



GRADUATE SCHOOL
EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

East Tennessee State University
Digital Commons @ East
Tennessee State University

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Student Works

5-2006

Improving Parent and Teen Conflict Resolution Skills: Evaluating the Effectiveness of the "Family Reunion" Crisis Intervention Program.

Carrie Davis Marchant
East Tennessee State University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.etsu.edu/etd>



Part of the [Family, Life Course, and Society Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Marchant, Carrie Davis, "Improving Parent and Teen Conflict Resolution Skills: Evaluating the Effectiveness of the "Family Reunion" Crisis Intervention Program." (2006). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. Paper 2197. <https://dc.etsu.edu/etd/2197>

This Thesis - unrestricted is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Works at Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. For more information, please contact digilib@etsu.edu.

Improving Parent and Teen Conflict Resolution Skills: Evaluating the Effectiveness of
the “Family Reunion” Crisis Intervention Program

A thesis

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Criminal Justice and Criminology

by

Carrie Davis Marchant

May 2006

Larry Miller, PhD., Chair

John Whitehead, PhD.

Michael Braswell, PhD.

Keywords: Teen, Parent, Conflict Resolution, Communication, Connectedness
Relationships, Family Reunion

ABSTRACT

Improving Parent and Teen Conflict Resolution Skills: Evaluating the Effectiveness of the “Family Reunion” Crisis Intervention Program

by

Carrie Davis Marchant

Parent and teen communication combined with relationship skills, and their ability to resolve conflict, need extensive research to help understand if effective intervention can lead to short-term and long-term success in terms of continued crime and delinquency prevention and relationship endurance. This researcher conducted a short-term study by holding a parent and teen communication and conflict resolution intervention program for teens and parents in crisis called Family Reunion. Five classes were held with 102 research subjects. Pre and post treatment questionnaire surveys were administered containing both fixed responses and open-ended questions. Quantitative analysis of the fixed response items indicated positive results of the treatment and analysis of the open-ended items indicated satisfaction with the program for both parent and teen respondents. The research did not address long-term results. In order for long-term effects to emerge, families must continue to practice the skills learned in the communication and conflict resolution skills program.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express her appreciation to the members of her thesis committee: Dr. Michael Braswell, Dr. John Whitehead, and Dr. Larry Miller, thesis chairman, for their constructive comments, guidance, encouragement, and patience throughout the course of this study.

Special thanks are given to Mr. Frank L. Adams, Executive Director of the First Tennessee Human Resource Agency, for allowing this study to take place in cooperation with the Youth Services Division. Without his support this study and thesis would not have occurred.

Much gratitude is given to Beverly Chandley, Doug Fannon, and Dr. Ben Brooks who gave consistent support, patience, friendship, and motivation throughout the study.

Last, but not least, a special thanks to all the families who participated in this study, for it was found that much love availed among these parents and teens. Those families have left a permanent impression upon my life and shall remain in my heart forevermore.

CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	2
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	3
LIST OF TABLES	7
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	8
Background of the Problem	8
Purpose of the Research.....	10
Research Questions.....	11
Basic Assumptions.....	12
Limitations of the Study.....	12
Definition of Terms	13
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	15
Family Communication	15
Monitoring.....	16
Family Conflict.....	17
Equity Theory	19
Social Learning Theory.....	19
Relational Maintenance Theory.....	20
Teen Outcomes	20
Differentiation.....	22
Balanced Relationships.....	22
Supposition from the Researcher.....	24
3. METHODOLOGY	26
Procedure for Collecting Data	27
Subjects	27

	Page
Apparatus	28
Operationalization of Variables	29
Procedures for Treating Data	32
Treatment Summary.....	33
4. ANALYSIS OF DATA.....	34
Analysis of Qualitative Questions	44
Qualitative Question: Would You Recommend this Class?.....	45
Qualitative Question: Describe your Feelings about the Class.....	45
Qualitative Question: Why Would You or Would You Not Recommend this Class?.....	46
Qualitative Question: What was the Most Helpful part of Class?.....	46
Qualitative Question: What was the Least Helpful part of Class?.....	46
Qualitative Question: What was your Evaluation of the Facilitator/Instructor?..	47
Qualitative Question: Any Comments? Your thoughts are Important to Us!.....	47
Summary	47
5. SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS.....	48
Findings of the Quantitative Study	49
Findings of the Qualitative Study	49
Recommendations, Implications and Conclusions	53
REFERENCES	56
APPENDICES	60
APPENDIX A: Referral Request Letter	60
APPENDIX B: Consent Form	61
APPENDIX C: Assent Form	64
APPENDIX D: Pretest.....	65
APPENDIX E: Posttest.....	67

	Page
APPENDIX F: Qualitative Questionnaire	69
APPENDIX G: Treatment Summary	70
APPENDIX H: Teen Panel Preparation Sheet.....	75
APPENDIX I: Parent Panel Preparation Sheet	77
APPENDIX J: Answers to Qualitative Question: Describe your Feelings About the Class.....	79
APPENDIX K: Answers to Qualitative Question: Why Would You or Would You Not Recommend This Class?.....	85
APPENDIX L: Answers to Qualitative Question: What was the Most Helpful Part of the Class?.....	90
APPENDIX M: Answers to Qualitative Question: What was the Least Helpful Part of the Class?.....	95
APPENDIX N: Answers to Qualitative Question: What is your Evaluation of the Instructor/Facilitator?.....	99
APPENDIX O: Answers to Qualitative Question: Any Comments? Your Thoughts are Important to Us!	104
VITA	109

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Distribution of Basic Demographic Characteristics of the Sample	35
2. One Way Analysis of Variance of Parent Conflict Resolution.....	37
3. One Way Analysis of Variance of Teen Conflict Resolution.....	38
4. One Way Analysis of Variance of Parent Communication	39
5. One Way Analysis of Variance of Teen Communication.....	41
6. One Way Analysis of Variance of Parent Connectedness	42
7. One Way Analysis of Variance of Teen Connectedness.....	43
8. Distribution of “Yes” “No” Responses to Recommendation of Treatment.....	44
9. Describe your Feelings about the Class	45
10. Why Would You or Would You not Recommend this Class?	46

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

There is frequent agreement that many teens and parents do not communicate or resolve conflict well (Wierson, Nousiainen, Forehand, & Thomas, 1992). “Studies of parent-child relationships during the adolescent period repeatedly show that the transition into adolescence accompanies some levels of tension between parents and their children and disruption in the family” (Xia et al., 2004, p. 122). Adolescence is a time when teens struggle to understand the newly developing relationship with their parents and come to terms with both democracy and equality in this very intimate relationship. Moreover, teens also struggle at the same time towards understanding the parent’s role as caregiver, director, and overseer.

Both parents and teens have opposing goals in the trading of information, during this period and are in somewhat of a power struggle. “Parents believe in gaining information, which means retention of power and control, while the teenagers believe that the withholding of information ensures their privacy, power and identity” (Solomon, Warin, Lewis, & Langford, 2002, p. 964). Learning to operationalize independence and cohesiveness while considering feelings, attitudes, and behaviors, is difficult for adults, much less adolescents.

An analysis of a longitudinal study on family and households indicates that the parent and teen relationship has long-term consequences for young adults’ well being (Aquilino & Supple, 2001). Family life significantly affects development from infancy

through adulthood that leaves one to consider the domino effect for generations to come.

Effective communication skills are important in all relationships. However, communication plays an essential role in family functioning during adolescence, and a good parent and child relationship cannot be sustained without open and healthy communication (Xia et al., 2004). Research indicates that the two main educators and influences in the lives of our children are their parents and their teachers (ACE Bulletin, June 2004). Therefore, it is crucial that parents can effectively communicate with their children, especially with their youth who are at-risk. Communication skills are imperative to create high quality relationships between parents and teens in order to promote understanding and discussion regarding urgent topics that are vital to this relationship (Jaccard, Dittus, & Gordon, 2000).

Communication and conflict resolution problems inherently appear during parents' and teens' struggle for balance. Adolescents redefine their roles as decision makers and seek equalitarian relationships. Parents resist their teens' newly acquired attitude with a strong stance claiming that it is their domain. Given that conflict is inherent to this relationship does not necessarily mean it is negative to the relationship or to the teen. In fact, conflict can encourage individuation and development of social roles (Xia et al., 2004). Most parents and teens work through these turbulent and emotional times; however, some youth choose to run away from home or divorce their parents (Vogl-Bauer, Kalbfleisch, & Beatty, 1999).

Because many agree that conflict is inevitable in the parent and teen relationship, having the skills to resolve such discord is essential to a successful relationship. Developing conflict resolution skills during a teen's formative years is

especially important because such skills, or the lack thereof, will most likely influence the current and future family relations (Reece-Weber, 2000).

The definition of theory may be different at any given time, depending on where and from whom the definition originates. A general definition of theory is, “a set of interconnected statements or propositions that explain how two or more events or factors are related to one another” (Renzetti, Curran, & Carr, 2003, p. vii). When defining crime as it relates to theory, it could be defined as a phenomenon used to solve a specific problem and could also suggest a solution to a specific problem. Consequently, one will most likely be able to explain a strategy for solving crime from that definition (Renzetti et al.). This study set forth the more prominent theories and strategies and offered understanding of solutions suggested by researchers in the field of social sciences and criminology. The prominent theories discussed are equity theory, social learning theory, relational maintenance theory, extended kinship support, individuation theory, family theory, and differential theory.

Purpose of the Research

A hopeful solution when youth are in crisis is to connect them with their parents and to help them understand the relationship between poor parent and teen communications, the inability to resolve conflict, and the youth’s present and future potential to be involved in crime. The purpose of this study was to determine how effective the parent and teen communication and conflict resolution program, Family Reunion, was in intervening in the lives of troubled teens and families. In addition, this study measured the value of offering such a program or treatment.

Research Questions

The previously written programs and actively being implemented were written with specific goals and were designed to fit the unique and individual needs of at-risk youth and their families. These programs have been in operation in 11 counties in Tennessee and 6 in Virginia. Approximately 3,000 at-risk youth and their families have participated in the various programs. These previously written, piloted, and independently studied programs have documented an 82% to 93% success rate (Holleran, 2004). Based on years of experience in writing successful programs for at-risk youth and their families and on the specific research found regarding the concerns of this thesis, this researcher wrote a parent and teen communication and conflict resolution program to meet those specific needs. The more prominent theories and strategies mentioned were used for this study.

Family Reunion is not intended to be a therapeutic measure but an intervention to facilitate understanding, agreement, and support. All programs written by this researcher used the true facilitation method, where participants are not lectured to, but become one with the facilitator and classroom participants without authoritarian leadership. In experiential learning, participants learn by experience and participation in-hands-on activities. In service learning, participants become more invested in their community by giving time and service, therefore, resulting in their reflecting upon the importance of such. These are all elements of this researcher's programs.

The 6-week, 2-hour sessions (total of 12 classroom hours), along with the assignments performed together at home, may enable parents and teens to learn to work together in order to promote understanding and resolution. It is the assertion of this researcher that families may discover solutions that will enable them to find their way

through the various crises that tend to erupt in the parent/teen relationship, thus ensuring both a present time and life-long flourishing relationship. Also, it is asserted that they may gain an understanding of how poor relationship skills, communication skills, and conflict resolution skills can lead to crime in the lives of the youth presently. Moreover, these skills can progress to more severe issues within their adult lives.

The research hypotheses are as follows:

Ha 1: Upon completion of the Family Reunion Program, parents and teens will report they have better conflict resolution skills and strategies, and improved knowledge of conflict resolution skills.

Ha 2: Upon completion of the Family Reunion Program, parents and teens will report they have improved communication skills.

Ha 3: Upon completion of the Family Reunion Program, parents and teens will report they have improved connectedness to each other.

Basic Assumptions

As is the case with most Likert scale tests, it is assumed for this study that participants on both the pretest and posttest instruments were truthful with their answers. It is also assumed that they understood the questions and the scaling of the pretest and posttest instruments.

Limitations of the Study

This study is not long term and does not include a long-term follow-up. Also, a statistical comparison between parents and teens who have not had a similar treatment

was not feasible for this present study. Lack of a control group necessitates caution in any inference that the treatment was effective.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are meant to enhance comprehension of the program, Family Reunion, and the research that was conducted for this study. They were derived from extensive years of experience by this researcher and not from any additional reference:

Teen - adolescent, youth, young person, juvenile, youngster, minor.

Parent – kinship paternal or maternal father or mother, authority figure, leader, mentor, parent, idol, role model, boss, guide, example, influence, person of influence.

Conflict-difference: a disagreement or clash between ideas, principles, or people.

Resolution- resolving of something: the process of resolving something, the resolution of a difficulty.

Communication - exchange of information: the exchange of information between individuals, for example, by means of speaking, writing, or using a common system of signs or behavior; to have a sense of rapport: a sense of mutual understanding and sympathy.

Connectedness - joined together: joined or linked firmly together; with beneficial social connections: with useful social connections (often used in combination).

Relationships - behavior or feelings toward somebody else: the connection between two or more people or groups and their involvement with each other,

especially as regards how they behave and feel toward each other and communicate or cooperate.

Family Reunion – name of program (treatment) used in this study created by this researcher.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Family Communication

Studies suggest the greater the family communication the less likely teens are to engage in all types of delinquent behavior, and this positive effect could be attributed to the teen feeling that someone cares about his or her problems, his or her life, and his or her future (Davalos, Chavez, & Guardiola, 2005). Once communication and conflict resolution is identified as an issue, one must infer that there is also an issue with the relationship. Differential theory asserts that there needs to be a balance between separateness and connectedness in the parent and child relationship. In order to have sufficient boundaries and autonomy, yet include support and responsiveness, parents and teens need to have tolerance for both individuality and intimacy. A central quality of a good relationship is one in which there is dialogue. “Dialogue relates to the ability of two people to relate to each other in an open manner and to exchange ideas around subjects that are important to them while respecting the unique self of each of them,” (Avnir & Shor, 1998, p. 506). Attention needs to be given to the meaning of “genuine dialogue”. With “genuine dialogue” conversations are based on fairness and trust, and self-worth is actualized and affirmed.

Another issue that must be considered in regard to effective communication skills between adolescents and parents is the amount and quality of time spent together. Fallen and Bowles (1997) indicated in their study that teens and parents are not experiencing close relationships and are not able to communicate. They attributed this to their time together as not being quality time and short in duration. One central issue

to this theme is that teens naturally want to spend more time with their peers and less time with their families. However, some researchers report that this is due to more and more families simply not spending time together, resulting in teens seeking affection, alliance, and support elsewhere (Vernberg, Berry, Ewell, & Abwender, 1993). Linked to this could be Newman's (1989) study that reported diminished closeness and understanding between teens and their parents between the ages 11 and 17. Newman also reported that harmony combined with a sense of closeness within this age group and with younger adolescents resulted in the adolescents experiencing defiance and independence at a high level.

Monitoring

Monitoring knowledge is a concept that is directly linked to communication among teens and parents. Higher levels of monitoring knowledge would imply that parents would be informed of their children's whereabouts, friends, activities, etc. Also parents' lowered levels of monitoring knowledge would imply that they have been kept out of the loop and have little or no knowledge of their teens' activities. Lower monitoring knowledge has been linked to more anti-social behavior in children. Higher monitoring knowledge has been linked to less anti-social behavior. In addition, more time spent with children resulted in reports of more enjoyment between parents and children. Monitoring, not rigid control, has proven to be quite effective during adolescence and generates the vital communication between parents and children allowing parents to stay informed about their children's lives (Laird, Pettit, Dodge, & Bates, 2003).

Families with good communication skills help their youth to have better self-concepts that allow them to better connect with others. They are able to develop the social skills that are positively correlated with self-esteem, coping, well being, and social support. Better family communication inspires adolescents to express themselves and their feelings more clearly as well as mediate the stress that comes with being a teen (Xia et al., 2004).

Family Conflict

“Conflict resolution skills are essential at each developmental stage of life for productive and harmonious relationships. Because individuals are likely to disagree or have differences of opinion, conflict resolution skills are necessary to cope with these differences and remain within a positive relationship” (Reese-Weber, 2000, p. 710). A major factor influencing family functioning and cohesion, particularly during adolescence, is the method used by families in dealing with and resolving disputes. Adolescents who are subjected to high levels of conflict in the home and low levels of support are at increased risk for psychological and behavioral problems ranging from low self-esteem to delinquency (Fondacero, Dunkle, & Pathak, 1998).

For years much attention has been given to the structure of the family as a predictor of delinquency; however, researchers argue that instead, it is the interactional patterns within the family that are better predictors. Davalos et al. (2005) reported that adolescent familial factors like parental influence, acceptance, and coherence all provide useful information regarding the effects of relationships regarding susceptibility to depression, anxiety, and substance abuse.

Greenberger and Chen (1996) attributed depressed mood as the key affective disturbance of normal adolescence and attributed a greater number of stressful life events report to a more depressed mood. When considering other variables such as parenting style, parental warmth and support, control, and depressed mood in adolescence, conflict could prove to be quite volatile. Maternal issues may be more prominent in these situations because conflict with mothers appears to be more common than with fathers (Greenberger & Chen). They attribute these findings primarily due to mothers having greater day-to-day interaction with the teens.

There is also much to be said about the idea of procedural justice in resolving family disputes and family conflict.

Procedural justice refers to the extent to which conflict resolution and other decision-making procedures are judged to be fair by those who are subjected to them. In contrast to distributive justice, which is based on people's concerns about the fairness of decision making outcomes, procedural justice is based on concerns about the fairness of the decision making process. (Fondacero et al., 1998, p. 101)

Research suggests people care as much or more about how they are treated as they do about the outcome. In a study conducted by Fondacero et al. of over 240 families with specific disputes, the results indicated that overall judgments of procedural fairness were positively associated with family cohesion and psychological well being. They also reported that the judgments were negatively related to family conflict and deviant behavior. It appears that being treated in a respectful and trustworthy manner fosters healthy relationships that endorse effective communication.

Keeping in mind that conflict is inherent in the parent and teen relationship, researchers must be mindful not to mistake usual familial conflict with characteristics associated with more serious family matters. Conduct disordered children constitute the largest group of emotionally disturbed youth and are associated with dysfunctional

family environments. They too often have conflict in the home that is not easily resolved. Their essential feature is “persistent pattern of conduct in which the basic rights of others and major age-appropriate societal norms or rules are violated. The behavior pattern typically is present in the home, at school, with peers, and in the community” (Reed & Sollle, 1992, p. 354). These children and families need therapeutic measures to meet their individual and unique requirements. It would, therefore, be immensely important not to overlook teens and their dysfunctional families as the norm in the scheme of adolescence parental growth.

Equity Theory

The teen-parent relationship continually changes over the family life cycle and as this change occurs and children grow older, there may be a greater need for current programs and treatment that work to balance family relationships. Therefore, the importance of a fair, balanced, reciprocated exchange lays the foundation for the equity theory. This theory asserts that each party should be relatively equal in terms of what is given and what is received. This theory also asserts that there is tension when one party feels under-benefited in the relationship and the other is over-benefited. Equity theory has been applauded because it has much causal power in relationships, because most relationships last as long as both parties feel benefited from the relationship (Vogl-Bauer et al., 1999).

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory is one of the more prominent theories and states that new behaviors can be acquired, or learned, through direct experience or through observation

of others. Social learning theory is often called observational learning or modeling. Social learning emphasizes that reinforcement of behaviors can lead to successful or adaptive modes of behavior and can motivate and regulate behavior (Barclay, 1982). It also emphasizes antecedent learning as well as learning by consequences. Aker's social learning theory asserts that peer associations are predictors of delinquency (cited in Chappell & Piquero, 2004). Wren (1982) explains social learning theory as

Not a single theory but a family of theories that attempt to explain behavior primarily in terms of learning and learning in terms of the behaviorist credo, the Law and Effect. Consequently, its discussions of morality are distinguished from their cognitive-developmental and psychoanalytic counterparts by the motivational role it assigns to rewards. (p. 410)

Relational Maintenance Theory

Relational maintenance theory focuses on the actions and activities that sustain the desired relational activities and on sustaining or continuing relationships. Although relational maintenance theory has not been studied in regard to parent and teen relationships and only primarily with couples and friends, Vogl-Bauer et al. (1999) reported that there are those who believe that this theory could apply to this relationship as well. In other words, relational strategies may offer positive undertones and insight into how couples, the parent and teen couple in particular, can work together toward a successful relationship.

Teen Outcomes

The theorists, Lamborn and Nguyen (2004), report that kinship support and paternal warmth are directly associated with teen outcomes such as self-reliance, work orientation, and school function. Others theorists report that the cause of poor relationships among parents and teens originates from the amount of time adolescents

spend with parents as well as the influence of family relations from factors such as intensity, duration, and frequency of conflict. Laird et al. (2003) linked anti-social behavior problems in youth to less enjoyable relationships with their parents and the amount and quality of time they spent together. Also, a study conducted by Fallon and Bowles (1997) reported, “Simply spending time in the company of others may not be satisfying the need for assertive care, or provide the knowledge that care is available, if desired” (p. 2). In his research, Montemayor (1982) used amount of time, as not just being in the same place but “...feeling as if you and the other person were together, with parents, peers, and alone as the variable of interest (cited in Fallon & Bowles, p. 29).

Many also report that disconnected teens who are not experiencing truly connected relationships with their parents end up making bad decisions that, in turn, may lead to living unsuccessful lives. A report from the 15th annual KIDS COUNT data book available online from the Anne E. Casey Foundation, provides a state-by-state statistical portrait of the educational health and economic conditions of American children. The 2004 essay focuses on the increasing number of “disconnected” youth, and indicates approximately 15% of youth, ages 18 to 24, are primarily among this group, and nearly 4 million disconnected youth face a greater likelihood of bad outcomes now and in the future (Mallette, 2004). These results indicate severe implications not just for the youth and their families but also for our society as a whole. This implication is further re-enforced in the same essay with the findings of “nearly one in six young adults is ill-equipped to make the transition to successful adulthood” (Mallette, p. 54).

Differentiation

The concept of differentiation may be deductively inferred to when considering the improvement of the relationship and what may have lead to the relationship issues. Avnir and Shor (1998) report that differentiation is a concept of Bowen's family systems theory that asserts that a family with a high level of differentiation, meaning a family that has a balanced relationship between separateness and connectedness, will thrive. The key here is allowing teens to experience life along with their individuality, while remaining intimately close with their parents. This allows the teen to have a sense of self-esteem and independency while parents foster guidance and support.

Balanced Relationships

Xia et al.'s (2004) study of Chinese adolescence indicated from their results that good parent and child communication was positively associated with cohesion and negatively associated with conflict. Other researchers, asserting differentiation theory, reported that a family with a balanced relationship between separateness and connectedness is a family with a high level of differentiation (Avnir & Shor, 1998). The family systems theory contends that adolescents progress through constant interactions with the family and this theory promotes interactions with larger social systems. Teens who are involved with decision making processes are found to be associated with good outcomes; however, being involved excessively with family decision making can lead to bad outcomes, especially in early adolescence (Xia et al.).

The transition to adulthood from adolescence is developmentally challenging. One has to wonder if parenting practices during adolescence have effects on the well-

being outcomes in young adulthood. Aquilino and Supple (2001) reported a study regarding parents' behavior toward their adolescent children and how it affects them as they move into young adulthood. Their results indicated that a coercive parenting style, high in conflict, was related to lower levels of self-esteem, life satisfaction, and self-efficacy. The results also indicated higher levels of hostile effect and irritability and poorer life adjustment (Aquilino & Supple).

One in four of young adults age 18 to 25 report his or her life satisfaction as low, and over the past 20 years this age group has higher rates of illicit drug use and the highest rate of binge drinking than any other age group (Aquilino & Supple, 2001). Studies indicate that parental behaviors and strategies are critical to both positive and negative development during adolescence (Peterson & Hann, 1999). Results suggest that parents' behavior towards their adolescent has an influence on the well being of the teens as they progress into adulthood. Moreover, parents both directly and indirectly, have an affect on the psychological well-being of the young adult. Aquilino and Supple found "Parenting during adolescence influenced young adults' drinking, smoking, and marijuana use, behaviors that may increase the risk of youth experiencing poorer health and well-being outcomes," (p.290).

In a study from Colorado State University regarding the effects of perceived parental school support and family communication on delinquent behaviors in Latinos and white non-Latinos, the researchers found,

Focusing on parents' involvement may be beneficial to all school-age adolescents. By implementing programs that provide parents with information that will aid them in their ability to communicate and emphasize education, we may be able to prevent acts of delinquency in diverse populations. (Davalos et al, 2005, p. 65)

Another study of sixth graders in conflict resolution role plays with peers, parents, and teachers reported, “implementing programs designed to enhance communication competency during the transition into adolescence may benefit youth by building skills useful for navigating challenges and potential pitfalls of new and varied social contexts that are experienced at this time,” (Borbely, Graber, Nichols, Brooks-Gunn, & Botvin, 2005, p. 289).

Supposition from the Researcher

The supposition of this researcher was that the Family Reunion Program will offer solutions that would connect the youth with their parents when in crisis, and would help them both understand the relationship among poor parent and teen communications, the inability to resolve conflict, and the youth’s present and future potential to be involved in crime. This study used a pretest, a posttest, and the information from open ended questionnaires including “yes” and “no” responses in order to conclude specific conclusions from families in crisis, including both parents and teens. These families attended and participated in the Family Reunion Program, a conflict resolution program that was designed to give both parents and teens the information and skills needed to communicate effectively. This researcher hoped that the difference among the results would demonstrate that families in crisis would have learned to understand each other and their individual and unique needs, learned how to effectively resolve conflict that is inherent in the teen-parent relationship and, thus, become “connected” to each other. Most importantly, it was also the supposition of this researcher that parents and teens would gain an understanding of the correlation among the ability to resolve conflict, unhealthy and non-equitable parent/teen

relationships and communication, and teens who end up having unsuccessful lives as both adolescents and adults. Although this study would not be able to determine if this program and its methods would be successful in the long-term lives of these at-risk youth and their families, without first conducting further research on these subjects at intervals in the future, it was the assumption of this researcher that a large majority of the subjects who completed this program and their stakeholders would have marked improvements in their family relationships. Additionally, these teens would have successful lives in their future with a lower rate of crime than those teens who did not complete the program.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine how effective the parent and teen communication and conflict resolution program, Family Reunion, was when intervening in the lives of troubled teens and families. Moreover, this study measured the value of offering such a program or treatment.

The following questions were formulated for this study:

1. After successful completion of the program, do parent's abilities to communicate with their teen(s) change?
2. After successful completion of the program, do teen's abilities to communicate with their parent(s) change?
3. After successful completion of the program, do parent's abilities to resolve conflict with their teen(s) change?
4. After successful completion of the program, do teen's abilities to resolve conflict with their parent(s) change?
5. After successful completion of the program, do parent's connectedness with their teen(s) change?
6. After successful completion of the program, do teen's connectedness with their parent(s) change?

It was deemed important, for the purposes of this study, that qualitative data be collected in order to collect human emotive and reactive data. Therefore, an open-ended and "yes" "no" questionnaire was also administered at the end of the last session (See Appendix F).

Procedures for Collecting Data

Subjects

The data used for analysis were obtained through self-reported pretest and post-Likert scale tests (See Appendices D & E) taken by 51 parents and 51 teens. The number used to comprise the sample was derived from the total 102 referred to the program during the study period. Youth who have been in some type of trouble, whether from truancy, delinquency, or a relationship with families, who were supervised and assisted by DCS (Department of Children's Services) because of various and specific family problems, were referred to attend and complete the Family Reunion Program. A copy of the informed consent and assent were sent to the referral sources. This researcher prepared and forwarded a cover letter explaining the program and the study (see Appendix A) to the referral sources. The sources then either mailed or hand delivered this information to the families. The cover letter explained that the program was a research project and that there would be no cost for participation in the program during the study period. A small minority of participant volunteers were experiencing crises but were not involved in court, DCS, or another youth agency with authority over the family. Family involved referrals came directly from juvenile judges, juvenile court directors, juvenile probation officers, school's truancy and attendance directors, and school administrators. Referrals for this program resided in the northeast Tennessee and/or Southwest Virginia regions.

This research included certain risks to the research subjects in that they could experience negative feelings that could prove to be somewhat stressful. Depending on whether the subjects were the parents or the teens, they heard their parents or teens talk

about problems or issues that they were experiencing or experienced in their relationships that prompted emotional or uncomfortable thoughts, feelings, memories, etc. The parents and teens were fully informed of all risks because the risks were written and explained on the Consent and Assent forms. The subjects were told that they may be mandated to attend the program by a judge or other official but that they did not have to participate in the study and may stop participation at any time.

Upon entering the program, students and parents were given and identified as P1 and T1, P2 and T2, etc. standing for parent number one and his or her teen. This ensured anonymity occurred both outside and inside of the classroom. Research subjects were known only by their assigned numbers. In order to ensure comprehension by all who participate, the participants, both parents and teens, were given the consent and assent forms. In addition, the facilitator read and explained the forms to the participants who were given the opportunity to ask for clarifications. This form included the confidentiality statements. If parents and teens decided to participate in the study, they were then asked to sign and date the consent and assent forms, thereby indicating agreement to all risks and events.

Apparatus

After the consent and assent forms were collected, those who gave consent or assent were given the pretest. Both the pretest and posttest consisted of a Likert scale, and both were administered to both the parents and the teens in order to obtain quantitative data. The questions were identical for both the parents and teens, with the exception of inserting “parent” or “teen” where applicable. The questions were answered based on the following Likert scale: **1 =Weak; 2 =Adequate; 3 =Good;**

4=Very Good; and 5 =Exceptional. The exact test was administered to the participants both as the pretest and posttest, immediately upon entering the first session of the 6-week program, and then again, upon completion of the sixth and last class session (See Appendices D & E).

During the last class session, along with the quantitative Likert scale posttest, a qualitative questionnaire was administered, with some nominal “yes” or “no” responses and other open-ended questions that allowed the participant to openly express their own individual thoughts, feelings, and opinions of the usefulness of the class, the class contents and topics, and the various methods used in the class. The top box on this qualitative questionnaire read, “Please complete the following evaluation of the entire course you just completed. Please honestly relate your experience, as your honest opinion will only help us in evaluating the program,” (See Appendix F). Immediately following the posttest, the qualitative, the open-ended and “yes” “no” questionnaire, was administered as well (See Appendix F).

Operationalization of Variables

This study included both an independent and numerous dependent variables. The independent variable was the program. The dependent variables, as reported by the participants, are the following: the participants’ improved connectedness to each other and their effectiveness in communication skills, better knowledge from the participants of conflict resolution skills and strategies and improved conflict resolution skills, improved understanding of the participants between effective parent and teen communication and conflict resolution with continued delinquency and crime for teens and later as adults, better understanding from the participants of the importance of

having a balanced relationship and an improved potential to have a balanced relationship, improved amount of time spent together including an improved quality of time spent together and an improved potential to spend quality time together, participants' ability to find solutions in times of crisis, participants' improved potential for growth and understanding of each other, and improved understanding of the participants of the unique and individual needs of each other.

The variables were operationalized by asking respondents to mark answers that most adequately reflected their feelings to the specific questions on both the pretest and posttests, as stated above on the following Likert scale: **1 =Weak**; **2 =Adequate**; **3 =Good**; **4=Very Good**; and **5 =Exceptional**. However, there are 3 basic research hypotheses derived from the 12 of the 13 questions asked during the study. They are categorized as follows:

Ha 1: Upon completion of the Family Reunion Program, parents and teens will report they have better conflict resolution skills and strategies, and improved knowledge of conflict resolution skills. This hypothesis was measured and variables operationalized based on analysis of data comparing the pretest and posttest of both parents and teens from the following questions on the pretest and posttest:

Which response best describes your conflict resolution skills with your teen (parent) (Question # 3 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes the importance of a balanced relationship between teens and parents (Question # 7 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes your potential to have a balanced relationship with your teen or parent (Question # 8 on pretest & posttest)?

How would you describe your and your teen's (parent's) ability to find solutions in times of crisis (Question # 12 on pretest & posttest)?

Ha 2: Upon completion of the Family Reunion Program, parents and teens will report they have improved communication skills. This hypothesis was measured and variables operationalized based on analysis of data comparing the pre- and posttest of both parents and teens from the following questions on the pre and posttest:

How effective are your communication skills with your teen (parent) (Question # 1 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes your knowledge of effective communication and conflict resolution strategies for teens and parents (Question #5 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes your potential for you and your teen (parent) to spend quality time together (Question # 9 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes the amount of time you have spent with your teen (parent) lately (Question # 10 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes the quality of time you have spent with your teen (parent) lately (Question # 11 on pretest & posttest)?

Ha 3: Upon completion of the Family Reunion Program, parents and teens will report they have improved connectedness to each other. This hypothesis was measured and variables operationalized based on analysis of data comparing the pre and posttest of both parents and teens from the following questions on the pretest and posttest:

How well do you understand the unique and individual needs of your teen (parent) (Question # 2 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes your connectedness to your teen (parent)
(Question # 4 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes the potential for growth and understanding
between teens and parents who participate in a teen and parent communication and
conflict resolution program (Question # 13 on pretest & posttest)?

*(Question # 6 on the pretest and posttest was answered by the research subjects
but not used in the data set or operationalized, as it proved to be too confusing to the
research subjects and proved to have no value in regard to the three research
hypotheses).

Recommendation of the program was operationalized by respondents simply
stating “Yes” or “No” on the qualitative questionnaire. Other recommendations and
opinions were derived from the statements made by respondents on the qualitative,
open-ended questionnaire.

Procedures for Treating Data

Review and compilation of data were the first steps in analyzing the data. The
next step was to enter data into a database to begin analysis. STAT PAK to accompany
Education Research Competencies for Analysis and Application was the database used
for the statistical research. In the database, the sample was grouped into parent and
teen categories and each parent or teen was identifiable by a parent or teen number,
family number, county where class was held, gender, and class number sequence. The
pretest and posttest response codes were recorded for all teens and parents for analysis
of data and one-way analysis of variance was used to assess whether there were
significant differences in the means between the pretest and posttest of the teens and

parents. The qualitative data responses were also recorded in this database, including the “Yes” and “No” responses to the recommendation of the program.

Treatment Summary

Parents and teens attended 6, 2-hour sessions, once a week, for 6 weeks. The first session was comprised of introductions, getting consent and assent forms signed, and the completion of pretests. The facilitator gave remarks and instructions for preparation for the next class session. Sessions two and three consisted of the parent and teen panels where both groups spoke openly, safely, and freely about their relationships without interference from the other. Additionally, in session four, parents and teens were introduced to prominent theories, strategies, and models that might shed light on their relationships. In session five, parents and teens worked in groups with other parents and teens, along with a seasoned facilitator, where they began formulating their family contracts and action plans. Session six concluded with parents and teens presenting their family action plans and contracts describing in detail how they planned to obtain success. Finally, the posttest was given immediately following the completion of session six (See the detailed treatment summary in Appendix G).

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

One hundred two research subjects participated in this study, as represented in Table 1. There were 51 parents with 11 (22%) being male and 40 (78%) being female. There were also 51 teens with 22 (43%) being male and 29 (57%) being female. The majority of the sample attended their classes in Greene County; 33 (65%) of the parents and 33 (65%) of the teens were from Greene County. This high rate of attendance at 1 county was more than likely due to the judge and probation officer in Greene County forwarding many referrals to the program during the time period of this study. However, class participants did not have to participate in the study. There were 13 (25%) parents and 14 (27%) teens who attended classes in Washington County and 5 (10%) parents and 4 (8%) teens who attended the program in Sullivan County. Again, this rate was more than likely due to the referrals from the judges, juvenile courts, or social service agencies from within those counties, although some of the participants were self-referred to the program.

Table 1

Distribution of Basic Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

<u>Category</u>	<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Parents		51	50
	Gender		
	Male	22	43
	Female	29	57
	Total Gender	51	100
Teens		51	50
	Gender		
	Male	22	43
	Female	29	57
	Total Gender	51	100
Parents		51	50
	County		
	Greene	33	65
	Washington	13	25
	Sullivan	5	10
	Total County	51	100
Teens		51	50
	County		
	Greene	33	65
	Washington	14	27
	Sullivan	4	8
	Total County	51	100
Total Sample		102	100

The first research hypothesis was: Upon completion of the Family Reunion Program, participants will report better knowledge of conflict resolution skills and

strategies and better conflict resolution skills in general. Therefore, the parent's Likert scale responses to the questions of relevance from the pretest and posttest regarding conflict resolution were compiled and a one-way analysis of variance test was conducted. This hypothesis was measured and variables were operationalized based on analysis of data comparing the pretest and posttest of parents from the following questions on the pretest and posttest:

Which response best describes your conflict resolution skills with your teen (parent) (Question # 3 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes the importance of a balanced relationship between teens and parents (Question # 7 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes your potential to have a balanced relationship with your teen or parent (Question # 8 on pretest & posttest)?

How would you describe your and your teen's (parent's) ability to find solutions in times of crisis (Question # 12 on pretest & posttest)?

The results, as represented in Table 2, indicate that there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest, significance at the .01 level, which supports the hypothesis ($F [1, 101] = 24.52, p < .01$)

Table 2

One Way Analysis of Variance of Parent Conflict Resolution

Parent Conflict Resolution				
	<u>df</u>	<u>Pretest Mean</u>	<u>Posttest Mean</u>	<u>F Ratio</u>
Total	(K-1) = 1 (N-K)=100 (N-1) =101	8.82	11.10	24.52
P<.01				

The teen’s Likert scale responses to the questions of relevance from the pretest and posttest regarding conflict resolution were compiled and a one-way analysis of variance test was conducted. This hypothesis was measured and variables operationalized based on analysis of data comparing the pretest and posttest of teens from the following questions on the pretest and posttest:

Which response best describes your conflict resolution skills with your teen (parent) (Question # 3 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes the importance of a balanced relationship between teens and parents (Question # 7 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes your potential to have a balanced relationship with your teen or parent (Question # 8 on pretest & posttest)?

How would you describe your and your teen’s (parent’s) ability to find solutions in times of crisis (Question # 12 on pretest & posttest)?

The results, as represented by Table 3, indicate that there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest, significance at the .01 level, which supports the hypothesis ($F [1, 101] = 20.78, p < .01$).

Table 3

One Way Analysis of Variance of Teen Conflict Resolution

Teen Conflict Resolution				
	<u>df</u>	<u>Pretest Mean</u>	<u>Posttest Mean</u>	<u>F Ratio</u>
Total	$(K-1) = 1$ $\frac{(N-K)=100}{(N-1)=101}$	8.65	11.02	20.78
P<.01				

The second research hypothesis was: Upon completion of the Family Reunion Program, parents and teens will report they have improved communication skills. Therefore, the parent's Likert scale responses to the questions of relevance from the pretest and posttest regarding communication were compiled and a one-way analysis of variance test was conducted. This hypothesis was measured and variables operationalized based on analysis of data comparing the pretest and posttest of parents from the following questions on the pretest and posttest:

How effective are your communication skills with your teen (parent) (Question # 1 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes your knowledge of effective communication and conflict resolution strategies for teens and parents (Question #5 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes your potential for you and your teen (parent) to spend quality time together (Question # 9 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes the amount of time you have spent with your teen (parent) lately (Question # 10 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes the quality of time you have spent with your teen (parent) lately (Question # 11 on pretest & posttest)?

The results, as represented in Table 4, indicate that there was a significant difference between pretest and posttest, significance at the .01 level that supports the hypothesis ($F [1, 101] = 20.69, p < .01$).

Table 4

On Way Analysis of Variance of Parent Communication

Parent Communication				
	<u>df</u>	<u>Pretest Mean</u>	<u>Posttest Mean</u>	<u>F Ratio</u>
Total	(K-1) = 1 (N-K)=100 (N-1) =101	13.51	17.32	20.69
P<.01				

The teen’s Likert scale responses to the questions of relevance from the pretest and posttest regarding communication were compiled and a one-way analysis of variance test was conducted. This hypothesis was measured and variables operationalized based on analysis of data comparing the pretest and posttest of teens from the following questions on the pretest and posttest:

How effective are your communication skills with your teen (parent) (Question #1 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes your knowledge of effective communication and conflict resolution strategies for teens and parents (Question #5 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes your potential for you and your teen (parent) to spend quality time together (Question # 9 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes the amount of time you have spent with your teen (parent) lately (Question # 10 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes the quality of time you have spent with your teen (parent) lately (Question # 11 on pretest & posttest)?

The results, as represented in table 5, indicate that there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest, significance at the .01 level that supports the hypothesis ($F [1, 101] = 31.21, p < .01$).

Table 5

One-Way Analysis of Variance of Teen Communication

Teen Communication				
	<u>df</u>	<u>Pretest Mean</u>	<u>Posttest Mean</u>	<u>F Ratio</u>
	(K-1) = 1			
	<u>(N-K)=100</u>	13.51	18.22	31.21
Total	(N-1)=101			
P<.01				

The third hypothesis was: Upon completion of the Family Reunion Program, parents and teens will report they have improved connectedness to each other. The parent’s Likert scale responses to the questions of relevance from the pretest and posttest regarding connectedness were compiled and a one-way analysis of variance test was conducted.

This hypothesis was measured and variables operationalized based on analysis of data comparing the pretest and posttest of parents from the following questions on the pretest and posttest:

How well do you understand the unique and individual needs of your teen (parent) (Question # 2 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes your connectedness to your teen (parent) (Question # 4 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes the potential for growth and understanding between teens and parents who participate in a teen and parent communication and conflict resolution program (Question # 13 on pretest & posttest)?

The results, as represented in Table 6, indicate that there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest, significance at the .01 level that supports the hypothesis ($F [1, 101] = 16.09, p > .01$).

Table 6

One Way Analysis of Variance of Parent Connectedness

Parent Connectedness				
	<u>df</u>	<u>Pretest Mean</u>	<u>Posttest Mean</u>	<u>F Ratio</u>
Total	(K-1) = 1 (N-K)=100 (N-1)=101	11.57	14.12	16.09
P<.01				

The teen’s Likert scale responses to the questions of relevance from the pretest and posttest regarding connectedness were compiled and a one-way analysis of variance test was conducted. This hypothesis was measured and variables operationalized based on analysis of data comparing the pretest and posttest of teens from the following questions on the pretest and posttest:

How well do you understand the unique and individual needs of your teen (parent) (Question # 2 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes your connectedness to your teen (parent)
(Question # 4 on pretest & posttest)?

Which response best describes the potential for growth and understanding
between teens and parents who participate in a teen and parent communication and
conflict resolution program (Question # 13 on pretest & posttest)?

The results, as represented by Table 7 indicate that there was a significant
difference between the pretest and posttest, significance at the .01 level that supports
the hypothesis ($F [1, 101] = 30.71, p < .01$).

Table 7

One Way Analysis of Variance of Teen Connectedness

Teen Connectedness				
	<u>df</u>	<u>Pretest Mean</u>	<u>Posttest Mean</u>	<u>F Ratio</u>
	(K-1) = 1			
	<u>(N-K)=100</u>	11.51	14.92	30.71
Total	(N-1) =101			
P<.01				

Qualitative information was collected for analysis, as well as to gauge the
emotive, reactive, and humanistic responses of the research subjects. The open-ended
questionnaire provided valuable information that gave insight that was not available
from quantitative questionnaires. The qualitative questions were asked on the open-
ended questionnaire (See Appendix F) and the answers were provided by both the

parent and teen human research subjects in this program. A brief analysis of the data follows each question. Participant’s answers to each question are found in the Appendices.

Analysis of Qualitative Questions

Qualitative Question: Would You Recommend this Class?

There were 51 parents who participated in the study and all 51 (100%) reported that they would recommend the class to others. Of the 51 parents, 11 (22 %) were male and 40 (78%) were female. Of the 51 total teens, 49 (96%) reported they would recommend the class to others. Of the 51 teens, 22 (43%) were male and 29 (57%) were female. The results are shown in Table 8.

Table 8
Distribution of “Yes” “No” Responses to Recommendation of Treatment

Category	Characteristic	Percent Responded “YES”	Percent Responded “NO”	Sample Size	Sample Percent
Parents				51	100
	Gender				
	Male	11		11	22
	Female	40		40	78
Teens				51	100
	Gender				
	Male	20	2	22	43
	Female	29		29	57
Total Sample				102	100

Qualitative Question: Describe Your Feelings about the Class

Two parent participants and 1 teen participant reported indifferent responses toward feelings about the class and 2 teens reported that the class, program, or treatment was not helpful or it had a negative effect. Of the 51 total parents, 46 (90%) reported positive responses to this question. Of the 51 total teens, 46 (90%) reported positive responses to this question as shown in Table 9. Three parents and 2 teens failed to answer this portion of their questionnaire. The results are shown in Table 9 (See Appendix I for the detailed questionnaire).

Table 9

Describe your Feelings about the Class

	# Positive Responses		# Negative Responses		# Indifferent Responses		# Missing Data		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	Parents	46	90			2	4	3	6	51
Teens	46	90	2	4	1	2	2	4	51	100

Qualitative Question: Why Would You or Would Not Recommend this Class?

Two parent and 2 teen participants reported indifferent responses for reasons about recommending the class. Two teens reported that the class, program, or treatment was not helpful or it had a negative effect. These results are shown in Table 10. Of 51 parents, 45 (88%) reported positive reasons for why they would recommend

the class. Of the 51 teens, 45 (88%) reported positive reasons for why they would recommend the class. There were 4 parents and 2 teens who failed to answer this portion of their questionnaire.

Table 10

Why Would You or Would You Not Recommend this Class?

	# Positive Responses		# Negative Responses		# Indifferent Responses		# Missing Data		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	Parents	45	88			2	4	4	8	51
Teens	45	88	2	4	2	4	2	4	51	100

Qualitative Question: What was the Most Helpful part of Class?

There were two negative comments from teens that stated, as answers to their most helpful part of the class, “I honestly did not see a helpful part” and “Leaving”. Three parents and three teens failed to answer this question on the questionnaire. Otherwise, the remaining participant answers indicated a positive response to the helpful parts of the class.

Qualitative Question: What was the Least Helpful part of Class?

Out of the 90 responses, 48 (53%) reported that there was not a least helpful part of the class. There were two negative statements from teens that stated, as answers to their most helpful part of the class, “I honestly did not see a helpful part” and

“Leaving”. Six parents and seven teens failed to answer this question on the questionnaire.

Qualitative Question: What was your Evaluation of the Facilitator/Instructor?

Two parents and four teens failed to answer this question on the questionnaire. One teen reported a negative response about the facilitator. Out of 51 parents, 49 (96%) parents had positive responses about the facilitator. Out of 51 teens, 46 (90%) teens had positive responses about the facilitator.

Qualitative Question: Any Comments? Your thoughts are Important to Us!

There was one negative statement from a teen that stated, as his “any comments”, “I hope I don’t get in trouble for speaking my mind”. Sixteen participants, 7 parents and 9, teens failed to answer this question on the questionnaire. The overall qualitative study indicated positive results from the treatment

Summary

The purpose of the qualitative data was to measure the emotive, reactive, and humanistic responses of the research subjects and to see how these responses corresponded with the hypotheses. Based on the analysis of the qualitative data, it appears that the data support the hypotheses.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This study was based on the following three research hypotheses:

1. Upon completion of the Family Reunion Program, parents and teens will report they have better conflict resolution skills and strategies and improved knowledge of conflict resolution skills.
2. Upon completion of the Family Reunion Program, parents and teens will report they have improved communication skills.
3. Upon completion of the Family Reunion Program, parents and teens will report they have improved connectedness to each other.

The Family Reunion Program offered a venue where the hypotheses could be studied. Research subjects, parent and teen teams, were solicited to participate in the 6 week, 12-hours of classroom time treatment. Research subjects were given pertinent information about participation in such a volunteer study. Parents were given the opportunity to consent to participate in the study and to give assent for their teens to participate as well. Families who had previously reported issues with conflict, communication, connectedness, or crisis between parents and teens from the counties of Washington, Greene, and Sullivan were solicited through different sources. These sources included the juvenile courts, schools, department of children's services, and word of mouth. After completion of the consent and assent forms, participants were administered the pretest (See Appendix D for pretest). Research subjects participated in the 6 week- 12-hour classroom program and completed various extra-curricular

activities. After successful completion of the program, they were administered the posttest (See Appendix E for the posttest).

One hundred twenty-three individuals initially participated in one or more sessions: 57 families, 62 parents and 61 teens; however, 46 families, 51 parents and 51 teens successfully completed the program or treatment. This means 62 parents and 61 teens began the treatment and participated to some degree, but only 51 parents and 51 teens attended each and every session and completed all coursework and requirements of the program; the sample included 102 participants. Fifty-one of these 102 participants were parents, 11 male and 40 female. The sample also included 51 teens, 22 male and 29 female. Eighty-three percent of those who began the treatment successfully completed the program.

Findings of the Quantitative Study

The pretest and posttest questions were divided according to the three hypotheses and tested by one-way ANOVA. The ANOVA tests compared the means of both the pretest and posttest of parents and teens, and it is important to consider that each of the ANOVA tests indicated a significant effect. This was a strong indication that the treatment worked in all areas. Results for both parents and teens for all research hypotheses indicated acceptance of the research hypotheses.

Findings of the Qualitative Study

The majority of the feedback from the open-ended questionnaire were quite sanguine and also indicated that treatment had positive results. There were 51 parents out of the 102 research subjects, and all parents stated that they would recommend the

program. Out of the 51 teens who were subjects, 49 said that they would recommend the program; however, 2 said that they would not. Because there was very little variation in responses, there was no attempt to scale the qualitative, open-ended responses.

The qualitative data proved to be quite valuable as they presented a different perspective. Qualitative information was collected for analysis in order to gauge the emotive, reactive, and humanistic responses of the research subjects. The open-ended questionnaire provided valuable information that gave insight not otherwise available from quantitative questionnaires. From the questionnaires, the results indicate that the parents and teens responded that they felt very good about the ability to express themselves during the parent and teen panels. Some of the responses were:

“This is great for allowing parent/teen to be able to express feelings in a ‘safe’ environment.

“To develop good communications skill, and equally important to learn to listen to our teenagers.”

In response to the most important parts of the class were the following responses:

“I believe it made my teen more aware of how her behavior hurt me when it was presented in front of others.”

“The panel questions-it really gives you a chance to face things you otherwise would never know.”

“Letting the teens voice their opinions and letting the parent’s voice their’s, and having each side listen to the other.”

“The teen/parent panel-I think was very good to allow for honest communication.”

“Learning to listen; your turn will come wait patiently and listen when it’s not your turn.”

“Because you can say things you might not say to each other but in class you can and they seem to listen.”

This particular activity was designed to promote active listening skills on the behalf of both the parents and teens. Both were required to practice active listening skills when either the parent or teen presented issues of concern regarding their relationships during their panels. Parents and teens made several comments about learning to listen on the questionnaire. Some of the comments made in regard to the most helpful part of the class were:

“Reminding parents and teens to listen effectively to each other.”

“Talking with others & listening.”

“Learning to listen; your turn will come, wait patiently and listen when its not your turn.”

“Learning to listen and understand.”

Both parents and teens were able to discuss their troubles or feelings in a safe environment, and either the parent or teen had to listen quietly, while taking notes, making occasional eye contact, and presenting pleasant body language. One teen said, “This is great for allowing parent/teen to be able to express feelings in a ‘safe’ environment.” Many techniques were learned during these panels that promoted both effective communication and conflict resolution skills.

The comments on the questionnaires indicate decisively that many of the parents and teens simply did not communicate prior to the treatment, and this treatment forced them to do so. The comments from both parents and teens included responses that they

felt good about communicating. It was evident from their comments that they were more concerned about communication and that they learned more about how to communicate effectively as a result of the treatment; this confirmed the quantitative results.

Comments like the following were common:

“I really enjoyed the class I learned a lot about our problems & how we don't communicate & how we can learn to.”

“It has helped us communicated well.”

“I found this to be so helpful to our relationship and how to communicate. I hate to see the class end.”

“I highly recommend this class. It helps you to be more open and communicate more.”

Many comments were made regarding the contract the parents and teens formulated during the last two sessions in groups and then presented as parent and teen teams. They also were required to spend some time at home working on objectives and goals of the contract that would enable them to communicate better, resolve conflict more effectively, and become and remain more connected to each other. This activity was designed so that they would engage as stakeholders in their own futures. The comments from the subjects indicated that they learned from this endeavor. One teen said, in response to the most helpful part of the class, “when we did the contract” and two parents simply responded, “the contract”.

As the results of the tests indicate, 100% of the parents and 96% of the teens recommended the class to others. This is remarkable, especially considering that the majority of the subjects, although volunteers for the research project, were mandated

through a court, school, or department of children's service program to take the treatment. Often people who are ordered to attend treatment or a program may have some resistance that might continue throughout the study, and in turn this resistance could have negative implications on the measuring instrument.

One comment made in several of the questionnaires from the parents and teens was that they no longer felt alone since their participation in the treatment. It appears from the comments by the parents and teens that prior to this program, they experienced a sense of feeling alone. Furthermore, the comments indicated that this class opened their eyes to the fact that they were not unique and that they were not the only ones having parent and teen crises. One parent said, "It makes you realize you are not the only one that has these problems." Another said, "Helpful suggestions, know there is someone else same problem." Several seemed to share these same feelings. This information seemed to provide a sense of relief to the families with the realization that they were not the only parent and teen family with communication, conflict resolution, and connectedness problems. Moreover, respondents often commented that the program was helpful. A couple of parents said, "I feel that it has really made a difference" and "I felt good about the class and looked forward to the next class." Perhaps they were not able to articulate the specific reasons for the helpfulness but were able to speak of a sense of goodwill, support, and concern.

Recommendations, Implications, and Conclusions

Prior research indicated, "Open communication with parents has a strong positive correlation with family satisfaction" (Jackson, Bijstra, Oostra, & Bosma, 1998). However, the current study is not long-term and such implications cannot be predicted

based on the short-term positive results. Although some may infer that a program with positive results would have some long-term effect, a longitudinal study should be conducted for such measures.

It is important to take into account when considering the results that most of the parent research subjects were female and that many of the teen's fathers had chosen not to participate in the program for any number of reasons. Possibly, the fathers were simply not actively involved in their teens' lives. This issue alone could include an entire study regarding the effects of single mother parenting or the effects of an absent male or father figure in the home. It would be interesting to compare communication patterns and communication effectiveness in single-parent families versus two-parent families. Such research that studied single-parent families with communication problems following a marital breakup could be beneficial to researchers.

Furthermore, it is important to consider that each of the ANOVA tests that compared the means of both pretest and posttest of parents and teens indicated significance at the .01 level. This is a strong indication that the treatment worked in all areas. The tremendous positive feedback must also be considered from the qualitative data and only reinforces the results of the quantitative study. The implications of continued use of a treatment such as Family Reunion could prove to be quite remarkable and valuable in the lives of teens and parents in crisis. Because it is well known among professionals as well as the community that family life significantly affects development from infancy through adulthood, a treatment like Family Reunion, should be considered as the positive domino effect that could transpire for generations to come.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that with a study of this nature it is best to use a control group for comparison. Unfortunately, securing the information for a control group for this study was not feasible. When considering the results of this study, one must take this fact into consideration, as the confidence level in the results is lessened due to this fact.

The positive results of this study suggest that this program and treatment continue as well as more in-depth research, both short and long term. It is imperative that marketing and support of this program continue in order for such an endeavor to occur. The argument that this treatment is making a difference in the lives of at-risk parents and teens, cannot be substantiated unless the program is put into effect for an extended period of time, coupled with analyses measuring its success or failure.

One key factor that surrounded the success of this program or short-term treatment was the community support that will either make or break the program in the long term. Without considerable cooperation from non-profit “people serving” organizations, schools, courts, department of children’s services, other youth serving organizations, and responsible parents and caregivers, effective results from programs like Family Reunion, will be minimized.

REFERENCES

Ace Bulletin. The principals of effective communication with parents. June 2004 i119
10-10.

Avnir, Y., & Shor, R. (1998). A systematic qualitative evaluation of levels of
differentiation in families with children at risk. *Families in Society: The
Journal of Contemporary Human Services*, 79, 504-524.

Aquilino, W. S., & Supple, A.J. (2001). Long-term effects of parenting practices
during adolescence on well-being outcomes in young adulthood. *Journal of
Family Issues*, 22, 289-309.

Barclay, L. (1982). Social learning theory: A framework for discrimination research.
Academy of Management Review, 7, 587-594.

Borbely, C. J., Graber, J. A., Nichols, T., Brooks-Gunn, J., & Botvin, G. J. (2005).
Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 34, 279-291.

Chappell, A.T., & Piquero, A.R. (2004). Applying social learning theory to police
misconduct. *Deviant Behavior*, 25, 89-108.

Corel WordPerfect (Version 10) [Computer software]. Ottawa, ON: Oxford University
Press. (Thesaurus and Dictionary)

Davalos, D. B., Chavez, E. L., & Guardiola, R. J. (2005). Effects of perceived parental
school support and family communication on delinquent behaviors in Latinos
and White non-Latinos. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*,
11(1), 57-68.

- Dougherty, L.R., Klein, D.N., & Davila, J. (2004). A growth curve analysis of the course of dysthymic disorder: The effects of chronic stress and moderation adverse parent-child relationships and family history. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 72*, 1012-1022.
- Fondacero, M.R., Dunkle, M.E., & Pathak, M.K., (1998). Procedural justice in resolving family disputes: A psychosocial of individual and family functioning in late adolescence. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence 27*, 1001-1020.
- Fallon, B.J., & Bowles, T.V. (1997). The effect of family structure and family functioning on adolescents' perceptions of intimate time spent with parents, siblings, and peers. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 26(1)*, 25-44.
- Greenberger, E.G., & Chen, C. (1996). Perceived family relationships and depressed mood in early and late adolescence: A comparison of European and Asian Americans. *Developmental Psychology, 32*, 707-717.
- Holleran, D. (2004). *Moral kombat report in brief*. Unpublished report written for Moral Kombat.
- Jaccard, J., Dittus, P.J., & Gordon, V.V. (2000). Parent-teen communication about premarital sex: Factors associated with the extent of communication. *Journal of Adolescent Resource, 15*, 187-208.
- Jackson, S., Bijstra, S.J., Oostra, L., & Bosma, H. (1998). The home. *Public Health Council Agency of Canada, Division of Childhood Adolescence, 3*.
- Laird, R.D., Pettit, G.S., Dodge, K.A., & Bates, J.E. (2003). Change in parents' monitoring knowledge: Links with parenting, relationship quality, adolescent beliefs, and antisocial behavior. *Review of Social Development, 12*, 401-

420.

- Lamborn, S.D., & Nguyen, D-G. T. (2004). African American adolescents' perceptions of family interactions: Kinship support, parent-child relationships, and teen adjustment. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 33, 547-559.
- Mallette, M. (2004). Most kids doing better; number of at-risk teens growing. *Teacher Librarian*, 32(1), 54.
- Newman, B.M. (1989). The changing nature of the parent-adolescent relationship from early to late adolescence. *Adolescence*, 24, 915-925.
- Petterson, G. W., Bush, K.R., & Supple, A. (1999). Predicting adolescent autonomy from parents: Relationship connectedness and restrictiveness. *Sociological Inquiry*, 69, 431-457.
- Petterson, G.W., & Hann, D. (1999). Socializing parents and families. In M. Sussman & S.K. Steinmetz (Eds.), *Handbook of marriage and the family* (pp. 471-506). New York: Plenum.
- Reed, R., & Solle, D. L. (1992). Conduct disordered children: Familial characteristics and family interventions. *Family Relations*, 41, 352-358.
- Reese-Weber, M. (2000). Middle and late adolescents' conflict resolution skills with siblings: Association with interparental and adolescent conflict resolution. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 29, 697-720.
- Renzetti, C.M., Curran, D.J., & Carr, P.J. (eds.). (2003). *The theories of crime: A reader*. Des Moines, IO: Allyn & Bacon.
- Sillers, A. (2005). Change communication and understanding parent- adolescent relationships. *Human Communication Research*, 31, 102-129.

- Soloman, Y., Warin, J., Lewis, C. & Langford, W. (2002). Intimate talk between parents and their teenage children: Democratic openness or covert control? *Sociology*, 36, 964-965.
- Vermberg, E., Berry, S., Ewell, K., & Abwender, A. (1993). Intimacy and intergenerational aid and contact among mothers and daughters. *J. Marriage Family* 45, 841-848.
- Vogl-Bauer, S., Kalbfleisch, P.J., & Beatty, M.J. (1999). Perceived equity, satisfaction, and relational maintenance strategies in parent-adolescent dyads. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 28(3), 27-29.
- Wierson, M., Nousiainen, D., Forehand, R., & Thomas, A.M. (1992). Parent-adolescent congruence on decision-making and its relation to adolescent adjustment. *Journal of Family Violence*, 7(1), 9-10.
- Wren, T. E., (1982). Social learning theory, self-regulation, and morality. *Ethics*, 92, 409-424.
- Xia, Y.R., Xie, X., Zhou, Z., DeFrain, J., William, M.H., & Combs, R. (2004). Chinese adolescents' decision-making, parent-adolescent communication and relationships. *Marriage & Family Review*, 36, 119-146.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Referral Request Letter

MORAL KOMBAT 8

Family Reunion

You and your child have the opportunity to attend, at no cost, the Family Reunion Program. During this Summer/Fall term, it will be offered at no cost, as this is Program is part of a research project by Carrie Davis Marchant, the Director and author of the MK Programs. Family Reunion is a conflict resolution and communication skills program for parents and teens. You have been scheduled through the juvenile court, truancy board, or other juvenile organization.

Please read carefully and sign the attached consent and assent forms prior to entering the program. You and your teen will be research subjects while participating in the Program.

Your class will be held at First Tennessee Human Resource Agency in the Professional Office Building at 112 E. Myrtle Avenue, Johnson City, Tennessee 37601, on the 4th floor, suite 400, at the Power Board in Greeneville, or The Kingsport Civic Center, 1550 Fort Henry Drive, Kingsport, Tennessee 37664, depending upon which county (Washington, Greene, or Sullivan) that you are referred from or reside at. Your course sessions will be on the following dates and times, therefore, make all necessary arrangements to be there.

County of Class: _____

Class Dates and Time: _____

It is imperative that you and your teen attend all sessions. If you have additional questions, please contact the primary researcher, Ms. Carrie Davis Marchant at (423) 461-8244, Office Number (423) 483-8404, Cell Phone Number, or (423) 282-8620, Home Number.

APPENDIX B

Consent Form

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

East Tennessee State University
Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology

Parent and Teen Communication and Conflict Resolution—
A Hopeful Approach to Reduce Juvenile Crime and Positively Affect the
Juvenile's Adult Life

PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR

Carrie Davis Marchant, Criminal Justice and Criminology Graduate Student

Dr. Larry Miller, ETSU Professor

This Informed Consent will explain your involvement as a research subject. It is important that you read this form carefully and then decide if you want to participate and allow your teen to participate in the study as well.

PURPOSE

This is a study about parent and teen conflict resolution, communication, and relationships. We want to know if parents and teens who participate in a conflict resolution, communication skills, and effective relationships program will give both the parents and teens the tools they need to effectively resolve conflict and improve communication skills and relationships. We also want to know if participation in a program will provide adequate education and awareness of the importance of cultivating these skills in parent and teen relationships.

DURATION

The Program will consist of twelve hours of classroom participation, simultaneously with the teens and their parents. The sessions will be held once a week, 2 hours each, for 6 weeks. Classes will be held during the summer of 2005, either at the First Tennessee Human Resource Agency, 112 E. Myrtle Avenue, Suite 104, Johnson City, Tennessee, the Kingsport Civic Auditorium, 1550 Fort Henry Drive in Kingsport, Tennessee, or at 311 Tusculum Blvd., Suite 2, Greeneville, Tennessee 37743. If scheduling does not permit, classes may have to be held at other locations within the three cities.

PROCEDURES

The study will be explained to both parents and teens. The parent(s) will be asked to read and sign a consent form and the teen will be asked to read and sign an assent (or agreement). A pretest will then be given, asking questions in regard to the purpose of the research, with a likert scale representing the answer that most closely relates to their feelings on the particular question. The parent(s) and teens will then participate in the Program with the primary facilitator being a researcher from East Tennessee State University. In this program, parents and teens will come together. The first class has an icebreaking start where families begin to communicate. On the next session, participants will talk about issues with communicating and resolving conflict with their parents. The kids talk about their feelings and parents are allowed to ask questions. The kids speak for 1 ½ hours. They are advised they are in a safe environment. At the end of the class, the parents can ask for clarification. At the next class, parents are the panel. They answer the same questions the teens answered before and the teens get to ask questions.

On the fourth class, participants will talk about various things found in the research that would help them in details. The fifth class begins by making a plan to help them communicate and resolve conflict. Participants will also design a contract and the teen and parent sign it together. Lastly, they will present their contracts and their plans to the rest of the groups. The groups can ask questions on how they are going to resolve conflict. To insure anonymity, (both parent and teen participants) will be given a number and will only be identified in the research as the number assigned. There will be no way, outside from the primary researcher's knowledge, that the parents or teens name can be connected with the responses. On the last class session, both parents and teens will be asked to answer the same exact questions as given on the pretest. Then the results will be compared and a statistical study will be prepared. Both parents and teens will be asked to answer another class evaluation during the last class session that asks both open ended and "yes" and "no" questions. Please remember that both parents and teens may refuse to take part in this study.

POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Some negative memories or feelings come from the parent and teen's conflict, communication issues, and unsteady relationships. Talking about these subjects may be stressful for both you and your teen. This method is anonymous and confidential. Participants may refuse to answer any questions that make them feel uncomfortable.

POSSIBLE or PERCEIVED BENEFITS

Some research indicates that parents and teens that are having conflict and problems, and participate in an education and intervention program designed to meet their specific needs, go on to have lifelong flourishing relationships. You are not guaranteed that you will have the same or similar result. This study may show that such programs are helpful in the relationships with parents and teens and may, therefore, help other parents and teens in the future.

FINANCIAL COSTS

It will not cost participants anything to take part in this study.

ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES

There are no other research procedures.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants may refuse to take part in the study at any time. Participants may be taken out of the study at any time, if we decide it is not in our best interest to continue (i.e., if we believe participants are being uncooperative or untruthful). Participants may be taken out of the study if it ends early. Your choice to participate or not participate in this research study will not be reported to the Department of Children's Services or any other referral sources.

CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS

If you have any research-related questions or problems at any time, you may reach Dr. Larry Miller at (423) 439-5964 or (423) 439-5346. You may reach the Chairman of the Institutional Review Board at 423-439-6055 if you have questions about participant's rights as a research subjects.

INJURY/COMPLICATIONS

Under Federal Law, subjects are entitled to follow-up treatment if an injury occurs. Compensation may or may not be payable in the event of physical injury arising from this study under Federal Law.

COMPENSATION FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT

East Tennessee State University (ETSU) will pay the cost of emergency first aid for any injury that happens as a result participants being in this study. They will not pay for any other medical

treatment. Claims against ETSU or any of its agents or employees may be made to the Tennessee Claims Commission. These claims will be settled as provided under TCA Section 9-8-307. For more information about claims reach the Chairman of the ETSU/VA Institutional Review Board at 423-439-6055.

CONFIDENTIALITY

A copy of the records from this study will be stored in the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology at East Tennessee State University for at least 10 years. The results of this study may be published and/or presented at meetings without releasing participant's names as subjects. The ETSU IRB, VA Research & Development Committee, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services and (individual or department) has access to the study records.

SUBJECT CONFIDENTIALITY

Each subject/participant's right to privacy will be maintained. The research information will be available for inspection by study related personnel, the ETSU IRB or the Criminology Department). All information about the subject/participant's will be treated confidentially and will not be revealed, except as noted above, unless required by law.

CONSENT

By signing below, I certify that I have read or have had this document read to me. I will be given a signed copy. I have been given the chance to ask questions and to discuss our participation with the investigator. I freely and voluntarily agree to participate in the study and research project.

SIGNATURE OF LEGAL GUARDIAN

DATE SIGNED

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

DATE SIGNED

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS

DATE SIGNED

APPENDIX C

Assent Form

Assent to Participate in a Research Study

East Tennessee State University
Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology

Parent and Teen conflict resolution, communication and relationships

My parents (or legal guardians) have consented to allow me to take part in this study.

This study is about parent and teen conflict resolution, communication and relationships.

A Researcher from the college will be overseeing the study. The Researcher seeks to find if parents and teens who participate in a conflict resolution, communication skills, and effective relationships program will give both the parents and teens the tools they need to effectively resolve conflict and improve communication skills and relationships. We also want to know if participation in a program will provide adequate education and awareness of the importance of cultivating these skills in parent and teen relationships.

I am being asked to take part in this study because I was referred and volunteered to participate in this program in either Sullivan or Washington County.

I understand the program will last 12 hours, with 2-hour sessions being held once a week for 6 weeks.

I will be asked personal questions about myself, family life, feelings, conflicts, and relationships with parents. Answering them may be stressful and uncomfortable because they are so personal.

I can refuse to answer any question. I agree to take part in this study.

DATE SIGNED

DATE SIGNED

DATE SIGNED

APPENDIX D

Pretest

Date of Pretest _____, 2005

Teen # _____

Parent # _____

**Pretest for Participation in
Teen and Parent Conflict Resolution, Communication, and
Relationship Program**

East Tennessee State University
Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology

The following likert scale, pre and post test, is used for the research project of ETSU Criminal Justice and Criminology Graduate Student, Carrie Davis Marchant and her Thesis Committee Chair, Dr. Larry Miller, ETSU Professor. **Only answer the following questions if you have read, consented, and signed the consent to participate in research study form.**

Please answer the following questions with the responses that **most accurately** reflect your feelings.

1. How effective are your communication skills with your teen (parent)?

Weak Adequate Good Very Good Exceptional

2. How well do you understand the unique and individual needs of your teen (parent)?

Weak Adequate Good Very Good Exceptional

3. Which response best describes your conflict resolution skills with your teen (parent)?

Weak Adequate Good Very Good Exceptional

4. Which response best describes your “connectedness” to your teen (parent)?

Weak Adequate Good Very Good Exceptional

5. Which response best describes your knowledge of effective communication and conflict resolution strategies for teens and parents?

Weak Adequate Good Very Good Exceptional

6. Which response best describes the *relationship between* effective teen and parent communication and conflict resolution, with continued delinquency and crime for teens and later as adults?

Weak Adequate Good Very Good Exceptional

7. Which response best describes the importance of a balanced relationship between teens and parents?

Weak Adequate Good Very Good Exceptional

8. Which response best describes your potential to have a balanced relationship with your teen or parent?

Weak Adequate Good Very Good Exceptional

9. Which response best describes the need for parents to gain information about their teens to maintain power and control in the relationship?

Weak Adequate Good Very Good Exceptional

10. Which response best describes the need of teenagers to withhold information from their parents to ensure their privacy, power and identity?

Weak Adequate Good Very Good Exceptional

11. Which response best describes the potential for you and your teen (parent) to spend quality time together?

Weak Adequate Good Very Good Exceptional

12. Which response best describes the amount of time you have spent with your teen (parent) within the last 3 weeks?

Weak Adequate Good Very Good Exceptional

13. Which response best describes the quality of time you have spent with your teen (parent) within the last 3 weeks?

Weak Adequate Good Very Good Exceptional

14. How would you describe your and your teen's (parent's) ability to find solutions in times of crisis in the parent/teen relationship that could ensure both a present time, and life-long flourishing relationship?

Weak Adequate Good Very Good Exceptional

15. Which response best describes the potential for growth and understanding between teens and parents who participate in a teen/parent communication and conflict resolution program.

Weak Adequate Good Very Good Exceptional

APPENDIX E

Posttest

Date of Posttest _____, 2005 Teen # _____
Parent # _____

**Posttest for Participation in
Parent and teen Conflict Resolution, Communication, and
Relationship Program**

East Tennessee State University
Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology

The following likert scale, pre and posttest, is used for the research project of ETSU Criminal Justice and Criminology Graduate Student, Carrie Davis Marchant and her Thesis Committee Chair, Dr. Larry Miller, ETSU Professor. **Only answer the following questions if you have read, consented, and signed the consent to participate in research study form.**

Please answer the following questions with the responses that **most accurately** reflect your feelings.

1. How would you rate your ability to effectively communicate with your teen (parent)?

___Weak ___Adequate ___Good ___Very Good ___Exceptional

2. How would you rate your ability to understand the unique and individual needs of your teen (parent)?

___Weak ___Adequate ___Good ___Very Good ___Exceptional

3. How would you rate your ability to resolve conflict with your teen (parent)?

___Weak ___Adequate ___Good ___Very Good ___Exceptional

3. How would you rate your “connectedness” to your teen (parent)?

___Weak ___Adequate ___Good ___Very Good ___Exceptional

4. How would you rate your knowledge of effective communication and conflict resolution strategies for parents and teens?

___Weak ___Adequate ___Good ___Very Good ___Exceptional

5. How would you rate the *relationship between* effective parent and teen communication, conflict resolution, and continued delinquency and crime, for teens who are currently in crisis and then later on in their lives as adults?

___Weak ___Adequate ___Good ___Very Good ___Exceptional

6. How would you rate the importance of a democratic, fair, and balanced relationship between the parent and teen?

___Weak ___Adequate ___Good ___Very Good ___Exceptional

7. How would you rate your potential to have a relationship with your teen (parent) that is democratic, fair, and balanced?

___Weak ___Adequate ___Good ___Very Good ___Exceptional

8. How would you rate the importance of parents gaining information about their teens while maintaining power and control in the relationship?

___Weak ___Adequate ___Good ___Very Good ___Exceptional

9. How would you rate the importance of teenagers withholding information from their parents in order to ensure their privacy, power and identity?

___Weak ___Adequate ___Good ___Very Good ___Exceptional

10. How would you rate the potential for you and your teen (parent) to spend quality time together?

___Weak ___Adequate ___Good ___Very Good ___Exceptional

11. How would you rate the amount and quality of time you have spent with your teen (parent) lately?

___Weak ___Adequate ___Good ___Very Good ___Exceptional

12. How would you describe your and your teen's (parent's) ability to find solutions that will enable each of you to find your way through the various crises that tend to erupt in the parent/teen relationship that could ensure both a present time and life-long flourishing relationship?

___Weak ___Adequate ___Good ___Very Good ___Exceptional

13. What is your perception of the potential for growth and understanding with your teen (parent) when participating in a teen (parent) communication and conflict resolution program, whether attendance and participation is voluntary or mandated?

___Weak ___Adequate ___Good ___Very Good ___Exceptional

14. How would you rate your understanding of the correlation between teen's and parent's inability to communicate, inability to understand each other's unique and individual needs, inability to effectively resolve conflict, inability to have an equitable relationship, and teens who continue to be involved in crime and other activities that lead to unsuccessful lives as teens and later on as adults as well?

___Weak ___Adequate ___Good ___Very Good ___Exceptional

APPENDIX F

Qualitative Questionnaire

**Youth Services Division
MORAL KOMBAT
STUDENT COURSE EVALUATIONS**

Student

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

MK Course Completed: (circle one)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

Instructor/Facilitator: _____

County of Class: _____

Please complete the following evaluation of the entire course you just completed. Please honestly relate your experience, as we are very interested in your response!
--

Describe your feelings about the class:

Would you recommend this class to others?

Yes	No
------------	-----------

Why? _____

What was the most helpful part of the class? _____

What was the least helpful part of the class? _____

What was your evaluation of the Facilitator/Instructor? _____

Any Comments? Your thoughts are important to us! _____

APPENDIX G

Treatment Summary

A summary of the 6, 2-hour sessions follow:

Session 1 Why Are We Here?

Facilitator assigns numbers to participants, gives introduction to program and research study, has participants sign consent and assent forms (Appendices B and C), explains and clarifies the pretest/posttest (Appendices D and E), has participants complete the pretest, and continues with experiential learning techniques for classroom introductions. Participants are informed about the teen panel session for the following week and the teens are asked to complete the questionnaire (Appendix G) prior to the next session (for homework) regarding their feelings about their relationships, conflict resolution skills, and conflict resolution skills with their parents, and be ready to present the answers at the next class session. The class ends with discussion on inspiring quotes that relate to the subject at hand.

Session 2 Teen's Panel – We Are Just Misunderstood!

The class begins with an experiential learning activity that promotes communication and allows openness. A discussion is held regarding the importance of adhering to specific rules while the teens present from the panel regarding their feelings. Parents are not allowed to question their teens during their presentations. After the presentations, parents are allowed to ask teens other than their own, questions for clarification firstly, and then parents are allowed to ask for clarification from their own teens, but are not allowed to argue the subject or give opinions. A discussion is held and activities to promote understanding of the difference between valid and invalid criticism, the importance of giving compliments and seeing the good are done and discussed. The group session will end on a positive note—with a reminder to all parents that they are not to question or harass their teen about what was said during the teen panel. If the

parent asks them to participate in a conversation regarding the matter, they may, but must promise to participate in the conversation only if they can remain positive and calm.

Participants are informed about the parent panel session for the following week and the parents are asked to complete the questionnaire (Appendix I) regarding their feelings about their relationships, communication skills, and conflict resolution skills with their teens, and be ready to present the answers at the next class session. In sessions two and three participants will actively practice conflict resolution skills.

Session 3 Parent’s Panel – Who Are You And Where Did You Come From?

The class begins with a discussion on the feelings about last week’s teen panel. After the discussion comes to a close, the participants are reminded of the same pre-panel rules that applied to the teen discussion and the importance of adhering to those rules. The parent panel presents and are asked to adhere to the same post-panel rules as stated in the previous week’s teen panel. The class ends with discussion on inspiring quotes that relate to the subject at hand.

Session 4 What’s Up?

The class begins with a discussion of last week’s parent panel. After the discussion has come to a close, the facilitator introduces the most prominent theories, strategies and models that may shed light upon their personal relationships. As each are introduced, a discussion is held before moving on to the next. The theories, strategies and models that are introduced and discussed are as follows:

Equity Theory—This theory asserts that most relationships endure because both parties benefit from it. Therefore, under-benefited and non-equitable relationships have been reported to cause problems in many relationships. This generally means that the “give and take” is off balance—in other words, one is giving much more than the other one to the relationship (Vogel-Bauer, Kalbfleisch, & Beatty, 1999).

Relational Maintenance Theory—This theory focuses on sustaining or continuing relationships by specifically looking at the actions and activities that are used to sustain the desired relationship. Relational maintenance strategies tend to have positive undertones such as positivism, openness, assurance, networks, shared tasks, and therefore, may offer insights in how parents and adolescents reinforce one another and their relationships. (Vogl-Bauer, Kalbfleisch, & Beatty).

Extended Kinship Support—Kinship support has been associated with youth’s educational achievement, especially their decision to pursue higher education. It seems plausible that older teens would benefit directly from extended kin relationships (Vogl-Bauer, Kalbfleisch, & Beatty).

- **The Mediation Model**—According to this model, kinship support is related to positive parenting practices, which in turn, are associated with positive youth adjustment. This model suggests that the key importance of kinship support is to provide support to parents, thus allowing them to engage in more adaptive parenting practices (Vogl-Bauer, Kalbfleisch, & Beatty).
- **The Compensatory Model**—This model proposes that kinship support is especially beneficial when youth are lacking a positive relationship with their parents. Compensation refers to the process of receiving alternative social provisions to make up for less supportive relationships. This model supports the view that social provisions can be derived from multiple relationship sources (Vogl-Bauer, Kalbfleisch, & Beatty).
- **The Enhancement Model**—This model proposes that kinship support would further enhance the development of youth who already benefit from positive relationships with parents. This model suggests that teens with supportive parents benefit more from additional social support than those who have less positive relationships with their parents. The foundation of positive

support serves to prime the youth to advance even further in their development when additional supportive contexts and relationships are encountered (Vogl-Bauer, Kalbfleisch, & Beatty).

Social Learning Theory—This theory suggests that individuals may imitate the conflict behaviors of other family members with higher status leading to consistencies between individuals. Parents who model an attack style of conflict resolution during inter-parental and parent—adolescent disputes may be imitated by adolescents, and likewise for those who model compromise and cohesion (Vogl-Bauer, Kalbfleisch, & Beatty).

Systems Theory—This theory proposes that what occurs in one family subsystem is likely to occur in other family subsystems. Family subsystems are thought to be arranged in pecking order, in which parents have more influence than adolescents and their siblings (Vogl-Bauer, Kalbfleisch, & Beatty).

It Takes A Village to Raise A Teen—This is not a theory, but a concept that many believe has been put aside in today's time. In some parts of the world this is still a major part of the community's job to help raise all the kids around them. It is said, that a caring community can make the critical difference between failure and success in the lives of today's at-risk teens. It has also been said that no teen can have too much guidance and too much love.

Individuation Theory—This theory provides a framework for the best parenting practices while children move through adolescence. Children are to individuate from their families to begin to establish a degree of freedom and functioning on their own, including with their peer groups, in workplaces, at school, and in romantic relationships. There is a shift from dependence on parents to a more autonomous relationship and the parents are to be supportive of such while at the same time remaining connected and supportive emotionally. Parents are to continue monitoring and supervising their adolescents to ensure that they do not develop

problematic behaviors, but do so without becoming authoritarian and controlling or emotionally detached or unsupportive (Vogl-Bauer, Kalbfleisch, & Beatty).

Session 5 The Plan Begins—Establishing Equitable Relationships!

In this session parents and teens begin to formulate personal action plans that may include family meetings, conflict resolution plans, etc. with forms provided for suggestions on how to plan and formulate individualistic action plans. They are encouraged to look at the theories and strategies from the previous session to see if they apply to their own relationships. The facilitator will provide guidance and suggestions. The facilitator will also provide clarification as they begin their plans. They will work in groups of two parents and two teens, with volunteer facilitators assisting each group. Each subgroup of parent and teen will take their plan home, work together to plan and discuss specifics of their proposed plan so that they can provide details of such plans and be ready to present at the next class session.

Session 6 This Is What We're Going Do About It! The Plan Is Revealed.

In this last class session, the parent and teen subgroups will present their plans in detail. Upon completion of their plans and family contracts, the rest of the class may ask for clarification or make suggestions. They will sign and date their contracts. Each subgroup will be mailed a copy of their contracts in 30 days, again in 60 days, and then again in 90 days. The class is reminded of the mailings of the copies of their contracts and that they are to look over their contracts each time they receive them to see how well they are adhering to the plan and contract. The posttest (Appendix E) and open-ended evaluation (Appendix F) will be administered. The participants will receive a word of encouragement from the facilitator and the participants will then be dismissed.

APPENDIX H

Teen Panel Preparation Sheet

Defining Issues (Step 1)

Teens will sit at the front of the room in chairs facing the rest of the audience. Each teen will take turns introducing themselves and their parents. The facilitator will ask the following questions and each teen will answer in detail. (Note that parents are simply serving as listeners and are not allowed to speak or question their own teen. Parents may ask other teens questions, as long as they are not threatening or in some way derogatory.)

(You may make some notes if you want, or speak from your heart.)

**Each teen will answer the question before proceeding to another one.

Explain your relationship with your parent(s).

2. Do you think your parent(s) really listen to you or understand you?

3. If you could ask your parents to change one thing about how they interact with you, what would it be?

Do you feel that you and your parents have an equitable relationship—meaning, do you give more to the family and the relationship, does your parent(s) give more to the family and the relationship, or do you think you both give to the family and to the relationship in an equal manner?

How does it feel when one side or the other is getting more from the relationship and the other is giving more? How does each person in the relationship feel?

How do each of you react to conflict? (Do you yell, slam doors, and shut each other out by retreating into your own rooms for sanctity— or do you simply not communicate at all?) How do you feel about your reactions to conflict?

What would you like to say to your parents in this safe environment that you would not normally say to them at home or in a hostile environment?

APPENDIX I

Parent Panel Preparation Sheet

Defining Issues (Step 1)

Teens will sit at the front of the room in chairs facing the rest of the audience. Each teen will take turns introducing themselves and their parents. The facilitator will ask the following questions and each teen will answer in detail. (Note that parents are simply serving as listeners and are not allowed to speak or question their own teen. Parents may ask other teens questions, as long as they are not threatening or in some way derogatory.)

(You may make some notes if you want, or speak from your heart.)

**Each teen will answer the question before proceeding to another one.

Explain your relationship with your parent(s).

2. Do you think your parent(s) really listen to you or understand you?

3. If you could ask your parents to change one thing about how they interact with you, what would it be?

Do you feel that you and your parents have an equitable relationship—meaning, do you give more to the family and the relationship, does your parent(s) give more to the family and the relationship, or do you think you both give to the family and to the relationship in an equal manner?

How does it feel when one side or the other is getting more from the relationship and the other is giving more? How does each person in the relationship feel?

How do each of you react to conflict? (Do you yell, slam doors, and shut each other out by retreating into your own rooms for sanctity— or do you simply not communicate at all?) How do you feel about your reactions to conflict?

What would you like to say to your parents in this safe environment that you would not normally say to them at home or in a hostile environment?

APPENDIX J

Answers to Qualitative Question: Describe your Feelings about the Class

(The following answers for Appendices J through O are written as verbatim comments.)

1. Good.
2. I really enjoyed the class I learned a lot about our problems & how we don't communicate & how we can learn to.
3. Apprehensive at first but as classes progressed I am now thankful we are involved in this class.
4. I came into class with the hope of helping Toby and me to be able to talk without yelling or fighting and it has worked wonderfully.
5. I feel that it has really made a difference.
6. I felt good about the class and looked forward to the next class.
7. Emotional.
8. I feel all teens & parents & facilitator were connect & involved at every meeting (that's rare). Good things & bad things were mention & good suggestions given by all.
9. Very helpful.
10. I felt that I have learned quite a few things that I didn't realize know about.
11. It helped us to see our problems.
12. I really enjoyed it, have learned a lot from it and knows other people has the same problems we do.
13. I think this has been a wonderful class. It makes you realize you are not the only one that has these problems.
14. It has helped us a lot! And we have gotten along better!

15. Well good help me a lot.
16. It has helped us communicated well.
17. I think the class is very helpful in many ways. Parents and teens need communication skills to make the relationship better.
18. I think that the class has a tremendous capacity to help those who truly want a better relationship.
19. I feel the class is worth going to. No parent wants a horrible relationship with their child.
20. Good class-very helpful instructor.
21. I think this would be great before problems start.
22. It's good at the end.
23. Productive for most. You have to put something into it to get anything out of it!
24. I'm glad to have this time with Michael one on one.
25. It's very open and informative of others aspect or dealing with teens opinions.
26. This was the best time I have invested in my 15 year relationship with Kara. All parents of teens should take this class before kids become teens. I have done lots of programs and this was worth all the money I wasted on the rest.
27. I do think the classes were a bit long, but I have seen improvement in the teens in the class and with some of the parents. I think it can help people who are open to it.
28. I looked forward to this class & to work with my daughter to achieve a better understand. & to comm. more effect. The class goals & objectives are great. Unfortunately, the goal hoped for was not achieved, but not due to instructor or class material.
29. I really enjoyed Carrie & taught us quite a lot. We learned a lot about our teens as well as ourselves
30. It was a very good well thought out class.

31. I found this to be so helpful to our relationship and how to communicate. I hate to see the class end.
32. I feel that the class was very understanding and full of lots of information for me in understanding relationships.
33. Wonderful, very eye opening, an enjoying experience. I really learned a lot about myself and my teens during this program.
34. I really enjoyed the class-realizing other parents and teens are going through the same things you are.
35. It was a great class.
36. I really glad that I came to this class. It really help me with my child.
37. It is a very good class.
38. I feel this class can be a wonderful intervention for parent teen conflict resolution.
39. Class was very effective, opened more doors for my family. Enjoyed it very much-thank you.
40. I was hesitant about the help provided but now feel all could benefit from interaction help to from better conditions to build family relations on.
41. I thought it was great.
42. Very good.
43. Kids should not play around and pass notes while class is going on.
44. It was ok for some not for all.
45. It gives the parents & children the opportunity to speak freely.
46. Maybe my daughter and I will be ale to talk to each other better.
47. Excellent Class
48. Great help recognizing conflict and helping resolve source.

49. I really enjoyed the session and all the people.
50. I felt I learned a lot from this class, it was worth it.
51. This class was exceptional for my Mom and my relationship. I hope all parents & teens can take this class & it help them like it did me and my Mom.
52. It helps to talk about the problems you have.
53. This class is very helpful in resolving conflict.
54. It was a very good class it helped out a lot.
55. I thought it was a waste of time, but now I think it's great!
56. I liked it and I think more families should try it.
57. The class was awesome and helped out.
58. I feel this class has helped me see things into our relationship I would not see. Would like it to continue.
59. It helped out us a lot and it helped me get along with my sisters.
60. It is a great class and I think anyone that tries can have a great relationship if they follow their contract.
61. It has helped, I like it, and Carrie is a very nice person.
62. My mom and I had pretty much already fixed the problems between us before this class; but there were still little things that this class helped with.
63. I think the class is very good but, I think it would have helped if my dad wouldn't have had to work.
64. It helped me and my Mom. We talk now and do things together.
65. Happy because I got to talk to my Mom.
66. Very good and helpful.
67. I really liked it. I thought that it helped a lot, not just us, but others in the class! Thanks!

68. I think that this class is really good for parents and teens. It helped me and my Mom!
69. I loved it now that I've went threw it. I loved expressing myself in this class about our relationship.
70. It was very fun and it helped a lot.
71. I feel indifferent to the class. I wouldn't recommend or recommend because of my indifferent feelings.
72. I loved it. And I'd do it all over again.
73. I enjoyed the class, it's awesome!
74. It is a great class & very helpful!
75. It's a very good class. It has helped my relationship with my mom a lot better.
76. I loved it.
77. I enjoyed it.
78. I think that this can and will really help teens & parents
79. This class is very helpful!
80. It is great.
81. It is cool.
82. It was good.
83. To start I think it was exceptional. I'm really glad there is a class.
84. It's ok. It helps for people who really need it.
85. It's helpful in many ways.
86. It was honestly a waste of my time. This should have no been required.
87. It's a good, helpful class to most people.
88. I found this class interesting and informative.
89. It is all right.

90. I think it was a waste of time. (I had to leave work very early to come.)

91. That I did not benefit from at all. We did not have problems.

92. Excellent

93. Good.

94. It is a very good class.

95. It was great...I think it really helped.

96. It was good.

97. Very proud if I had a scale of 1-10 it would be a 9.

98. It was good for me and I feel better.

APPENDIX K

Answers to Qualitative Question: Why Would You or Would You Not Recommend This Class?

1. Will help others if they are willing to work it
2. I think it opened both our eyes and made us think in these short weeks we are more open.
3. You can all learn to communicate better.
4. Because you can say things you might not say to each other but in class you can and they seem to listen.
5. It really helps. I didn't think that it would be but it has been a huge difference in our life.
6. The open communication and encouragement is so needed.
7. It has helped us in many different ways.
8. Helpful suggestions, know there is someone else same problem.
9. It helps parents and teens have a better relationship.
10. Because it was very helpful.
11. Resolve their conflicts.
12. It is a very good class for troubled families.
13. I would highly recommend this class. It helps you to be more open & communicate more.
14. It has helped us and it can help other people!
15. Show me how to get along with my daughter.
16. It's very helpful for the parents and the teens.
17. Because I totally feel that it helps those who admit that they need and what help.

18. If you can't communicate effectively, the entire family suffers. Parents & teens MUST talk & understand each other.
19. If participants are willing to work at it-if the situation applies to the problem.
 - a. Reassurance-you are not alone.
 - b. Easy as learning to control your tongue.
20. Because it helps.
21. Any resource to assist teens & parents with gaining better relationships should be pursued.
22. To spend productive time together.
23. It helps ones that don't know how to truthfully communicate a person's thoughts about different situations.
24. This will turn the light back on at the end of the tunnel that burned out.
25. I believe it made my teen more aware of how her behavior hurt me when it was presented in front of others.
26. This is great for allowing parent/teen to be able to express feelings in a "safe" environment.
27. Because Carrie is a very well teacher & families could use the class as there children turn into teens.
28. Because it is a good class.
29. If you have a struggling relationship you can learn excellent skills to assist in making it better.
30. I believe it will help others with these problems.
31. I don't think anyone from any walk of life with children could walk away empty handed.
32. It really helps to be able to open up and discuss your problems-feeling no one is going to judge you-but there to help.

33. Because it teaches you a lot.
34. I know now that there are other parents with almost the same problem.
35. Because it teaches you how to deal with problems better.
36. It helps parents & teens understand each other.
37. It was very helpful to see some things we may not have realized before=eye opener.
Gives a sense of healing. Helped w/ opening up.
38. All people need some help and it is always nice to know you're not alone in your problems.
39. It helps you and teen to communicate a lot better.
40. Helps to bring things out into open & see answers.
41. I think if both parties can participate it also can be a great help and experiment.
42. Gives you a chance to hear other problems and how they deal with them.
43. Depends on the problem the families are experiencing.
44. It gives you the chance to talk.
45. To develop good communications skill, and equally important to learn to listen to our teenagers.
46. To help others to come to grips with problems.
47. It was helpful to me and I'm sure it can help others.
48. Because it helped me & my Mom grow in our relationship.
49. Like I said before, my Mom & I are closer now than ever because for this class. It was awesome!!
50. Knowing your not the only one. Helps.
51. It is helpful.
52. Cause it helps.

53. I can help relationships tremendously.
54. It helped us out a lot.
55. Anyone with parent/teen problems could be helped attending the class.
56. Better insight into family relationship.
57. It helps out.
58. Because I feel it helps.
59. Because it may help them, like it has helped me and my Mom.
60. Because this class really could help other families in need just as long as they are willing to go through it.
61. B/c it could save a lot of family's relationships.
62. It's a good experience. And we'll help your relationship.
63. It helps you on your family trouble.
64. Because it will help you.
65. It helped a lot w/ everybody.
66. Because it helped me. I hope that this class will help other families.
67. It WORKS! If you work it- it works.
68. Because it really helps the people in it. It brought us together.
69. I feel indifferent to the class. I wouldn't unrecommend or recommend because of my indifferent feelings.
70. Because it helped a lot and it was fun.
71. Because the way it helped me and my Mom, I want it to help other parent/child relationships.
72. Because it will quickly resolve their problems as well.
73. Because if it can help me it can help them.

74. If it can help my mom & I, it can help anyone.
75. It helped us a lot.
76. Cause it can really help.
77. It could help so many families.
78. Cause it teaches you respect for parents.
79. It is helpful.
80. Because it would help more people.
81. Because it shows how to deal with your feelings.
82. Because of the fact it helps.
83. Because it's very helpful in many ways for a relationship.
84. This class was too over run with emotion. People need to harden up a little bit and stop being wusses.
85. It can help even if you don't think it can or want to be there.
86. It might help that family.
87. Let them. Do we mine.
88. I could have made a total of \$90 if I was not in this room.
89. It does help if you need it.
90. Good to know that other families have problems too.
91. Other teens it could help.
92. It is a good class.
93. I think it helps.
94. Because it's a good class.
95. Because it helped me and my Moms relationship a lot.
96. It's helped me.

APPENDIX L

Answers to Qualitative Question: What was the Most Helpful part of Class?

1. Learning to communicate.
2. I think the 2nd class when Laura told me how she felt & learning to listen.
3. Class participation-teen and parent board.
4. Learning to communicate and know we can be honest with each other and learning to trust.
5. I don't know it all helps.
6. Discussion of resolution of conflict and issues.
7. We all basically had the same problems.
8. It's always good to know different things that can help if the need arises down the road.
9. Showed us how to communicate better.
10. Everything, it's very good and I think everyone with children should take this class.
11. Discussing problems
12. Recognizing our problems.
13. The parent-teen panel. It helped me to be able to tell Brooks my feelings about a lot of things.
14. When we did the contract.
15. The way she helped us together.
16. Helping us communicate and getting along better.
17. Hearing the honesty in the teens and the caring of the parents and knowing we are not alone.
18. Having had to communicate more effectively.
19. All of it!
20. Learning to communicate.

21. Hearing my child voice her frustrations with me as a parent.
22. Everything.
23. Reminding parents & teens to listen effectively to each other.
24. Talking with others & listening.
25. To find humor in every day situations.
26. The panel questions-it really gives you a chance to face things you otherwise would never know.
27. Letting the teens voice their opinions and letting the parents voice theirs, and having each side listen to the other.
28. The teen/parent panel-I think was very good to allow for honest communication.
29. Learning to listen; your turn will come wait patiently and listen when its not your turn.
30. The teachers being reasonable.
31. I can't pinpoint one thing being most helpful, but the teen and parent panels were helpful for our relationships.
32. Other classmates and talking about our problems. Help one another to understand better.
33. The focus on the communication techniques, and the openness of all involved. (Teens and parents).
34. Communication.
35. Talking to other parents and understanding what they go through and trying to find issues.
36. Listening to other people that are having similar problems, and gives you a better understanding.
37. The contract.
38. Open discussion in a safe environment.

39. Seeing interaction between the adults, the teens, and then how they interacted together and as groups.
40. Getting into groups and discuss things. Even though I was very nervous person about getting u front & talking.
41. Carrie and her helpers were very good at what they do.
42. I think listening to the problems and watching as same who were angry ended up solving problems together was great.
43. Getting to talk and listen.
44. Listening to the teenagers talk and seeing the similar ideas & actions shared by them.
45. Showed me there was hope.
46. THE CONTRACT.
47. Breaking down aspects of conflict.
48. Everything. Listening to other's problems from other's parents.
49. Realizing our issues.
50. Carrie teaching/helping us to communicate better and helping us understand each other a lot better.
51. Everyone being understanding.
52. Learning to listen and understand.
53. Everything.
54. The STOP part.
55. Recognizing our problems.
56. Recognizing our problems.
57. Teen & parent panel.
58. Talking my problems.

59. Discussing our problems and her having me say things I normally couldn't.
60. Helping us learn to communicate.
61. Pretty much listening to all the other families and realizing that we aren't the only family with problems. That made me stop & think.
62. Everything to us really.
63. When she was like Lisa you and your daughter need to talk and fix your relationship.
64. That I can talk to my family.
65. Everything.
66. Talking it out and helping understand each other.
67. The part when we had the teen parent panel.
68. When we had homework. Sec. 3.
69. When me and Mom talked about our real problems.
70. Teen & parent panels and the open discussions.
71. I met people and learned from their mistakes.
72. The parent/teen panel.
73. Communication.
74. Discussion-- letting my feelings get out.
75. Talking & expressing our feelings.
76. Getting to tell true feelings.
77. Contract.
78. Understood where parents are coming from.
79. All.
80. Getting to talk to my Mom more.
81. Help us talk out our problems.

82. Seating down and talking out our problems.
83. Explaining your issues.
84. Learning to resolve conflicts.
85. Leaving.
86. All of it.
87. Being able to speak without my Dad trying to fight me and cuss at me like normal.
88. Done things together.
89. I honestly do not see a helpful part.
90. Spending time together.
91. Being able to listen to the kids open up to us.
92. Help me to open up.
93. The communication skills.
94. The controlled discussions.
95. Hearing others.
96. The homework.
97. To have more connection.

APPENDIX M

Answers to Qualitative Question: What was the Least Helpful part of the Class?

1. Thought it was all helpful.
2. I think it was all helpful.
3. There was not any part that wasn't helpful.
4. There was not anything that didn't help, or that someone couldn't benefit from.
5. None.
6. Nothing.
7. Communication because we do communicate often.
8. I don't know if anything that wasn't.
9. Taking off work.
10. None
11. When we did the heart.
12. Nothing.
13. N/A
14. Nothing.
15. Having a husband and son who made it into a joke and neither admitted that help was needed and certainly not wanted.
16. Some people get embarrassed. Don't want to air problems in public.
17. Thought it was all helpful-will work if both parties are willing to let it.
18. I didn't see one.
19. Nothing.
20. Hearing about what happened in other classes!
21. Homework.

22. I tolerate teens talking down to parent instead of just stating how they felt about situation.
23. It was not long enough.
24. I didn't like being up in front of people too much. I don't like drawing attention to myself.
25. All of the class was helpful. I'd like to see more panel discussions for teens/parents.
26. ??
27. Nothing it was all very helpful.
28. There was nothing that wasn't helpful.
29. N/A All was "Great".
30. I don't think anything about the class applies to the least of any aspect of the classes goal.
31. I can't think of one.
32. There wasn't anything that didn't help.
33. N/A
34. Being on a Friday night.
35. Downtime-during the class downtime. (I don't mean breaks.)
36. Need to give information for other programs-not sure part of program but could not find something that could not be helpful.
37. Nothing.
38. It was all good.
39. Kids need to have more to work with a lot seem not interested in trying to make it work.
40. Time consuming.
41. Unknown.
42. None of it--all was helpful.
43. The leadership elements talking about how lousy the men are who were previous husbands.
44. Not any.

45. Session 3-I wasn't here.

46. N/A

47. There was no least helpful part of this class. Everything that we were helped from beginning to end was tremendous.

48. The class was good.

49. N/A. Everything was very helpful.

50. Nothing. It was all good.

51. Nothing, it all helped me.

52. Taking up or Saturday.

53. Taking time out of our Saturday.

54. None-everything was excellent.

55. Having my sisters telling me they miss and love me.

56. Making us get up in front of the class.

57. N/A

58. Other families not wanting to talk to us about their own problems, so they may get help to fix them.

59. Nothing-it all helped.

60. Really there wasn't a least helpful part of this class.

61. Nothing.

62. Nothing.

63. None of it was not helpful. I thought it wouldn't be.

64. When we...well...none really.

65. Over talking & overly explaining.

66. I don't think there is any part not helpful.

67. The banana activity.
68. Everything was "most helpful".
69. It was all very helpful.
70. Everyone complaining and its Friday night.
71. First day.
72. Nothing.
73. being bored.
74. Taking up time on Saturday.
75. None.
76. Saying our names.
77. Getting in front of the class and talking.
78. Panels.
79. The first day.
80. Unknown.
81. I don't know.
82. The time wasted.
83. The homework.
84. Too short.
85. When I had to go up in front of class.
86. Their assent on.
87. Nothing.
88. Nothing
89. The interruptions and too much talking.
90. Not one.

APPENDIX N

Answers to Qualitative Questions: What is your Evaluation of the Instructor/Facilitator?

1. She was very nice & helpful.
2. I think Carrie was extremely a good & helpful in answering questions.
3. Did great job! We all learn better when the (teacher) has been in our shoes before.
4. Carrie is awesome. She keeps your attention and understands because she knows what we are going through-been there!
5. A wonderful person who has a kind heart & wants to help.
6. Great.
7. Very helpful.
8. Carrie's class was very helpful. We got to hear different comments & opinions. She showed us she really does care about individuals.
9. She was very nice and helpful.
10. They were excellent.
11. She cares about other people, she has been where we are now.
12. She is a very sweet, lovable, caring woman.
13. I truly feel that Cary cares about everyone in the class. She is truly a great person. Keep up the good job.
14. It was good. I thought she was good.
15. Teach me what I was doing wrong.
16. Great.
17. Carrie is wonderful! I would probably use her in the future. She has been a great listener and teacher. I thank her for caring.

18. Portrayed a clearly effectious passion to the program, clearly dedicated to helping parents and teens that want to help to help themselves.
19. She is wonderful! Capable & Understanding.
20. Very helpful & knowledgeable. Very caring & wonderful person. I really liked all of them.
21. Excellent. My evaluation is she has been there and so have I.
22. She was helpful and nice.
23. Carrie is an excellent instructor. Her heart is really committed to helping teens & parents overcome obstacles in their lives.
24. Always listening and giving good advice.
25. She's very open and honest about each situation. She's real.
26. Carrie makes you see that someone can survive and not die from raising a teen.
27. I believe she did a good job but is a little long winded. I like getting to the point and getting to what we are doing.
28. Carrie you are great-you have experience in living & you are an effective/good/facilitator as you show such love & care for each individuals, esp. teen.
29. Between 1 to 10 and 10 is the best Carrie earns an 11.
30. It was good.
31. Carrie is awesome! She isn't instructing just for her books or education, she has experienced the same issues with one of her children.
32. I loved her impact and understanding. She is a "Wonderful Person".
33. Wonderful person, has a great ability to help others see the best in themselves, and realize the potential of success for them and their teens.

34. I think Kerri & other facilitators were most helpful-very easy to talk to-very pleasant personalities-and showed love and concern to all.
35. They were great.
36. I really like her. She helped us out so much.
37. It was awesome-wonderful-full of life to help others.
38. Great! Wonderful! You know your stuff!
39. Excellent ability to clarify which is very important and ability to maintain a disciplined 3 hour meeting with some who are not respectful-very impressive.
40. Very helpful and patient to others needs and feelings.
41. She was or is a very understanding person.
42. Exceptional.
43. She did a pretty good job.
44. Good.
45. Exceptionally well informed and attempted to help "each" person.
46. She was a very good talker. I would recommend her.
47. Truly caring and interested in the lives of troubled teenagers and the relationships they have with their parents.
48. Great.
49. Great.
50. All of them were helpful, knowledgeable, & did a great job!
51. She was such an inspiration to me-for the most part she really turned my life around.
52. Good. Nice Lady.
53. She is so great. I really, really liked her.
54. She's great.

55. She's great!!
56. She is cool.
57. She's awesome & she cares.
58. Excellent-knows where we are coming from.
59. Nothing.
60. She was great. She really helped us.
61. Good (Excellent)
62. Carrie is a wonderful, sweet, and understanding woman. She really cares about other people & their family (including her own.)
63. She done a great job!
64. The woman listened and explained great.
65. Nothing but I bye the class.
66. She was nice and she helps people.
67. She was great! She helped a lot and she's a great person.
68. I liked her. I hope other people will have her.
69. She's wonderful at what she does. And she let's us know she cares about us and the program.
70. Really good. She hit the points and worked on them to destroy the problems.
71. Sincere.
72. The teacher taught it great. She explained it well & it helped.
73. She's amazing, one of the nicest ladies I've ever met.
74. She was awesome".
75. She was very nice, opened about things, and very helpful.
76. I loved all of them. I feel I can tell them anything & they will always be there 2 help.

77. Very caring & polite.
78. Very caring & helpful.
79. She was very helpful and informative.
80. She was awesome.
81. Carrie is cool.
82. She is cool.
83. That there are here to help us and they are all very good hearted people.
84. Good, be more aggressive about putting the point across.
85. Very good instructor; wonderful.
86. She has good means, but she needs to do this on a strictly volunteer basis.
87. Good.
88. I think she was a great instructor.
89. It was good for people.
90. She had her heart in the right place, but the program is not effective to me.
91. Nice, funny.
92. Carrie has a great head on her shoulders and a big heart. She has done a great job of putting her ideas in a form to help others.
93. Very Understanding.
94. Very good.
95. She was awesome.
96. Was a good instructor-very good.
97. Great and wonderful. It helped a lot.

APPENDIX O

Answers to Qualitative Question: Any Comments? Your Thoughts are important to Us!

1. Keep helping others. Great job!
2. You really helped us a lot. The class really opened my eyes--Thank you.
3. I think we were placed here for a reason and this class can only better parents and teens!
4. This program is wonderful. It has brought to our family and love between my daughter and me. I would recommend it to any family having problems.
5. This class is great & the people help make it that way to! Thanks for the help. We needed it!
6. This class should have been available a long time ago!
7. I recommend this class to every parent and teen who have problems.
8. I feel this class is very helpful-if both really care-are willing to honestly participate.
9. Just keep up the good work.
10. I need help, emotionally and would like to know about a program for support.
11. I think this class has been very helpful & interesting.
12. I wish there were more classes like this one for parents & teens. It has been very rewarding.
13. No!
14. So glad I got to take it.
15. This course will help parents and teens tremendously. Learning to communicate is the key! Thank you very much!

16. I see the potential for teaching parents and teens to get along better. I just wish I had been introduced to this long ago. I wish it could be a mandatory class taught in high school freshman year.
17. When I first came to the class I was angry. I have to say I really enjoyed it. Thank you Carrie!!
18. Keep up the good work. May God bless you and your work.
19. Mandatory as a parent should learn to talk with teenagers before they become one, and it may alleviate problems in the future.
20. I think people said it stupid at first and it really helps at end.
21. Note: The skills learned in this class must be practiced over time to become effective- some of the positive results are not yet accounted for. If taken seriously this class can be helpful. It is good to hear other parents/teens share their experiences.
22. I think you are good at having a class in this area.
23. You should have a MK support group, for parents to have each other to lean on. Never stop doing this! You touch so many people's lives. Thank You! This class has given me hope that I thought was not there. I showed Kara emotions I never knew I could.
24. I think it helped some people more than others. I can see bigger changes in some parent/teen groups than others. I think it may come down to how much do you want to save your relationship.
25. Please continue to provide this teaching for the community it is so needed to help teens & parents to better & more caring families.
26. Carrie done a very well job. She listened without judging or forming her opinion. She likes to talk with us is right up her alley. Magnificent job well done.
27. We will miss you!

28. I feel if everything went great. I would love to come in to help if/when needed.
29. I would love to help if I could in any way with future classes or any aspect of any MK classes. This class has truly inspired a deeper interest and concern for the future of teens today... that I think will grow into a deeper desire to want to change.
30. Great program-would highly recommend to anyone.
31. Everyone was very helpful and nice and no one judged.
32. I think this was the best think that we could of done for us.
33. Just keep up the wonderful work.
34. Keep up the good jog-you really make a difference in the lives of many parents and teens.
35. The way the class meetings were handled, was great. Having the same type classes open for parents to come together and have open discussions.
36. I started the program on a negative feeling but with Carrie's patience and listening to problem learned to separate for the better welfare of family and resolution of conflict. Thank you.
37. Keep up the good work. God will help us all if we let him.
38. Keep doing what your doing it does help some children & parents.
39. The attitude of the instructor is extremely important!
40. Think if you go through this class if they get back into trouble again, the parent should not have to do the class again.
41. Keep up the Good Work
42. Maybe add a succession on family dynamics and responsibility of family members.
43. Keep up the good work.
44. THANK YOU!

45. I loved this class for what it has done for me and my Mom. We actually can spend more than one hour together without fighting.
46. Thank you, for your help & support.
47. Carrie is so cool. She is what makes this class enjoyable.
48. This class was very helpful & I hope it stays around.
49. I loved the class.
50. No, not really.
51. Would recommend this class to all.
52. No.
53. I loved the class! But you should have an intervention before the problems start.
54. N/A
55. Thank you!! This class was helpful & really important to me.
56. Thanks for your time and concern!
57. Everyone with problems should take this class and its a help and wonderful experience.
58. You should go at first you won't like it but you really enjoy it.
59. I wish the class wasn't over! (tear)
60. I loved this class.
61. I didn't think ANYTHING could bring us where we are now. And we'll keep working on it cause of this class.
62. I really like the people in the class.
63. It was alright.
64. This class was awesome.
65. Keep doing this class.
66. None.

67. This class is very helpful.
68. You all are very helpful.
69. Really good helpful class.
70. No!!
71. This class is cool.
72. No, not really.
73. It really changed who I am. Thank you for everything.
74. Be more aggressive.
75. This class was helpful.
76. To understand that most families are two-faced.
77. It is a good class.
78. This class could help certain people.
79. It was fun to go in take time from work.
80. All I have to say is I hope I don't get in trouble for speaking my mind.
81. Make class time longer-either three hours or extend the weeks.
82. Thanks for helping me.
83. Very good class.
84. No, it was good the way it is!
85. It was just a good class.
86. None.
87. It's a good class.

VITA

Carrie Davis Marchant

- Personal Data: Date of Birth: February 7, 1966
- Place of Birth: Richlands, Virginia
- Marital Status: Divorced
- Education: Public Schools, Richlands, and Lebanon, Virginia
- Virginia Intermont College, Bristol, Virginia
- Paralegal, B.A, 1994
- East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee
- Criminal Justice/Criminology, M.A., 2005
- Professional: Director of Community Relations and Marketing
- Director of Youth Services and Program Development
- Author of Programs for at Risk Teens and Adults (MORAL KOMBAT)
- Experience: Life Foundations/Alternative Correctional Services, Kingsport, Tennessee, Senior Case Officer and Training Coordinator, August 1995 to July 1998
- Director of Youth Services and Program Development for Adult Misdemeanor Probation Program, and Director of Greeneville Juvenile Probation, July 1998 to July 2005
- Josephson Institute of Ethics and the National CHARACTER COUNTS!sm Program, Los Angeles, California, Faculty Member, 2000 to June 2006 (Part-time)

First Tennessee Human Resource Agency, Johnson City, Tennessee,
Director of Community Relations and Marketing, September,
2005. First Tennessee Human Resource Agency, Johnson City,
Tennessee,

Honors/Awards: Certified Trainer of Trainers/Facilitators – National Safety Council
1996 to 2006

Sullivan County Foster Care Review Board Member – Judge
Appointed 2000 to 2006

Washington County Foster Care Review Board Member – Judge
Appointed December 2003 to 2006

The Business Journal of Tri-Cities Tennessee/Virginia 2003 40 Under
Forty Leadership Award

2005 Northeast Tennessee Council on Children and Youth's Child
Advocate of the Year