

Running head: ENGAGEMENT IN SCOUTREACH

Towards the Promotion of Positive Development among Youth in Challenging Contexts:

A Mixed-Methods Study of Engagement in the ScoutReach Program

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## Abstract

The experiences of male youth of color in urban and lower-income communities (e.g., related to exposure to racism, antisocial behaviors, and conflicting cultural norms in regard to masculine identity and behavior) may constrain their capacity to develop positive self-judgments and hopeful future-oriented beliefs. However, these youth may have access to external resources that buffer them against potential contextual risk factors. Youth development (YD) programs (e.g., Boy Scouts of America [BSA]) may represent key ecological developmental assets in the individual ↔ context developmental systems of these youth that are linked to thriving and reduced likelihood of problematic developmental trajectories. Engagement is an important dimension of participation in YD programs that reflects the quality of young people's involvement, their degree of investment, and how they make meaning of their experiences. However, more research is needed that explores cognitive, emotional, *and* behavioral dimensions of engagement in YD programs that serve underrepresented male youth.

Accordingly, this cross-sectional and mixed-methods study, informed by relational developmental systems metatheory and the Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory, sought to enrich understanding of the experiences of male youth of color in ScoutReach, an arm of BSA that aims to make Scouting more accessible to culturally diverse youth from lower-resource communities. I analyzed questionnaire data from 32 Scouts enrolled in two ScoutReach units in the greater Boston area, interview data from 10 Scouts, 10 parents/guardians, and five program leaders, and short-answer questionnaire responses from 32 parents/guardians. These analyses primarily explored different dimensions of youth engagement in the program and relations among these dimensions and indicators of positive and potentially problematic youth development.

Quantitative results suggested that Scouts demonstrated different dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach, and that these dimensions were related differentially to indicators of positive and potentially problematic youth development. Qualitative results revealed similarities and differences in stakeholder groups' views of ScoutReach and how the program may be impacting youth development. These data also elucidated aspects of the program context that were linked to youth engagement. For instance, whereas Scouts and program leaders primarily described camping and other outdoor activities as strongly linked to youth engagement and positive development, parents/guardians more strongly emphasized Scouts' interpersonal relationships in the program. When analyzed together, these quantitative and qualitative findings indicated nuanced relations among dimensions of engagement and indicators of youth development and, as well, nuances in individuals' perceptions of (and experiences in) ScoutReach and Scouts' communities. I discuss limitations of the study and potential implications for future research and practice.

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**Table of Contents**

Abstract .....	ii
Acknowledgments .....	iv
Table of Contents .....	v
List of Tables .....	vi
Chapter 1: Introduction .....	1
Chapter 2: Method .....	29
Chapter 3: Quantitative Results .....	65
Chapter 4: Qualitative Results .....	76
Chapter 5: Discussion .....	137
References .....	171
Appendix A: Scout Questionnaire .....	193
Appendix B: Parent/Guardian Questionnaire .....	213
Appendix C: Semi-Structured Scout Interview Protocol .....	220
Appendix D: Semi-Structured Parent/Guardian Interview Protocol .....	222
Appendix E: Semi-Structured Pack Leader Interview Protocol .....	224
Appendix F: Final Version of Scout Interview Codebook .....	226
Appendix G: Final Version of Parent/Guardian Interview Codebook .....	235
Appendix H: Final Version of Pack Leader Interview Codebook .....	249
Appendix I: Final Version of Parent/Guardian Short-Answer Response Codebook .....	261

**List of Tables**

Table 1. Scale Descriptive Statistics .....	190
Table 2. Correlations among dimensions of engagement, program involvement, and indicators of positive development .....	191
Table 3. Correlations among indicators of positive development corrected for attenuation due to measurement error .....	192

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Multidisciplinary scholarship suggests that the experiences of boys and young men of color in urban and economically disadvantaged communities in the United States (U.S.) may constrain their capacity to develop positive self-judgments, hopeful future-oriented beliefs, and personal agency (e.g., Cunningham, Corprew, & Becker, 2009; Spencer, Swanson, & Harpalani, 2015), and may place them at risk of unhealthy developmental trajectories (e.g., Dill & Ozer, 2015; Foney & Cunningham, 2002). In particular, exposure to racism and negative stereotypes (e.g., Liu, Bolland, Dick, Mustanski, & Kertes, 2015), antisocial behaviors (e.g., Dill & Ozer, 2015), and conflicting cultural norms and expectations in regard to masculine identity and behavior (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2009; Spencer, Fegley, Harpalani, & Seaton, 2004) may be difficult for some male youth of color to navigate. These potential challenges may be especially salient during adolescence, or the second decade of life (e.g., Lerner & Steinberg, 2004). Adolescence is characterized by individual and contextual changes and transitions that may positively and/or negatively impact young people's identity formation, attitudes, and behaviors (e.g., Gestsdóttir, Urban, Bowers, Lerner, & Lerner, 2011; Johnson & Lerner, 2015). Thus, adolescence is a developmental period associated with both opportunity and risk or vulnerability (e.g., Cunningham, Hurley, Foney, & Hayes, 2002).

However, not all male youth of color who are exposed to adversity demonstrate problematic development (e.g., Jain, Buka, Subramanian, & Molnar, 2012; Taylor et al., 2003). These youth may have access to external resources and supports (e.g., mentors and out-of-school time [OST] programs) that buffer youth against potential contextual risk factors (e.g., Francois, Overstreet, & Cunningham, 2011). To enhance understanding of why some boys and young men of color demonstrate healthy development despite their exposure to potentially stressful and

challenging circumstances, more research is needed that explores the experiences of these youth in different contexts (e.g., home, school, and community), how they make meaning of their experiences, and how their experiences, in turn, may impact their development (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2002; Cunningham, Swanson, & Hayes, 2013). In particular, more comprehensive research is needed that explores the experiences of ethnically and racially diverse boys and young men who participate in OST programs, and if and how these youth demonstrate program engagement, or meaningful involvement and sustained participation (e.g., Bohnert, Fredricks, & Randall, 2010; Ramey et al., 2015). This sustained participation and meaningful involvement may, in turn, help these young men to gain the most from their experiences and support their positive development.

Accordingly, the present cross-sectional and mixed-methods study aimed to enrich understanding of the experiences of male youth of color who participated in the Boston-area ScoutReach program during childhood and early adolescence. ScoutReach is an arm of Boy Scouts of America (BSA) that aims to make Scouting more accessible to culturally diverse boys and young men in lower-resource communities, who may face barriers to participation in Scouting and other OST programs (e.g., BSA, 2016; D. Warren, personal communication, January 28, 2016). In this chapter, I describe the theoretical and empirical contexts for this study, and then present the primary research questions that I explored.

### **Adopting a Relational Developmental Systems Approach**

Relational developmental systems (RDS) metathory (e.g., Overton, 2015) represents an ideal frame through which to explore how to optimize the development of youth of color (and youth, more broadly). This holistic and integrated view of human development emphasizes that all youth have strengths and the capacity for healthy growth that results from mutually-

influential individual ↔ context relations (e.g., Overton, 2015; Overton & Lerner, 2014). Youth are hypothesized to thrive when their individual developmental assets or strengths (e.g., confidence, hopeful future expectations, intentional self-regulation skills) are connected with ecological developmental assets, or strengths and resources in their environments (e.g., schools, programs, and mentors; e.g., Lerner, Agans, DeSouza, & Gasca, 2013; Theokas et al., 2005). Although positive youth development (PYD), or thriving, is operationalized in different ways in the literature, the Lerner and Lerner Five Cs Model of PYD (i.e., Competence, Confidence, Character, Caring, and Connection; Lerner et al., 2005) is the most empirically supported framework to date (e.g., Geldhof et al., 2013; Lerner, Lerner, Bowers, & Geldhof, 2015).

RDS metatheory underscores the potential for (at least) relative plasticity in individual ↔ context exchanges (e.g., Lerner, 1984, 2005). Plasticity refers to the potential for systematic changes in the structure and/or function of an individual's developmental trajectory throughout life (e.g., Lerner 1984, 2005). Thus, there is the potential for systematic positive or problematic change across the life span. A key idea in RDS-based models is that it is possible that means may be found to enhance the likelihood of systematic change for the better in the lives of diverse individuals (e.g., Lerner, 2006). However, it is also important to note that characteristics of individuals (e.g., low future orientation) and characteristics of their contexts (e.g., social inequalities) may constrain individuals' capacities for positive developmental change (e.g., Lerner, 2006). Accordingly, as part of efforts to enhance all young people's likelihoods of thriving, it is important to explore how diverse youth navigate potential individual and contextual constraints.

### **The PVEST Framework**

Predicated on RDS metatheory, Margaret Beale Spencer's (1995, 2006)

Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST) is a particularly useful conceptual model for understanding how youth of color in economically disadvantaged contexts perceive social and cultural structures and expectations that, in turn, may impact their judgments of their capabilities and their future-oriented beliefs (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2013). The PVEST framework considers how individuals' interactions with context-linked experiences (e.g., racism and social inequalities) may influence how individuals navigate and make meaning of these experiences (e.g., Spencer et al., 2015). As discussed by Spencer et al. (2015), awareness of racial and economic inequalities can negatively impact young people's self-processes, including their self-appraisals and sense of personal agency.

The PVEST framework is comprised of five bidirectionally-related components that elucidate how individual identity and self-appraisals are formed and may be challenged by sociocultural perceptions and experiences (e.g., Spencer, Fegley, & Harpalani, 2003; Spencer et al., 2015). *Risk contributors* is the first component and refers to risk factors that may elevate an individual's likelihood of adverse developmental outcomes. These factors can include poverty and racial stereotypes, which may negatively shape a young person's view of himself or herself. *Net stress engagement*, the second component of the PVEST framework, refers to the net experiences of situations (e.g., discrimination) that can challenge an individual's identity, self-appraisals, and well-being. *Reactive coping methods* are the third component and may include positive or negative problem-solving strategies that are employed by a young person in response to challenging experiences. As an individual develops, these coping methods become more stable and support the development of the fourth component known as *emergent identities*, which

defines how an individual views himself or herself across different contexts. An individual's identity (which is shaped by social and cultural perceptions and expectations) contributes to *life-stage specific coping outcomes*. This fifth component of the PVEST framework may encompass productive and/or adverse outcomes (e.g., high self-esteem or self-destructive behaviors, respectively).

In short, the components of the PVEST framework suggest how context-linked life experiences play an important role in shaping an individual's perceived agency and pathways to success (e.g., Spencer et al., 2015). This framework may also inform understanding of why some urban male youth of color develop positive identities and engage in socially responsible behaviors, whereas others do not (e.g., Swanson, Cunningham, & Spencer, 2003).

As described by Cunningham et al. (2009), the PVEST framework helps to enrich understanding of potential risk factors and opportunities for growth within a cultural-ecological niche. Risk exposure may be offset by external supports (e.g., mentors and youth-serving programs) that promote positive youth adaptation within the context of adversity (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2009). A key idea reflected in the PVEST is that young people's perceptions and experiences of challenges and supports in different settings need to be assessed to enrich understanding of the potential processes involved in optimal and less than optimal developmental functioning (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2009; Foney & Cunningham, 2002).

Therefore, in the present study, I drew on aspects of RDS metatheory and the PVEST framework to explore the views and experiences of urban male youth of color, as related to their communities and their engagement in a particular youth development program, ScoutReach. The PVEST framework helped to inform the interview protocols that I describe in Chapter 2 (Method), such as questions about potential risk contributors (e.g., Spencer et al., 2015), or

perceived challenges in participants' communities. Components of the PVEST also helped to inform my analysis of the interview data, as described in Chapter 4 (Qualitative Results). In the next section, I review extant research that further helps to elucidate the key components of the PVEST framework.

### **Urban Male Youth of Color: Developmental Challenges and Coping Methods**

An extensive body of research has demonstrated the challenges that ethnically and racially diverse boys and young men in urban, lower-income communities may face in navigating successful pathways to adulthood (e.g., Cunningham, 1999; Shin, Morgan, Buhin, Truitt, & Vera, 2010; Spencer et al., 2015). Their exposure to structural and social challenges such as racism (e.g., Swanson et al., 2003), community violence (e.g., Dill & Ozer, 2015), limited resources and opportunity structures (e.g., Swanson et al., 2003), and conflicting cultural norms, judgments, and expectations in regard to identity and behavior (e.g., Joyce, O'Neil, Stormshak, McWhirter, & Dishion, 2013) are linked to unhealthy developmental outcomes. These outcomes include hopelessness (e.g., Stoddard, Zimmerman, & Bauermeister, 2011b), poor psychological health (e.g., Arbona & Jimenez, 2014), affiliation with deviant peers (e.g., Joyce et al., 2013), and engagement in antisocial behaviors (e.g., Williams, Aiyer, Durkee, & Tolan, 2014).

Most research in this area has explored the experiences of urban African American boys and young men, who, perhaps, are the most stereotyped and stigmatized group in the U.S. (e.g., Cunningham, 1999; Swanson et al., 2003). For instance, Cunningham (1999) examined male African American adolescents' perceptions of resources and constraints in urban and economically disadvantaged communities. He found that adolescents perceived barriers to healthy development in their communities, such as unemployment, poor quality schools, and

violence. Cunningham (1999) also found that negative Black male experiences (e.g., getting stopped and questioned by police) predicted exaggerated masculine attitudes (e.g., bravado, as indexed by items such as “violence is manly”). Bravado can be conceptualized as hypermasculine attitudes and behaviors that emphasize toughness, sexual promiscuity, thrill seeking, and interpersonal violence (e.g., Corprew & Cunningham, 2012). Bravado attitudes and behaviors may represent coping methods employed by male African American youth who perceive themselves as vulnerable to stigmatization and negative stereotypes and unable to assume traditional male roles (e.g., Corprew & Cunningham, 2012).

School contexts may play important roles in positively and/or negatively impacting the attitudes and coping methods of African American boys and young men (e.g., Corprew & Cunningham, 2012). For instance, Corprew and Cunningham (2012) found that, for male African American youth who perceived social support in school, there was a negative relation between reports of bravado attitudes and negative youth experiences. Conversely, for participants who perceived low school support, there was no significant association between bravado attitudes and negative youth experiences. Perceived school support may help to buffer the relation between negative youth experiences and bravado attitudes among male African American youth (Corprew & Cunningham, 2012). In addition, these findings underscore the importance of examining the lived experiences of youth of color, more broadly, and how supportive contexts and resources may promote healthy coping strategies in this population (Corprew & Cunningham, 2012).

Francois et al. (2011) examined the effects of structural and experiential characteristics (e.g., crime rates and personal victimization, respectively) of low-income neighborhoods on the relation between personal exposure to community violence and academic functioning in African American adolescents. They also examined the potential role of participation in community-

based structured activities (e.g., YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs, community service) in young people's community perceptions and experiences. They found, for instance, that when there were fewer opportunities for involvement in community-based structured activities, greater exposure to community violence was linked to poorer academic outcomes for adolescents who spent less time in structured activities.

As Francois et al. (2011) discussed, structured activities may serve a protective function in urban, low-income neighborhoods. These activities may provide a safe space for African American male youth (and youth of color, more broadly) who are exposed to violence and other potentially challenging experiences, and may connect them with other individuals who model effective coping skills (Francois et al., 2011). Structured community-based activities may also provide male youth of color with opportunities to explore issues related to masculinity and to test out roles that are not associated with hypermasculinity (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2013).

Similarly, research exploring the experiences of male (and female) youth from other ethnic and racial backgrounds has suggested developmental challenges associated with perceived negative stereotypes and discrimination (e.g., Greene, Way, & Pahl, 2006; Kuperminc, Wilkins, Roche, & Alvarez-Jimenez, 2009; Perreira, Fuligni, & Potochnick, 2010). For instance, Rosenbloom and Way (2004) examined experiences of discrimination among African American, Asian American, and Latino adolescents in an urban high school. They found that, whereas Asian American students primarily reported physical harassment and discrimination from their non-Asian peers, African American and Latino students primarily perceived discrimination from teachers, police officers, and other individuals in position of authority. As Rosenbloom and Way (2004) discussed, discrimination from peers can negatively impact peer relations and

psychological health, whereas discrimination from adults might have a stronger negative impact on young people's academic- and career-related beliefs and outcomes.

### **Negative Future-Oriented Beliefs**

Additional empirical work examining self-concept, motivation, and future expectations among ethnically and racially diverse youth in economically disadvantaged contexts further demonstrates the challenges that this population may face in constructing positive future-oriented pathways. Developmental research indicates that hopeful future expectations may play an important role in positive youth development (e.g., Callina, Johnson, Buckingham, & Lerner, 2014). However, the experiences of youth of color in economically disadvantaged communities may threaten their abilities to formulate positive goals, expectations, and visions of whom they hope to become (e.g., Bolland, 2003).

For example, in his longitudinal assessment of primarily male adolescents of color living in low-income neighborhoods, Bolland (2003) found that nearly 50% of boys reported moderate or severe feelings of hopelessness related to general expectations for the future and life expectancy. These feelings were associated with engagement in risk and problem behaviors (e.g., violence and substance use). Similarly, Cedeno, Elias, Kelly, and Chu (2010) investigated the relation between exposure to school-based violence and hope in a sample of African-American male and female youth from lower-income communities. Exposure to school violence was positively associated with engagement in problem behaviors and negatively associated with social skills, self-concept, and academic competence. However, boys who reported strong beliefs in their abilities to achieve their goals and a more positive sense of self-worth demonstrated fewer externalizing behaviors than boys who did not endorse positive self-concepts. These

findings suggested that hope may have buffered boys against the effects of exposure to violence on self-concept (Cedeno et al., 2010).

In addition, Stoddard, Henly, Sieving, and Bolland (2011a) found that developmental trajectories characterized by increased hopelessness were linked to engagement in serious violence among primarily male African American adolescents from urban, lower-income communities. However, they also found a negative association between positive social connections (particularly between participants and their mothers during early adolescence) and feelings of hopelessness, suggesting that positive social connectedness may help to buffer youth against potentially negative environmental influences (Stoddard et al., 2011a). Similarly, Dubrow, Arnett, Smith, and Ippolito (2001) found that higher levels of positive expectations for the future were related to lower levels of engagement in problem behaviors and to higher levels of school engagement, internal resources (e.g., problem-solving efficacy and self-esteem), and social support in ethnically and racially diverse adolescents from urban, lower-income communities.

In sum, male youth of color (and youth of color, more broadly) in urban and economically disadvantaged communities may face structural and social barriers to thriving (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2009; Spencer et al., 2015). Research exploring the views and lived experiences of these youth suggests how perceived racism and discrimination, limited support resources, and conflicting cultural norms may adversely impact individuals' beliefs and behaviors, particularly during adolescence (e.g., Corprew & Cunningham, 2012; Cunningham, 1999; Gestsdóttir et al., 2011).

However, despite their challenging ecological circumstances, some youth demonstrate healthy adaptive functioning when they are connected with supports and resources that may

buffer them against potentially harmful experiences (e.g., Jain et al., 2012). A comprehensive understanding of positive and potentially problematic individual and contextual factors in the lives of urban male youth of color is needed to inform scholarly and applied efforts aimed at promoting thriving in this population. As part of this scholarship, it is important to explore how urban male youth of color interact with different contexts, and how their perceptions of (and experiences within) these contexts might shape their beliefs and behaviors (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2013). Thus, in the next section, I review research suggesting the developmental benefits associated with participation in youth development programs, and discuss the need for additional research exploring the experiences of urban male youth of color within this particular context.

### **Youth Development Programs as Potential Ecological Developmental Assets**

Extensive developmental research suggests that high-quality youth development (YD) programs (e.g., 4-H, Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA, Boys & Girls Clubs, and Big Brothers/Big Sisters) may represent key contexts, or ecological developmental assets, in the individual↔context developmental system (e.g., Lerner et al., 2005; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003; Vandell, Larson, Mahoney, & Watts, 2015). This subset of OST programs immerses youth in structured activities in safe and supervised settings during non-school hours, and provides youth with opportunities to enhance their socialization and life skills (e.g., Mueller et al., 2011; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). YD programs tend to incorporate a philosophy that emphasizes a PYD perspective, through viewing youth as resources to be developed rather than as problems to be managed (e.g., Lerner et al., 2005; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003).

The highest quality and most effective YD programs embody three key curricular characteristics (termed the “Big Three” by Lerner, 2004). These programs involve providing youth with access to safe spaces that offer opportunities to: 1. Develop and sustain positive

relationships with adult mentors; 2. Develop important life and leadership skills; and 3. Apply these skills through participation in valued activities (e.g., Lerner et al., 2015; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). Participation in such programs is linked to academic achievement and increased school engagement (e.g., Fredricks & Eccles, 2005; Zaff, Moore, Papillo, & Williams, 2003), civic engagement (e.g., Sherrod & Lauckhardt, 2009), reduced substance use and other problem behaviors (e.g., Anderson-Butcher, Newsome, & Ferrari, 2003), and overall positive and healthy youth functioning (e.g., Agans et al., 2014; Lerner et al., 2005; Lerner, Phelps, Forman, & Bowers, 2009). Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003) suggest that effective YD programs may help to cultivate an “atmosphere of hope” (p. 97) through adopting a strength-based approach that is focused on fostering young people’s skills and talents. Providing opportunities for adolescents to exercise leadership and responsibility and engage with knowledgeable and supportive adults who hold high, albeit realistic, expectations for young people’s success can set a positive tone and empower youth to achieve their goals and aspirations (e.g., Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003).

Urban youth of color in economically disadvantaged communities are disproportionately underrepresented in YD programs (e.g., Borden, Perkins, Villarruel, & Stone, 2005; Lee, Borden, Serido, & Perkins, 2009; Perkins et al., 2007). However, when they do participate, these youth are likely to benefit, such that YD programs may function as protective contexts that buffer youth against potential contextual risk factors (e.g., see review by Dubois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002; Mahoney, 2000; Urban, Lewin-Bizan, & Lerner, 2009). For instance, Urban et al. (2009) found that youth who showed the highest scores on self-regulation were girls from lower-resource environments who participated in YD programs (e.g., Big Brothers/Big Sisters) and other after-school activities (e.g., sports and theater/arts).

Similarly, Lee et al. (2009) explored the experiences and potential developmental benefits associated with participation in YD programs in a sample of ethnically and racially diverse adolescents and found that results varied according to participants' ethnic and racial backgrounds. For instance, African American and Caucasian youth were more likely to report feeling safe in programs than Asian or Pacific Islander and Hispanic youth. In addition, African American youth were more likely than Caucasian, Asian or Pacific Islander, and Hispanic youth to report learning social skills and having positive relationships with adult program staff. As Lee et al. (2009) discussed, these findings suggest the importance of adopting culturally sensitive program practices and exploring young people's perceptions of programs as part of efforts to enhance the quality of their experiences.

Other research in this area has explored the motivations and reasoning underlying traditionally underrepresented young people's decisions to participate in YD programs, as well as potential barriers to their program participation. For instance, Fredricks, Hackett, and Bregman (2010) conducted interviews with ethnically and racially diverse children and adolescents who participated in Boys & Girls Clubs in lower-income communities. Youth commonly reported that they joined the program because they wanted to have fun, to be with their friends, to be part of a group, and to feel safe. In comparison to females, males were more likely to report that they participated in the program to get help with homework, to stay out of trouble, and because they were bored at home. Similarly, Perkins et al. (2007) explored the reasons that ethnically and racially diverse children and adolescents participated in community-based youth programs. Commonly cited reasons for young people's involvement included wanting to avoid the streets and dangerous influences, to learn new things, to have fun, to learn life skills, to make new friends, and to get help with homework. In contrast, commonly cited

barriers to program participation included lack of transportation, lack of time, safety concerns, negative views or opinions of programs, and disinterest in the activities at the program (e.g., Fredricks et al., 2010; Perkins et al., 2007).

In addition, Borden et al. (2005) explored the cultural and contextual factors that influenced the participation of urban Latino youth in youth programs. Latino youth most often reported joining programs to enhance their personal development and confidence, to improve their social lives, to learn life skills, to improve themselves and their communities, and to have access to a safe space. In comparison to Latina youth, Latino youth more often cited joining programs to participate in social and fun activities, whereas Latinas more often reported wanting to set a good example for children and to perform community service. As Borden et al. (2005) discussed, these findings suggest the importance of exploring cultural and contextual factors that are linked to young people's participation in youth programs.

### **Key Dimensions of Youth Program Participation**

Scholarship on YD programs (and OST programs, more broadly) differentiates among four key dimensions of program participation: breadth, duration, intensity, and engagement (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010). I describe these dimensions below.

**Breadth, duration, and intensity.** Research on involvement in OST programs has most often examined dimensions of participation that reflect young people's "amount of [program] exposure" (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010, p. 577). Breadth is one such dimension that is defined as the total number of different program contexts in which youth participate (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010). Youth involvement in a range of program contexts (e.g., athletic, academic, arts/music) may promote the development of diverse relationships and skills and may be particularly beneficial during adolescence, as individuals explore potential interests and identities (e.g.,

Bohnert et al., 2010). Breadth is primarily linked to positive developmental outcomes, including increased school belonging, psychological adjustment, and more positive peer relationships (e.g., Fredricks & Eccles, 2006).

Duration is a second dimension of youth program participation that reflects the length of time spent in a program (e.g., number of years; e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010). Greater duration of involvement in school clubs, for instance, is linked to academic achievement, psychological resilience, higher school belonging, and increased self-worth (e.g., Fredricks & Eccles, 2006). In contrast, greater duration of participation in sports has been linked to alcohol use in adolescents (e.g., Fredricks & Eccles, 2006). Nevertheless, sustained participation in high-quality youth programs is likely to promote positive functioning among participants, such that there is more time to develop caring and supportive relationships and to learn healthy skills and behaviors (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010; Fredricks & Eccles, 2006).

Intensity is a third dimension of youth program participation that reflects frequency of attendance (e.g., average number of hours per week or month) in a program (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010). Intensity of participation in youth programs is linked to positive youth outcomes, such as enhanced academic orientation and civic development (e.g., Denault & Poulin, 2009). Similarly to duration of participation, greater intensity of participation in youth programs may provide participants with more opportunities for learning skills and building relationships (e.g., Denault & Poulin, 2009).

**Engagement.** Whereas breadth, duration, and intensity quantify young people's involvement in OST programs, engagement is a multidimensional construct that reflects the quality of young people's experiences in programs, and how youth afford meaning to their experiences (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010; Bundick, 2011; Fredricks, 2011; Tiffany, Exner-Cortens,

& Eckenrode, 2012). Engagement is distinct from, yet related to, other dimensions of participation (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010). For instance, greater intensity of program participation is linked to higher youth engagement (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010). Whereas engagement has been widely studied within the context of schools, it is relatively under-explored in the literature on OST programs (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010; Tiffany et al., 2012). Scholars argue that more research is needed that explores multiple dimensions of engagement within organized program contexts, given that this construct has the potential to provide a rich characterization of young people's program experiences and how to encourage and sustain their active participation (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010; Fredricks, 2011).

Bohnert et al. (2010) conceptualized engagement as comprised of three dimensions: cognitive, emotional, and behavioral. Drawing from the school engagement literature, Bohnert et al. (2010) described cognitive engagement as investment in learning. This dimension may also reflect the extent to which youth value what they learn and may involve self-regulation and a commitment to mastering difficult skills (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010; Li & Lerner, 2013). In comparison, emotional engagement refers to young people's positive and negative reactions toward program activities, and may include emotions such as enjoyment and enthusiasm and feelings of belonging and emotional bonding (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010; Li & Lerner, 2013). Finally, behavioral engagement reflects both shallow engagement (e.g., attendance) and deeper engagement (e.g., concentration, active participation, and effort) in a program (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010; Li & Lerner, 2013).

In comparison, prior scholarship has explored the broader concept of psychological engagement (which includes cognitive and affective components) in OST programs, and suggests that meaningful engagement in programs (and in life, more generally) is likely to be

psychologically rewarding (e.g., Bundick, 2011). For instance, research suggests that high-quality youth programs may facilitate Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) notion of flow, or an optimal developmental state derived from complete engrossment in an activity (e.g., Greene, Lee, Constance, & Hynes, 2013).

Dawes and Larson (2011) conducted longitudinal interviews with ethnically and racially diverse high school-aged youth to explore how youth became psychologically engaged in OST programs (e.g., arts programs and community-based programs). They defined psychological engagement as motivation to the extent to which a young person's attention is absorbed in activity-related tasks and challenges. They found that most youth who reported increased engagement/motivation reported that the programs in which they were involved acquired greater significance to their personal values, goals, or identities. These youth described their personal connections to programs as developing due to individual changes (e.g., in knowledge, skills, and values) and positive changes in their perceptions of programs. Dawes and Larson (2011) found that other youth (albeit a much smaller group) who were engaged in programs focused on describing positive changes in their relationships with others in the programs. Across interviews, youth also provided other reasons for their increased engagement in programs. For instance, they described realizing that they were gaining knowledge and skills that would be valuable for their futures, developing a sense of competence, and forming personal connections to goals. As Dawes and Larson (2011) discussed, these findings provide grounded theory on adolescents' development of psychological engagement in OST programs, and suggest that engagement can emerge from young people's experiences in programs (and does not necessarily need to be present at the outset of their involvement in programs).

Other research by Shernoff (2010) explored the relation between engagement in OST programs and social and academic outcomes in a sample of ethnically and economically diverse middle school youth. He operationalized engagement as concurrently involving program-related concentration, interest, and enjoyment. He found that program dosage (or amount of time that youth spent in programs) was not associated with social competence or academic achievement. In contrast, engagement was positively associated with social competence, and perceived program-related challenge and meaningfulness predicted increased academic achievement. As Shernoff (2010) discussed, these findings suggest that, as compared to quantity of participation, quality of program participation may be more strongly related to positive youth outcomes. However, it is also important to note the potential of a selection effect, such that youth who were engaged in OST programs may have differed in important ways from youth who were less engaged and who may have been more likely to drop out.

Similarly, Mahoney, Parente, and Lord (2007) examined the relation between engagement in OST programs and teacher-reported social and academic competence in a sample of children from economically disadvantaged communities. They also examined relations between program features (e.g., structure, activities, relationships) and engagement. They defined engagement as involving high levels of program-related attention, interest, effort, and enjoyment. Program engagement was positively associated with intrinsic motivation a child derived from solving challenging problems at school and social competence. However, engagement was not associated with participants' school grades. They also found positive associations between aspects of program contexts (e.g., perceived structure, relationships, opportunities for cognitive growth) and engagement.

As Mahoney et al. (2007) discussed, these findings suggest the importance of examining aspects or features of program contexts in relation to youth engagement. Similarly, Bohnert et al. (2010) discussed the importance of considering characteristics of program contexts (e.g., relationships, opportunities for skill building, and activities), and exploring how these contextual characteristics may promote youth participation and engagement.

A smaller body of scholarship has explored the relation among different dimensions of engagement in OST programs and youth outcomes. For instance, Tiffany et al. (2012) developed and tested a measure that assessed the quality of young people's participation in OST programs and structural characteristics of program contexts (e.g., perceived safety/support) in a sample of ethnically and racially diverse youth. Their final measure consisted of 20 items on four subscales that assessed personal development (e.g., *"I learn a lot from participating in the program"*), perceived safety/support (e.g., *"I usually feel safe when I am involved in program activities"*), voice/influence (e.g., *"I feel I have a lot of voice/power to influence decisions about the program"*), and community engagement (e.g., *"The program has had a positive influence on how I treat people from my neighborhood"*). Tiffany et al. (2012) found, for instance, that scores on personal development, perceived safety/support, and community engagement were positively associated with intensity of program participation and family connectedness. In comparison, scores on voice/influence were only positively associated with breadth of program participation, and scores on perceived safety/support were positively associated with duration of program participation.

Subsequent research by Ramey et al. (2015) developed and evaluated a measure of youth psychological engagement in OST programs in two samples of Canadian adolescents (one about 17 years of age, on average, and the other averaging about 13 years of age). The measure of

psychological engagement consisted of items that assessed cognitive engagement (e.g., thinking about the program, concentrating while involved in the program), affective engagement (e.g., enjoyment and perceived importance of program), and relational/spiritual engagement (e.g., perceived meaningfulness of program and a perceived connectedness to something beyond the self). They also assessed positive program-related features (e.g., perceived safety) and behavioral participation (e.g., frequency and duration of involvement). Ramey et al. (2015) found, for instance, that psychological engagement and behavioral participation were moderately correlated in both samples. They also found that higher scores on perceived program-related features predicted higher scores on all three dimensions of psychological engagement in both samples. In addition, among older adolescents, they found that relational/spiritual engagement was the only dimension that positively predicted perceived positive impact of the program on individual characteristics and behaviors (e.g., *“How well you get along with other people and make friends”*). In comparison, among younger adolescents, affective and relational/spiritual engagement each uniquely and positively predicted perceived program impact. As Ramey et al. (2015) noted, their findings underscore the importance of examining engagement as a multidimensional construct, and exploring whether differences in participant characteristics (e.g., age) and program characteristics (e.g., activities) may impact youth engagement and youth outcomes.

In sum, scholars agree that engagement is a key dimension of youth participation in OST programs that represents “the missing link in organized activity research” (Bohnert et al., 2010, p. 593). A small body of research has broadly explored the concept of psychological engagement or motivation in OST programs (e.g., Dawes & Larson, 2011; Shernoff, 2010), and a subset of research in this area has begun to explore different dimensions of psychological program

engagement, including cognitive and affective dimensions (e.g., Ramey et al., 2015; Tiffany et al., 2012). As Bohnert et al. (2010) discussed, different dimensions of program engagement are important to assess concurrently, given that youth may demonstrate different cognitive, emotional, and behavioral patterns. Although there is overlap between various measures of psychological engagement that have been tested, these measures tend to focus on assessing cognitive and affective dimensions of engagement, as compared to behavioral engagement. Drawing on the school engagement literature, Bohnert et al. (2010) recommend that scholars explore cognitive, emotional, *and* behavioral dimensions of engagement. Furthermore, more research is needed that examines different dimensions of program engagement among ethnically, racially, and economically diverse male youth in different program settings (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010). As noted earlier, structured programs may function as supportive contexts that provide boys and young men of color with opportunities to explore healthy masculine identity (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2013).

Therefore, in the present study, I used an adapted version of an empirically validated measure of school engagement (e.g., Li & Lerner, 2013) to assess cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement among ethnically and racially diverse male youth of color from urban, lower-income communities who participated in the ScoutReach program. Thus, another potential contribution of this study is to examine whether this adapted measure may be appropriate for use among diverse youth in a YD program context.

### **Mixed-Methods Approach**

Extant scholarship exploring the experiences of diverse youth in OST programs also emphasizes the importance of adopting mixed-methods approaches to gain a richer and more holistic understanding of the potential processes through which involvement in programs may be

linked to youth outcomes (e.g., Hershberg et al., 2015; see review by Riggs & Greenberg, 2004). For instance, whereas quantitative data may be useful for indexing dimensions of program involvement (such as breadth, duration, and intensity) and measuring individual attributes and behaviors, qualitative data can help to elucidate young people's motivations and reasons for joining programs and sustaining their participation (e.g., see review by Greene et al., 2013; Pearce & Larson, 2006; see review by Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2015). Qualitative data collected from program leaders can also shed light on how they try to promote youth attendance and engagement in programs (e.g., Greene et al., 2013).

Furthermore, triangulation of data across data sources (i.e., quantitative and qualitative) and across participant groups may be useful for assessing the validity of measures and for exploring potential convergence and divergence in individuals' views and experiences (e.g., Guion, 2002; Hershberg et al., 2015). For instance, King et al. (2005) conducted quantitative and qualitative analyses of interviews with ethnically and racially diverse youth program practitioners, parents, and adolescents to explore similarities and differences in their understandings of characteristics associated with youth thriving. They found a lack of consensus in the thriving terms used among the three participant groups. Whereas practitioners more often used the terms "*connected with others*" and "*support from others*" to describe indicators of thriving linked to program participation, half of the parents used the terms "*communication skills*" and "*positive self-concept*," and more than half of early adolescents (around 13 years of age) used the term "*academic success*." As King et al. (2005) discussed, these findings suggest the importance of exploring the perspectives of diverse OST program stakeholder groups. Differences in groups' perceptions of how OST programs influence young people may have

important implications for measurement techniques and research and policy priorities (e.g., Hershberg et al., 2015).

Accordingly, in the present study, I collected qualitative data from ScoutReach program leaders, parents/guardians, and youth to explore potential similarities and differences in their perceptions and experiences. More information about the specific mixed-methods aims of the study can be found in Chapter 2 (Method).

### **Current Research Context: ScoutReach**

The present study was inspired by a longitudinal, mixed-methods investigation, known as the Character and Merit Project (CAMP), that I helped to conduct in collaboration with the BSA program in Philadelphia (see Hershberg et al., 2015; Hilliard et al., 2014; Wang et al. 2015b). BSA is one of the largest YD programs in the country, serving close to three million young people (BSA, 2016). The organization places a strong emphasis on promoting the development of character and life and leadership skills among boys and young men in diverse contexts (e.g., Hilliard et al., 2014). The CAMP study explored whether participation in Cub Scouts was related to character and other indicators of positive development among boys between six and 12 years old.

Based on analysis of five waves of data collected from Scouts and comparison school youth, we found that involvement in Cub Scouts was positively associated with character-related virtues (e.g., kindness, trustworthiness, and obedience) and other indicators of positive development (e.g., intentional self-regulation), and that Scouts' scores on these items increased by Wave 5, whereas the comparison school youth showed no changes in scores (Wang et al., 2015a). Furthermore, preliminary findings from the CAMP study suggested that Scouts were

engaged in Scouting, as indexed by eight items assessing general program-related interest, effort, and enjoyment (see Lynch et al., 2016).

During the course of the CAMP study, we also collected focus group data from three groups of ScoutReach leaders (see Hershberg et al., 2015). ScoutReach is an arm of BSA that was established in 1998 to “recruit strong adult leaders and to develop solid relationships with chartered organizations in urban and rural communities nationwide to ensure that culturally diverse youth have the opportunity to join the Scouting program” (BSA, 2016; D. Warren, personal communication, January 28, 2016). Since 1998, the vision of ScoutReach has been refined to include an emphasis on making Scouting more accessible to culturally diverse unserved and under-served youth by removing economic barriers to participation in communities where there might be a scarcity of resources enabling the promotion of the Scouting outcomes of character, leadership, fitness, and citizenship (D. Warren, personal communication, January 28, 2016).

During focus groups in the CAMP study, ScoutReach leaders discussed challenges that they experienced in trying to implement the standard Scouting program in a way that was functional, feasible, and engaging to Scouts who were primarily from urban, lower-income communities (Hershberg et al., 2015). Leaders also described placing a strong emphasis on the development of particular attributes and skills in their Scouts, such as perseverance, hopeful future expectations, and leadership and problem-solving skills (Hershberg et al., 2015). In addition, leaders discussed the importance of cultivating nurturing and supportive relationships with Scouts, teaching Scouts to give back to their communities, and exposing Scouts to positive male role models, given that many Scouts reportedly came from households and communities where there was a scarcity of these relationships, opportunities, and resources (Hershberg et al.,

2015). These findings informed some of the constructs that I explored in the present study (e.g., grit and contribution).

At this writing, the BSA National Service Center (NSC) is undergoing a review of ScoutReach to develop a clearer and more cohesive view of the program, in light of concerns over inconsistencies in how its scope and aims have been described and understood both within and outside of the organization (D. Warren, personal communication, January 28, 2016). There is also debate about whether ScoutReach should be described as a program, as compared to a smaller strategy or initiative (with programmatic components; D. Warren, personal communication, January 28, 2016). Research conducted by BSA staff has indicated discrepancies in staff members' understandings of the ScoutReach program's purpose and target populations (D. Warren, personal communication, January 28, 2016). As such, efforts are underway to clarify the role of this program in the BSA organization, the training that is provided to ScoutReach staff, and how the program is evaluated to ensure that expectations are met (D. Warren, personal communication, January 28, 2016).

In short, the organization is moving toward achieving a long-term vision of ScoutReach as a Council-initiated strategy (with programmatic components) that aims to “develop relationships with families and community resources so that traditional Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, and Venturing crews [or the co-ed program within BSA] will be sustainable and embedded in the community” (D. Warren, personal communication, January 28, 2016). Although the current NSC review did not directly impact the present research, this information is important for understanding the historical and contemporary contexts of the ScoutReach program and potential future directions. In conjunction with findings from the CAMP study (e.g., Wang et al.,

2015a), findings from the present study may inform efforts by the BSA NSC to clarify the role of ScoutReach by elucidating different stakeholders' related views and experiences.

### **The Present Study**

The present study was informed by RDS metatheory and the PVEST framework, findings from the CAMP study, scholarship exploring developmental challenges experienced by male youth of color (in particular, adolescents) in urban and economically disadvantaged communities, and research suggesting the potential developmental benefits associated with engagement in YD programs. I primarily aimed to advance understanding of the experiences of male youth of color in lower-income communities in the greater Boston area who participated in ScoutReach, based on analysis of cross-sectional quantitative and qualitative data that I collected from program leaders, parents/guardians, and Scouts. I explored the following primary research questions:

- 1.** On average, how do Scouts score on different dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach (e.g., cognitive, emotional, behavioral) and indicators of positive and potentially problematic development?;
- 2.** What is the relation among different dimensions of engagement and indicators of positive development among Scouts?;
- 3.** Do Scouts differ in their scores on dimensions of engagement based on self-reported substance use and involvement in any delinquency?;
- 4.** What is the relation among different dimensions of involvement in ScoutReach and other OST programs (i.e., breadth, duration, and intensity) and dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach?;

- 5.** What is the relation among breadth, duration, and intensity of program involvement and indicators of positive development among Scouts?;
- 6.** Do Scouts differ in their scores on breadth, duration, and intensity of program involvement based on self-reported substance use and involvement in any delinquency?;
- 7.** What is the relation among perceived aspects of the ScoutReach program and dimensions of youth engagement?;
- 8.** Based on analysis of interviews, what are Scouts', parents'/guardians', and program leaders' views of the ScoutReach program and how it is related to youth engagement and youth development? That is:
  - a.** How do Scouts/parents/leaders describe Scouts' experiences in (or their personal views of) ScoutReach?;
  - b.** How do Scouts/parents/leaders describe Scouts' experiences in their communities?;
  - c.** Do Scouts/parents/leaders perceive ScoutReach as having an impact on youth development? If so, how?;
  - d.** According to Scouts/parents/leaders, which aspects of ScoutReach seem to be the most important or most strongly related to youth engagement?;
  - e.** How are Scouts/parents/leaders similar and distinct in their views of ScoutReach and its potential impact on youth development?; and
  - f.** How are younger Scouts' (i.e., younger than 10 years old) and older Scouts' (i.e., aged 10 and older) views of (and experiences in) ScoutReach and their communities similar and distinct?;

**9.** Based on analysis of parent/guardian short-answer responses, what themes emerged in parents'/guardians' descriptions of why their sons joined ScoutReach, and their views of how the program has impacted their sons?; and

**10.** When interpreting the quantitative and qualitative data together, what types of meta-inferences can be made about youth engagement in ScoutReach and its relation to youth development?

This research may contribute to existing developmental scholarship through elucidating the phenomenology of ethnically and racially diverse boys' experiences in a particular YD program and in their urban and lower-income communities. Given that there are hundreds of ScoutReach programs throughout the nation (BSA, 2016), this study has the potential to be replicated at other sites and may form the basis of follow-up longitudinal investigations. Findings derived from this research may also inform practices in other after-school programs that aim to recruit and retain demographically similar populations of youth and that strive to help these youth to effectively navigate potential contextual challenges.

## CHAPTER 2: METHOD

The present study was inspired by the Character and Merit Project (CAMP), a longitudinal assessment of the relation between participation in Cub Scouts and character development among youth between the ages of six and 12 (see Hilliard et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2015a, 2015b). Preliminary findings from the CAMP study suggested that youth were generally engaged in the Scouting program (Lynch et al., 2016). I sought to expand on these initial findings by, primarily, examining different dimensions of youth engagement in the ScoutReach program and their potential relations to indicators of positive and potentially problematic youth development. To enrich understanding of the program- and community-related experiences of urban male youth of color involved in the Boston-area ScoutReach program, I collected cross-sectional quantitative and qualitative data from Scouts, parents/guardians, and program leaders, as described below.

### **Participants (Quantitative Data)**

I analyzed quantitative data collected from 32 boys ( $M_{age} = 9.97$  years,  $SD = 2.46$ ,  $Range = 6$  to 14) enrolled in two Boy Scouts of America (BSA) ScoutReach units served by the Spirit of Adventure Council in the greater Boston area. Age data were missing for three (9.4%) participants. In the entire sample, 20 boys (62.5%) held ranks at the Cub Scout level: 12.5% were Tiger, 12.5% were Wolf, 15.6% were Bear, and 21.9% were Webelo. In comparison, 12 boys (37.5%) held ranks at the Boy Scout level: 18.8% were Boy Scout Rank, 3.1% were Tenderfoot Rank, 3.1% were First Class Rank, 3.1% were Star Rank, and 9.4% were Life Rank. These different Scouting ranks correspond to Scout age and the mastery of different skills.

In regard to ethnicity, 62.5% of Scouts did not identify as Hispanic or Latino, whereas 31.3% of Scouts identified as Hispanic or Latino. Of these Scouts, 70.0% identified as

multiethnic or multiracial (including African American and European American or Caucasian) and 20.0% identified as American Indian/Native American. Detailed information was not available for one (10.0%) Scout who identified as Hispanic or Latino. Data on ethnicity were missing for two (6.3%) Scouts.

The racial composition of the overall sample was 37.5% multiethnic or multiracial, 15.6% Black or African American, 9.4% American Indian/Native American, 9.4% Asian or Pacific Islander, 9.4% European American or Caucasian, and 6.3% identified as Other. Data on race were missing for four (12.5%) Scouts.

I also collected quantitative data from 32 parents/guardians of Scouts ( $M_{age} = 40.0$  years,  $SD = 8.54$ ,  $Range = 26$  to  $55$ ). Twenty-seven (84.4%) of the parents/guardians who completed questionnaires also had sons who completed questionnaires, which included three sets of siblings. The remaining five parents/guardians who completed questionnaires did not have sons who completed questionnaires. Age data were missing for eight (25.0%) parents/guardians. In addition, 56.3% of parents/guardians identified as female (with 15.6% missing data). Half (50.0%) of parents/guardians identified as Scouts' mothers, 28.1% as fathers, 3.1% as grandparents, and 3.1% identified as Other (with 15.6% missing data).

In regard to ethnicity, 50.0% of parents/guardians did not identify as Hispanic or Latino/a, whereas 31.3% of parents/guardians identified as Hispanic or Latino/a. Of these parents/guardians, 40.0% identified as multiethnic or multiracial (including European American or Caucasian), 10.0% identified as Black or African American, 10.0% identified as American Indian/Native American, and 40.0% identified as Other (e.g., three parents/guardians specified that they were Hispanic, one specified that he was Latino, and one specified that he or she was from Central America). Data on ethnicity were missing for six (18.7%) parents/guardians.

The racial composition of the overall sample was 21.9% European American or Caucasian, 18.8% Black or African American, 15.6% Other, 15.6% multiethnic or multiracial, 6.3% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 6.3% identified as American Indian/Native American. Data on race were missing for five (15.6%) parents/guardians.

Most of the parents/guardians (43.8%) indicated that they were currently married (with 15.6% missing data). They also reported the following education levels: 3.1% 8<sup>th</sup> grade or less, 9.4% some high school, 15.6% high school diploma, 6.3% some college, 15.6% trade/technical/vocational training, 25.0% Bachelor's degree, 3.1% postgraduate degree, and 3.1% doctoral degree. Education data were missing for six (18.8%) parents/guardians. In addition, the largest proportion of parents/guardians (21.9%) reported an average total household income of \$45,000 to less than \$55,000; 40.7% of remaining parents/guardians reported incomes below this level and 34.4% reported incomes above this level. Income data were missing for one (3.0%) parent/guardian.

I calculated family income status (i.e., high or low) based on parents'/guardians' self-reported average total household incomes, self-reported total number of people in the household, and Fiscal Year 2015 Income Limits for the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy area published by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Parent-reported income has been used as a proxy for socioeconomic status (SES) in prior research (e.g., Hoff, Laursen, & Bridges, 2012). In the present study, parents/guardians were asked to indicate their average total household income by checking one of ten salary ranges that ranged from "Under \$15,000" to "\$150,000 and above." They were also asked to report the total number of adults (including themselves) and children residing in their household. In the present study, I summed these two values to calculate the total number of individuals residing in the household. I then compared

these parent-reported data to the HUD income limits. The HUD low-income limits are as follows: \$48,800 (one-person household), \$55,800 (two-person household), \$62,750 (three-person household), \$69,700 (four-person household), \$75,300 (five-person household), \$80,900 (six-person household), \$86,450 (seven-person household), and \$92,050 (eight-person household).

Based on these data, 68.8% of parents/guardians met criteria for low-income status. For example, a parent/guardian with a self-reported income of “\$35,000 to less than \$45,000” in a four-person household was coded as “low-income.” However, I could not determine income status for four (12.5%) parents/guardians, in light of missing or unclear data (i.e., in some instances, HUD income limits fell within parents’/guardians’ self-reported incomes, making it difficult to discern whether they met criteria for low- or high-income status). For example, I could not determine the income status for a parent/guardian with a self-reported income of “\$75,000 to less than \$100,000” in a seven-person household. The HUD income limit for a seven-person household is \$86,450, and it was unclear whether the parent’s/guardian’s income was below or above this limit.

### **Participants (Qualitative Data)**

I collected qualitative data from 10 boys ( $M_{age} = 11.40$  years,  $SD = 2.41$ ,  $Range = 6$  to 14). All 10 Scouts also completed questionnaires. Three boys (30.0%) held ranks at the Cub Scout level: 10.0% were Tiger, 10.0% were Bear, and 10.0% were Webelo. In comparison, seven boys (70.0%) held ranks at the Boy Scout level: 20.0% were Boy Scout Rank, 10.0% were Tenderfoot Rank, 10.0% were First Class Rank, 10.0% were Star Rank, and 20.0% were Life Rank.

In regard to ethnicity, 70.0% of Scouts did not identify as Hispanic or Latino, whereas

20.0% of Scouts identified as Hispanic or Latino. Of these Scouts, one Scout (50.0%) identified as multiethnic or multiracial (including European American or Caucasian), and one Scout (50.0%) identified as American Indian/Native American. Data on ethnicity were not available for one (10%) Scout.

The overall racial composition of the sample was 40.0% multiethnic or multiracial, 30.0% Asian or Pacific Islander, 20.0% American Indian/Native American, and 10.0% identified as Black or African American. In comparison to the Scouts who completed questionnaires, the Scouts who completed interviews tended to be older and more held ranks at the Boy Scout level. Both samples of Scouts primarily identified as multiethnic or multiracial.

I also collected qualitative data from 10 parents/guardians of Scouts ( $M_{age} = 37.0$  years,  $SD = 9.37$ ,  $Range = 27$  to 51). Age data were missing for two (20.0%) parents/guardians who completed interviews. All 10 participants also completed questionnaires and had sons who completed questionnaires. Only three of the 10 parents/guardians also had sons who completed interviews (due to reasons related to convenience sampling – e.g., their sons were participating in Scout activities when the interviews were being conducted). Of the parents/guardians who completed interviews, 70.0% identified as female (with 10.0% missing data). Half (50.0%) of the sample identified as Scouts' mothers, 20.0% as fathers, 10.0% as grandparents, and 10.0% as Other (with 10.0% missing data).

In regard to ethnicity, 40.0% of parents/guardians did not identify as Hispanic or Latino/a, whereas 50.0% of parents/guardians identified as Hispanic or Latino/a. Of these parents/guardians, 60.0% identified as multiethnic or multiracial (including European American or Caucasian), 20.0% identified as Black or African American, and 20.0% identified as

American Indian/Native American. Data on ethnicity were missing for one (10.0%) parent/guardian.

The racial composition of the overall sample was 30.0% multiethnic or multiracial, 20.0% Black or African American, 20.0% European American or Caucasian, 10.0% American Indian/Native American, and 10.0% identified as Asian or Pacific Islander. Data on race were missing for one (10.0%) parent/guardian.

Most of the parents/guardians who completed interviews (40.0%) indicated that they were currently married (with 10.0% missing data). They also reported the following education levels: 20.0% high school diploma, 20.0% some college, 20.0% trade/technical/vocational training, 10.0% Bachelor's degree, and 10.0% doctoral degree. Education data were missing for two (20.0%) participants. In addition, the largest proportion of parents/guardians (30.0%) reported an average total household income of \$25,000 to less than \$35,000; 30.0% of remaining parents/guardians reported incomes below this level and 40.0% reported incomes above this level. Based on analysis of parents'/guardians' self-reported average total household incomes, self-reported total number of people in the household, and Fiscal Year 2015 Income Limits from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, 90.0% of parents/guardians met criteria for low-income status. I could not determine family income status for one (10.0%) parent/guardian, in light of missing or unclear data.

In comparison to the parents/guardians who completed questionnaires, the parents/guardians who completed interviews tended to be slightly younger, a larger proportion identified as Hispanic or Latino/a, and a smaller proportion reported having a Bachelor's degree. Both samples of parents/guardians primarily indicated that they were female and currently married, and met criteria for low-income status.

Finally, I collected qualitative data from five program leaders ( $M_{age} = 54.0$  years,  $SD = 10.83$ ,  $Range = 33$  to  $62$ ) who oversaw ScoutReach units served by the Spirit of Adventure Council in the greater Boston area. All of the leaders were male and the majority (60.0%) were European American or Caucasian. All of the leaders had at least a Bachelor's degree, and two leaders (40.0%) had doctorate degrees. Four of the leaders were volunteers, with two leaders (50.0%) representing one ScoutReach unit and the other two leaders (50.0%) representing a second ScoutReach unit. The fifth leader was the District Executive of the ScoutReach program, who was a paid staff member and helped to provide leadership to other ScoutReach units and provide general oversight over the ScoutReach program. Their duration of involvement as leaders ranged from one year to approximately 20 years.

The size of my interview sample (i.e., 10 Scouts, 10 parents/guardians, and five program leaders) was chosen with regard to both research-related and logistical reasons. First, the analytic approach that I used (i.e., interpretative phenomenological analysis) is recommended for use with small samples to facilitate in-depth analysis of individuals' experiences (e.g., Smith, 2011; Smith & Osborn, 2008). I describe this approach in more detail later in this chapter. Second, I had a limited budget that could only cover the costs of incentives for a small number of participants.

### **Procedure**

I describe procedures related to participant recruitment, compensation, data collection, and data storage below. In October 2015, this study was approved by the Tufts University Institutional Review Board (IRB), and I obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality from the National Institutes of Health.

**Recruitment.** Participants were recruited from two ScoutReach units in the greater Boston area. The recruitment procedure involved the use of several techniques and was designed with respect to the structure of the Spirit of Adventure Council in Massachusetts (and of BSA, in general). ScoutReach is an initiative within the Spirit of Adventure Council that serves several hundred youth between the ages of six and 14 years across 16 units that vary in size and are led by Cub Scout pack and/or Boy Scout troop leaders. ScoutReach is headed by a District Executive, to whom the leaders report. I worked with the District Executive to select packs from whom to recruit study participants. In identifying packs for recruitment, I gave consideration to the following criteria: convenience (e.g., ease with which I could travel to the pack site), interest level (e.g., interest and enthusiasm expressed by leaders), and composition (e.g., ideally comprised of youth aged 9 years or older with a history of participation in the program, in light of the measures that were administered). With the assistance of the District Executive and using email and phone scripts, I reached out to leaders of several units to invite them to participate in the study. I was able to secure participation from only two units; I did not hear back from the other units that I contacted. Both units were the only units in the Spirit of Adventure Council that were comprised of both Cub Scout packs and Boy Scout troops. According to the District Executive, these units were considered to be exemplary by the Council in light of their successful records of recruitment and retention of Scouts.

After speaking with the leaders of the two units over the phone, I attended their pack meetings to speak with parents/guardians about the study and obtain their verbal consent for their sons to participate. If I was unable to meet parents/guardians in person, I collected their verbal consent over the phone.

**Compensation.** I received a Dissertation Funding Award from the Society for Research in Child Development to cover some of the costs associated with compensation for participants. Scouts who completed questionnaires were given a small toy (e.g., finger lights, yo-yos), and parents/guardians who completed questionnaires were given a \$10 gift card to a national retail outlet. All Scouts, parents/guardians, and leaders who completed interviews were given a \$15 gift card to a national retail outlet.

**Data collection.** I collected quantitative and/or qualitative data from Scouts, parents/guardians, and leaders, as described below. I used different approaches for data collection depending on leaders' preferences. Consistent with guidelines from the Tufts IRB and the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, all data that were collected were anonymous. That is, no participant names or other identifying information were permanently retained or linked to questionnaire or interview responses. To facilitate data analysis and also uphold participant confidentiality, I compiled a list of names of participants who provided verbal consent and assent to participate. This list also included corresponding pack numbers to facilitate data collection, data entry, and distribution of participant incentives. However, following completion of data collection, data entry, and the distribution of incentives, all lists containing identifying information were destroyed and, thus, were not used to link individuals' identities to their data.

Data collection primarily took place during Scout meetings or events (e.g., Pinewood Derby). I set up a welcome table where I greeted parents/guardians and their Scouts as they entered the meeting or event. I explained the purpose of the study to them and reviewed information sheets (in lieu of consent forms) that described the data to be collected, anticipated risks and benefits, and compensation. At the end of the form, I signed and indicated whether the

parents/guardians provided verbal consent for their sons to complete a questionnaire and be contacted to participate in an interview (and allow it to be audio-recorded). I also indicated whether parents/guardians provided verbal assent to complete a questionnaire and potentially be contacted for an interview (and allow it to be audio-recorded). The parent/guardian information sheets and questionnaires were available in English and Spanish. In some cases, program leaders provided verbal translation assistance to parents/guardians who were primarily Spanish speaking. During this time, I also reviewed the questionnaire information sheet with Scouts and, at the bottom, I signed and indicated whether they provided verbal assent to complete a questionnaire. Interview information sheets were reviewed with Scouts immediately prior to conducting the interviews with them. Separate information sheets containing contact information for the researchers and the Tufts IRB were also provided to participants.

All Scout and parent/guardian questionnaires were completed during Scout meetings or events. In some cases, Scouts completed the questionnaires as a group (although they each worked independently). In other cases, Scouts were independently pulled away from activities and asked to complete their questionnaire off to the side. I was available to answer questions or provide assistance with reading comprehension. On average, the Scout questionnaires took 15-20 minutes to complete. Parents/guardians completed their questionnaires at their convenience during the course of Scout meetings or events. On average, parent/guardian questionnaires took 5-10 minutes to complete. Upon completion of the questionnaires, Scouts were provided with a small toy, and parents/guardians each received a \$10 gift card.

All Scout and parent/guardian interviews were also conducted during the course of Scout meetings or events. Participants were selected to be interviewed based on convenience (i.e., the order in which they entered the meeting or event, or based on whomever was available at the

time). A total of 13 Scouts were interviewed. However, only transcripts from 10 of the interviews were analyzed. The other three interviews were either not completed, were of poor audio quality, or did not generate meaningful data (i.e., were largely comprised of “yes/no” responses). A total of 10 parents were interviewed.

Using a semi-structured interview protocol, I conducted the interviews in conjunction with a second trained researcher. Interviews were never conducted alone with participants, but within the eyesight of other individuals. Prior to conducting the Scout interviews, the other researcher and I reviewed information sheets with Scouts and we signed and indicated whether they provided verbal assent to participate in the interview (and have the interview be audio-recorded). All Scouts provided full verbal assent and, during initial study intake, all parents/guardians provided full verbal assent. On average, the interviews took 15-20 minutes to complete. Upon completion of the interviews, Scouts and parents/guardians each received a \$15 gift card.

Interviews were also conducted with program leaders during the course of Scout meetings or events, or during other scheduled times that were convenient for participants. Two of the interviews were with leaders from one unit whose Scouts participated in the study, two interviews were with leaders from a second unit whose Scouts participated in the study, and the fifth interview was with the District Executive, who provided leadership to other ScoutReach units whose Scouts did not participate in the study. Prior to conducting the interviews, I reviewed information sheets with participants and I signed and indicated whether they provided full verbal assent. Using a semi-structured interview protocol, I conducted and audio-recorded four of the interviews in person, and I conducted one interview over the phone that was not audio-recorded due to logistical reasons. Instead, I wrote detailed notes of the leader’s responses, which were

later transcribed. On average, the interviews took 20-25 minutes to complete. Upon completion of the interviews, leaders each received a \$15 gift card.

All of the interviews were transcribed by a professional transcription service or by me. I reviewed the transcripts for accuracy and deleted any identifying information (e.g., names) that was accidentally provided by participants. I deleted all audio recordings following their transcription.

**Data storage.** I entered the quantitative and qualitative data into SPSS Version 22 and NVivo Version 10, respectively, for data analysis. Data files were de-identified and stored on the secure password-protected server for the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development. Hard copies of questionnaires and transcriptions were kept in a locked file cabinet in a locked office. Only myself and any other individuals assisting in the analysis of data (e.g., a second interview coder) had access to the data.

## Measures

Scouts were asked to complete a modified version of the questionnaire that was administered in the CAMP study (see Hilliard et al., 2014). The questionnaire (see Appendix A) included a measure, known as the Assessment of Character in Children and Early Adolescents (ACCEA; see Wang et al., 2015a, 2015b), that assesses eight character-related attributes, some of which are reflected in the Scout Law<sup>1</sup> (i.e., obedience, religious reverence, cheerfulness, kindness, thriftiness, hopeful future expectations, trustworthiness, and helpfulness). Consistent with the CAMP study, two attributes that are associated with positive youth development (PYD) in the developmental literature (i.e., self-perceived school competence and intentional self-

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<sup>1</sup> Scout Law: A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent (BSA, 2016).

regulation) were assessed, as well as a measure of general Scouting engagement (see Wang et al., 2015a, 2015b).

As described in more detail below, I also assessed the following constructs: PYD (as indexed by competence, confidence, character, caring, and connection), contribution (action-oriented), grit, perceived program aspects, engagement (as indexed by cognitive, emotional, behavioral, Scouting advancement, and more general Scouting components), and involvement in risk/problem behaviors. I added these scales to the questionnaire in light of findings derived from focus groups and interviews with ScoutReach leaders and youth in the CAMP Study (see Ferris, Hershberg, Su, & Lerner, in press, and Hershberg et al., 2015). Except as otherwise noted, items were scored using a five-point Likert-type scale, with values ranging from 1 (*Not at all like me*) to 5 (*Exactly like me*); higher scores indicated greater endorsement of items. I created mean-level composite scores by averaging participants' responses across scale items.

In light of time and resource constraints, and given that the Scout questionnaire was an adapted version of the one used in the CAMP study (see Hilliard et al., 2014) and incorporated several validated scales, I did not pilot test the Scout questionnaire. I discuss limitations associated with this decision in Chapter 5 (Discussion).

**Obedience.** Participants completed four items adapted from the conduct/behavior adequacy subscale of the Self-Perception Profile for Children (SPPC; Harter, 1982, 1983). Items included “*I act the way I am supposed to*” and “*I do what my teachers say.*” In the CAMP study (Wang et al., 2015b), scores on this scale showed good reliability for boys between six and 12 years of age, with Cronbach's alphas of .71 and .71 in Waves 1 and 2, respectively. In the present study, scores on this scale showed adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .73$ ).

**Religious reverence.** Participants completed four items adapted from the Spiritual Transcendence Scale (Piedmont, 1999). Items included “*I like to read or listen to stories from my religion*” and “*I pray.*” In the CAMP study (Wang et al., 2015b), scores on this scale showed adequate reliability for boys between six and 12 years of age, with Cronbach’s alphas of .76 and .78 in Waves 1 and 2, respectively. In the present study, scores on this scale showed low reliability ( $\alpha = .66$ ). Analysis of inter-item correlations did not reveal any potential changes to the scale (i.e., deleting items) that would enhance reliability.

**Cheerfulness.** Participants completed three items adapted from the Positive and Negative Affect Scale for Children (Laurent, Potter, & Catanzaro, 1994). Items included “*I am happy*” and “*I smile a lot.*” In the CAMP study (Wang et al., 2015b), scores on this scale showed adequate reliability for boys between six and 12 years of age, with Cronbach’s alphas of .78 and .79 in Waves 1 and 2, respectively. In the present study, scores on this scale showed adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .74$ ).

**Kindness.** Participants completed four items adapted from the Caring scale used in the 4-H Study of PYD (Lerner et al., 2005). Items included “*I’m kind to other kids*” and “*When my friends are upset, I try to make them feel better.*” In the CAMP study (Wang et al., 2015b), scores on this scale showed adequate reliability for boys between six and 12 years of age, with Cronbach’s alphas of .81 and .79 in Waves 1 and 2, respectively. In the present study, scores on this scale showed adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .83$ ).

**Thriftiness.** Participants completed four items adapted from the Frugality Scale developed by Lastovicka, Bettencourt, Hughner, & Kuntze (1999). Items included “*I save my money for something special*” and “*I find ways to reuse things.*” In the CAMP study (Wang et al., 2015b), scores on this scale showed lower reliability for boys between six and 12 years of

age, with Cronbach's alphas of .61 and .60 in Waves 1 and 2, respectively. In the present study, scores on this scale showed low reliability ( $\alpha = .52$ ). Analysis of inter-item correlations did not reveal any potential changes to the scale (i.e., deleting items) that would enhance reliability.

**Hopeful future expectation.** Participants completed three items adapted from the Schmid Hopeful Future measure (Schmid & Lopez, 2011). Items included "*I will have a happy family*" and "*People will think I am a good person.*" In the CAMP study (Wang et al., 2015b), scores on this scale showed adequate reliability for boys between six and 12 years of age, with Cronbach's alphas of .71 and .70 in Waves 1 and 2, respectively. In the present study, scores on this scale showed acceptable reliability ( $\alpha = .71$ ).

**Trustworthiness.** Participants completed five items adapted from the Personal Values subscale of the Character measure of Positive Youth Development used in the 4-H Study (Lerner et al., 2005). Items included "*I can be counted on to tell the truth*" and "*I take responsibility when I make a mistake.*" In the CAMP study (Wang et al., 2015b), scores on this scale showed adequate reliability for boys between six and 12 years of age, with Cronbach's alphas of .81 and .80 in Waves 1 and 2, respectively. In the present study, scores on this scale showed adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .89$ ).

**Helpfulness.** Participants completed six items adapted from the Child Behavior Scale (CBS; Ladd & Profilet, 1996). Items included "*I help people in my family*" and "*I help my friends.*" In the CAMP study (Wang et al., 2015b), scores on this measure's Prosocial Behavior subscale showed strong reliability for boys between six and 12 years of age, with Cronbach's alphas of .82 and .76 in Waves 1 and 2, respectively. In the present study, scores on this scale showed acceptable reliability ( $\alpha = .72$ ).

**Self-perceived school competence.** Participants completed six items adapted from the academic competence subscale of the SPPC (Harter, 1982, 1983). Items included “*I am very good at my schoolwork*” and “*I get good grades in school.*” In the CAMP study (Wang et al., 2015b), scores on this scale showed adequate reliability for boys between six and 12 years of age, with a Cronbach’s alpha of .72 at Wave 1. In the present study, scores on this scale showed low reliability ( $\alpha = .68$ ). Analysis of inter-item correlations did not reveal any potential changes to the scale (i.e., deleting items) that would enhance reliability.

**Intentional self-regulation (ISR).** Participants completed six items adapted from the selection, optimization, and compensation (or SOC) measure developed by Baltes and colleagues (e.g., Freund & Baltes, 2002). Items included “*I am good at making plans*” and “*I am a hard worker.*” In the CAMP study (Wang et al., 2015b), scores on this scale showed lower reliability, with Cronbach’s alphas of .67 and .67 at Waves 1 and 2, respectively. In the present study, scores on this scale showed low reliability ( $\alpha = .63$ ). Analysis of inter-item correlations did not reveal any potential changes to the scale (i.e., deleting items) that would enhance reliability.

**Positive Youth Development (PYD).** Participants completed an adapted version of the 17-item PYD Very Short Form (PYD-VSF; Geldhof et al., 2013) that assesses five constructs (i.e., the Lerner and Lerner Five Cs Model of PYD; Lerner et al., 2005) associated with PYD. The subscales are derived from the SPPC (Harter, 1982; 1983), the Search Institute’s Profile of Student Life – Attitudes and Behaviors Survey (PSL-AB; Benson, Leffert, Scales, & Blyth, 1998), the Eisenberg Sympathy Scale (ESS; Eisenberg et al., 1996), and the Teen Assessment Project Survey Question Bank (TAP; Small & Rodgers, 1995). In the present study, mean scores for the five constructs were combined into an overall PYD score ( $\alpha = .82$ ).

*Confidence* was assessed using three items that represent self-worth, physical identity, and positive identity. Items included “*I am happy with myself most of the time*” and “*I am happy with my height and weight.*” Scores on this subscale have shown adequate reliability, with Cronbach’s alphas ranging from .80 to .92 across Grades 5 through 12 (Geldhof et al., 2013). In the present study, scores on this subscale showed low reliability ( $\alpha = .58$ ).

*Competence* was assessed using three items representing academic, social, and physical competence. Items included “*I have a lot of friends*” and “*I do very well at my class work.*” Scores on this subscale have shown adequate reliability, with Cronbach’s alphas ranging from .80 to .86 across Grades 5 through 12 (Geldhof et al., 2013). In the present study, scores on this subscale showed low reliability ( $\alpha = .45$ ).

*Character* was assessed using four items representing social conscience, values diversity, conduct behavior, and personal values. Items included “*It is important to help make the world a better place to live in*” and “*I enjoy being with people who are of a different race than I am.*” Scores on this subscale have shown strong reliability, with Cronbach’s alphas ranging from .89 to .93 across Grades 5 through 12 (Geldhof et al., 2013). In the present study, scores on this subscale showed low reliability ( $\alpha = .62$ ).

*Caring* was assessed using three items from the 4-H Study (Lerner et al., 2005). Items included “*When I see someone being taken advantage of, I want to help them*” and “*When I see someone being picked on, I feel sorry for them.*” Scores on this subscale have shown adequate reliability, with Cronbach’s alphas ranging from .80 to .88 across Grades 5 through 12 (Geldhof et al., 2013). In the present study, scores on this subscale showed adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .71$ ).

Finally, *Connection* was assessed using four items from the 4-H Study (Lerner et al., 2005) representing family, neighborhood, school, and peers. Items included “*In my family I feel*

*useful and important*” and *“I feel my friends are good friends.”* Scores on this subscale have shown strong reliability, with Cronbach’s alphas ranging from .89 to .92 across Grades 5 through 12 (Geldhof et al., 2013). In the present study, scores on this subscale showed low reliability ( $\alpha = .69$ ).

**Contribution (Action).** Participants completed nine items that were originally derived from the Youth Inventory of Involvement (Short Form; Pancer, Pratt, Hunsberger, & Alisat, 2007) and then adapted by Johnson and colleagues (S. Johnson, personal communication, March 21, 2016). Participants were asked to indicate how often they participated in certain activities, including political activities, community service activities, and helping people they did not know. Items were scored on a scale from 0 (*Never*) to 4 (*All the time [at least once a week]*); higher scores indicated greater involvement in the activity. Scores on this scale have shown strong reliability, with Cronbach’s alphas ranging from .90 to .88 among students in Grade 12 (Pancer et al., 2007). In the present study, scores on this scale showed adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .83$ ).

**Grit.** Participants completed eight items adapted from the Short Grit Scale (Grit-S; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). Items included *“Delays and obstacles don’t discourage me. I bounce back from disappointments faster than most people”* and *“I often set a goal but later choose to follow a different one.”* Scores on this scale have shown adequate reliability, with a Cronbach’s alpha of .82 among youth approximately 13 years old (Duckworth, Kirby, Tsukayama, Berstein, & Ericsson, 2011). In the present study, scores on this scale showed low reliability ( $\alpha = .69$ ). Based on analysis of inter-item correlations, I removed the second and fifth items from the scale (i.e., *“New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones”*

and “*I often choose to set a goal, but later choose to follow a different one,*” respectively). Scores on the revised scale showed adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .79$ ).

**Perceived program aspects.** Participants completed five items that asked them to rate the degree to which they liked different aspects of Scouting. Items included “*I like my Scout leader*” and “*I like Scout activities (like camping).*” This scale was created for use in the present study, and was based on prior research suggesting that these aspects of YD programs are important to assess (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010). In the present study, scores on this scale showed adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .75$ ).

**Scouting engagement.** Participants completed eight items that assessed general Scouting engagement that were derived from the measure that was administered in the CAMP study (see Lynch et al., 2016). Items included “*I like to go camping*” and “*I like my Scout uniform.*” In the CAMP study, scores on this eight-item scale showed adequate reliability among youth at least seven years of age, with Cronbach’s alphas ranging from .80 to .81 (Lynch et al., 2016). In the present study, scores on this scale showed low reliability ( $\alpha = .41$ ). Based on analysis of inter-item correlations, I removed the last three items of the scale (i.e., “*I will get my Arrow of Light,*” “*I will become a Boy Scout,*” and “*I will become an Eagle Scout*”) and combined them to form a new scale reflecting Scouting advancement. Scores on the Scouting advancement scale showed higher, but still relatively low, reliability ( $\alpha = .52$ ). In light of this finding, I examined both Scouting engagement (the original scale) and Scouting advancement as separate dimensions of engagement in all subsequent analyses.

**Cognitive engagement.** Participants completed five items adapted from the school engagement measure used by Li and Lerner (2013). Items included “*I want to learn as much as I can in Scouts*” and “*Scouts is very important for future success.*” Scores on the original scale

have shown strong reliability across Grades 9 through 11, with a Cronbach's alpha of .90 (Li & Lerner, 2013). In the present study, scores on this scale showed strong reliability ( $\alpha = .95$ ).

**Emotional engagement.** Participants completed five items adapted from the school engagement measure used by Li and Lerner (2013). Items included "*I think Scouts is fun and exciting*" and "*I care about Scouts.*" Scores on the original scale have shown adequate reliability across Grades 9 through 11, with Cronbach's alphas ranging from .82 to .84 (Li & Lerner, 2013). In the present study, scores on this scale showed adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .79$ ).

**Behavioral engagement.** Participants completed five items adapted from the school engagement measure used by Li and Lerner (2013). Items included "*I come to Scout meetings and activities on time*" and "*I work hard to do well in Scouting.*" Scores on the original scale have shown adequate reliability across Grades 9 through 11, with Cronbach's alphas ranging from .67 to .70 (Li & Lerner, 2013). In the present study, scores on this scale showed low reliability ( $\alpha = .60$ ). Based on analysis of inter-item correlations, I removed the first item from the scale (i.e., "*I come to Scout meetings and activities prepared [with my uniform on, parent permission forms signed]*"). Scores on the revised scale showed higher, but still relatively low, reliability ( $\alpha = .67$ ).

**Risk/problem behaviors.** Participants completed seven items derived from the PSL-AB (Benson et al., 1998) and the Monitoring the Future questionnaire (Johnston, O'Malley, & Bachman, 2001). Three items formed a subscale that assessed substance use. Items included "*I have smoked cigarettes*" and "*I have had alcohol to drink.*" Scores on this subscale have shown adequate reliability across Grades 7 through 12, with Cronbach's alphas ranging from .75 to .87. In the present study, scores on this subscale showed low reliability ( $\alpha = .59$ ).

In addition, four items formed a subscale that assessed other forms of delinquency. Items included *“I have stolen something”* and *“I have hit or beat someone up.”* Scores on this subscale have shown low to adequate reliability across Grades 7 through 12, with Cronbach’s alphas ranging from .56 to .78. In the present study, scores on this subscale showed low reliability ( $\alpha = .65$ ). Analysis of inter-item correlations did not reveal any potential changes to the scales (i.e., deleting items) that would enhance reliability.

Inspection of item responses showed that, for substance use, the items were not frequently endorsed (i.e., 9.4% of Scouts reported substance use). In contrast, half (50.0%) of Scouts reported involvement in any delinquency. These youth primarily reported hitting or beating someone up (37.5%) and/or stealing something (31.3%). Nevertheless, I recoded participants’ responses to the substance use and delinquency items as dichotomous (i.e., self-reported substance use or no substance use and self-reported delinquency or no delinquency).

**Parent/guardian demographic questionnaire.** Parents/guardians completed a modified version of the demographic questionnaire that was used in the CAMP study (see Hilliard et al., 2014). The measure (see Appendix B) consisted of 26 multiple-choice items that asked parents/guardians for standard background information (e.g., education and income levels), and about their sons’ involvement in Scouting. Items included *“What is the highest level of education that you have completed?”* and *“Please rate how important being a part of Scouts is in your son’s life.”* The questionnaire also included five open-ended items about parents’/guardians’ views of Scouting and how it was perceived to impact their sons. Items included *“Do you think that Scouts is good for your son? If yes, how? If no, why not?”* and *“Do you think that Scouts prevents kids from getting into trouble and involved in risk/problem behaviors (such as using drugs and violence)? If yes, how? If no, why not?”* This measure was available in English and

Spanish. The Spanish version was transcribed by an outside researcher who was not involved in the study but who was fluent in Spanish. I obtained a corresponding Certificate of Translation. As described below, this questionnaire (in conjunction with the Scout questionnaire) was also used to index Scouts' breadth of out-of-school time (OST) program participation, and duration and intensity of involvement in Scouting.

***Breadth of OST program participation.*** Both the Scout questionnaire and the parent/guardian questionnaire included a list of 10 OST programs (other than Scouting), and asked respondents to indicate in which programs they (on the Scout questionnaire) or their sons (on the parent/guardian) participated. The list included the following programs: academic clubs, arts and crafts, band/music, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Club, 4-H, martial arts, religious education (church youth group, Sunday school), sports, and community service. Breadth of OST program participation was indexed as the summed total number of programs in which Scouts participated, with higher scores indicating greater breadth of OST program participation (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010). I compared responses from both Scouts and parents/guardians to calculate breadth. If a Scout and his parent/guardian reported different numbers of programs in which the Scout participated, I calculated the average of the two values. Of the Scouts and parents/guardians who completed questionnaires, 75.9% did not provide completely matching responses. This discrepancy might be attributed, in part, to comprehension problems associated with the question. Perhaps participants misunderstood the question and endorsed programs in which Scouts were previously involved or programs that they planned to join, as opposed to only endorsing programs in which Scouts currently participated.

***Duration of involvement in Scouting.*** Both the Scout questionnaire and the parent/guardian questionnaire asked respondents to indicate for how long they (on the Scout

questionnaire) or their sons (on the parent/guardian questionnaire) participated in Scouting. Responses were scored on a scale from 1 to 5, ranging from “*Less than six months*” to “*More than three years.*” Based on responses from Scouts and parents/guardians (i.e., if respondents provided different responses, I calculated the average of their responses), duration was indexed as the amount of time that Scouts were in the program, with higher scores indicating greater duration of involvement in Scouting (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010). Of the Scouts and parents/guardians who completed questionnaires, 24.1% did not provide completely matching responses. Again, this discrepancy might be attributed, in part, to comprehension problems associated with the question.

***Intensity of involvement in Scouting.*** Both the Scout questionnaire and the parent/guardian questionnaire asked respondent to indicate approximately how many hours per week they (on the Scout questionnaire) or their sons (on the parent/guardian) questionnaire participated in Scouting. Participants used a five-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 0 (*Does not participate*) to 5 (*Five or more hours/week*). Based on responses from Scouts and parents/guardians (i.e., if respondents provided different responses, I calculated the average of their responses), intensity was indexed as the average number of hours per week that Scouts participated in the program, with higher scores indicating greater intensity of involvement in the program (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010). Of the Scouts and parents/guardians who completed questionnaires, 44.8% did not provide completely matching responses. Again, this discrepancy might be attributed, in part, to comprehension problems associated with the question.

**Youth interview.** I used a modified version of the semi-structured interview protocol that was used in the CAMP Study (see Ferris et al., in press) to ask youth about their experiences in Scouting (including what they liked about it and what they were learning), how they believed

that the program was impacting them, and their experiences in their communities. The protocol consisted of 18 items (see Appendix C), including *“What do you learn at Scouts?,”* *“How has Scouts affected you and your life?,”* and *“Tell me about the neighborhood or community where you live. What is it like to live there?”* I pilot tested the youth interview protocol with a Cub Scout who was not involved in the study but who belonged to a unit that was demographically similar to the ScoutReach units in the study. I asked the Scout for feedback on the interview protocol. However, he did not provide suggested revisions and there did not appear to be any issues associated with the questions based on his responses. As a result, I did not change any items.

**Parent/guardian interview.** I used a semi-structured interview protocol to ask parents/guardians about their sons’ involvement in Scouting, how they believed that the program was impacting their sons, and their experiences in their communities. The protocol consisted of 16 items (see Appendix D), including *“How do you feel about your son being in Scouts?,”* *“What kind of an effect do you think that Scouts has on your son?,”* and *“In your community, what are some challenges that your son and other boys face?”* In the present study, I pilot tested the parent/guardian interview protocol with a parent/guardian of a Cub Scout who was not involved in the study but who belonged to a unit that was demographically similar to the ScoutReach units in the study. I asked the parent/guardian for feedback on the interview protocol. However, he or she did not provide suggested revisions and there did not appear to be any issues associated with the questions based on his or her responses. As a result, I did not change any items.

**Program leader interview.** I used a modified version of the semi-structured interview protocol that was used in the CAMP study (see Hilliard et al., 2014) to ask ScoutReach leaders

about their involvement in the program, their views of the program, and how they believed that it impacted participating youth. The protocol consisted of 16 items (see Appendix E), including “*What do you like the most about your job?*,” “*How do you get kids engaged in ScoutReach?*,” and “*What kind of effect do you think that ScoutReach has on kids?*” In the present study, I pilot tested the pack leader interview protocol with a colleague who had formerly worked for the BSA organization and who had experience in regularly interacting with ScoutReach leaders. I asked the pilot participant for feedback on the interview protocol. However, he or she did not provide suggested revisions and there did not appear to be any issues associated with the questions based on his or her responses. As a result, I did not change any items.

### **Quantitative Analysis Strategy**

The quantitative portion of the study primarily aimed to enrich understanding of young people’s engagement in ScoutReach, and whether different dimensions of engagement were related to indicators of positive and potentially problematic development, as well as other dimensions of OST program involvement (i.e., breadth, duration, and intensity). I addressed the following quantitative research questions:

- 1.** On average, how do Scouts score on different dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach (e.g., cognitive, emotional, behavioral) and indicators of positive and potentially problematic development?;
- 2.** What is the relation among different dimensions of engagement and indicators of positive development among Scouts?;
- 3.** Do Scouts differ in their scores on dimensions of engagement based on self-reported substance use and involvement in any delinquency?;

4. What is the relation among different dimensions of involvement in ScoutReach and other OST programs (i.e., breadth, duration, and intensity) and dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach?;
5. What is the relation among breadth, duration, and intensity of program involvement and indicators of positive development among Scouts?;
6. Do Scouts differ in their scores on breadth, duration, and intensity of program involvement based on self-reported substance use and involvement in any delinquency?; and
7. What is the relation among perceived aspects of the ScoutReach program and dimensions of youth engagement?

I performed missing value analysis using SPSS Version 22 software. The percent missingness for Scouts by scale was as follows: obedience (18.8% of participants had missing data); reverence (18.8%); cheerfulness (0.0%); kindness (9.4%); thriftiness (9.4%); hopeful future expectation (6.3%); trustworthiness (6.3%); helpfulness (18.8%); self-perceived school competence (21.9%); ISR (21.9%); PYD (46.9%); contribution (37.5%); grit (37.5%); perceived program aspects (9.4%); Scouting advancement (18.8%); Scouting engagement (28.1%); cognitive engagement (12.5%); emotional engagement (6.3%); behavioral engagement (21.9%); substance use (3.1%); and delinquency (6.3%).

Results from Little's Missing Completely at Random (MCAR) test (Little, 1988) indicated that data for the majority of the scales were MCAR. However, the data were not MCAR for the following three scales: hopeful future expectation,  $\chi^2 = 0.00$ ,  $p < .05$ ; cognitive engagement,  $\chi^2 = 20.69$ ,  $p < .05$ ; and emotional engagement,  $\chi^2 = 19.68$ ,  $p < .05$ . Closer inspection of these data revealed that two participants completely skipped over the hopeful future

expectation scale. In addition, one participant did not answer two of the five cognitive engagement items, and another participant did not answer four of the five emotional engagement items. It is possible that data missingness across these scales and the other scales might be attributable to difficulties with reading comprehension that participants may have experienced (in particular, younger participants). In addition, the format and/or length of the survey may have played a role in data missingness. I address these potential limitations in Chapter 5 (Discussion).

In light of the study's small sample, I imputed all missing values using SPSS Version 22 software. I performed 20 data imputations and, in SPSS, split the file by the imputation variable to generate pooled estimates (IBM SPSS Guide, 2011).

In addition, in light of the low reliability estimates (i.e.,  $< .70$ ) associated with eight variables (i.e., reverence, thriftiness, perceived school competence, ISR, Scouting advancement, substance use, delinquency, and behavioral engagement), I computed correlations with corrections for attenuation manually in Microsoft Excel, using the approach described by Murphy and Davidshofer (1988). These correlations reflect the potential magnitude of correlations if the measures available had less measurement error.

To address the first research question (i.e., On average, how do Scouts score on different dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach [e.g., cognitive, emotional, behavioral] and indicators of positive and potentially problematic development?), I performed descriptive analyses by tabulating participants' scores (i.e., means and standard deviations) on all of the predictor and outcome variables that I assessed. I hypothesized that Scouts would score high on indicators of positive development and engagement, and low on indicators of potentially problematic development.

To address the second research question (i.e., What is the relation among different dimensions of engagement and indicators of positive development among Scouts?), I computed Pearson product-moment correlations. I hypothesized that the five dimensions of engagement (i.e., cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, behavioral engagement, Scouting advancement, and Scouting engagement) would be positively associated with indicators of positive development among Scouts.

To address the third research question (i.e., Do Scouts differ in their scores on dimensions of engagement based on self-reported substance use and involvement in any delinquency?), I conducted two independent samples *t*-tests. I hypothesized that Scouts' scores on dimensions of engagement would differ significantly depending on whether they reported using any substances or involvement in any delinquency, such that Scouts who indicated involvement in these risk/problem behaviors would score lower on engagement than youth who reported no involvement in such behaviors.

To address the fourth research question (i.e., What is the relation among different dimensions of involvement in ScoutReach and other OST programs [i.e., breadth, duration, and intensity] and dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach?), I computed Pearson product-moment correlations. I hypothesized that breadth of participation in other OST programs and duration and intensity of involvement in ScoutReach would be positively associated with dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach.

To address the fifth research question (i.e., What is the relation among breadth, duration, and intensity of program involvement and indicators of positive development among Scouts?), I computed Pearson product-moment correlations. I hypothesized that breadth, duration, and

intensity of involvement in ScoutReach and other OST programs would be positively associated with indicators of positive development among Scouts.

To address the sixth research question (i.e., Do Scouts differ in their scores on breadth, duration, and intensity of program involvement based on self-reported substance use and involvement in any delinquency?), I conducted two independent samples *t*-tests. I hypothesized that Scouts' scores on dimensions of involvement would differ significantly depending on whether they reported using any substances or involvement in any delinquency, such that Scouts who indicated involvement in these risk/problem behaviors would score lower on dimensions of involvement than youth who reported no involvement in such behaviors.

To address the seventh research question (i.e., What is the relation among perceived aspects of the ScoutReach program and dimensions of youth engagement?), I computed Pearson product-moment correlations. I hypothesized that perceived aspects of the ScoutReach program would be positively associated with dimensions of engagement.

### **Qualitative Analysis Strategy**

I collected cross-sectional qualitative data from Scouts, parents/guardians, and program leaders to enrich understanding of young people's experiences in the ScoutReach program and in their communities (from the perspectives of three different stakeholder groups). I also sought to gain a more multifaceted understanding of whether the ScoutReach program may promote healthy attributes, skills, and behaviors that might help youth to navigate potential contextual challenges or barriers to thriving. In addition, I aimed to explore which aspects of the program seemed to be the most strongly linked to youth engagement (based on participants' own words). To gain insights into these areas of inquiry, I conducted interviews with 10 Scouts, 10

parents/guardians, and five program leaders. In addition, I analyzed three short-answer questionnaire responses from 32 parents/guardians.

I collected these data to explore the following primary research questions: **1.** Based on analysis of interviews, what are Scouts', parents'/guardians', and program leaders' views of the ScoutReach program and how it is related to youth engagement and youth development?; and **2.** Based on analysis of parent/guardian short-answer responses, what themes emerged in parents'/guardians' descriptions of why their sons joined ScoutReach, and their views of how the program has impacted their sons? Below, I describe two analysis approaches that I used in analyzing the interviews and short-answer responses (i.e., interpretative phenomenological analysis and thematic analysis, respectively), and present the more specific corresponding research questions.

**Participant interviews.** The semi-structured interview protocols (see Appendices C-E) aimed to explore Scouts' experiences in the ScoutReach program and in their communities, and individuals' views of how the program may be impacting participating youth (based on the perspectives of three stakeholder groups). Questions in the interview protocols were guided by RDS metatheory (e.g., Overton, 2015) and the PVEST framework (e.g., Spencer et al., 2015). These theoretical perspectives emphasize the importance of adopting a holistic and integrated view of human development, and the developmental processes involved in how young people make meaning of, and navigate, positive and potentially problematic experiences (e.g., Overton, 2015; Spencer et al., 2015). As such, the interview protocols included questions assessing participants' views of Scouts' experiences in the ScoutReach program and in their communities, and whether the program might equip youth with skills to effectively navigate potential barriers to healthy functioning.

Specifically, I explored the following research questions:

- a.** How do Scouts/parents/leaders describe Scouts' experiences in (or their personal views of) ScoutReach?;
- b.** How do Scouts/parents/leaders describe Scouts' experiences in their communities?;
- c.** Do Scouts/parents/leaders perceive ScoutReach as having an impact on youth development? If so, how?;
- d.** According to Scouts/parents/leaders, which aspects of ScoutReach seem to be the most important or most strongly related to youth engagement?; and
- e.** How are Scouts/parents/leaders similar and distinct in their views of ScoutReach and its potential impact on youth development?; and
- f.** How are younger Scouts' (i.e., younger than 10 years old) and older Scouts' (i.e., aged 10 and older) views of (and experiences in) ScoutReach and their communities similar and distinct?

To address Questions a through d, I performed interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA; Smith, 2011; Smith & Osborn, 2008) to examine the views and experiences of Scouts, parents/guardians, and program leaders who were involved in the ScoutReach program. IPA is a dynamic and idiographic qualitative approach that is focused on understanding individuals' lived experiences, and how individuals make meaning of their experiences (e.g., Smith, 2011; Smith & Osborn, 2008). This approach involves close, detailed analysis of individual cases, followed by analysis of patterns or themes across cases to assess for potential convergence and divergence in individuals' views and experiences (e.g., Smith, 2011). Rather than measuring the frequency of individuals' experiences, IPA is focused on substantively understanding individuals'

experiences, and complexities associated with how individuals make sense of their experiences (e.g., Smith & Osborn, 2008).

As is the case in the present study, IPA is typically used with small samples that are relatively homogenous (e.g., similar in socio-demographic characteristics), and in investigations that employ semi-structured interview protocols, which provide researchers with flexibility in asking participants follow-up questions to probe interesting topics or ideas that emerge in participants' responses (e.g., Smith & Osborn, 2008). There are several steps involved in IPA (e.g., Smith & Osborn, 2008) that I undertook in analyzing interview transcripts from each participant group (i.e., Scouts, parents/guardians, and program leaders).

In the first stage, I closely read (and re-read) each transcript and made notes in the margins of interesting ideas or topics that emerged in participants' responses. Next, I transformed these initial notes into themes or concise phrases that captured the overall essence of what participants were saying. These themes were drawn from participants' own words (e.g., "[ScoutReach] keeps [youth] off the streets") or from relevant developmental literature (e.g., "reinforcement of learning"). Then, I compiled the codes into one document and looked for connections among them or whether any of them clustered together. I then collated overlapping themes under superordinate codes (e.g., "preoccupies time" and "exposure to role models" were collated under "prevention"). Next, I developed a codebook that listed the themes linked to each superordinate code, along with corresponding definitions and examples. This initial codebook was used to guide the analysis of subsequent transcripts within a particular participant group. Throughout this process, I engaged in memo writing to document my ideas and any potential preconceptions or biases. For example, I documented reflections related to my role as an outside researcher (e.g., potential limitations associated with participants feeling hesitant or

uncomfortable in opening up to me about their views and experiences) and my prior experience in working with the ScoutReach program (e.g., similarities and differences that I observed between units in Philadelphia and Boston).

After I developed initial codebooks for each participant group (i.e., Scouts, parents/guardians, and program leaders), I discussed the codes with two other trained qualitative researchers to validate my interpretations of participants' responses and reach conceptual agreement on the codes. Next, using the initial codebooks, a second researcher and I independently coded a portion of the transcripts (approximately half of the transcripts in each participant group) using NVivo Version 10 software. We then met to discuss each transcript in detail and our coding decisions, and whether modifications needed to be made to the codebooks (e.g., through adding codes or revising the definitions of codes). Differences in our coding decisions primarily reflected differences in the amount of interview context that we linked to codes in NVivo (e.g., I might have captured the interviewer's question as part of the context, whereas the second researcher might have just captured the participant's response). From a more substantive perspective, the second researcher and I were primarily in agreement about the codes and how they applied to the data. Nevertheless, we made several revisions to the codebooks. For example, we decided to expand our definition of engagement so that we coded instances when Scouts demonstrated engagement in the program *and* when they appeared to be less engaged in the program.

After finalizing the codebooks (see Appendices F-H), we independently coded the remaining transcripts. I calculated interrater reliability coefficients for each set of interviews, as reported in Chapter 4 (Qualitative Results).

**Parent/guardian short-answer responses.** I analyzed parents'/guardians' responses to open-ended questions (see Appendix B) to learn more about Scouts' reasons for joining the program and the perceived developmental impact of the program on participating youth, based on the views of a larger sample of parents/guardians ( $n = 32$ ). Specifically, I assessed parents'/guardians' responses to the following three questions: "Why did your son join Scouts?," "Do you think that Scouts is good for your son? If yes, how?," and "Do you think that Scouts prevents kids from getting into trouble and involved in risk or problem behaviors (such as using drugs and violence)? If yes, how?"

I conducted thematic analysis (TA; Braun & Clarke, 2006) to identify and describe patterns or themes in participants' responses. TA is a qualitative analysis method that is focused on identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes within data (e.g., Braun & Clarke, 2006). In contrast to IPA, TA is not necessarily linked to a particular theoretical framework or focused on understanding details associated with participants' lived experiences (e.g., Braun & Clarke, 2006; Clarke & Braun, 2014). Instead, TA is appropriate for exploring a broader array of research questions using inductive or deductive approaches (e.g., Clarke & Braun, 2014). In the present study, TA was conducted using both inductive and deductive descriptive coding. In other words, codes were informed by participants' own words (inductive) and were also based on my pre-existing knowledge of relevant developmental literature (deductive). However, my analysis of participants' responses was primarily inductive in nature, because I focused on identifying, analyzing, and reporting basic topics or themes in participants' descriptions of why their sons became involved in ScoutReach, and their views of how the program may positively impact their sons and other participating youth (e.g., Hershberg, DeSouza, Warren, Lerner, & Lerner, 2014).

There were several steps involved in conducting TA of participants' short-answer responses (e.g., Braun & Clarke, 2006). First, I familiarized myself with the data by reading (and re-reading) all of the responses to each of the three short-answer questions. Next, I generated initial descriptive codes based on the content of participants' responses. Then, I documented these themes in a codebook, and provided corresponding examples. Throughout this process, I engaged in memo writing to document my ideas and any potential preconceptions or biases. For example, I documented my preliminary ideas about how these data compared to parents'/guardians' interview responses. Although this analytic approach is similar to IPA, unlike with the interviews, I did not approach my analysis of the short-answer responses with an underlying theoretical framework in mind (e.g., Braun & Clarke, 2006). In addition, whereas IPA involves two levels of theme development (i.e., emergent themes are then transformed into superordinate themes), TA generally involves one level of theme development (i.e., themes are developed based on the codes; e.g., The University of Auckland, 2006). In short, IPA involves more descriptive and conceptual analysis, whereas TA involves a semantic approach, such that codes and themes explicitly reflect the content of the data (e.g., The University of Auckland, 2006).

After developing the initial codebook, a second trained qualitative researcher and I independently coded half of the responses for each question and met to discuss our coding decisions and whether the codes needed to be refined. We were practically in complete agreement about our coding decisions and made very few minor revisions to the codes (e.g., by consolidating similar codes into one code).

After finalizing the codebook (see Appendix I), we independently coded the remaining responses using Microsoft Excel. As part of the analysis, I examined the frequency with which particular codes were applied to responses, as presented in Chapter 4 (Qualitative Results).

### **Mixed-Methods Analysis Strategy**

Because my study included a mixed-methods design, I sought to integrate the quantitative and qualitative data that I collected from Scouts, parents/guardians, and program leaders into a coherent narrative that may support meta-inferences (e.g., Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) about the nature of Scouts' experiences and engagement in ScoutReach and, as well, the program's relation to youth development. Thus, after I completed my separate analyses of the quantitative and qualitative data, I explored areas of commonality and convergence across the three participant groups and across both sets of quantitative and qualitative analyses (e.g., for example, see Johnson et al., 2014). This concurrent triangulation approach (Creswell, 2009) helped to provide more in-depth information about participant experiences and outcomes, and may offset the weaknesses associated with one method with the strengths associated with the other method.

### CHAPTER 3: QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Based on analysis of cross-sectional quantitative data collected from Scouts and parents/guardians, the present study aimed to enrich understanding of whether youth were engaged in ScoutReach in different ways (e.g., cognitively, emotionally, behaviorally). These data also examined if and how different dimensions of engagement and involvement (i.e., breadth, duration, and intensity) in ScoutReach and other OST programs were related to indicators of both positive and potentially problematic youth development. In this chapter, I present findings from analyses of Scout and parent/guardian questionnaire data.

#### **Question 1: Descriptive Analyses**

I calculated mean scores and standard deviations for all scales that I assessed. As expected, Scouts' average scores were moderate to high on indicators of positive development. As shown in Table 1, Scouts' scores were moderate to high on the following variables: obedience, reverence, cheerfulness, kindness, thriftiness, hopeful future expectation, trustworthiness, helpfulness, self-perceived school competence, ISR, PYD, grit, and perceived program aspects. However, Scouts' average scores were relatively low on contribution (action).

As expected, Scouts had high average scores on cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, behavioral engagement, Scouting advancement, and Scouting engagement (as shown in Table 1). In addition, as expected, Scouts indicated relatively low endorsement of items related to substance use (i.e., 9.4% reported any substance use). Of the Scouts who reported substance use, 66.7% were aged 10 or older. However, half of Scouts (50.0%) reported any delinquency. Of these Scouts, 62.5% were aged 10 or older.

Scouts' breadth of involvement in OST programs was indexed by the total number of programs in which they participated (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010). On average, Scouts participated

in approximately three programs, including Scouting ( $SD = 1.44$ , Range = 1.0-7.0). Breadth data were missing for one (3.1%) Scout. Duration of involvement in Scouting was indexed as the amount of time that Scouts were in the program (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010). Over half (56.2%) of Scouts were involved in Scouting for more than two years. Finally, intensity of involvement in Scouting was indexed as the average number of hours per week that Scouts participated in the program (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010). On average, half (50.0%) of Scouts participated in Scouting for one to less than two hours per week. Intensity data were missing for three (9.4%) Scouts

### **Question 2: Engagement and Indicators of Positive Development**

I computed Pearson product-moment correlations to examine the relations among five dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach (cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, behavioral engagement, Scouting advancement, and Scouting engagement) and indicators of positive development. Given the small sample size for my analyses, I focused on both statistical significance and practical significance, as indexed through the magnitude of the correlations. I interpreted the magnitudes of correlation coefficients using Cohen's (1988) guidelines for interpreting  $r$ , which are, perhaps, the most widely used in the social and behavioral sciences (e.g., Hemphill, 2003). According to these guidelines, a coefficient of 0.1 to less than 0.3 is small, a coefficient of 0.3 to less than 0.5 is moderate, and a coefficient of 0.5 or greater is large.

As shown in Table 2, cognitive engagement was positively associated with hopeful future expectation, trustworthiness, helpfulness, self-perceived school competence, and PYD. The magnitudes of these correlation coefficients were moderate. Inspection of the non-significant correlations revealed that the magnitudes of the coefficients for cheerfulness, thriftiness, and grit were also moderate.

Emotional engagement was positively associated with obedience, reverence, cheerfulness, kindness, thriftiness, hopeful future expectation, trustworthiness, helpfulness, self-perceived school competence, ISR, PYD, and contribution (action). The magnitudes of the correlation coefficients for obedience, reverence, cheerfulness, thriftiness, hopeful future expectation, trustworthiness, ISR, and contribution were moderate. In comparison, the magnitudes of the coefficients for kindness, helpfulness, and self-perceived school competence were large. In regard to the non-significant correlations, the magnitude of the coefficient for grit was moderate.

Behavioral engagement was positively associated with trustworthiness and PYD. The magnitude of the coefficient for trustworthiness was large, whereas the magnitude of the coefficient for PYD was moderate. Inspection of the non-significant correlations revealed that the magnitudes of the coefficients for obedience, hopeful future expectation, helpfulness, and self-perceived school competence were moderate. The magnitudes of the remaining coefficients were small.

Scouting advancement was only positively associated with cheerfulness, and the magnitude of this correlation coefficient was moderate. The magnitudes of all non-significant coefficients were small. Scouting engagement was only positively associated with self-perceived school competence, and the magnitude of this correlation coefficient was moderate. The magnitudes of all non-significant correlation coefficients were also small to moderate.

It is also worth noting that cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement were all positively correlated with each other. The magnitude of the correlation between cognitive and emotional engagement was large, as was the magnitude of the correlation between cognitive and

behavioral engagement. In contrast, the magnitude of the correlation between emotional and behavioral engagement was moderate.

In addition, Scouting advancement was positively associated with cognitive and emotional engagement, and the magnitudes of these correlations were moderate. Scouting engagement was positively associated with cognitive and emotional engagement, and the corresponding magnitudes of these correlations were moderate. It is also worth noting that Scout age was positively associated with behavioral engagement, and the magnitude of this correlation was moderate.

Table 3 presents correlations corrected for attenuation due to measurement error. As noted earlier, these correlations reflect the potential magnitude of correlations if the measures available had less measurement error (e.g., Murphy & Davidshofer, 1988). Overall, the corrected correlations between the dimensions of engagement and indicators of positive development were higher than the uncorrected correlations presented in Table 2. For example, the correlation coefficients were higher between cognitive engagement and the following variables: obedience (0.31 corrected correlation vs. 0.26 uncorrected correlation); reverence (0.21 vs. 0.17); kindness (0.28 vs. 0.25); thriftiness (0.44 vs. 0.31); hopeful future expectation (0.49 vs. 0.40); trustworthiness (0.49 vs. 0.45); helpfulness (0.54 vs. 0.45); self-perceived school competence (0.51 vs. 0.41); ISR (0.31 vs. 0.24); PYD (0.49 vs. 0.43); contribution (0.16 vs. 0.14); and grit (0.36 vs. 0.31).

### **Question 3: Engagement and Indicators of Potentially Problematic Youth Development**

I conducted two sets of independent samples *t*-tests to examine whether youth differed in their scores on five dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach (cognitive engagement, emotional

engagement, behavioral engagement, Scouting advancement, and Scouting engagement) based on whether they reported using any substances or being involved in any forms of delinquency.

For these comparisons, I also computed effect sizes (Cohen's  $d$ ), which I interpreted according to guidelines presented by Wuensch (2015): small effect = 0.2, moderate effect = 0.5, and large effect = 0.8.

The first set of  $t$ -tests focused on group comparisons based on whether Scouts reported any substance use. There was a statistically significant difference in scores on cognitive engagement based on self-reported substance use:  $t(30) = -.959, p = .04, 95\% \text{ CI } [-1.70, .61], d = .39$ , such that Scouts who indicated substance use ( $M = 3.87, SD = 1.79$ ) scored lower on cognitive engagement than Scouts who indicated no substance use ( $M = 4.41, SD = .84$ ). However, the effect size was small to moderate.

In regard to emotional engagement, there were no statistically significant differences in scores between Scouts who reported substance use (Group 1:  $M = 4.53, SD = .64$ ) and Scouts who did not use substances (Group 2:  $M = 4.39, SD = .63$ ),  $t(30) = .37, p = .94, d = .22$ . There were no differences in scores on behavioral engagement between Group 1 ( $M = 4.08, SD = .52$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 4.53, SD = .57$ ),  $t(30) = -1.29, p = .99, d = .82$ . Although there were no significant differences between groups in regard to behavioral engagement, the corresponding effect size was large. There were no differences in scores on Scouting advancement between Group 1 ( $M = 3.78, SD = .84$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 4.75, SD = .50$ ),  $t(30) = -3.01, p = .25, d = 1.40$ . Although there were no significant differences between groups in regard to Scouting advancement, the corresponding effect size was quite large. There were also no differences in scores on Scouting engagement between Group 1 ( $M = 3.92, SD = .69$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 4.30,$

$SD = .42$ ),  $t(30) = -1.43$ ,  $p = .41$ ,  $d = .67$ . Again, despite this non-significant finding, the corresponding effect size was moderate to large.

The second set of  $t$ -tests focused on examining potential group differences based on whether Scouts reported any delinquency. There were no statistically significant differences in scores on cognitive engagement between Scouts who reported any delinquency (Group 1:  $M = 4.13$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ ) and Scouts who did not report delinquency (Group 2:  $M = 4.59$ ,  $SD = .55$ ),  $t(30) = -1.41$ ,  $p = .09$ ,  $d = .50$ . There were no differences between Group 1 ( $M = 4.39$ ,  $SD = .56$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 4.43$ ,  $SD = .70$ ) for emotional engagement,  $t(30) = -.17$ ,  $p = .91$ ,  $d = .06$ . There were no differences between Group 1 ( $M = 4.34$ ,  $SD = .72$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 4.63$ ,  $SD = .34$ ) for behavioral engagement,  $t(30) = -1.42$ ,  $p = .11$ ,  $d = .52$ . There were no differences between Group 1 ( $M = 4.54$ ,  $SD = .61$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 4.77$ ,  $SD = .58$ ) for Scouting advancement,  $t(30) = -1.09$ ,  $p = .34$ ,  $d = .39$ . There were also no differences between Group 1 ( $M = 4.20$ ,  $SD = .48$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 4.33$ ,  $SD = .43$ ) for Scouting engagement,  $t(30) = -.78$ ,  $p = .52$ ,  $d = .29$ .

#### **Question 4: Participation Breadth, Duration, and Intensity and Engagement**

I computed Pearson product-moment correlations to examine the relation among three dimensions of involvement in ScoutReach and other OST programs (breadth, duration, and intensity) and five dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach (cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, behavioral engagement, Scouting advancement, and Scouting engagement). As shown in Table 2, breadth of OST program participation was positively associated with cognitive engagement. Based on Cohen's (1988) guidelines for interpreting the  $r$  coefficient, the magnitude of this correlation coefficient was moderate. In addition, duration was positively associated with emotional engagement, and the magnitude of this correlation was moderate. Intensity was also positively associated with cognitive and behavioral engagement, and the

corresponding magnitudes were moderate. Perhaps not surprisingly, Scout age was positively associated with duration and intensity of involvement in ScoutReach. The magnitudes of these correlations were moderate.

I did not calculate correlations corrected for attenuation between dimensions of involvement in ScoutReach and other OST programs and dimensions of engagement. The formula that I used to compute attenuated correlations (Murphy & Davidshofer, 1988) requires alpha coefficients, which were not calculated for my indices of participation breadth, duration, and intensity, given that these values were based on one item or one count value (i.e., summed total or average).

### **Question 5: Participation Breadth, Duration, and Intensity and Indicators of Positive Development**

I computed Pearson product-moment correlations to examine the relation among three dimensions of involvement in ScoutReach and other OST programs (breadth, duration, and intensity) and indicators of positive development among Scouts. As shown in Table 2, breadth of OST program participation was positively associated with reverence, thriftiness, hopeful future expectation, self-perceived school competence, ISR, PYD, and grit. Based on Cohen's (1988) guidelines for interpreting the  $r$  coefficient, the magnitudes of the correlation coefficients for reverence, thriftiness, hopeful future expectation, and PYD were moderate, whereas the magnitudes of the coefficients for self-perceived school competence, ISR, and grit were large. Inspection of the non-significant correlations revealed that the magnitude of the coefficient for trustworthiness was moderate. The magnitudes of the other coefficients were small.

Duration of involvement in ScoutReach was positively associated with kindness, thriftiness, hopeful future expectation, helpfulness, and contribution (action). The magnitudes of

these coefficients were moderate. In regard to the non-significant correlations, the magnitudes of the coefficients for trustworthiness, self-perceived school competence, and grit were moderate.

The magnitudes of the other coefficients were small.

Finally, intensity of involvement in ScoutReach was positively associated with thriftiness and grit, and the magnitudes of these correlation coefficients were moderate. The magnitudes of all non-significant correlations were small.

As noted in regard to the analyses conducted to address Question 4, I did not calculate correlations corrected for attenuation involving dimensions of involvement in ScoutReach, given that alpha coefficients for participation breadth, duration, and intensity could not be calculated. Indices of these measures did not correspond to standardized scales, but, instead, were based on one item or one count value (i.e., summed total or average).

### **Question 6: Dimensions of Involvement and Indicators of Potentially Problematic Youth Development**

I conducted two sets of independent samples *t*-tests to examine whether youth differed in their scores on three dimensions of involvement in ScoutReach and other OST programs (breadth, duration, and intensity) based on whether they reported substance use or involvement in any delinquency.

The first set of *t*-tests explored potential differences between Scouts who reported any substance use and those who did not. In regard to breadth, there were statistically significant differences between Scouts who used substances (Group 1:  $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = 3.54$ ) and Scouts who did not use substances (Group 2:  $M = 2.98$ ,  $SD = 1.28$ ),  $t(29) = 1.46$ ,  $p < .05$ , 95% CI [-.60, 3.64],  $d = .57$ , such that Scouts who reported substance use tended to score higher on breadth of OST program participation than Scouts who reported no substance use. Based on guidelines

presented by Wuensch (2015), the effect size was moderate to large. There were no differences in scores on duration between Group 1 ( $M = 3.33$ ,  $SD = 1.53$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 3.21$ ,  $SD = 1.66$ ),  $t(30) = .13$ ,  $p = .38$ ,  $d = .08$ . In regard to intensity, I could not compare scores between groups, given that one group consisted of only one participant.

Similarly, in regard to breadth, there were no statistically significant differences in scores between Scouts who were involved in any delinquency (Group 1:  $M = 3.06$ ,  $SD = 1.59$ ) and Scouts who reported no delinquency (Group 2:  $M = 3.10$ ,  $SD = 1.33$ ),  $t(29) = -.071$ ,  $p = .53$ ,  $d = .03$ . There were also no differences in scores on duration between Group 1 ( $M = 3.38$ ,  $SD = 1.82$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 3.06$ ,  $SD = 1.44$ ),  $t(30) = .54$ ,  $p = .06$ ,  $d = .19$ . However, there were statistically significant differences in scores on intensity between Group 1 ( $M = 2.64$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 2.47$ ,  $SD = .64$ ),  $t(27) = .57$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $d = .20$ , such that Scouts who reported no delinquency tended to score lower on intensity of involvement in ScoutReach than Scouts who indicated involvement in delinquency. However, the effect size was small.

### **Question 7: Perceived Aspects of Program Context and Engagement**

I computed Pearson product-moment correlations to examine the relation between perceived aspects of the ScoutReach program context and five dimensions of engagement (cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, behavioral engagement, Scouting advancement, and Scouting engagement) in ScoutReach. As shown in Table 2, the scale of perceived program aspects was positively associated with all dimensions of engagement, with the exception of general Scouting engagement. Based on Cohen's (1988) guidelines, the magnitudes of the correlation coefficients for cognitive and emotional engagement were large, whereas the magnitudes of the coefficients for Scouting advancement and behavioral engagement were moderate.

Table 3 presents correlations corrected for attenuation due to measurement error. Overall, the corrected correlations were higher than the uncorrected correlations presented in Table 2, specifically between perceived program aspects and cognitive engagement (0.79 corrected correlation vs. 0.67 uncorrected correlation); emotional engagement (0.97 vs. 0.75); behavioral engagement (0.56 vs. 0.40); Scouting advancement (0.66 vs. 0.41); and Scouting engagement (0.63 vs. 0.35).

### **Summary of Quantitative Results**

In sum, analysis of questionnaire data collected from Scouts and parents/guardians suggested that Scouts were engaged cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally in ScoutReach. Consistent with findings from the CAMP study (e.g., Lynch et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2015a), Scouts also demonstrated general program-related interest, effort, and enjoyment (as indexed by the Scouting engagement scale) and, as well, indicated their desires to remain in the program and progress through the different ranks or levels (as indexed by the Scouting advancement scale).

Although there was relatively low endorsement (i.e., 9.4%) of items assessing substance use, half of the Scouts reported involvement in some delinquent acts (namely, hitting or beating someone up or stealing). This finding was slightly unexpected given Scouting's emphasis on building character and instilling values of good conduct in Scouts (BSA, 2016). Scouts who reported substance use scored lower on cognitive engagement and higher on breadth of OST program participation than Scouts who reported no substance use. However, given the small proportion of Scouts who reported substance use, I believe that it is not prudent to interpret these findings as substantive.

Quantitative results also demonstrated that the dimensions of engagement were related differentially to some indicators of positive development. For instance, emotional engagement

was positively associated with the most indicators of positive development, followed by cognitive engagement, behavioral engagement, and Scouting advancement and general Scouting engagement. In addition, emotional engagement was uniquely associated with seven indicators, including obedience, reverence, cheerfulness, kindness, thriftiness, ISR, and contribution (action). For the most part, the magnitudes of the correlation coefficients associated with emotional engagement were also larger than the coefficients associated with the other dimensions of engagement.

Breadth, duration, and intensity were also related differentially to some dimensions of engagement and indicators of positive development. Breadth was positively associated with the most indicators of positive development, followed by duration and then intensity. In general, the magnitudes of correlation coefficients were moderate to large. In addition the scale of perceived program aspects was positively associated with all dimensions of engagement, except for general Scouting engagement.

In short, these findings suggested nuanced relations among dimensions of engagement and involvement in OST programs and indicators of positive and potentially problematic development among Scouts. Emotional engagement, or having a positive affect toward the ScoutReach program (e.g., feeling happy, excited, a sense of belonging), seemed to be a particularly important dimension of engagement that was related to positive youth outcomes. However, to more fully understand the complexities associated with Scouts' experiences and engagement in the ScoutReach program, I analyzed qualitative data from Scouts and other important stakeholder groups, as I describe in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 4: QUALITATIVE RESULTS

Based on analysis of cross-sectional qualitative data collected from Scouts, parents/guardians, and program leaders, the qualitative portion of this study aimed to enrich understanding of the phenomenology of young people's experiences in the ScoutReach program and in their communities. Broadly, I analyzed qualitative data from Scout, parent/guardian, and program leader interviews and parent/guardian short-answer questionnaire responses to examine participants' views of (or experiences in) the ScoutReach program and how the program may be related to youth engagement and youth development, more broadly. In this chapter, I first present findings from my analysis of participant interviews, followed by findings from my analysis of short-answer responses.

### **Participant Interviews: Providing Insights into Scouts' Lived Experiences**

Consistent with interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA; Smith, 2011; Smith & Osborn, 2008), I conducted interviews with Scouts, parents/guardians, and program leaders to elucidate the phenomenology of Scouts' experiences in the ScoutReach program and in their communities by identifying and examining patterns or themes in participants' descriptions and assessing for potential convergence and divergence in individuals' views and experiences. I sought to address the following specific research questions:

- a. How do Scouts/parents/leaders describe Scouts' experiences in (or their personal views of) ScoutReach?;
- b. How do Scouts/parents/leaders describe Scouts' experiences in their communities?;
- c. Do Scouts/parents/leaders perceive ScoutReach as having an impact on youth development? If so, how?;

- d.** According to Scouts/parents/leaders, which aspects of ScoutReach seem to be the most important or most strongly related to youth engagement?;
- e.** How are Scouts/parents/leaders similar and distinct in their views of ScoutReach and its potential impact on youth development?; and
- f.** How are younger Scouts' (i.e., younger than 10 years old) and older Scouts' (i.e., aged 10 and older) views of (and experiences in) ScoutReach and their communities similar and distinct?;

To address Questions a through d, a second researcher and I independently coded the interview transcripts after reaching conceptual agreement on the codebooks (see Appendices F – H). Using NVivo 10 software, I calculated a Cohen's Kappa coefficient for each set of interviews (i.e., from Scouts, parents/guardians, and program leaders) to assess interrater reliability (e.g., McHugh, 2012). The Kappa coefficients indicated adequate interrater reliability: .72 for Scout interviews; .73 for parent/guardian interviews; and .75 for leader interviews.

I organized findings according to participant group. I present findings from the interviews with program leaders first, followed by findings from the interviews with parents/guardians and then Scouts. I present the findings in this order to more clearly showcase similarities and differences in perspectives among these three stakeholder groups and, in particular, to clarify how adults' views of the program compare to young people's experiences. For each participant group, I also reflected on the concept of theoretical saturation, or the point at which no new information or themes were identified in participants' responses; this reflection helped me to gauge the potential representativeness of themes (e.g., Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). After presenting findings from each group, I explore potential similarities and differences in themes across groups.

## Program Leaders

Five ScoutReach leaders ( $M_{age} = 54.0$  years,  $SD = 10.83$ ,  $Range = 33$  to  $62$ ) participated in interviews about their views of, and experiences in, ScoutReach, and how they believed that the program impacted participating youth. Four of the leaders were volunteers representing two ScoutReach units, and the fifth leader was the District Executive of the ScoutReach program. I present key findings from the interviews below, according to corresponding research question.

**a. Experiences in (and views of) ScoutReach.** Leaders primarily described their experiences in (and view of) the ScoutReach program as positive and enjoyable. They described the structure and composition of their ScoutReach units (e.g., as related to factors such as youth enrollment, retention, and curriculum), their reasons for becoming involved in the program, perceived positive aspects associated with their roles as leaders, and perceived important aspects of the program. Leaders also described program-related challenges that they experienced, or potential areas for program improvement.

***Unit structure and composition.*** Both ScoutReach units that were involved in the study consisted of Cub Scout packs and Boy Scout troops. In their interviews, leaders described the processes through which they recruited Scouts for their units. As one leader explained, although his unit met at an elementary school, he recruited Scouts from neighboring communities who traveled to attend Scout meetings and activities at the school. Whereas this unit was based at an elementary school and held its meetings right after school, the other unit was based at a church and held its meetings in the early evening. Both units held meetings once per week.

In describing the training that program leaders received, the District Executive stated the following: *“New Program Specialists mostly have no Scouting background. So we tell them about the Scouting program and the value of the program, what Scouting stands for. There is*

*also other training – there’s a classroom management piece. Role play. The other piece is how you run the lesson – it’s not just about opening the book, but how you run the program effectively. There is a strong emphasis on rank advancement and how to plan a lesson. At the very beginning, new units use a standard curriculum. We go through the set of required lessons...but no one unit is the same. There are different units with different dynamics, so leaders can take initiative. They are highly encouraged to adapt the curriculum.”*

Leaders described using the standard Scouting curriculum, while also adapting components of the lesson plan based on characteristics of their environments. For instance, as one leader explained: *“We use the Scouting guide...[but] I think every Cub Scout Pack has to adapt the programming to fit their reality...their child population and other geographical realities.”* One leader also explained that he electronically tracked each Scout’s progress in the program and their completion of curriculum requirements: *“...we’re fully electronically enabled in our tracking of the Scouts. I can look across every single Scout, know exactly what to do, how to structure that, how to come in and execute to meet each one of the requirements in each component, at each level.”*

Leaders also described the three-tier system that comprised the ScoutReach program in the Sprit of Adventure Council. As one leader explained: *“The first phase is fully supported by the Boy Scouts...they have Boy Scout employees that run the units. Phase Two is fully volunteer run. In Phase Two, we still accept and rely heavily on camperships for the boys to go to different programs. Phase Three... [is] fully financially self-sufficient. That phase is where you’re actually transitioning to a traditional unit.”* According to the leaders, both units that participated in the study were fully volunteer run but were not quite financially self-sufficient.

When asked to compare the ScoutReach program to the more traditional Scouting program, leaders primarily described socio-demographic differences in the populations served by both programs. As one leader stated: “...[ScoutReach] is driven by geography partly, but it’s more driven by economics. It’s the people who are a little tougher to afford the components of Scouting. A lot is covered. The basics are covered. The uniform is covered.” Another leader described how, historically, the ScoutReach program was “seen as the ‘Scouting Babysitters of America,’” but recently moved toward becoming more like the traditional Scouting program. The District Executive stated the following: “...even though [ScoutReach] units are sponsored by the Council, they are working on the same things [as traditional units] and emphasize monthly advancements.”

**Reasons for becoming involved.** Leaders described several reasons why they became involved as leaders in the ScoutReach program. For instance, four (80.0%) leaders stated that they became involved because their sons were involved (e.g., “My son wanted to be involved in the Scouting program” and “I became a leader because my son was in the program and, as usual, it had trouble getting volunteers”). One leader (20.0%) stated that he joined the program because he was involved in Scouting as a child (e.g., “...I had such a good time as a kid”). In addition, two (40.0%) leaders said that they joined the program to positively impact young people (e.g., “...you really do it for the kids”) and because they personally identified with the Scout mission and values (e.g., “These values are what I hold dear, and the impact that the program creates...raising youth that grow up to be independent and take initiative”). Two (40.0%) leaders also stated that they joined because there was a need for more leaders (e.g., “I was drafted because of the fact that I am multi-language...” and “After a couple of years, my wife started seeing things in [our son’s] old pack that she felt were due to mismanagement”).

***Perceived positive aspects of role.*** Leaders discussed different aspects and experiences associated with their role as leaders that they particularly enjoyed. For instance, three (60.0%) leaders described enjoying their interactions with Scouts (e.g., *“I love the interaction with the kids”* and *“For me, it’s the opportunity to work with young people”*). Four (80.0%) leaders stated that what they liked most about their jobs was being able to observe positive changes in Scouts (e.g., *“Seeing radical transformations in young men and boys”* and *“Seeing the kids, and the ones that stayed...watching those kids grow up. Seeing them develop...those types of things just make it well worth the expenditure of time and effort”*). One (20.0%) leader also described other positive aspects associated with his role (e.g., *“...[being able] to expose [Scouts] to things that they may not be exposed to, specifically the outdoors and nature, that’s one of my big things”* and *“...really my goal is to make these kids into First Class Scouts”*).

***Perceived positive/important program aspects.*** Leaders described several specific aspects of the program that they believed were particularly important for participating youth. For instance, three (60.0%) leaders described exposing Scouts to new opportunities and experiences (e.g., *“My objective is to get them outside as much as possible, to get them camping...just to get them out of the neighborhood and let them see and experience other things that kids in different socioeconomic circumstances take for granted”* and *“What I would do was, I would bring up topics. We’d be hiking in the middle of the White Mountains, and I’d be telling them about my first girlfriend in college, and all the details that are involved. When do you ever talk about that stuff? It’s that kind of experience”*).

Four (80.0%) leaders also described the importance of involving youth in different Scouting activities and events (e.g., *“...the foundation [of our success] was in the programs, particularly STEM programs that I implemented”* and *“When you ask a Scout why they join*

*Scouting, the first thing they should say is 'I want to go camping'"). Two (40.0%) leaders also discussed the opportunity to build relationships with other Scouts and leaders as an important aspect of the program (e.g., "...I think every one of them...they know that they can call on their brothers in Scouting if there was anything that they needed, and they would help them. That is truly what is unique about the program..." and "Relationships are key"). In addition, one (20.0%) leader described how the program addressed gaps in Scouts' lives, such as the need for structure and discipline and compassion (e.g., "...a lot of the families are single mother families and there's not a lot of strong male influence in the household, so there's not a lot of discipline, not a lot of respect, not a lot of structure. The program gives that to the Scouts" and "A lot of these guys don't have a lot of love in their lives, and if you can demonstrate that in the purest way and know that you love them, and you don't hold back, they will respond to it no matter if they've never had it in their lives").*

***Family involvement in program.*** Many leaders also described the different ways in which Scouts' families were actively involved in the program, and also stated how they believed that family involvement played an important role in Scouts' success. For instance, two (40.0%) leaders described how families participated in Scouting activities and events: "...two or three years ago, we started our first overnight campout where we required parents to come and to be engaged, and we had a lot of fathers come. Some of the fathers are from broken homes. It was really nice to see...[Scouts] want their dads to be a part of their lives"; "...[Scouts'] parents are required to be here and actively participate in the programming. It is expected to be a family program"; "Population-wise, we have to be realistic to the fact that there are different family expectations, especially in an area that is heavily immigrant. You have to welcome the families";

and *“Cub Scouts is designed to have a child and parent interacting...when the parent’s there, children tend to behave a lot better and you can teach them more...”*

Some leaders also discussed how actively involving the parents/guardians in the program may lead parents/guardians to reinforce what Scouts are learning in different contexts (e.g., home, community). For instance, as two (40.0%) leaders stated: *“If you have Scouts come in and they just hear about these things and that’s it, but they don’t hear it reiterated at home, they don’t make a connection. If parents are involved, they apply the lessons at home. They drive the point home. Those Scouts are a bit more successful. The time invested by parents is key”*; *“...by enforcing the values across both the parents and the children, you have a better ability to impact the child”*; and *“If you have a parent that is in there with them, learning with them, and doing it with them, and preaching the same subject, the children tend to do extremely well long term.”*

***Program-related challenges/areas for improvement.*** Leaders described several program-related challenges and potential areas for improvement. For instance, three (60.0%) leaders described the need to enhance employee hiring practices and retention (e.g., *“Hiring people off the street that have no Boy Scout experience and calling them a program specialist and expecting them to succeed at this...it takes years of development...”*; *“...it’s like you have to be able to find people who are gonna work in a way that would let the Scout get his full potential and not have whatever agenda or what they think they should be doing interfere with that”*; and *“My biggest concern is continuity of professionals”*).

Two (40.0%) leaders described challenges associated with the content and implementation of the curriculum (e.g., *“The curriculum has been either hit or miss”*; *“This year has been challenging because the Scouting guide for Cub Scouts changed dramatically”*; and *“...we run a one-room school house....so we can’t break [the Scouts] out into age-*

*dependent groups. You're dealing with first graders, dealing with fifth graders, and the developmental issues between the two ages is rather dramatic").*

Four (80.0%) leaders also described challenges associated with encouraging parent/guardian involvement in the program. For instance, as the following leaders stated: "...we don't have enough parental involvement"; "I'm very vocal in the Council meetings on the fact that we have to start opening up the opportunity for ScoutReach parents to join. Having the kids just do it after school...has led to great sign-up numbers but absolutely no retention"; "...the salesmanship job is to present the values in a way that we don't turn them off the way a school or a Sunday school might"; and "Given the fact that parents might have to juggle jobs, they're not (even the ones who want to) – they can't really invest time in kids to help them."

**b. Scouts' experiences in their communities.** In discussing the neighborhoods and communities in which Scouts lived, leaders described challenges that they believed the Scouts experienced that may threaten their healthy development.

**Community challenges.** Leaders described concerns that they had about the communities in which Scouts lived, and corresponding challenges that youth appeared to face. For instance, three (60.0%) leaders mentioned challenges associated with drugs and/or gangs (e.g., "There has been a significant gang influence in this area. [Scouts] face that on a daily basis. Some of the older Scouts are very restricted. Their families restrict them and what they do in outside activities. They don't just go running around on the street" and "Well, obviously, there are gangs, there's drugs, all of the urban problems are here"), one (20.0%) leader mentioned the quality of Scouts' schools (e.g., "In their neighborhoods, their schools might be failing"), and one (20.0%) leader mentioned a scarcity of positive role models (e.g., "Seeing a lot of the

*families are single mother families, and there's not a lot of strong male influence in the household...").*

In addition, one (20.0%) leader described a community-related challenge in relation to Scouting. According to him: “...*our community is slightly different than most because in our community either the families, the parents, have no concept of Scouting whatsoever because it's completely new to them. In some of the groups we're working with...[Scouting] was used to get children trained in military behaviors. We're fighting those preconceptions.*”

**c. Perceived developmental impact of program.** Leaders described how they believed that Scouting impacted participating youth cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally. Leaders described the different attributes, skills, and behaviors they believed that Scouts learned in the program, and their views of how Scouting may prevent youth from becoming involved in risk/problem behaviors. Some leaders also personally reflected on how they observed Scouts change over the course of their participation in the program.

**Learning.** Leaders described different attributes, skills, and behaviors that they taught (and that they believed Scouts were learning) in ScoutReach. For instance, three (60.0%) leaders described how Scouts learned attributes associated with the Scout Law, such as character and trustworthiness (e.g., “*Character development...was my primary focus...to ensure that the Scouts were responsible and they were respectful, and they were doing the right thing, making the right decisions*”); “*Scouts knew that if they were going to come in, they lived by the Oath and the Law...*”; and “*Trustworthiness and being loyal – those [attributes] really stand out because we see the boys back-pedal in their actions if we teach that*”).

Four (80.0%) leaders also described how Scouts learned other attributes and values, such as respect, self-reliance, confidence, and teamwork (e.g., “*We start with the foundation is respect*

*for self. You learn to respect yourself first. Second is respect for family. Then you move into respect for community and respect for the country”; “...self-reliance. They learn how to accomplish things that, in many respects, they did not know they could accomplish. [The activity] built on his self-reliance. It built on his self-confidence”; and “The purpose [of activities] is to teach them fundamental values of responsibility, teamwork...”).*

In addition, four (80.0%) leaders described how Scouts learned different skills in the program. For instance, first-aid skills (e.g., “[They] know first aid from the second [they’re] involved...all the way into Heimlich maneuver and serious rescue techniques...”), handicraft skills (e.g., “...we just had a Pinewood Derby event where the boys put their cars together and raced their cars”), science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) skills (e.g., “We’ve had 14...medalists in the...Council; 10 of those came from [this school]. We have six more candidates from [this school] pursuing their third STEM medal”), leadership skills (e.g., “...learning how to be a leader. Also learning how to be a follower and work in a group”), and self-regulation skills (e.g., “Take real-life situations, be aware of the situations that are happening, and use the tools of Scouting. ‘In cases like these, here’s what should happen.’ So the boys see it. For instance, how kids deal with being frustrated or angry. How do you deal with that? ‘Rather than hit someone, take a moment, take a walk. Develop a more acceptable way of handling it. Don’t act in the moment. Think about it and come up with a better solution so that you can handle it better”).

**Prevention.** Leaders described how they believed that ScoutReach may prevent youth from becoming involved in risk/problem behaviors. For instance, three (60.0%) leaders believed the program operated in a preventive capacity through involving Scouts’ families (e.g., “The more involvement of the families with the Scouting program, the better the likelihood, in my

*mind, of keeping them out of trouble”). Two (40.0%) leaders said that Scouting encourages Scouts to focus their time and energy on positive activities (e.g., “...if you can get them to decide that [Scouting] is a valuable thing to do and not to do those [other] things, that’s...valuable...”; and “...we’re giving them an option...”), and one (20.0%) leader said that Scouting promotes the development of problem-solving skills (e.g., “[I think the program’s helping Scouts] to navigate and not get into those things [drugs and gangs]”).*

In addition, one (20.0%) leader described how he addressed risk/problem behaviors in the program: “*As they get older, we obviously go into the drug conversation. We have these very challenging conversations...*” One (20.0%) leader described the importance of exposing youth to exciting opportunities and experiences: “*If they learn that they can get excited and have fun...and get that high from achievement, you gave [them] a complete way out from drugs.*” In addition, two (40.0%) leaders discussed the importance of fostering a sense of community among Scouts (e.g., “*We also create a community for them. We’re creating that community that the boys know ‘They’ve got my back. I don’t need to do any of this stuff because people are watching out for me’*” and “*If we do our job right, [Scouting] gives them another scenario, another coping mechanism. You’re with boys of the same age, doing something positive, or being part of a group, and you face challenges and experiences with boys your age*”).

**Reflections on change.** Leaders also provided examples of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral changes that they observed in Scouts over the course of their participation in the program. For example, one (20.0%) leader said: “*We had one Scout that suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder because he saw three of his family members killed by gangs. He was essentially mute for the first year of the program. He didn’t talk much. Then, through some development efforts and circumstances, we got him to talk. He started talking, he started*

*inculcating, and he started doing much better” and “I really have seen these young guys turn into respectable and responsible individuals. It’s helped them academically as well.” One (20.0%) leader stated that he believed exposure to the program would undoubtedly have a positive impact on youth (e.g., “If a Scout is exposed to the values in the unit, to the values of Scouting, it’s gonna have a positive impact...that’s like a serum. It’s gonna work”).*

**d. Key aspects of program related to youth engagement.** Leaders described different ways in which Scouts were engaged (or how they tried to promote engagement) in ScoutReach. Their responses were coded for indicators of cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, behavioral engagement, and general Scouting engagement.

**Cognitive engagement.** Cognitive engagement refers to the extent to which youth value what they learn, their thoughts about learning, and whether what is learned in the program is perceived as meaningful and important (e.g., Li & Lerner, 2013). In addition, cognitive engagement may reflect investment in the learning process and a willingness to go beyond the basic requirements to master difficult skills (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010).

Leaders described ways in which Scouts were cognitively engaged in the program, or how they tried to promote this dimension of engagement. For instance, two (40.0%) leaders described exposing Scouts to mentally challenging experiences and acknowledging their mastery of difficult tasks and skills (e.g., “*What I think [Scouts] like about [the activity] is it’s challenging*”; “*Get [Scouts] outdoors in challenging situations. Congratulate them when they do it...*”; “*It’s the challenge, and what we have is the biggest classroom in the world. Just keep pushing the envelope*”; and “*The Cub Scouts here do better than some of the Boy Scout units in the traditional environment...They want to do good. They’re very motivated*”).

Three (60.0%) leaders also described how they promoted cognitive engagement during Scout meetings through presenting lessons concisely and interactively (e.g., “...in the meetings...you’re learning while you’re having fun”; “The Boy Scout meeting is a 90-minute meeting and the way we try and do it is so they’re broken up into small blocks which will keep young boys’ attention, 15-20 minutes on one thing. We try to use a combination of a teaching section where they work on a Scout skill, a planning section where they think about assuming responsibility...some physical activity...”; and “It’s the way you run meetings or a lesson. For instance, teamwork...you could talk about it in a fun way and actually work on fun things...You see a learning process coming together in front of you”).

**Emotional engagement.** Emotional engagement reflects individuals’ sense of belonging and affect toward the program. This dimension can include feelings such as happiness, excitement, enjoyment, and connectedness (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010; Li & Lerner, 2013).

Leaders described ways in which Scouts were emotionally engaged in the program, or how they tried to promote this dimension of engagement. For instance, all five (100.0%) leaders described the importance of exposing Scouts to fun and exciting experiences and activities (e.g., “At the Cub Scout level...do stuff that’s exciting. That’s number one”; “You’ve got to make it fun. This is where we probably have the hardest time because we’re trying to follow the curriculum, but...you’ve got to have a fun element”; and “Attitude has to be a part of it. The children that really get into the outdoor parts of the program tend to stay because they love the outdoors program so much that they want to continue”). One (20.0%) leader also linked Scouts’ positive affect toward the program to receiving recognition for achievements: “They need to know they’re earning things. Nothing makes a child prouder and more wanting to come in than when you call them to the front of the room once a month and you hand them a belt loop...”

**Behavioral engagement.** Behavioral engagement reflects both shallow involvement (e.g., attendance) as well as deeper involvement in the program (e.g., effort; Li & Lerner, 2013). This dimension is related to contribution, preparation, active participation, following the rules, and concentration (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010; Li & Lerner, 2013).

Leaders also described ways in which Scouts were behaviorally engaged in the program, or how they tried to promote this dimension of engagement. For instance, all five (100.0%) leaders described the importance of getting Scouts actively involved in memorable activities (e.g., *“Get them out early, in activities that they will remember for the rest of their Scouting career – BBs, archery, out to a camp...once you set that hook, they’re always going to want to do more”*; *“Do a campfire, have some ‘s’mores, and then let them go back on Monday and the first thing out of their mouth when they walk in the classroom is ‘I built a fire on Saturday.’ That’s what works...”*; *“You have to have a physical element that is active”*; and *“Do things. Get the boys hands-on experience”*).

**Scouting engagement.** Finally, Scouting engagement reflects more general interest, effort, and enjoyment in the program, as indexed, for instance, by a commitment to advancing in the program toward different ranks and levels (e.g., Wang et al., 2015a, 2015b). In the present study, given the overlap between this general dimension of engagement and the other three dimensions of engagement that I assessed, within the context of interviews, Scouting engagement was indexed as a Scout’s desire to progress or advance in the program.

Several leaders described ways in which Scouts demonstrated Scouting engagement more generally, or how they tried to promote this dimension of engagement. For instance, three (60.0%) leaders described the importance of advancement and how Scouts reached different ranks within the program (e.g., *“We’ve had a lot of continuity. Some of these kids started off as*

*Wolves and are now First Class or Star Scouts in the Boy Scouts”; “...the achievement piece is so extremely important...”; and “...we’ve had kids who have literally gone through the whole program and gotten their First Class and that’s that. Others who race to become Eagle Scouts, others will become Eagle Scout...”*

### **Summary of Interviews with Leaders**

In sum, program leaders primarily helped to elucidate the phenomenology of Scouts’ experiences in ScoutReach by describing their views of important aspects of the program and how they tried to promote youth engagement. In particular, leaders discussed the importance of exposing Scouts to new opportunities and experiences, involving Scouts in different activities (primarily related to camping or the outdoors), fostering the development of important relationships among Scouts, teaching them life and leadership skills, and involving Scouts’ families in the program. Leaders also, albeit to a lesser extent, shed light on the phenomenology of Scouts’ experiences in their communities by describing the contextual challenges that Scouts faced and their views of how ScoutReach may help Scouts to navigate challenges associated with exposure to drugs, gangs, and violence (e.g., by exposing Scouts to new experiences and involving Scouts’ families in the program).

Of note, leaders emphasized the role of the camping experience in the lives of Scouts. Leaders described camping as a fun and exciting activity that temporarily removed Scouts from their potentially stressful neighborhoods and communities and exposed them to nature and to the outdoors, an experience that Scouts might not have otherwise had. According to leaders, camping may function as an “emotional hook” that gets boys and young men excited about Scouting and may sustain their participation in the program. Leaders also described camping as providing Scouts with access to hands-on opportunities that got them interested in what they

were learning and actively involved in activities. Thus, in their descriptions, leaders appeared to strongly link camping to Scouts' emotional engagement in the program, which, in turn, helped to promote Scouts' cognitive and behavioral engagement. Leaders also described camping as helping to cultivate strong relationships among Scouts and to promote the development of life and leadership skills that Scouts could then apply within the context of camping or the outdoors (e.g., through working as a team to pitch tents or build campfires).

In regard to theoretical saturation (e.g., Guest et al., 2006), by the time that I finished analyzing the fifth program leader interview, no new ideas or themes were identified in leaders' interview responses. However, these data were collected from a small sample of leaders from across several units in a specific Scouting program within a particular geographic area. Thus, the degree to which these themes might be representative of the larger population of Scout leaders is questionable, especially in light of potential threats to the study's external validity. I further describe these limitations in Chapter 5 (Discussion).

In short, camping and Scouts' exposure to nature and the outdoors (more broadly) were aspects of Scouting that leaders most strongly linked to different dimensions of youth engagement in the program and to indicators of positive youth functioning. These findings are consistent with prior research relating the camping experience (more broadly) to positive youth developmental outcomes, including positive identity, enhanced social, physical, and cognitive skills, positive values, and enhanced peer relationships (e.g., Henderson, Whitaker, Bialeschki, Scanlin, & Thurber, 2007a; Thurber, Scanlin, Scheuler, & Henderson, 2007). These findings also align with the "Big Three" (Lerner, 2004) characteristics associated with effective YD programs; that is, leaders linked Scouts' experiences in camping and the outdoors to relationship building, skill development, and skill application. In Chapter 5 (Discussion), I further interpret these data

(in conjunction with findings from the interviews with parents/guardians and Scouts) in light of existing developmental theory and research, and explore how these findings expand on extant scholarship.

### **Parent/Guardian Interviews**

Ten parents/guardians ( $M_{age} = 37.0$  years,  $SD = 9.37$ ,  $Range = 27$  to  $51$ ) participated in interviews about their views of the ScoutReach program and whether the program impacted their sons' development. I present key findings from the interviews below, according to corresponding research question.

**a. Views of ScoutReach and son's experiences in program.** Parents/guardians primarily described having positive views of the ScoutReach program. They described their sons' reasons for joining the program, aspects of the program that they believed were important, and perceived role models for their sons within the program. Parents/guardians also described ways in which they were involved in the program. In addition, some parents/guardians described potential program-related challenges or areas for improvement.

***Reason son joined.*** Parents/guardians described different ways in which their sons became interested in the ScoutReach program and their reasons for joining. For instance, two (20.0%) parents/guardians shared that they (themselves) were involved in Scouting as children and thought it would be a good experience for their sons (e.g., "*My husband and I were both in Scouting and thought it would be a good idea for him*" and "*I was a Scout when I was younger, so I know how it is*"), and two (20.0%) parents/guardians shared that their sons' interest in joining stemmed from their siblings' involvement in the program (e.g., "*He joined Scouts because he was interested because my daughter was a Girl Scout...and he said 'Why can't I become a Boy Scout?'*"). Three (30.0%) parents/guardians also described how their sons learned

about the program from their friends who were involved (e.g., “...his best friend was in the program, and he just had to be a part of it” and “...his friend was actually involved in the Boy Scouts and he had brought him to a couple of meetings and he said that he’d really like to do it”).

In addition, four (40.0%) parents/guardians stated that their sons joined after learning about the program in school (e.g., “They had a flyer going around school. I explained to him what it was about. He seemed interested in it, so he wanted to do it” and “When he was in elementary school, [Scouts] came to his school”). Four (40.0%) parents/guardians stated that their sons joined because it seemed like a fun opportunity to them, based on their observations of the program or what they heard about the program from others (e.g., “He’s actually seen the overnight at the Museum of Science, and he saw how they were having fun, how they were interacting. He wanted to be part of a pack, and that’s how we found this pack” and “He wanted to go out on adventures and learn new things”). In addition, three (30.0%) parents/guardians mentioned that their sons joined the program because they simply needed something to do outside of school (e.g., “I wanted to put him in some type of program to get something out of it” and “He wanted to do something...so we talked about it, about what kind of clubs he would like to join. So this was one of them”). In addition, one (10.0%) parent/guardian stated that he or she wanted his or her son to join after hearing positive things about the program: “...I heard that Boy Scouts can teach them or help them with their self-confidence and also in teamwork, stuff like that.”

**Perceived positive/important program aspects.** Parents/guardians described different aspects of the program that they viewed as especially positive or important in the lives of their sons and other participating youth. For instance, three (30.0%) parents/guardians described

Scouting as providing their sons with exposure to new experiences and opportunities (e.g., “[*The program*] offers him something different”; “*There are good opportunities within the Scouts to do things that other urban kids cannot do*”; “*When he went to a week-long, overnight camp in the summer, it was a nice experience for him. It was his second time being away from home, but it was a different kind of experience...*”; and “*One of the things that we got to do with him that we haven’t done as a family otherwise was we did some community service*”). Eight (80.0%) parents/guardians described the program activities (namely, those related to camping and the outdoors) as important (e.g., “*They go hiking, they go camping, they do all the little activities here. They just do a whole bunch*”; “*The activities lead to good habits, because they learn from those activities*”; and “*Being involved in community activities is the best thing for [my son]*”).

Nine (90.0%) parents/guardians also described peer scaffolding and relationship building that took place between Scouts (and between Scouts and leaders) as important aspects of the program. For instance, as several parents/guardians stated: “...[*my son*] has the older Scouts with him [in meetings], and they model [good behaviors]. They help the younger Scouts. It creates a brotherhood between the kids”; “...I see the older boys helping the younger boys”; “It’s nice to see the camaraderie between the boys”; “You make these really good connections, really good buddies. They have someone that they might be able to depend on, later in life...”; “He’s making friends”; and “I would say it’s the relationship with both the leaders and the other Cub Scouts [that’s the most important]. His interaction so he can get to be more sociable...”

Five (50.0%) parents/guardians stated that the quality of program leadership played an important role in their sons’ experiences. For instance, as some parents stated: “[*The leader*] is an awesome troop leader. He really cares about the kids. I just feel like when I’ve seen him and the kids go to him and talk with him, they really feel comfortable enough to talk with him about

*anything”; “...we’ve been very blessed to be able to be surrounded with [the leader], his wife is active, too. She’s awesome”; “[His relationship with his leader is important] because he can learn to trust in another adult besides his parent. If anything is bothering him, or if he feels like he can’t come to me, I would hope that he would feel that he could go to [the leader]”; and “The leadership is showing the boys what and how to do things.”*

Several parents/guardians described other aspects of the program that they believed were important. For instance, six (60.0%) parents/guardians referred to the program as an overall generally positive experience (e.g., “...it’s been a really good experience for [my son]” and “...I guess the [overall] message would be the most important, but because of how it’s delivered. It’s not delivered like it’s a command or something that the children have to study...it’s something that carries out through everything that they’re doing. It’s presented as something fun...”).

***Perceived role models.*** Five (50.0%) parents/guardians also described how they believed that the other Scouts and program leaders acted as role models for their sons. For instance, as a couple of parents/guardians stated: “*The leader makes a difference in these kids. You look up to people who make a positive attitude in other kids’ lives*” and “*I think the greatest benefit [of the program] is the abundance of role models for him.*” Although most parents/guardians described Scouting-related role models for their sons, two (20.0%) parents/guardians identified family members and public figures as individuals whom their sons and other youth may look up to (e.g., “...the other day he told me that he wants to do the Air Force...my brother-in-law...he worked for the Air Force...” and “*You have the Police Department. You got the Police Department. Some kids they look up to them*”).

***Family involvement in program.*** Many parents/guardians described how they were involved in the program in different ways. Three (30.0%) parents/guardians described more

superficial involvement through attending meetings (e.g., *“I will keep coming [to the meetings] to let [my son] have something to do”*). In contrast, most (80.0%) parents/guardians described being more actively involved in the program. For instance, some parents/guardians described participating in Scout activities and events (e.g., *“I’m active...they had the Pinewood Derby race and I was here...his dad is active, too. When they have the weekend overnight, his dad took the weekend off and did that...”*; *“...we went hiking. I was with him with that. We did the whole mile hike together”*; and *“[I’m involved] when they need help painting or reading...things like that”*). Several parents also described their role as volunteer leaders in the program (e.g., *“I plan all the activities with the kids. I make sure the activities are done”* and *“I am a Den leader. It was kind of like a volunteer situation. I was volunteering before that with them...”*).

***Program-related challenges/areas for improvement.*** Parents/guardians described program-related concerns, challenges, and potential areas for improvement. For instance, two (20.0%) parents/guardians stated that they wished the program promoted more tolerance and diversity among members (e.g., *“I just wish...it was open to girls because it gives the girls more freedom”*; *“There is a lot of bias against women and negative bias and positive bias for boys that, I think, helps push them up in those activities and depress the abilities of girls...”*; *“I think to categorize any one group based on something that they feel is innate to their person or their identity is inherently immoral and wrong. Although [Scouting] is an organization where religiousness is very important...you cannot be a Scout without believing a religion...I think if you’re trying to teach children to be good moral citizens, part of it is to be able to learn about people who don’t affect you in any way that I can discern”*; and *“To blatantly exclude a group because they don’t believe in the same theory you do or because they do something differently, I think is wrong”*). Of note, one parent’s/guardian’s concerns in regard to diversity and

inclusiveness in Scouting were in reference to the organization's previous policies denying membership to individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation. In 2013, the BSA ended its ban on openly gay Scouts and, in 2015, ended its ban on openly gay leaders (BSA, 2016).

In addition, one (10.0%) parent/guardian stated that transportation to activities was a potential barrier to program participation: *"We have to try to rely on carpool and sometimes there's not enough room, so then he misses out because there's no transportation to go up there."* Another (10.0%) parent/guardian stated that he or she would like to see different activities incorporated into the program: *"...maybe more field trips...a museum, historic places."* One (10.0%) parent/guardian stated that he or she wished the Scouting program (more generally) would be more accommodating of Scouts with special needs: *"You don't have a lot of packs that take the special needs kid and understand the special needs kids who have mental disabilities."* In addition, four (40.0%) parents/guardians shared concerns or challenges related to the logistical operation of the program (e.g., *"...there are some other troops that need a little bit more support"*; *"If you notice, a lot of the siblings come here, which I don't agree with, but parents sometimes don't have babysitters for their children..."*; and *"Unfortunately, doing it up here in the northeast isn't the same as doing it further south, where you can be out more often"*).

**b. Experiences in their communities.** Parents/guardians described physical and social characteristics associated with their neighborhoods and communities. They also described different challenges that their sons and other youth faced within their communities, as well as their views of characteristics that were associated with good citizens (both within and outside of their communities). In addition, some parents/guardians described other experiences that their sons encountered in their homes and communities (e.g., reinforcement of what is learned in

Scouting, parents/guardians leading by example, and Scout experiences in other OST programs and activities).

**Community characteristics.** Parents/guardians generally described positive physical and social characteristics associated with their neighborhoods and communities. For instance, one (10.0%) parent/guardian described his or her community as healthy (e.g., “*We’ve been really blessed to be living in environments that are good communities, healthy places for children to live*”), another (10.0%) described his or her community as culturally diverse (e.g., “*...a lot of our community is Latino...it’s very easy for [my son] to see people who look like him...* ”), and another (10.0%) parent/guardian described his or her community as characterized by positive relationships between neighbors (e.g., “*Neighbors in our community are very helpful with snow removal. Everyone speaks to each other. We barely know anyone, but familiar faces, just even people say ‘hello’*”).

However, five (50.0%) parents/guardians also described potentially problematic characteristics associated with their communities; for instance, as related to perceived safety. As several parents stated: “*There’s a lot of drugs in [my town] ...there’s a lot of bad stuff*”; “*...apparently, there was a stabbing the other night on [my street]*”; “*...[there’s] a big epidemic on drugs right now*”; and “*There’s a lot of bullying and violence.*”

**Community challenges.** Parents/guardians also described how they believed that community-related challenges could directly impact their sons, or described how they observed challenges affecting their sons and other youth within their communities. For instance, one (10.0%) parent/guardian described how he or she has seen youth using drugs in his or her neighborhood: “*I basically run into where I’ve seen teenagers who were not with their parents and they’re in a hallway where young kids live and they’re doing stuff that they’re not supposed*

to. *Young kids walk by and they go 'What's that smell? What are they doing?'*” Another (10.0%) parent/guardian stated concerns about youth exposure to gangs and drugs: *“With societies today, the gangs and the drugs, and stuff like that...you don't want your kids involved in that. That is a challenge for different cities. All kids, they see it every single day. Either you want to be like that...in gangs, selling drugs...or you could try to make a positive thing for your city.”* Similarly, another (10.0%) parent/guardian expressed concerns about his or her son's personal exposure to drugs in the community: *“[My town] recently had a methadone clinic open up. [My son] has been exposed to some people who I know are high...”*

In addition, one (10.0%) parent/guardian discussed concerns about his or her son's exposure to peer pressure: *“Peer pressure [is a challenge]. I would hope that he'd be able to make sound decisions, because you're not always going to be surrounded by the right influences...I feel like, in some sense, he lives in a little bit of a bubble...”* Three (30.0%) parents/guardians also described other challenges that their sons and other youth in their communities experienced: *“[My son's] also been exposed to some homeless people...I think those are challenges for children, or at least for their parents, to feel like their children can be safe outside of the home”; “...the biggest challenge that he faces [is] just exposure to people who are not necessarily having the greatest health or are able to live the way that they want to”; and “...[my son] told me that 'I don't like many of the things that guys or people are doing outside.’”*

**Qualities of good citizens.** Parents/guardians described different characteristics associated with perceived good citizens (both within and outside of their communities). For instance, half (50.0%) of parents/guardians described a good citizen as someone who helps others, follows the rules, and/or positively impacts the community (e.g., *“...helping out around*

*the community*"; "...helping your neighbors"; "You want people who are either engaged in the community, are good citizens in general, people who help others"; and "A good citizen follows the rules in the community and also helps other people from the community..."). Three (30.0%) parents/guardians also described good citizens as holding occupations in safety and public service (e.g., "...a police officer or...a firefighter"), or as teaching youth the difference between right and wrong (e.g., "[Good citizens] show the kids what they're supposed to do, what they can do, what's right to do, what's wrong to do").

In addition, three (30.0%) parents/guardians described "good citizens" as acting like role models for their sons. For instance, as several parents stated: "Some kids, they look up to [fire fighters and police officers]. As they get older, 'Oh, I want to be a police officer. Oh, I want to be a fire fighter'" and "[Good citizens] have shown 'Hey, if we do certain things in the community, we make the community better.'"

**Reinforcement of learning.** Four (40.0%) parents/guardians described how the values and principles that their sons learned in Scouting were reinforced by them and by others in their communities (and vice-versa). For instance, as several parents/guardians stated: "...the Boy Scouts...it holds the same morals that we have. It helps with how we teach him and tell him a young man should be in the world. It's an extension to what his everyday life is, because we're active in our church. It has the same message. It reflects...a lot of what he's already learned in life...he's getting the same message everywhere he goes"; "...even with hockey...they talk about sportsmanship and good health, being mindful of how you treat people and being kind. Again, that carries over..."; "...a lot of the environments that he's in, a lot of the children are very similar. Even if they're not Scouts, the families that I know of...they have some of the same values"; and "What we teach him at home and what they teach him here...I think that'll really

*help him...it's like an extra added step to doing the right thing. Someone else is telling you, not just your parents."*

***Leading by example.*** Three (30.0%) parents/guardians provided examples of ways in which they tried to instill positive values in their sons through setting a positive example, as demonstrated through their own attributes and behaviors. For instance, as some parents/guardians stated: *"If there's someone in need, we give. We may not know the people, but we know there are people that need things like the clothes that he wears...those things that we donate, we give to people who we know, people we don't"* and *"There was a woman at the grocery store and she was short on what she was buying. I just swiped my card. I said 'Go ahead.' [My son] says 'Mommy, do you know that lady?' I said 'No, but she was buying groceries and she didn't have enough.' He sees me do these things, so he thought about it."*

***Involvement in other OST activities.*** All 10 (100.0%) parents/guardians described other OST programs and activities (both structured and unstructured) in which their sons were involved. For instance, most (90.0%) parents/guardians said that their sons participated in sports. In addition, three (30.0%) parents/guardians described their sons' involvement in non-Scout-related volunteering and community service activities, youth mentoring programs (e.g., Big Brothers/Big Sisters), and academic clubs. Two (20.0%) parents/guardians also stated that, on days when their sons were not involved in Scouting, their sons participated in more unstructured activities (e.g., playing video games and hanging out with friends).

Seven (70.0%) parents/guardians compared their sons' experiences in Scouting to their sons' experiences in other programs. For instance, as several parents stated: *"...he loves Scouts for reasons and then sports...he likes to be up and active..."; "In sports, it's very competitive. Scouting is not competitive. It's challenging, but it's not competitive...it's equality. Everybody's*

*working together as a team. In sports, you work as a team, but...you want to win, versus teamwork here... '...we're all winners.' That's the difference. In sports, you only have one winner"; and "[In the mentoring program], he doesn't get the interaction like he does with the other peers of the Scouts."*

**c. Perceived developmental impact of program.** Parents/guardians described how they believed that Scouting impacted their sons cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally. Parents/guardians described the different attributes, skills, and behaviors that they believed their sons learned in the program, how their sons applied this learning in different contexts, and how they believed Scouting may prevent youth from becoming involved in risk/problem behaviors. Some parents/guardians also personally reflected on how they believed their sons changed since joining the program, and how participation in the program may help their sons to achieve the goals that they personally envisioned for them.

**Learning.** Parents/guardians described different attributes, skills, and behaviors that they believed their sons were learning in the ScoutReach program. For instance, three (30.0%) parents/guardians described how their sons and other Scouts were learning attributes associated with the Scout Law, such as kindness and helpfulness (e.g., “[Scouts] are made aware of ‘What is honorable? How should you really be treating [other kids]? Is it okay for you to be making fun of or poking at this person...? Or, should you be helping him? ...[Scouts see the older boys working with the younger boys] ... ‘They’re helping me, and they’re being kind...’” and “[You learn to] grow up and help yourself and help others...”). Eight (80.0%) parents/guardians also stated that their sons were learning attributes and values that were not necessarily associated with the Scout Law, such as respect, independence, being prepared, and teamwork. For instance, as several parents/guardians said: “...the leaders teach him respect and to be honest and be

*prepared... ”; “...he does learn a lot about how to respect people and...not be a bully... ”; “...they keep teaching him all these good traits of being honest, respectful, truthful...being prepared”; and “They learn how to share, they learn how to respect space, privacy, keep a distance, and work together.”*

Five (50.0%) parents/guardians also described different skills that they believed their sons learned. For instance, some parents/guardians described outdoor and survival skills (e.g., “*how to whittle*”; “*archery*”; “*how to survive when you’re alone*”; and “*making a tent*”). Parents/guardians also described how their sons learned computer safety skills (e.g., “*...it teaches them about computer things, like how to be on a computer. Don’t give people your information...*”), leadership skills (e.g., “*...social, learning skills, learning about leadership. Be able to think on his own*”), and communication skills (e.g., “*[how to be] more outspoken*”). Four (40.0%) parents/guardians also stated that their sons learned how to get along with other people (e.g., “*They teach for them to try to get along with people...*” and “*...they teach him how you want to be treated is how you have to treat somebody else*”), and one (10.0%) parent said that Scouting teaches youth to do the right thing (e.g., “*...[the program helps] them in doing the right thing...there’s a saying ‘If you guide your child to the right path, they will follow it and they will remember it’*”). In addition, half (50.0%) of parents/guardians described other material that the program teaches their sons and other Scouts (e.g., “*how...a young man should be in the world*” and “*...he’s learning to do new stuff...*”).

***Application of learning.*** Half (50.0%) of parents/guardians described how they observed their sons apply the attributes, behaviors, and skills that they learned in Scouting in other contexts (e.g., home, school, community). For instance, as several parents stated: “*[My son] is more compliable at home, like setting the table. He’s worked on a badge for that. Picking up*

*toys, responsibility things”; “...the leaders teach him respect and to be honest and be prepared, which has helped him with schoolwork...”; “...he’s learned archery...one day he found a stick in the yard that was shaped like a bow and arrow and made one himself; and “You have Scouts that are here, but then you have Scouts that also stick up for kids outside of school. We have a Scout that actually stuck up for my daughter because my daughter was being teased on the bus.”*

**Prevention.** Parents/guardians described how they believed that ScoutReach may prevent their sons and other youth from becoming involved in risk/problem behaviors. For instance, four (40.0%) parents/guardians stated that they believed the program operated in a preventive capacity through keeping youth “off the streets” (e.g., *“I firmly believe that it’s keeping the kids out of the streets because it occupies them in something positive rather than having free time to be doing things that they shouldn’t be doing”*; *“We wanted an activity where we knew he wasn’t going to be on the streets, running the streets, where he wasn’t going to get in trouble...”*; and *“Scouts is a big thing. It keeps the kids going. It keeps the kids out of gangs, off the streets, selling drugs and stuff like that...”*).

Six (60.0%) parents/guardians also described the program as providing a safe space for youth that focuses their time and energy on positive activities (e.g., *“...it gets them interested in other things, whether it’s nature or fundraisers...so they can stay out of trouble”*; *“[Youth] need something, like Scouts, productive to teach them the right things and the right values”*; *“They keep them busy in doing things that they enjoy and they open their minds to new experiences...”*; *“...something to keep him busy in the right direction”*; and *“...this could be a safe place for [youth] to speak with someone and to try to find help or talk things out”*).

Four (40.0%) parents/guardians stated that they believed the program prevented youth from making unhealthy decisions through exposing them to positive role models. For instance, as

one parent/guardian said: *“So, challenges might come across like maybe...there’s a kid...they don’t have a father, they don’t have a mother, they don’t have a good role model. This is a place where they can come to terms with ‘Okay, I don’t have that in my house, but I can find it someplace else.’ So what can become a challenge in the street, it might be easier for them to deal with it because here they’re around other people who are positive. Positive role models. That’s what they need...in the street, they’re not gonna find that.”* Three (30.0%) parents/guardians stated that the structure, rules, and discipline that their sons and other youth learned in the program may help to prevent them from becoming involved in risk/problem behaviors (e.g., *“...they know the rules, they know they’re not supposed to carry knives. They’re not supposed to use guns. They’re not supposed to have certain items in their possession because it’s unsafe for them to have them”*).

**Reflections on change.** Parents/guardians provided examples of ways in which they observed cognitive, emotional, and behavioral changes in their sons since they joined ScoutReach. For instance, six (60.0%) parents/guardians described seeing changes in their sons’ attributes and values (e.g., *“...being in Boy Scouts has helped him...have a lot more confidence in himself”*; *“[Scouting] has helped him be more responsible”*; *“I noticed that he likes to help the little kids that are smaller than him”*; *“...[Scouting] has made a big difference in terms of him thinking of others”*; and *“He’s more helpful when it comes to doing activities on the outside”*).

More than half (60.0%) of parents/guardians also described observing positive changes in their sons’ behaviors since joining the program (e.g., *“...he likes to play more outdoors. [Scouting] got him active again”*; *“...he gets along with other kids a little better since joining Scouts”*; *“...[Scouting] has made a difference in terms of him...being involved in the*

*community*”; and “[My son] started like talking more, being different, and changing, and I was like ‘Oh my God. Is that my son playing with other kids and talking?’”). In addition, one (10.0%) parent/guardian described observing changes in his or her son’s outdoor skills (e.g., “*On the nature hike that we did, I noticed that he was looking for the tracks...That’s something that I don’t think he would have known otherwise, except for being here*”), and four (40.0%) parents/guardians reported observing other, more general changes in their sons’ functioning since joining the program (e.g., “*Just overall, he’s more set...*” and “*Scouting, it’s a big change for him, his attitude*”).

Only two (20.0%) parents/guardians stated that they had not observed any cognitive, emotional, or behavioral changes in their sons since they joined ScoutReach. They stated that this was likely due to their sons’ limited duration of involvement in the program (i.e., several months).

***Vision for their sons.*** When asked what type of person they hope their sons grow up to be, parents/guardians described different attributes and behaviors that they hoped their sons demonstrate, and goals that they hoped their sons accomplish. In some cases, parents also explained how they think their sons’ involvement in ScoutReach will help them to realize the goals that they envisioned for their sons’ futures.

Half (50.0%) of parents/guardians described wanting to see their sons demonstrate attributes and values associated with the Scout Law, such as helpfulness and trustworthiness (e.g., “*I hope that the idea he has now [in Scouting] about giving back and helping the community continues through whatever he wants to do in his life*”; “*...just as long as...I think as long as he continues to come [to Scouting] and they keep teaching him all these good traits of being honest, truthful...prepared...I think that’s what’s going to get him ready for a good life*”;

and “[I hope my son becomes] a good citizen...helpful, willing to help out when someone’s needy”). Half (50.0%) of parents/guardians also described hoping to see their sons demonstrate other qualities and attributes, such as respect, confidence, leadership, and independence (e.g., “I hope [my son] respects people...”; “The most I want him to be is...self-confidence”; “I want him to be a good leader. I want him to be the best man that he can be. [I hope that Scouting will teach him] to be the good leader, to show that he can lead his own way without following behind somebody”; “Scouting does help you in the long run, as you get older...as [my son] gets older, he could be a leader and help other kids down the road”; and “I want him to be independent and to be able to do good things and survive out there and get the best out of it, and that’s something that he learns [in Scouting]”).

Three (30.0%) parents/guardians described having more academic- and career-related goals for their sons. For instance, as several parents stated: “I’d like to see him go far in school and, you know, get a good job and be a respected person by a lot of people” and “I would like to see him be respected, well-known, well-educated, with a career profession...” In addition, three (30.0%) parents/guardians described wanting their sons to avoid becoming involved in risk/problem behaviors in the future (e.g., “I’m hoping that my son will stay in Scouts so it gives him something positive to preoccupy his time with instead of going out and doing stuff that he isn’t supposed to do” and “As long as he doesn’t get into any trouble, that will be fine”). Still, one (10.0%) parent/guardian described a more general vision for his or her son (e.g., “I think I would be happy if [my son] grew up feeling like happiness is something that you create and...that happens within yourself, and it’s part of your perspective...”).

**d. Key aspects of program related to youth engagement.** Parents/guardians indicated different ways in which their sons were engaged in the ScoutReach program, or described ways

in which the program may promote different types of engagement. Their responses were coded for indicators of cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, behavioral engagement, and general Scouting engagement.

**Cognitive engagement.** Parents/guardians provided several examples of how the program may promote cognitive engagement and how their sons were cognitively engaged in ScoutReach. For instance, three (30.0%) parents/guardians described the importance of teaching Scouts interesting, useful, and important information, and mentioned that their sons felt proud when they accomplished important tasks (e.g., “[Scouts] offers not only the theory of learning...but they do things that are practical and they prove themselves”; “You’ve got to make [Scouts] interesting for [youth] so they’re willing to participate”; and “[My son’s] proud of himself when he’s...learned a new task and he’s completed it”).

**Emotional engagement.** Parents/guardians provided several examples of how the program may promote emotional engagement and how their sons were emotionally engaged in the program. For instance, four (40.0%) parents/guardians suggested how their sons’ emotional engagement was linked to program activities (in particular, camping; e.g., “[Camping] was nice and [my son] really enjoyed it”; “[My son] loves archery. He loves fishing. He loves the activities where he can do them outside of Scouts as well”; “I think [the activities] are enjoyable for [my son]”; and “[My son] had a lot of fun [at camp]”). More than half (60.0%) of parents/guardians also suggested that their sons’ emotional engagement was linked to their relationships with other boys in the program (e.g., “He’s excited to come. He knows he’s going to...[interact] with other boys” and “He likes being around his friends”).

**Behavioral engagement.** Three (30.0%) parents/guardians also provided several examples of how the program may promote behavioral engagement and how their sons were

behaviorally engaged in ScoutReach. For instance, parents/guardians described their sons' effort and active participation in different program activities (e.g., *"When he went to the Pumpkin Fest...he didn't want to do the bow and arrow. He said 'I'm not going to be able to do it.' Even though he didn't really make the shot...he tried it. He liked the fact that he's able to do that"* and *"[Scouting] worked with him and he sees how much fun he can have outside doing things"*).

**Scouting engagement.** In addition, three (30.0%) parents/guardians provided examples of how their sons demonstrated Scouting engagement. For instance, several parents/guardians stated that their sons planned to remain in Scouting as they grew older and progress through the different ranks and levels of the program (e.g., *"[My son] expresses the fact that he wants to become an Eagle Scout. He expresses the fact that he wants to go on, and he wants to earn more badges"*).

### **Summary of Interviews with Parents/Guardians**

In sum, parents/guardians primarily described having positive views of ScoutReach and perceived the program as having a positive impact on their sons. These interviews also primarily helped to enrich understanding of the phenomenology of Scouts' experiences outside of Scouting (i.e., at home and in their communities). Although parents/guardians described positive features of their communities, many discussed community challenges related to drugs, gangs, and violence that their sons and other youth faced. However, they described ScoutReach as providing their sons with access to a safe space away from the challenges associated with "the streets" that focused their energy on positive activities and exposed them to positive role models, in the form of adult leaders and other Scouts.

Parents/guardians strongly emphasized their sons' relationships with program leaders and other Scouts as important aspects of the program, and discussed how these relationships may

have positively influenced other parts of their sons' lives. For instance, parents/guardians described how Scouting gave their sons access to adults and peers who they might feel more comfortable going to with their problems than their parents, and how their sons might draw on these interpersonal connections later in life if they need help or support. They also described their sons' relationships with adult leaders and other Scouts as operating in a preventive capacity, through exposing them to individuals who modeled appropriate attributes and behaviors.

Of note, many parents/guardians helped to elucidate how their sons' experiences in the program carried over to other contexts. For instance, they described observing their sons apply what they learned in Scouting (e.g., helpfulness) at home. Some parents/guardians also discussed how they personally reinforced the attributes and values (e.g., kindness) that their sons were taught in meetings, so that their sons were receiving consistent messages about what constituted appropriate behaviors.

In regard to theoretical saturation (e.g., Guest et al., 2006), by the time that I finished analyzing the seventh parent/guardian interview, no new ideas or themes were identified in parents'/guardians' interview responses. However, as noted earlier, these data were collected from a small sample within a specific context. Thus, potential limitations associated with the study's external validity need to be considered, a point that I address in Chapter 5 (Discussion).

In short, interviews with parents/guardians primarily revealed the positive (and potentially problematic) experiences of Scouts outside of the Scouting context, and helped to clarify how aspects of their sons' experiences in ScoutReach were translatable to other contexts in their lives. Parents/guardians described the program as providing their sons with access to new and exciting opportunities and experiences (e.g., camping and community service) that were linked to their sons' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement in the program. However,

they primarily underscored the importance of their sons' relationships with adult leaders and other Scouts in the program. These relationships were strongly linked to their sons' positive affect toward the program. These data are consistent with prior research suggesting the importance of mentoring relationships and friendships in OST programs (e.g., Grossman & Bulle, 2006; Rhodes & DuBois, 2008; Watkins, Larson, & Sullivan, 2007), particularly among youth of color from lower-income communities (e.g., Halpern, 2005). I further discuss these findings in Chapter 5 (Discussion).

### **Scout Interviews**

Ten Scouts ( $M_{age} = 11.40$  years,  $SD = 2.41$ ,  $Range = 6$  to 14) participated in interviews about their experiences in ScoutReach and in their communities, and their views of whether the program impacted their development. I present key findings from the interviews below, according to corresponding research question.

**a. Experiences in ScoutReach.** Scouts primarily described their experiences in the ScoutReach program as positive and enjoyable. They discussed their reasons for joining the program, aspects of the program that they especially enjoyed, and perceived role models within the program. Scouts also described potential areas for program improvement.

**Reasons for joining.** Scouts described several reasons why they became interested in ScoutReach and decided to join the program. For instance, four (40.0%) Scouts reported learning about the program from a family member(s) and/or friend who was involved (e.g., "*I joined because my cousins were in Scouts and they seemed to have a lot of fun, so I wanted to join because I wanted to have fun, too...*"), three (30.0%) Scouts reported hearing about the program in school (e.g., "*...when I was in second grade, people for Scouting came to my classroom and they talked about it and it seemed interesting...*"), more than half (60.0%) of

Scouts reported hearing about fun or interesting activities that the program offered (e.g., *“I heard about fishing and hiking...so I thought it [sounded] fun”*), and two (20.0%) Scouts reported joining because they simply needed something to do (e.g., *“[I joined] because before I wasn’t in after-school activities”*).

In addition, one (10.0%) Scout stated that he thought it would be a good overall experience: *“I just joined because I [thought] it would be a good experience for me.”* One (10.0%) Scout also stated that he joined out of a desire to positively impact others and the community: *“I joined Scouts to help other people and help my society.”*

***Perceived positive/important program aspects.*** Scouts described several specific aspects of the program that they enjoyed. Half (50.0%) of Scouts stated that they enjoyed getting to spend time with other Scouts and building friendships with them (e.g., *“...I get to hang out with my friends”* and *“...there’s like more people to make friends with than at home”*). Half (50.0%) of Scouts also stated that they enjoyed earning merit badges (e.g., *“I like to get merit badges”*), and all (100.0%) Scouts described participating in different activities within the program (e.g., *“We play fun games...[go on] trips, outings, camp-outs”* and *“My favorite [aspect] would probably be the activities, because you get to do more things than you do in school”*).

In addition, two (20.0%) Scouts stated that they enjoyed the program because it provided them with the opportunity to be involved in activities outside of their normal routines (e.g., *“We go outside more, because whenever I’m at Scouting, I’m free from video games”* and *“Like, at home, I would just play games all night but at Boy Scouts, I’m active, like how I’m supposed to be”*). Of note, the majority (90.0%) of Scouts stated that camping and being outdoors were their favorite aspects of the program (e.g., *“[I] mostly [like] camping. It’s going away from home,*

*where you are normally, and you have some fun” and “We like get to make a fire and sleep in tents that we pitched and stuff”).*

***Perceived role models.*** Four (40.0%) Scouts described looking up to other Scouts and leaders in their units, whom they regarded as positive role models. For instance, as several Scouts stated: *“I look up to [my leader] ...because he’s the one that helps me to be the best I [can] be”* ; *“I look up to my Scout masters, Scouts...because they could help me gain more experience by helping me do things because they may do it differently and I could learn off of that”*; and *“For my Scout Master, I trust him as a leader. I’ve seen what we, under his leadership, have been able to accomplish...”*

***Program-related challenges/areas for improvement.*** Scouts also described several aspects of the program that they did not enjoy and thought could be improved. For instance, one (10.0%) Scout stated that he did not like receiving “lectures” from leaders, and another (10.0%) Scout said that he did not always like wearing the uniform (in particular, when participating in more athletic activities). Another (10.0%) Scout described feeling bored when they reviewed material that he already learned: *“Sometimes it gets boring when we’re learning about something for the new Scouts that I’ve already learned about.”*

**b. Experiences in their communities.** Scouts described different physical and social characteristics of the neighborhoods and communities where they lived, including different challenges that they faced. Some Scouts also described other experiences in their homes and communities (e.g., related to perceived role models).

***Community characteristics.*** Scouts described positive physical and social features of their communities. For instance, one (10.0%) Scout described his community as clean, three (30.0%) Scouts described their communities as safe, one (10.0%) Scout mentioned that his

community was culturally diverse, two (20.0%) Scouts described their communities as quiet, and two (20.0%) Scouts noted that their communities were comprised of friendly people (e.g., “...there’s like friendly people who do the right thing, are helpful to others” and “...whenever we notice someone who’s having trouble with something, we try to help”). In contrast, six (60.0%) Scouts described their communities as unsafe (e.g., “...it’s not the safest”), whereas three (30.0%) Scouts described their communities as comprised of both positive and problematic characteristics (e.g., “It’s like half of it is bad, half of it is good”). Of note, one (10.0%) Scout described how the principles that he learned in Scouting were reinforced by others in his community: “...a lot of my friends in the community are in Scouts or a band as well, which I feel has some of the same principles...”

**Community challenges.** Scouts also described concerns about their communities, and related challenges that they personally faced. For example, two (20.0%) Scouts described a strong gang presence in their communities and how it impacted them (e.g., “It’s like scary because if I live near the gang side, you don’t know what’s gonna happen” and “...just maybe a few days ago, when there was like a group of people...they were just hanging out on my street and then the police had to come. [I felt] scared”). Another (10.0%) Scout stated how he felt about seeing homeless people in his community: “[I want to help the poor] because I see some other people being mean to them...when I walk down the street most of the time. I feel sad.” In addition, one (10.0%) Scout discussed a perceived community challenge in relation to the Scouting program: “We have a lot of immigrants in our community...they don’t understand what [Scouting is] in the U.S...we aren’t a military training organization.”

**Perceived role models.** Scouts provided different examples of role models in their homes, schools, and communities who were not affiliated with the ScoutReach program. For instance,

over half (70.0%) of Scouts mentioned looking up to their families (e.g., *“My brother, my big brother, my dad, and my mom, because they help lots of people”* and *“Mostly my parents, because they just seem like really good people and they’re pretty successful”*). Two (20.0%) Scouts stated that they admired school officials (e.g., *“I look up to the principals and assistant principals because they encourage us to do the right thing”* and *“My teachers, because they’re teaching us skills that we need to learn for life”*).

**d. Perceived developmental impact of program.** Scouts described how they believed that Scouting impacted them cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally. In particular, Scouts discussed the different attributes, skills, and behaviors that they learned in the program, how they applied this learning in different contexts, how they believed Scouting may prevent youth from becoming involved in risk/problem behaviors, and how Scouting impacted their future goals. Some Scouts also personally reflected on how they believed that they changed since joining the program.

**Learning.** When asked what they learned in Scouting, many Scouts described learning different values and attributes. Over half (70.0%) of Scouts described learning attributes consistent with the Scout Law, such as trustworthiness, helpfulness, obedience, and kindness (e.g., *“[Scouts teaches] you how to help other people in different ways”*; *“I’ve learned to be more courteous to people”*; and *“When someone tells you to stop, you stop”*). Four (40.0%) Scouts also described learning other values and attributes that were not necessarily reflected in the Scout Law, such as confidence, creativity, bravery, teamwork, and respect. In addition, most (90.0%) Scouts described learning different skills in the program, such as outdoor skills (e.g., *“like knots”*; *“[using] a map and a compass...”*; *“swim techniques”*; *“survival skills”*; and *“how to camp”*), first-aid skills, leadership skills, and communication skills.

**Application of learning.** Some Scouts described how they applied what they learned in Scouting in other contexts (e.g., home, school, community). For instance, as one (10.0%) Scout stated: *“I’ve learned to be more courteous to people, like holding doors open. Just today, somebody dropped their stuff and I helped them pick it up.”* Another (10.0%) Scout described how he applied outdoor skills that he learned in Scouting: *“...like every year, me and my family go to Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont...rent a cabin...and me and my cousins would...make fires, we chop wood for the fires.”* In addition, one (10.0%) Scout described how he applied what he learned in Scouting in school: *“For trustworthy, I never really tell lies about things in school.”* Another (10.0%) Scout stated: *“...since I feel safe here, at school [I] can be confident, have courage, and be respectful and responsible and cooperative, like we are here.”*

**Prevention of risk/problem behaviors.** Scouts described different ways in which they believed Scouting helped to prevent youth from involvement in risk/ problem behaviors or making poor decisions. For instance, one Scout (10.0%) suggested that Scouting operated in a preventive capacity through exposing youth to positive role models (e.g., *“[Scouts prevents kids from getting into trouble because] everyone around you is a good influence”*), and half (50.0%) of Scouts said that Scouting teaches youth structure, rules, and discipline (e.g., *“[Scouts] shows you how to be morally straight, mentally awake, and physically strong with discipline and understanding”*; *“...we know if we get in trouble, we’ll probably be kicked out...”*; *“[Scouts] helps a lot. It gives [us] a more structured environment than a lot of different organizations”*; and *“Scouts is like a military for younger kids and it has a strict set of rules and if you really listen to those rules...it really prevents you from doing other things that get you into trouble”*).

In addition, some Scouts described how Scouting prevented youth from doing the wrong thing through teaching them what *not* to do. For instance, one Scout (10.0%) shared that they

learned not to “trash” places or “do any bad stuff.” Another Scout (10.0%) said that they learned not to rob stores. In addition, one Scout (10.0%) stated that there is a crime prevention merit badge that involves having a policeman come to a meeting and teach them about public safety. Finally, one Scout (10.0%) shared that Scouts prevented youth from doing the wrong thing through teaching them the consequences of their actions: “...because if people decide to do one thing, people in Boy Scouts can encourage them not to do it, because they know if they get in trouble, there will be a consequence.”

Scouts also described how Scouting taught them problem-solving or coping skills to use in response to challenges in their communities. For instance, as one (10.0%) Scout stated: “[Scouting] teaches you how to make plans and successfully find ways to do things.” In addition, one Scout (10.0%) described the program as providing access to a safe and positive space that prevents youth from getting into trouble (e.g., “...Scouts is like a safe environment and they’re not playing with their friends outside...” and “...Scouts aren’t gonna be around their friends that tell them to do something bad”).

**Future goals.** Scouts described how their involvement in ScoutReach helped to positively impact their future goals. For instance, as two (20.0%) Scouts stated: “[I want to be] a mechanical engineer...because [in Scouts] we talk a lot about STEM stuff” and “I was thinking of being a psychologist...[Scouting has helped me with] talking to other people better.” Another Scout (10.0%) described how the program helped to influence his goal pursuit skills: “I did the youth leadership training, which taught me how to make smarter goals and attainable goals, whereas before I was known to set goals that were physically unreachable.”

**Reflections on personal change.** Several Scouts described how they believed that they personally changed since joining ScoutReach. For instance, half (50.0%) of Scouts reflected on

changes in their attributes and behaviors (e.g., “*I seem more mature*”; “*Before Scouts, I was very quiet, laid back. I really was not the most helpful. I would sit around watching TV, but I’ve become much more active since I joined Scouts*”; and “*I see that I respect adults a lot more...now I try to find opportunities to help others*”). In addition, three (30.0%) Scouts described how Scouting impacted their skills and experience (e.g., “*[Scouting] has helped bring up my experience in certain things, like emergency*”; “*...before Scouts, camp outs were hard if we weren’t staying in the cabin*”; and “*...since I’ve been in Scouts for two years now, my communication has improved*”). Only one (10.0%) Scout stated that he did not believe that Scouting had impacted him or his life. When asked whether he believed that Scouts had impacted him or his life, the Scout stated “*Not really*” and did not elaborate.

**d. Key aspects of program related to youth engagement.** Scouts indicated different ways in which they were engaged in the ScoutReach program. Their responses were coded for indicators of cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, behavioral engagement, and general Scouting engagement.

**Cognitive engagement.** Scouts provided several examples of how they were cognitively engaged in ScoutReach. For instance, half (50.0%) of Scouts said that they thought the skills that they learned were useful and important (e.g., “*...the most important [skill I learn] I would think was first-aid*”; “*[first-aid] is important to learn because you can help people that’s hurt*”; and “*I like to learn new things...learning about new knots, new first-aid type things...like how to make splints and stuff. I think it’s really cool and it’s really useful information*”). One Scout (10.0%) described how he personally valued what he learned in the program: “*For me, it was extremely rewarding to learn how to use axes, knives, make fire, and also how to make shelters.*”

Two Scouts (20.0%) also described feeling proud of their learning and accomplishments in Scouting (e.g., through earning merit badges).

**Emotional engagement.** Scouts provided several examples of how they were emotionally engaged in ScoutReach. For instance, for four (40.0%) Scouts, their emotional engagement was linked to relationships (e.g., *“I think [Scouting] is fun because there’s other people...”* and *“[I feel] happy [at Scouts] because you get to meet your friends that you have there”*). For most (70.0%) Scouts, their emotional engagement was related to different experiences and activities in the program (e.g., *“[Scout has] made me feel more...you go outside more, so you feel different sometimes”*; *“I feel happy, excited [at Scouts] ...because I don’t know what we’re gonna do next”*; *“I enjoy [Scouting] and I feel happy when I’m here. It’s another thing I do instead of just staying home all day”*; *“...we don’t just learn, we have fun sometimes, playing dodge ball and stuff like that”*; and *“The [game] over there was called bean-bag toss, and we try and make it in the clown’s mouth. I did and when I did it, I felt good, like I can do it again. When I did, I was excited.”*

**Behavioral engagement.** Scouts provided several examples of how they were more deeply involved in ScoutReach. For instance, all (100.0%) Scouts described their effort and active participation in camping and other activities (e.g., *“we...make a fire and sleep in tents that we pitched”*; *“[at summer camp], we go swimming, archery, rifle shooting, and more”*; *“when we went to the camps, we did archery, rock climbing, BB guns, and how to make a fire”*; *“...I am actually helping staff the youth leadership training over the summer”*; and *“my last major [service project] was actually cleaning up the garden cemetery...”*). Some Scouts described, more generally, why they were behaviorally engaged in the program, as compared to other activities (e.g., *“I think Scouts is better [than basketball] because you get to do more things”* and

“...at home, I would just play games all night, but at Boy Scouts, I’m active, like how I’m supposed to be”).

**Scouting engagement.** Scouts provided several examples of how they demonstrated Scouting engagement. For instance, half (50.0%) of Scouts stated that they planned to remain in Scouting as they grew older, and described planning to complete requirements in order to earn merit badges, to become an Eagle Scout, and to become a Scout Leader to “*try to help out as quickly and as much as possible.*” One Scout (10.0%) also stated that he wanted to join the National Honor Society of the Boy Scouts, which requires “*15 nights of camping.*”

### **Summary of Interviews with Scouts**

Interviews with Scouts primarily enhanced understanding of their experiences in ScoutReach and aspects of the program that were linked to their engagement. Overall, Scouts described their experiences in ScoutReach as positive. Although they mentioned their relationships with other Scouts as important, they described their experiences in camping and the outdoors as particularly meaningful to them and, indeed, as their favorite aspect of the program. Scouts described wanting to join the program after learning about the different activities that were offered (e.g., outdoor activities), and discussed how their involvement in the program exposed them to opportunities and experiences (e.g., camping) that differed from their normal, everyday routines and allowed them to be outdoors and more active. In their interviews, Scouts also primarily linked their experiences in camping and other Scouting activities (more broadly) to different dimensions of engagement. They described enjoying learning outdoor and survival skills, feeling happy and excited when going camping and doing other activities, and how they actively participated in camping and other activities (e.g., through making fires and preparing food).

To a lesser degree, Scouts described their experiences in their neighborhoods and communities and potential challenges that they faced. Nonetheless, Scouts described positive features of their communities and, as well, described their concerns in response to the presence of gangs and homeless individuals. They also described how they believed that ScoutReach helped to prevent youth from getting into trouble by teaching them structure, rules, and discipline and exposing them to positive role models. Some Scouts also described how they applied what they learned in ScoutReach in other areas of their life (e.g., at home, school, and in their community).

In regard to theoretical saturation (e.g., Guest et al., 2006), by the time that I finished analyzing the eighth Scout interview, no new ideas or themes emerged in Scouts' interview responses. However, again, these data were collected from a small sample within a specific context. Thus, the representativeness of these data is questionable.

In sum, Scouts primarily viewed camping and other outdoor activities as the most important aspects of the ScoutReach program. Hearing about these activities helped to generate Scouts' interest in joining the program, and they described their experiences in these activities as linked to their development of skills that they perceived as useful and important. They also described having positive affect toward camping and other activities, and provided rich examples of their effort and active participation in the program through involvement in these activities. As noted earlier, these findings are consistent with prior research suggesting that participation in camping is linked to multidimensional growth among diverse youth (e.g., Thurber et al., 2007).

### **Similarities and Differences in Interviews across Participant Groups**

To address Question e (i.e., How are Scouts/parents/leaders similar and distinct in their views of ScoutReach and its potential impact on youth development?), and consistent with

interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA; Smith, 2011; Smith & Osborn, 2008), I compared interview responses across participant groups (i.e., program leaders, Scouts, and parents/guardians). I explored convergence and divergence in individuals' views of (and experiences in) ScoutReach and Scouts' communities.

Overall, program leaders, parents/guardians, and Scouts described having similar positive views of ScoutReach and its perceived developmental impact on participating youth. All three groups described the program as teaching Scouts attributes associated with the Scout Law, but differed slightly in the specific attributes that they mentioned. Whereas program leaders primarily mentioned that Scouts learned character and trust, parents/guardians primarily stated that their sons learned kindness and helpfulness. In comparison, Scouts primarily mentioned learning trustworthiness, helpfulness, obedience, and kindness. Similarly, the three groups described how Scouts learned other attributes and values (e.g., respect and teamwork) in the program, and important life and leadership skills (e.g., outdoor, leadership, and communication skills).

Similarly, the three participant groups also acknowledged how ScoutReach provided youth with opportunities to participate in camping and other outdoor activities and to build positive relationships with adult leaders and other Scouts. However, the groups differed in their emphasis on these different aspects of the program and, thus, in their views of the potential processes through which ScoutReach impacted Scouts. Whereas program leaders and Scouts primarily focused on describing Scouts' experiences in camping and the outdoors as particularly meaningful and important in promoting the development of attributes and skills, parents/guardians more strongly emphasized the importance of relationships that their sons were forming with their leaders and other Scouts as playing a role in their sons' development of

attributes and skills. In short, program leaders and Scouts primarily described Scouts' involvement in camping and other outdoor activities as the most important aspect of the program that, in turn, helped to facilitate Scouts' interest in joining the program and their sustained participation. Based on program leaders' and parents'/guardians' descriptions, these activities were strongly linked to different dimensions of youth engagement in ScoutReach. In comparison, parents/guardians more strongly emphasized the importance of their sons' relationships within the program.

Similarly, all three participant groups viewed ScoutReach as helping to prevent youth from becoming involved in risk/problem behaviors. However, the groups, again, differed slightly in their descriptions of how they believed that the program operated in a preventive capacity. Program leaders primarily emphasized the importance of involving Scouts' families in the program, followed by focusing Scouts' energy on positive activities and experiences and fostering a sense of community among Scouts. In comparison, parents/guardians primarily described the program as keeping youth off of the streets, in addition to focusing young people's attention on positive activities, exposing youth to role models, and teaching youth structure and discipline. Scouts primarily described the program as teaching them structure and discipline, followed by exposing them to positive role models and teaching them what not to do.

All three participant groups also differed in their descriptions of characteristics of Scouts' communities. Whereas program leaders primarily described Scouts' communities as characterized by problems related to drugs, gangs, and violence, Scouts and parents/guardians described both positive and potentially problematic challenges associated with their communities. These differences in observations may be attributable to the fact that not all leaders resided in the same communities as Scouts. In fact, several leaders resided in more affluent

communities and, thus, may have been less attuned to positive community features (e.g., friendly neighbors) that parents/guardians and Scouts described. This finding also underscores the importance of capturing the views of different stakeholder groups and how they comprehend their experiences (e.g., Swanson et al., 2003). I explore this idea in greater depth in Chapter 5 (Discussion).

In addition, in their interviews, parents/guardians tended to provide richer information about the experiences of Scouts in different contexts outside of Scouting (e.g., at home and in their communities). For instance, parents/guardians described observing how their sons applied what they learned in Scouting (e.g., helpfulness) at home and, as well, noted changes in their sons' behaviors at home since joining the program. Parents/guardians also described non-Scout-related role models in the lives of their sons and, in some instances, compared their sons' involvement in ScoutReach to their involvement in other OST programs. Thus, these qualitative data collected from parents/guardians provided more in-depth information about the experiences of Scouts outside of the program context. In comparison, program leaders and Scouts primarily described Scouts' experiences within the context of ScoutReach. Therefore, these findings again underscore the importance of exploring the perspectives of different stakeholder groups to obtain a more holistic understanding of individuals' lived experiences.

In sum, interviews with program leaders, parents/guardians, and Scouts revealed similarities and differences in their views of Scouts' experiences in ScoutReach and in their communities, important aspects of the program context, and of how the program may be impacting Scouts' development. Of note, the participant groups differed in the emphasis that they placed on different aspects of the program context (i.e., leaders and Scouts more strongly emphasized camping and other outdoor experiences, and parents/guardians more strongly

emphasized relationship building), and in the amount of information that they provided about different contexts in Scouts' lives (i.e., leaders and Scouts focused on describing Scouts' experiences in the program context, and parents/leaders provided more information about Scouts' experiences in their home and community contexts). Learning about the phenomenology of Scouts' experiences through these three different participant lenses helped to provide a more multifaceted understanding of the potential role of the program in the lives of participating youth.

### **Comparison of Younger and Older Scouts' Experiences**

To address Question f (i.e., How are younger Scouts' [i.e., younger than 10 years old] and older Scouts' [i.e., aged 10 and older] views of [and experiences in] ScoutReach and their communities similar and distinct?), I compared interview responses from Scouts who were children ( $n = 2$ ) and Scouts who were early adolescents ( $n = 8$ ) and, as well, interview responses from parents/guardians of children ( $n = 5$ ) and of early adolescents ( $n = 5$ ). Although, in the present study, I did not explicitly aim to compare the experiences and outcomes of Scouts in different portions of development, as noted earlier, adolescence is a developmental period that is highly associated with identity formation, other individual and contextual changes, and opportunity and risk (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2002; Gestsdóttir et al., 2011; Johnson & Lerner, 2015). In addition, it is relatively uncommon for ScoutReach programs to serve youth beyond the Cub Scout level. Thus, I wanted to take advantage of having older Scouts in my sample by qualitatively comparing their experiences in the program and in their communities to the experiences of younger Scouts. However, given that my qualitative Scout sample was primarily aged 10 and older, I cannot make meaningful between-group comparisons. Thus, as with all of

the results in the present study, these findings are preliminary and exploratory. I reiterate this point and discuss potential related directions for future research in Chapter 5 (Discussion).

I started by comparing the experiences of younger and older Scouts based on their interview responses. The two younger Scouts who were interviewed ( $M_{\text{age}} = 7.5$  years,  $SD = 2.12$ ) primarily described having positive views of (and experiences in) ScoutReach. Specifically, they discussed how they enjoyed learning first-aid skills and participating in outdoor Scouting activities and events (e.g., camping). They also described how they looked up to the older Scouts in their units and how Scouting taught them to follow the rules, help others, make good decisions, and not to do the wrong things (e.g., “...*like scare other people...*”). In regard to their experiences in their communities, the younger Scouts described positive characteristics of their communities (e.g., knowing and playing with kids on their streets) and not perceiving any challenges or problems.

In comparison, interviews with the eight older Scouts ( $M_{\text{age}} = 12.4$  years,  $SD = 1.19$ ) revealed different views of (and experiences in) ScoutReach and in their communities. Similarly to the younger Scouts, the older Scouts primarily described enjoying participating in outdoor Scouting activities and events. They also described learning more attributes and values in the program, such as respect, teamwork, loyalty, and independence. In addition, in comparison to the younger Scouts, they provided rich examples of how they applied what they learned in Scouting in other contexts in their lives (e.g., at home and in school). Furthermore, several of the older Scouts described assuming leadership roles within ScoutReach by helping the younger Scouts to master difficult skills. In contrast to the younger Scouts, the older Scouts also described challenges that they perceived in their communities (e.g., related to gangs). The older Scouts also

provided richer descriptions of how they believed the program impacted their development, by describing perceived changes in their beliefs and behaviors since joining the program.

I then compared the experiences of five younger Scouts ( $M_{\text{age}} = 7.0$  years,  $SD = 1.22$ ) and five older Scouts ( $M_{\text{age}} = 11.6$  years,  $SD = 1.34$ ), based on interview responses from parents/guardians. Parents/guardians of younger Scouts primarily described how ScoutReach exposed their sons to positive role models, including older Scouts who set good examples, held good values, and modeled appropriate behaviors. They also described how Scouting taught their sons to become more mature, self-confident, independent, and helpful, and how their sons have learned how to get along better with others. Parents/guardians also described challenges that their sons and other youth were exposed to in their communities, such as drugs, gangs, and violence.

Similarly, parents/guardians of older Scouts primarily described how ScoutReach has helped their sons to become more independent, respectful, helpful, and prepared to handle different situations. They also noted that participation had strengthened their sons' leadership, communication, and teamwork skills. Parents/guardians also described how their sons were building friendships with other Scouts who were a good influence, and how their sons were becoming more actively involved in program activities (e.g., camping), sometimes without the help of adult leaders or parents/guardians. Parents/guardians also described their concerns about drugs and violence in their communities.

In sum, there were similarities and differences in the program- and community-related views and experiences of younger and older Scouts, according to the perspectives of Scouts and of parents/guardians. Of note, younger Scouts seemed less attuned to potentially problematic characteristics of their communities that were described by parents/guardians. Younger Scouts, and the parents/guardians of younger Scouts, also described Scouting as exposing youth to

positive role models, namely older Scouts whom they could look up to. In comparison, older Scouts provided richer descriptions of attributes and values that they learned in the program, and how they applied this learning in other contexts. Several older Scouts also described assuming leadership roles in the program, and reflected on some of the challenges that they perceived in their communities. Parents/guardians of older Scouts also described how their sons assumed increasingly independent roles in program activities.

Perhaps these findings are not surprising, given that adolescence is a developmental period associated with greater independence, self-reflection, and awareness (e.g., Bandura, 2005). However, as I describe in Chapter 5 (Discussion), these findings are preliminary and more extensive research is needed to enrich understanding of potential developmental differences in the experiences of ScoutReach participants.

### **Short-Answer Responses: Exploring Themes in Parents'/Guardians' Views of ScoutReach**

To address the ninth research question (i.e., Based on analysis of parent/guardian short-answer responses, what themes emerged in parents'/guardians' descriptions of why their sons joined ScoutReach, and their views of how the program has impacted their sons?) and consistent with the thematic analysis (TA; Braun & Clarke, 2006) qualitative analysis method, I examined parents'/guardians' responses to three short-answer questions. I aimed to identify, analyze, and report patterns or themes in parents'/guardians' views of their sons' reasons for joining ScoutReach, and their views of how the program may be impacting their sons. Below, I present the main themes (and corresponding frequencies) that emerged across parents'/guardians' responses, according to each short-answer question.

**Question 1: “Why did your son join Scouts?”**

Twenty-nine parents/guardians (85.3%) responded to a question about their sons’ reasons for joining ScoutReach. Twelve (12) primary themes were observed across participants’ responses (see Appendix I).

The most frequent reasons that parents/guardians provided were: “The program seemed fun or interesting” (41.4%); “To learn (discipline, values, skills)” (37.9%); “To build relationships” (17.2%); “Family was involved” (13.8%); “Son loved the program [or being in activities, more generally]” (10.3%); and “To enjoy the outdoors [e.g., camping]” (10.3%).

In comparison, fewer parents/guardians provided the following reasons for why their sons joined the program: “Son heard about program in school” (6.8%); “Friend was involved” (6.8%); “To enjoy new experiences or adventures” (6.8%); “To become a Boy Scout or Eagle Scout” (6.8%); “Son likes to help others” (3.4%); and “To be productive” (3.4%).

**Question 2: "Do you think that Scouts is good for your son? If yes, how?"**

Thirty-one (91.2%) parents/guardians responded to a question about whether they believed Scouting was good for their sons. Twenty-two (22) primary themes were observed across participants’ responses (see Appendix I).

The most frequent reasons that parents/guardians provided were: “Promotes positive relationships or social interactions (e.g., teamwork)” (35.5%); “Promotes development of skills (e.g., life skills, outdoor skills, problem-solving skills)” (29.0%); “Provides exposure to new or different experiences or opportunities (e.g., outdoors)” (25.8%); “Promotes development of values and attributes” (19.4%); “Teaches discipline” (12.9%); and “Positively impacts son’s overall learning and development” (12.9%).

In contrast, fewer parents/guardians (i.e., less than 10%) provided other reasons that they believed Scouting was good for their sons. These reasons included the following: “Connects son with community”; “Son learns to listen and follow instructions”; “Reinforces principles/values learned in other settings (e.g., home)”; “Son participates in activities”; and “Provides opportunities to help others.”

**Question 3: “Do you think that Scouts prevents kids from getting into trouble and involved in risk and problem behaviors (such as using drugs and violence)? If yes, how?”**

Twenty-nine parents (90.6%) responded to a question about whether they believed Scouting helped to prevent youth from getting into trouble. Twenty-one (21) primary themes were observed across participants’ responses (see Appendix I).

The most frequent reasons that parents/guardians provided were coded as follows: “Promotes development of values and attributes” (24.1%); “Gives youth something positive to focus on” (24.1%); “Provides structure and discipline” (13.8%); “Promotes development of skills (e.g., life skills, outdoor skills, problem-solving skills)” (13.8%); “Keeps youth busy” (10.3%); and “Has positive impact on son’s overall development” (10.3%).

In contrast, fewer parents/guardians (i.e., less than 10%) provided other reasons that they believed Scouting helped to prevent risk/problem behaviors. These reasons included the following: “Promotes application of Scouting skills and attributes in different settings (e.g., school, community)”; “Promotes positive decision-making”; “Youth learn to help others and positively influence society”; and “Keeps youth away from negative influences.”

**Summary of Short-Answer Responses and Comparison to Interview Responses**

Overall, parents’/guardians’ short-answer responses reinforced the themes that emerged across all of the interviews with parents/guardians, and parents’/guardians’ positive views of the

ScoutReach program more broadly. According to parents'/guardians' short-answer responses, their sons primarily joined Scouting because the program seemed fun or interesting, to learn (e.g., discipline, values, skills), to build relationships and, as well, because of family involvement. In comparison, in their interviews, parents/guardians primarily stated that their sons joined the program due to family or peer involvement. To a lesser extent, in their interviews, parents/guardians also said that their sons joined ScoutReach because it seemed like a fun opportunity. Thus, although there was overlap in parents'/guardians' responses in the two sources of data, there were differences in the frequency with which they provided certain responses. In part, differences might be attributable to potential limitations associated with the measures, which I discuss in Chapter 5 (Discussion), and/or to differences in how the questions were presented and understood by participants in the questionnaire, as compared to in the interview.

In regard to whether they perceived the program as being good for their sons, in their short-answer responses, parents/guardians primarily reported that they believed the program had a positive impact by promoting positive relationships and the development of important skills, and providing their sons with exposure to new experiences or opportunities (e.g., outdoors). Similarly, in their interviews, parents/guardians primarily emphasized the program as cultivating strong and positive relationships among Scouts and between Scouts and leaders. Parents/guardians also acknowledged their sons' exposure to different opportunities.

Finally, in their short-answer responses, parents/guardians primarily stated that Scouting prevented youth from getting involved in risk/problem behaviors by promoting the development of positive values and attributes, and giving youth something positive on which to focus their time and energy. In comparison, in their interviews, parents/guardians primarily reported that

ScoutReach operated in a preventive capacity by keeping youth off of the streets and out of trouble, focusing their energy on positive activities, and exposing youth to positive role models. Again, these differences might be attributable in part to potential limitations associated with the measures or the way in which questions were presented and understood by participants.

In sum, although I primarily focused on exploring participants' responses to interview questions, I collected and assessed parents'/guardians' responses to short-answer questionnaire items in order to capture the views of a larger sample of participants. These data allowed me to identify and describe themes that emerged in parents'/guardians' perceptions of the ScoutReach program and its perceived impact on their sons, which I then compared to parents'/guardians' interview responses. Although there was a strong degree of overlap in themes that arose from both sources of data, there were differences in the frequency with which some ideas were mentioned. This finding suggests the importance of collecting data from participants in different forms to assess the validity of the data, and also suggests the challenges associated with authentically capturing participants' views and experiences (e.g., Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006). I describe these challenges in more detail in Chapter 5 (Discussion).

### **Meta-Inferences Derived from Analysis of Mixed-Methods Data**

To address the tenth and final research question (i.e., When interpreting the quantitative and qualitative data together, what types of meta-inferences can be made about youth engagement in ScoutReach and its relation to youth development?), I explored the ways in which the quantitative and qualitative data that I collected converged to enrich understanding of Scouts' experiences in the ScoutReach program and in their communities and, in particular, if and how Scouts were engaged in the program along different dimensions. I also examined the relation

among different dimensions of Scout engagement in the program and indicators of youth development.

My analyses of the quantitative and qualitative data indicated that Scouts were engaged cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally in the ScoutReach program, and that they also demonstrated general Scouting engagement. As noted earlier, on the Scout questionnaires, Scouts had high average scores on the different dimensions of engagement that I assessed. Similarly, interviews conducted with program leaders, parents/guardians, and Scouts demonstrated that Scouts were engaged in the program in these different ways. The interviews expanded on the findings derived from the questionnaires by elucidating which aspects of the ScoutReach program context were most strongly related to cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement. For example, participants commonly linked Scouts' engagement in ScoutReach to the program's outdoor activities and the opportunity to build strong relationships with leaders and other Scouts. The interviews also shed light on differences in participants' views of the importance of different program aspects. That is, whereas program leaders and Scouts more strongly emphasized Scouts' exposure to camping and other outdoor activities as important, parents/guardians focused on describing Scouts' interpersonal relationships within the program.

My analyses of the quantitative and qualitative data also converged to suggest the important role of youth emotional engagement in ScoutReach. Data from the Scout questionnaires demonstrated that emotional engagement in ScoutReach was positively associated with the greatest number of indicators of positive development, and was uniquely associated with several of these indicators. Similarly, in their interviews, program leaders, parents/guardians, and Scouts provided more vivid examples of how Scouts were emotionally engaged in the program, as compared to how they demonstrated other dimensions of engagement. In particular, program

leaders emphasized the importance of encouraging and sustaining young people's participation in the program by employing an "emotional hook"; for instance, getting Scouts involved in fun and exciting activities (namely, camping) that they would remember and would help to get them interested in what they were learning and actively involved in the program. Thus, in addition to reinforcing the important role of emotional engagement, interviews with program leaders, in particular, seemed to suggest that youth emotional engagement helped to promote cognitive and behavioral engagement in the program.

In addition, my analyses of the quantitative and qualitative data converged to indicate that Scouts, overall, demonstrated various indicators of positive youth development. Analysis of the Scout questionnaires demonstrated that Scouts' average scores were moderate to high on the indicators of positive youth development that I assessed, including obedience, reverence, kindness, hopeful future expectation, and ISR. Similarly, in their interviews, program leaders, parents/guardians, and Scouts described how Scouts demonstrated these different attributes within the context of Scouting, at home, and in their communities. The interviews also expanded on the questionnaire data by directly linking Scouts' embodiment of these attributes to the attributes that Scouts learned in the ScoutReach program. For instance, all three participant groups described how Scouts learned to be helpful, kind, and to follow the rules in Scouting.

My analyses of the quantitative and qualitative data also converged to suggest the presence of potential developmental challenges in the lives of Scouts. In other words, the questionnaire data indicated that some Scouts reported substance use and/or involvement in delinquency. Similarly, interviews with program leaders, parents/guardians, and Scouts revealed that Scouts were exposed to challenges in their communities, such as drugs, gangs, and violence. Taken together, these quantitative and qualitative findings suggest that some Scouts may have

experienced difficulty in navigating these contextual challenges that, in turn, may have adversely impacted their decision-making and behaviors. However, not all of the Scouts in the sample endorsed risk/problem behaviors in their questionnaires. I compared interview responses between Scouts who reported involvement in risk/problem behaviors and those who reported no such behaviors, but I did not find any clear differences in their descriptions of their experiences in ScoutReach and in their communities. Thus, future research in this area may want to explore in greater depth whether particular aspects of the Scouting context (or other factors in the lives of Scouts, more generally) are linked to lower levels of risk/problem behaviors.

In sum, both sets of quantitative and qualitative analyses similarly suggested that Scouts demonstrated different dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach and, as well, different indicators of positive youth development. Data collected from the interviews further helped to illuminate which aspects of the program context may be linked to Scout engagement in the program and, as well, revealed nuances in individuals' views of (or experiences in) the program across participant groups. The interviews also helped to link the attributes measured in the questionnaire to the material that Scouts learned in the program. Furthermore, the questionnaire and interview data suggested potential contextual challenges that ScoutReach youth faced. Overall, these findings underscored the importance of continuing to examine the perspectives and experiences of different stakeholder groups involved in ScoutReach (and other OST programs, more broadly) using mixed-methods designs. In the next chapter, I discuss potential implications for future research in this area.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Theory and research in the fields of psychology, criminology, sociology, public health, and developmental science suggest that, for some male youth of color in urban and economically disadvantaged communities, adaptive challenges during childhood and adolescence (e.g., structural racism, poverty, violence, limited resources and opportunities, conflicting cultural norms) may inhibit their abilities to formulate positive self-judgments and future-oriented beliefs (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2009; Liu et al., 2015; Spencer et al., 2015). However, high-quality youth development (YD) programs may constitute key ecological developmental assets in the lives of these young people and buffer them against potential contextual challenges by adopting a strength-based approach (e.g., Francois et al., 2011; Mahoney, 2000; Urban et al., 2009).

Prior research suggests that engagement is a particularly important dimension of participation in YD programs (and out-of-school time [OST] programs, more broadly) that reflects the quality, as compared to the quantity, of young people's involvement and how they make meaning of their program-related experiences (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010; Bundick, 2011; Fredricks, 2011; Tiffany et al., 2012). However, drawing from the school engagement literature, more research is needed that explores cognitive, emotional, *and* behavioral dimensions of engagement in YD programs that serve traditionally underrepresented youth (e.g., Bohnert et al., 2010). In particular, research is needed that focuses on exploring the views and experiences of male youth of color in relation to YD programs and their communities, given that males (namely, male adolescents) may face unique challenges related to their development of healthy masculine identities (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2009; Spencer et al., 2004).

Therefore, the present study used cross-sectional, mixed-methods data to explore the experiences of urban male youth of color in lower-income communities who participated in

ScoutReach, an arm of Boy Scouts of America (BSA) that aims to make Scouting more accessible to culturally diverse youth who may face barriers to program participation (e.g., BSA, 2016; D. Warren, personal communication, January 28, 2016). In this chapter, I briefly review the purpose of this investigation and the quantitative and qualitative results that I presented in Chapters 3 and 4, respectively. I interpret these findings in light of extant scholarship and, as well, discuss potential practical implications, limitations, and considerations for future research.

### **Overview of the Investigation**

The purpose of this cross-sectional study was to examine whether male youth of color were engaged in the ScoutReach program in different ways (e.g., cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally), and to explore whether these dimensions of engagement were related to indicators of positive and potentially problematic youth development. I also sought to learn more about the broader experiences of these youth in the ScoutReach program and in their communities, including potential challenges they might have faced and how the program might have helped them to navigate these challenges. I collected quantitative and/or qualitative data from Scouts, parents/guardians, and program leaders to gain a more multifaceted understanding of different stakeholders' views of (and experiences in) the program, and how the program may impact youth development. This study was informed by relational developmental systems (RDS) metatheory (e.g., Overton, 2015) and the Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST; e.g., Spencer et al., 2015) and, thus, primarily aimed to enrich understanding of the experiences of male youth of color within the ScoutReach program, a potential ecological developmental asset nested within the individual-contextual developmental system.

The quantitative portion of the study focused on exploring the relation among five dimensions of youth engagement in ScoutReach (i.e., cognitive engagement, emotional

engagement, behavioral engagement, Scouting engagement, and Scouting advancement), dimensions of involvement in ScoutReach and other OST programs (i.e., breadth, duration, and intensity), and indicators of positive and potentially problematic youth development. The qualitative portion of the study primarily aimed to illuminate the phenomenology of Scouts' experiences in ScoutReach and in their communities from the perspectives of three stakeholder groups (i.e., Scouts, parents/guardians, and leaders). I triangulated these data across methods and participant groups to gain a richer and more holistic understanding of Scouts' experiences and how the program may be impacting their development.

### **Review of Quantitative Findings**

In the quantitative portion of this study, I analyzed questionnaire data from Scouts to address the following seven research questions:

- 1.** On average, how do Scouts score on different dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach (e.g., cognitive, emotional, behavioral) and indicators of positive and potentially problematic development?;
- 2.** What is the relation among different dimensions of engagement and indicators of positive development among Scouts?;
- 3.** Do Scouts differ in their scores on dimensions of engagement based on self-reported substance use and involvement in any delinquency?;
- 4.** What is the relation among different dimensions of involvement in ScoutReach and other OST programs (i.e., breadth, duration, and intensity) and dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach?;
- 5.** What is the relation among breadth, duration, and intensity of program involvement and indicators of positive development among Scouts?;

6. Do Scouts differ in their scores on breadth, duration, and intensity of program involvement based on self-reported substance use and involvement in any delinquency?; and

7. What is the relation among perceived aspects of the ScoutReach program and dimensions of youth engagement?

To address the first question, I performed descriptive analyses on all of the predictor and outcome variables that I assessed. Overall, I found that Scouts' average scores were moderate to high on indicators of positive development (e.g., obedience, reverence, cheerfulness, kindness, thriftiness, hopeful future expectation, trustworthiness, helpfulness, self-perceived school competence, ISR, PYD, and grit). This finding is consistent with prior research examining character virtues and other indicators of positive development among Scouts (e.g., Hilliard et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2015a, 2015b). Scouts also had high average scores on the different dimensions of engagement that I assessed. This finding is consistent with prior research exploring more general youth engagement in Scouting (e.g., Lynch et al., 2016) and youth engagement in other OST programs (e.g., Ramey et al., 2015; Tiffany et al., 2012). However, in the present study, I also found that some of the scales that assessed character virtues and other indicators of positive development performed differently than in the CAMP study (e.g., Hilliard et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2015a, 2015b). For example, reliability coefficients associated with religious reverence, thriftiness, self-perceived school competence, ISR, and general Scouting engagement were lower in my sample. In contrast, coefficients associated with kindness and trustworthiness were higher in my sample. There were also relatively low alpha values associated with the scales that assessed substance use and delinquency, which, perhaps, is not surprising given that these measures are intended for older youth. Nonetheless, these low alpha coefficients

call into question the reliability of some of the scales. Future research with ScoutReach should consider ways in which to enhance the performance of these measures (e.g., by conducting cognitive interviews with participants to assess their understanding of items).

In addition, I found that relatively few Scouts (9.4%) indicated substance use. Of the Scouts who reported substance use, 66.7% were aged 10 or older. Surprisingly, half of the sample (50.0%) reported delinquency. Although most of these Scouts (62.5%) were aged 10 or older, there were some younger children who reported involvement in delinquency, some as young as six years old. Research suggests that antisocial behaviors are relatively uncommon during early childhood but tend to gradually increase in late childhood and peak during adolescence before sharply declining during young adulthood (e.g., Loeber & Farrington, 2014). However, individual differences (e.g., in self-regulation, environmental conditions) exist, which may help to explain why some individuals engage in antisocial behaviors beginning in early childhood (e.g., Loeber & Farrington, 2014). Nonetheless, most youth involvement in risk/problem behaviors is adolescent-limited, such that it does not persist beyond adolescence, a developmental period that tends to be characterized by experimentation and developmentally normative risk-taking (e.g., Moffitt, 2006). Thus, in the present study, Scouts' endorsement of risk/problem behaviors may not necessarily be predictive of problematic developmental trajectories.

In the present study, Scouts participated in an average of three OST programs, which is consistent with prior research exploring the breadth of OST participation among Cub Scouts, more generally (e.g., Champine et al., in press). In addition, over half (56.2%) of the Scouts in the sample participated in ScoutReach for more than two years. This average duration of participation in ScoutReach is higher than the value reported in prior research exploring Scouts'

duration of involvement in Cub Scouts, more generally (e.g., Lynch et al., 2016). On average, half (50.0%) of the Scouts in my sample also participated in ScoutReach for one to less than two hours per week. This finding is consistent with prior research exploring the intensity of Scouts' participation in Cub Scouts, more generally (e.g., Champine et al., in press).

To address the second research question, I computed Pearson product-moment correlations to examine the relation among different dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach and indicators of positive development. Emotional engagement was positively associated with the greatest number of indicators of positive development, followed by cognitive engagement, behavioral engagement, and Scouting advancement. The magnitudes of the significant correlation coefficients were moderate to large. Of note, general Scouting engagement was only positively associated with self-perceived school competence. This finding conflicts with prior research suggesting positive associations between this scale and character virtues in Cub Scouts, more generally (e.g., Lynch et al., 2016). It is unclear why this discrepancy occurred, but, perhaps, it may be attributable in part to differences in sample characteristics between the studies. In comparison to the sample in the study by Lynch et al. (2016), the Scouts in my sample were enrolled in ScoutReach, were more ethnically and racially diverse, and were from lower-income backgrounds. The salience of the Scouting engagement items may have differed depending on the characteristics of the samples. However, I do not want to speculate here. Thus, I recommend that future research investigate this discrepancy.

To address the third research question, I conducted two independent samples *t*-tests to examine whether Scouts differed in their scores on dimensions of engagement based on self-reported substance use and involvement in delinquency. Scouts who reported substance use scored lower on cognitive engagement than Scouts who reported no substance use. Perhaps this

finding may be understood within the context of prior research suggesting that substance use is linked to impaired youth memory and concentration and reduced cognitive engagement within the context of schools (e.g., King, Meehan, Trim, & Chassin, 2006). However, given that the effect size associated with this result was small to moderate ( $d = .39$ ), I do not want to over-interpret this finding.

To address the fourth research question, I computed Pearson product-moment correlations to assess the relations among different dimensions of involvement in ScoutReach and other OST programs (i.e., breadth, duration, and intensity) and dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach. Breadth of involvement in OST programs was positively associated with cognitive engagement in ScoutReach, and the magnitude of this correlation coefficient was moderate. This finding can, perhaps, be interpreted in light of prior research suggesting that involvement in a broad range of activity contexts may provide youth with different opportunities for learning and cognitive growth (e.g., Busseri, Rose-Krasnor, Willoughby, & Chalmers, 2006). In addition, duration of involvement in ScoutReach was positively associated with emotional engagement in ScoutReach, and the magnitude of this correlation coefficient was moderate. This finding makes intuitive sense; that is, Scouts who enjoyed being in the program were likely to be involved in it for longer durations of time. In addition, intensity of participation in ScoutReach was positively associated with cognitive and behavioral engagement. This finding is consistent with prior research suggesting that intensity of involvement in OST programs is related to positive youth outcomes (e.g., Mahoney & Vest, 2012).

To address the fifth research question, I computed Pearson product-moment correlations to examine the relations among breadth, duration, and intensity of involvement in ScoutReach and other OST programs and indicators of positive development. Breadth was positively

associated with the most indicators of positive development, followed by duration and then intensity. The magnitudes of the significant correlation coefficients were moderate to large. These findings can, again, perhaps be understood in light of prior research linking breadth, duration, and intensity of involvement in OST programs to positive youth outcomes (e.g., Busseri et al., 2006; Mahoney & Vest, 2012). The broader the array of organized activity contexts to which youth are exposed, and the more time they spend within these activity contexts, the greater the opportunities for the development of knowledge, skills, and interpersonal relationships (e.g., Busseri et al., 2006; Denault & Poulin, 2009).

To address the sixth research question, I conducted two independent samples *t*-tests to examine whether Scouts differed in their scores on breadth, duration, and intensity of involvement in ScoutReach and other OST programs depending on whether they reported substance use or delinquency, respectively. Scouts who reported substance use tended to score higher on breadth of OST program participation than Scouts who reported no substance use. The corresponding effect size was moderate to large. This finding can, perhaps, be interpreted in light of prior research suggesting that involvement in particular activities (e.g., sports) or particular combinations of activities may be related to potentially problematic youth outcomes (e.g., Moore & Werch, 2005). In addition, unexpectedly, Scouts who reported delinquency tended to score higher on intensity of involvement in ScoutReach than Scouts who reported no delinquency. However, the corresponding effect size was small. As noted earlier, future research should explore in greater depth the experiences of Scouts who demonstrate more intense participation in Scouting.

Finally, to address the seventh research question, I computed Pearson product-moment correlations to assess the relation between perceived aspects of the ScoutReach program context

and dimensions of engagement in ScoutReach. The scale of perceived program aspects was positively associated with all dimensions of engagement, with the exception of general Scouting engagement, and the magnitudes of the corresponding correlation coefficients were moderate to large. This finding is consistent with prior research examining the relation among perceived features of OST program contexts and dimensions of youth engagement (e.g., Ramey et al., 2015).

Overall, these quantitative findings were consistent with prior research demonstrating that Scouts tend to score high on Scouting engagement, more generally, and high on indicators of positive development (e.g., Hilliard et al., 2014; Lynch et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2015a, 2015b). These results also aligned with prior research linking different dimensions of youth engagement and involvement in OST programs to indicators of positive development (e.g., Ramey et al., 2015; Tiffany et al., 2012). In short, these quantitative data suggested that nuanced relations existed among dimensions of engagement and involvement in OST programs and indicators of positive and potentially problematic development among Scouts and, thus, underscored the importance of examining the complexities associated with Scouts' experiences using a mixed-methods approach.

### **Review of Qualitative Findings**

In the qualitative portion of this study, I first analyzed interview data from program leaders, parents/guardians, and Scouts to primarily address the following research questions:

1. Based on analysis of interviews, what are Scouts', parents'/guardians', and program leaders' views of the ScoutReach program and how it is related to youth engagement and youth development? That is:

- a.** How do Scouts/parents/leaders describe Scouts' experiences in (or their personal views of) ScoutReach?;
- b.** How do Scouts/parents/leaders describe Scouts' experiences in their communities?;
- c.** Do Scouts/parents/leaders perceive ScoutReach as having an impact on youth development? If so, how?;
- d.** According to Scouts/parents/leaders, which aspects of ScoutReach seem to be the most important or most strongly related to youth engagement?;
- e.** How are Scouts/parents/leaders similar and distinct in their views of ScoutReach and its potential impact on youth development?; and
- f.** How are younger Scouts' (i.e., younger than 10 years old) and older Scouts' (i.e., aged 10 and older) views of (and experiences in) ScoutReach and their communities similar and distinct?

To address Questions a through d, I performed interpretative phenomenological analysis (Smith, 2011; Smith & Osborn, 2008) to gain a more in-depth understanding of the views and experiences of Scouts, parents/guardians, and program leaders who were involved in the ScoutReach program, and how Scouts (in particular) made meaning of their experiences in the program and in their communities. In response to Question a, Scouts, parents/guardians, and leaders generally described having positive views of (and experiences in) the program. Program leaders emphasized how they enjoyed exposing Scouts to new opportunities and experiences and involving Scouts in different activities (e.g., primarily related to camping and the outdoors). Parents/guardians focused on describing how their sons developed strong relationships with adult

leaders and other Scouts in the program, whereas Scouts described their experiences in camping and the outdoors as the most enjoyable aspect of the program.

In response to Question b, program leaders described perceiving challenges in Scouts' communities primarily related to drugs, gangs, and violence. However, parents/guardians and Scouts described both positive and potentially problematic characteristics associated with their communities. Parents/guardians also shed light on Scouts' positive and challenging experiences at home and within other contexts (e.g., school, church) in their lives, and how they observed Scouts apply what they learned in Scouting in these other contexts.

In response to Question c, Scouts, parents/guardians, and leaders generally perceived ScoutReach as having a positive impact on the development of participating youth. All three groups described how Scouts learned attributes associated with the Scout law (e.g., helpfulness, kindness, trustworthiness), other attributes (e.g., respect and teamwork), and important life and leadership skills (e.g., outdoor skills and communication skills). They also generally perceived Scouting as operating in a preventive capacity through providing Scouts with access to a safe space that focused their energy on positive activities and exposed them to positive role models.

In response to Question d, Scouts, parents/guardians, and leaders described various aspects of the ScoutReach program that were linked to different dimensions of Scout engagement. In their descriptions, program leaders primarily linked camping and outdoor activities to Scouts' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement in the program. In comparison, parents/guardians primarily linked Scouts' cognitive engagement in the program to learning new and interesting information, more generally. In addition, they primarily related Scouts' emotional engagement in ScoutReach to relationships with other boys in the program, followed by program activities (e.g., camping), and linked behavioral engagement to Scouts'

involvement in different activities and events, more generally. Similarly to program leaders, Scouts primarily linked their cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement in the program to camping and other outdoor activities.

To address Question e, I compared interview responses across program leaders, parents/guardians, and Scouts to explore areas of convergence and divergence in stakeholders' views of (or experiences in) ScoutReach and Scouts' communities. Overall, the three participant groups, similarly, described having positive views of the program and perceived it as positively impacting young people's beliefs, values, and behaviors and operating in a preventive capacity. However, the three groups differed in their views of the most important aspects of the ScoutReach program. Whereas program leaders and Scouts strongly emphasized the importance of camping and outdoor experiences, parents/guardians focused on describing Scouts' relationships with adult leaders and other Scouts in the program. Furthermore, in comparison to program leaders and Scouts, parents/guardians provided richer information about the experiences of Scouts in contexts other than ScoutReach (e.g., at home, in the community).

These findings suggested the importance of capturing the views of different YD program stakeholder groups. These data were also consistent with prior research suggesting that the perceptions of practitioners, parents/guardians, and youth may vary in regard to what constitutes youth thriving, and potential barriers to thriving, within the context of YD programs and other youth-serving settings (e.g., psychological health care; e.g., Baker-Ericzén, Jenkins, & Haine-Schlagel, 2013; King et al., 2005). For instance, Baker-Ericzén et al. (2013) asked parents/guardians, youth mental health providers, and youth about their experiences in receiving community mental health services, related problems or challenges they encountered, and desired changes. Findings revealed similarities and differences in perspectives across the three

stakeholder groups. For instance, whereas therapists indicated that they valued and wanted more parent/guardian participation in youth mental health treatment, parents/guardians often reported feeling blamed and unsupported by youth service providers (Baker-Ericzén et al., 2013). Thus, these findings may help to enhance the provision of youth services by taking into consideration the perspectives and experiences of different stakeholders (Baker-Ericzén et al., 2013). In the present study, program leaders, parents/guardians, and Scouts held similar and different views of aspects of ScoutReach that they perceived to be working well and needing improvement. Therefore, these findings may help to inform enhancements to the program and ways in which the program is marketed to different stakeholders, an idea that I explore in greater depth in the potential practical implications section of this chapter.

In addition, as noted by King et al. (2005), considerable variation in individuals' views and perspectives may exist across communities and cultural groups. Although I explored the views and perspectives of an ethnically, racially, and economically diverse sample of participants, between-group comparisons based on differences in demographic characteristics were beyond the scope of the present study. Thus, future research may want to examine whether individuals' views of (and experiences in) ScoutReach and BSA, more broadly, vary across particular communities and cultural groups.

To address Question f, I compared interview responses from Scouts (or parents/guardians of Scouts) who were under age 10 and Scouts (or parents/guardians of Scouts) who were aged 10 or older to identify areas of convergence and divergence in their views of (and experiences in) ScoutReach and Scouts' communities. In comparison to the younger Scouts, older Scouts provided richer descriptions of different attributes and skills that they learned in ScoutReach and seemed more cognizant of potential community-related challenges. Older Scouts also described

holding more independent leadership roles in the program and trying to serve as role models to the younger Scouts who, in comparison, described looking up to the older Scouts.

These findings were consistent with prior research suggesting that adolescence is a developmental period associated with increased psychosocial maturity, perceived self-efficacy, responsibility, and independence (e.g., Lerner & Steinberg, 2004). As noted earlier, adolescence is also characterized by important individual and contextual changes and transitions (e.g., hormonal changes and changes in relationships), and is a period during which individuals may become more attuned to social norms, values, and expectations, which may both reflect and influence their identity formation, beliefs, and values (e.g., Gestsdóttir & Lerner, 2008; Johnson & Lerner, 2015). Youth-serving programs may function as important “identity formation contexts” in the lives of adolescents who are beginning to explore who they are and reflect on who they wish to become (e.g., Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003, p. 876). In particular, youth programs may provide adolescents with opportunities to explore different masculine or feminine identities (e.g., Eccles et al., 2003).

For instance, Eccles and Barber (1999) examined the relation between activity involvement and activity-based identity formation among adolescents. They found, for example, that male adolescents who participated in sports tended to identify as “jocks,” whereas females who were involved in performing arts and school-based groups often identified as “princesses.” Follow-up longitudinal research found that activity participation in high school and corresponding identity categories predicted diverse developmental outcomes. For example, sports participation and a “jock” identity were linked to positive academic, occupational, and social outcomes, and yet higher rates of substance use (e.g., Barber, Eccles, & Stone, 2001).

In short, scholarship in this area suggests that adolescents may attach meaning to their participation in activities that is linked to their desired identities, which may have important implications for their developmental trajectories (e.g., Barber et al., 2001). Activity contexts may provide adolescents with opportunities to affiliate with peers with similar backgrounds and values and negotiate their personal identities with a desired “social identity group” (e.g., Barber et al., 2001, p. 448). As noted earlier, research predicated on the PVEST framework suggests that urban male youth of color may experience structural challenges (e.g., racism and negative stereotypes) that constrain their abilities to form healthy masculine identities (e.g., Cunningham, 1999). They may cope with negative experiences associated with being a young man of color (e.g., getting stopped by police) by displaying hypermasculine, or exaggerated, attitudes and behaviors that conform to negative masculine stereotypes (e.g., that emphasize toughness and violence; e.g., Corprew & Cunningham, 2012).

In the present study, I did not explicitly aim to explore identity formation among male adolescents of color who participated in ScoutReach, or to examine ScoutReach as a potential identity-promoting context. However, findings that emerged from participants’ interviews helped to elucidate aspects of the program context that were linked to Scouts’ initial interests, and sustained engagement, in the program, and that may have important implications for Scouts’ masculine identity development. The opportunity to participate in camping and other outdoor activities was one such aspect of the ScoutReach program context that was emphasized by participants. As I describe below, these findings may be interpreted in light of components associated with the PVEST framework.

### **Camping and the Outdoors**

In their interviews, program leaders, Scouts, and parents/guardians all acknowledged the importance of Scouts' involvement in camping and outdoor activities in ScoutReach. Based on descriptions from Scouts and leaders, in particular, camping appeared to be the component of the program that was most strongly related to Scouts' interest in joining ScoutReach and their sustained cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement in the program. Program leaders and Scouts described how camping and participation in outdoor activities, more broadly, were linked to Scouts' development of positive attributes and values (e.g., helpfulness, teamwork, respect), life and leadership skills (e.g., survival skills and communication skills), and strong interpersonal relationships (e.g., a "brotherhood"). They also described camping as a context that facilitated Scouts' involvement in active, hands-on activities that helped to foster the development and application of these attributes and skills. Thus, ScoutReach and camping, in particular, seemed to provide urban male youth of color in the sample with exposure to a new context that gave them the opportunity to "test out" non-hypermasculine roles and identities (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2013; for instance, as a leader or member of a team) that may be less functional or feasible within the context of their local communities.

A large body of research suggests the developmental benefits associated with camping and other forms of experiential learning (e.g., Garst, Scheider, & Baker, 2001; Henderson et al., 2007a, 2007b; Thurber et al., 2007). For instance, youth involvement in camping and outdoor adventure programs is linked to positive identity, independence, social skills (e.g., leadership and making friends), positive values and decision-making, and enhanced environmental awareness and physical skills (e.g., Thurber et al., 2007; Henderson et al., 2007b). As Henderson et al. (2007b) discussed, camping may provide an important context for positive youth development

by promoting social belonging, skill building, supportive relationships, and positive social norms. As they further discussed, camping may be an especially meaningful experience for youth who lack access to supportive adults and peers (Henderson et al., 2007b).

Similarly, research suggests that camping and outdoor adventure programs may be particularly beneficial for ethnically and racially diverse youth from urban, lower-income communities and may function as an intervention setting (e.g., Bialeschki, Henderson, & James, 2007; Garst et al., 2001). For instance, Garst et al. (2001) conducted a mixed-methods study to explore the experiences and outcomes of culturally diverse youth from inner-city communities who were new participants in an outdoor adventure program. Quantitative results suggested that perceived social acceptance increased from pretest to immediate post-test, but then decreased after four months. In addition, scores on behavioral conduct increased from pre-test to four-month post-test, and no significant differences were found for perceived athletic competence and global self-worth. Qualitative data revealed that youth appreciated the novelty of the outdoor adventure experience and their positive relationships with peers in the program. Qualitative data collected from parents/guardians also suggested that youth applied what they learned in the outdoor adventure experience (e.g., improved listening skills) at home.

Findings in the present study are consistent with this prior research suggesting that the camping experience (or experiential learning, more broadly) may promote positive multidimensional growth among traditionally underserved youth. The literature on camping also suggests that camping may promote positive youth outcomes through cultivating strong relationships and promoting skill building (e.g., Bialeschki et al., 2007). Similarly, I found that program leaders and Scouts in my sample described camping and other outdoor activities as promoting these assets and, in addition, helping to facilitate the application of learned attributes

and skills. Thus, as noted earlier, the “Big Three” (Lerner, 2004) components of effective YD programs were manifest in participants’ descriptions of this ecological niche within the program.

In addition, it is important to note how the camping experience appeared to help foster positive relationships between Scouts and different male figures in their lives. As one leader stated, many of the Scouts were from single-parent households where there was a scarcity of positive male role models. However, Scouts, parents/guardians, and program leaders described how ScoutReach and, in particular, camping helped to enhance the quality of Scouts’ relationships with other boys, adult male leaders, and their fathers. For instance, one parent/guardian said that her husband frequently traveled for work, but described how Scout camping trips helped to strengthen the bond between her husband and her son by giving them quality time to spend together away from home.

In addition, program leaders and parents/guardians discussed how ScoutReach helped to cultivate a brotherhood or community of support among Scouts, such that the older boys helped to scaffold and mentor the younger boys. As participants stated, Scouts knew that they could call on their “brothers” if they needed help or support. In particular, the camping experience seemed to foster a sense of community by immersing Scouts in new and challenging environments that required them to work closely together to survive (e.g., by pitching tents, building campfires, preparing their own food). These findings are consistent with prior research suggesting that camping helps to promote positive peer relationships by enhancing young people’s social skills, including teamwork, tolerance, and listening skills (e.g., Bialeschki, Krehbiel, & Henderson, 2001). Similarly, research by Way, Santos, and Cordero (2011) suggests the importance of emotional intimacy in friendships among male youth of color, and how different contexts in these young people’s lives (e.g., families and schools) and corresponding expectations in regard

to masculinity may impact boys' friendships. As the researchers discuss, positive peer relationships among these male youth, particularly during adolescence, may help to promote essential social and emotional adjustment. In the present study, there is qualitative evidence to suggest that ScoutReach and, in particular, camping may be important contexts in fostering the development of close friendships among male youth of color. However, future research should investigate in greater depth the program's potential impact on Scouts' friendships and whether these relationships, in turn, positively impact Scouts' social and emotional functioning.

### **Integrating Qualitative Findings with the PVEST Framework**

The PVEST framework may be a useful theoretical lens through which to interpret what these preliminary findings suggested about the potential role of the ScoutReach program (in particular, the experience of camping) within the individual-context developmental systems of participating youth. In the present study, interviews with program leaders, parents/guardians, and Scouts shed light on some of the challenges that ScoutReach youth faced in their communities (e.g., related to drugs, gangs, and violence). Thus, these interviews enriched understanding of potential risk contributors (e.g., Spencer et al., 2015) in Scouts' lives. The interviews also suggested how Scouts' awareness (or experiences) of these community-related challenges impacted their emotions and thought processes. For instance, some Scouts reported feeling scared or sad in response to perceiving gangs, a strong police presence, and homeless individuals in their communities. Parents/guardians also described their sons' awareness of (and exposure to) community-related challenges, and one leader discussed how he observed families restrict their sons' outdoor activities in light of safety concerns. Thus, these interview responses provided insights into Scouts' potential net stress engagement (e.g., Spencer et al., 2015), or their experiences of potentially challenging situations. However, future research with ScoutReach

should more rigorously assess the potential impact of these experiences on Scouts' identities and self-appraisals.

Data derived from the Scout questionnaire and the three participant groups' interviews also provided information about potential coping methods that Scouts employed in response to perceived challenging situations. Again, across interviews, participants described potential challenges that Scouts perceived and experienced in their communities. In the Scout questionnaires, a small proportion of Scouts reported substance use, but half (50.0%) of the sample endorsed some delinquent acts (namely, hitting or beating someone up or stealing). It is possible that these behaviors reflected negative, reactive coping methods (e.g., Spencer et al., 2015) in response to perceived challenges. However, this hypothesis needs to be tested in follow-up research. Nonetheless, not all of the Scouts in the sample who described community-related challenges endorsed risk/problem behaviors. Perhaps, future research could investigate coping methods employed by these youth. It might also be the case that Scouts' desire to participate in ScoutReach (in addition to being a function of parents'/guardians' decision-making) was reflective of a form of coping in response to perceived challenges. Across their interviews, Scouts described wanting to join the program for various reasons, including to participate in fun or interesting activities and to have something to do after school. Future research may want to explore whether Scouts' motivation for joining (and sustaining their participation in) ScoutReach may stem from a desire to avoid being negatively influenced by community challenges.

Data from the Scout questionnaires and interviews also provided preliminary information that reflected Scouts' self-appraisals, or emergent identities (e.g., Spencer et al., 2015). For instance, Scouts had high average scores on scales that assessed different character virtues (e.g., trustworthiness, kindness, helpfulness) and other indicators of positive development (e.g., PYD,

self-perceived school competence, grit). Similarly, in their interviews, Scouts described learning these positive attributes in Scouting, and some provided rich examples of how they demonstrated these attributes and other attributes and behaviors (e.g., respect, teamwork) in different contexts. In short, the Scouts in my sample primarily seemed to have positive self-appraisals. In particular, their experiences in camping and other outdoor activities seemed to be linked to their development and application of positive attributes and behaviors (e.g., Scouts described working together to pitch tents and discussed how mastering difficult outdoor tasks helped to boost their self-confidence). Thus, ScoutReach appeared to provide these youth with access to a context, that they might not have otherwise had access to, that connected them with opportunities to build positive relationships and cultivate positive attributes and skills, and that facilitated the application of positive attributes, skills, and behaviors. Through their immersion in this outdoor context, Scouts, arguably, had opportunities to test out different roles and identities (Cunningham et al., 2013) that they could then apply in other contexts in their lives. For example, some Scouts described learning problem-solving skills and how to be disciplined, which helped to keep them from making poor decisions in their communities.

However, future research should investigate the processes involved in Scouts' identity development, and how Scouts negotiate potentially conflicting norms (e.g., associated with ScoutReach and their communities) in regard to masculine identity and behavior. For instance, future research should consider expanding the Scout Questionnaire (Appendix A) to include a scale that assesses Scouts' hypermasculine attitudes and behaviors (e.g., the Machismo Measure by Mosher & Sirkin, 1984). In addition, the Scout Interview Protocol (Appendix C) could incorporate questions that ask Scouts about their perceived identities, the qualities that they believe characterize a "good man," and if and how their experiences in ScoutReach and their

communities have shaped their ideas about masculinity. Longitudinal research in this area may also help to shed light on how Scouts' identities may contribute to life-stage specific coping outcomes (e.g., Spencer et al., 2015), and the potential role that ScoutReach plays in fostering positive, and preventing negative, outcomes across different portions of development.

Of note, although camping and the outdoors were primary themes across participants' interviews in the present study, these experiences were not as strongly emphasized in the CAMP study mentioned earlier (e.g., see Hershberg et al., 2015; Hilliard et al., 2014). For instance, in focus groups conducted with ScoutReach leaders in the greater Philadelphia area, some leaders acknowledged the importance of getting their Scouts outdoors and in nature (e.g., Hershberg et al., 2015), but camping was not described as a key aspect of the program like it was in the present study. In addition, in the present study, the fact that camping emerged as playing a key role in supporting Scouts' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement in the program conflicts with prevailing conceptions among BSA leadership that ScoutReach youth are not interested in camping or the outdoors (e.g., D. Warren, personal communication, January 28, 2016).

In short, in the present study, both sets of quantitative and qualitative analyses helped to elucidate the program- and community-related views and experiences of ScoutReach leaders, parents/guardians, and Scouts. Each data set also helped to uniquely contribute to my understanding of Scouts' beliefs, attributes, and behaviors, as related to their experiences in ScoutReach and in their communities. Whereas the quantitative data derived from Scouts' and parents'/guardians' questionnaires enhanced understanding of Scouts' self-perceived attributes and dimensions of their involvement in ScoutReach and other OST programs, the interviews with leaders, parents/guardians, and Scouts suggested how Scouts' program- and community-

related experiences may be linked to the attributes measured in the questionnaire. For instance, in their interviews, participants described how Scouts were learning kindness and helpfulness in ScoutReach, attributes that were measured in the Scout questionnaire. Participants' interviews also revealed some challenges that Scouts faced in their communities, which may be related to the risk/problem behaviors that some Scouts endorsed in their questionnaires. The participant interviews also expanded on the Scout questionnaire data by suggesting which aspects of the program context were linked to Scouts' dimensions of engagement in the program. Thus, mixed-methods findings from this study helped to expand prior scholarship on Scouting and young people's experiences in OST programs, more broadly, and raise potential practical considerations and implications.

### **Potential Scholarly and Applied Implications**

Findings from the present study may have important implications for ways in which ScoutReach and BSA leadership, more broadly, recruit participants, implement their programming, and continue to explore the experiences and outcomes of diverse Scouts in collaboration with researchers. First, the present study reinforced the importance of capturing the views, perspectives, and experiences of different stakeholders involved in ScoutReach (i.e., program leaders, parents/guardians, and Scouts). Although largely similar in their overall perspectives of the program, there were nuances, for instance, in which aspects of the program stakeholders believed were working well and could be improved. It was unclear whether stakeholder feedback on perceived program quality was currently being collected by ScoutReach leadership or the BSA organization. If these data are not currently being collected, it is recommended that leaders at the local and national levels take steps to measure different stakeholders' perceived satisfaction of the program and potential areas for improvement, perhaps

via brief, anonymous questionnaires. Research suggests that capturing these data is an important component of process evaluation of youth programs, and may help to enhance the quality of programming so that it is more responsive to participants' needs (e.g., Sabatelli, Anderson, & LaMotte, 2005).

Similarly, the present study also revealed differences in the aspects of the program context that stakeholders perceived as particularly important. These findings may have important implications for how ScoutReach leadership markets its programming to diverse consumer audiences. For instance, in describing the program to prospective Scouts, leaders may want to continue to strongly emphasize the opportunities that the program provides for Scouts to gain exposure to new experiences, namely camping and the outdoors. In comparison, when describing the program to parents/guardians of prospective Scouts, leaders may want to emphasize how the program helps to cultivate supportive interpersonal relationships. Qualitative data also suggested potential challenges related to the recruitment of youth and families from diverse cultural backgrounds. As one leader noted, immigrant families in the surrounding community often held negative preconceived notions of Scouting as a military training organization and, thus, were initially apprehensive about their sons joining the program.

Therefore, program recruitment efforts may need to be tailored according to community and cultural norms (e.g., when recruiting Scouts and families from largely immigrant communities, leaders may want to consider how their uniforms may be perceived). The importance of adopting culturally sensitive practices within the context of youth-serving programs is strongly emphasized in the literature (e.g., Nation et al., 2003). Similarly, although I did not explore potential differences in stakeholders' program-related views, experiences, and outcomes according to their specific ethnic and racial backgrounds, future research may want to

explore, for instance, whether participants' origin groups may impact their views of (and experiences in) the ScoutReach program and BSA programming, more broadly.

Findings from the present study also raised other potential implications for future research with ScoutReach. For instance, follow-up longitudinal work may want to explore in greater depth the potential impact of the camping experience on the development of ScoutReach youth. This research might address questions such as: Is the camping experience related to the development of healthy masculine identity? If so, how?; Is there variation in the amount of emphasis that ScoutReach units place on camping among units throughout the country?; What factors are involved in a ScoutReach unit's decision to emphasize, or not emphasize, the camping experience?; How do the camping-related views and experiences of ScoutReach youth compare to those of Scouts who are enrolled in the more traditional Scouting program?; and How do the views and experiences of ScoutReach youth who are involved in camping and outdoor activities compare to those of ScoutReach youth who do not participate in such activities? Research that further elucidates the role of camping in the lives of ScoutReach youth may, again, have important implications for how the program is marketed to Scouts and families and the training that leaders receive in which particular aspects of the program to emphasize.

It is also important to note the unique three-phase system through which ScoutReach units progress in the Spirit of Adventure Council, and how engagement (at the individual and unit levels) might be understood in light of this model. At Phase 1, units are fully financially supported by the Council and are primarily led by paid Program Specialists (K. Kokkotos, personal communication, December 18, 2013). During Phase 2, units are partially funded by the Council and parent volunteers are asked to become more actively involved. Phase 3 is when ScoutReach units transition to more traditional units, such that these units are fully volunteer-run

and are financially self-sufficient. According to the leaders in the present study, their units were operating at the Phase 2 level. However, future research should seek to collect data from units operating across all three levels of the system, to explore potential similarities and differences in Scouts', parents'/guardians', and leaders' program-related views and experiences, and to assess which aspects of the program may be linked to optimal and less than optimal youth functioning. It is possible that the phase or level that a unit occupies within the three-phase system may be a reflection of individual- and unit-level engagement in ScoutReach. In other words, one might presume that the higher a unit's phase or level, the more engaged are the individual Scouts, parents/guardians, leaders and collective units, since progression through the levels requires Scouts' mastery of competencies, support from leaders, and the active involvement of parent volunteers. Thus, future research should explore whether differences in dimensions of program engagement exist among Scouts who belong to successful and less successful ScoutReach units.

In short, findings from this study helped to enrich understanding of how to define engagement, measure engagement, and promote engagement among youth involved in ScoutReach. However, it is important to underscore that this study was very preliminary and exploratory and, as such, more research is needed to address the potential limitations and future directions described below.

### **Limitations and Additional Future Directions**

Although findings from the present study helped to illuminate the program- and community-related experiences of ScoutReach youth from the perspectives of three stakeholder groups, it is important to emphasize that this study was exploratory in nature and contained a number of limitations that should be addressed in future research. A primary limitation of the present study was its small sample size. A key disadvantage associated with a small sample is

reduced statistical power and increased difficulty in estimating true effects (e.g., Hackshaw, 2008). Thus, future research should be conducted with a larger sample.

It is also important to note that the present study's small sample may have been a reflection of the level of engagement of units that participated (and did not participate) in the study. In other words, the two units with whom I worked seemed to be led by volunteers who were enthusiastically committed to promoting the success of their Scouts by actively involving them in program activities (e.g., camping) and helping them to progress through the Scouting ranks (e.g., to become Boy Scouts and Eagle Scouts). They also seemed eager to participate in the study, and were easy to get in touch with to arrange data collection times and to answer any questions.

In contrast, the other units with whom I tried to connect were less responsive and seemed less interested in participating in the study. Perhaps, I should have tried different approaches for getting in touch with other leaders (e.g., other than using email and phone), or should have worked more closely with the ScoutReach District Executive to help facilitate their participation and address any questions or concerns they may have had. It might be possible that some leaders were hesitant to participate due to feelings of uncertainty about the research process, or dissatisfaction with how their units were performing.

Future research might examine potential differences between participating and non-participating units based on analysis of administrative data collected by the Council (e.g., Scout and leader retention rates, program benchmarks or milestones completed by units, proportion of Scouts who progress through the different Scouting ranks). These data may suggest reasons for ScoutReach units' participation or lack of participation in a study, and may help to generate discussion among researchers, units, and the Council about how research is not intended to

criticize study participants but, instead, may provide opportunities to reflect on what is working well and potential areas for program improvement.

Relatedly, more research is needed that explores the role of parent/guardian involvement in helping to promote youth engagement in ScoutReach, and potential barriers and facilitators to their involvement. Leaders from both units involved in the study acknowledged challenges (e.g., cultural challenges) associated with promoting active parent/guardian participation, and discussed how it takes time to build strong relationships with parents/guardians and get them to “buy in” to the program. However, leaders described parent/guardian program involvement as essential for Scouts’ success. Similarly, prior research on youth academic achievement suggests the importance of parents’ involvement in their children’s education, particularly among youth of color (e.g., Hill & Tyson, 2009). However, research is needed that explores the impact of parent/guardian participation in ScoutReach (and other YD programs) on the development of participating youth.

As part of this scholarship, research should consider different ways in which parents/guardians demonstrate program involvement (e.g., by attending meetings, by participating in activities, by serving as leaders), and explore whether differences exist in relation to youth outcomes. For instance, do youth whose parents/guardians serve as program leaders demonstrate healthier outcomes than youth whose parents are less involved or non-involved in a program? Related research should also consider the degree to which ScoutReach is perceived by parents/guardians and youth to represent a culturally sensitive program, or a program that takes into account the cultural beliefs, values, and traditions of participants, since this perspective may play a role in individuals’ decisions to participate or not participate (e.g., Borden et al., 2005; Kumpfer, Alvarado, Smith, & Bellamy, 2002).

Another important limitation associated with the study was its cross-sectional design. Only data collected from participants at one point in time were assessed. Thus, I could not assess potential intraindividual variability, but could only make inferences about groups (e.g., Lerner, 2002). In addition, although RDS metatheory and the PVEST framework helped to inform this investigation and my interpretation of the results, these theoretical perspectives involved individual↔context relations across time and place. Therefore, these facets of the models could not be tested using the current cross-sectional design. Thus, future longitudinal research should explore whether Scouts' program-related experiences and outcomes inform their subsequent individual↔context developmental regulations. As part of this scholarship, directional hypotheses should be tested, in light of findings that emerged in the present study. For instance, in their interviews, program leaders seemed to suggest that Scouts' emotional engagement (or employing an "emotional hook") helped to promote their cognitive and behavioral engagement in ScoutReach. This idea should be tested in subsequent research. In addition, research should examine the potential mediating role of engagement in ScoutReach in relation to indicators of youth development by exploring, for instance, whether engagement buffers the relation between individual identity and indicators of positive development.

The present study also contained threats to external and ecological validity. Only data from self-selected individuals affiliated with a specific YD program in a particular geographic area were analyzed, thus limiting the generalizability of findings to other populations (Baltes, Reese, & Nesselrode, 1988). There is also the risk of self-selection bias, such that Scouts who were enrolled in ScoutReach may have differed in important ways from their peers who were not involved in this program. Thus, future research in this area should involve collecting data from demographically similar comparison samples. In addition, although qualitative data collected

within the program setting helped to shed light on Scouts' experiences in non-program contexts, the study was conducted within a controlled program setting and, thus, provided limited information about the real-world experiences of Scouts.

The study also contained threats to internal validity and reliability. For instance, there was a large amount of missing data in the Scout questionnaires and, as a result, I had to impute missing data. This missingness might be attributable to characteristics associated with the questionnaire (e.g., perhaps the questionnaire was too long and younger Scouts had trouble focusing on completing it, or some of the items were not clearly worded or understood by all participants). There also may be issues associated with the way in which the different dimensions of engagement were operationalized and measured. As noted earlier, there is a small body of research that is beginning to explore how to assess dimensions of engagement within the context of youth programs. In the present study, I tested how adapted versions of school engagement measures performed in a sample enrolled in a YD program. However, subsequent research should more rigorously examine the validity of these scales (e.g., by performing exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses). Future research may also want to consider potentially expanding the engagement measure by incorporating additional dimensions of engagement. For example, Ramey et al. (2015) found that, among older adolescents, relational/spiritual engagement (or a beyond-the-self orientation) uniquely predicted individuals' perceived positive impact of the program on individual characteristics and behaviors. This dimension of engagement might be important to include in future research with ScoutReach, especially given that Scouts, parents/guardians, and program leaders all acknowledged in their interviews the importance of the relationships that Scouts formed in the program.

As noted earlier, there were also relatively low alpha coefficients associated with a number of the scales included in the Scout questionnaire. Thus, future research should examine ways in which to strengthen the validity and reliability of these measures in ScoutReach samples (e.g., perhaps, through conducting cognitive interviews with Scouts to explore their understanding of items and identify potential areas for modification).

Characteristics associated with me and the other researcher who assisted in conducting interviews might also have impacted the validity of the data that we collected. For instance, given that we were strangers who were not part of Scouting and who were from outside communities, participants may have been hesitant to fully open up about their views of and experiences in the program and in their communities. The participants in this study were primarily male and from ethnically, racially, and economically diverse backgrounds. In comparison, I am a Caucasian female from a higher socioeconomic background. These differences in demographic characteristics between the study participants and me, in conjunction with my lack of participation in the core activities during Scout meetings and events, contributed to my role as an outsider in the research process (e.g., Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). In short, I was not a member of the group with whom I was working. This membership status may have raised doubts among participants about my intentions and how the data that I collected would be used. Consequently, participants may have held back in fully opening up to me about their program- and community-related views and experiences during their interviews, which I documented in my reflexivity notes. Research on conducting qualitative studies suggests the importance of forming positive relationships with study participants, in particular members of marginalized populations, to help break down communication and trust barriers and to gain an insider's perspective on participants' experiences (e.g., Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

In light of the present study's relatively short timeline, I was unable to form strong relationships with participants and become a familiar presence in the program. My experiences reinforced the importance of building relationships with applied research collaborators and engaging them as partners early in the research process by collecting their feedback on proposed measures and data collection approaches. I also realized the importance of allocating time in the beginning stages of a study to observe and become familiar with the dynamics of study populations and what they hope to derive from participating in a study. This information may help to inform research questions and measures and may contribute to a more iterative and collaborative research process.

In addition, in light of the present study's small sample and the fact that I was only able to collect data from two groups, I was unable to account for the nested structure of the data. In other words, Scouts were nested in ScoutReach units that may have varied in ways that impacted differentially Scouts' experiences and outcomes. I only collected data from participants who were involved in two ScoutReach units that were considered to be exemplary by the Council. Although these units, similarly, held records of successful Scout recruitment and retention, during the process of data collection, I observed ways in which the characteristics of leaders and their units differed.

For instance, one unit held its meetings in school right after school and, thus, parents/guardians did not attend. This unit was also led by leaders who were not from the local community, but who resided in more affluent areas and who were predominantly Caucasian or European American. In contrast, the other unit held its meetings in the early evening at a church, with the expectation that all parents/guardians attended and participated. This unit was also led by leaders who were from the local community and who were from diverse ethnic/racial

backgrounds. Thus, future research should explore if and how differences in these characteristics of ScoutReach units and leaders may impact Scouts' experiences and outcomes.

Despite these limitations, the present study helped to expand developmental scholarship by exploring the experiences of urban male children and adolescents of color who participated in an arm of one of the oldest and largest youth-serving programs in the country. The mixed-methods research design, in particular, supported a multifaceted understanding of which particular aspects of the program context seemed to be linked to youth engagement and indicators of both positive and potentially problematic youth development. Although this study is an initial, exploratory attempt to examine more in depth the experiences of urban male youth of color within a particular program context, the findings raised important questions and considerations for future research and practice, as noted earlier.

### **Conclusions**

High-quality YD programs have the potential to function as key contexts in the lives of ethnically, racially, and economically diverse youth. In particular, these programs may provide meaningful opportunities and experiences for youth of color from urban and economically disadvantaged communities, who may face barriers to thriving (e.g., Francois et al., 2011; Urban et al., 2009). Continued, in-depth research is needed that explores the views and experiences of these youth, and different stakeholder groups, as part of efforts to enhance the quality of young people's experiences across different youth program settings. As noted earlier, the PVEST framework (e.g., Spencer et al., 2015) offers a useful theoretical lens through which to explore the context-linked life experiences of youth of color. The present study drew on aspects of this framework and aimed to enhance understanding of the phenomenology of the experiences of male children and adolescents of color within a specific program context, ScoutReach, and, as

well, sought to illuminate how their experiences within this ecological niche related to their experiences in other contexts of their lives (e.g., their homes, communities).

My analyses of exploratory mixed-methods data suggested that youth were engaged in ScoutReach in different ways, and that these dimensions of engagement were related to particular aspects of the program context, including experiences that carried over to other parts of Scouts' lives. Their experiences in the program, in turn, helped them to navigate potential contextual challenges and appeared to help cultivate attributes, values, and behaviors associated with healthy identity development and thriving, more broadly. Future research in collaboration with ScoutReach and other programs that serve demographically similar youth may help to reveal greater insights into the developmental processes involved in youth program engagement.

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Table 1

*Scale descriptive statistics*

<b>Variable</b>	<b><i>n</i> of Items</b>	<b>Mean (Standard Deviation)</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
Obedience	4	3.88 (.65)	2.75	5.0	.73
Religious reverence	4	3.15 (.91)	1.50	5.0	.66
Cheerfulness	3	3.58 (.95)	1.67	5.0	.74
Kindness	6	4.06 (.66)	2.50	5.0	.83
Thriftiness	4	3.53 (.81)	2.25	5.0	.52
Hopeful future expectation	3	4.44 (.66)	2.67	5.0	.71
Trustworthiness	5	3.76 (.91)	1.0	5.0	.89
Helpfulness	6	3.84 (.63)	2.5	5.0	.72
Self-perceived school competence	6	3.79 (.69)	2.5	4.83	.68
Intentional self-regulation	6	3.41 (.62)	2.5	4.5	.63
Positive youth development	17	3.88 (.55)	2.71	5.0	.82
Contribution (Action)	9	2.86 (.85)	1.22	4.22	.83
Grit*	6	3.57 (.85)	3.19	3.91	.79
Perceived program aspects	5	4.36 (.68)	3.0	5.0	.75
Scouting engagement	8	4.27 (.45)	3.25	5.0	.41
Scouting advancement	3	4.67 (.60)	4.56	4.81	.52
Cognitive engagement	5	4.36 (.93)	1.0	5.0	.95
Emotional engagement	5	4.41 (.62)	2.8	5.0	.79
Behavioral engagement**	4	4.48 (.57)	4.13	4.75	.67
Substance use	3	1.08 (.29)	1.0	2.33	.44
Delinquency	4	1.34 (.53)	1.0	3.25	.65

\*Original grit scale was comprised of eight items.

\*\*Original behavioral engagement scale was comprised of five items.

Table 2

*Correlations among dimensions of engagement, program involvement, and indicators of positive development (n = 32)*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
1. Age																							
2. Breadth	.23																						
3. Duration	.46*	.26																					
4. Intensity	.38*	.42*	.01																				
5. Obedience	.19	.26	.16	.07																			
6. Reverence	-.02	.49**	.07	.20	.06																		
7. Cheerfulness	-.01	.17	.18	.15	.45**	.17																	
8. Kindness	.35	.10	.42*	-.06	.44*	.05	.39*																
9. Thriftiness	.24	.40*	.38*	.44*	.14	.58**	.17	.33															
10. Hope	.21	.36*	.40*	.18	.41*	.30	.19	.58**	.41*														
11. Trust	.24	.33	.32	.23	.71*	.03	.38*	.48**	.32	.57**													
12. Helpfulness	.23	.22	.39*	.13	.65**	.06	.60**	.78**	.38*	.52**	.66**												
13. School	.19	.60**	.33	.10	.51**	.48**	.33	.52**	.47**	.44*	.48**	.51**											
14. ISR	.23	.52**	.28	.19	.45**	.39*	.36*	.60**	.64**	.46**	.48**	.58**	.63**										
15. PYD	.15	.44*	.18	.29	.58**	.23	.61**	.49**	.37*	.39*	.68**	.68**	.56**	.50**									
16. Contribution	.32	.23	.43*	.13	.35*	.26	.24	.45*	.62**	.35	.53**	.42*	.32	.58**	.53**								
17. Grit	.29	.50**	.31	.38*	.60**	.34	.55**	.53**	.55**	.43*	.58**	.58**	.61**	.71**	.67**	.49**							
18. Prog Asp	.16	.36*	.18	.18	.30	.20	.50**	.62**	.41*	.41*	.48**	.70**	.62**	.52**	.55**	.27	.53**						
19. Scout Eng	-.16	.15	-.07	.03	-.03	.34	.10	.03	.27	-.02	-.01	.06	.38*	.28	.18	.14	.07	.35					
20. Scout Adv	-.08	-.02	-.02	.13	.15	-.08	.40*	.24	-.16	.17	.05	.28	-.02	.03	.11	-.04	.03	.41*	.22				
21. Cog Eng	.17	.36*	.06	.36*	.26	.17	.34	.25	.31	.40*	.45*	.45*	.41*	.24	.43*	.14	.31	.67**	.45**	.41*			
22. Emo Eng	.28	.30	.41*	.07	.38*	.35*	.37*	.52**	.48**	.43*	.41*	.69**	.59**	.48**	.36*	.42*	.32	.75**	.39*	.38*	.60**		
23. Behav Eng	.40*	.31	.14	.36*	.33	.05	.24	.28	.15	.33	.54**	.33	.32	.19	.37*	.19	.26	.40*	.17	.29	.77**	.42*	

*Notes.* Hope = hopeful future expectation. Trust = trustworthiness. School = perceived school competence. ISR = intentional self-regulation. PYD = positive youth development. Program Asp = perceived program aspects. Scout Eng = Scouting engagement. Scout Adv = Scouting advancement. Cog Eng = cognitive engagement. Emo Eng = emotional engagement. Behav Eng = behavioral engagement.

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3

*Correlations among indicators of positive development corrected for attenuation due to measurement error (n = 32)*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
<b>1. Obedience</b>																			
<b>2. Reverence</b>	.09																		
<b>3. Cheerfulness</b>	.61	.07																	
<b>4. Kindness</b>	.57	.59	.39																
<b>5. Thriftiness</b>	.23	.99	.17	.50															
<b>6. Hope</b>	.57	.44	.19	.76	.67														
<b>7. Trust</b>	.88	.04	.38	.56	.47	.72													
<b>8. Helpfulness</b>	.90	.09	.60	1	.62	.73	.82												
<b>9. School</b>	.72	.72	.33	.69	.79	.63	.62	.73											
<b>10. ISR</b>	.66	.60	.36	.83	1	.69	.64	.86	.96										
<b>11. PYD</b>	.75	.31	.61	.59	.57	.51	.80	.88	.75	.70									
<b>12. Contribution</b>	.45	.35	.24	.54	.94	.46	.62	.54	.43	.80	.64								
<b>13. Grit</b>	.79	.47	.55	.65	.86	.57	.69	.77	.83	1	.83	.61							
<b>14. Prog Asp</b>	.41	.28	.50	.83	.66	.56	.59	.95	.87	.76	.70	.34	.69						
<b>15. Scout Eng</b>	-.05	.65	.10	.05	.58	-.04	-.02	.11	.72	.55	.31	.24	.12	.63					
<b>16. Scout Adv</b>	.24	-.14	.40	.37	-.31	.28	.07	.46	-.03	.05	.17	-.06	.05	.66	.48				
<b>17. Cog Eng</b>	.31	.21	.34	.28	.44	.49	.49	.54	.51	.31	.49	.16	.36	.79	.88	.58			
<b>18. Emo Eng</b>	.50	.48	.37	.64	.75	.57	.49	.91	.80	.68	.45	.52	.41	.97	.69	.59	.69		
<b>19. Behav Eng</b>	.47	.08	.24	.38	.25	.48	.70	.48	.47	.29	.50	.25	.36	.56	.32	.49	.97	.63	

*Notes.* Hope = hopeful future expectation. Trust = trustworthiness. School = perceived school competence. ISR = intentional self-regulation. PYD = positive youth development. Program Asp = perceived program aspects. Scout Eng = Scouting engagement. Scout Adv = Scouting advancement. Cog Eng = cognitive engagement. Emo Eng = emotional engagement. Behav Eng = behavioral engagement.

## Hello Scout!

These are some questions about what you think and what you are like.  
There are no wrong answers!

Please read each question and circle the words that are most like you.

If you don't know an answer, that's okay. You can just circle the words "I don't know."  
Please ask for help if you have any questions.

Let's try out some practice questions!

<b>Is this like you?</b>						
<b>1. I like ice cream.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. I like to clean my room.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>



<b>Is this like you?</b>							
<b>1. I am very good at my schoolwork.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. I think schoolwork is hard.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>3. I can figure out the answers in school.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>4. I get good grades in school.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>5. I like school.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>6. I like to learn new things.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>

<b>Is this like you?</b>							
<b>1. I like to read or listen to stories from my religion.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. I pray.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>3. I pray to God when I need help.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>4. I believe in God.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>

<b>Is this like you?</b>						
<b>1. I am good at making plans.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. When I want something, I try different ways to get it.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>3. I can ask for help from others.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>4. When I am having trouble, I ask for help.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>5. When I am having trouble, I think of new ideas.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>6. I am a hard worker.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>7. New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>8. I do not get upset about challenges.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>9. I get really interested in a certain idea or project for a short time, but later lose interest.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>10. I often set a goal, but later choose to follow a different one.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>11. I have a hard time staying focused on projects that take more than a few months to complete.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>

<b>12. I finish whatever I begin.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>13. I am hard working and careful.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>

<b>Is this like you?</b>						
<b>1. I am kind to other kids.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. I say nice things about other people.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>3. When my friends are upset, I try to make them feel better.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>4. I am nice to other kids without being told.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>5. I like to play with kids who are different from me.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>6. I am friendly to new kids.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>

<b>Is this like you?</b>						
<b>1. I help others.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. When someone is sad, I try to make them feel better.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>3. I offer help, even if someone doesn't ask me.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>4. I help people in my family.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>5. I help my friends.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>6. I would help someone I don't know.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>

<b>Is this like you?</b>						
<b>1. I take care of my things.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. I find ways to reuse things.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>3. I turn off lights to save energy.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>4. I save my money for something special.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>

<b>Is this like you?</b>						
<b>1. I am happy.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. I smile a lot.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>3. I am cheerful.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>

<b>Is this like you?</b>						
<b>1. I can be counted on to tell the truth.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. If I borrow something, I will return it.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>3. Other people can trust me.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>4. I tell the truth, even when it is not easy.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>5. I take responsibility when I make a mistake.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>

<b>Is this like you?</b>						
<b>1. I act the way I am supposed to.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. I get into trouble.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>3. I do what my parents say.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>4. I do what my teachers say.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>

<b>Is this like you?</b>						
<b>1. I have smoked cigarettes.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. I have had alcohol to drink.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>3. I have used drugs (marijuana, crack or cocaine).</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>4. I have stolen something.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>5. I have gotten into trouble with the police.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>6. I have hit or beat someone up.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>7. I have damaged property just for fun (such as breaking windows).</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>

<b>Is this like you?</b>						
<b>1. I have a lot of friends.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. I do very well in my class work at school.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>3. I am better than others my age at sports.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>4. I am happy with myself most of the time.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>5. I hardly ever do things I know I shouldn't do.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>6. I really like the way I look.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>7. All in all, I am glad I am me.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>8. I want to make the world a better place to live.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>9. I accept responsibility for my actions when I make a mistake or get in trouble.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>

<b>Is this like you?</b>						
<b>10. I enjoy being with people of a different race.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>11. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I want to help them.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>12. When I see someone being picked on, I feel sorry for them.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>13. When I see another person who is hurt or upset, I feel sorry for them.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>14. I receive a lot of encouragement at my school.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>15. I am a useful and important member of my family.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>16. I feel like an important member of my local community.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>17. I feel my friends are good friends.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>

<p><b>Here is a list of different types of activities people can get involved in. Please tell us how much you did each kind of activity over <u>the past 12 months</u>.</b></p>						
<p><b>1. Political activities:</b> includes things like voting for or supporting a leader or issue you believe in. These activities could be in your school, your city, or your state.</p>	Never	Rarely (1 or 2 times)	Sometimes (every few months)	Often (a few times a month)	All the time (at least once a week)	I don't know
<p><b>2. Community service activities:</b> includes things like helping organize a community event, volunteering, or doing things to help improve your neighborhood.</p>	Never	Rarely (1 or 2 times)	Sometimes (every few months)	Often (a few times a month)	All the time (at least once a week)	I don't know
<p><b>3. Social activism:</b> includes things like recycling or sharing your opinions or beliefs through messages on your clothing or pins.</p>	Never	Rarely (1 or 2 times)	Sometimes (every few months)	Often (a few times a month)	All the time (at least once a week)	I don't know

**Here is a list of different types of activities people can get involved in. Please tell us how much you did each kind of activity over the past 12 months.**

<p><b>4. Helping people you don't know:</b> includes things like helping other people, donating some of your things to others who need them, helping people who were new to school, or giving money to a cause.</p>	Never	Rarely (1 or 2 times)	Sometimes (every few months)	Often (a few times a month)	All the time (at least once a week)	I don't know
<p><b>5. Helping people you know:</b> includes things like caring for members of your family, using money you earned to support your family, giving help to friends or classmates who needed it, or helping out at home.</p>	Never	Rarely (1 or 2 times)	Sometimes (every few months)	Often (a few times a month)	All the time (at least once a week)	I don't know
<p><b>6. Cultural activities:</b> includes things like going to meetings about your culture as part of being in a club, or learning a language from your culture.</p>	Never	Rarely (1 or 2 times)	Sometimes (every few months)	Often (a few times a month)	All the time (at least once a week)	I don't know

<b>Here is a list of different types of activities people can get involved in.  Please tell us how much you did each kind of activity over <u>the past 12 months.</u></b>						
<b>7. Organized sports or other physical activities:</b> includes things like being on a sports team, or going to sports lessons or exercise classes.	<b>Never</b>	<b>Rarely (1 or 2 times)</b>	<b>Sometimes (every few months)</b>	<b>Often (a few times a month)</b>	<b>All the time (at least once a week)</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>8. Organized arts-based activities:</b> includes things like theater or music group, painting or other art lessons, or band.	<b>Never</b>	<b>Rarely (1 or 2 times)</b>	<b>Sometimes (every few months)</b>	<b>Often (a few times a month)</b>	<b>All the time (at least once a week)</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>9. Academic clubs:</b> includes things like math club, mock trial, or debate team.	<b>Never</b>	<b>Rarely (1 or 2 times)</b>	<b>Sometimes (every few months)</b>	<b>Often (a few times a month)</b>	<b>All the time (at least once a week)</b>	<b>I don't know</b>

<b>What will your life be like when you grow up? “When I grow up...”</b>						
<b>1. I will be healthy.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. I will have a happy family.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>3. People will think I am a good person.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>

**1. How old are you?** \_\_\_\_\_ years old

**2. Are you Hispanic or Latino?**

- Yes  
 No

**3. How would you describe yourself? (please check one)**

- American Indian/Native American  
 Asian or Pacific Islander  
 Black or African American  
 European American or Caucasian  
 Multiethnic or multiracial (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_  
 I don't know

**4. What grade are you in school?** \_\_\_\_\_

**5. How many adults do you live with?** \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you have any brothers and sisters who live with you? (*circle one*)      Yes      No  
If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you receive free lunch at school? (*circle one*)      Yes      No      I don't know
8. How tall are you?      \_\_\_\_ feet \_\_\_\_ inches      I don't know
9. How much do you weigh?      \_\_\_\_ pounds      I don't know

**Now, I want to learn more about your involvement in Scouting.**

1. What rank did you BEGIN Scouts? (*please check one*)
- Tiger
  - Wolf
  - Bear
  - Webelo 1
  - Webelo 2
  - Boy Scout
  - Tenderfoot
  - Second Class
  - First Class
  - Star
  - Life
  - Eagle

**2. What rank are you NOW?** *(please check one)*

- Tiger
- Wolf
- Bear
- Webelo 1
- Webelo 2
- Boy Scout
- Tenderfoot
- Second Class
- First Class
- Star
- Life
- Eagle

**3. How long have you been in Scouts?** *(please check one)*

- Less than 6 months
- 6 to 12 months
- More than one year
- More than two years
- More than three years

**4. How often do you participate in Scouting in a typical week? (please check one)**

- Less than one hour per week
- 1 hour to less than 2 hours per week
- 2 hours to less than 4 hours per week
- 4 hours to less than 5 hours per week
- 5 or more hours per week
- I don't know

**5. In addition to Scouts, what other activities do you participate in? (please check all that apply)**

- I don't participate in any other activities
- Academic clubs
- Arts and crafts
- Band/music
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters
- Boys & Girls Club
- 4-H
- Martial arts
- Religious education
- Sports
- Community service
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Is this like you?</b>							
<b>1. I come to Scout meetings and activities prepared (with my uniform on, parent permission forms signed).</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. I come to Scout meetings and activities on time.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>3. I skip Scout meetings without permission.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>4. I participate in Scout meetings and activities.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>5. I work hard to do well in Scouting.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>6. I feel part of my Scout pack.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>7. I care about Scouts.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>8. I am happy to be a Scout.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>

<b>Is this like you?</b>							
<b>9. I think Scouts is fun and exciting.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>10. I enjoy Scout meetings and activities.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>11. I want to learn as much as I can in Scouts.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>12. I think it is important to do well in Scouts.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>13. I think the things I learn in Scouts are important.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>14. I think a lot about how to do well in Scouts.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>
<b>15. Scouts is very important for future success.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>		<b>I don't know</b>

<b>Is this like you?</b>						
<b>1. I like to go camping.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. I like my Scout uniform.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>3. I have fun at Scout meetings.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>4. I have a best friend in Scouts.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>5. Adults in my family go to pack activities.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>6. I will get my Arrow of Light.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>7. I will become a Boy Scout.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>8. I will become an Eagle Scout.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>

<b>Is this like you?</b>						
<b>1. I like my Scout leader.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>2. I like the other Scouts in my pack.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>3. I like Scout meetings.</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>4. I like Scout activities (like camping).</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>
<b>5. I like Scout events (like Pumpkin Fest).</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little bit</b>	<b>Kind of</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Exactly</b>	<b>I don't know</b>

**Thank you!**  
**You are DONE! 😊**



TUFTS UNIVERSITY  
Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development

**Study of the ScoutReach Program of the Boy Scouts of America  
Spirit of Adventure Council**

**Parent/Guardian Demographic Questionnaire**

Dear Families,

Thank you so much for taking the time to complete this brief questionnaire. In the next pages, you will find questions about you, your son, and your family. After you complete the questionnaire, please return it to the researcher or seal it in the stamped and addressed envelope that is provided and place it in the mail.

Your responses will be completely anonymous, meaning that your name and other personally identifiable information will not be retained or linked to your responses, and confidential, except as required by law. Please do not write your name or any other personal information (such as your date of birth or address) on the questionnaire. Only members of the research team will have access to the questionnaire, and all information will be used for research purposes only.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Robey Champine, the Co-Investigator and Study Coordinator ([robey.champine@tufts.edu](mailto:robey.champine@tufts.edu); 617-627-8825).

We really appreciate your time and contribution to this exciting study of Scouting and youth development. Thanks so much!

**Richard M. Lerner, Ph.D.**

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Spirit of Adventure Council ScoutReach Study  
Tufts University  
Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development  
Medford, MA 02155

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(617) 627-5558

*Please help us to understand more about your family by checking the answers that best describe you or your household. If there is any question that you do not feel comfortable answering, please feel free to skip it. Thank you very much for your help.*

**1. What is your relationship to the child who is participating in the study? (Please check one)**

- Mother
- Step-mother
- Father
- Step-father
- Grandparent
- Foster parent
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**2. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_**

**3. What is your gender? (Please check one)**

- Male
- Female
- Other

**4. Are you Hispanic or Latino/a? (Please check one)**

- Yes
- No

**5. How would you describe yourself? (Please check one)**

- American Indian/Native American
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- European American or Caucasian
- Multiethnic or multiracial \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**6. How would you describe your son? (Please check one)**

- American Indian/Native American
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- European American or Caucasian
- Multiethnic or multiracial (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Approximately, what is your son's height? \_\_\_\_\_ feet \_\_\_\_\_ inches**

**8. Approximately, what is your son's weight? \_\_\_\_\_ pounds**

**9. What is your current marital/relationship status? (Please check one)**

- Single (never married)
- Married
- Cohabiting (not married)
- Divorced
- Separated
- Widowed
- Remarried

**10. How long has this been your current marital/relationship status?**

Years: \_\_\_\_

Months: \_\_\_\_

**11. What is the highest level of education that you have completed? (Please check one)**

- 8th grade or less
- Some high school
- High school diploma
- Some college
- Trade/technical/vocational training
- Bachelor's degree
- Postgraduate work
- Master's degree
- Doctoral degree

**12. What is your religious preference? (Please check one)**

- Christianity
- Judaism
- Islam
- Buddhism
- Hinduism
- Native American religion
- Agnostic
- Atheist
- Nonreligious/Secular
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- Don't know

**13. If applicable, typically, how often do you attend religious services? (Please check one)**

- More than once a week
- Once a week
- Once a month
- Major religious holidays
- Never
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- Not applicable



Sports	<input type="radio"/>					
Community service	<input type="radio"/>					
Other: _____	<input type="radio"/>					

**20. At what rank did your son begin Scouts? (Please check one)**

- Tiger
- Wolf
- Bear
- Webelo 1
- Webelo 2
- Boy Scout
- Tenderfoot
- Second Class
- First Class
- Star
- Life
- Eagle
- Don't know

**21. What rank is your son now? (Please check one)**

- Tiger
- Wolf
- Bear
- Webelo 1
- Webelo 2
- Boy Scout
- Tenderfoot
- Second Class
- First Class
- Star
- Life
- Eagle
- Don't know

**22. How long has your son been in Scouts? (Please check one)**

- Less than 6 months
- 6 to 12 months
- More than one year, but less than two years
- More than two years, but less than three years
- More than three years

**23. Why did your son join Scouts?**

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24. Why did you/your son choose this particular pack?

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25. How far are pack/den meetings from where you live? *(Please circle one)*

- Less than 2 miles
- 2-5 miles
- 5-10 miles
- 10-20 miles
- More than 20 miles

26. Are you a pack leader? *(Please check one)*

- Yes
- No

27. Were you a Boy Scout or Girl Scout when you were a child? *(Please check one)*

- Yes
- No

a. If yes, please rate how important being a part of the Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts was in your life. *(Please check one)*

- Not very important
- A little important
- Somewhat important
- Very important
- Extremely important

28. Please rate how important being a part of Scouts is in your son's life. *(Please check one)*

- Not very important
- A little important
- Somewhat important
- Very important
- Extremely important

29. Do you think that Scouts is good for your son? *(Please check one)*

- Yes
- No

a. If yes, how?

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b. If no, why not?

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**30. Do you think that Scouts prevents kids from getting into trouble and involved in risk and problem behaviors (such as using drugs and violence)? (Please check one)**

- Yes
- No

**a. If yes, how?**

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**b. If no, why not?**

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**31. Does your son have any special needs? If so, please explain.**

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*Thank you, again, for your participation in this study! Please use the blank space below to provide any feedback regarding this questionnaire, explanations to any of the above questions, or any feedback related to your experiences with your son and Scouting.*

## Appendix C

**Spirit of Adventure Council  
ScoutReach Youth Interview Protocol**

Interviewer: I'm going to ask you some questions about what it is like to be involved in Scouts. There are no right or wrong answers; I just want to hear about your experience in Scouts. If you do not understand a question, just tell me and we can move on to the next one. You can also skip any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering. Please do not say your name or any other personal information during the interview. Remember that everything you tell me will be kept private. This means I won't share what you say with anyone unless you want me to. We are going to start now. Are you ready?

***\*\*First, I have some questions about your involvement in Scouts – what you like about Scouting and what you are learning.***

- 1. Why did you join Scouts?**
- 2. Do you have fun at Scouts? Why or why not?**
- 3. How do you feel when you're at Scouts (e.g., happy, sad, bored, safe, or unsafe)? Do you feel different than you do when you're at home or in school? If so, can you tell me about it?**
- 4. What do you learn in Scouts?**
- 5. What do you like best about Scouts? Why?**
- 6. What don't you like about Scouts?**

***\*\*Now I want to ask you about how you think Scouts affects kids like yourself.***

- 7. How has Scouts affected you and your life? Has Scouting helped you in your school or community? What kinds of things do you do differently because of Scouts (things that you didn't used to do)?**
- 8. Do you have friends who aren't in Scouts? What kinds of things do they do after school?**
- 9. Do you think that Scouts prevents kids from getting into trouble or doing the wrong thing? Why or why not?**

***\*\*Now I am interested in learning more about your goals for the future.***

- 10. What are your goals for the future?**
- 11. How has Scouts influenced your goals?**
- 12. Are you learning things in Scouts that you think will help you to achieve your goals?  
If so, can you tell me more about what you are learning?**

***\*\*Now I have some questions about other parts of your life.***

- 13. Who are the people in your life who you look up to? Why do you look up to them?**
- 14. Tell me about the neighborhood or community where you live. What is it like to live there?**
- 15. What are some things in your neighborhood or community that could get in the way of your growing up to be a successful adult?**
- 16. What types of skills do you learn in Scouting that can help you with these types of challenges?**
- 17. Is there anything else we haven't talked about that you would like to say about Scouting? Do you have any questions for me?**
- 18. Do you think that you can make positive changes in your school, neighborhood, community, or the world right now? What about when you grow up? If so, how?**

***Those are all of my questions. Thank you so much for speaking with me today!***

**Appendix D****Spirit of Adventure Council  
Parent/Guardian Interview Protocol**Interviewer:

I'm going to ask you some questions about your son's involvement in Scouts and how you think the program may be impacting him. There are no right or wrong answers; I just want to learn about your view of the role of Scouts in your son's life. We can skip any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering. Please do not say your name or any other personal information during the interview, and please do not mention your son's name or other specific youth names or identifying characteristics in your responses. Instead, please respond to the questions using general terms. Remember that everything you tell me will be kept private. We are going to start now. Are you ready?

- 1. How long has your son been in Scouts?**
- 2. Why did your son join Scouts?**
- 3. How do you feel about your son being in Scouts?**
- 4. Are you involved in Scouting (as a parent volunteer or leader)? If so, please describe. If no, why not?**
- 5. What does your son learn in Scouts?**
- 6. What kind of effect do you think that Scouts has on your son?**
- 7. What do you think that Scouts does for kids who might be at risk of getting into trouble?**
- 8. Does your son have friends who are not involved in Scouting? If so, do you notice any differences between them and your son (with respect to attitudes and behaviors)?**
- 9. Are there other after-school activities or programs that your son could join or has joined? If so, how do think they compare to Scouts?**
- 10. In some communities, it's easy for boys to grow up to be successful adults. However, in many communities, there are challenges that boys face in becoming successful adults. In your community, what are some challenges that your son and other boys face?**
- 11. Given the realities of life in your community, what kinds of things do people who are seen as "good citizens" do in your community? What kind of citizen do you hope your son grows up to be?**

12. What do you hope that Scouting will do to help your son become a good citizen?
13. What do you want for your son to get out of the Scouting experience?
14. What do you think is the most important aspect of Scouting (relationships with leaders, other Scouts, meetings, curriculum, activities)? Why?
15. Do you have any concerns about Scouts, or think that anything about the program could be improved? Please describe.
16. Is there anything else we haven't talked about that you would like to say about your son or the Scouting program? Do you have any questions for me?

*Those are all of my questions. Thank you so much for speaking with me today!*

**Appendix E****Spirit of Adventure Council  
Pack Leader Interview Protocol**Interviewer:

I'm going to ask you some questions about your involvement in ScoutReach and how you think the program may impact participating youth. There are no right or wrong answers; I just want to learn about your view of the role of Scouting in the lives of kids who participate. We can skip any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering. Please do not say your name or any other personal information during the interview, and please do not mention any specific youth names or identifying characteristics in your responses. Instead, please respond to the questions using general terms. Remember that everything you tell me will be kept private. We are going to start now. Are you ready?

- 1. How long have you been a ScoutReach pack leader?**
- 2. Why did you decide to become a pack leader?**
- 3. What do you like the most about your job?**
- 4. What do you like the least about your job, or what do you find to be the most challenging aspect of your job?**
- 5. How do you think that ScoutReach compares to the more traditional Boy Scout program?**
- 6. What do you teach Scouts during pack meetings?**
- 7. What do you see as some of the challenges to positive development that Scouts in your program experience in their neighborhoods and communities?**
- 8. How do you think that the Scouting curriculum helps you to help Scouts address these challenges?**
- 9. What attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors do you think are useful and important to teach Scouts?**
- 10. How do you get kids engaged in ScoutReach?**
- 11. What kind of effect do you think that ScoutReach has on kids?**
- 12. Are there some boys in your pack or troop who are more successful than others? Why do you think these differences exist?**

13. What do you think that ScoutReach does for kids who might be at risk of getting into trouble?
14. What do you think is the most important aspect of ScoutReach (Scout-leader relationship, relationship among Scouts, parent involvement, pack meetings, curriculum, activities)? Why?
15. Do you have any concerns about ScoutReach, or think that anything about the program could be improved? Please describe.
16. Is there anything else we haven't talked about that you would like to say about Scouts? Do you have any questions for me?

*Those are all of my questions. Thank you so much for speaking with me today!*

**Towards the Promotion of Positive Development among Youth in Challenging Contexts: A Mixed-Methods Study of Engagement in the ScoutReach Program**

R. Champine

**Codebook for Scout Interviews**

**1. Description of ScoutReach Program**

CODE	SUB-CODES	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE(S)
<b>Reason Joined</b>	1. Heard about in school 2. Family involved 3. Peer connection 4. Needed something to do 5. Seemed interesting or fun 6. Other	Different reasons why Scouts joined program.	<p><i>“...when I was in second grade, like the people for Scouting came to my classroom and they talked about it and it seemed interesting, so I asked my father to join it and he signed me up.”</i></p> <p><i>“My friend told me about Scouts and then he gave me a paper to sign up for it.”</i></p> <p><i>“I joined because my grandfather, he was in it about, I think, 18 years. He had his own pack.”</i></p>
<b>Positive Program Aspects</b>	1. Structure/discipline 2. Activities (e.g., camping) 3. Events (e.g., Pumpkin Fest) 4. Leader	Different aspects of the program (e.g., outdoor activities, games, relationships) that Scouts enjoy.	<p><i>“We go outside more because whenever I’m at Scouting, I’m free from video games.”</i></p> <p><i>“I like to get merit badges.”</i></p> <p><i>“We play fun games, socialize, discuss new ideas, go on trips, outings, camp-</i></p>

	<p>5. Peer Relationships</p> <p>6. Merit badges</p> <p>7. Other</p>		<p><i>outs.”</i></p> <p><i>“We get to go camping outside.”</i></p> <p><i>“There’s like more people to make friends with than at home.”</i></p>
<b>Areas for Improvement</b>	<p>1. Lessons or material</p> <p>2. Timing of meetings</p> <p>3. Other</p>	<p>Different aspects of the program that Scouts think could be improved.</p>	<p><i>“Like maybe we should not go every single week because sometimes I get really tired.”</i></p> <p><i>“Since I get out later, like it takes time from doing my homework.”</i></p> <p><i>“Sometimes it gets boring when we’re learning about something for the new Scouts that I’ve already learned about.”</i></p>

**2. Description of Community**

<b>CODE</b>	<b>SUB-CODES</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>	<b>EXAMPLE(S)</b>
<b>Community Characteristics</b>	<p>1. Cleanliness</p> <p>2. Safety (safe vs. unsafe)</p> <p>3. Positive relationships with neighbors</p> <p>4. Diversity</p>	<p>Scouts’ observations of physical and social characteristics of their neighborhoods/communities.</p>	<p><i>“...like half of it is bad, half of it is good, because there’s like a gang.”</i></p> <p><i>“It’s a good community because there’s lots of recycling right across the street from my house, there’s a shelter.”</i></p>

	<p>5. Healthy</p> <p>6. Other</p>		<p><i>"...sometimes I'll see trash around the neighborhood."</i></p> <p><i>"There's a lot of diversity."</i></p> <p><i>"We're mainly families who help each other."</i></p>
<b>Community Challenges</b>	<p>1. Peer pressure</p> <p>2. Drugs</p> <p>3. Gangs</p> <p>4. Violence</p> <p>5. Don't go outside a lot</p> <p>6. Other</p>	Scouts' descriptions of challenges in their communities that they have personally experienced, or their descriptions of how challenges have impacted them (e.g., cognitively, emotionally, behaviorally).	<p><i>"It's like scary because if I live near the gang side, you don't know what's gonna happen."</i></p> <p><i>"I don't go out a lot...it's not the safest."</i></p>

### 3. Potential Developmental Impact of ScoutReach Program

CODE	SUB-CODES	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE(S)
<b>Engagement</b>	<p>1. Cognitive</p> <p>2. Emotional</p> <p>3. Behavioral</p>	1. <u>Cognitive</u> : extent to which youth value what they learn in Scouting, and their thoughts about learning. Related to goal orientation (e.g., "I want to learn as much as I can"), identification with Scouting, and whether what is learned in Scouting is perceived as	<u>Cognitive</u> : <i>"For me, it was extremely rewarding to learn how to use axes, saws, knives, make fires, and also how to make shelters"; "I personally think it's very important to learn how to help oneself and how to help others"; "...learning about new knots,</i>

		<p>meaningful and important (e.g., “I think the things I learn are very important for future success”; Li &amp; Lerner, 2013).</p> <p>2. <u>Emotional</u>: reflects sense of belonging and affect toward Scouting (e.g., “I feel like a part of the group”). Include happiness, excitement, enjoyment, connectedness (Li &amp; Lerner, 2013).</p> <p>3. <u>Behavioral</u>: reflects shallow engagement (e.g., attendance) and more meaningful engagement (e.g., effort). Related to contribution, preparation (Li &amp; Lerner, 2013).</p>	<p><i>first-aid type things, like...how to make splints and stuff. I think it's really cool and useful information.”</i></p> <p><u>Emotional</u>: “...learning all the different skills and helping the younger kids learn is extremely fun for me.”; “...you go outside more [in Scouting], so you feel different sometimes”; “I feel happy, excited...because I don't know what we're gonna do next in Scouts.”</p> <p>3. <u>Behavioral</u>: “I'm hoping to get my Tenderfoot. I have to complete requirements”; “Like at home, I would just play games all night but at Boy Scouts, I'm active...like how I'm supposed to be”; “I want to get the geography and weather merit badges. I'm currently working on those ones.”</p>
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<p><b>Learning</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Scout Law (trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent)</li> <li>2. Other attributes/values (e.g., respect)</li> <li>3. Behaviors (e.g., volunteering)</li> <li>4. Skills (e.g., outdoor skills)</li> <li>5. Other</li> </ol>	<p>Scouts' descriptions of different attributes/values, behaviors, and skills that they learn in the program.</p>	<p><i>"...you learn trust..."</i></p> <p><i>"...the Scout law...being trustworthy, loyal, helpful, and be courteous..."</i></p> <p><i>"...they teach you how to help other people in different ways."</i></p> <p><i>"[In Scouts, you learn] when someone tells you 'stop,' you stop. When people need help, you help them. When someone tells you 'you have to do it,' you have to do it."</i></p> <p><i>"I go to summer camp. I learn a lot of good things about first aid, survival skills, arts and crafts, and some science."</i></p> <p><i>"It teaches you how to make plans and successfully find ways to do different things."</i></p>
<p><b>Reflections on Change</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attributes/values</li> <li>2. Behaviors</li> <li>3. Skills (e.g., outdoor skills)</li> <li>4. No impact</li> </ol>	<p>Scouts' reflections on how being in the program has changed them.</p>	<p><i>"I respect adults a lot more. I try helping others as much as I can now, whereas before I might have helped someone once in a while. Now, I try to find opportunities to help others."</i></p> <p><i>"[In Scouts], I've learned to be</i></p>

	5. Other		<i>more courteous to people, like holding doors open...</i>
<b>Application of Learning</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. School</li> <li>2. Home</li> <li>3. Community</li> </ol>	Scouts' descriptions of how they apply what they learn in Scouting in other contexts (e.g., home, school, community).	<p><i>"Like, we might learn something here that you don't know that maybe the teacher might talk about. Like if you're in life skills class, they're talking about camping, you already know what you need to do."</i></p> <p><i>"...at school, you can be confident, have courage, and be respectful and responsible, like we are here."</i></p> <p><i>"...just today somebody dropped their stuff and I helped them pick it up."</i></p>
<b>Prevention</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides safe space</li> <li>2. "Keeps them off streets"</li> <li>3. Preoccupies time</li> <li>4. Exposure to role models</li> <li>5. Learn rules, structure/discipline</li> <li>6. Promotes development of problem-solving or coping skills</li> </ol>	Scouts' descriptions of how the program may prevent young people from getting involved in risk/problem behaviors or making poor decisions.	<p><i>"...you would follow a law, like obedience. And, you wouldn't just like trash the place and you wouldn't do any bad stuff that other people do that aren't in Scouting."</i></p> <p><i>"Well, like I know stuff not to do and to do, like don't do dares and like don't listen to other people when they say 'I dare you to do something' because if you do that, you might get hurt."</i></p>

	<p>6. Learn what not to do</p> <p>8. Other</p>		<p><i>"...it's like a safe environment [in Scouts] and [you're] not playing with friends outside and like not doing things that friends are gonna say or do that might be bad."</i></p> <p><i>"...if people decide to do one thing, people in Boy Scouts can encourage them not to do it, because they know if they get in trouble there will be consequences."</i></p> <p><i>"Scouts is like a military for younger kids and it has a strict set of rules and it like...you really listen to those rules and it really prevents you from doing other things that get you into trouble."</i></p>
<p><b>Future Goals</b></p>		<p>Scouts' descriptions of how the program has impacted their future goals.</p>	<p><i>"[I want to be a] mechanical engineer...because we [in Scouts] talk a lot about STEM stuff."</i></p> <p><i>"I did the youth leadership training, which taught me how to make smarter goals and attainable goals, whereas before I was known to set goals that were unreachable."</i></p>

#### 4. Other Important Aspects of Scouts' Lives

CODE	SUB-CODES	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE(S)
<b>Role Models</b>	1. Associated with Scouting  2. Not associated with Scouting	Scouts' descriptions of important role models or people they look up to (both in Scouting and outside of Scouting – e.g., family members).	<p><i>"I look up to my teachers, Scout masters, and Scouts...because they could help me gain more experience by helping me to do things because they may do it differently and I could learn off of that."</i></p> <p><i>"My role model is my brother, because he encourages me to be more like him."</i></p>
<b>Other OST Activities</b>		Scouts' descriptions of their involvement in community and other OST activities.	<p><i>"[I] play basketball [and] there's like a program where people come in to help you with, like, schoolwork and stuff like that."</i></p>
<b>Perceived Self-Efficacy</b>		Scouts' descriptions of whether (or not) they believe that they can make changes in their communities right now and/or in the future.	<p><i>"I try to help [make positive changes in the community] through service projects with the school whenever I can. I also try to act more as a leader when that is needed."</i></p> <p><i>"...like with [a career in] psychology, I could be a counselor or speaker, announcer for crowds and maybe turn them to a new light. A new point of view."</i></p>

			<i>"...if I become a scientist or engineer, I feel I could really help impact the science community by finding out new things."</i>
<b>Reinforcement of Learning</b>		Scouts' descriptions of how principles and values that they learn in program are reinforced in different contexts (e.g., in home, at school).	<i>"...a lot of my friends in the community are in Scouts or band as well, which I feel has a lot of the same principles with the level I am in, and at home, both of my parents are leaders."</i>

**Appendix G**

**Towards the Promotion of Positive Development among Youth in Challenging Contexts: A Mixed-Methods Study of Engagement in the ScoutReach Program**

R. Champine

**Codebook for Parent Interviews**

**1. Description of ScoutReach Program**

CODE	SUB-CODES	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE(S)
<p><b>Reason Son Joined</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Heard about in school</li> <li>2. Family involved</li> <li>3. Peer connection</li> <li>4. Needed something to do</li> <li>5. Seemed fun</li> <li>6. Other</li> </ul>	<p>Parents’ descriptions of different reasons why their sons became involved in Scouting.</p>	<p><i>“They had a flyer going around at school.”</i></p> <p><i>“I talked to [the leader], he was telling me the program was here at the school, it was every Friday. He was already here for after school, as it was, and his best friend was in the program, and he just had to be a part of it. That’s how we initially signed up.”</i></p> <p><i>“...his grandfather was in Boy Scouts...”</i></p> <p><i>“...he saw how they were having fun, how they were interacting.”</i></p>

<p><b>Positive Program Aspects</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Structure/discipline</li> <li>2. Activities (e.g., camping)</li> <li>3. Events (e.g., Pumpkin Fest)</li> <li>4. Leader</li> <li>5. Social interactions and relationships</li> <li>6. Other</li> </ol>	<p>Parents' descriptions of different aspects of the program (e.g., structure, outdoor activities, games, relationships) that their sons enjoy or that they believe are important.</p>	<p><i>“When he went to a week-long overnight camp in the summer, it was a nice experience for him. It was his second time being away from home, but it was a different kind of an experience because the Boy Scout activities were different and he was with his Troop. It was nice, and he really enjoyed it.”</i></p> <p><i>“[The leader] is an awesome Troop leader. He really cares about the kids. I just feel like when I’ve seen him and the kids go to him, they really feel comfortable enough to talk with him about anything. That helps, too, to have a really good leader that helps the kids to understand.”</i></p> <p><i>“...he has older Scouts with him and they model. They help the younger Scouts. It’s really nice. It creates a brotherhood between the kids.”</i></p> <p><i>“It’s nice to see the camaraderie between the boys. You make these really good connections, really good</i></p>
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			<p><i>buddies. They have someone that they might be able to depend on later in life..."</i></p> <p><i>"He's making friends. He's...learning stuff that I probably wouldn't be able to teach him by myself."</i></p> <p><i>"...the message would be the most important [aspect of Scouting], but because of how it's delivered. It's not delivered like it's a command or something that the children have to study...it's presented as something fun, something that they can enjoy doing."</i></p> <p><i>"...it's the relationship with both the leaders and the other Cub Scouts [that's the most important]."</i></p> <p><i>"The activities lead to good habits because they learn from those activities."</i></p>
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<p><b>Concerns/potential areas for Improvement</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Activities</li> <li>2. Barriers to participation (e.g., transportation)</li> <li>3. Enhance tolerance/diversity</li> <li>4. Consider Scouts' special needs</li> <li>5. Other</li> </ol>	<p>Different aspects of the program that parents think could be improved.</p>	<p><i>"The only thing I don't like is they don't provide transportation to go places. We have to rely on carpool and sometimes there's not enough room, so then he misses out because there's no transportation..."</i></p> <p><i>"More activities for the kids. Maybe more field trips."</i></p> <p><i>"I just wish it was open to girls because it gives the girls more freedom."</i></p> <p><i>"You don't have a lot of packs that take the special needs kid and understand the special needs kid..."</i></p>
<p><b>Family Involvement in Scouting</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attendance at meetings</li> <li>2. More active involvement (e.g., participation in activities)</li> <li>3. Other</li> </ol>	<p>Parents' descriptions of how they (and other members of their families) are involved in the program.</p>	<p><i>"I changed my schedule to get out early on Fridays to get him here for Boy Scouts."</i></p> <p><i>"I come to the events, like they had the Pumpkin Fest, we went to that. When they had the weekend overnight, his dad took the weekend off and did that with him."</i></p> <p><i>"Even for his dad, it's like an awesome experience for him,"</i></p>

			<p><i>too, because not only is he getting to spend quality time with my son, but he's learning something and doing things that he didn't get a chance to do when he was younger."</i></p> <p><i>"I am a den leader."</i></p>
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**2. Description of Community**

<b>CODE</b>	<b>SUB-CODES</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>	<b>EXAMPLE(S)</b>
<b>Community Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cleanliness</li> <li>2. Safety (safe vs. unsafe)</li> <li>3. Positive relationships with neighbors</li> <li>4. Diversity</li> <li>5. Healthy</li> <li>6. Other</li> </ul>	Parents' observations of physical and social characteristics of their neighborhoods/communities.	<p><i>"We've been really blessed to be living in environments that are good communities, healthy places for children to live."</i></p> <p><i>"There's a lot of bullying and violence."</i></p> <p><i>"There's a lot of drugs... apparently, there was a stabbing the other night...there is a lot of bad stuff."</i></p> <p><i>"Neighbors in our community are very helpful...everyone speaks to each other. We barely know anyone, but there are familiar faces..."</i></p>

<p><b>Community Challenges</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Peer pressure</li> <li>2. Substance use</li> <li>3. Gangs</li> <li>4. Violence</li> <li>5. Other</li> </ol>	<p>Parents' descriptions of challenges in their communities that they (or their sons) have personally experienced or may be likely to experience, or their descriptions of how these challenges have impacted their sons.</p>	<p><i>"Peer pressure. I would hope that [my son would] be able to make sound decisions, because you're not always going to be surrounded by the right influences."</i></p> <p><i>"...I've seen teenagers who were not with their parents and they're in a hallway where young kids live and they're doing stuff they're not supposed to. Young kids walk by and they go 'What's that smell? What are they doing?'"</i></p>
<p><b>Good Citizens</b></p>		<p>Parents' descriptions of characteristics associated with people who are considered to be "good citizens" in their communities.</p>	<p><i>"...follows the rules in the community...and helps other people."</i></p> <p><i>"I think it's the same everywhere. I don't think it changes. You want people who are engaged in the community...people who help others. I think [my son] gets exposure to that."</i></p>

### 3. Perceived Developmental Impact of Program

CODE	SUB-CODES	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE(S)
Engagement	1. Cognitive	1. <u>Cognitive</u> : extent to which youth value what they learn in Scouting, and their thoughts about learning. Related to goal orientation (e.g., “I want to learn as much as I can”), identification with Scouting, and whether what is learned in Scouting is perceived as meaningful and important (e.g., “I think the things I learn are very important for future success”; Li & Lerner, 2013).	<u>Cognitive</u> : “[My son is] proud of himself when he’s earned a new badge, and he’s learned a new task, and he’s completed it.”
	2. Emotional	2. <u>Emotional</u> : reflects sense of belonging and affect toward Scouting (e.g., “I feel like a part of the group”). Include happiness, excitement, enjoyment, connectedness (Li & Lerner, 2013).	<u>Emotional</u> : “[The leaders] have worked with him and he sees how much fun he can have outside doing things”; “[My son] loves Scouts”; “[My son] loves archery. He loves the fishing. He loves the activities where he can do them outside of Scouts as well.”
	3. Behavioral	3. <u>Behavioral</u> : reflects shallow engagement (e.g., attendance) and more meaningful engagement (e.g., effort). Related to contribution, preparation (Li & Lerner, 2013).	<u>Behavioral</u> : “[My son] expresses that he wants to be an Eagle Scout”; “...he likes to come, he likes to do the activities”; “Today, [my son] said ‘I can’t wait until I’m a full-fledged Boy Scout.’ That, to me, means that he’s willing to grow through the program and achieve that.”

<p><b>Learning</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attributes associated with Scout Law (trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent)</li> <li>2. Other attributes/values (e.g., respect)</li> <li>4. Behaviors (e.g., volunteering)</li> <li>5. Skills (e.g., outdoor skills)</li> <li>6. Other</li> </ol>	<p>Parents' descriptions of different attributes/values, behaviors, and skills that their sons learn in the program.</p>	<p><i>"They horse around. They do just like any other kid...but they're called on those actions. They're made aware of 'What is honorable? How should you really be treating [others]? Is it okay for you to be making fun of or poking at this person? Or should you be helping him?"</i></p> <p><i>"There's other skills that he's learned, like how to whittle, which is really cool."</i></p>
<p><b>Reflections on Change</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attributes/values</li> <li>2. Behaviors</li> <li>3. Skills (e.g., outdoor skills)</li> <li>4. Unsure/no impact</li> <li>5. Other</li> </ol>	<p>Parents' reflections on how being in the program has impacted or changed (or not impacted) their sons.</p>	<p><i>"I think being in Boy Scouts has helped him be a little more mature, and have a lot more confidence in himself."</i></p> <p><i>"...it's a good activity for him. It teaches him good life lessons and it's really helped him be more responsible."</i></p> <p><i>"I've seen a big difference in him...he was really fresh and I noticed that since he's been to Boy Scouts, he's toned it down..."</i></p>

			<p><i>"...he gets along with other kids a little better since joining Scouts."</i></p> <p><i>"...[the program] allows him to be more independent in a way, be able to think on his own."</i></p> <p><i>"He has learned to speak up for himself and actually defend others' views."</i></p>
<p><b>Application of Learning</b></p>	<p>1. School</p> <p>2. Home</p> <p>3. Community</p>	<p>Parents' descriptions of how their sons apply what they learn in Scouting in other contexts.</p>	<p><i>"He lives the Scout Oath down to daily life. It has not just affected his school life...but it affects life at school, where he knows not to be a bully. He knows how to be helpful."</i></p> <p><i>"The friends that he hangs with...they swear, they use bad language, and he knows that's not right to do."</i></p>

<p><b>Prevention</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides safe space</li> <li>2. "Keeps them off streets"</li> <li>3. Preoccupies time/"keeps them busy"</li> <li>4. Exposure to role models</li> <li>5. Learn rules, structure/discipline</li> <li>6. Promotes development of problem-solving or coping skills</li> </ol>	<p>Parents' descriptions of how the program may prevent their sons and other young people from getting involved in risk/problem behaviors or making poor decisions.</p>	<p><i>"I would think that [Scouting] would give [youth] the ability to problem-solve. Give them a way to think about something else that they could do instead of making the bad choices."</i></p> <p><i>"Hopefully, [Scouts] gets [young people] interested in other things, whether it's nature or fundraisers or whatever so that they can stay out of trouble. I'm hoping my son will stay in Scouts so it gives him something to preoccupy his time with instead of going out and doing stuff that he isn't supposed to."</i></p> <p><i>"I firmly believe that [Scouts] is keeping the kids out of the streets because it occupies them in something positive rather than having free time to be doing things that they shouldn't be doing."</i></p> <p><i>"So challenges might come across...like maybe there's a kid that, unfortunately, they don't have a father, they don't have a mother, they don't have a good role model. This</i></p>
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			<p><i>is a place where they can come to terms with 'Okay, I don't have that in my house, but I can find it someplace else.' So what can become a challenge in the street, it might be easier for them to deal with it because here they're around other people who are positive. Positive role models. In the street they're not gonna find that. Go to the corner, they're not gonna find that."</i></p> <p><i>"We wanted an activity where we knew he wasn't going to be on the streets, running the streets, where he wasn't going to get into trouble... They know the rules. They know they're not supposed to carry knives. They're not supposed to use guns."</i></p>
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4. Other Important Aspects of Program & Scouts' Lives

CODE	SUB-CODES	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE(S)
<b>Role Models</b>	1. Associated with Scouting  2. Not associated with Scouting	Parents' descriptions of important role models or people their sons look up to (both in Scouting and outside of Scouting – e.g., family members).	<p><i>"[My son] wants to join the Air Force...I just learned that my sister was talking to him about...showing him some awards, and it just so happened that my brother-in-law...he worked for the Air Force."</i></p>
<b>Other OST Activities</b>		Parents' descriptions of their sons' involvement in community and other OST activities, and (in some cases) how their sons' experiences in different activity contexts compare.	<p><i>"...he loves Scouts for reasons and then sports...he likes to be up and active."</i></p> <p><i>"Where I live, right down the street is the neighborhood developers...and he used to go with my mom to the meetings and he'd go around during the summer picking up trash..."</i></p> <p><i>"[My son's] involved in sports. In sports, it's very competitive. Scouting is not competitive...it's equality. Everybody's working together as a team."</i></p> <p><i>"[In Big Brothers/Big Sisters], he doesn't get the interaction like he does with the other peers of the Scouts. It will just</i></p>

			<p><i>be him and another adult leader..."</i></p>
<p><b>Reinforcement of Learning</b></p>		<p>Parents' descriptions of how values that Scouts learn in program are reinforced in different contexts (e.g., in home, at school).</p>	<p><i>"What we found was, just with the Boy Scouts, it has the same...it holds the same morals that we have. It helps with how we teach him, and tell him a young man should be in the world. It's an extension to what his everyday life is, because we're active in our church. It has the same message. We teach him how to be respectful to adults and other people. It reflects what his life already...a lot of what he has already learned in life...he's getting the same message everywhere he goes."</i></p> <p><i>"What we teach him at home and what they teach him here, I that that'll really help him...it's like an extra added step to doing the right thing. Someone else is telling you, not just your parents."</i></p>

<p><b>Lead by Example</b></p>		<p>Parents' descriptions of how they try to act as role models for their sons by modeling positive attributes and behaviors.</p>	<p><i>"There was a woman at the grocery store and she was short on what she was buying. I just swiped my card. I said "Go ahead." [My son] says 'Mommy, do you know that lady?' I said 'No, but she was buying groceries and she didn't have enough.' He sees me do those things, so he thought about it."</i></p>
<p><b>Vision for Son</b></p>		<p>Parents' descriptions of their visions, hopes, or goals for their sons, and (in some cases) how Scouting may play a role.</p>	<p><i>"I would hope that he'd grow up to be very helpful, be very involved in his community...I said to him 'Maybe that's something you [Scouts] can do as a group. Maybe you could talk to [the leader] too because you guys are Boys Scouts...Scouts help others."</i></p> <p><i>"I'd like to see him go far in school...get a good job and be a respected person by a lot of people..."</i></p> <p><i>"I hope he respects people, he doesn't get into trouble, he abides all the laws..."</i></p>

## Appendix H

### Towards the Promotion of Positive Development among Youth in Challenging Contexts: A Mixed-Methods Study of Engagement in the ScoutReach Program

R. Champine

#### Codebook for Pack Leader Interviews

##### 1. Description of ScoutReach Program

CODE	SUB-CODES	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE(S)
<b>Reason Joined Program</b>	1. Family involved 2. Was a Scout as a child 3. To make a positive impact 4. Other	Leaders' descriptions of their reasons for becoming involved with the program.	<i>"My son wanted to be involved in the Scouting program."</i>  <i>"...because I had such a good time when I was a kid."</i>
<b>Structure &amp; Composition of Pack</b>		Leaders' descriptions of how their packs are structured (e.g., number of Scouts, curriculum that is used, etc.).	<i>"We are a fully volunteer-run unit."</i>  <i>"...we're fully electronically enabled in our tracking of the Scouts, which is something that I provide for the unit...none of the other units have. I can look across at every single Scout, know exactly what to do, how to structure that, how to come in and execute to meet each one of the requirements in each component..."</i>  <i>"...[the program is] more</i>

			<p><i>driven by economics. It's the people who are a little tougher to afford the components of Scouting."</i></p> <p><i>"You're not bound by a classroom curriculum and a classroom set of rules...you're only bound by the Scouting rules that are appropriate, but stretching the limit."</i></p> <p><i>"We wanted the ability to run the pack as we saw fit...with the parent involvement, not being an after-school program...it is expected to be a family program."</i></p>
<p><b>Positive Aspects of Role</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Observing Scouts change</li> <li>2. Interacting with Scouts</li> <li>3. Other</li> </ol>	<p>Leaders' descriptions of what they like most about their role as leaders in the program.</p>	<p><i>"Seeing radical transformations in young men and boys."</i></p> <p><i>"I'm not going to do this forever, but I do look forward to seeing these young men in their late 20s and early 30s, and following along with them...to see what impact [the program] truly has."</i></p> <p><i>"I love the interaction with the kids."</i></p>

<p><b>Areas for Improvement</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hiring practices</li> <li>2. Staff retention</li> <li>3. Curriculum</li> <li>4. Meeting time</li> <li>5. Parent involvement</li> <li>6. Other</li> </ol>	<p>Different aspects of the program that leaders think could be improved.</p>	<p><i>“My biggest concern is continuity of professionals.”</i></p> <p><i>“Hiring people off the street that have no Boy Scout experience and calling them a program specialist, and expecting them to succeed at this...it takes years of development.”</i></p> <p><i>“We don’t have a curriculum here...that’s a bit of a thorn in everybody’s side...the curriculum has been rather hit or miss.”</i></p> <p><i>“This is one of the few units that does not wear the uniform...”</i></p> <p><i>“We don’t have parents involved, so we can’t break them out into age-dependent groups.”</i></p> <p><i>“You can’t bring up [drugs and gangs] when you’ve got 19 boys from first grade to fifth grade. It doesn’t work.”</i></p> <p><i>“We’re meeting at the wrong time...”</i></p>
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<p><b>Family Involvement in Scouting</b></p>		<p>Leaders' descriptions of how Scouts' families are involved in the program, and potential barriers to their involvement.</p>	<p><i>"[The parents] are very engaged in support of the program, but for me to...gain trust took several years...There were significant proof points that these parents wanted to see before they were just fully engaged..."</i></p> <p><i>"Parental involvement is significantly different in a ScoutReach unit than it is in a traditional unit...in ScoutReach, it's much more difficult to get parental involvement, but it will come after a period of time."</i></p> <p><i>"We don't have enough parent involvement."</i></p>
<p><b>Important Program Aspects</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Structure/discipline</li> <li>2. Exposure to opportunities</li> <li>3. Activities (e.g., camping)</li> <li>4. Events (e.g., Pumpkin Fest)</li> <li>5. Relationships</li> <li>6. Other</li> </ol>	<p>Leaders' descriptions of different aspects of the program (e.g., structure, outdoor activities, games, relationships) that Scouts enjoy or that they believe are important.</p>	<p><i>"The success of our program is really based on the classroom management. We're pretty strict about behaviors and we address [problem behaviors] immediately."</i></p> <p><i>"My objective is to get them outside as much as possible, to get them camping...just to get them out of the neighborhood, and let them see and experience other things..."</i></p>

			<p><i>“It’s very, very important that you provide the opportunities and you consistently apply the opportunities. If there’s any inconsistencies whatsoever, you’re going to have failure points within the program...”</i></p> <p><i>“Kids inherently want discipline. I’m not saying punishment, I’m saying discipline. They want to know that someone’s in control, and they want to feel safe. Safety is so important to these kids...”</i></p> <p><i>“We’re all brothers and sisters in Scouting. It transcends beyond this unit, but they should be brothers to each other and provide that support...this is truly what is unique about the program, and particularly in communities like this.”</i></p> <p><i>“A lot of these guys don’t have a lot of love in their lives and if you can demonstrate that in the purest way and know that you love them, and you don’t hold back, they will respond to it no matter if they never had it in their lives.”</i></p>
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			<p><i>“They’ve gone through some rough times. It’s the perseverance, and providing that opportunity for perseverance. It’s the greatest gift that they can be offered...”</i></p> <p><i>“The program gives [structure] to the Scouts.”</i></p>
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**2. Description of Community**

<b>CODE</b>	<b>SUB-CODES</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>	<b>EXAMPLE(S)</b>
<b>Community Characteristics</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cleanliness</li> <li>2. Safety (safe vs. unsafe)</li> <li>3. Positive relationships with neighbors</li> <li>4. Diversity</li> <li>5. Healthy</li> <li>6. Other</li> </ol>	<p>Leaders’ observations of physical and social characteristics of the neighborhoods/communities in which their Scouts live.</p>	<p><i>“We’re in a really tough demographic area.”</i></p>

<p><b>Community Challenges</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Peer pressure</li> <li>2. Drugs</li> <li>3. Gangs</li> <li>4. Violence</li> <li>5. Scarcity of positive male role models</li> <li>6. Other</li> </ol>	<p>Leaders' descriptions of challenges in Scouts' communities that Scouts have experienced or may be likely to experience.</p>	<p><i>"...a lot of the families are single mother families and there's not a lot of strong male influence in the household, so there's not a lot of discipline, not a lot of respect, not a lot of structure."</i></p> <p><i>"...there has been a gang influence in this area...as a matter of fact, it's one of the most at risk. Some of the older Scouts are very restricted. Their families restrict them and what they do in outside activities. They don't just go running around the streets."</i></p> <p><i>"Drugs and gangs."</i></p>
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3. Perceived Developmental Impact of Program

CODE	SUB-CODES	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE(S)
<p><b>Engagement</b></p>	<p>1. Cognitive</p>	<p>1. <u>Cognitive</u>: extent to which youth value what they learn in Scouting, and their thoughts about learning. Related to goal orientation (e.g., “I want to learn as much as I can”), identification with Scouting, and whether what is learned in Scouting is perceived as meaningful and important (e.g., “I think the things I learn are very important for future success”; Li &amp; Lerner, 2013).</p>	<p><u>Cognitive</u>: “The Cub Scouts here do better than some of the Boy Scout units in the traditional environment. They really do get it, they like it, they enjoy it. They want to do it. They want to do good. They’re very motivated”; “What I think they like about [the activity] is that it’s challenging”; “Get them outdoors in challenging situations. Congratulate them when they do it, help them when they don’t...”; “It’s the challenge, and what we have is the biggest classroom in the world. We’ve got the whole outdoors. Just keep pushing the envelope”; “You’re learning while you’re having fun”; “If they’re having a good time, they’ll keep coming back.”</p>
	<p>2. Emotional</p>	<p>2. <u>Emotional</u>: reflects sense of belonging and affect toward Scouting (e.g., “I feel like a part of the group”). Include happiness, excitement, enjoyment, connectedness (Li &amp; Lerner, 2013).</p>	
	<p>3. Behavioral</p>	<p>3. <u>Behavioral</u>: reflects shallow engagement (e.g., attendance) and more meaningful engagement (e.g., effort). Related to contribution, preparation (Li &amp; Lerner, 2013).</p>	

			<p><i>the room once a month and you hand them a belt loop..."</i></p> <p><u>Behavioral</u>: <i>"Get [Scouts] out early, in activities that they will remember for the rest of their Scouting career – BBs, archery, out to a camp...once you get that hook, they're always going to want to do more."</i></p>
<p><b>Learning</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attributes associated with Scout Law (trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent)</li> <li>2. Other attributes/values (e.g., respect)</li> <li>3. Behaviors (e.g., volunteering)</li> <li>4. Skills (e.g., outdoor skills)</li> <li>5. Other</li> </ol>	<p>Leaders' descriptions of different attitudes/values, behaviors, and skills that Scouts are taught in the program.</p>	<p><i>"Character development is what they call it in Scouting, and that was my primary focus...was to ensure that the Scouts were responsible, and they were respectful, and they were doing the right thing, making the right decisions."</i></p> <p><i>"We've pushed academics, as well as the Cub Scout and the Scouting program."</i></p> <p><i>"We teach first-aid. We teach handicraft skills...we're heavily influenced by my background in technology to integrate STEM into our programs."</i></p> <p><i>"...[the program is] just a remarkable opportunity for the boys to learn skills that they would be able to use for the rest of their lives. This</i></p>

			<p><i>isn't a one-shot deal. This is developing these guys consistently over a period of time, and once they have that foundation laid, it's with them forever."</i></p> <p><i>"...the buddy system...you're suddenly paired up with not your usual friend...but you're paired up with another Scout. Now you're going through a process where they're going to coach you while you can't see...it's a trust issue."</i></p>
<p><b>Reflections on Change</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attributes/values</li> <li>2. Behaviors</li> <li>3. Skills (e.g., outdoor skills)</li> <li>4. Other</li> </ol>	<p>Leaders' reflections on how being in the program has impacted or changed Scouts.</p>	<p><i>"We had one Scout that suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder because he saw three of his family members killed by gangs. He was essentially mute, for the first year of the program, he didn't talk. Then through some developmental efforts and circumstances, we got him to talk. He started talking, he started inculcating, and he started doing much better."</i></p> <p><i>"I really have seen these young guys turn into very respectable and responsible individuals. It's helped them academically as well...we get</i></p>

			<i>feedback from the parents. I get feedback from the teachers. I get feedback from the administration of the school."</i>
<b>Application of Learning</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. School</li> <li>2. Home</li> <li>3. Community</li> </ol>	Leaders' descriptions of how they have observed youth apply what they learn Scouting and in other contexts.	<i>"They're in a community with children, with the same values that they are, and hopefully that can be translated into school. We've had cases where one of our scouts was being bullied in school and the other scouts came over to help him."</i>
<b>Prevention</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides safe space</li> <li>2. "Keeps them off streets"</li> <li>3. Preoccupies time</li> <li>4. Exposure to role models</li> <li>5. Learn rules, structure/discipline</li> <li>6. Promotes development of problem-solving or coping skills</li> <li>6. Family involvement</li> </ol>	Leaders' descriptions of how the program may prevent Scouts and other young people from getting involved in risk/problem behaviors or making poor decisions.	<p><i>"Scouts knew that if they were going to come in, they lived by the Oath, and the Law, and the rules, and that behaviors were not going to be tolerated. They would be dealt with. A lot of times in a very loving and kind way, a lot of times in a very firm way, but, as a result, we've had a lot of continuity..."</i></p> <p><i>"The more involvement of the families...the better the likelihood...of keeping [Scouts] out of trouble."</i></p>

	7. Other		
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#### 4. Other Important Aspects of Program & Scouts' Lives

CODE	SUB-CODES	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE(S)
<b>Role Models</b>	1. Associated with Scouting 2. Not associated with Scouting	Leaders' descriptions of important role models or people they think that Scouts look up to (both in Scouting and outside of Scouting – e.g., family members).	<i>"I would think that in the program they have the opportunity to establish relationships with good role models, through their leaders, through older members of the unit..."</i>
<b>Vision for Scouts</b>		Leaders' descriptions of their visions, hopes, or goals for Scouts.	<i>"I'm not going to do this forever, but I do look forward to seeing these young men in their late 20s and early 30s, and following along with them, to see what impact it truly has. I cherish the thought that these guys are going to do very well."</i>
<b>Reinforcement of Learning</b>		Leaders' descriptions of how principles and values that Scouts learn in program is reinforced in different contexts (e.g., in home, at school).	<i>"In many cases here we are teaching the same values to the parents that we're teaching the children."</i>

**Towards the Promotion of Positive Development among Youth in Challenging Contexts: A Mixed-Methods Study of Engagement in the ScoutReach Program**

R. Champine

**Codebook for Parent Short-Answer Responses**

**1. "Why did your son join Scouts?"**

<b>CODE</b>	<b>EXAMPLE</b>
1 – Son heard about program in school	<i>"...he was introduced through his school."</i>
2 – The program seemed fun or interesting	<i>"He thought it would be fun."</i>
3 – Friend was involved	<i>"Because his best friend was a Scout."</i>
4 – Son loved the program (or being in activities, more generally)	<i>"[He] loves activities..."</i>
5 – To build relationships	<i>"To...make new friends..."</i>
6 – Family was involved	<i>"...his dad was a Scout."</i>
7 – Son likes to help others	<i>"He loves to help people."</i>
8 – To enjoy new experiences or adventures	<i>"To enjoy all the experiences provided."</i>
9 – To learn (discipline, values, skills)	<i>"...to learn the discipline...that Scouting teaches."</i>
10 – To be productive	<i>"To be a productive...boy."</i>
11 – To become a Boy Scout or Eagle Scout	<i>"To...become an Eagle Scout."</i>
12 – To enjoy the outdoors (e.g., camping)	<i>"He enjoys camping..."</i>

**2. "Do you think that Scouts is good for your son? If yes, how?"**

<b>CODE</b>	<b>EXAMPLE</b>
1 – Promotes positive relationships or social interactions (e.g., teamwork)	<i>"Gets him involved with other children..."</i>
2 – Provides exposure to new or different experiences or opportunities (e.g., outdoors)	<i>"Get him involved [in]...more outdoor experience."</i>
3 – Reinforces principles/values learned in other settings (e.g., home)	<i>"Extends on the core values that I am teaching my son."</i>
4 – Helps son	<i>"To help him."</i>
5 – Son participates in activities	<i>"Teaches him...fun, safe activities."</i>
6 – Connects son with the community	<i>"...to meet other children in his community..."</i>
7 – Promotes development of skills (e.g., life skills, outdoor skills, problem-solving skills)	<i>"Life skills have helped him to improve and learn to follow direction."</i>
8 – Gives son an organization to be a part of	<i>"...fitting in with an organization..."</i>
9 – Son learns to listen and follow instructions	<i>"...learning to listen to leaders and instructions being taught..."</i>
10 – Provides exposure to role models	<i>"...having other kids to look up to."</i>
11 – Addresses gap/void in son's life (e.g., absence of father)	<i>"He loves the outdoors and has no dad to show him how to do it."</i>
12 – Promotes development of values and attributes	<i>"It helps him to build confidence..."</i>
13 – Keeps son grounded	<i>"I think it keeps him grounded."</i>

14 – Is fun	<i>“He...has fun.”</i>
15 – Helps son regulate ideas, emotions, and/or behaviors	<i>“Because it has helped him to control his emotions and express his ideas...”</i>
16 – Teaches leadership	<i>“Leadership skills...”</i>
17 – Provides opportunities to help others	<i>“Loves to...help others.”</i>
18 – Teaches life lessons	<i>“Teaches him life lessons...”</i>
19 – Provides safe space	<i>“Learning...how to do dangerous things safely...”</i>
20 – Keeps son preoccupied	<i>“...keeps him busy...”</i>
21 – Teaches good manners	<i>“Scouts teaches...good manners.”</i>
22 – Positively impacts son’s overall learning and development	<i>“He learns many useful and important things...”</i>

**3. "Do you think that Scouts prevents kids from getting into trouble and involved in risk and problem behaviors (such as using drugs and violence)? If yes, how?"**

<b>CODE</b>	<b>EXAMPLE</b>
1 – Keeps youth busy	<i>“Keeps them busy and less idle minds.”</i>
2 – Promotes application of Scouting skills and attributes in different settings (e.g., school, community)	<i>“My son takes the values and applies them at school, in the community.”</i>
3 – Promotes positive decision-making	<i>“...they...can think twice before making a bad choice.”</i>
4 – Provides structure and discipline	<i>“Scouts provides structure...”</i>
5 – Allows youth to feel proud of accomplishments	<i>“Scouts provides...a way for kids to feel proud of their achievements.”</i>
6 – Promotes development of values and attributes	<i>“Because it teaches them respect and values towards others, the community, and themselves.”</i>
7 – Promotes development of skills (e.g., life skills, outdoor skills, problem-solving skills)	<i>“...at least they'll have the first aid skills to deal with any trouble.”</i>
8 – Gives youth something positive to focus on	<i>“They are active and thinking of positive things to do instead of the negative.”</i>
9 – Keeps youth away from negative influences	<i>“It keeps them away from negative influences.”</i>
10 – Unsure	<i>“Unsure.”</i>
11 – Teaches youth how to have fun	<i>“Yes, it teaches them that they can have fun and be very hard working people.”</i>
12 – Provides space for youth to belong	<i>“Gives kids a place to belong.”</i>
13 – Promotes sense of personal responsibility and accountability	<i>“Makes them accountable for their actions.”</i>
14 – Youth learn to help others and positively influence society	<i>“They learn...[to] do good things for them and others.”</i>
15 – Provides safe space	<i>“I think it can help give kids a safe...outlet.”</i>
16 – Has positive impact on son’s overall development	<i>“Scouts keeps him on a great life path.”</i>
17 – Youth learn the difference between right and	<i>“They become more aware of right and</i>

wrong	wrong.”
18 – Keeps youth off of streets	<i>“It helps them stay off street corners.”</i>
19 – Provides youth with access to positive supports and resources	<i>“...I felt at least they have more positive supports...”</i>
20 – Teaches youth to abide by Scout Oath	<i>“...the oath they abide by. It's a code they can follow and apply to their life, not just something they recite at meetings.”</i>
21 – Provides exposure to role models	<i>“Positive role models can have strong influences...”</i>