respected.

6) Normal sexual relations. People with disabilities should live in the same setting as the opposite sex and have the opportunity to form relationships typical for their society.

7) Normal economic standards. People with disabilities should have the opportunity to join typical job-training programs, gain competitive employment, earn equal pay, and have personal spending money.

8) Normal service providers. People with disabilities should have the right to the same standards for hospitals, housing, and schools as any member of society, which includes facilities not isolated for their use alone.

The goal of Normalization is that people with disabilities gain complete integration into society, independence, and equal opportunities for education and development (Nirje, 1969). The principle even goes so far as to consider criminal activity and depravity as normal conditions for people in a particular societal setting (Nirje, 1985). Further, Nirje maintained that this principle should guide the practices of all fields touching people with disabilities, including the educational, political,

psychological, and medical (Ward, 2005). Since its adoption in the 1970s, the

Normalization Principle has led the way for the inclusion of students with disabilities in

public education (Culham & Nind, 2008), the belief that people with disabilities can live

self-determined lives (Wehmeyer et al., 2000), and the development of the self-advocacy

movement (Brunk, 1991).

Advocacy movement

The advocacy movement, primarily carried out through advocacy organizations,

made dramatic changes in society's perceptions of people with disabilities and the ability

for people with disabilities to live independent lives within their communities (Rhoades,

Browning & Thorin, 1986). With the introduction of the Normalization Principle, those

who spoke for people with disabilities shifted first from specialists in the medical field,

next to parents of people with disabilities, and finally to people with disabilities

themselves (Wehmeyer, 2002).

Parent organizations

Parents of children with disabilities began establishing advocacy organizations in

the 1940s (Grossberg, 2011). However, these organizations' initial purpose was to

provide support for the parents and not to advocate for their children (Wehmeyer, 2002).

Parent organizations changed in the late 1940s to focus more on advocacy, particularly

when the parents began to protest the exclusion of their children from public education

(Pfeiffer, 1993). In the 1950s, frustrated by a lack of government response to their

protests, such parents began establishing national advocacy organizations. National

parent advocacy organizations have been credited with many legislative changes

benefiting people with disabilities (e.g., the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) of 1975) (Apler, Schloss & Schloss, 1995).

In the beginning stages of the disability rights movement, parents were viewed as responsible for advocating on the behalf of people with disabilities (Daniels, 1982). In fact, the Council for Exception Children (CEC) wrote in a 1981 factsheet that it is the parent's responsibility to advocate for his or her child. Self-advocates, however, changed public and parent opinion by increasingly demanding the right to self-advocate (Daniels, 1982). In the early 1980s, parent-led organizations began to recognize the importance of advocacy organizations being run by people with disabilities, and began asking that these self-advocating organizations be involved in the national conventions normally dominated by parent-run organizations (Rhoades, Browning & Thorin, 1986).

Organizations led by people with disabilities

People with disabilities developed advocacy organizations in response to their systematic exclusion from society (Miller & Keys, 1996). Advocacy organizations run by people with disabilities can be traced back to social clubs in the 1960s in Sweden that served the purpose of teaching members means of government decision-making and advocacy (Brunk, 1991). Representatives from such clubs held a conference in 1970 to discuss their concerns regarding realizing the Normalization Principle. That conference inspired other conferences in England and a conference in Canada that motivated five people from Washington state to form People First.

People First held its first convention in 1974 as a way of disseminating information regarding how to self-advocate, and as an effort to foster greater interest in

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advocacy (Miller & Keys, 1996). The first convention was attended by 560 people and propelled People First into a position to become a model that hundreds of advocacy organizations would later imitate (Brunk, 1991). Advocacy organizations, however, were not nationally networked until the first nationwide conference for advocates in Estes Park, Colorado in 1990, and the incorporation of Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) in 1994 (Caldwell, 2011).

An early victory in the effort to gain those services required for independent living was the passage of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibited establishments receiving federal funding from discriminating against people with disabilities (Pfeiffer, 1993). In the 1980s, advocacy efforts hit a critical turning point when the president of the Department of Transportation, upon hearing of a planned protest, announced that all transportation funded by the department would be made accessible to people with disabilities. Following that victory, many legislative battles were won in the areas of funding and transportation, but the largest victory was the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (which is a public civil rights law prohibiting discrimination against people with disabilities).

Advocacy involvement

The benefits of involvement in YLF or a similar self-advocacy program parallels the benefits of involvement in advocacy organizations. Advocacy organizations teach people with disabilities self-advocacy, as well as ways to advocate for group rights (Brunk, 1991). Moreover, the goals of self-advocacy organizations are to teach people with disabilities about their rights and responsibilities, the benefits of self-advocacy, and

how to become role models as self-determined people with disabilities (Miller & Keys,

1996). Many advocacy organizations spend a substantial amount of time teaching people

how to advocate in their personal lives and at the government level (Hayden & Shoultz,

1991). In fact, a national survey of advocacy organizations revealed that they spend a

greater amount of time teaching self-advocacy than they do at any other activity

(Browning, Thorin & Rhoades, 1984). Additionally, involvement in an advocacy

organization has many personal benefits. One of the chief benefits is an increased sense

of empowerment (Bert, Hardy & Buchan, 2003). Furthermore, advocacy organizations

allow people with disabilities to meet others who can relate to the difficulties that people

with disabilities face, and who can provide counseling in dealing with these difficulties

in both personal and public life.

Legislation

The controversy regarding how to educate students with disabilities began in

1910 when legislation mandated school attendance for all youths of below 14 years old

(Skrtic, 1987). Public schools did not know how to include students with disabilities and,

by the 1930s, the standard model for teaching students with disabilities was segregation.

The Training of Professional Personnel Act (P.L. 85-926) of 1958 was the earliest US

legislation addressing the education of students with disabilities. This law provided

funds for teacher-preparation programs focusing on the education of people with ID; the

reauthorization of the law in 1963 expanded to include students in all disability

categories (US Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1969). Grants to support

teacher-preparation programs came and went; it wasn't until the late 1980s that grants

included money geared toward training personnel to assist in students' transition into adulthood (Kleinhammer-Tramill, Baker, Tramill & Fiore, 2003). Laws mandating the inclusion of students with disabilities were passed in the 1970s, and were followed shortly after by laws mandating transition-related training (Halper, 1991).

Inclusion

The Education of Handicapped Act of 1970 (EHA) was the first education law to target exclusively school inclusion for students with disabilities, providing grants to colleges and public schools for programs supporting students with disabilities attending public education. By 1973, 45 states had laws in place. However, most were not enforced or students were served inadequately in general education settings with no additional support, or in settings otherwise inappropriate (e.g., students with physical disabilities served in settings created for students with ID) (Martin, Martin & Terman). Furthermore, though Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 made it illegal for recipients of federal funding (including educational institutions) to discriminate against people with disabilities these institutions were not afforded additional funding and there was no enforcement branch for the law. Thus, students with disabilities continued to be refused access to public education.

The 1975 amendment to the EHA, renaming the legislation the Education for all Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) was, arguably, the most important special education law in US history (Katsiyannis, Yell & Bradley, 2000). The EAHCA of 1975 established the right of students with disabilities to equal access to public education

(Grossberg, 2011). Prior to the EAHCA, only 20% of students with disabilities attended public education (Katsannis, Yell & Bradley).

Before the EAHCA became effective in 1978, states were allowed to refuse to educate children with disabilities (Martin, Martin & Terman, 1996). Many states in the 1960s and early 1970s enacted legislation mandating inclusion, but the mandates were inconsistent and often limited to students with certain disability types (Huefner, 1991). The passage of the EAHCA provided a means for enforcement, as well as federal funds to support state efforts. The 1983 amendment to the EAHCA made strides toward preparing students for adult life by providing funds for the development of programs that promoted the transition of students with disabilities into the workforce (Brolin & Gysbers, 1989).

Vocational education

The initial effort to prepare students with disabilities for adulthood came in the form of work-study programs (Halper, 1991). The Vocational Rehabilitation Act funded these initial work-study programs, which were a cooperative effort between schools and state vocational rehabilitation centers hoping to provide students with mild disabilities school credit for time spent at a job. The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986 and the Developmental Disabilities Act Amendment of 1984 mandated interagency cooperation to provide students with job training opportunities, and students with severe disabilities continued services that would allow such students to maintain employment outside of sheltered workshop settings (Brolin & Gysbers, 1989). Furthermore, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, amended in 1993, included provisions for vocational

rehabilitation collaboration with schools in order to train students for the workforce, as well as to train special educators to teach these students (Dowdy, 1996).

Other employment laws in the 1970s and 1980s also included requirements for students with disabilities (Brolin & Gysbers, 1989). The 1977 Career Implementation Incentive Act (P.L. 95-207) mandated career education be a part of public education, and specifically mentioned people with disabilities as appropriate candidates of this education. The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984 required that schools provide parents and students with vocational education program information no later than when the student reaches the ninth grade, and include vocational goals in students' IEPs.

Transition

Legislation in the early 1990s broadened the focus of transition, and increased the importance of students gaining self-advocacy skills (Wehmeyer et al., 2000). The 1992 reauthorization of the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 added language highlighting the importance of students with disabilities gaining independent living skills (Wehmeyer et al., 2000), and added a definition of transition (Johnson, 2002). Moreover, the 1990 amendment to the EAHCA, renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), introduced the concept of transition to education law (Wiliams & O'Leary, 2001).

The 1983 amendment to the EAHCA authorized, but did not require, federal funding for states "to assist in the transitional process to postsecondary education, vocational training, competitive employment, continuing education, or adult services"

(96 Stat. 1322. 29 USC 1501 (1)); funding for transition through the EAHCA became a priority in the 1986 fiscal year (Kleinhammer-Tramill et al., 2003). However, passage of the 1990 amendments to the EAHCA, renamed the IDEA, made significant changes to transition policy (Halpern, 1991). IDEA 1990 included transition components in students' IEPs, and a formal definition of transition services (Baer et al., 2003).

The 1997 amendments to the IDEA increased the importance that public education must place on students' transitions into adult settings (Benz, Linstroff & Yovanoff, 2000). The amendments mandated that schools focus on the entirety of students' education, including all elements that might lead to successful outcomes. The IDEA of 1997 adjusted the IEP components to include a required statement of transition services and/or a course of study in the student's IEP by the time the student reaches age 14. Related transition services were also added (e.g., speech and language therapy, psychological services, physical therapy, rehabilitation counseling, transportation). Additionally, the definition of special education included activities intended to prepare students for transition from school to work and into adult life (Flexer, Simmons, Luft & Baer, 2001).

The most recent IDEA amendments (2004) included redefined transition services, stating that services must be designed "within a results-oriented process," that focuses on "improving the academic and functional achievement." Vocational education was added as a potential service, and student strengths, in addition to preferences and needs, were now taken into account when considering a student's transition services

(Test, Aspel, & Everson, 2006). The law, thus, further strengthened the importance of self-advocacy skills.

Quality of Life Indicators

In this study this researcher includes employment, independent living, and post-secondary education as quality of life indicators. Recognition of these indicators as transition outcomes began with Madeleine Will's (1984) OSERS position paper presenting transition as an educational priority, and has continued to dominate outcome studies.

Madeline Will's (1984) OSERS paper articulated a congressional transition initiative. The proposition paper attributed high disability program costs to a lack of preparation for community living and stated that, consequently, people with disabilities were becoming dependent upon government-sponsored programs after completion of school. Congress called for a national investment in special education to address this issue. Although Will's paper discussed a student need for choices in living environments, community activities, and career options, the paper defined transition as the movement from school to work, and focused on career as the outcome of education. Living environments and community activities were discussed as factors that improved employment outcomes.

Halpern (1985) published a commentary on Will's (1984) position paper, demonstrating that the model proposed in the OSERS paper did not match the findings of recent research. Halpern conducted a three year study of people with ID living "semi-independent" in four different states. The study's findings indicated that the quality of a

person's living environment, employment, and community/social support indeed did not correlate. However, the three conditions were all important to adults with disabilities hoping to enjoy a high quality life, independently in the community. Haplern, therefore, recommended that a new model for education, legislation, and research include all three factors to measure educational outcomes.

Halpern (1993) followed up on his paper in order to discuss a broader conceptualization of transition outcomes subsequent to the passage of the IDEA of 1990, which included a broader definition of transition outcomes than previously indicated in the literature (i.e., the IDEA added postsecondary education and community inclusion as outcomes). Halpern developed a conceptualization through a review of theoretical literature and outcomes research. The theoretical findings indicated that quality of life should be measured by considering society's suggestions regarding quality lives, as well as what people with disabilities and their families consider to be quality lives. The 41 outcome studies included in the review examined 14 component items. Halpern included all the components from the full study and added demographic variables to gain a fuller research model. The final model included six domains: 1) student and family characteristics, 2) school services received, 3) school outcomes achieved, 4) quality of life while in school, 5) post-school services received, and 6) quality of life after leaving school. The domain "quality of life after leaving high school" included four components of interest: 1) education, 2) employment, 3) independent living, and 4) personal/social outcomes. Subsequent to his development of the conceptualization, Halpern tested the model in a follow-up study. The results demonstrated that none of the four components

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correlated, and therefore they should be treated as separate transition outcomes. Halpern suggested that future research investigate the four components when assessing student post-school outcomes.

A recent study conducted by the Post-School Outcomes Center confirmed that employment, independent living, and postsecondary education all were important outcomes (Alverson, Naranjo, Yamamoto & Unruh, 2010). The review study identified 100 outcomes studies conducted from 1975 to 2009. These 100 studies measured employment data (96%), postsecondary education involvement (69%), and independent living outcomes (66%). The researchers noted that these results were expected because these variables are commonly accepted as important variables in transition research, and the variables align with the IDEA's intent.

Furthermore, discerning which government-funded outcomes studies were measured since the IDEA introduced their accountability requirements would establish what variables such research uncovered as important (Blackorby et al., 2007). The IDEA's indicator 14 required school districts to collect information on student involvement in post-secondary education and employment in order to determine the quality of student outcomes following graduation (Alverson et al., 2010). The US Department of Education (DOE) measured employment and postsecondary education involvement of students with disabilities who graduated from 1976 to 2006 (Ingels, Glennie & Lauff, 2012). The National Longitudinal Transition Study 2 (NLTS2) was funded by the DOE, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), and the Institute of Education Science (IES) from 2001 to 2011 in order to conduct a follow-along study

to assess the quality of students with disabilities' outcomes (NTLS2, 2012). The NLTS2 collected data on involvement in employment, postsecondary education, independent living, social adjustment, and advocacy goals.

Self-Advocacy Theoretical Support

The transition from adolescence to adulthood is difficult for everyone, but people with disabilities often find the transition more so because they frequently are asked to transition from passivity and dependency to independence (Daniels, 1982). Parents and services often provide students with disabilities with greater levels of supports than they do for these students' peers without disabilities. Consequently, opportunities to learn self-advocacy frequently are lacking in both school and community settings (Caldwell, 2010), thus creating an institutionalized dependence on others.

Additionally, the IDEA no longer applies to post-graduation settings. Instead, disability law provides people with disabilities access to services and support under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Eckes & Ochoa, 2005). The ADA and Section 504 make discrimination illegal, but they do not require that the individual settings determine a person's needs. Therefore, in post-graduation settings, people with disabilities must request needed support or they likely will not receive it. Furthermore, self-advocacy has become more important due to society's shifting from the parent to the person with a disability being understood as the individual responsible for advocacy (Merchant & Gajar, 1997).

Postsecondary education

To successfully complete postsecondary education, students with disabilities require self-advocacy skills (Eckes & Ochoa, 2005). Students entering college, university, or technical school must know that they need to request accommodations, what accommodations are available for them to request, and how to request these accommodations (Getzel & Thoma, 2008). This is complicated because students often must encounter school employees unfamiliar with their accommodation needs. Faculty and staff may not understand why students require certain accommodations, or they may be unfamiliar with what services the university provides (Eckes & Ochoa).

Disability service providers from 74 colleges identified self-advocacy as the transition skill most lacking in students transitioning from high school to postsecondary education (Janiga & Costenbader, 2002). As a result of this lack, postsecondary education students with disabilities often fail to request the accommodations they need in order to be successful. In an additional study, participants in self-advocacy training were found to be more likely to complete their university education than their peers with disabilities who did not attend this type of training (58% versus 37%) (Dalke, 1993).

Employment

To maintain employment, a person with a disability often needs to self-advocate for natural support or advocate for the business to provide accommodations (Callahan, Griffin & Hammis, 2011). Youths, when applying to local vocational rehabilitation service centers, often list self-advocacy as training they require to improve their

employment outcomes, thereby indicating their realization of the importance of self-advocacy skills in the workplace (National Council on Disability, 2008).

Studies support the theory of self-advocacy's importance in employment. Seventy-five job seekers who gained self-advocacy skills (i.e., knowledge of self) measured much higher with regards to employment decision-making confidence over the comparison group (Farley & Parkerson, 1992). Carter, Austin and Trainer (2012) found that students whose teachers rated them higher on self-advocacy were more likely to be employed two years after graduation. Lindstrom, Doren and Miesch (2011) discovered that adults with disabilities who sought training opportunities were more likely to keep their jobs, or find new jobs after losing a job.

Independent living

To successfully live independently, people with disabilities need community supports (e.g., adequate public transportation, assistive technology, personal attendants) and these types of support are often gained through self-advocacy (Eisenman, 2007). Limited research supports this theory; adult leaders with disabilities have stated that they were able to move into independent living situations only because of the self-advocacy skills gained through training (Caldwell, 2010).

Outcomes data

Little data exist demonstrating the long-term outcomes from self-determination (Wood, Test & Project Co-Directors, 2001) or self-advocacy programs (Test et al., 2005b). However, outcomes studies support the theory that self-determination and the component skill, self-advocacy, lead to superior adult outcomes.

Self-determination outcomes studies

Twenty-nine students with disabilities who were in a foster care system participated in *Take Charge*, a self-determination training, for 12 months (Powers et al., 2012). They received weekly coaching meetings and quarterly workshops with adult mentors. The students focused on setting goals and following through on their plans. One year after the intervention, the intervention group showed better outcomes than the comparison group in the categories of high school graduation (72% vs. 50%), employment (45% vs. 28%), and no longer living in supported-living environments (60% vs. 50%).

Wehmeyer and Schwartz (1997) assessed 80 students with ID one year after high school completion. The participants were assessed for levels of self-determination and surveyed for adult outcomes. Wehmeyer and Schwartz divided the participants into high and low self-determination categories. Results demonstrated there was no significant difference between the two groups in the categories of independent living (90% lived with their parents), postsecondary education enrollment, and number of hours worked per week. However, the high self-determination group was more likely to have a checking account, have full or part-time employment, and earned a higher average wage.

Wehmeyer and Palmer (2003) conducted a similar study to the Wehmeyer and Schwartz (1997) study, collecting self determination assessment and outcome data for students with ID one and three years after high school completion. Similar to the Wehmeyer and Schwartz study, the 94 participants were divided into high and low self-determination groups. The three-year follow-up data revealed a significant difference

from the one-year follow-up in the high self-determination group compared to the low self-determination group in terms of students who had moved out of their parents' homes, lived independently, were financially independent, worked full or part time, and in terms of the number of job benefits received (i.e., health insurance, sick leave, vacation).

Self-advocacy outcomes studies

Students with LD who attended a two-year job preparation program at a university were given supplemental self-advocacy instruction (Roffman, Herzog & Wershba-Gershon, 1994). Nineteen students participated in the 15-hour self-advocacy instruction where they learned about their disability, strengths and weakness, as well as about appropriate ways to obtain accommodations. The participants scored significantly higher on disability knowledge posttest scores, and mock interviews, and the employer ratings of the students one year following the intervention demonstrated a significant maintenance of work adjustment skills as compared to the control group.

Participants in a weeklong self-advocacy program were surveyed after their training (Rothman, Maldonado & Rothman, 2008). The weeklong program provided instruction on independent living, advocacy, study skills, disability services, transition knowledge, postsecondary education, assertiveness, accommodations, and sexuality. The amount of time following participation in the training ranged from a few months to seven years. From the sample of 27 participants, 21 were enrolled in postsecondary education, two had completed postsecondary education, four were employed, and eight were both employed and attended postsecondary education.

Students with LD selected for their potential to attend postsecondary education participated in a two to three year comprehensive transition program (Aune, 1991). These students learned about their strengths, weakness and needs, study strategies, career exploration, postsecondary education, accommodations, self-advocacy, and interpersonal skills. Participants also lead their own IEP meetings and met with transition councilors during their junior and senior years; some students continued to meet with the councilors one year following graduation. The study followed up on 31 participants one year after graduation. More than half of the participants had enrolled in postsecondary education (58%); and others had joined the military (26%). Of those who enrolled in postsecondary education, 89% completed the first year of school.

Self-Advocacy Instruction Methods

Several methods have been used to enhance self-advocacy skills in students with disabilities. Research on these methods has included the use of published curricula, teaching students to lead their own IEP meetings, peer tutoring, writing strategies, employment skills training, transition planning training, direct instruction, college based transition programs, and weeklong training programs.

Published curricula

Curriculum studies have used *Self-Directed IEP* (Martin, Marshall, Maxsson & Jerman, 1996), POW+TREE strategy (Mason & Shriner, 2008), *Whose Future is it Anyway?* (Wehmeyer et al., 2000), the *Empowered Curriculum* (Cleveland et al., 2007), the *Self Advocacy Strategy* (Van Reusen et al., 1984), and *Student-Directed Transition Planning* (Sylvester, Woods & Martin, 2007) to teach students with disabilities self-

advocacy. Arndt, Konrad and Test (2006) applied *Self-Directed IEP* utilizing videos, workbooks, IEP meeting scripts, discussions of expected behavior, and IEP vocabulary to teach students self-advocacy leadership skills and how to lead their own IEP meetings. Cuenca-Sanchez, Mastropieri, Scruggs and Kidd (2012) modified the *POW+TREE* strategy, a persuasive writing strategy, to include self-advocacy communication strategies. Cuenca-Sanchez and colleagues taught students about self-determination and transition in order to enable students to self-advocate through writing. *Whose Future is it Anyway?* has been used to teach high school (Wehmeyer, Palmer, Lee, Williams-Diehm & Shogren, 2011) and middle school students (Lee et al., 2011; 2012) in order to increase transition planning knowledge. The Wehmeyer et al. curriculum includes 36 sessions addressing: 1) knowledge of self, 2) decision making, 3) community resources, 4) writing and evaluating goals and objectives, and 5) self-advocacy. The *Empowered Curriculum* was taught in large group settings to increase student self-perception and school self-advocacy skills (Levin & Rotheram-Fuller, 2011). Topics included self-awareness, self-management, personal advocacy, decision-making, and the setting of long-term goals. Neale and Test (2010) used the *Self Advocacy Strategy* to teach students to lead their own IEP meetings through instruction regarding recognizing their strengths and needs, and the importance of effective communication. Woods, Sylvester and Martin (2010) used the *Student-Directed Transition Planning* curriculum to teach students comprehensive self-advocacy skills. The students learned about: 1) self-awareness within their family and community, 2) transition planning, 3) employment, 4) postsecondary education, 5) independent living,

6) courses of study, 7) adult support and services, and 8) Summary of Performances (SOPs).

IEP meeting leadership

Researchers have taught students to lead their own IEP meetings as a means to increase self-advocacy skills. Martin and colleagues (2006) explored *Self-Directed IEP* as a means for students to learn and practice self-advocacy. The 11 sessions included videos, workbooks, IEP meeting scripts, discussions of expected behavior, and IEP vocabulary, followed by student-led mock and authentic IEP meetings. Danneker and Bottge (2009) investigated the impact of lessons developed for elementary students that combined *A Student's Guide to the IEP* (McGahee-Kovac, 1995) and *Standing Up for Me* (Cooper, Roder, Wichmanowski & Yeretzian, 2004). These lessons taught elementary students to: 1) understand the purpose, content, and format of IEP meetings, 2) identify their needs, strengths, and interests, 3) evaluate goal progression, 4) modify and develop goals, and 5) identify helpful accommodations and modifications; student-involved IEP meetings followed these lessons. Neale and Test (2010) adapted the *Self Advocacy Strategy* for use with students in elementary school in order to teach such students about their strengths, needs, and the importance of effective communication; student-led mock IEP meetings followed the lessons.

Peer tutoring

In Bobroff and Sax's (2010) study, peers tutored each other in interview skills over a seven week period. Four times a week the tutor asked interview questions and completed an evaluation form to assess his or her peer's competence, while the tutee

completed an evaluation form of him or herself following the interview after viewing a recording of the interview. The participants learned to self-advocate within the interview setting.

Writing strategies

Using the *POW+TREE* writing strategy, Cuenca-Sanchez, Mastropieri, Scruggs and Kidd (2012) increased middle school students' abilities to self-advocate through writing. Supplementary to the students' persuasive writing course, the instructors taught the students four times a week over 33 days about choice-making, goal-setting, knowledge of self, problem-solving, self-advocacy, progress evaluation, self-efficacy, and transition terms.

Employment skills training

TeenBiz: Teens in Business through the Arts, a program developed to support student employment learning needs, was investigated for its effects on participant self-advocacy within an employment setting (Krajewski, Wiencek, Brady, Trapp & Rice, 2010). The participants, five days a week for six weeks, took part in an authentic business in order to organize, plan, develop, implement, and market a musical production. The days were divided into work-related activities in the morning (i.e., leadership, planning, organization, time management, financial management, public speaking, writing, and marketing) and life skills in the afternoon (i.e., listening and following instructions, respect for themselves and others, body and mind coordination, grooming, and self-confidence).

Transition knowledge development

Whose Future is it Anyway? (Wehmeyer et al., 2004) was studied to determine whether it increased student knowledge on transition planning (Lee et al. 2011; 2012; Wehmeyer et al., 2011). The six section course included 36 sessions of lecture, discussion, and worksheets covering knowledge of self, decision-making, community resources, goal-setting, assertive communication, and meeting leadership.

Direct instruction

Campbell-Whatley (2008) studied the effects of lessons developed to teach elementary, middle school, and high school students to self-advocate via knowledge of self. The seven lessons included: 1) knowledge of student disabilities, 2) learning about role models with disabilities, 3) how the students' disabilities affected them, 4) special education procedures, 5) strengths and weaknesses in various settings, 6) how to solve problems through self-advocacy, and 7) managing confrontations effectively.

Mishna, Muskat, Farnia and Weiner (2011) studied lessons developed from a literature review on: 1) group instruction, 2) teaching self-advocacy to students with LD, and 3) dealing with bullying. Small group sessions lead by social workers or school psychologists and co-lead by research staff taught middle school students to self-advocate for school accommodations. The lessons taught over a 12 week period included: 1) rules and goal-setting, 2) knowledge of disabilities, 3) strengths and interests, 4) the participant's specific disability, 5) accommodations/support, 6) dealing with confrontation, 7) assertiveness, 8) self-advocacy at school, 9) stress management, 10) problem-solving, and 11) practicing self-advocacy.

Wood, Kelly, Test and Fowler (2010) investigated the use of direct instruction and mock interviews to teach high school students postsecondary education self-advocacy. Lessons were developed from the US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights brochure entitled "Students With Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities." The study involved the students reading the brochure to gain vocabulary and knowledge about ADA rights and responsibilities, as well as postsecondary education accommodations. Following direct instruction on the vocabulary and knowledge, the participants took part in mock interviews for practice and assessment purposes.

College-based transition programs

A high school transition/dual credit program held on a community college campus was studied to investigate the program's effects on participants' employment self-advocacy (Ankeny & Lehmann, 2011). These students lived on a college campus and took college credit courses towards certification in an employment area such as welding, administrative assistance, housekeeping, and early childhood education. Self-advocacy was not directly taught; however, the investigators assessed the program's effects on participant self-advocacy.

Weeklong training programs

Two similar weeklong summer self-advocacy training programs were investigated. Both programs, YLF and a program reported on in Rothman, Maldonado and Rothman's (2008) investigation, taught high school students to self-advocate in the

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areas of employment, secondary education, postsecondary education, and within the community.

Rothman and colleagues investigated a weeklong residential advocacy summer workshop held on a university campus where successful people with disabilities presented large and small group presentations, discussions, and activity sessions. Topics included: 1) independent living, 2) advocacy skills, 3) study skills, 4) disabled student services, 5) transition skills, 6) college systems (registration, financial aid, etc.), 7) assertiveness training, 8) reasonable accommodations, and 9) teen sexuality.

In the YLF model, high school students attend a weeklong self-advocacy training program on a college campus in the state's capital city (Grenwelge, Zhang & Landmark, 2010). Participants learn about leadership, team-building, self-advocacy, volunteerism, employment, legislative policy, and public speaking from successful mentors, facilitators, and presenters with disabilities.

Empirical Self-Advocacy Evidence

Two reviews investigated self-advocacy literature: Test et al. (2005b) and Merchant and Gajar (1997). Merchant and Gajar reviewed seven self-advocacy programs for students with LD who were in the process of transitioning to postsecondary education. The reviewers concluded that there was a need for secondary education self-advocacy programs and more empirical studies. Test and colleagues included all disability populations and self-advocacy programs in their broadened review. Test and colleagues' review of 25 studies published from 1972 to June of 2004 revealed that most participants were LD or ID and in high school, and that the studies did not represent an

ethnically diverse population. Few studies investigated self-advocacy predictors or outcomes from self-advocacy programs. Test and colleagues recommended that future research include more rigorous methodology, outcomes from self-advocacy programs, representation by a larger number of disabilities, and predictors of self-advocacy.

No review has been conducted since the Test et al. (2005b) study. Therefore, the following review includes self-advocacy practices published from June of 2004 to June of 2012.

For inclusion in this review, a practice had to meet several criteria aligned with the purpose of this study. The practice had to be designed to promote self-advocacy. The participant characteristics must have included persons who, at the time of the intervention, were students (i.e., individuals attending elementary school, middle school, or high school) with disabilities or with a special education classification according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004). To capture studies published since Test, Fowler, Wood, Brewer & Eddy (2005b), all studies had to be published in a peer-reviewed journal between June of 2004 and June of 2012. Dependent variables had to include a component of self-advocacy as defined by Test et al. (2005a) (i.e., knowledge of self, knowledge of rights, communication, or leadership). All studies had to use an evidence-based design (i.e., group experimental, quasi-experimental, single-case, or qualitative).

Self-advocacy practices

Ankeny and Lehmann (2011) conducted a qualitative study to evaluate what former students of a high school transition/dual credit program understood to be self-

determination, and what they believed influenced self-determination skills development. This intervention was designed to prepare students for employment, and was delivered by special education teachers on a community college campus. The study participants were four high school students with ID or LD. The participants identified locus-of-control, self-awareness, and goal setting as self-determination components; they also identified opportunities to practice self-determination, experience outcomes and learn from those experiences, and leadership roles in IEP meetings as factors that fostered self-determination development.

Special education teachers delivered a researcher-modified curriculum, *Self-Directed IEP*, in a self-contained classroom to five high school students with ID, LD, PD, or EBD (Arndt et al., 2006). The purpose of this study was to add to the literature base validating the *Self-Directed IEP*. Participants were evaluated on their performances in mock IEP meetings in the single-subject, multiple-probe-across-participants study design. The study results demonstrated that the participants did increase their IEP knowledge and leadership skills.

Bobroff and Sax (2010) examined the effects of peer tutoring on job interview skills in six high school students with an EBD, AU, or Multi at a special education school. The teacher delivered a single-subject AB design with pre-post measures and evaluated the participants' interview skills, how selection and matching affected their outcomes, tutor training, the teacher's role during tutoring, participant interaction, and self-determination gains. The outcomes indicated that all of the tutors and all but one tutored student increased their interview knowledge. The participants all increased their

interview skills and improved their attitudes about interviews, and reported increased interview confidence. Overall, the intervention provided the participants the opportunity to practice self-advocacy skills.

Thirteen middle school students with LD or ID were taught in resource classrooms about: 1) their disabilities, 2) role models with disabilities, 3) how their disabilities affected them, 4) special education procedures, 5) their strengths and weaknesses in various settings, 6) how to solve problems through self-advocacy, and 7) managing confrontations effectively (Campbell-Whatley, 2008). This researcher-developed curriculum was evaluated for effects on the participants' self-awareness and self-concepts. It used a pre-experimental design with a mixed methodology, employing both quantitative and qualitative strategies. Participants increased their self-esteem, stated that learning about learning disabilities, IEP meetings, and successful people with LD were useful, and learned to identify their needs, request assistance, and how to explain their disability to others.

Cuenca-Sanchez and colleagues (2012) conducted a group experimental study with pre/post assessments to examine the effectiveness of the *POW+TREE* strategy, a writing strategy modified to include self-advocacy skills development (i.e., self-advocacy through writing). Special education teachers delivered the instruction to 11 middle and high school students with an EBD in special education schools for behavior management. The study evaluated participant gains in writing skills, self-advocacy, and writing efficacy. Results indicated that the experimental groups made significant gains in

writing skills and self-advocacy over the comparison groups, that their writing skills generalized to other subjects, and that those skills were maintained two weeks later.

To explore how teachers can adequately prepare elementary school students to participate in their IEP meetings and explore the benefits and barriers to involving elementary school students in their IEP meetings, researchers developed lessons for elementary school use from *A Student's Guide to the IEP* (McGahee-Kovac, 1995) and *Standing Up for Me* (Cooper, Roder, Wichmanowski & Yeretzian, 2004) (Danneker & Bottge, 2009). Researchers delivered instruction to four elementary school students with LD, AD/HD, OHI, and EBD in special education classrooms. The lessons taught the students the purpose, content and format of IEP meetings; to identify their strengths and interests; to evaluate their goal progression; to modify and develop goals; and to identify helpful accommodations and modifications. The study qualitatively explored the results using pre-post interviews, observations, and document reviews. The results indicated that the IEP meetings became student led, the students were able to practice self-advocacy in an authentic setting, and adult collaboration increased. However, the special educators were seen as the most responsible for IEP meetings, self-advocacy was not seen as important by the adults, and the special educators were not aware how to prepare students to lead their own IEP meetings.

Kotzer and Margalit's (2007) group experimental study taught the *Road to Myself* curriculum to 111 middle school students with LD in general education and self-contained classrooms. This internet-supported self-advocacy curriculum used in-class activities and discussions between students with LD and the students' school councilors

to address four major topics: 1) self-awareness, 2) the meaning of LD, 3) coping strategies, and 4) school self-advocacy. Kotzer and Margalit assessed the curriculum's effects on students' self-advocacy knowledge, and sought to identify predictors of self-advocacy knowledge. The study's analysis demonstrated significant gains in the students' self-knowledge, and found that the significant predictive variables for the levels of self-knowledge were loneliness, hope for the future, and relatedness.

TeenBiz: Teens in Business through the Arts, a summer work program developed to support student employment needs (as expounded by peer-reviewed literature addressing empowerment theory) was examined for its effects on participant communication expectations, knowledge of leadership, team building, planning, organization and time management skills, accountability, and self-confidence (Krajewski et al., 2010). Project staff members were instructors at the university campus-based program, and were responsible for teaching 34 high school students with AD/HD, ID, AU, EBD, or TBI. The qualitative study assessed the program's effects through observation, documentation review, and a post-program evaluation. Results indicated that the participants increased their work skills, sense of responsibility, leadership, team-building, and team-membership skills. Additionally, the participants reported an improved sense of empowerment.

Lee and colleagues' (2011) study used a group experimental design to evaluate the effects of *Whose Future is it Anyways?* on middle school students. Teachers taught the curriculum with the aid of *Reading Rockets*, a reading program, to 86 middle school students with AD/HD, ID, speech disorders, OHI, AU, or LD in general and resource

classrooms. The study compared the effects of the curriculum delivered with the aid of a reading program to students who received the same instruction without the aid of a reading program. The study measured a significant difference between the two groups in terms of levels of self-determination, self-realization, self-efficacy, expected outcomes, and transition planning knowledge.

Participant data from the Lee and colleagues' (2011) study was evaluated in a correlational design study with statistical controls to realize predictors of self-determination and transition knowledge gain (Lee et al., 2012). The participants included 168 middle school students with AD/HD, ID, speech disorders, OHI, AU, or LD who were taught *Whose Future is it Anyway?* modified to work with students in middle school. Predictors of self-determination included outcome expectancy, efficacy, and prior transition planning knowledge; age, gender, and IQ were not predictors. Predictors of transition planning knowledge gains included participant self-determination level, higher IQ, and the amount of intervention the participant received.

The primary goal of the Levin and Rotheram-Fuller (2011) study was to examine the effects of an intervention using the *Empowered Curriculum*. These researchers taught the curriculum to 15 high school students with VI, in a private school for the visually impaired. The group quasi-experimental, pre/post intervention assessment study evaluated the effects on self-advocacy, self-concept, and self-esteem. No significant differences were observed between the pre and post interventions or between the various groups.

Martin and colleagues' (2006) study was designed to validate the effectiveness of *Self-Directed IEP*. The group experimental pre/post assessment study included 65 middle and high school students with LD, OHI, EBD, PD, and "other" disabilities in middle and high schools. The researchers evaluated participant engagement in their IEPs and transition-related topics, and the length of the participant IEP meetings. The study outcomes included a statistical difference in participants starting and leading their own IEP meetings, a positive relationship between the amount of participation and the leadership observed in the IEP meetings, a strong effect on participants' expression of goals and learning of the IEP leadership steps, a moderate effect on participants' use of take-action goals, a small effect on participant IEP knowledge, a moderate effect on participant ratings of transition items, a strong effect on IEP behavior, and a small effect on participants' perceptions of IEP involvement. Additionally, no significant difference was observed in IEP meeting length or in the amount students discussed transition during their IEP meetings.

Thirty-two high school students with LD in Catholic high schools were taught self-advocacy lessons developed from a literature review on group instruction, teaching self-advocacy to students with LD, and dealing with bullying (Mishna et al., 2011). The participants also attended self-advocacy workshops developed from past participant feedback. Social workers and school psychologists delivered the instruction that was co-lead by research staff. To evaluate the self-advocacy intervention, the researchers used a group experimental design and assessed participant problem behavior, social competence, knowledge of LD, knowledge of their strengths, weaknesses and needs,

accommodations and advocating of knowledge. No statistical differences were observed in problem behavior or social competence, but statistically significant and practically significant gains were observed in self-advocacy.

Neale and Test (2010) evaluated the effects of the *Self Advocacy Strategy* adapted for use with elementary students. The single-subject multiple-probe-across-participants design included four students with ID or LD in a resource room with the instruction delivered by the students' teacher. Neal and Test evaluated the participants' verbal contributions to the IEP questions, as well as their verbal contributions in their IEP meetings. Participants increased and maintained their IEP communication, and generalized those skills to their mock IEP meetings.

Rothman and colleagues (2008) evaluated the longitudinal impact of a weeklong self-advocacy program for high school student that was located on a college campus and taught by successful people with disabilities. Twenty-seven participants with VI, AD/HD, LD, AU, arthritis, PD, HI, Multi, and "other" disabilities responded to the researchers' survey. The study used a mixed-methods, group correlational and qualitative survey design to assess the participants' post-training outcomes from a few months to seven years following their participation. Twenty-one participants were enrolled in postsecondary education, two had completed postsecondary education, four were employed, eight were both employed and attended postsecondary education, and the remainder reported no influence on their level of success. The participants also reported on the benefits of the program. They reported that they learned the most about self-advocacy and ADA rights and responsibilities, and the least on employment

advocacy; the participants also reported that the most important lesson learned for future success was self-advocacy, and to a lesser extent social skills and information regarding the ADA. The participants further reported that they benefited from learning about disabilities, their strengths and weaknesses, and that the most useful program aspects were meeting their peers, learning about college, and meeting role models.

Whose Future is it Anyway? was evaluated to see whether or not there was a causal relationship between participant self-determination and transition knowledge gains (Wehmeyer et al., 2011). The participants in this study were 351 middle and high school students with multiple disabilities, including AD/HD, EBD, ID, OHI, AU, LD, and "other," and were gathered from both general and special education schools. The lessons were teacher-taught and the study was conducted using a group, experimental, randomized assignment design. Significant predictors included age, gender, IQ level, and time spent on intervention, with mixed results for high school students.

Wood and colleagues' (2010) single-subject, multiple-baseline-across-participants, simultaneous treatments study included four high school students with LD, AD/HD, and EBD, taught in a general education school. Researchers used direct instruction and student practice to teach the participants the contents of the US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights brochure "Students With Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities." Researchers evaluated participants' knowledge of their rights and their postsecondary education accommodations. Participants demonstrated an increased knowledge of their rights and responsibilities, and postsecondary education accommodations; participants

maintained that knowledge with only a slight loss in correct responses.

Woods and colleagues' (2010) study assessed differences in knowledge of transition terms concepts and self-efficacy in the transition planning process among students who received instruction in *Student-Directed Transition Planning* and students who did not. The participants were 19 high school students with LD, EBD, ID, multiple disabilities, OHI, VI, or TBI, taught at a general education school and a school for the visually impaired. The group-experimental pre-post evaluation, randomized assignment design was teacher delivered. The experiment group demonstrated a high level of significant gains in transition planning knowledge, and a medium level of significant gains in self-efficacy.

Empirical YLF Evidence

Four studies investigated YLF programs, exploring the Ohio, Kansas, and Texas YLFs. The studies appeared in dissertations (Bauer, 2003; Gragoudas, 2006), a program evaluation (Hall & Starrett, 2006), and a peer reviewed journal (Grenweldge & Zhang, in press). Three additional studies provided further empirical support, concluding that YLF provided participants with skills leading to their success.

YLF studies

Bauer (2003) used a mixed methods approach to collect data from two groups. He quantitatively surveyed participants one to three years after participating in the Ohio YLF. The participants rated themselves on impact factors of the forum (e.g., leadership, disability knowledge, rights and responsibilities). Bauer collected data from a second group using the same quantitative survey, before and after forum attendance (i.e., before

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attending the forum and six months following the forum). He qualitatively assessed the Ohio YLF's impact through pre/post small and large group focus groups that asked participants to discuss their thoughts on how the program affected them and whether the program had an impact their lives. An unspecified number of participants (between 30 and 103) indicated that the Ohio YLF positively affected their outlook as persons with disabilities, appreciation of disability culture and communities, ability to verbally self-advocate, senses of pride, purpose and direction, knowledge of leadership and self-advocacy, leadership and advocacy confidence, leadership skills, and recognition as leaders by their peers. Bauer did not provide recommendations for future research.

Texas YLF participants were quantitatively surveyed both before and after the intervention, providing self-ratings on 39 Likert Scale questions that addressed their knowledge of their rights, knowledge of self, communication, and leadership (Grenwelge & Zhang, in press). This non-equivalent group design included 34 experimental group participants and 34 control group participants. The experimental group made significant gains in self-advocacy knowledge as compared to the control group; those with developmental disabilities made the greatest gains as compared to the youths with learning disabilities and physical disabilities. No significant effect was observed for gender. Grenwelge and Zhang recommend that future research investigate the long term effects of self-advocacy training on adult outcomes, a replication of the study with randomized selections, and an investigation of ways schools or other community settings might adopt effective YLF components.

Thirty participants, six years after their involvement in the Kansas YLF were surveyed in a focus group quantitative study for program evaluation purposes (Hall & Starrett, 2006). Participants reported that they lived in a college dorm (10%), with their parents (73%), in a shared apartment (10%), or in their own apartment (7%). Other outcomes reported by the participants included having medical insurance (80%), having received sexual health education (50%), working full time (20%), working part time (50%), that they did not work from fear of losing insurance or disability benefits (20%), that they had not received vocational or career training to help them prepare for a job (40%), and that they were dissatisfied with their current level of social activity (30%). No future research recommendations were made.

Gragoudas' (2006) qualitative study used small group discussion, observation, and documentation reviews to assess the long-term impact of the Kansas YLF. The participants were five successful adults with disabilities queried five years after their involvement in the forum. These participants concluded that YLF helped people with disabilities gain a positive self-image, increase their sense of self-empowerment to self-advocate, learn of resources that would assist them in successfully living independent lives, and gain a sense of disability community. Gragoudas recommend that future research investigate the impact of YLF using extant measures.

Secondary studies

Carter, Swedeen, Walter, Moss and Hsin (2011) interviewed 34 young adults with disabilities identified as leaders to qualitatively investigate predictive factors of leadership development. Their results identified YLF as an opportunity for future leaders

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to practice effective communication skills, enhance leadership skills, and realize their ability to advocate.

The university of Illinois held a conference to collect opinions regarding self-determination promotion from invited guest speakers with disabilities. Triano (2003) provided a self-report crediting the California YLF with her increased self-confidence and self-determination.

Wolf-Branigin, Schuyler and White (2007) conducted a two year post-intervention study that measured significant differences in physical health and school functioning for all 64 participants, with more significant impacts measured for younger students involved in career readiness programs. Participants were involved in one or more of nine different transition-related interventions; YLF was one of these interventions (the direct effects of YLF were not measured).

Summary

Several influences have prepared society to accept people with disabilities taking charge of their own lives. Such acceptance has increased the importance of people with disabilities having self-advocacy skills and of society setting up systems to support self-advocacy training. These factors include a societal perspective change from the medical model to the Normalization Principle, an advocacy movement that began with parents and changed to people with disabilities leading their own movement, and legislative mandates that first required inclusion and now require that students with disabilities learn skills for living an autonomous adulthood. Following Madeleine Will's (1984) OSER position paper presenting transition as an educational priority, published theories

and research have established employment, postsecondary education, and independent living as measures of successful adult outcomes. Furthermore, the literature has established self-advocacy as an important skill for a successful transition into adulthood.

Self-advocacy literature includes the use of published curricula, teaching students to lead their own IEP meetings, peer tutoring, writing strategies, employment skills training, transition planning training, direct instruction, college-based transition programs, and weeklong programs supporting self-advocacy skills training. A program review of research published since 2004 revealed that most studies used quantitative designs ($n = 12$) and high school participants ($n = 11$), and few studies took place out of the public school setting ($n = 2$) or measured program outcomes ($n = 1$). The studies measured factors that participants identified with self-advocacy ($n = 4$), an increase in self-advocacy knowledge ($n = 7$), and involvement in self-advocacy activities ($n = 7$).

Four studies investigated YLF using mixed methods ($n = 1$), quantitative ($n = 2$), and qualitative ($n = 1$) designs. Measures were taken post-training (Bauer, 2003; Hall & Starrett, 2006; Gragoudas, 2006) and pre/post intervention (Bauer, 2003; Grenwelge & Zhang, in press). Participants made significant gains in self-advocacy knowledge, participants with developmental disabilities made the greatest gains, and no significant effect was observed for gender. Most participants lived with their parents, had medical insurance, received sexual health education, and worked part-time. YLF positively affected participants' self-image, appreciation of disability culture and community, knowledge and ability to self-advocate, knowledge of resources, and recognition as a

leader by their peers. Additional studies indicated that YLF enhanced participant self-advocacy.

The results of this literature review demonstrate the importance of self-advocacy skills for adults with disabilities, and YLF's potential to affect adult outcomes. YLF research, and self-advocacy research in particular, suggests a need for future research to investigate post-training adult outcomes and advocacy involvement, and self-advocacy involvement's effects on adult outcomes. Additionally, inconsistent results suggest a need for future research to investigate the mediating factor of disability type. Furthermore, given the importance of students with disabilities achieving successful outcomes and the theory that self-advocacy involvement increases adult outcomes, further contribution to the literature on student outcomes is needed.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purposes of this study are to examine TXYLF participants' post-training outcomes and the relationship between their advocacy involvement and their outcomes. To achieve these purposes, former TXYLF participants were surveyed between one and six years after their participation in TXYLF. This study was designed to answer four research questions:

1) What are the TXYLF participants' post-training outcomes?

2) What are the relationships among TXYLF participant demographics, and post-training adult outcomes and self-advocacy involvement?

3) What are the relationships among TXYLF program components, and post-training adult outcomes and self-advocacy involvement?

4) What are the relationships among post-training self-advocacy involvement and adult outcomes?

Question three had one sub-explanatory research question: Do participant demographics have an interaction effect on post-training adult outcomes and self-advocacy involvement?

To explore these research questions, the data were analyzed using descriptive techniques and logistic regression.

Intervention

YLF is a five day advocacy training program provided free of charge to 30 to 35 youths with disabilities on a university campus in the state's capital city (Epstein, Eddy, Williams & Socha 2006). High school juniors and seniors with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 22, located across the state, apply to attend the training; final participants are selected through a competitive review process (Edelman, Gill, Comerford, Larson & Hare, 2004).

TXYLF uses an enhanced self-advocacy development model (see Figure 3.1) (Grenwelge, Zhang & Landmark, 2010). TXYLF expanded the traditional model by including a nine month support phase and follow-up training. Research has demonstrated that extended exposure (ideally, nine months) to training is necessary for youths with disabilities to retain their learned skills (Field, Martin, Miller, Ward & Wehmeyer, 1998). Furthermore, TXYLF includes regional YLFs where participants attend multiple local forums during the year (Grenwelge, Zhang & Landmark, 2010).

Figure 3.1

Texas Statewide Youth Leadership Forum
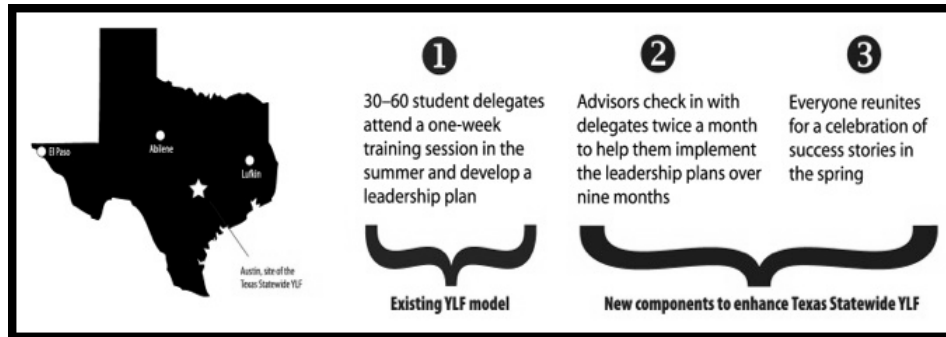
Note: From "Comprehensive Leadership Training for Youth With Disabilities: A New and Improved Youth Leadership Forum Model" by C. Grenwelge, D. Zhang & L. Landmark. Teaching Exceptional Children, 42, p. 64. Copyright 2005 Council for Exceptional Children.

Procedure for participant selection

Applications were collected from students who desired to participant in TXYLF for their first time (as delegates) and from prior participants who desired to return as youth mentors. First time applicants provided demographic information, volunteer and work experience, an essay that demonstrated their desire to learn advocacy skills, and two letters of references (see Appendix A). The TXYLF Project Advisory Committee (PAC) scored these applications according to a scoring rubric (see Appendix B). The rubric was designed to select a diverse group of students with advocacy potential. The thirty-five applicants with the highest scores were invited to attend each year; the goal was to have 30 delegates at TXYLF, so 35 applicants were invited to offset the number who dropped out before the forum began. Youth mentors completed a leadership project during the nine month support phase to demonstrate a real-world application of the

advocacy skills they learned at TXYLF, after which they applied for attendance as a mentor (see Appendix C). The TXYLF project coordinator selected the mentors from his or her observations of the applicants' mentorship abilities.

Five day training

The selected youths traveled to the state capital and stayed on a university campus; they slept in the dorms, ate in the cafeteria, and attended most of their trainings in a large campus conference room. The initial training focused on one theme per day (see Figure 3.2). On the fourth day, the participants provided self-selected and self-prepared testimonials to state representatives in a capitol building testimonial chamber. Research suggests that youths who participate in legislative activities are more likely to be involved in government activates as adults (U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy, n.d.) Following the capitol building visit, a celebration and talent contest were held on the university campus. On the fifth day the participants created leadership plans. The delegates developed their leadership plans with the assistance of their mentors and volunteers. The leadership plans outlined what the delegates would accomplish in their respective hometowns to practice the advocacy skills they learned at the forum.

Figure 3.2

Texas Statewide Youth Leadership Forum initial training phase

Note: From "Comprehensive Leadership Training for Youth With Disabilities: A New and Improved Youth Leadership Forum Model" by C. Grenwelge, D. Zhang & L. Landmark. Teaching Exceptional Children, 42, p. 65. Copyright 2005 Council for Exceptional Children.

The types of training provided at the forum included small and large group activities and presentations by people with disabilities who had advanced advocacy experience. Small groups ranged in size from five to seven delegates, with one or two mentors and one adult volunteer. The typical day began at 8:00am with all activities completed by 9:00pm.

The curriculum and teaching format integrated Test and colleagues' (2005a) self-advocacy conceptualization. For example, participants had to use effective communication techniques to work together as a team and self-advocate for the required accommodations; many group activities required participants to know how they were

affected by their disabilities. The curriculum development also included program evaluations. The prior year's training was evaluated through informal observations and participant feedback. Curriculum changes were made to improve the effectiveness of student learning, add accommodations, update material, and include technology improvements.

Nine month support phase

On the final day of the initial training phase, the delegates created leadership plans detailing community or school service projects that the delegates intended to complete at their respective home sites with the aid of adult advisers who lived in their respective geographic areas, and who were assigned to the youths by the TXYLF project coordinator. In the nine month support phase (see Figure 3.3), the TXYLF participants spent nine months fulfilling their leadership plans. Research supports the notion that youths who receive self-advocacy training and practice these skills experience greater gains in self-advocacy (Wehmeyer, 2004). The advisors sent the project coordinator monthly reports of each participant's progress, and the project coordinator assisted as needed (e.g., provided advice to overcome obstacles, contacted wayward delegates, etc.). At the end of the nine months, participants who accomplished their goals were invited to attend a follow-up training event. Delegates who attended the follow-up training spent two days at a structured campsite to celebrate their successes, attend training sessions, and give a three to five minute presentation highlighting the challenges and triumphs they experienced while accomplishing their leadership plan. Training sessions at the

celebratory weekend training included fun activities that reinforced the five day training session.

Figure 3.3

Texas Statewide Youth Leadership Forum nine month support phase
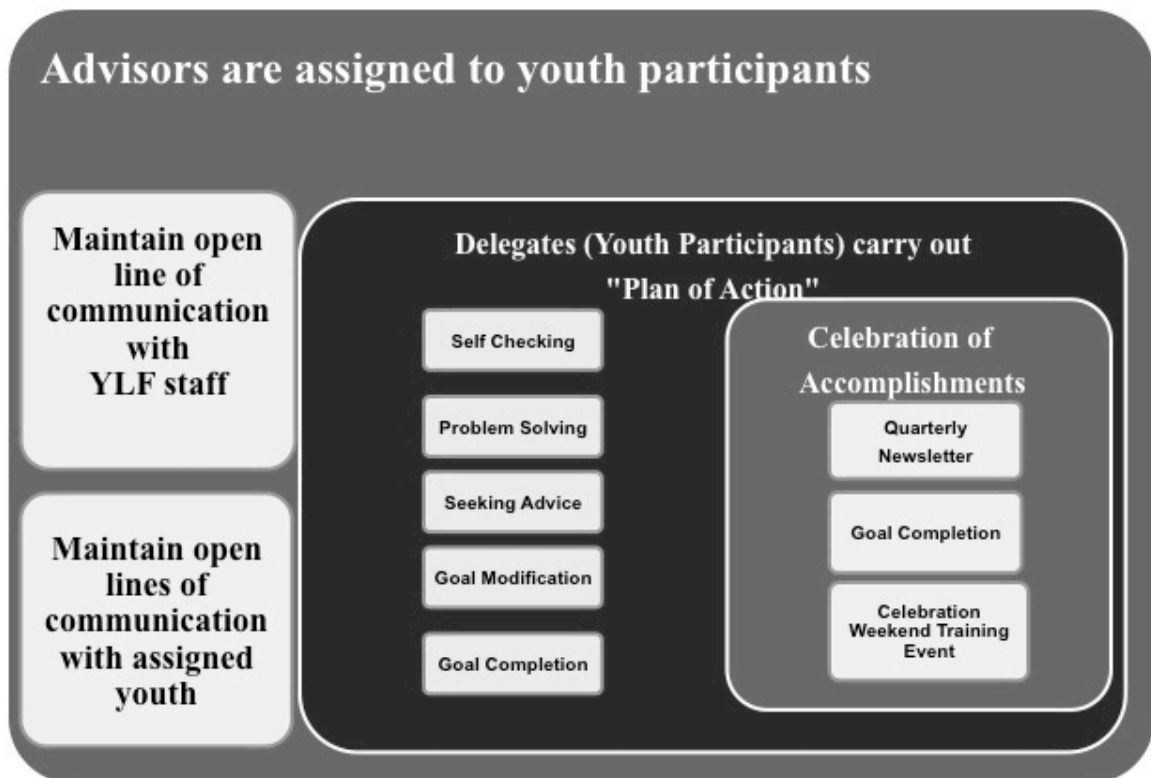
Note: From "Comprehensive Leadership Training for Youth With Disabilities: A New and Improved Youth Leadership Forum Model" by C. Grenwelge, D. Zhang & L. Landmark. Teaching Exceptional Children, 42, p. 67. Copyright 2005 Council for Exceptional Children.

Population and Sampling

Target population

The target population for this study was high school juniors or seniors who qualified for special education services under the IDEA or who had developmental disabilities. The target population was between the ages of 16 and 22.

Study population

The study population included the 143 participants of the TXYLF who attended the summer training program in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, or 2011. The participants may also have attended regional YLFs, completed their leadership plans and took part in the nine month support phase, and/or returned to the five day training as mentors.

Sample recruitment

The sample participants were recruited from the study population through multiple means of contact. The contact information supplied by the participant when they applied to TXYLF (i.e., phone number, email address, and mailing address) and the TXYLF Facebook page were used to locate and recruit TXYLF participants. A recruitment flyer (see Appendix D) was mailed to participants up to three times. The flyer was sent to all mailing addresses in the first mailing wave. In the second wave, flyers were mailed to participants who had not completed the survey and whose first flyer was not returned by the postal service. The third wave of flyers were mailed to participants who still had not completed the survey and whose first flyer was not returned by the postal service. Additionally, the recruitment flyer was displayed on the TXYLF Facebook page multiple times. The participants who supplied their email

addresses received multiple messages informing them of the survey (for the email script,

see Appendix E); the emails included the recruitment flyer, which was enclosed as an

attachment. One to two weeks following the first email and wave of flyer mailings,

attempts were made to recruit the participants via phone (for phone script see Appendix

F). This researcher made three phone call attempts to each participant.

Sample

Fifty-one TXYLF participants completed the survey (35.7% of the study

population) (see Table 3.1). Responses were limited by addresses that were no longer

current ($n = 20$), phone numbers that were no longer connected or no longer in use ($n = $

44), and by participants who had not supplied email addresses ($n = 37$) or by email

addresses no longer in use ($n = 27$). Some participants fell into more than one of the

above categories. Some participants declined to participate in the study when contacted

by phone ($n = 5$) or by email ($n = 1$). The number of participants contacted through

Facebook is unclear because many "friends" of the TYLF Facebook page reposted the

flyer, which then reached an unknown number of TXYLF participants. However, most

participants likely received the invitation to participate through one of the contact

methods but did not complete the survey.

Table 3.1

Participant characteristics

Variable	Total	Percentage
Gender		
Male	21	41%
Female	30	59%
Ethnicity		
White not Hispanic	29	57%
Minority	22	43%
Primary disability category		
High incidence disability	16	31%
Low incidence disability	35	69%
Age		
Under 21	30	59%
21 and older	21	41%
Delegate year		
2007	11	21.5%
2008	7	13.7%
2009	7	13.7%
2010	13	25.5%
2011	13	25.5%

Design

A correlational research design was used in this study. The design was appropriate for the study's purposes because the goal of correlational research is to determine if two or more variables are related (Marczyk, DeMatteo & Festinger, 2005) and to increase one's understanding of an event or trend (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990). When variables are related, the researcher can make predictive inferences (e.g., because of the significant association of the program with advocacy involvement, we can reasonably predict that when a student is involved in the program he or she will be involved in advocacy (Marczyk, DeMatteo & Festinger). Note that this conclusion does not imply that a strong association specifies a cause, but only a relationship.

Additionally, a survey was used to collect data for the study because surveys can measure data about behavior at the individual level (Weisberg, Krosnick & Bowen, 1996); therefore, a survey was appropriate for the purposes of this study. Moreover, a web-based survey was used because web-based surveys allow for participants to interact personally with the instrument, make reaching participants who are geographically spread out easier, allow for participants to answer the questions at their own pace, and take advantage of technological advances (Cook, Heath & Thompson, 2000).

Variables

Dichotomous data were collected to support the purposes and design of this study. Participants provided data indicating whether or not they were involved in each intervention component, adult outcome, and self-advocacy activity.

Intervention variables

To evaluate the relationship of participation in TXYLF, the five variables of participation in TXYLF were assessed in this study. The five post-training variables included the year of attendance as a delegate (i.e., the initial year a participant attended the five day initial training), as well as attendance at the initial five day training, taking part in the nine month support phase, attendance as a mentor, and attendance at a regional YLF. Furthermore, the three contiguous variables were assessed as levels (i.e., the initial five day training [level 1], nine month support phase [level 2], mentor [level 3]) to evaluate the effects of the levels participants attended TXYLF.

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Advocacy involvement variables

To address the relationship of self-advocacy involvement to participation in TXYLF, five post-training advocacy variables were used (see Table 3.2). The five post-training advocacy variables included: 1) secondary education advocacy, 2) postsecondary education advocacy, 3) employment advocacy, 4) community advocacy, and 5) independent living advocacy. For contributions to postsecondary education and/or employment advocacy, the participant first had to indicate whether they attended postsecondary education and/or were subsequently employed.

Table 3.2

Advocacy involvement

Variable	Participant involvement
Secondary education advocacy	Took a leadership role in his or her IEP meeting.
Postsecondary education advocacy	Spoke with postsecondary education representative to request academic accommodations.
Employment advocacy	Independently contacted an employment agency for assistance.
Community advocacy	Took part in a community advocacy effort to affect change.
Independent living advocacy	Independently chose his or her community services.

Adult outcomes variables

To address the relationship of adult outcomes to participation in TXYLF, four post-training adult outcomes variables were used. The four adult outcomes variables

included: 1) living with parents or guardians, 2) attendance in postsecondary education, 3) employment, and 4) employment in an inclusive job.

Demographic variables

To address the relationship of participant demographics with participation in TXYLF, four variables were used (see Table 3.3). The demographic variables included: 1) disability type, 2) gender, 3) ethnicity, and 4) age (see Table 3.4).

Table 3.3

Demographic variables

Variable	Variable explained
Disability type	Low incidence disability (i.e., ID, OI, VI, HI, AU, Multi, and "other") or High incidence disability (i.e., LD)
Gender	Male or Female
Ethnicity	Minority or White not Hispanic
Age	Under 21 or 21 and older

Table 3.4

Participant age

Age	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	26	27
Total	2	9	11	6	7	5	5	3	1	1
Percentage	3.9%	17.6%	21.6%	11.8%	13.7%	9.8%	9.8%	5.9%	2%	2%

Variable relationships

To investigate research question one, the demographic and advocacy involvement variables were investigated through descriptive techniques. To inferentially

investigate research questions two through four, the operational relationships of the

variables were assessed through three models.

The intervention variables operated as predictor variables in models one and two

in order to investigate research questions two and three. The demographic variables

operated as predictor variables and moderator variables in the second model in order to

investigate the third research question. To investigate research questions two and three,

the self-advocacy involvement variables operated as outcome variables (see Figures 3.4

and 3.5); to answer research question four, the self-advocacy involvement variables

operated as predictor variables (see Figure 3.6). The adult outcomes variables operated

as outcomes variables in all models to investigate research questions two, three, and

four.

Figure 3.4

Research model one
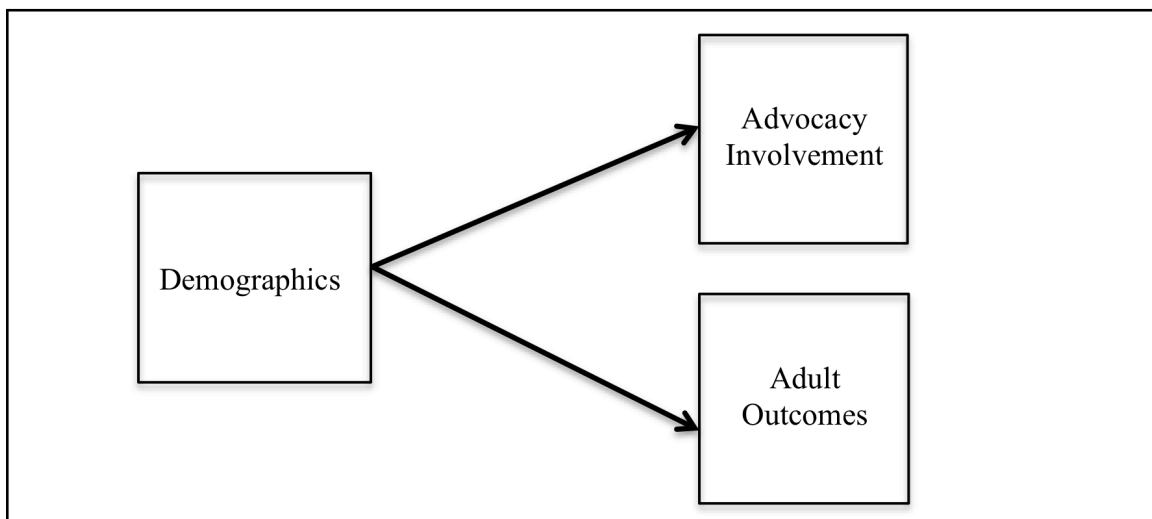
Figure 3.5

Research model two
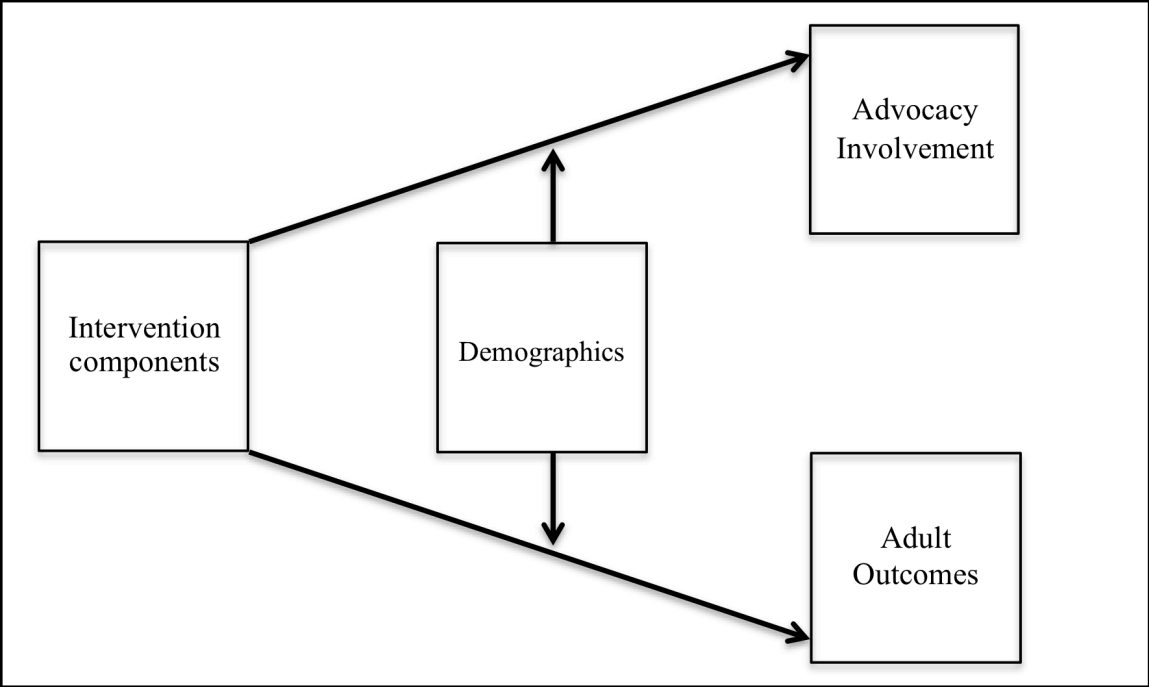
Figure 3.6

Research model three

Instrument

Survey development

To develop survey questions, a literature and assessment review was conducted. First, a literature review was conducted for studies that surveyed or evaluated the self-advocacy and/or adult outcomes of students with disabilities. Secondly, the assessments used in these studies were assessed. The assessments were evaluated for the frameworks used in their development and the data they were designed to collect. Questions were selected when they met the above requirements and matched the activities that TXYLF promotes. Furthermore, to reduce bias, the questions written with the most specificity were selected. Surveys with unclear questions and dichotomous choices (e.g., yes/no, agree/disagree, true/false) result in greater bias because they force participants to interpret the question (Krosnik, 1999). Therefore, whenever possible, more explicit questions that provided several answer options that could later be reduced to dichotomous data were selected. The questions were applied verbatim in the survey. To collect adult outcomes data, NLTS2 questions were chosen (NLTS2, 2009). For advocacy involvement, questions were selected from the *ARC's Self-Determination Scale* (Wehmeyer & Kelchner, 1995), *AIR Self-Determination Scale* (Wolman, Campeau, Dubois, Mithaug & Stolarski (1994), *Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy Skills Questionnaire* (Miller, Lombard & Corbey, 2007), *Steps to Self-Determination* (Hoffman & Field, 1996), and *Me! Lessons for Self-Awareness and Self-Advocacy* (Cantley, Little & Martin, 2010).

Survey description

The online survey was divided into six sections (see Appendix G). The initial section included questions to establish consent and, when appropriate, assent. The second section asked the participants their demographic and TXYLF participation questions. The remaining sections were divided into topics (i.e., outcomes, education advocacy, employment advocacy, community advocacy, and independent living) to help the participants focus on one topic at a time, and not to become overwhelmed by too much content (Krosnik, 1999).

Survey validity

Validity is the instrument's ability to provide the intended information (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990). To establish instrument validity, this researcher took measures to establish construct and external validity. Construct validity is created when the measurement instrument applies sound theoretical backing (Mitchell, 1985). To establish construct validity when developing the survey, this researcher held rigorously to the Test and colleagues' (2005a) self-advocacy theory, and to the outcomes measures established in the transition literature. Furthermore, to increase the validity of the study inferences, external validity measures were taken (i.e., measures of participants from different training years, and of participants in different settings).

<center>**Data Collection Procedures**</center>

The survey was administered via Qualtrics online survey software. Qualtrics, located at www.qualtrics.com, allows for multiple question types (e.g., open ended, Likert Scale, multiple choice, etc.), participant access to the survey via a link that can be

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typed in or clicked on, and logic programmed into the survey (e.g., skip questions that do not pertain to the participant, display questions only when they pertain, force participants to answer questions before displaying the next, etc.).

Participants were provided the option of completing the survey either independently, with the assistance of a parent or guardian, or with the support of this study's researcher. Participants who completed the survey independently or with the assistance of a parent or guardian followed the provided link to the survey. Before beginning the survey, participants were asked whether they were 18 years old or older, or if they had a legal guardian. The survey directed those authorized to provide adult consent to the consent document where the participants agreed to the consent or, when not agreeing to consent, to end of the survey, without revealing any further questions. Participants who were unable to provide adult consent were asked to have a parent read the consent document and provide consent by selecting "YES, I am the parent or guardian, I understand the agreement and I agree to allow participation in the study." After parents or guardians provided consent, the survey directed the participant to give assent.

For the participants who chose to have a researcher's assistance, the researcher opened the survey link, read the procedures and the questions to the participant over the phone, and selected the options chosen by the participants. The questions were restated when participants indicated they did not understand them. However, in accordance with the procedures, the answers were read verbatim without restating them and the answers

the participants chose were selected by the researcher regardless of the researcher's opinion of the participants' intent or understanding of the options.

Survey response description

The survey took the participants an average of 19 minutes to complete. Nine (17.7%) participants indicated that a parent or guardian provided assistance, 25 (49%) indicated that they received no assistance, and the researcher assisted 17 (33.3%) participants in completing the survey. Participants who left the survey's online site before completing the survey had to begin the survey again if they returned, and participants who completed the survey were provided the option of entering a drawing for one of seven gift cards. Identifiable information provided when entering the drawing was not downloaded with the analyzable data; therefore, the analyzable data could not be linked to the individual participants.

<div align="center">**Analysis**</div>

Descriptive analyses

Descriptive analyses were conducted to determine the post-training outcomes of the TXYLF participants. Calculating the proportion and total number of participants to achieve each adult outcome and advocacy involvement variable provided a summary of the data, allowing for a basic understanding of the effects of TXYLF on the participants' post-training outcomes. These results were sufficient to answer research question one.

Logistic regression

For a richer understanding of the data and to answer research questions two through four, logistic regression was used. Logistic regression measures the association

of dichotomous variables in order to estimate the strength of the relationship (Menard, 2002); therefore, logistic regression was an appropriate analysis for the study's purposes. Each potential relationship was calculated separately (e.g., nine month support phase and community advocacy) because the categorical variables were mutually exclusive of each other, representing unique qualities that did not overlap (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). Furthermore, one representative survey question from each self-advocacy category was chosen for analysis. The questions with the closest to a proportional incidence of 50/50 were selected in order to avoid inflated results when performing the logistic regression analysis (Thompson, 2006).

To determine significant results one-tailed *p*-values were used. Additionally, confidence intervals were established regarding the significant estimated values. Estimating the confidence intervals further supported the accuracy of the logistic regression outputs, thereby increasing the confidence this researcher had in the study's inferences (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 1995). A MPLUS logistic regression simulation indicated the model had low power to detect differences between groups (i.e., .57 for an effect size of .7). Therefore, at an alpha level of .05 logistic regression may fail to detect significant differences at smaller magnitudes (Cohen, 1992).

Summary

To investigate post-training outcomes of self-advocacy training for high school juniors and seniors with disabilities, this study investigated TXYLF participant outcomes. The survey return rate from the study population of 143 was 35.7%. The

correlational design analyzed the survey results through a descriptive analysis and

logistic regression.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purposes of this study were to examine the TXYLF participants' post-training outcomes and the relationship between their advocacy involvement and their outcomes. To achieve these purposes, former TXYLF participants were surveyed between one and six years after their participation in TXYLF. This study was designed to answer four research questions:

1) What are the TXYLF participants' post-training outcomes?

2) What are the relationships among the TXYLF participant demographics, post-training adult outcomes, and self-advocacy involvement?

3) What are the relationships among the TXYLF program components, post-training adult outcomes, and self-advocacy involvement?

4) What are the relationships among post-training self-advocacy involvement and adult outcomes?

Question three had one sub-explanatory research question: Do participant demographics have an interaction effect on post-training adult outcomes and self-advocacy involvement?

Chapter IV presents the results of the descriptive and logistic regression analyses conducted to explore these questions. This chapter has three sections: a description of the sample, the outcomes of the analyses, and a summary of the findings.

Sample

This study's sample included 51 (36%) of the 143 participants in TXYLF who

attended in 2007 (*n* = 11), 2008 (*n* = 7), 2009 (*n* = 7), 2010 (*n* = 13), and 2011 (*n* = 13).

Nineteen (38%) attended the initial five day training only, 14 (27%) took part in the nine

month support phase, 18 (35%) attended TXYLF as a mentor, and 14 (28%) attended the

regional trainings. (For additional sample details, see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1

Participant demographics

Variable	Total	Percentage
Gender		
Male	21	41%
Female	30	59%
Ethnicity		
White non-Hispanic	29	57%
Minority	22	43%
Primary disability category		
High incidence disability	16	31%
Low incidence disability	35	69%
Age		
Under 21	30	59%
21 and older	21	41%

Outcomes

Participants' post-training outcomes

Adult outcomes

The descriptive analysis revealed that 31 (61%) of the TXYLF participants

attended post-secondary education classes, 14 (28%) lived in a residence other than their

parent or guardian's home, 29 (57%) had been employed after they attended TXYLF,

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and 24 (83%) of the 29 employed participants had been employed in inclusive settings. Nine (18%) participants had not attended postsecondary education classes, been employed, or lived in a residence outside of their parent or guardian's home. Seven (14%) had attended postsecondary education classes, been employed, and lived outside of their parent or guardian's home after TXYLF attendance.

White non-Hispanic participants, as compared to minority participants, reported a higher percentage of achievement in all of the four adult outcomes areas (i.e., employment, inclusive employment, independent living, and postsecondary education). Additionally, participants with high incidence disabilities, as compared to participants with low incidence disabilities, reported a higher percentage of achievement in all four adult outcomes areas. Male participants, as compared to female participants, reported a higher percentage of employment, inclusive employment, and postsecondary education attendance; female participants reported a higher percentage of living in residences other than in their parent or guardian's home. Both age groups (i.e., under 21, and 21 and older) reported an equal percentage of having been employed; participants age 21 and over reported a slightly higher percentage of attending postsecondary education classes, and participants under 21 years old reported a higher percentage of living in residences other than in their parent or guardian's home, and of obtaining inclusive employment. Overall, participants with high incidence disabilities reported the greatest percentage of employment, males the highest percentage of postsecondary education attendance and inclusive employment, and white non-Hispanic participants the highest percentage of

living in residences other than their parent or guardian's home. (For more details on

demographic outcomes, see Figure 4.1.)

Figure 4.1

Adult outcomes for each demographic
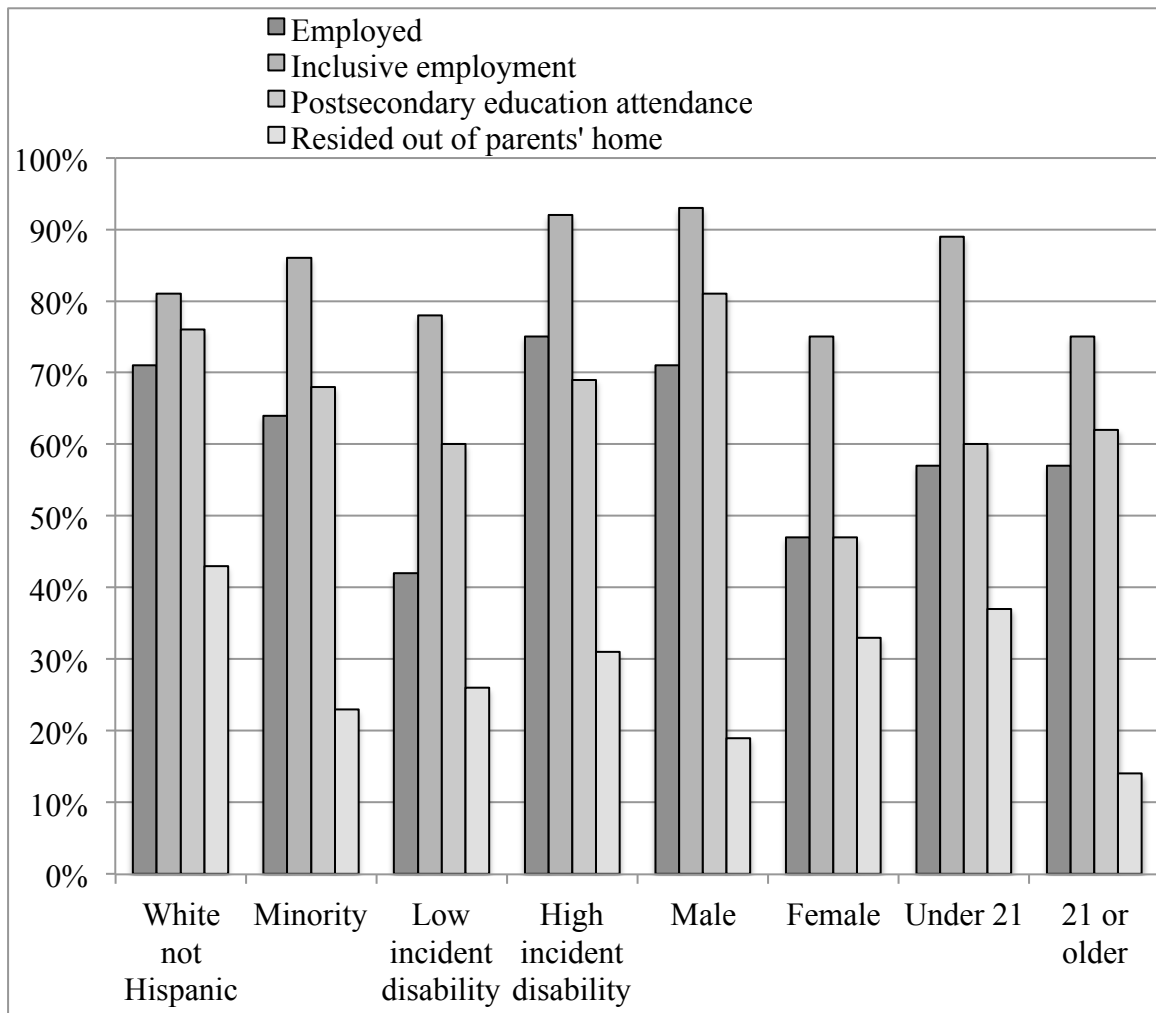
Note: percentages indicate the proportion of participants in each demographic to report adult outcomes (e.g., 15 of the 29 white non-Hispanic participants reported having been employed; hence, 71% of white non-Hispanic participants reported having been employed).

Participants who attended TXYLF as mentors reported the highest percentages from all attendance components (having been employed, attending postsecondary education classes, and living in residences other than in their parent or guardian's home) after attending the forum. Participants who attended the initial training only reported the highest percentage of being employed in inclusive jobs. (For more details on outcomes per participation level, see Figure 4.2.)

Figure 4.2

Adult outcomes for each participation level
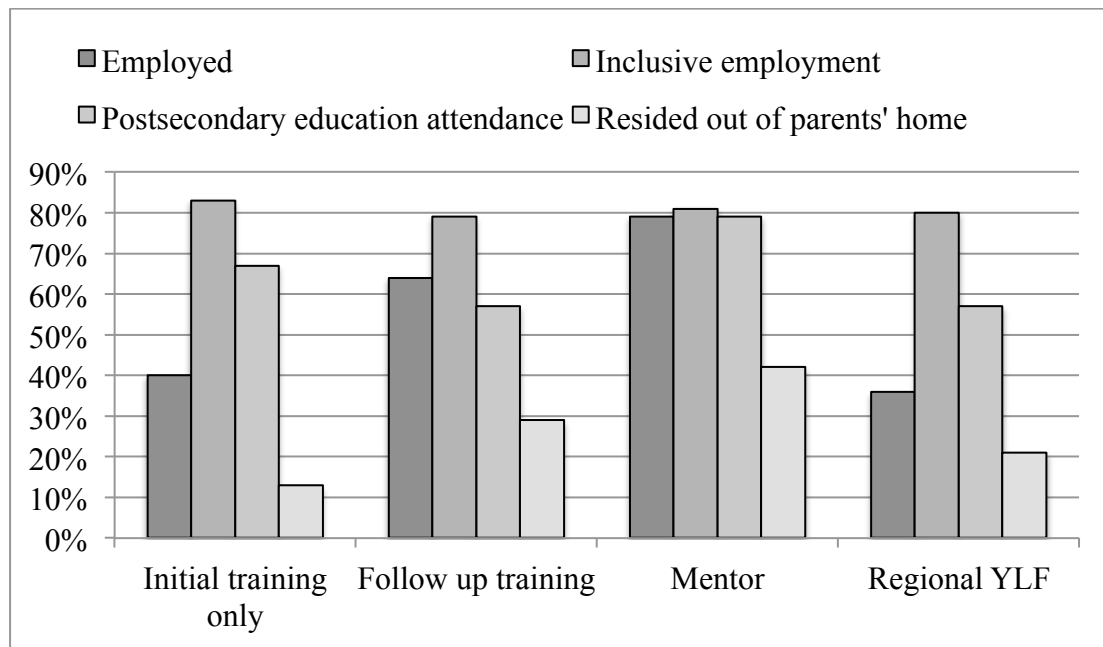
Note: percentages indicate the proportion of participants in each level of training to report adult outcomes (e.g., six of the 15 participants who attended the initial training only reported that they had been employed; hence, 40% of participants who attended the initial training only reported having been employed).

Participants who attended TXYLF as delegates in 2009 reported the highest percentage of having been employed, having attended postsecondary education classes, and having lived in residences other than in their parent or guardian's home. Participants who attended TXYLF as delegates in 2008 and 2010 reported 100% employment in an inclusive job setting. No participant from 2008 reported living in a residence outside of his or her parent or guardian's home. (For more details on outcomes per delegate year, see Figure 4.3.)

Figure 4.3

Adult outcomes for the year attended as delegates
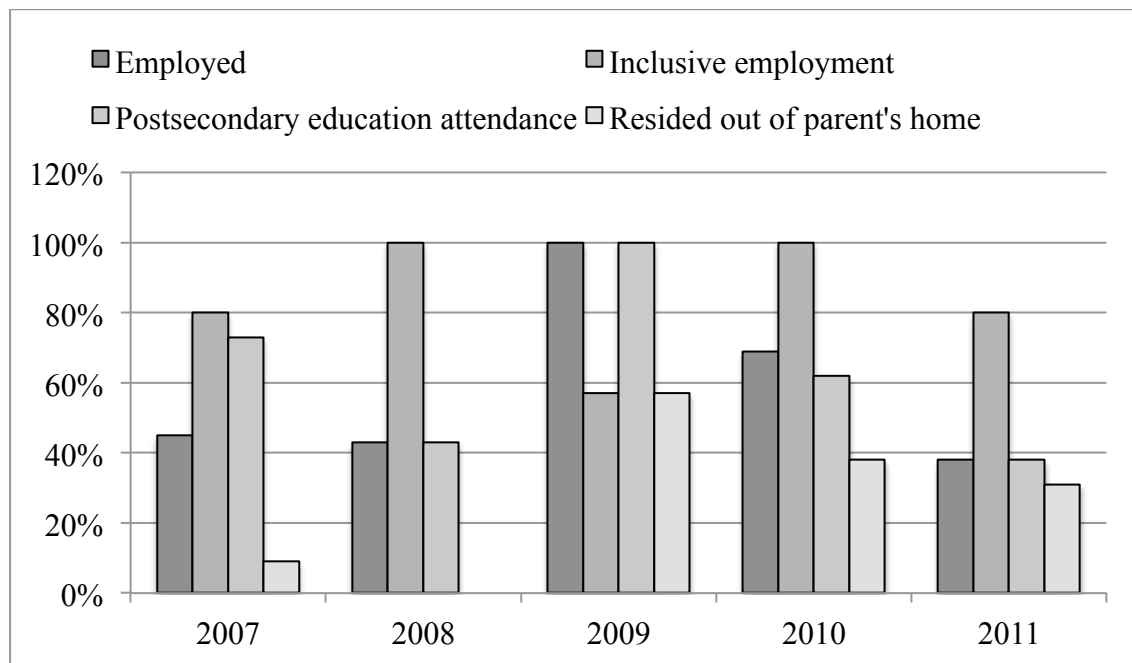
Note: percentages indicate the proportion of participants from each year to report adult outcomes (e.g., five of the 11 participants who attended TXYLF as delegates in 2007 reported that they had been employed; hence, 45% of participants who attended TXYLF as delegates in 2007 reported having been employed).

Advocacy involvement

Twenty eight participants (55%) reported involvement in secondary education advocacy, 26 (51%) in postsecondary education advocacy, 37 (73%) in independent living advocacy, 30 (59%) in community advocacy, and 28 (55%) in employment advocacy. Furthermore, female participants, as compared to male participants, reported a higher percentage of advocacy involvement in all five advocacy areas. Participants who were under 21 years old, as compared to participants 21 years old and older, reported a higher percentage of advocacy involvement in the five advocacy areas. White non-Hispanic participants, as compared to minority participants, reported higher levels of advocacy in all areas other than secondary education advocacy. Participants with low incidence disabilities, as compared to participants with high incidence disabilities, also reported higher levels of advocacy in all areas other than secondary education advocacy. (For more details on advocacy involvement per demographic, see Figure 4.4.)

Figure 4.4

Advocacy involvement for each demographic
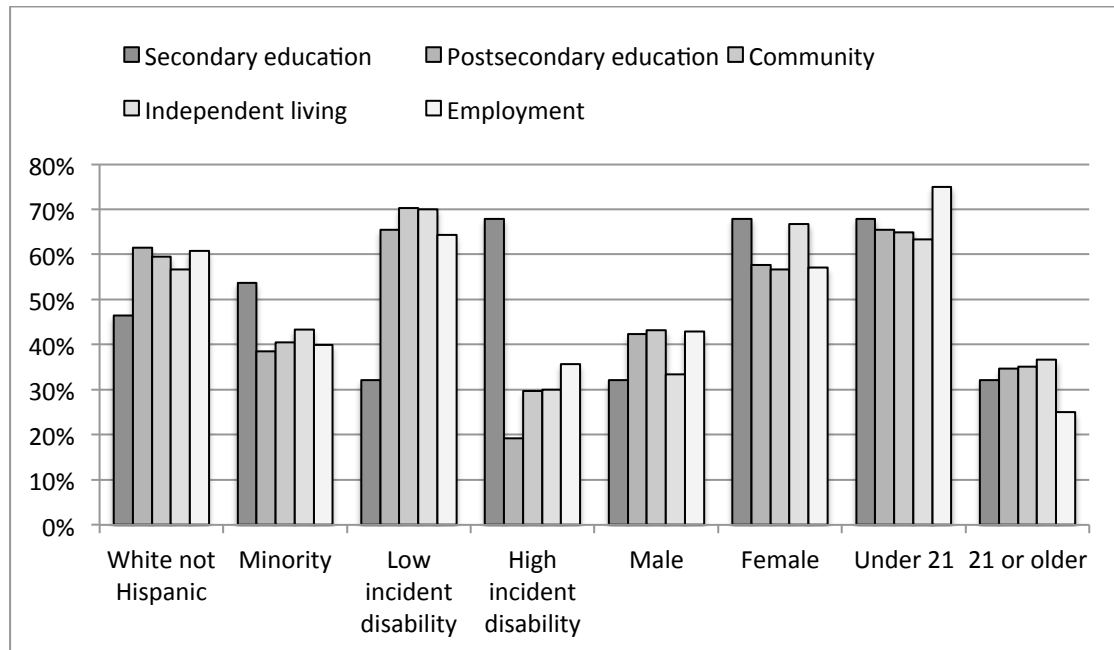
Note: percentages are the proportion of participants in each demographic who reported involvement in each advocacy area (e.g., 13 of the 28 white non-Hispanic participants were involved in secondary education advocacy; hence, 46% of white non-Hispanic participants were involved in secondary education advocacy).

Participants who attended TXYLF as mentors reported the highest percentage of involvement in all areas of advocacy, (For more details on advocacy involvement per participation level, see Figure 4.5.) Participants who attended TXYLF as delegates in 2009 reported the highest percentage of involvement in secondary, postsecondary, and independent living advocacy, as compared to participants who attended as delegates in all others years. Participants who attended TXYLF as delegates in 2010 reported the highest percentage of involvement in community advocacy. Participants who attended TXYLF as delegates in 2010 and 2011 reported the highest percentage of involvement in

employment advocacy. (For more details on advocacy involvement per year attended as

delegates, see Figure 4.6.)

Figure 4.5

Advocacy involvement per participation level
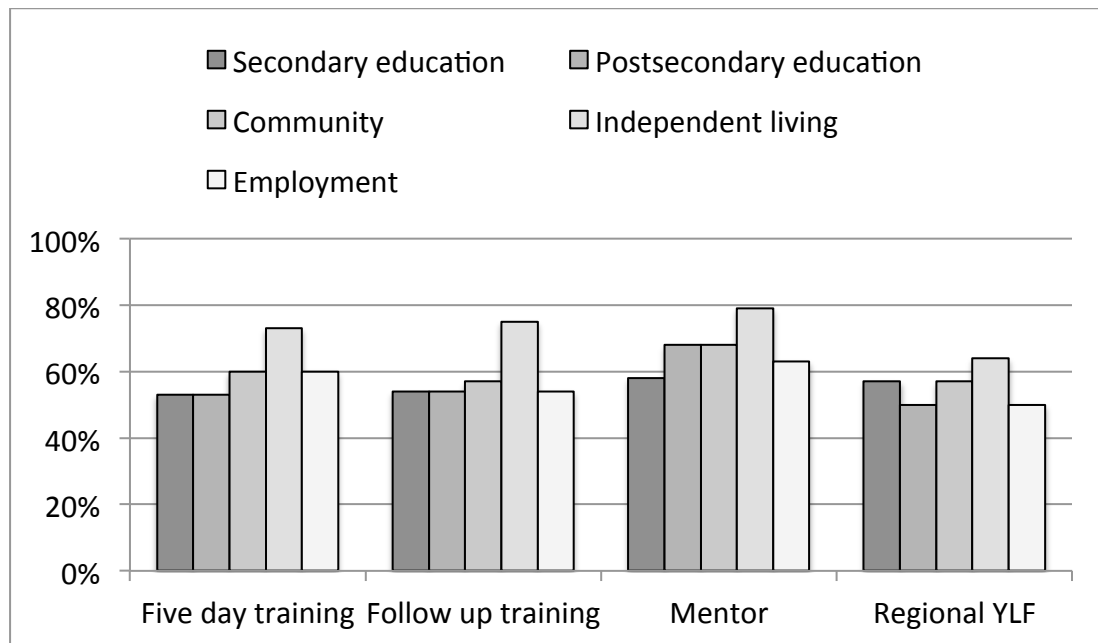
Note: percentages are the proportion of participants in each level of participation who
reported involvement in each advocacy area (e.g., eight of the 15 participants who
attended the five day training only were involved in secondary education advocacy;
hence, 53% of participants involved in the five day training only were involved in
secondary education advocacy).

Figure 4.6

Advocacy involvement for the year attended as delegates
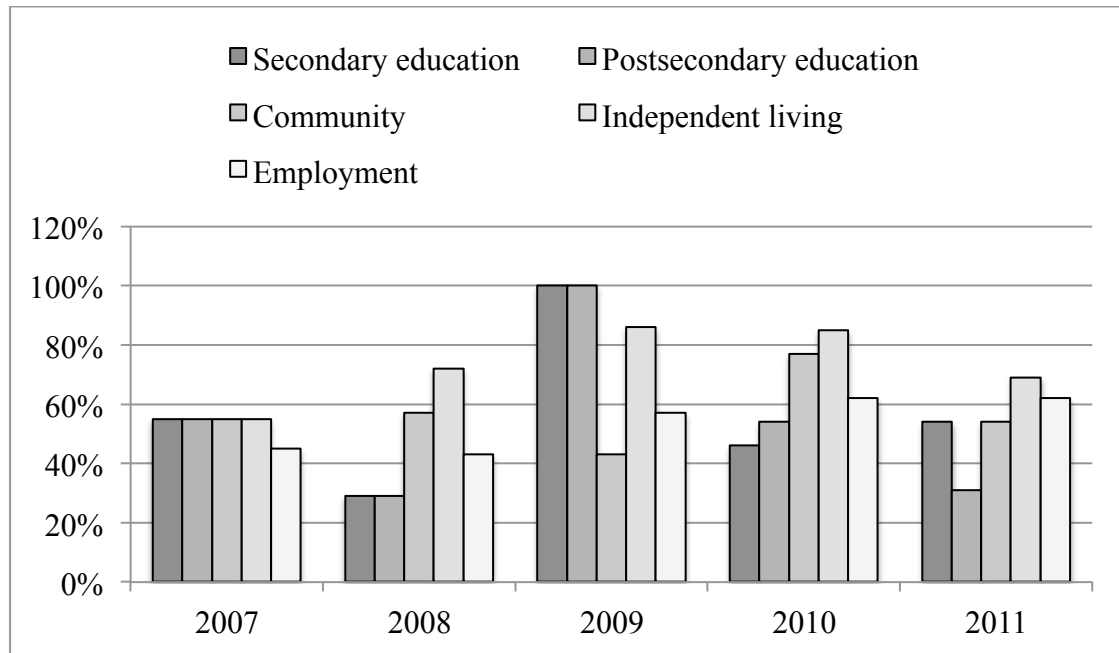
Note: percentages are the proportion of participants in each year who reported involvement in each advocacy area (e.g., six of the 11 participants who attended TXYLF as delegates in 2007 were involved in secondary education advocacy; hence, 55% of participants who attended TXYLF as delegates in 2007 were involved in secondary education advocacy).

Participants with the highest reported percentage of secondary education advocacy were also the participants who reported the highest percentage of living in residences other than their parent or guardian's home. Participants with the highest percentage of postsecondary education advocacy were also those participants with the highest percentage of postsecondary education attendance. Participants with the highest percentage of community advocacy were also those participants who reported the highest percentage of employment, and the participants who reported the highest

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percentage of employment advocacy were also those participants who reported the

highest percentage of postsecondary education attendance. The highest percentage of

participants involved in independent living advocacy was tied at 79% for participants

who also reported the highest percentage of employment and those participants who

reported the highest percentage of living in residences other than their parent or

guardian's home. (For more details on advocacy per adult outcomes, see Figure 4.7.)

Figure 4.7

Advocacy involvement for each adult outcome
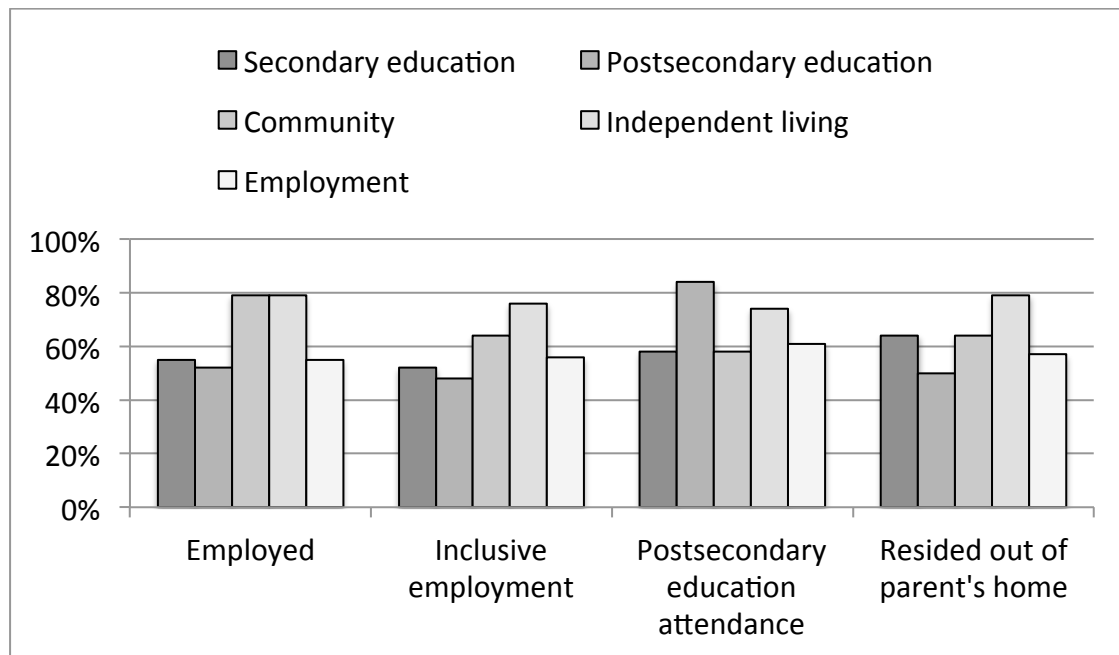
Note: percentages are the proportion of participants for each adult outcome who reported
involvement in each advocacy (e.g., 16 of the 29 participants who reported having been
employed also reported involvement in secondary education advocacy; hence, 55% of
participants who had been employed were also involved in secondary education
advocacy).

Relationships among TXYLF participant demographics, and post-training adult outcomes and self-advocacy involvement

The results from the one tailed logistic regression applied to the second research question are presented in Tables 4.2 through 4.5. Significant results indicated predicative relationships among the demographic variables, the adult outcomes, and advocacy involvement variables; however, because of the low power of the research model, additional significant results may not have been detected.

Adult outcomes

For participants who were under 21 years old there was a statistically significant *p* value obtained for independent living (*p* = .044). The calculated effect sizes of pseudo R^2 = .062 (Cox & Snell) and pseudo R^2 = .090 (Nagelkerke) were small (Cohen, 1988). The results demonstrated that the odds were .288 times greater for participants under 21 years old to live in residences other than in their parent or guardian's home than for participants 21 years old and older; furthermore, the results demonstrated that this researcher could be confident in these findings because the odds will fall to between .069 and 1.203, 95% of the time. Thus, the results demonstrated a small predictive effect for participants under 21 years old and their chances of living in a residence other than in a parent or guardian's home.

For participants with a high incidence disability there was a statistically significant *p* value (*p* = .042) obtained for employment. The calculated effect sizes of pseudo R^2 = .062 (Cox & Snell) and pseudo R^2 = .083 (Nagelkerke) were small (Cohen, 1988). The results demonstrated that the odds were .315 times greater for participants

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with a high incidence disability to be employed after attending TXYLF than for participants with a low incidence disability; furthermore, the results showed that this researcher could be confident in these findings because the odds will fall to between .085 and 1.618 95% of the time. Thus, the results demonstrated a small predictive effect of having a high incidence disability on the chances of being employed after attending TXYLF.

Advocacy involvement

For participants who are minorities there was a statistically significant p value obtained for involvement in secondary education advocacy ($p = .050$). The calculated effect sizes of pseudo $R^2 = .053$ (Cox & Snell) and pseudo $R^2 = .071$ (Nagelkerke) were small (Cohen, 1988). The results demonstrated that the odds were .379 times greater for minority participants to be involved in secondary education advocacy than for white non-Hispanic participants; furthermore, the results showed that this researcher could be confident in the findings because the odds will fall to between .119 and 1.207 95% of the time. Thus, the results demonstrated a small predictive effect of being a minority on the chances of involvement in secondary education advocacy.

For participants who were under 21 years old there was a statistically significant p value obtained for involvement in employment advocacy ($p = .006$) and postsecondary education advocacy ($p = .045$). The calculated effect sizes of pseudo $R^2 = .125$ (Cox & Snell) and pseudo $R^2 = .168$ (Nagelkerke) for employment advocacy, and pseudo $R^2 = 111$ (Cox & Snell) and pseudo $R^2 = .188$ (Nagelkerke) for postsecondary education advocacy were small (Cohen, 1988). The results demonstrated that the odds were .214

times greater for participants under 21 years old to be involved in employment

advocacy, and .132 times greater for the same participants to be involved in

postsecondary education advocacy than for participants 21 years old and over;

furthermore, the results showed that this researcher could be confident in the findings

because the odds will fall to between .065 and .709 for employment advocacy

involvement, and to between .013 and 1.368 for postsecondary education advocacy

involvement 95% of the time. Thus, the results demonstrated a small predictive effect of

being under 21 years old on the chances of involvement in employment advocacy and

postsecondary education advocacy.

Table 4.2

Low incidence disability

Dependent variables	R^2 (Cox & Snell)	R^2 (Nagelkerke)	p	B(SE)	95% CI for Exp(B) (OR)		
					Lower	Exp(B) (OR)	Upper
Adult outcomes							
Employment	.062	.083	.042*	-1.156 (.67)	.085	.315	1.618
Inclusive employment	.041	.069	.153	-1.219 (1.19)	.029	.295	3.048
Postsecondary	.012	.017	.217	-.501 (.64)	.173	.606	2.118
Independent living	.003	.005	.341	-.272 (.66)	.207	.762	2.797
Advocacy							
Secondary	.000	.000	.448	-.079 (.608)	.281	.924	3.038
Postsecondary	.012	.017	.217	-.501 (.64)	.173	.606	2.118
Independent living	.003	.005	.341	.272 (.66)	.358	1.313	4.822
Employment	.011	.014	.231	-.454 (.62)	.189	.635	2.130
Community	.001	.002	.400	.154 (.61)	.352	1.167	3.862

Note: *indicates $p < .05$.

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Table 4.3

Male

Dependent variables	R^2 (Cox & Snell)	R^2 (Nagelkerke)	p	B(SE)	95% CI for Exp(B)		
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
Adult outcomes							
Employment	.027	.037	.120	.693 (.59)	.630	2.000	6.352
Inclusive employment	.069	.114	.096	1.553 (1.19)	.458	4.727	49.771
Postsecondary	.010	.014	.237	.425 (.59)	.480	1.592	4.877
Independent living	.025	.037	.133	-.754 (.67)	.125	.471	1.775
Advocacy							
Secondary	.040	.054	.076	-.834 (.58)	.139	.434	1.357
Postsecondary	.017	.029	.236	-.716 (.10)	.069	.489	3.440
Independent living	.005	.007	.313	.316 (.65)	.484	1.371	4.894
Employment	.001	.002	.394	.154 (.57)	.379	1.167	3.587
Community	.036	.048	.089	-.788 (.58)	.145	.455	1.427

Note: *indicates $p < .05$.

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Table 4.4

Minority

Dependent variables	R^2 (Cox & Snell)	R^2 (Nagelkerke)	p	B(SE)	95% CI for Exp(B)		
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
Adult outcomes							
Employment	.014	.019	.198	-.491 (.58)	.197	.612	1.902
Inclusive employment	.006	.010	.334	-.405 (1.00)	.094	.667	4.733
Postsecondary	.017	.024	.174	-.555 (.59)	.180	.574	1.828
Independent living	.009	.012	.256	.424 (.65)	.430	1.530	5.449
Advocacy							
Secondary	.053	.071	.050*	.970 (.59)	.119	.379	1.207
Postsecondary	.235	.400	.499	20.510 (10048.55)	.000	8077374 21.00	.
Independent living	.007	.010	.272	.383 (.63)	.426	1.467	5.049
Employment	.007	.010	.271	.348 (.57)	.464	1.417	4.323
Community	.000	.000	.487	-.019 (.58)	.318	.981	3.025

Note: *indicates *p* < .05.

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Table 4.5

21 and older

Dependent variables	R^2 (Cox & Snell)	R^2 (Nagelkerke)	*p*	B(SE)	95% CI for Exp(B)		
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
Adult outcomes							
Employment	.000	.000	.487	.019 (.57)	.331	1.020	3.145
Inclusive employment	.029	.048	.181	-.916 (1.00)	.056	.400	2.871
Postsecondary	.000	.001	.446	.080 (.58)	.345	1.083	.345
Independent living	.062	.090	.044*	-1.245 (.73)	.069	.288	1.203
Advocacy							
Secondary	.040	.054	.076	-.834 (.58)	.139	.434	1.357
Postsecondary	.110	.188	.045*	-2.022 (1.19)	.013	.132	1.368
Independent living	.039	.056	.080	-.902 (.64)	.116	.406	1.426
Employment	.125	.168	.006*	-1.540 (.61)	.065	.214	.709
Community	.012	.016	.218	-.451 (.58)	.205	.637	1.978

Note: *indicates *p* < .05.

Relationships among TXYLF program components, and post-training adult outcomes and self-advocacy involvement

The program components were assessed in four stages. First, the three contiguous levels of TXYLF (i.e., initial 5 day training [level 1], nine month support phase [level 2], and attendance as a mentor [level 3]) were assessed in a one tailed ordered level logistic regression (see Table 4.6). Secondly, attendance of a regional YLF was added to the initial model to determine the effect of attending a regional YLF on participants' outcomes (see Table 4.7). Third, each TXYLF attendance component was assessed individually in a one tailed logistic regression to determine more of the specific effects

of attending each level of involvement (see Tables 4.8 to 4.11). Fourth, the participants'

delegate year was assessed in a one tailed logistic regression (see Table 4.12).

Significant results indicated a predicative relationship among the involvement variables

and the adult outcomes variables; however, because of the low power of the research

model, further significant results might not have been detected.

Adult outcomes

For participants involved in TXYLF from level two to level three there was a

statistically significant p value obtained for employment ($p = .008$). The effect sizes of

pseudo $R^2 = .120$ (Cox & Snell) and pseudo $R^2 = .161$ (Nagelkerke) were small (Cohen,

1988). The results demonstrated that the odds of participants being employed were 6

times greater because they were involved in TXYLF from level two to level three;

furthermore, the results showed that this researcher could be confident in the findings

because the odds will fall to between 1.407 and 9.366, 95% of the time. Thus, the results

demonstrated a small predictive effect of being involved in TXYLF from level one to

level three on the chances of obtaining employment.

For participants involved in TXYLF as mentors there was a statistically

significant p value obtained for employment (i.e., .009), postsecondary education (i.e.,

.024), and independent living (i.e., .039). The effect sizes for these three adult outcomes

were small (Cohen, 1988). The effect on employment was pseudo $R^2 = .117$ (Cox &

Snell) and pseudo $R^2 = .156$ (Nagelkerke); on postsecondary education, attendance was

pseudo $R^2 = .083$ (Cox & Snell) and pseudo $R^2 = .112$ (Nagelkerke); and on independent

living the effect was pseudo $R^2 = .061$ (Cox & Snell) and pseudo $R^2 = .088$

(Nagelkerke). The odds of mentors being employed were 4.821, attending postsecondary education classes were 3.750, and living in residences other than a parent or guardian's home were 3.152; furthermore, the results showed that this researcher could be confident the odds will fall between .1.307 and 17.708 for employment, 1.019 and 13.795 for postsecondary education, and .883 and 11.242 for independent living 95% of the time. Thus, the results demonstrated a small predictive effect of being involved in TXYLF as a mentor on the chances of obtaining employment, attending postsecondary education, and living in a residence other than in a parent or guardian's home.

For participants involved in regional YLFs there was a statistically significant p value (i.e., .034) obtained for employment. The calculated effect sizes of pseudo $R^2 =$ .067 (Cox & Snell) and pseudo $R^2 = $ .089 (Nagelkerke) were small (Cohen, 1988). The odds were .301 times greater for participants involved in regional YLFs being employed; furthermore, the results showed that this researcher could be confident that the odds will fall between .083 and 1.088 95% of the time. Thus, the results demonstrated a small predictive effect of being involved in a regional YLF on the chances of being employed.

Advocacy involvement

No statistically significant relationship was observed for advocacy involvement. Thus, the results demonstrated no effect of the program components on advocacy involvement.

Table 4.6

The effect of the three levels of TXYLF on the outcome variables

Dependent variables	R^2 (Cox & Snell)	R^2 (Nagelkerke)	p	B(SE)	95% CI for Exp(B)		
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
Adult outcomes							
Employment (1)	.120	.161	.126	.827 (.72)	.558	2.286	9.366
Employment (2)			.008*	1.792 (.74)	1.407	6.000	25.589
Inclusive employment (1)	.008	.014	.460	.154 (1.52)	.059	1.167	22.937
Inclusive employment (2)			.374	-.405 (1.26)	.057	.667	7.852
Postsecondary (1)	.111	.150	.062	-1.127 (.73)	.077	.342	1.363
Postsecondary (2)			.168	.714 (.74)	.479	2.042	8.707
Independent living (1)	.034	.050	.490	.022 (.86)	.189	1.023	5.526
Independent living (2)			.121	.870 (.74)	.557	2.386	10.215
Advocacy							
Secondary (1)	.004	.005	.318	-.318 (.71)	.181	.727	2.914
Secondary (2)			.443	-.095 (.66)	.247	.909	3.341
Postsecondary (1)	.117	.157	.140	-.811 (.75)	.102	.444	1.929
Postsecondary (2)			.065	1.061 (.70)	.735	2.889	11.360
Independent living (1)	.034	.050	.402	-.185 (.75)	.193	.831	3.576
Independent living (2)			.149	.836 (.80)	.497	2.308	11.119
Employment (1)	.060	.081	.106	-.906 (.73)	.097	.404	1.676
Employment (2)			.292	.375 (.68)	.382	1.455	1.676
Community (1)	.018	.024	.327	-.318 (.71)	.181	.727	2.914
Community (2)			.292	.375 (.68)	.382	1.455	5.543

Note: *indicates *p* < .05.

Table 4.7

The effect of the three levels of TXYLF by regional YLF attendance on the outcome

variables

Dependent variables	R^2 (Cox & Snell)	R^2 (Nagelkerke)	p	B(SE)	95% CI for Exp(B)		
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
Adult outcomes							
Employment (1)	.060	.081	.058	-1.833 (1.16)	.016	.115	1.563
Employment (2)			.483	-.041 (.97)	.144	.960	6.393
Inclusive employment (1)	.029	.049	.500	19.498 (40192. 97)	.000	2937336 999	.
Inclusive employment (2)			.225	-1.012 (1.34)	.026	.364	5.026
Postsecondary (1)	.033	.045	.190	-.852 (.97)	.064	.427	2.841
Postsecondary (2)			.210	.940 (1.16)	.262	2.560	25.013
Independent living (1)	.070	.102	.500	-20.44 (17974. 84)	.000	.000	.
Independent living (2)			.298	-.619 (1.17)	.055	.596	5.306
Advocacy							
Secondary (1)	.010	.014	.434	.160 (.97)	.177	1.174	7.790
Secondary (2)			.250	-.651 (.97)	.079	.522	3.462
Postsecondary (1)	.041	.055	.356	-.357 (.965)	.106	.700	4.639
Postsecondary (2)			.108	1.435 (1.16)	.432	4.200	40.868
Independent living (1)	.010	.015	.372	.383 (1.72)	.147	1.467	14.594
Independent living (2)			.271	-.598 (.98)	.147	.550	3.744
Employment (1)	.075	.100	.080	-1.631 (1.16)	.020	.196	1.906
Employment (2)			.163	1.141 (1.61)	.321	3.130	30.497
Community (1)	.000	.000	.475	.061 (.97)	.160	1.062	7.061
Community (2)			.475	.061 (1.61)	.160	1.062	7.061

Note: *indicates *p* < .05.

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Table 4.8

Initial five day training only

Dependent variables	R^2 (Cox & Snell)	R^2 (Nagelkerke)	p	B(SE)	95% CI for Exp(B)		
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
Adult outcomes							
Employment	.002	.003	.406	.182 (.77)	.267	1.200	5.400
Inclusive employment	.002	.003	.444	.233 (1.57)	.058	1.250	26.869
Postsecondary	.010	.013	.299	.405 (.769)	.332	1.500	6.774
Independent living	.011	.019	.284	-.573 (1.00)	.079	.564	4.009
Advocacy							
Secondary	.001	.002	.419	-.154 (.75)	.198	.857	3.713
Postsecondary	.010	.017	.337	-.560 (1.33)	.042	.571	7.740
Independent living	.010	.013	.300	.424 (.81)	.314	1.528	7.437
Employment	.010	.013	.295	.405 (.75)	.344	1.500	6.532
Community	.001	.001	.438	.118 (.76)	.256	1.125	4.937

Note: *indicates $p < .05$.

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Table 4.9

Nine month support phase

Dependent variables	R^2 (Cox & Snell)	R^2 (Nagelkerke)	p	B(SE)	95% CI for Exp(B)		
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
Adult outcomes							
Employment	.027	.036	.120	.675 (.57)	.637	1.964	6.052
Inclusive employment	.030	.050	.190	-1.050 (1.92)	.034	.350	3.622
Postsecondary	.007	.009	.279	.341 (.58)	.450	1.406	4.391
Independent living	.001	.001	.422	.125 (.63)	.328	1.133	3.918
Advocacy							
Secondary	.001	.001	.417	.119 (.57)	.371	1.127	3.417
Postsecondary	.078	.133	.077	1.696 (1.87)	.533	5.455	55.800
Independent living	.004	.005	.333	.272 (.63)	.382	1.312	4.504
Employment	.001	.001	.417	-.119 (.57)	.293	.888	2.692
Community	.001	.002	.394	-.154 (.57)	.279	.857	2.635

Note: *indicates $p < .05$.

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Table 4.10

Mentor

Dependent variables	R^2 (Cox & Snell)	R^2 (Nagelkerke)	p	B(SE)	95% CI for Exp(B)		
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
Adult outcomes							
Employment	.117	.156	.009*	1.573 (.67)	1.307	4.821	17.788
Inclusive employment	.006	.010	.343	-.405 (1.00)	.094	.667	4.733
Postsecondary	.083	.112	.024*	1.322 (.67)	1.019	3.750	13.795
Independent living	.061	.088	.039*	1.148 (.65)	.883	3.152	11.242
Advocacy							
Secondary	.002	.003	.371	.193 (.58)	.386	1.213	3.813
Postsecondary	.005	.009	.342	.405 (.99)	.214	1.500	10.515
Independent living	.012	.018	.217	.533 (.68)	.450	1.705	6.460
Employment	.016	.022	.182	.539 (.59)	.537	1.714	5.477
Community	.023	.031	.143	.648 (.61)	.581	1.912	6.289

Note: *indicates $p < .05$.

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Table 4.11

Regional YLF

Dependent variables	R^2 (Cox & Snell)	R^2 (Nagelkerke)	*p*	*B(SE)*	95% CI for Exp(B)		
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
Adult outcomes							
Employment	.067	.089	.034*	1.201 (.67)	.083	.301	1.088
Inclusive employment	.001	.002	.429	-.223 (1.25)	.070	.800	9.180
Postsecondary	.002	.003	.367	-.209 (.64)	.233	.812	2.832
Independent living	.007	.010	.278	-.439 (.74)	.150	.645	2.771
Advocacy							
Secondary	.001	.001	.422	.125 (.63)	.328	1.133	3.918
Postsecondary	.004	.006	.374	.388 (1.20)	.140	1.474	.140
Independent living	.012	.018	.210	-.547 (.68)	.154	.579	2.180
Employment	.004	.005	.333	-.272 (.63)	.222	.762	2.615
Community	.000	.001	.441	-.095	.262	.909	3.159

Note: *indicates *p* < .05.

Table 4.12

Year of TXYLF involvement as delegate

Dependent variables	R^2 (Cox & Snell)	R^2 (Nagelkerke)	p	B(SE)	95% CI for Exp(B)		
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
2007							
Adult outcomes							
Employment	.001	.001	.457	.105 (.98)	.164	1.111	7.506
Inclusive employment	.120	.227	.500	-19.82 (23205.42)	.000	.000	.
Postsecondary	.085	.116	.107	1.269 (1.02)	.481	3.556	26.282
Independent living	.055	.158	.500	18.900 (15191.52)	.000	161574483.00	.
Advocacy							
Secondary	.064	.086	.144	1.099 (1.03)	.396	3.00	22.711
Postsecondary	.085	.116	.107	1.269 (1.02)	.481	3.556	26.282
Independent living	.029	.039	.239	-.734 (1.03)	.063	.480	6.634
Employment	.001	.001	.457	.105 (.98)	.164	1.111	7.506
Community	.001	.001	.457	-.105 (.190)	.133	.900	6.080
2008							
Adult outcomes							
Employment	.402	.576	.500	-21.49 (15191.52)	.000	.000	.
Inclusive employment	.233	.331	.500	20.915 (23205.76)	.000	1.212E+9	.
Postsecondary	.402	.576	.500	-21.49 (15191.52	.000	.000	.
Independent living	.402	.576	.500	-21.49 (15191.52	.000	.000	.
Advocacy							
Secondary	.506	.695	.500	-21.12 (151191.52)	.000	.000	.
Postsecondary	.506	.695	.500	-21.12 (151191.52)	.000	.000	.
Independent living	.030	.047	.261	-.875 (1.37)	.029	.417	6.064
Employment	.020	.027	.284	-.575 (1.08)	.068	.563	4.672
Community	.020	.027	.297	.575 (1.08)	.214	1.778	14.767
2009							
Adult outcomes							
Employment	.402	.576	.500	21.491	.000	2.154E+	.

Note: *indicates $p < .05$.

Participant demographics interaction effect on post-training adult outcomes and self-advocacy involvement

Corresponding positive relationships were observed among the variables of low incidence disabilities, contiguous TXYLF involvement, and employment. Corresponding positive relationships were also observed among the variables of participants who were 21 years old and older, had contiguous TXYLF involvement, had contiguous TXYLF involvement and involvement in a regional YLF, and postsecondary education advocacy. Therefore, to answer the sub-explanatory research question, three interaction effects were explored: 1) the relationship between post-training employment and contiguous TXYLF involvement by participants with low-incidence disabilities, 2) post-training postsecondary education advocacy and contiguous TXYLF involvement by participants who were 21 years old and older, and 3) post-training postsecondary education advocacy and contiguous TXYLF involvement and regional YLF involvement by participants who were 21 years old and older.

No statistically significant relationship was observed. Thus, the results demonstrated no interaction effect on these demographic variables; however, because of the low power of the research model, further significant results might not have been detected (see Table 4.13).

Table 4.13

Interaction effects

Dependent variables	R^2 (Cox & Snell)	R^2 (Nagelkerke)	p	B(SE)	95% CI for Exp(B)		
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
Employment							
Contiguous components by low incidence disabilities (1)	.012	.017	.439	-.223 (1.45)	.047	.800	13.604
Contiguous components by low incidence disabilities (2)			.232	.875 (1.19)	.232	2.400	24.873
Postsecondary							
Advocacy							
Contiguous components by 21 and older (1)	.006	.008	.423	-.125 (.64)	.251	.882	3.101
Contiguous components by 21 and older (2)			.294	-.531	.086	.588	4.009
Contiguous components by 21 and older by regional (1)	.024	.032	.459	.071 (.69)	.277	1.074	4.163
Contiguous components by 21 and older by regional (1)			.157	-1.210	.028	.298	3.146

Note: *indicates $p < .05$.

Relationships among post-training self-advocacy involvement and adult outcomes

      Results from the logistic regression for research question four are presented in
Tables 4.13 through 4.18. No statistically significant differences (i.e., a p value of $\leq .05$)
of the one tailed analysis were observed for the effects of self-advocacy involvement on
adult outcomes. However, because of the low power of the research model, significant
results might not have been detected.

Table 4.14

Secondary education advocacy

Dependent variables	R^2 (Cox & Snell)	R^2 (Nagelkerke)	p	B(SE)	95% CI for Exp(B)		
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
Employment	.000	.000	.482	.025 (.56)	.337	1.026	3.123
Inclusive employment	.054	.090	.122	-1.386 (1.19)	.024	.250	2.577
Postsecondary	.006	.008	.287	.325 (57)	.447	1.385	4.287
Independent living	.014	.020	.205	.534 (.65)	.479	1.705	6.067

Note: *indicates $p < .05$.

Table 4.15

Postsecondary education advocacy

Dependent variables	R^2 (Cox & Snell)	R^2 (Nagelkerke)	p	B(SE)	95% CI for Exp(B)		
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
Employment	.030	.041	.182	-1.076 (1.18)	.033	.341	3.488
Inclusive employment	.107	.167	.500	-20.2 (200096.50)	.000	.000	.
Postsecondary	.572	.775	.500	22.589 (7882.5)	.000	6.46E+9	.
Independent living	.011	.015	.280	-.593 (1.01)	.076	.553	4.035

Note: *indicates $p < .05$.

Table 4.16

Independent living advocacy

| Dependent variables | R^2 (Cox & Snell) | R^2 (Nagelkerke) | p | B(SE) | 95% CI for Exp(B) | | |
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
Employment	.030	.040	.110	.784 (.64)	.628	2.190	7.643
Inclusive employment	.085	.141	.500	-19.92 (16408. 71)	.000	.000	.
Postsecondary	.002	.003	.372	.209 (.64)	.353	1.232	4.299
Independent living	.007	.010	.278	.439 (.74)	.361	1.511	6.669

Note: *indicates *p* < .05.

Table 4.17

Employment advocacy

| Dependent variables | R^2 (Cox & Snell) | R^2 (Nagelkerke) | p | B(SE) | 95% CI for Exp(B) | | |
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
Employment	.000	.000	.482	.025 (.57)	.337	1.026	3.123
Inclusive employment	.002	.003	.406	-.238 (1.00)	.111	.788	5.600
Postsecondary	.025	.034	.128	.660 (.58)	.619	1.935	6.048
Independent living	.001	.001	.422	.125 (.63)	.328	1.133	3.918

Note: *indicates *p* < .05.

Table 4.18

Community advocacy

Dependent variables	R^2 (Cox & Snell)	R^2 (Nagelkerke)	p	B(SE)	95% CI for Exp(B)		
					Lower	Exp(B)	Upper
Employment	.007	.010	.272	.352 (.58)	.457	1.422	4.427
Inclusive employment	.102	.170	.056	-1.897 (1.20)	.014	.150	1.560
Postsecondary	.000	.001	.446	.080 (.58)	.345	1.083	3.402
Independent living	.005	.007	.313	-.316 (.65)	.204	.729	2.602

Note: *indicates $p < .05$.

Summary

In Chapter IV, the results of the study were presented. Descriptive data were presented for research question one and logistic regression results were presented for research questions two, three, and four.

A descriptive analysis revealed that post-training, most of the participants attended postsecondary education classes, were employed, and were employed in inclusive settings; furthermore, most participants were involved in advocacy. Statistically significant results were observed for participants under 21 years old, participants with high incidence disabilities, and for minority participants. Statistically significant results were also observed for involvement in levels two to three, attendance at a regional YLF, and for mentors. Statistically significant results were not observed for the participants' delegate years, for demographic interaction effects, or for the effects of self-advocacy involvement on adult outcomes.

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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Chapter V presents a summary of the results, a comparison of the findings of this research to those of previous studies, and an interpretation of our results. Additionally, threats to validity, the study's limitations, the implications of the study, and possible areas for future research are discussed.

Summary of the Results

A descriptive analysis revealed that post-training, the participants attended postsecondary education classes (61%), lived independently (28%), were employed (57%), and were employed in inclusive settings (83%). The participants were involved in secondary education advocacy at a rate of 55%, postsecondary education advocacy at a rate of 51%, independent living advocacy at a rate of 73%, community advocacy at a rate of 59%, and employment advocacy at a rate of 55%. Furthermore, the demographic contrasts revealed that white non-Hispanic participants, participants under 21 years old, females, and participants with high incidence disabilities were more likely to report higher adult outcomes and levels of advocacy involvement. Those who served as mentors, as compared to all other involvement attributes, reported the highest percentage in all outcome areas with the exception of inclusive employment.

Statistically significant results for research question two were observed for participants under 21 years old (in independent living, postsecondary education advocacy, and employment advocacy), participants with high incidence disabilities (in

employment), and for minority participants (in secondary education advocacy). Statistically significant results for research question three were observed for involvement in levels two to three (in employment). Additionally, statistically significant results were observed for mentors (in employment, postsecondary education, and independent living) and for participants attending a regional YLF (in employment). Statistically significant results were not observed for the participants' delegate years, or for demographic interaction effects. No statistically significant results were observed for research question four (i.e., the effects of self-advocacy involvement on adult outcomes).

Discussion

Self-advocacy theory supports the hypothesis that the acquisition of self-advocacy skills leads to higher levels of adult outcomes in employment (Callahan, Griffin, & Hammis, 2011; Farley & Parkerson, 1992; Lindstrom, Doren, & Miesch, 2011; National Council on Disability, 2008), independent living (Caldwell, 2010; Eisenman, 2007), and postsecondary education attendance (Dalke, 1993; Eckes & Ochoa, 2005; Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Janiga & Costenbader, 2002). A few studies have used descriptive methods to explore the relationships of self-advocacy programs and adult outcomes; however, few (if any) studies have inferentially explored the relationship between self-advocacy programs and adult outcomes, and few (if any) studies have explored, descriptively or inferentially, the relationship between self-advocacy program components and adult outcomes. Therefore, the following sections first compare the results of previously conducted descriptive studies to the results of this study, and secondly to the results of inferential studies that can indirectly be contrasted

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to the results of this study. Next, the implications of the results are discussed to clarify what can be derived from the comparisons, what can be derived from the original findings of this study, what is still unknown after these findings, and what further research can investigate to increase our understanding of the effectiveness of TXYLF and self-advocacy programs.

The descriptive results compared to previous findings

Adult outcomes for people with disabilities

The Aune (1991), Hall and Starrett (2006), and Rothman, Maldonado, and Rothman (2008) studies all used descriptive methods to explore the relationships among self-advocacy programs and adult outcomes; additionally, the National Longitudinal Transition Study 2 (NLTS2) conducted a nationwide survey to collect data on the adult outcomes of people with disabilities (Newman, Wagner, Cameto, Knokey, & Shaver, 2010), and the Institute for Community Inclusion reported rates of persons with low incidence disabilities employed in inclusive jobs (Fichthorn & Gilmore, 2006). Since no data exists to directly compare to the regression analysis results from this study, direct comparisons of outcomes of this study are limited to descriptive data from self-advocacy programs and the adult outcomes from nationwide samples of adults with disabilities.

Comparisons to self-advocacy programs

Hall and Starrett (2006) investigated adult outcomes five years after participants attended the Kansas YLF. A greater percentage of TXYLF participants reported that they moved out of their parent or guardian's home post-training than those who reported the same outcome in the Hall and Starrett study (17% vs. 28%); however, the percentage

of participants who reported they were employed was greater in the Hall and Starrett study than in this study (70% vs. 57%). Rothman et al. (2008) surveyed participants a few months to seven years after they attended a summer self-advocacy training. Rothman and colleagues found that a larger percentage were enrolled in postsecondary education than reported the same outcome in this TXYLF study (78% vs. 61%); however, the participants from this TXYLF study reported that a greater percentage were employed (57% vs. 15%). Aune (1991) performed a follow-up study of a high school self-advocacy program one year after the participants had graduated. The percentage enrolled in postsecondary education was slightly lower (58%) than the percentage with postsecondary education attendance from this study (61%).

Comparisons to nationwide samples of adults with disabilities

Newman and colleagues (2010) collected nationwide data on adults with disabilities to determine their involvement in employment, postsecondary education, and independent living. When NLTS2 interviewed participants four years after they graduated high school the study found that 46% had ever been enrolled in postsecondary education, 62% were in employed at the time of the interview, and 47% lived independently (Newman et al., 2010). The participants in this study reported higher percentages of achievement in postsecondary education attendance (61% vs. 46%), but lower percentages in employment (57% vs. 62%), and living in a residence other than his or her parent or guardian's home (28% vs. 47%).

The Institute for Community Inclusion, housed at the University of Massachusetts-Boston, produced a report on the rate of persons with low incidence

disabilities employed in inclusive employment in each state and nationwide. Participants with low incidence disabilities in this study reported a higher percentage of inclusive employment both nationwide (78% vs. 23%) and in the state of Texas (78% vs. 20%).

Adult outcomes by demographic

Newman and colleagues (2010) reported nationwide adult outcomes data broken down by disability type, gender, and ethnicity on adults with disabilities. These data allow for a direct comparison to the post-training data from this study, using these demographic categories. However, certain categories from this study cannot be compared because of low response rates (i.e., Black [$n = 2$], Asian [$n = 2$], HI [$n = 4$], VI [$n = 2$]).

In most cases participants in this study from the various demographic categories reported a higher proportion of involvement in adult outcomes. Postsecondary education attendance was far above the national average for all categories but for that of females (47% vs. 49%). Most post-training employment outcomes (with the exception of females and participants with OIs) were far above the national average; participants with OIs were the only group to report a lower rate of employment than the national average (8% vs. 33%), and rates for females were only two percent above the national average. Independent living was a weak area of achievement for participants in this study. Males and participants with OIs reported rates 8% to 10% below the national average, while participants with AU and white non-Hispanic participants were the only groups to report substantially higher rates than the national average (i.e., 14% and 10% above the

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national average, respectively). White non-Hispanics, Hispanics, and participants with AU all reported higher rates than the national averages in all three adult outcomes areas.

Advocacy involvement

Self-advocacy program studies reported participants' levels of leadership involvement in their IEP meetings (i.e., secondary education advocacy) both pre- and post-intervention (Arndt et al., 2006; Danneker & Bottge, 2009; Martin et al., 2006; Neale & Test, 2010), participants' levels of self-advocate knowledge as a result of attending a self-advocacy program (Bauer, 2003; Campbell-Whatley, 2008; Grenwelge & Zhang, in press; Kotzer & Margalit, 2007; Lee et al., 2011, 2012; Levin & Rotheram-Fuller, 2011; Mishna et al., 2011; Wehmeyer et al., 2011; Wood et al., 2010, Woods et al., 2010), and participants' respective abilities to advocate through writing (Cuenca-Sanchez et al., 2012). Furthermore, theory supports the hypothesis that participants will continue to practice self-advocacy in order to improve their outcomes after participating in self-advocacy programs (Arndt et al., 2006; Merchant & Gajar, 1997; Martin et al., 2006; Neal & Test, 2010; Test et al., 2005a, 2005b). However, few (if any) studies have reported outcome data about participants' involvement in advocacy activities. Therefore, no data exists to directly compare to the descriptive advocacy involvement outcomes reported in this study.

The inferential results compared to previous findings

Advocacy involvement and adult outcomes

Self-advocacy theory supports the hypothesis that the acquisition of self-advocacy knowledge leads to higher levels of adult outcomes (Dalke, 1993; Doren &

Miesch, 2011; Eckes & Ochoa, 2005; Eisenman, 2007; Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Lindstrom, Doren, & Miesch, 2011; National Council on Disability, 2008). Self-advocacy theory also supports the hypothesis that participants will continue to practice self-advocacy post-training, and thereby improve their outcomes after increasing their self-advocacy knowledge in self-advocacy programs (Arndt et al., 2006; Merchant & Gajar, 1997; Martin et al., 2006; Neal & Test, 2010; Test et al., 2005a, 2005b). Furthermore, prior research supports a supposition that the participants in this study increased their self-advocacy knowledge through TXYLF. This supposition is supported by the Grenwelge and Zhang (in press) study that assessed the thirty-four 2009 TXYLF participants for self-advocacy knowledge and established that the participants increased their self-advocacy knowledge pre- to post-intervention significantly over an equivalent comparison group. Therefore, to gain greater insight into the results of this study it is reasonable to compare these findings to previous studies that operated under the same self-advocacy theory and that measured the relationships among self-advocacy knowledge acquisition (Odom et al., 2005).

Comparison by demographics

Grenwelge and Zhang (in press), and Lee and colleagues (2012) conducted investigations of participant self-advocacy knowledge gain and its relationship to demographic factors. Grenwelge and Zhang, in their TXYLF study, investigated the effects of disability and gender on participant self-advocacy knowledge gain. The results demonstrated that the participants with developmental disabilities (i.e., students with ID and AU) gained significantly more self-advocacy knowledge than participants with LD

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and participants with OI. No significant effects for were observed for gender. Lee and colleagues investigated predictors of increases in participants' self-advocacy knowledge. Among the significant predictors was a higher IQ.

Similar to previous research, gender was not a significant predictor in this study. Furthermore, participants with low incidence disabilities in this study had an increased likelihood of employment as a result of TXYLF involvement; however, because of conflicting results from previous research, no deductions from these results can be made.

Comparison by amount of intervention received

The study conducted by Lee and colleagues (2012) investigated predictors of gain in self-advocacy knowledge. Among the significant predictors was the amount of intervention the participants received. Participants received up to ten sessions of the intervention; the analysis indicated that there was a small effect ($sr^2 = .016$) on participants' knowledge increase that was caused by receiving more of the intervention. Similarly, in the Ankeny and Lehman (2011) qualitative study, participants identified that a sufficient amount of time to practice self-advocacy and learning from outcomes were predictors of higher levels of self-advocacy. Likewise, in this TXYLF study, significant results demonstrated that the more involvement and opportunity to practice self-advocacy a participant had in TXYLF (i.e., the nine month support phase leading to involvement in TXYLF as a mentor, involvement in TXYLF as a mentor, and attendance of a regional YLF), the greater the likelihood of involvement in adult outcomes (i.e., employment, postsecondary education, and independent living).

Interpretation of findings

      Research question one: What are participants' post-training outcomes?

      Calculating the proportion and total number of participants to achieve the adult outcomes and advocacy involvement variables provided a summary of the data, which in turn allowed for a basic understanding of the effects of TXYLF on the participants' post-training outcomes. The results of the descriptive data revealed that the participants of TXYLF post-training 1) were involved in self-advocacy, 2) were employed in inclusive jobs and attended postsecondary education more than the national average for people with disabilities, 3) some demographics had higher percentages for adult outcomes than the national average (i.e., white non-Hispanic, Hispanic, and participants with AU), and 4) participants involved in TXYLF as mentors reported higher percentages of involvement as compared to all other involvement variables in all advocacy involvement areas and adult outcomes other than inclusive employment. This encouraging data indicates a current state of affairs but does not point to a cause (Odom et al., 2005). The descriptive data and the logistic regression analysis conducted to evaluate the remaining research questions merely provide a better understanding of the phenomenon. To determine causation, further investigation that rigorously controls for competing hypotheses is required.

      The results do, however, provide some support for the study's hypothesis that participants in TXYLF have positive post-training adult outcomes. From the descriptive data we know that participants were involved in advocacy activities, but with no prior data with which to compare the results we cannot determine whether the results are

positive or negative as compared to the average involvement of adults with disabilities. Therefore, further research is needed to provide a better understanding of the advocacy involvement results. This study's hypothesis also implies that participants should have better than average adult outcomes in all four areas, but this was only observed for postsecondary education and inclusive employment; furthermore, participants with AU, white non-Hispanic, and Hispanic participants all demonstrated better than average adult outcomes. These findings are potentially important for self-advocacy program practices; however, further exploration is required to isolate the cause of these positive results.

Investigation of the TXYLF involvement components revealed that mentors had the highest adult outcomes and advocacy involvement of all involvement variables, and their adult outcomes were higher than the national average in all areas but independent living (i.e., employment 79% vs. 46%, postsecondary education 81% vs. 62%, and independent living 42% vs. 47%). These results demonstrate the positive outcomes experienced by these participants and, consequently, the results are very encouraging. However, further investigation is required to isolate a cause.

Research question two: What are the relationships among TXYLF participant demographics, post-training adult outcomes, and self-advocacy involvement?

Previous research and theory support the hypothesis that a person's adult outcomes and self-advocacy involvement may indeed be related to their demographic characteristics (Grenwelge & Zhang, in press; Lee et al., 2012). However, few (if any) studies have inferentially explored the relationships among demographics and adult

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outcomes or advocacy involvement; therefore, a correlational approach to answering this research question was appropriate due to the lack of prior research in this area (Thompson et al., 2005). If further knowledge had existed, a randomized group experiment might have been more appropriate (Odom et al., 2005). Furthermore, positive relationships between demographics and outcomes can increase our understanding of post-training outcomes by illuminating potential causal factors (Odom et al., 2005).

The logistic regression analysis detected predictive relationships between a participant's age and their involvement in independent living, postsecondary education advocacy, and employment advocacy. Additionally, the logistic regression detected a predictive relationship between disability and gaining employment, as well as ethnicity and involvement in secondary education advocacy.

The results demonstrated encouraging predictive relationships among demographics and involvement in certain outcomes that indicated that when a participant was under 21 years old, had a low incidence disability, or was a minority, his or her chances of living independently, being employed, being involved in secondary education advocacy, and being involved in employment advocacy increased (Cohen, 1988). However, the analysis and the research design did not allow for a conclusion that involvement in TXYLF was the cause of these predictive relationships (Thompson et al., 2005). Furthermore, because of the conflicting results from previous research, little (or no) data exists to support or disprove an assumption that the predictive relationships detected in this study resulted from an involvement in a self-advocacy program.

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Therefore, further research is needed to support an assertion beyond the immediate results.

Research question three: What are the relationships among TXYLF program components, post-training adult outcomes, and self-advocacy involvement?

Previous research and theory support the hypothesis that a person's adult outcomes and self-advocacy involvement may indeed be related to their level of involvement in a self-advocacy program (Arndt et al., 2006; Lee et al., 2012; Merchant & Gajar, 1997; Martin et al., 2006; Neal & Test, 2010; Test et al., 2005a, 2005b). However, few (if any) studies have inferentially explored the relationships among advocacy program components and adult outcomes or advocacy involvement. A correlational approach to answering this research question was appropriate because of the lack of knowledge in this area (Thompson et al., 2005). Furthermore, positive relationships among program components and outcomes can increase our understanding of post-training outcomes by illuminating potential causal factors inherent in self-advocacy programs (Odom et al., 2005).

The logistic regression analysis detected predictive relationships between involvement in the TXYLF nine month support phase through involvement in TXYLF as a mentor for employment. Statistically significant results likewise were detected for participants attending TXYLF as mentors for employment, postsecondary education, and independent living, and for participants who attended a regional YLF for employment. Statistically significant results were not detected for the participants' respective delegate

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years or for the interaction effects of demographic factors. Therefore, the analysis demonstrated a predictive relationship for a greater amount of involvement in TXYLF and involvement in certain adult outcomes, and a predictive relationship for participants who attended TXYLF as mentors and involvement in most adult outcomes. Furthermore, the analysis did not detect that demographic factors or the year a participant attended TXYLF as a delegate acted as predictive influences for involvement in the outcomes, thereby eliminating these factors as potential causes.

Several potential causal factors of these results were eliminated but the analysis and the research design did not allow for a conclusion that involvement in TXYLF is the cause of these predictive relationships (Thompson et al., 2005). Support for a conclusion that TXYLF was the cause of the results includes previous research that demonstrated that the more self-advocacy intervention received by a participant, the greater their increase in self-advocacy knowledge; additionally, demographic characteristics and the year of attendance as delegate were not determined to be alternative causes for the participants' outcomes. Nevertheless, additional variables that were not included in this study need to be eliminated before causation can be determined. Further research needs to eliminate other potential motivating factors (such as any additional self-advocacy training the participants may have received) before causation can be determined.

Research question four: What are the relationships among post-training self-advocacy involvement and adult outcomes?

Theory supports the hypothesis that a person's adult outcomes may be related to their involvement in self-advocacy (Arndt et al., 2006; Merchant & Gajar, 1997; Martin

et al., 2006; Neal & Test, 2010; Test et al., 2005a, 2005b); however, few (if any) studies have inferentially or descriptively explored the relationships of advocacy involvement and adult outcomes. A correlational approach to answering this research question was appropriate because of the lack of knowledge in this area (Thompson et al., 2005). Furthermore, positive relationships between advocacy involvement and adult outcomes can increase understanding of post-training outcomes by illuminating potential causal factors (Odom et al., 2005).

The hypothesis of this study predicted that involvement in self-advocacy would increase a participant's likelihood of achieving positive post-training adult outcomes; however, no statistically significant relationships were detected. These results suggest that factors other than involvement in self-advocacy caused the participants' positive post-training outcomes. Therefore, further research is needed to determine what elements of TXYLF, other than encouraging post-training self-advocacy involvement, increased participants' post-training likelihood of adult outcomes.

Threats to Validity

Threats to the internal and external validity of this study must be considered when determining the accuracy and generalizability of the study's findings. The attrition rate might affect the results of a study when the participants are different from those who were not included in the study. The attrition rate of this study is a threat to the internal validity of this study because 64% of TXYLF participants did not respond to the survey; therefore, the participants may have possessed different characteristics that affected the study's results. History (i.e., events that affect participant responses) is another threat

that may affect the internal validity of a study. The ages of the participants in this study ranged from 17 years old to 27 years old; therefore, services the participants received may have changed over time and affected the participants' adult outcomes and/or advocacy involvement rates.

Further threats include population validity. The population of the study was made up of students with disabilities who applied to take part in a self-advocacy program, and the participants were selected from these applicants. Therefore, the population of this study may have possessed qualities atypical to the greater population of people with disabilities.

Limitations

The findings of this study should be interpreted with caution because of the following limitations. 1) This study intended to study self-advocacy through a self-advocacy program whose participants applied to attend and was conducted on a university campus. It is not intended to investigate self-advocacy from a school setting intervention perspective. As a result, the participants may have possessed qualities atypical to the greater population. 2) This study explored demographic variables, but not other potential variables such as prior self-advocacy exposure or other motivations that may have affected the study's results. 3) Participants self-identified their disability and answered the survey questions to the best of their knowledge. Therefore, the participants could have incorrectly labeled their disabilities or answered some questions inaccurately. 4) A logistic regression simulation indicated that the model had a low power to detect differences between groups. Therefore, at an alpha level of .05, the logistic regression

may have failed to detect some significant differences that could have provided a greater understanding of the phenomenon.

Implications

Implications for self-advocacy

Contributions to the self-advocacy evidence base

This study added to the self-advocacy evidence base by inferentially and descriptively investigating the post-training adult outcomes and self-advocacy involvement of a particular self-advocacy program. Furthermore, the program took place outside of the school environment. Also, the study investigated the predictors of the outcomes by evaluating the components of the program and the relationships of demographic variables to self-advocacy.

In previous studies predictors of self-advocacy were investigated inferentially (Lee et al., 2011) and anecdotally (Ankeny & Lehmann, 2011; Rothman et al., 2008). The Rothman and colleagues study was the only investigation to explore predictors in a post-training follow-up study. Participants in the Rothman study identified predictors of their success from the summer training program as meeting others with disabilities, learning about postsecondary education, and meeting role models. Further predictors included the opportunity to experience and practice self-advocacy (Ankeny & Lehmann, 2011), and a greater amount of intervention received (Lee et al., 2011). This study added to the evidence base by finding that: (1) having a high incidence disability, receiving a greater amount of intervention, and mentoring peers all predicted post-training employment;; and (2) participants under 21 years old predicted independent living.

Previous studies investigated the pre and post effects of a self-advocacy program on participants' quality of involvement in self-advocacy (Arndt et al., 2006; Danneker & Bottge, 2009; Martin et al., 2006; Neale & Test, 2010). However, few (if any) studies investigated the amount of self-advocacy or the predictors of self-advocacy involvement post-training; therefore, this study added to the self-advocacy evidence base by evaluating the level of participant involvement in self-advocacy and the predictors of self-advocacy involvement. This study found that 55% of the participants were involved in secondary education advocacy, 51% in postsecondary education advocacy, 73% in independent living advocacy, 59% in community advocacy, and 55% in employment advocacy. Furthermore, being a minority predicted involvement in secondary education advocacy, and being under 21 years old predicted involvement in postsecondary education advocacy and employment advocacy.

Several studies have used descriptive methods to explore the relationships among self-advocacy programs and adult outcomes (Aune, 1991; Hall & Starrett, 2006; Rothman, Maldonado, & Rothman, 2008). These studies described the participants' outcomes but they did not compare the results to other resources or otherwise determine the importance of their findings. This study added to the self-advocacy evidence base by demonstrating that participants in this study had higher than the national average outcomes in postsecondary education attendance and inclusive employment; additionally, this study demonstrated that participants with AU, white non-Hispanic, and Hispanic participants had better than average post-training adult outcomes in all areas. Furthermore, participants who had the opportunity to mentor peers had the highest adult

outcomes and advocacy involvement of all involvement variables and their adult outcomes were higher than the national average in all areas but independent living.

Grenwlege and Zhang (in press), and Lee and colleagues (2012) conducted investigations of participant self-advocacy knowledge gain and its relationship to demographic factors. The results demonstrated that the participants with developmental disabilities (i.e., students with ID and AU) gained significantly more self-advocacy knowledge than participants with LD and participants with OI (Grenwelge & Zhang, in press); participants with higher IQs gained significantly more self-advocacy knowledge (Lee et al., 2011). No significant effects were observed for gender in either study. This study added to the self-advocacy evidence base by demonstrating that having a high incidence disability predicted post-training employment, participants being under 21 years old predicted independent living, and that gender was not a predictor of adult outcomes.

The Rothman and colleagues (2008) intervention took place outside of the school environment and demonstrated descriptively that participants were involved in employment (at a rate of 15%), and postsecondary education (at a rate of 78%). This study added to the self-advocacy evidence base by demonstrating that a self-advocacy program that took place outside of a school environment produced positive adult outcomes in postsecondary education and inclusive employment. Furthermore, this study demonstrated the predictive components of the program that increase participants' likelihood of involvement in employment, postsecondary education, and independent living.

The Lee and colleagues (2011) study investigated various components of a self-advocacy intervention and determined that more time spent on the intervention predicted significant gains in self-advocacy knowledge. This study contributed to the self-advocacy evidence base through findings that indicated the more time a participant spent on the intervention the greater his or her likelihood of post-training employment.

Contributions to self-advocacy practice

Evidence from this study indicated that participants require an extensive amount of self-advocacy training to significantly increase their chances of higher than average adult outcomes. No significant results were detected for participation in the five-day training alone. Participation in the nine month component of TXYLF and returning to the five-day training as a mentor (i.e., receiving one year of the training) predicted post-training employment. Therefore, self-advocacy practices should extend the length of exposure to the intervention to last at least up to one year to significantly impact the employment outcomes of participants.

Participants who mentored their peers in this study revealed many encouraging results. Mentors achieved higher than the national average for people with disabilities in adult outcomes. Additionally, participating as a mentor significantly increased the participants' chances of involvement in employment, postsecondary education, and independent living. Therefore, self-advocacy training programs should include opportunities for participants to mentor their peers in self-advocacy training situations.

The significant results of this study also indicated that having the opportunity to practice self-advocacy is important for increased outcomes. Participants who were

involved in TXYLF during the nine month support phase of TXYLF and participants

who mentored their peers both had opportunities to practice self-advocacy. Participants

during the nine month support phase worked on self-advocacy projects and mentors

practiced leadership. Involvement in these components predicted post-training

employment, postsecondary education attendance, and independent living. Therefore,

self-advocacy trainings should provide participants with extensive opportunities to

practice self-advocacy.

Implications for YLFs

Contributions to the YLF evidence base

The results of this study addressed research needs and added to the evidence-

based knowledge regarding the effectiveness of YLFs. Four previous studies have

investigated YLFs using mixed methods ($n = 1$), quantitative ($n = 2$), and qualitative ($n =

1$) designs. The Grenwelge and Zhang (in press) study demonstrated that participants

made significant gains in self-advocacy knowledge, participants with developmental

disabilities made the greatest gains, and no significant effect was observed for gender. In

the Bauer (2003) study participants indicated that YLF positively affected their outlook

as persons with disabilities, appreciation of disability culture and communities, ability to

verbally self-advocate, sense of pride, purpose and direction, knowledge of leadership

and self-advocacy, leadership and advocacy confidence, leadership skills, and

recognition as leaders by their peers. In the Hall and Starrett (2006) study the results

revealed that post-training, most participants lived with their parents, had medical

insurance, received sexual health education, and were employed. In the Gragoudas

(2006) study participants concluded that YLF helped people with disabilities gain a positive self-image, increase their sense of self-empowerment to self-advocate, learn of resources that would assist them in successfully living independent lives, and gain a sense of disability community.

This study added to YLF evidence-based knowledge through descriptive and inferential means investigating participants' adult outcomes and advocacy involvement. The post-training evidence revealed that the participants attended post-secondary education at a percentage higher than the national average, and participants with low-incidence disabilities were employed in inclusive jobs at a percentage higher than the national average. Participants were involved in self-advocacy activities after attending TXYLF, but the self-advocacy involvement did not increase the likelihood of involvement in adult outcomes. Involvement in TXYLF at increased levels of participation predicted post-training employment. Participants involved in TXYLF as a mentor reported higher than the national average adult outcomes in all areas but independent living; involvement in TXYLF as a mentor increased a participant's likelihood of employment, attending postsecondary education, and independent living. Furthermore, similar to the results found by previous research, gender was not a significant predictor in this study.

Contributions to YLF practice

The traditional YLF is a five-day advocacy training program (Epstein, Eddy, Williams, & Socha 2006). TXYLF expanded the traditional model by including a nine month support phase where participants complete self-advocacy projects with

supervision from a local adult advisor and, upon completion of the projects, attend a follow-up training; TXYLF also added regional YLFs where participants attend multiple local forums during the year (Grenwelge, Zhang, & Landmark, 2010). This study demonstrated that an increased level of involvement, including participation in a regional YLF, is important to improving participant gains. Involvement in more levels of TXYLF significantly increased participants' likelihood of employment; however, involvement in only the initial five-day training did not result in an increased likelihood of involvement in any adult outcome. Therefore, to contribute significantly to participants' employment outcomes, traditional YLFs should expand their model to include a nine month support phase and regional YLFs.

A further component of the traditional YLF model is to have successful adults with disabilities mentor youths in YLF (Bauer, 2003; Epstein, Eddy, Williams, & Socha 2006). TXYLF follows the same practice; however, in TXYLF the mentors are participants from the previous year's initial five-day training (Grenwelge, Zhang, & Landmark, 2010). Having former delegates return as mentors provides the participants with one full year of YLF involvement, as well as the opportunity to practice leadership skills with their peers while being viewed as leaders by their peers. This study demonstrated that when former delegates return to TXYLF as mentors they achieve higher results than any other involvement variable in measures of success such as employment, postsecondary education attendance, and independent living; additionally, mentors achieve higher than average adult outcomes over the rates of people with disabilities nationwide. Furthermore, participating as a mentor increases the likelihood

of participants' involvement in employment, postsecondary education, and independent living. Therefore, to significantly impact participants' post-training adult outcomes and involvement in advocacy, traditional YLF models should include this component.

The primary goal of a traditional YLF is to train youths to self-advocate (Bauer, 2003; Edelman, Gill, Comerford, Larson, & Hare, 2004; Epstein, Eddy, Williams, & Socha 2006; Gragoudas, 2006; Grenwelge, Zhang, & Landmark, 2010). This study revealed that participants do self-advocate after attending TXYLF. The analysis revealed that 55% of the participants were involved in secondary education advocacy, 51% in postsecondary education advocacy, 73% in independent living advocacy, 59% in community advocacy, and 55% in employment advocacy. However, this study did not find that involvement in self-advocacy increased the chances of achievement in adult outcomes. Therefore, YLF programs should also encourage the additional benefits of YLF identified as important in the Bauer (2003) and Gragoudas (2006) studies. Bauer quantitatively surveyed participants one to three years after participating in the Ohio YLF. The participants stated that the Ohio YLF positively affected their outlook as persons with disabilities, appreciation of disability culture and communities, ability to verbally self-advocate, sense of pride, purpose and direction, knowledge of leadership and self-advocacy, leadership and advocacy confidence, leadership skills, and recognition as leaders by their peers. Gragoudas' qualitative study used small group discussion, observation, and documentation reviews to assess the long-term impact of the Kansas YLF. Participants concluded that YLF helped them gain a positive self-image, increase their sense of self-empowerment to self-advocate, learn of resources that

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would assist them in successfully living independent lives, and gain a sense of disability community. Triano provided a self-report crediting the California YLF with her increased self-confidence and self-determination that led to her successful adult outcomes.

Recommendations for Future Research

A correlational research design was used in this study. The design was appropriate for the study's purposes because the goal of correlational research is to determine if two or more variables are related (Marczyk, DeMatteo, & Festinger, 2005) and to increase one's understanding of an event or trend (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990). When variables are related, the researcher can make predictive inferences (Marczyk, DeMatteo, & Festinger). However, significant results in correlational research do not specify a cause, but only a relationship (Thompson et al., 2005). Therefore, future research is needed that takes the findings from this study and establishes a causal relationship through a randomized group experimental design that eliminates alternative causes (Odom et al., 2005).

Results from this study and previous self-advocacy studies demonstrated that participants benefit in the area of postsecondary education outcomes. All self-advocacy studies that reported descriptive data of post-training adult outcomes revealed that the participants were involved in postsecondary education at a higher percentage than the national average (Aune, 1991; Hall & Starrett, 2006; Rothman, Maldonado, & Rothman, 2008). Additionally, participants in this study reported higher percentages of postsecondary education attendance; the analysis also indicated that involvement in

TXYLF predicted postsecondary education attendance. Therefore, future research should investigate these relationships in order to further understand the significance and causal factors.

Involvement in self-advocacy was not a significant predictor of adult outcomes in this study. However, self-advocacy theory asserts that a higher level of self-advocacy leads to better adult outcomes (Dalke, 1993; Doren & Miesch, 2011; Eckes & Ochoa, 2005; Eisenman, 2007; Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Lindstrom, Doren, & Miesch, 2011; National Council on Disability, 2008). Future research is needed to understand these results and to investigate alternative causes of positive adult outcomes resulting from self-advocacy training.

Self-advocacy theory supports the hypothesis that participants will continue to practice self-advocacy in order to improve their outcomes after participating in self-advocacy programs (Arndt et al., 2006; Merchant & Gajar, 1997; Martin et al., 2006; Neal & Test, 2010; Test et al., 2005a, 2005b). However, TXYLF was not a significant predictor of self-advocacy involvement this study. Future research is needed that investigates effective means to promote self-advocacy involvement post-training.

Participants mentoring their peers is a variable not often included in self-advocacy interventions. However, mentors in this study demonstrated positive adult outcomes in all areas and the act of serving as a mentor was a predictive variable for all adult outcomes other than inclusive employment. Therefore, future research is needed to establish the cause of these results and to provide data for duplication of these results in practice. The plausible causes and areas for further research include the amount of

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involvement the mentors had in TXYLF, the manner in which the mentors were chosen (i.e., by application or by being recognized as a potential leader), an increase in self-esteem by being chosen to act as a leader as well as being looked at by his or her peers as a leader, and the experience of practicing leadership skills on a statewide level.

Summary

This study's purpose was to examine TXYLF participants' post-training outcomes and the relationships among advocacy involvement and adult outcomes. A correlational research design was used in this study. The results demonstrated that participants' post-training postsecondary education attendance was higher than the national average for adults with disabilities. Participants with low incidence disabilities were involved in inclusive employment more often than the national average. A minority status predicted involvement in secondary education advocacy, having a high incidence disability predicted post-training employment, and being under 21 years old predicted post-training independent living, involvement in postsecondary education advocacy, and involvement in employment advocacy. Involvement in TXYLF from the nine month support phase to involvement as a mentor predicted post-training employment. Furthermore, involvement in TXYLF as a mentor predicted post-training employment, postsecondary education, and independent living. No significant relationships were observed for the TXYLF components and involvement in self-advocacy or the relationship of self-advocacy and adult-outcomes. Future research is needed that takes the findings from this study and establishes a causal relationship through a randomized group experimental design that eliminates alternative causes.

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APPENDIX A

TXYLF PARTICIPANT APPLICATION

WE ARE INVITING FUTURE LEADERS TO ATTEND OUR ANNUAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM
FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

JULY 25th through the 29th, 2011
AT ST. EDWARDS UNIVERSITY CAMPUS
AUSTIN, TEXAS

- 30 Delegates, high school juniors and seniors, will be selected from qualified applicants across the state of Texas.
- No charge to selected delegates (all expenses paid)
- Exciting educational four-day training program includes a tour of the State Capitol, a meeting with state level officials and one day of mock legislative sessions.

****

DEADLINE FOR POSTMARK ON MAILED APPLICATION: March 31, 2011
Delegates must complete ALL information on pages 1 through 6 of this application.
Please type or print.
Mail, email, electronically submit on our webpage, or fax the application to the address on page 5.

1.
Applicant's Last Name   First   Middle

2.
Residence Address   City   State   County   Zip

3.
Mailing Address, if different than above   City   State   Zip

4.   **5**.

174

(Area code) Home Telephone Number   e-mail address

6.   **7**.
   Name of High School attending   Expected Date of Graduation or
                                        Graduation Date if applicable

8. Birth date:

9. **(optional question)**
Please specify your gender:

☐ Male   ☐ Female
Please specify your ethnicity:
☐ American Indian or   ☐ African American, Black   ☐ Asian or Pacific Islander
   Alaskan Native
☐ Hispanic or Latino   ☐ White, Non-Hispanic   ☐ Other

10. What is the name of your disability?

11. How would you describe your primary disability?
☐ Cognitive   ☐ Emotional/Behavioral   ☐ Health
☐ Hearing   ☐ Learning   ☐ Mobility
☐ Psychiatric   ☐ Visual   ☐ Other

If you checked <u>other</u> please explain:

12. Are you currently working with Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative
Services (DARS)?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

If yes, what is your DARS counselor's:

Name   contact information

13. Please list current Reading Grade Level:

14. Please list name, address, phone number and email address of academic advisor or
counselor

Name   address   phone number   e-mail address

15. Please provide your current cumulative grade point average:

175

16. Please respond to the following:

State Senate Representative's Name	District Number

State House Representative's Name	District Number

17. Name of Local News Source (list at least one):

18. Are you a member of a local YLF?

☐ Abilene ☐ El Paso ☐ Lufkin

Below, please briefly list your involvement with your school and community. This may include any offices held, club memberships, after-school activities or work experiences. List the length of involvement, the grade level you were in at the time of participation, and the name of an adult you worked with. Feel free to attach additional sheets if necessary.

School Activities

Name of Activity	Adult Contact	Dates From/To	Grade Level

Community/Volunteer Activities

Name of Activity	Adult Contact	Dates From/To	Grade Level

Employment Experiences

Employer	Dates	Position	Grade Level

Required Essay
    Your answers to the following questions will be used to assess your readiness to participate in this leadership forum. Please write/type your responses **on a separate paper** and attach to your completed application packet. Your total response **cannot** exceed 1-2 type-written, double space pages. For individuals who have difficulty writing, a video or DVD may be substituted as long as the material includes the information mentioned below.

       (a) **Qualifications**- Explain why you feel you are qualified to be a delegate to this forum and what you hope to gain from the experience.

       (b) **Positive Influence** –In terms of leadership, please tell us about two people who have had a positive influence in your life and why. These people could include but are not limited to teachers, family members, counselors, friends, public officials or celebrities.

       (c) **Future Plans –** Describe any of your plans for after high school graduation and any steps you have made towards meeting these goals.

Reference Letters:
Please use the two attached reference letters at the end of this form which describe your demonstrated leadership potential. One letter **must** be from an academic source and one letter **must** come from a community representative. The community representative letter **must** come from a Youth Leadership Forum representative if you are involved with regional Youth Leadership Forum activities.

Please use the check list below to make certain your application packet is complete. All questions must be answered and requested letters of recommendation and essay must be provided.

Required Items	Enclosed
(1) Application Form (6) Pages	
(2) Two letters of reference	
(3) Essay (response to 3 topics)	

_____

    _____

Signature of Student   Date

Thank you for completing this application. Please mail, email, or fax the application to the address below.

Mail:
Texas Youth Leadership Forum
Eric Roberts
Texas A&M University

Department of Educational Psychology
4225 Texas A&M University
College Station, Texas 77842-4225
Fax:
Attn: Eric Roberts
979-862-1256
Email:
txylf@tamu.edu
If you have any questions please contact Eric Roberts at (979) 458-4168 or email:
eric.roberts@tamu.edu

REFERENCE FORM (#1)

TO THE APPLICANT

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE APPLICANT'S

Name (Last)	(First)	(Middle)

City	State	Zip Code

The Texas Youth Leadership Forum Selection Committee must receive this form by April 1st.
The comments will be used for Texas Youth Leadership Forum selection purposes only.

Permission: I hereby request that you complete and furnish this reference information to the Texas Youth Leadership Forum.

Student or Parent Signature:
_____

TO THE REFERENCE

The person named above is an applicant for the Texas Youth Leadership Forum. The Selection Committee attaches considerable weight to the statements made by the references of the applicant. The Committee is mindful of the time necessary to prepare this reference and gratefully acknowledges your help.

Please return this form by Aril 1, 2010, to the Texas Youth Leadership Forum.

Texas Youth Leadership Forum
Eric Roberts
Texas A&M University
Department of Educational Psychology

4225 Texas A&M University
College Station, Texas 77842-4225

Name of Reference _____

Position/Title_____

School/Firm/Organization _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone Number _____

INFORMATION

1. For how long and in what capacity have you known the applicant:

_____
_____
_____
____

2. What do you consider the applicant's primary talents or strengths:

_____
_____
_____
____

3. Comments on the applicant's relationships with his or her peers:

_____
_____
_____
____

4. Please use the scale below to compare the applicant with other high school students you have known.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Unable to Judge
Character					
Concern for others					
Responsibility					
Leadership					
Self-Initiative					
Curiosity					

Ability to work with others					
Maturity					
Communication Skills					
Determination					
Interest in community affairs					

5. Please comment generally on the applicant's ability to communicate with others, his or her behavior in a group setting (participant or observer?), interest in community affairs and potential for becoming a community leader. Attach an additional sheet if necessary.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

_____   _____/_____/_____
         Signature of Reference   Date

REFERENCE FORM (#2)

TO THE APPLICANT

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE APPLICANT'S

Name (Last)	(First)	(Middle)
City	State	Zip Code

The Texas Youth Leadership Forum Selection Committee must receive this form by April 1st.
The comments will be used for Texas Youth Leadership Forum selection purposes only.

Permission: I hereby request that you complete and furnish this reference information to the Texas Youth Leadership Forum.

      Student or Parent Signature:

_____

TO THE REFERENCE

The person named above is an applicant for the Texas Youth Leadership Forum. The Selection Committee attaches considerable weight to the statements made by the references of the applicant. The Committee is mindful of the time necessary to prepare this reference and gratefully acknowledges your help.

Please return this form by Aril 1, 2010, to the Texas Youth Leadership Forum.

Texas Youth Leadership Forum
Eric Roberts
Texas A&M University
Department of Educational Psychology
4225 Texas A&M University
College Station, Texas 77842-4225

Name of Reference _____

Position/Title_____

School/Firm/Organization _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone Number _____

INFORMATION

1. For how long and in what capacity have you known the applicant:

_____
_____
_____

2. What do you consider the applicant's primary talents or strengths:

_____
_____
_____

3. Comments on the applicant's relationships with his or her peers:

_____
_____
_____

4. Please use the scale below to compare the applicant with other high school students you have known.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Unable to Judge
Character					
Concern for others					
Responsibility					
Leadership					
Self-Initiative					
Curiosity					
Ability to work with others					
Maturity					
Communication Skills					
Determination					
Interest in community affairs					

5. Please comment generally on the applicant's ability to communicate with others, his or her behavior in a group setting (participant or observer?), interest in community

affairs and potential for becoming a community leader. Attach an additional sheet if necessary.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

_____   _____/_____/_____
        Signature of Reference   Date

APPENDIX B

TXYLF SCORRING GUIDE

YLF Applicant Scoring Form

Applicant Name: _____

Evidence of Leadership Qualities derived from reference form	Mark the box that fits the best		
Evidence of Leadership Qualities derived from application and/or essay (i.e., a member of a school organization, a student representative in an organization, volunteers in community, involved with regional YLF, etc.)	3 or more examples of leadership ability	2 examples of leadership ability	Zero to 1 example of leadership ability
Evidence of self-advocacy derived from reference form, application and/or essay (i.e., has good communication skills (reference), shows responsibility (reference and essay), able to recognize positive qualities in others that they seek to copy (essay), aware of the need to be self determined (essay-qualifications), involved with regional YLF, etc.)	3 or more examples of self advocacy experience	2 examples of self advocacy experience	Zero to 1 example of self advocacy experience
Evidence of legislative advocacy derived from reference form, application and/or essay (i.e., knows state representative (application), aware of media sources in area (application), knows local representatives (application), knows state representatives (application), has advocated for policy change school or community, involved with regional YLF, etc.)	3 or more examples of legislative advocacy experience	2 examples of legislative advocacy	Zero to 1 example of self advocacy experience

Applicant Scoring Form (Continued)

Applicant Name: _____

Evidence of Leadership Qualities derived from reference form	Mark the box that fits the best		
Qualifications included willingness to learn leadership and advocacy qualities to utilize now and in the future derived from essay	3 or more examples	2 examples	Zero to 1 example
Future plans included goals and objectives for leadership and advocacy in adult life after graduation derived from essay	3 or more examples	2 examples	Zero to 1 example
Minority Applicant (may apply to ethnicity or gender)	+5		
Under-represented geographic region and/or disability type (from the Texas valley or panhandle; has less common disability)	+5		
Total Points			

Any additional comments:

Thank you!

APPENDIX C

TXYLF MENTOR APPLICATION

MENTOR/FACILITATOR APPLICATION

Fax your application to 979-862-1256or mail it postmarked no later than <u>April 15, 2010</u> to:

Texas Youth Leadership Forum c/o Eric Roberts

Department of Educational Psychology

4225 Texas A&M University
College Station, Texas 77842-4225

If you have questions, contact Eric Roberts at 979-458-4168 or eric.roberts@tamu.edu.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

_____
Last Name   First

_____
Address   City   State   Zip

_____
Home Phone Number (include area code)   Fax Number (include area code)

_____
Work Phone Number (include area code)   Email Address

_____
Birth Date (MM/DD/YY)   Social Security Number

T-Shirt Size: S   M   L   XL   2XL   3XL

Explain your interest in being a YLF mentor.
_____
QUALIFICATIONS
Educational_____
_____
_____
Professional _____

_____

_____

Technical _____

_____

Other _____

_____

REFERENCES
Please provide two references.

(1)
_____
       Last Name   First

_____
Address   City   State   Zip

_____
     Phone Number (include area code)   Email Address
(2)
_____
       Last Name   First

_____
Address   City   State

_____
     Phone Number (include area code)   Email Address
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
If applicable, please specify your disability.

_____
Would you require any accommodations in the following areas?

       Housing   No   Yes
       Transportation   No   Yes
       Meals   No   Yes
       Communication   No   Yes
       Other   No   Yes (please describe):

_____   _____

- *I understand and give my consent to a KBI background check.*
- *I understand that the people I listed as references will be contacted.*
- *I understand the requirements of the position for which I am applying.*
- *I understand the commitment to participate for the entire session and that I will be required to stay on campus in the dorm for the entire YLF and attend all staff meetings.*
- *I understand that my lodging, transportation and meals will be provided.*

- *I understand that—along with the rest of the volunteers—I am responsible for the supervision of student delegates and am legally responsible for my actions while at YLF.*
- *I understand that I am responsible for my actions and do not hold Texas YLF liable for those actions or the ramifications of those actions.*
- *I give my permission for the Texas Youth Leadership Forum to print or publish photographs and video of me, and to use quotations from me for YLF publicity efforts.*

_____

Signature   Date

APPENIX D

RECRUITMENT FLYER

Were you a Delegate at TX YLF?

Enter a Drawing for One of Seven $25 Gift Cards!
Amazon.com, Target, or Walmart

To enter the drawing simply complete a short survey
telling us what you have done since attending TX YLF.

To complete the survey go to:
https://tamucehd.qualtrics.com//SE/?SID=SV_6QLVl9jSFpKfnJG

If you are under 18 or have an Intellectual Disability and a legal guardian please have a parent or guardian present when you begin the survey.

You can receive help completing the survey from a parent, guardian, or YLF's Eric Roberts. To receive help from Eric completing the survey or to ask questions about the survey please call him at 979-458-4168 or email him at eric.roberts@tamu.edu.

The survey is part of a research study to determine the effectiveness of TX YLF. The results may help other entities run similar programs better, help others know the importance of programs like TX YLF, and help the research field know the effects of programs like TX YLF. Participation in the study is volunteer and you may withdraw from the study for any reason.

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APPENIX E

RECRUITMENT EMAIL SCRIPT

Did you attend TX YLF?

Enter a Drawing for One of Seven $25 Gift Cards!
Amazon.com, Target, or Walmart

To enter the drawing simply complete a short survey telling us what you have done since attending TX YLF and where you are now.

To complete the survey go to:
https://tamucehd.qualtrics.com//SE/?SID=SV_6QLVl9jSFpKfnJG
Once you have completed the survey you will be prompted to enter your name and address where the gift card can be sent if your name is drawn.
If you are under 18 or you have a legal guardian please have a parent or guardian present when you begin the survey.

You can receive help completing the survey from a parent, guardian, or YLF's Eric Roberts. To receive help from Eric completing the survey or to ask questions about the survey please him at call 979-458-4168 or email him at eric.roberts@tamu.edu.

The survey is part of a research study to determine the effectiveness of TX YLF. The results may help other entities run similar programs better, and help others know the effects of programs like TX YLF. Participation in the survey is volunteer and you may withdraw from the study for any reason.

APPENIX F

RECRUITMENT PHONE SCRIPT

"Hi [*potential participant's name*], my name is Eric Roberts with Texas YLF and I am a PhD student working under the supervision of Dr. Zhang at Texas A&M University. I am contacting you because you attended Texas YLF as a delegate in [*2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, or 2011*]. The reason I'm calling is that we are conducting a study with former YLF delegates to see where they are now to help others see the importance of YLF and programs like YLF, and I wondered if you would be interested in hearing more about the study."

[IF NO] Thank you for your time. Good-bye.

[IF YES] Continue

"Participation in this study involves answering questions in an online survey. The questions include demographic information, information about self-advocacy activities, and information about what you are doing as far as work, community living, and education. I can help you go through the study by asking you the questions and inputting the answers on my end or you can visit the survey and answer the questions on your own or with help from a parent, a guardian, or me. Participation in this study would take approximately 20 minutes to 1 hour of your time; depending on how quickly you answer the questions. In appreciation of your time commitment, you can enter to receive one of seven $25 gift cards from Target, Amazon.com, or Walmart at the end of the survey. However, the final decision about participation is yours. Completing the survey is volunteer and you can choose to not complete the survey at anytime.

Would you be interested in participating?"

[If NO] Thank you for your time. Good-bye.

[IF YES] Thank you; we appreciate your interest in our study!

 "Would you like to go through the survey now while I on the phone with you?"

[If NO] "OK, well you can get to the survey by going to https://tamucehd.qualtrics.com//SE/?SID=SV_6QLVl9jSFpKfnJG. I can also email the survey address to you if that would be easier for you."

[If YES] "OK, would you like me to ask you the questions and enter your answers or do you want to visit the site and have my help?

You can get to the survey by going to https://tamucehd.qualtrics.com//SE/?SID=SV_6QLVl9jSFpKfnJG"

"Thank you for you help with our study."

APPENIX G

SURVEY INSTRUMENT (WORD DOCUMENT VERSION)

TXYLF Adult Outcomes Survey

Please Complete this Survey for a Chance to Win a $25 Gift Card!   Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to answer the following survey questions. The survey has four parts (demographic section, self-advocacy section, home/school/employment section, and gift card drawing entry section). When you complete the survey please enter your contact information to enter the drawing for one of seven $25 gift cards. You must complete the survey and submit the survey to enter the drawing. Winners will select to receive a gift card of their choice from Amazon, Target or Walmart. You may receive help completing the survey and if you need my assistance completing the survey please contact me at eric.roberts@tamu.edu to schedule a time. If you need immediate assistance with the survey please contact me at 979-845-4168 or 409-356-3979.Completion of the survey is volunteer, it is your choice to complete the survey or not, and you can choose to not complete the survey for any reason once you have begun.   Thank You! Eric Roberts

Are you 18 years old or older?
❍ Yes (1)
❍ No (2)
If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Click to write the question text

Are you your own legal guardian?
❍ Yes (1)
❍ No (2)
If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To You are invited to take part in a res...

If you are seeing this screen then you MUST have a parent or guardian provide consent to allow your participation in the survey. (If your parent or guardian is not with you at the moment you may return to the survey at a later time when he or she can provide consent in the next screen.)
❍ YES, my parent or guardian is with me to provide consent in the next screen. (1)
❍ No, my parent or guardian is not with me to provide consent in the next screen. (2)
If No, my parent or guardian i... Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Your child (or the person in your guardianship) is invited to take part in a research study being conducted by Texas A&M University researchers. The information in this documentation is provided to help you and your child (or the person in your guardianship) decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to allow your child or the person in your guardianship to take part in the study, you will be asked provide consent. If you decide you do not want your child to participate, there will be no penalty to you, or your child (or the person in your guardianship), and your child (or the person in your guardianship) will not lose any benefits they normally would have.   Why Is This Study Being Done? The purpose of this study is to discover what advocacy activities, if any, people who participated in TX YLF have done since attending YLF and to discover

where participants of TX YLF are in the areas of community living, employment, and post-secondary education.   Why is My Child Being Asked to Be in This Study? Your child (or the person in your guardianship)is being asked to be in this study because your child (or the person in your guardianship) participated in TX YLF during the years of 2007 to 2011.   How Many People Will Be Asked To Be In This Study? All 150 former TX YLF participants, from all over the state of Texas, will be invited to participate in this study.   What Are the Alternatives to being in this study? The alternative to being in the study is not to participate by selecting "NO I do not want my child (or the person in your guardianship)to take part in the study." or by exiting out of the survey.   What Will My Child Be Asked To Do In This Study? Your child will be asked to answer up to 47 survey questions (only relevant questions, depending on provided answers, will be displayed. Participation in this study will last up to 1 hour.   Will Photos, Video or Audio Recordings Be Made Of My Child during the Study? No.   Are There Any Risks To My Child? The things that your child will be doing are no more risks than your child would come across in everyday life.   Will There Be Any Costs To My Child? Aside from his or her time, there are no costs for taking part in the study.   Will My Child Be Paid To Be In This Study? Your child will not be paid for being in this study. By completing the survey your child (or the person in your guardianship) may enter a drawing for one of seven $25 gift cards, therefore, there is no payment for participation but names may be drawn to receive a gift card for those who complete the survey and choose to enter the drawing.   Will Information From This Study Be Kept Private? The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking your child to this study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely and only Eric Roberts, and Dalun Zhang will have access to the records.   Information about your child will be stored in computer files protected with a password.   Information about your child will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law. People who have access to your information include the Principal Investigator and research study personnel. Representatives of regulatory agencies such as the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) and entities such as the Texas A&M University Human Subjects Protection Program may access your child's records to make sure the study is being run correctly and that information is collected properly.   Who may I Contact for More Information? You may contact the Principal Investigator, Eric Roberts, to tell him/her about a concern or complaint about this research at 979-356-3979 or eric.roberts@tamu.edu. You may also contact the Protocol Director, Dalun Zhang at 979-676-2286 or dalun@tamu.edu.   For questions about your child's rights as a research participant; or if you have questions, complaints, or concerns about the research, you may call the Texas A&M University Human Subjects Protection Program office at (979) 458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.   What if I Change My Mind About Participating? This research is voluntary and you have the choice whether or not to allow your child (or the person in your guardianship)to be in this research study. Your child (or the person in your guardianship)may decide to not begin or to stop participating at any time.   If he or she chooses not to be in this study or stop being in the study, there will be no effect on his or her relationship with TX YLF staff, or Texas A&M University.   STATEMENT OF CONSENT The procedures, risks, and benefits of this study have been provided to

me and I agree to allow my child to be in this study. My questions have been answered. I may ask more questions whenever I want. I do not give up any of my child's or my legal rights by signing this form. A copy of this consent form maybe downloaded from the link below.   By selecting "YES, I am the parent or guardian and I understand the agreement and I agree to take allow participation in the study." I am providing my consent to the above agreement.   Parental permission form

○ YES, I am the parent or guardian, I understand the agreement and I agree to allow participation in the study. (1)
○ NO, I do not want my child (or the person in your guardianship)to take part in the study. (2)

If NO I do not want to want to... Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

You are being asked to join a research study. A research study is a science project that is trying to answer a question. This research study is trying to see what people who went to YLF have done since going to YLF. To do this, we will need to answer the survey questions; you can answer the survey questions with help from a parent, guardian, or YLF staff person Eric Roberts.   You do not have to be in this research study and you can stop at any time by exiting out of the survey; your answers will not be recorded unless you get the survey completed screen at the end of the survey. If you have any questions, you can talk to your parents, your guardian, or Eric Roberts.   If you have any questions for Eric Roberts please call him at 979-458-4168 or email him at 979-458-4168   If you do not have any questions and you agree to take part in the study please select "YES I understand the agreement and I agree to take part in the study by completing the survey "below.   If you choose not to participate in the study please select "NO I do not want to want to take part in the study. "below. Assent form

○ YES, I understand the agreement and I agree to take part in the study by completing the survey. (1)
○ NO, I do not want to want my child (or the person in your guardianship)to take part in the study. (2)

If NO I do not want to want my... Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey If YES ... Is Selected, Then Skip To Are you receiving help completing the...

Answer If Are you 18 years old or older? Yes Is Selected Or Are you your own legal guardian? Yes Is Selected
You are invited to take part in a research study being conducted by Texas A&M University researchers. The information in this form is provided to help you decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part in the study, you will be asked to provide consent by selecting "YES I understand the agreement and I agree to take part in the study by completing the survey." If you decide you do not want to participate, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits you normally would have.   Why Is This Study Being Done? The purpose of this study is to discover what advocacy activities, if any, people who participated in TX YLF have done since attending YLF and to discover where participants of TX YLF are in the areas of community living, employment, and post-secondary education.   Why Am I Being

Asked To Be In This Study? You are being asked to be in this study because you participated in TX YLF during the years of 2007 to 2011..   How Many People Will Be Asked To Be In This Study? All 150 former TX YLF participants, from all over the state of Texas, will be invited to participate in this study.   What Are the Alternatives to being in this study? The alternative to being in the study is not to participate by selecting "NO I do not want to want to take part in the study" or by not answering the survey questions.   What Will I Be Asked To Do In This Study? You will be asked to answer up to 47 survey questions (only questions relevant to you, depending on your answers, will be displayed. Your participation in this study will last up to 1 hour.   Will Photos, Video or Audio Recordings Be Made Of Me during the Study? No.   Are There Any Risks To Me? The things that you will be doing are no more risks than you would come across in everyday life.   Will There Be Any Costs To Me? Aside from your time, there are no costs for taking part in the study.   Will I Be Paid To Be In This Study? You will not be paid for being in this study. By completing the survey you may enter a drawing for one of seven $25 gift cards, therefore, you will not be paid for participation but your name may be drawn to receive a gift card if you complete the survey and choose to enter the drawing.   Will Information From This Study Be Kept Private? The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely and only Eric Roberts, and Dalun Zhang will have access to the records.   Information about you will be stored in computer files protected with a password.   Information about you will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law. People who have access to your information include the Principal Investigator and research study personnel. Representatives of regulatory agencies such as the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) and entities such as the Texas A&M University Human Subjects Protection Program may access your records to make sure the study is being run correctly and that information is collected properly.   Who may I Contact for More Information? You may contact the Principal Investigator, Eric Roberts, to tell him about a concern or complaint about this research at 979-458-4186 or eric.roberts@tamu.edu. You may also contact the Protocol Director, Dalun Zhang at 979-676-2286 or dalun@tamu.edu.   For questions about your rights as a research participant; or if you have questions, complaints, or concerns about the research, you may call the Texas A&M University Human Subjects Protection Program office at (979) 458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.   What if I Change My Mind About Participating? This research is voluntary and you have the choice whether or not to be in this research study. You may decide to not begin or to stop participating at any time.   If you choose not to be in this study or stop being in the study, there will be no effect on your relationship with TX YLF staff or Texas A&M University.   STATEMENT OF CONSENT I agree to be in this study and know that I am not giving up any legal rights by taking part in this survey. The procedures, risks, and benefits have been explained to me, and my questions have been answered. I can ask more questions if I want.   A copy of this entire consent form can be downloaded by clicking on the link below.   By selecting "YES I understand the agreement and I agree to take part in the study by completing the survey" I am providing my consent to the above agreement. Consent form

○ YES, I understand the agreement and I agree to take part in the study by completing the survey. (1)
○ NO, I do not want to want to take part in the study. (2)
If NO I do not want to want to... Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Are you receiving help completing the survey?
○ A parent or guardian is helping me complete the survey. (1)
○ A YLF staff member is helping me complete the survey. (2)
○ No (3)

Demographic Section

What year did you attend Texas Statewide Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) as a delegate?
○ 2007 (1)
○ 2008 (2)
○ 2009 (3)
○ 2010 (4)
○ 2011 (5)

Did you attend Camp Summit?
○ Yes (1)
○ No (2)

Did you attend other year(s) as a mentor or volunteer?
○ Yes (1)
○ No (2)

Answer If Did you attend other year(s) as a mentor or volunteer? Yes Is Selected
What years did you attend as a volunteer and/ or a mentor?

Have you attended a Regional YLF (El Paso, Abilene, or Lufkin)?
○ Yes (1)
○ No (2)

Answer If Have you been involved in a Regional YLF (El Paso, Abilen... Yes Is Selected
Which regional YLF you were involved in.
○ Abilene (1)
○ El Paso (2)
○ Lufkin (3)

Please select your disability type(s).
- ❑ Learning Disability (1)
- ❑ Intellectual Disability (2)
- ❑ Mobility Disability (3) _____
- ❑ Visual Impairment (4)
- ❑ Hearing Impairment (5)
- ❑ Autism Spectrum (6)
- ❑ Other (7) _____

What is your gender.
- ❍ Male (1)
- ❍ Female (2)

What is your ethnicity.
- ❍ White not Hispanic (1)
- ❍ Hispanic (2)
- ❍ African American (3)
- ❍ Asian (4)
- ❍ American Indian (5)
- ❍ Other (6) _____

Please list your age.

Self-Advocacy Section
This is not a test! I only want to know what you have done since attending YLF. In each section please think about your most recent experience and choose the best answer to describe the event. Thank you for helping with this!

Educational Advocacy

Before leaving high school I led my ARD meeting at least once other than for a YLF project.
- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

While in high school I advocated for change or disability awareness. If you select "yes" please write the cause or reason you advocated.
- ❑ Yes (1)
- ❑ No (2)
- ❑ Cause/reason (3) _____

I have attended classes in a post-secondary education setting (college, university, or technical school).

○ Yes (1)
○ No (2)
If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Independent living advocacy

I spoke with my post-secondary education's disability services.
❑ Before applying to the school (1)
❑ Before beginning school but after getting accepted in the school (2)
❑ After running into academic difficulty (3)
❑ To resolve an issue when not receiving accommodations (4)
❑ Other (5) _____
❑ No (6)

I spoke with my professor or instructor about receiving accommodations or assistance.
❑ Before ever enrolling in the class (1)
❑ Before the class began (2)
❑ On the first day or soon after the class began (3)
❑ After running into difficulty (4)
❑ To resolve an issue when not receiving accommodations or assistance (5)
❑ Other (6) _____
❑ No (7)

Independent Living Advocacy

I have made my own appointments or independently contacted adult service providers.
❑ Medical appointments (doctor, dentist, counseling, etc.) (1)
❑ DARS/DBS (2)
❑ Workforce Solutions (3)
❑ Other disability service agencies (4) _____
❑ Other (5) _____
❑ No (6)

I choose what community services I use and when I change those services.
○ Yes (1)
○ No (2)

I have achieved personal goal(s) allowing me to live out a dream.
❑ Made it into a post-secondary education program (community college, university, technical school, etc.) (1)
❑ Gained employment at my choice job (2)
❑ Moved into the place where I wanted (out of parents house, out of an agency home) (3)
❑ Other (4)
❑ No (5)

I have described my disability or my strengths and needs related to my disability when asked or confronted.
- ❑ When others have asked (1)
- ❑ When others have stared or made a remark (2)
- ❑ When others tried to help too much (3)
- ❑ To help others know how to best help me (4)
- ❑ Other (5) _____
- ❑ No (6)

Employment Advocacy

I asked for accommodations at work or described my strengths and needs related to my disability to improve my work conditions.
- ❍ Interpreter (1)
- ❍ Assistive technology (2)
- ❍ Greater mobility access (3)
- ❍ Better environmental conditions (4)
- ❍ Other (5) _____
- ❍ No (6)

When not treated fairly by someone I have stood-up for my rights.
- ❑ I was able to do so in a respectful manner (1)
- ❑ I was unable to resolve the problem (2)
- ❑ What I had to advocate for/against (3) _____
- ❑ No (4)

I have independently contacted DARS/DBS or another service agency to improve my job skills.
- ❍ I contacted DARS/DBS (1)
- ❍ I contacted another agency to improve my job skills. (please list the agency) (2)
  _____
- ❍ No (3)

I have described the rights and responsibilities addressed by the disability rights laws ADA or 504 to others I work with.
- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

Community Advocacy

I advocated for change.
- ❑ Attended an advocacy conference or workshop to increase my knowledge (1)
- ❑ Attended an event advocating for change (2)
- ❑ Spoke with someone at a business or facility about needed changes (3)

❑ Other (4) _____
❑ No (5)

I have taken a leadership position in an organization or project. If you have taken a leadership position please list the role, or responsibility.
❑ Organization elected position (1)
❑ Organization volunteer position (2)
❑ Project seeking to bring change or awareness (3)
❑ Role (4) _____
❑ Responsibility (5) _____
❑ No (6)

I spoke or wrote to my representative or I signed a petition for change. If you have wrote you representative or signed a petition please list the reason or the cause.
❑ Local (1)
❑ State (2)
❑ Federal (3)
❑ Reason/cause (4) _____
❑ No (5)

I gave a testimonial in front of a panel of government representative other than during YLF.
❑ Yes (1)
❑ No (2)
❑ Reason/cause (3) _____
Is there any advocacy activity you would like to include?

home/school/employment section

Home

Did you graduate from high school?
○ Yes (1)
○ No (2)

Answer If Did you graduate from high school? Yes Is Selected
What year did you graduate high school?

Answer If Did you graduate from high school? No Is Selected
Have you earned a GED?
○ Yes (1)
○ No (2)

❍ I am working on earning a GED. (3)

Where do you live now? Mark ALL that apply.
❑ With a Parent or foster parent (1)
❑ In a college dorm or military housing (2)
❑ Alone or with a spouse or roommate (3)
❑ With an adult family member who is not a parent (4)
❑ In a group home or other supervised living arrangement (5)
❑ With a legal guardian who is not a family member (6)
❑ In a medical or mental health facility (7)
❑ In a correctional facility or youth detention center (8)
❑ In a residential or boarding other than college (9)
❑ Other (Specify) (10) _____
Post-secondary

Since leaving high school have you attended any post-secondary education classes?

	Community College (1)	Four-Year University (2)	Technical School (3)
Yes (1)	❍	❍	❍
No (2)	❍	❍	❍

Answer If Since leaving high school have you attended any postsecon... Yes - Community College Is Selected And Since leaving high school have you attended any postsecon... Yes - Four-Year University Is Selected And Since leaving high school have you attended any postsecon... Yes - Technical School Is Selected
Are you working toward a diploma, certificate, or license?
❍ Yes (1)
❍ No (taking classes for fun, attending for the experience, etc.) (2)
❍ Already graduated (3)
❍ No longer attending (4)

Answer If Are you working toward a diploma, certificate, or license? No longer attending Is Selected
When you graduated did you earned a diploma, certificate, or license?

	Community College (1)	4-year University (2)	Technical School (3)
Yes (1)	❍	❍	❍
No (2)	❍	❍	❍

What kind of job(s) have your courses trained you for?

Answer If Are you working toward a diploma, certificate, or license? Already graduated
Is Selected
Are you no longer attending because you...
❍ are on vacation. (1)
❍ graduated or completed the program. (2)
❍ some other reason (please specify): (3) _____

Employment

Have you ever had a paid job other than work around the house?
❍ Yes (1)
❍ No (2)
If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Are you currently seeking employment?

Do you have a paid job NOW, other than work around the house?
❍ Yes (1)
❍ No (2)

As part of this job, do you get ...

	Yes (1)	No (2)
Paid vacation or sick leave? (1)	❍	❍
Health insurance? (2)	❍	❍
Retirement benefits, like a 401k? (3)	❍	❍

At your job, do most of the workers have disabilities?
❍ Yes (1)
❍ No (2)

Answer If Have you ever had a paid job other than work around the h... No Is Selected
And Do you have a paid job NOW, other than work around the ho... No Is Selected
Are you currently seeking employment?
❍ Yes (1)
❍ No (2)
❍ I have a job and do not need another (3)

Answer If Are you currently seeking employment? Yes Is Selected
How long have you been seeking employment?

Answer If Are you currently seeking employment? No Is Selected
Why have you decided not to look for work right now? Please select ALL that apply.
❑ I just don't want to look for work right now. (1)

❑ I am raising children and choose not to work right now. (2)
❑ I am going to school or am in a training program. (3)
❑ I don't need or don't want a job right now. (4)
❑ I don't know how to find a job. (5)
❑ I am not interested in the kinds of jobs I could get. (6)
❑ I gave up looking; no one would hire me when I tried to find a job. (7)
❑ There aren't any jobs available. (8)
❑ My family doesn't want me to work. (9)
❑ I don't have any way to get to a job. (10)
❑ I would lose government benefits if I worked (such as SSI). (11)
❑ I am waiting to hear about a job or about to start a job. (12)
❑ Other. (13)

Gift Card Drawing Entry Section!

Please enter your name and address where a gift card can be mailed to you if you win:
Name (1)
Address (2)
Address 2 (3)
City (4)
State (5)
Zip Code (6)

Please select which gift card you would like to win.
❍ Amazon.com (1)
❍ Target (2)
❍ Walmart (3)