MEDIATING EFFECTS OF YOUTH-SERVING PROGRAMS ON ADJUSTMENT IN

YOUTH WITH TEMPORARILY-ABSENT PARENTS

A Thesis presented to

The Faculty of the Graduate School

At the University of Missouri

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

By

KENDRA S. FERGUSON

Dr. Louis Manfra, Thesis Supervisor

JULY 2020

APPROVAL

The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the thesis entitled

MEDIATING EFFECTS OF YOUTH-SERVING PROGRAMS ON ADJUSTMENT IN
YOUTH WITH TEMPORARILY-ABSENT PARENTS

presented by Kendra S. Ferguson,

a candidate for the degree of master of science,

and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

_____

Professor Louis Manfra

_____

Professor Duane Rudy

_____

Professor Irma Arteaga

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge and sincerely thank my thesis supervisor, Dr. Louis Manfra for his support and advisership in completing my thesis. His unwavering enthusiasm for research and mentorship has made a tremendous impact on my academic and professional development, and is greatly appreciated. My appreciation also extends to my thesis committee members, Drs. Duane Rudy and Irma Arteaga. I am grateful for their assistance, encouragement, and guidance. Their presence has been instrumental in completing my thesis project, and I am grateful to have worked with such a distinguished committee.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLISTRATUIONS

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine how youth-serving programs support youth during the temporary absence of a parent. For this study, temporarily-absent parents have been identified as those who are absent from the home due to work, separation or divorce, incarceration, and more. There have been many negative outcomes associated with youth adjustment in the absence of a parent, particularly with socio-emotional development and academics. While youth-serving programs have been historically known for promoting positive youth adjustment, research lacks the specifics as to how youth-serving programs support positive youth adjustment when filling the void of a temporarily-absent parent. One-hundred-five students from the University of Missouri were recruited to participate in this study, and nine qualified to complete the author-created survey. Largely, findings suggest that youth have a positive experience when attending youth-serving programs, during the temporary absence of their parent. While some participants indicated feelings of sadness and loneliness, many participants suggest that involvement in youth-serving programs has a positive influence on social engagement, such as development of friendships and sense of belonging. While program participation positively affected social engagement, perceived influence on academic outcomes varied. Implications of the findings are discussed. Specifically, methods for how youth and families can be better supported during the temporary absence of a parent/caregiver will be suggested.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In many households, youth are temporarily separated from their parents due to a range of circumstances. Oftentimes, these circumstances are related to work, incarceration, separation and divorce, and more. Unfortunately, current research has suggested a connection between temporarily-absent parents and poor youth adjustment, due to these separations (Rodriguez & Margolin, 2015). Youth tend to lean on their communities to support them in such circumstances, and, generally, youth-serving programs fall under that form of support. Over the years, youth-serving programs have been lauded for their efforts in supporting positive youth development and adjustment (Whitley, Forneris, & Barker, 2014). Although research has sustained dialogue around the effects of temporarily-absent parents on youth adjustment and the positive influence youth-serving programs has on youth adjustment, current research has not underscored the overlap of both factors (how youth-serving programs support youth with temporarily-absent parents). The purpose of this study is to examine the connection between adjustment of youth with temporarily-absent parents and how youth-serving programs may assist in mediating this circumstance.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The definition of a temporarily-absent parent varies based on context. Often times, this term is associated with parents who are absent for work-related reasons, incarceration, separation or divorce, and more. Universally, absence under any of the aforementioned circumstances has negatively impacted youth adjustment and outcomes. In fact, researchers (Barker & Berry, 2009) have suggested that temporary parent-child separations, that occur more often than not, typically result in poor youth adjustment. Aaron and Dallaire (2010) suggest that youth with temporarily-absent parents are faced with higher risks of maladaptation and future problems.

Work-Related Absence

Work has often caused the temporary absence of a parent or caregiver. A trend in work-related absence has commonly been seen in parents who share active, reserve, or guard status in the U.S. military. Research has suggested that 1.2 million children who have active duty parents in the military, and over 700,000 on reserve status (Rodriguez & Margolin, 2015), are affected by work-related absence. Generally, deployment and special assignments are the cause for temporary absence in military households. Card and colleagues (2011) conducted a study on the impact of deployment on military youth, where a surge in youth internalizing and externalizing behaviors, along with school-related problems, correspond with the deployment of their parent. These researchers analyzed a sample of sixteen studies exploring the effects of deployment among military families. Five of the sixteen studies indicated a positive correlation between parental deployment and academic adjustment. The researchers (Card et al., 2011) also stated that

results varied based on the age of the child, where children in middle childhood experienced more difficulties in adjustment overall.

In military households, children seem to be either proud or ashamed of the increased absence of their parent along with their line of work. Mmari et al. (2009) found some children are not as open to disclose how often, when, and why their parents are absent, specifically if they have categorized their local community as unsupportive. However, Rodrigues and Margolin (2015) found youth who have parents with active duty status are more likely to be open and transparent about the absence of their parent, as they tend to live in a community with others who likely shares similar experiences. While youth with parents in the military are regularly challenged with the disclosure of their parents' whereabouts, there are also increased barriers in communication. As it relates to deployment or alternative reasons for absence (e.g., field work), a trend in unstable and poor-quality in communication practices have been reported by military youth (Houston et al., 2013). Often times, military youth only e-mail or have phone conversations with the absent parent, both of which have been shown as inconsistent forms of communication (Houston et al., 2013).

While research has focused on absent military parents for some time, research focusing on absent parents due to parental migration is more recent. Parental migration refers to one or more parents working abroad, for six or more months, leaving their children behind. This form of temporary absence is rather common in Mexican, Chinese, and Filipino cultures (China Youth Research, 2006; Parrenas, 2005). According to the United Nations, there are roughly two hundred and thirty-two million people working away from their homes due to parental migration, with roughly one million immigrants

from Mexico working in the United States (Rodriguez & Margolin, 2015). Each nation of China and the Philippines has anywhere between 1/5 and 1/4 youth separated from one or both parents due to parental migration (Parrenas, 2005). In some cases, parental migration has caused a significant impact on educational outcomes among youth who have parents temporarily absent (Rodriguez & Margolin, 2015). Research has suggested that youth who have migrant parents often subject themselves to familiar lines of employment, leaving little intention to pursue an education (Nobles, 2011).

Further, some studies have suggested that parental migration has affected youth happiness and support-seeking (Graham et al., 2012), which also results in poor academic outcomes (Pottinger, 2005) and decreased interest in school-based programs (Wen & Lin, 2012). Although research has suggested some negative outcomes parental migration has on youth outcomes, research also posits how parental migration has supported families in some cases. According to Dreby (2007), parental migration has supported some families with economic resources, some of which have been used to support better development in the community the migrant parent is from.

Non-Work-Related Absences

There are several factors that contribute to the temporary absence of a parent. While work-related absences are common, factors such as separation, divorce and incarceration have also been considered and attributed to youth adjustment. As of 2014, roughly 2.3 million youth in the United States have incarcerated parents (Sykes & Pettit, 2014). Over the years, many studies have contributed to the growing body of literature on youth adjustment with incarcerated parents. Throughout this literature, studies have

indicated that factors at family, caregiver, and community levels impact youth who have absent parents due to incarceration (Johnson, Arditti, & McGregor, 2018). As a result of incarceration, there are many single-parent homes. Johnson and colleagues (2018) found that many youth were disengaged in social activities and had a perceived notion of lack of support from family and community, due to increased stress taken on by the at-home caregiver. As a result, youth were found to adjust poorly in educational and behavioral outcomes.

Another factor that has been considered in the literature is the effects of caregiver type and how this decision influences adjustment in youth who have incarcerated parents (Lahaie et al., 2009). For example, Trice and Brewster (2004) conducted a study on how maternal incarceration and caregiver type affects adjustment among children. Overall, it was found that youth were more likely to practice disobedience and dropout of school when in the care of nonfamilial caregivers compared to familial caregivers.

Similar to incarceration, separation and divorce have also been suggested as barriers for youth adjustment. Research has suggested that children exposed to parental conflict that eventually leads to divorce has long-term effects on adjustment in youth (Cherlin et al., 1998). Research further suggests that children with divorced or divorcing parents have increased levels of externalizing and internalizing problems, along with a decline in academic achievement, and poor social skills (Lansford, 2009).

While a trend in poor adjustment in youth with divorced parents is significant, one must also consider the many nuances that contribute to an already stressful climate of divorce, including custody. Lansford (2009) conducted a meta-analysis with 33 studies

focusing on joint physical and legal custody. Across studies, a trend in findings suggested that children with parents sharing custody resulted in fewer external and internal behaviors compared to those children who did not have parents sharing custody (Bauserman, 2002). Those children also performed better academically and upheld better social and interpersonal relationships (Lansford, 2009).

Communication with Temporarily-Absent Parent

Another consideration is how communication influences these outcomes. Observation of communication has been a substantial, yet varied factor, no matter the absent parent circumstance. Shame and guilt have made significant contributions to how youth communicate with their absent parent in both the work-related and non-work-related causes. Dreby (2006) conducted a study on migration in Mexican families and found youth who experienced separation due to parental migration had moderate to low communication with the absent parent. The at-home parent often facilitated communication between the absent parent and youth, placing barriers on quality communication between the youth and temporarily-absent parent and an influx of shame, guilt, and poor emotional adjustment influenced by the at-home parent. Similar to that of parental migration, youth with temporarily-absent parents due to military reserve status were reluctant to share the reasoning behind the absence of their deployed parents, as they were concerned with how their communities may receive and understand their experience and line-of-work of their absent parent (Rodriguez & Margolin, 2013).

Coyne and Smith (1991) introduced a term known as "protective buffering," where youth and the at-home parent filter their communication with the absent parent, as

there is concern around how the information may or may not be received, specifically dialogue leading to conflict or distress. This form of communication was practiced across studies for youth with temporarily incarcerated parents, and parents separated from their youth due to work-related reasons. In a study on migrant workers in Romania, Pantea (2012) asked youth and the at home-parent to report how often they avoided "burdening" conversations with temporarily-absent parents to protect the absent parent from at-home stressors. Within this study, it was also shared that youth had poor adjustment, as it relates to the decision by the at-home parent to share these stressors with the temporarily-absent parent, which led to at-home frustration and increased stressors (Pantea, 2012). In studies conducted by Dreby (2007) and Pantea (2011), youth linked their frustration and stress with the outcomes of their relationship with the temporarily-absent parent. Youth commonly challenged authority of both the at-home and temporarily-absent parent. Rodriguez and Margolin (2011) also highlight deviating authority from the at-home parent and youth, and how common it is for youth to challenge authority from both the temporarily-absent and at-home parent/caregiver.

While literature supports the notion of challenges in communication of authority and filtered conversations between youth, the at-home parent, and temporarily-absent parent, the frequency, type of communication, and quality of communication has also been considered in how youth adjust to the absence of a parent. Shlafer and Poehlmann (2010) found that youth who were in regular contact with their incarcerated parents were less likely to have disciplinary encounters at school or drop out, compared to those who did not. Although research (Shlafer & Poehlmann, 2010) has supported positive adjustment in youth who are in contact with incarcerated parents, there are also

challenges and barriers in meeting these expectations. Youth with temporarily incarcerated parents have also faced the challenge of visitation and access to the often-remote location in which their parents are in (Nesmith & Ruhland, 2008). Military youth and migrant working parents have also faced the challenge of erratic telecommunication and working schedules, making it difficult to support quality communication (Echegoyen-Nava, 2013). In these cases, youth, the at-home parent, and temporarily-absent parent have to often rely on e-mail as their primary form of contact (Houston et al., 2013).

Adjustment

Though adjustment is often studied through internal and external behaviors, interpersonal relationships, and academics, family dynamics, systems, and structures are also important to consider. Rodriguez and Margolin (2011) have emphasized family theories of change during temporary parental absence. In support of structural family theorists, such as Bowen (1978) and Minuchin (1974), current literature has suggested a threat to family systems and structures, such as roles, influence, and power structures, caused by temporarily-absent parents (Rodriguez & Margolin, 2011). In terms of social status, the image of an absent parent has also caused distress in family interactions, where youth, and at times the at-home parent, have expressed stigmatized views of their circumstance. In some cases, youth have sought stable support from their communities (Nesmith & Ruhland, 2008) where some have remained protective and secretive of their family situation (Hagen & Myers, 2003).

Research (Almedia et al., 1999) has also suggested how vulnerable family systems have faced increased levels of poor adjustment, related to distress and dysfunction within homes of temporarily-absent parents. Using attachment theory, Riggs and Riggs (2011) found that the absence of a parent resulted in poor sensitivity for the at-home parent, increasing challenge in the perception the child had for the at-home parent, and temporarily-absent parent's ability to appropriately be sensitive, responsive, and reliable. Researchers (Riggs & Riggs, 2011) also found that youth promoted proximity-seeking behaviors and emotional reassurance from people outside of their at-home and temporarily-absent parent. Poehlmann and colleagues (2008) found that youth who were transitioned from caregiver to caregiver, due to the absence of a parent, experienced heightened levels of depressive-like symptoms along with challenges in self-esteem.

Several factors have been considered in studies exploring the effects of temporarily-absent parents on youth adjustment. While these factors have generated a significant amount of research on the outcomes of youth adjustment, limited research exists exploring the impact of community, specifically youth-serving, programs on adjustment of youth with temporarily-absent parents.

Youth-Serving Programs

There are currently 17,000 youth development programs serving millions of children in the United States (Quinn, 1999). Programs such Boys & Girls Clubs of America, 4H, Girl and Boy Scouts, and more have made a significant contribution to youth development for many years. Many youth-serving programs have often supported youth in developing interpersonal skills, socio-emotional development, creating and

growing accustomed to a sense of belonging, practicing safe extracurricular activities, and encouraging youth to excel in academics (Morriseey & Werner-Wilson, 2005). Youth-serving programs grant youth the opportunity to build communities within their peer groups and create experiences where youth are guided to become leaders, explore roles and responsibilities (Roth, 2000), and offer suggestions on how to navigate familial and community-based spaces (Pittman & Irby, 1998).

Research has suggested that involvement in effective after-school and youth-serving programs positively impacts academic outcomes. Particularly, involvement in youth-serving programs has shown to impact attendance and performance, encourage positive interactions between youth-adult interactions, and increase prosocial behaviors across peer groups (Huang et al., 2000). Programs that have promoted positive youth-adult interactions have also been shown to stimulate more youth engagement, facilitate development in leadership skills, and encourage positive behaviors (Smith et al., 2013). Research has also suggested that effective youth-serving programs have supported a decline in risky behaviors and foster overall positive youth development (Smith et al., 2013).

Smith and colleagues (2013) express how families and communities serve as critical factors in youth development. Researchers (Simpkins, Vest, & Becnel, 2010) have also expressed that youth who participate in youth-serving programs early on tend to establish a better foundation in overall youth development and tend to participate in youth-serving programs throughout adolescence. Early participation in such programs creates more opportunity for youth to engage in healthy environments and interactions.

The Present Study

As previously mentioned, research has endorsed several studies that show implications of temporarily-absent parents on youth adjustment. Research has also highlighted the relevance of youth-serving programs on youth development in various capacities. While current literature underlines how youth-serving programs support youth outcomes in many capacities, and the effects of absent parenting on youth adjustment exists, there is little to no research on how youth-serving programs support youth with specific needs, such as adjusting to the circumstance of having a temporarily-absent parent away from the home. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the mediating relationship between youth-serving programs and adjustment in youth with temporarily-absent parents. The goal is to analyze how youth adjust to the temporary absence of their parent and how involvement in youth-serving programs mediates adjustment outcomes.

Within the scope of this study, the predominant research question is: *Does involvement in youth-serving programs support positive youth adjustment, during the temporary absence of a parent?* Supplemental questions include: *Does involvement in youth-serving programs have influence on the direction of grades during the temporary absence of a parent?* and *Does involvement in youth-serving programs have influence on social development during the temporary absence of a parent?*

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Sampling and Participants

The target population of participants consisted of a convenient sample of college students between the ages of 18 and 25 at the University of Missouri. In efforts of soliciting participation, an e-mail with detailed information regarding the study was sent to roughly 200 students enrolled in various courses across The University of Missouri. The expectation was to have a racially- and ethnically-representative population of at least one-hundred potential participants for this study. This sampling technique was selected as this study was presented as non-experimental with goals of natural and uncontrolled responses or scenarios from the anticipated sample. One-hundred five students at The University of Missouri agreed to answer the qualifying questions for this study. To qualify for participation, respondents had to have had a parent who was temporarily-absent from the home and have participation in a youth-serving program during this absence. Of the 105 volunteers, nine met the criteria for participation. Eight other volunteers (7.6%) experienced a temporarily-absent parent, however they did not participate in a youth-serving program. Eighty-three volunteers (83%) reported that they did not experience a temporarily-absent parent.

Data Collection

Data collection took place over the course of one academic semester and was implemented in survey form. Data were collected from six undergraduate courses in the departments of Human Development and Family Science, Music, and Communications. Each course averaged 25-50 students per class.

Measures

Participants were asked to complete a brief author-created survey that took anywhere from 10 to 15 minutes. Questions in the survey asked participants about the temporary absence of their parent, involvement in a youth-serving program, and adjustment in social, academic, and emotional areas. As shown in the Appendix, the survey is broken down into two sections, where participants are asked to respond to a series of rating and open-ended questions while reflecting on a memorable experience they had with a parent being absent from home. Section 1 includes questions about family dynamics, and section 2 contains questions that focus on program involvement. Examples of questions included in section 1 are, "Based on the event described above, how did you feel about the parent you selected being temporarily away from the home?" and "When your parent was temporarily absent, on average, how long and frequent were they gone?" Examples of questions in section 2 include, "How often did you participate in this program?" and "Did your participation in the identified program(s) have a positive or negative impact on you?"

Temporarily-absent parent. Temporary parental absence is operationalized as the absence of a parent from the home for at least one month or longer. Absences will be considered under work-related circumstances (e.g., military deployment, parental migration) and non-work-related circumstances (e.g., incarceration, separation/divorce, philanthropic duties). There are open-ended and rating questions that were asked in addressing this measure and are located in the survey within the Appendix.

Youth-serving programs. Youth-serving programs are operationalized as after-school programs, programs that promote positive youth development, sports-related programs, etc. Youth-serving programs were identified if they supported youth in developing interpersonal skills, socio-emotional development, creating and growing accustomed to a sense of belonging, practicing safe extracurricular activities, and encouraging youth to excel in academics (Morriseey & Werner-Wilson, 2005). Open-ended and ratings questions were also asked to support this measure and can be found in the Appendix.

Self-perceived youth adjustment. Youth adjustment is operationalized as a process in how youth adapt or become used to the temporary absence of a parent. Areas of adjustment include: social engagement, stress management, engagement in risky behaviors, and academic outcomes. These areas have been identified, as research suggests fragility in the aforementioned areas due to the temporary-absence of a parent (Rodriguez & Margolin, 2011). Open-ended and ratings questions were asked to support this measure and can be found in the Appendix.

Data Analysis

All rating/quantitative data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics. Percentages will be shared to reflect participant responses. While analyzing open-ended/qualitative data, themes will be identified to reflect participant patterns and connections.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The goal of this study was to analyze the mediating relations of youth-serving programs on adjustment in youth with temporarily-absent parents. Of the 105 original volunteers for this study, only nine had an absent parent and simultaneously participated in a youth-serving program. Of those nine, 44% of parents were temporarily absent due to work, 11% due to only separation or divorce, 33% due to work and separation or divorce, and 11% due to health concerns (e.g., rehab).

Participants were asked to identify one particular event to answer contextual questions about their experience of having a temporarily-absent parent. Questions within the survey addressed their social and academic experiences, as well as the youth-serving program(s) they participated in. Questions and participant responses that are most relevant and central to this study are shared below. Additional questions were asked and can be found in the complete survey of questions in the Appendix.

Summary of Quantitative Results

Table 1 reflects an accumulation of findings and descriptive statistics that emerged from the quantitative questions. Overall, results indicate that many, 44%, participants were social with family and friends during the temporary absence of their parent. Similar results were found following the return of the absent parent, where 44% of participants identified that they maintained a slightly good social life at that time.

The identified youth-serving programs were cub scouts, sports programs, summer camps, volunteer programs, after school programs, and YMCA. Overall, findings suggest that 100% of participants had a positive experience within their identified youth-serving

program. As shown in Table 1, overall, 89% of participants indicated that their participation in the identified programs influenced their social engagement and academic achievement.

In regards to their participation in youth-serving programs, four areas of adjustment were measured: stress management, engagement in risky behaviors, academic performance, social engagement, and managing emotions. As shown in Table 1, findings indicate that 44% of participants had extremely positive experiences. Results for the engagement of risky behaviors are broad with only 22% influenced by the absence of the parent. Table 1 also reflects that more than half of the participants share an extremely positive influence of participation in a youth-serving program on academic achievement (55%) and social engagement (66%). Given these results, it seems that, overall, participants had a positive experience within their youth-serving programs.

Summary of Qualitative Responses

As shown in Table 2, many participants reflect that their temporarily-absent parent missed life-changing and important events, such as graduation and sporting events. While parents were away, participants indicated that they were part of organizations such as YMCA, volunteer programs, after school programs, and summer camps, with the majority involved in programs such as cub scouts and sports leagues. Overall, their GPA did not vary much, as many participants maintained anywhere between a 3.0 and 3.5 during and after the return of their absent parent. Some participants indicated that their involvement in youth-serving programs did not positively influence the direction of their grades. Although some indicated that their involvement did not positively influence their

16

grades, some suggested that their program promoted time management, discipline, and direction, which supported positive outcomes in their academics.

Circumstances Pertaining to the Most Memorable Time a Parent was Absent from the Home

- Participant 1: My mom traveled a lot for work so when she was gone my grandma would often come over to watch us. The most memorable event would have to be when my mother was out of town and forgot to let my grandma know that I had a club meeting after school so I had to wait for her to come pick me up. I was in 7th grade and ending up having to sit on the front steps of the school because everyone else in the school had to leave.

- Participant 2: I remember my father was absent for about 6 months due to work which required him to work.

- Participant 3: When I was 3 years old my parents split and my father moved to his home state. I was enrolled at the YMCA youth camp for many years following the separation.

- Participant 4: Participating in sports made it so that I had a home away from home, and people that I connected with that I am still in touch with to this very day.

- Participant 5: My father travels for work so he wasn't really present during the week. I was in a program at my local hospital called the Junior Volunteer Program. It allows you to volunteer and shadow all over our local hospital. It really helped me to keep on track and be one less kid to look after for my mom.

- Participant 6: My dad missed my middle school graduation. My mom and aunt were still there.

- Participant 7: When I was playing soccer scored 3 goals and my mom wasn't there.

- Participant 8: My father left the household when I was a sophomore in high school and moved from Springfield Missouri to Houston Texas.

- Participant 9: When I was in the 5th grade, my mother was temporarily absent and I participated in after school sports both for the school and club.

Five of the nine participants indicated that their fathers were missing due to work or separation/divorce, while three of the nine participants experienced temporarily-absent mothers. Mothers were absent due to work and healthcare reasons. For those parents who were absent due to employment, majority held corporate jobs, while others worked in the car and healthcare industries. Participants were asked to share how they felt during the temporary absence of their parent (see Appendix). Some participants indicated feelings of sadness and loneliness, while some were understanding and used to their parents being absent. Majority of participants suggested that their parents were frequently absent on a week-to-week basis, while others indicated an absence of a month or longer. Some participants experienced years of absence.

GPA During the Temporarily Absence of Parent

- Participant 1: 3.5

- Participant 2: I was in elementary school at the time, which afterwards my parents divorced, so there was no impact on my high school GPA.

- Participant 3: Not applicable. I was in elementary school at the time.

- Participant 4: 3.0

- Participant 5: 4.0

- Participant 6: No response.

- Participant 7: 3.7

- Participant 8: It lowered a little (3.5).

- Participant 9: Excelled in School

GPA after Temporarily Absent Parent Returned Home

- Participant 1: 3.5

- Participant 2: Elementary school, so not applicable.

- Participant 3: I had a rough spot through elementary and middle school. Turned it around in high school and earned a 3.8 upon.

- Participant 4: 3.6

- Participant 5: 4.0

- Participant 6: No response.

- Participant 7: 3.8

- Participant 8: My dada really never returned.

- Participant 9: Continued to excel in school.

Based on the above results, there was not much difference in GPA during the temporary absence of the parent and return of the parent. Some participants expressed that their parents were absent during their time in elementary school and were unable to recall GPAs. However, as shown in Table 2, participants who were able to report GPAs

maintained a 3.0 or better while the parent was absent, and a 3.5 GPA or better when they returned.

What youth-serving programs did you participate in?

- Participant 1: School clubs, basketball, and summer camps

- Participant 2: Girl Scouts

- Participant 3: YMCA, Cub Scouts, Taekwondo

- Participant 4: Sports programs

- Participant 5: Junior Volunteer Program

- Participant 6: Girl Scouts

- Participant 7: Soccer, track, basketball

- Participant 8: After school events

- Participant 9: School and club sports

You indicated that your involvement in youth-serving programs had a positive effect, how so?

- Participant 1: It allowed me to gain new friends and stay active.

- Participant 2: I was able to connect with others my age and participated in fun yet educational/preparational activities.

- Participant 3: It helped me socialized with peers in my age group. It was hard to dwell on the negatives when I had friends to play with.

- Participant 4: Lifelong friendships, and somewhere to spend time and energy not at home.

- Participant 5: It led me to my passion in life-medicine.

- Participant 6: Close groups of friends.

- Participant 7: Made friendships out of sports.

- Participant 8: It gave me a sense of love and a place where I belonged.

- Participant 9: Allowed me to have fun with friends and stay active.

As shown in Table 2, majority of participants were involved in youth-serving programs such as sports leagues and cub scouts. Based on the above results, many participants reflected on positive experiences during their involvement of youth-serving programs during and after the return of their temporary-absent parent. Within their positive feedback, many shared that they were able to establish lifelong friendships, a sense of belonging, and have a fun place to be active and engage in various activities, whether socially or educationally. One participant indicated that the involvement supported and influenced the direction of professional goals.

You indicated that your influence from the identified program(s) neither positively nor negatively impacted you. Why was the impact neutral?

- Participant 5: I made connections at work, but I was working 8-hour days during the summer-doesn't leave much time for socializing.

You indicated that your influence from the identified program(s) positively impacted you. Why was the impact positive?

- Participant 1: I made lots of new friends.

- Participant 2: I was able to make friends through the program.

- Participant 3: I made many good friends and was able to meet with them weekly.

- Participant 4: Made lifelong friendships

21

- Participant 6: All of my friends were in the same troop.

- Participant 7: Made friendships

- Participant 8: It gave me a sense of belonging

- Participant 9: I made a lot of great friends through playing sports.

As indicated in Table 2, majority of participants specified that they were able to establish life-long friend groups and establish a sense of belonging. Although majority participants were able to engage in and establish friendships, one participant expressed neutral feelings regarding the influence of program involvement and social outcomes. This participant expressed that there was not much room for social engagement due to employment and not having the capacity to establish a network of friends.

What was your GPA while participating in your identified program(s)?

- Participant 1: 3.5

- Participant 2: Not applicable

- Participant 3: Not applicable

- Participant 4: 3.0-3.5

- Participant 5: 4.0

- Participant 6: No response

- Participant 7: 3.6

- Participant 8: It raised a little

- Participant 9: Excelled in school

You indicated that your participation in the identified program(s) did not influence the direction of your grades. How so?

- Participant 2: I don't remember it having an impact.

- Participant 4: I tried to do well and probably would've done the same if I was not in sports.

- Participant 6: I was young

- Participant 9: Regardless of playing sports or not, I believe my grades would have remained the same.

You indicated that your participation in the identified program(s) influenced the direction of your grades. How so?

- Participant 1: Having these problems helped me learn time management skills.

- Participant 3: It helped me develop social skills which led me to grow my skills.

- Participant 5: It motivated me to do my best so one day I could work in a hospital.

- Participant 7: Made me have discipline

- Participant 8: Gave me a direction and purpose

Similar to results shared in Table 1, there was not much influence in GPA from program participation. GPAs were consistent with a range of 3.0 or better. Four of nine participants indicated that their program participation did not influence the direction of their grades, as some believed their grades would have remained the same despite program involvement. Of those four, two indicated that they were either too young to remember or could not remember if their involvement influenced the direction of their grades. Five of nine participants expressed that their involvement did influence the direction of their grades. Many pinpointed that their involvement assisted with

progression of skills such as social engagement and time management. Some indicated that their involvement led to increased motivation, discipline, and purpose.

Table 2 reflects the aggregated summary of findings, and provides the interpretation and the themes that emerged from the qualitative questions. As shown in Table 2, results suggest that GPAs are consistent, relating to their involvement in youth-serving programs, and are similar to prior results shared about the absence and return of the parent. Five of the nine participants indicated that their participation in the identified program(s) supported the development of time management, direction and discipline, which further supported them in their academic achievement. Table 2 also indicates that while program participation influenced the direction of grades, four of the nine participants were neutral in their response that their academic progress was not influenced by their involvement.

As shown in the responses, friendships were pivotal example of positive influence in result of program involvement. Nearly all participants indicated that making friends was a key, social component within their program involvement. Therefore, it can be suggested that programs were a source of social interactions and a place for forming friendships.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to analyze the mediating relations of youth-serving programs on adjustment in youth who have experienced a temporarily-absent parent during primary and/or secondary school. The following research questions were addressed in the study: (A) Does involvement in youth-serving programs support positive youth adjustment, during the temporary absence of a parent? (B) Does involvement in youth-serving programs have influence on the direction of grades during the temporary absence of a parent? and (C) Does involvement in youth-serving programs have influence on social development during the temporary absence of a parent? To address these questions, a survey was created by the current author and used to collect qualitative and quantitative data from college students at the University of Missouri who were asked to reflect on experiences during their primary and secondary years of school. Open-ended and ratings questions were included and addressed adjustment in academics, social development, stress management, and engagement in risky behaviors. Within these questions, participants were asked to reflect on one memorable experience of a parent being absent during a time they were simultaneously involved in a youth-serving program.

One-hundred-five students participated in this study. Out of the 105 participants, nine (8.6%) experienced an absent parent while participating in a youth-serving program, and thus, were qualified to complete the full survey. During the absence of a parent, all nine participants indicated that participation in their identified youth-serving program positively influenced them during the temporary absence of their parent.

Overall, results indicate that program involvement might positively influence social outcomes of youth with an absent parent by creating opportunities for friendship and providing a sense of belonging. For example, when asked how program involvement positively affected their adjustment, one participant stated, "It helped me socialize with peers in my age group. It was hard to dwell on the negatives when I had friends to play with." Additionally, youth-serving programs may positively influence long-term academic and professional goals. For example, one participant stated the following as a reason for having a positive program experience: "It led me to my passion in life, medicine."

Youth-serving program participation may also have a small, positive influence on academic-related outcomes. For most of the questions, participants responded with positive or neutral (non-change) outcomes for school and academic factors. For example, one participant who was involved in sports and school programs indicated that the programs, "helped me learn time management." While another participant noted, "I tried to do well and probably would've done the same if I was not in sports," when referring to GPA. Other participants were too young to remember if their program involvement influenced the direction of their academics, and a few indicated an increase in GPA when their temporarily absent parent returned home.

Findings suggest that social engagement was a more salient form of influence through youth-serving program involvement. For example, while one participant "did not remember" their program involvement having an influence on academic performance, the same participant did remember how involvement in the identified program supported social engagement with same-age youth and participation in "fun, educational, and

preparational" activities. All nine participants highlighted how their experience supported the establishment of friends and a social network and how they are able to rely on youth-serving programs to help foster their social development. The findings also suggest how youth seek various forms of social engagement.

Based on responses from participants of this study, it might be suggested that youth-serving programs provide a space for youth to practice necessary social skills, and attain the support they need while juggling the temporary absence of a parent. In addition, an emphasis on career development was not anticipated and furthered the message on the role of youth-serving programs. Importantly, results highlight the significance of variation within youth-serving programs, as youth present different needs. For example, one participant shared how the experience helped develop career goals, while others shared how involvement led to direction and purpose. Future research focusing on youth with temporarily-absent parents might consider these variations when developing new studies.

As mentioned in the introduction, youth tend to lean on their communities to support them in various ways. This study contributes to the understanding of how youth-serving programs might influence adjustment among youth with temporarily-absent parents. With little to no research on this subject, questions within this survey address socio-emotional development, engagement in risky behaviors, academic development, and other factors. Contextual questions were asked to engage in further understanding of family dynamics, and how responses to those questions may affect the aforementioned outcomes. Responses from these questions have the potential to guide programmatic needs to better support youth who have a temporarily-absent parent. While many youth-serving

programs foster strong social engagement, socio-emotional development, and academic development, findings from this study might allow program developers, policymakers, and more to examine the scope of their resources and ensure that it generalizes to the needs of all youth.

The current study also highlights the frequency and type of communication between youth and their temporarily-absent parent. Communication type and frequency was based on the reasons why parents were absent, along with their line of work. Including this contextual information allows further understanding of the role youth-serving programs may or may not have for adjustment of youth with temporarily-absent parents. Examples of program goals that can be adjusted to meet the needs of youth with temporarily-absent parents might include: programming that encourages a range of positive communication around emotional expression, identifying triggers that discourage positive communication, and creating activities that support effective communication with the temporarily-absent parent and at-home parent.

Programming influenced by findings of this study also has the ability to prompt program developers, policymakers, etc. about ways to identify indirect support of their programs, and leveraging that information. For example, a participant indicated that involvement in a program influenced her career goals. That information might suggest building programming and policy around career development that support youth within these circumstances. This information also has the possibility to help current program developers and policymakers see what types of things youth might be hoping to get out of such programs.

Largely, results presented in this study support the value of and need for youth-serving programs, with further implications that show support for youth with temporarily-absent parents. While other research has demonstrated the value of youth-serving programs, no research has been explored about youth who attend youth-serving programs while simultaneously experiencing the temporary absence of a parent. This study endorses findings from other studies and extends them by indicating that these programs may also be useful for providing protective factors to youth experiencing an absent parent. Future research should continue to explore this population of youth and the extent to which these programs can serve as protective factors against social isolation and falling academic performance.

Limitations and Implications

While there are many studies that highlight the role of youth-serving programs on adjustment, there are few, if any, that address how such programs support youth during the absence of parents. The presented literature offers many strengths that support further research on the role of youth-serving programs. Findings can influence the direction of program development, with the possibility of emphasizing in areas of strength and weakness in academic, social, and emotional outcomes. Where findings highlight how participants felt a sense of belonging and an establishment of lifelong friendships and networks, programs can further implement activities and programming that support the fostering of positive, social engagement. While results did not indicate much influence in academics, programs can leverage these findings by implementing programs that further support adjustment in academics. Perhaps, future studies can examine areas in which youth require the most academic attention and implement programming that support

these areas and more. Further, youth-serving programs can use these findings to support youth with temporarily absent parents and use their platform to implement local policies and procedures to support positive youth adjustment.

While findings from this study indicate an overall positive influence on the role of youth-serving programs during the temporary absence of a parent, there were a few limitations. As mentioned, few studies have highlighted the role of youth-serving programs on adjustment in youth with temporarily absent parents. As a result, literature and resources were limited when implementing this study and the provided survey was created by the author to address the research questions and goal. While the survey was able to address the research questions, there were areas of the survey that could have further examined the given measures. For example, of the nine participants who were qualified to participate in this study, when asked about the influence of their program involvement on their academics, three of the nine indicated that they were in elementary school and had no recollection of program involvement on their academics. As a result, the role of program involvement, as it relates to academics, significantly varied and lacked consistency. To provide more contextual information, additional questions that address the age of the respondent (during the time the parent was temporarily-absent) and GPA prior to attending a youth-serving program and during program participation were needed, as well as questions that address responsibilities that were taken on due to the temporary absence of a parent.

Access to participants was also a limitation, as college students, at the University of Missouri, were convenient to use and easily accessible. With such a small sample of qualified participants, I was not able to gage the full "impact" of youth-serving programs

on adjustment in youth with temporarily-absent parents. Selection bias is present, as respondents of this study are college students, particularly when addressing academic outcomes. Expanding the sample pool to multiple markets might support further dialogue on how youth-serving programs support youth in adjusting during the temporary absence of a parent. Perhaps, future studies can focus on the impacts of youth-serving programs across regions, and reasons of why the parent is absent, to adjust programming and needs of the community they serve. Learning about youth with temporarily-absent parents who were interested in participating in youth-serving programs, but could not, might also support future directions of study. Examples of other moderators that might be controlled in future studies, that are not in academic settings, include stressful life events and economic hardship. Studies that compare adjustment outcomes in youth with temporarily-absent parents who do not attend youth-serving programs to those who do might further support the understanding of the role youth-serving programs play in youth adjustment. Further, future studies might survey high-school students who are participating in youth-serving programs during the time their parents are temporarily absent.

References

Aaron. L, Dallaire. D. (2010). Parental incarceration and multiple risk experiences: Effects on family processes and children's delinquency. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 39, 471–1484.

Almeida, D. M., Wethington, E., & Chandler, A. L. (1999). Daily transmission of tensions between marital dyads and parent-child dyads. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 49-61.

Barker L.H, Berry K.D. (2009). Developmental issues impacting military families with young children during single and multiple deployments, *Military Medicine*, 174, 1033–1040.

Bauserman, R. (2002). Child adjustment in joint-custody versus sole-custody arrangements: a meta-analytic review. *Journal of Family psychology*, *16*(1), 91.

Bowen, M. (1978). Family therapy in clinical practice. New York & London: Jason Aronson.

Card, N.A., Bosch, L., Casper, D.M., Wiggs, C.B., Hawkins, S.A., Schlomer, G.L., Borden, L.M. (2011). A meta-analytic review of internalizing, externalizing, and

academic adjustment among children of deployed military service members. *Journal of Family Psychology, 25*(4), 508-520.

Cherlin, A. J., Chase-Lansdale, P. L., & McRae, C. (1998). Effects of parental divorce on mental health throughout the life course. *American Sociological Review*, 239-249.

China Youth Research Center. China's children and juveniles statistical handbook. Science Press; Beijing: 2006.

Coyne, J. C., & Smith, D. A. (1991). Couples coping with a myocardial infarction: a contextual perspective on wives' distress. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, *61*(3), 404.

Dreby, J. (2006). Honor and virtue: Mexican parenting in the transnational context. *Gender & Society*, *20*(1), 32-59.

Dreby, J. (2007). Children and power in Mexican transnational families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *69*(4), 1050-1064.

Echegoyen-Nava, G. M. (2013). Separation and emotional distance: cases of Mexican undocumented transnational families. *International Journal of Work Organisation and Emotion*, *5*(3), 246-260.

Graham, Elspeth, Lucy P. Jordan, Brenda SA Yeoh, Theodora Lam, Maruja Asis, and Su-Kamdi. "Transnational families and the family nexus: perspectives of Indonesian and Filipino children left behind by migrant parent (s)." *Environment and Planning A* 44, no. 4 (2012): 793-815.

Hagen, K. A., & Myers, B. J. (2003). The effect of secrecy and social support on

behavioral problems in children of incarcerated women. *Journal of Child and

Family Studies*, *12*(2), 229-242.

Houston, J. B., Pfefferbaum, B., Sherman, M. D., Melson, A. G., & Brand, M. W. (2013).

Family communication across the military deployment experience: Child and

spouse report of communication frequency and quality and associated emotions,

behaviors, and reactions. *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, *18*(2), 103-119.

Huang, D., Gribbons, B., Kim, K. S., Lee, C., & Baker, E. L. (2000). A decade of results:

The impact of the LA's BEST after school enrichment program on subsequent

student achievement and performance. *Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for the

Study of Evaluation*.

Lahaie, C., Hayes, J. A., Piper, T. M., & Heymann, J. (2009). Work and family divided

across borders: The impact of parental migration on Mexican children in

transnational families. *Community, Work & Family*, *12*(3), 299-312.

Lansford, J. (2009). Parental divorce and children's adjustment. *Association for

Psychological Science, 4* (2), 140-152.

Johnson, E. I., Arditti, J. A., & McGregor, C. M. (2018). Risk, protection, and adjustment

among youth with incarcerated and non-resident parents: A mixed-methods

study. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *27*(6), 1914-1928.

Minuchin, S. (1974). Families and family therapy. Harvard U. Press.

Mmari, K., Roche, K. M., Sudhinaraset, M., & Blum, R. (2009). When a parent goes off
to war: Exploring the issues faced by adolescents and their families. *Youth &
Society*, *40*(4), 455-475.

Morrissey, K. M., & Werner-Wilson, R. J. (2005). The relationship between out-of-
school activities and positive youth development: an investigation of the
influences of communities and family. *Adolescence*, *40*(157).

Nesmith, A., & Ruhland, E. (2008). Children of incarcerated parents: Challenges and
resiliency, in their own words. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *30*(10),
1119-1130.

Nobles, J. (2011). Parenting from abroad: Migration, nonresident father involvement, and
children's education in Mexico. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *73*(4), 729-746.

Pantea, M. C. (2011). Young people's perspectives on changing families' dynamics of
power in the context of parental migration. *Young*, *19*(4), 375-395.

Pantea, M. C. (2012). 'I have a child and a garden': young people's experiences of care
giving in transnational families. *Journal of Youth Studies*, *15*(2), 241-256.

Parreñas, R. S. (2005). *Children of global migration: Transnational families and
gendered woes*. Stanford University Press.

Pittman, K., & Irby, M. A. (1998). Reflections on a decade of promoting youth
development. American Youth Policy Forum.

Poehlmann, J., Shlafer, R. J., Maes, E., & Hanneman, A. (2008). Factors associated with young children's opportunities for maintaining family relationships during maternal incarceration. *Family Relations*, *57*(3), 267-280.

Pottinger, A. M. (2005). Children's experience of loss by parental migration in inner-city Jamaica. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, *75*(4), 485-496.

Quinn, J. (1999). Where need meets opportunity: Youth development programs for early teens. *The future of Children*, 96-116.

Riggs, S. A., & Riggs, D. S. (2011). Risk and resilience in military families experiencing deployment: The role of the family attachment network. *Journal of family psychology*, *25*(5), 675.

Rodriguez, A.J. & Margolin, G. (2015). Parental incarceration, transnational migration, and military deployment: Family process mechanisms of youth adjustment to temporary parent absence. *Clinical Child Family Psychology Review, 18*(1), 24-49.

Roth, J. (2000, March). What we know and what we need to know about youth development programs. In *biannual meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence, Chicago, IL*.

Shlafer, R. J., & Poehlmann, J. (2010). Attachment and caregiving relationships in families affected by parental incarceration. *Attachment & Human Development*, *12*(4), 395-415.

Simpkins, S. D., Vest, A. E., & Becnel, J. N. (2010). Participating in sport and music activities in adolescence: The role of activity participation and motivational beliefs during elementary school. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, *39*(11), 1368-1386.

Smith, E. P., Osgood, D. W., Caldwell, L., Hynes, K., & Perkins, D. F. (2013). Measuring collective efficacy among children in community-based afterschool programs: Exploring pathways toward prevention and positive youth development. *American journal of community psychology*, *52*(1-2), 27-40.

Sykes, B. L., & Pettit, B. (2014). Mass incarceration, family complexity, and the reproduction of childhood disadvantage. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *654*(1), 127-149.

Trice A.D., Brewster J. (2004). The effects of maternal incarceration on adolescent children. *Journal of Policy and Criminal Psychology,* 19, 27–35.

Wen, M., & Lin, D. (2012). Child development in rural China: Children left behind by their migrant parents and children of nonmigrant families. *Child development*, *83*(1), 120-136.

Whitley, M. A., Forneris, T., & Barker, B. (2014). The reality of evaluating community-based sport and physical activity programs to enhance the development of underserved youth: Challenges and potential strategies. *Quest*, *66*(2), 218-232.

Table 1.

Questions	Percentages
Q14 Reflecting on the memorable event you identified, how often did you socialize with family, friends, etc. during the temporary absence of your parent/caregiver?	Often – 44% Somewhat Often – 33% Sometimes – 11% Not often – 11%
Q15 Based on the identified event, how was your social life, after your temporarily absent parent/caregiver returned home?	Slightly good – 44% Moderately good – 44% Neither good nor bad – 11%
Q22 Did your participation in the identified program(s) have a positive or negative impact on you? (select all that apply)	Positive – 100%
Q26 Did your participation in the identified program(s) positively or negatively influence you socially?	Positively – 89% Neither positive nor negative – 11%
Q31 Did your participation in your identified youth-serving program(s) influence the direction of your grades?	Yes – 55% No – 44%
Q34 How positively or negatively influential was your involvement (in your identified youth-serving program(s)) on adjustment in the following areas:	
Managing Stress	Extremely positive influence - 44% Moderately positive influence – 22%

Questions	Percentages
	Slightly positive influence – 22%
	Slightly negative influence – 11%
Engaging in risky behaviors	Extremely positive influence – 22%
	Slightly positive influence – 22%
	Moderately negative influence – 22%
	Slightly negative influence – 22%
	Extremely negative influence – 11%
Academic performance	Extremely positive influence – 11%
	Moderately positive influence – 55%
	Slightly positive influence – 11%
	Neither positive nor negative – 11%
	Slightly negative influence – 11%
Social engagement	Extremely positive – 66%
	Moderately positive – 22%
	Neither positive nor negative – 11%
Managing emotions	Moderately positive influence – 44%
	Slightly positive influence – 33%
	Neither positive nor negative – 11%
	Slightly negative influence – 11%

Table 2.

Qualitative Data

Questions	Themes
Q1 Briefly describe the event/circumstances pertaining to the most memorable time a parent/caregiver was temporarily absent from your home.	Absent parents missed important events. (e.g. graduation, sporting events, etc.)
Q16 Based on the event shared previously, what was your GPA after your temporarily absent parent/caregiver returned home?	3.0 or better
Q17 With consideration to the memorable event you shared, what was your GPA after your temporarily absent parent/caregiver returned home?	3.5 or better
Q18 What youth-serving program(s) did you participate in?	Sports programs & Cub Scouts
Q28 You indicated that the identified program(s) positively influenced you socially. How so?	Developed friendships and created a sense of belonging
Q30 What was your GPA while participating in your identified youth-serving program(s)?	3.0 or better
Q32 You indicated that your participation in the identified youth-serving program(s) did not influence the direction of your grades. How so?	Overly involved; No direct influence, no matter the amount of involvement

Questions	Themes
Q33 You indicated that your participation in the identified youth-serving program(s) influenced the direction of your grades. How so?	Influence of time management, discipline and direction

Appendix

1. Did you grow up in a home with a temporarily-absent parent/caregiver?

A temporarily absent parent/caregiver is a person you shared a home with who was not present for a short, but significant, amount of time (e.g., away for 3 months; away for 2-week trips once a month; etc.). Reasons for the temporary absence can vary. Some common reasons a parent/caregiver may have been absent might include: paid work, military service, volunteer work, separation/marital issues, incarceration, caring for an elderly relative, etc.

- Yes
- No

2. While your parent/caregiver was away from your home, were you involved in any youth-serving programs?

Youth-serving programs are programs that offer social and academic support within a local community. Examples include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Boys & Girls Club
- Girl/Boy Scouts
- 4H
- YMCA
- After-school programs
- Sports leagues

- Yes
- No

3. Briefly describe the event/circumstances pertaining to the most memorable time a parent/caregiver was temporarily absent from your home. Please include (a) the parent/caregiver who was temporarily absent, (b) your age or grade level when this occurred, and (c) the youth-serving program you attended.

If you had more than one experience, please describe the ***most memorable*** event in which a parent/caregiver was temporarily absent ***and*** you were enrolled in a youth-serving program.

The remaining questions on this survey will all be related to this specific event.

4. Based on the event described previously, which of the following best describes the reason/s your parent/caregiver was temporarily absent? (Select all that apply)

- Work
- Military affiliation
- Separation/Divorce
- Philanthropic Work
- Health concerns
- Temporary care for family member(s)
- Other; please specify: _____

5. Based on the event described above, how did you feel about the parent/caregiver you selected being temporarily away from your home?

6. What is/was the occupation of your temporarily absent parent/caregiver?

7. When your parent/caregiver was temporarily absent, on average, how long and frequent were they gone? (e.g. gone for 6 months at a time due to deployment...once every 2 years; gone for 1 week for business meetings...5 times a year; etc.)

8. Reflecting on the memorable time you identified, did you ever communicate with your temporarily absent parent/caregiver?

- Yes

- No

9. What was the main source of communication?

- Telephone

- E-mail

- Skype

- FaceTime

- Other: _____

10. On average, how often did you all communicate? (e.g. 3 times a week, twice a month, etc.)

11. Did you ever visit them?

- Yes

- No

12. You indicated that you visited them, how often? (e.g. once a month, twice a year, etc.)

13. Reflecting on the memorable event you identified, how often did you socialize with family, friends, etc. during the temporary absence of your parent/caregiver?

- Often

- Somewhat often

- Sometimes

- Not often

- Never

14. Based on the identified event, how was your social life, after your temporarily absent parent/caregiver returned home?

- Extremely good

- Moderately good

- Slightly good

- Neither good nor bad

- Slightly bad

- Moderately bad

- Extremely bad

15. Based on the event shared previously, what was your GPA during the temporary absence of your parent/caregiver?

16. With consideration to the memorable event you shared, what was your GPA after your temporarily absent parent/caregiver returned home?

17. When answering the following questions, please reflect on the memorable event you previously shared during the temporary absence of your parent/caregiver.

18. What youth-serving program(s) did you participate in?

19. How often did you participate in this program(s)?

20. In addition to participating in the identified program(s) during the temporary absence of your parent/caregiver, did you continue to participate when they returned?

21. How long would you say you have participated in this program(s)? (e.g. days, months, years)

22. Did your participation in the identified program(s) have a positive or negative impact on you? (select all that apply)

- Positive
- Negative
- Neither positive nor negative

23. You indicated that its effect was neither positive nor negative. Why was the impact neutral?

24. You indicated that it had a positive effect, how so?

25. You indicated that it had a negative effect, how so?

26. Did your participation in in the identified program(s) positively or negatively influence you socially?

- Positively

- Negatively

- Neither positive or negative

27. You indicated that its effect was neither positive nor negative. Why was the impact neutral?

28. You indicated that the identified program(s) positively influenced you socially. How so?

29. You indicated that the identified program(s) negatively influenced you socially. How so?

30. What was your GPA while participating in your identified community-based program(s)?

31. Did your participation in your identified youth-serving program(s) influence the direction of your grades?

- Yes

- No

32. You indicated that your participation in the identified youth-serving program(s) did not influence the direction of your grades. How so?

33. You indicated that your participation in the identified youth-serving program(s) influenced the direction of your grades. How so?

34. How positively or negatively influential was your involvement (in your identified youth-serving program(s)) on adjustment in the following areas:

Extremely negative influence	Moderately negative influence	Slightly negative influence	Neither positive nor negative influence	Slightly positive influence	Moderately positive influence	Extremely positive influence

	-10	-8	-5	-3	0	3	5	8	10
Managing stress ()									
Engaging in risky behaviors ()									
Academic performance ()									
Social engagement ()									
Managing emotions ()									