2012

Youth and Community Development through Rites of Passage: A Pilot Evaluation Model

Jason R. Emery
Antioch University of New England

Youth and Community Development through Rites of Passage: A Pilot Evaluation Model

by

Jason R. Emery

B.S., University of Michigan, 1997
M.S. Antioch University New England, 2007

DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment for the degree of
Doctor of Psychology in the Department of Clinical Psychology
at Antioch University New England, 2012

Keene, New Hampshire

Department of Clinical Psychology

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE PAGE

The undersigned have examined the dissertation entitled:

YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH RITES OF PASSAGE:
A PILOT EVALUATION MODEL

presented on June 25, 2012

by

Jason R. Emery

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Psychology

and hereby certify that it is accepted*.

Dissertation Committee Chairperson:
Victor Pantesco, EdD

Dissertation Committee members:
James Graves, PhD
Deborah Wasserman, PhD

Accepted by the
Department of Clinical Psychology Chairperson

Kathi A. Borden, PhD

on 6/25/12

* Signatures are on file with the Registrar's Office at Antioch University New England.

Acknowledgements

It is a much anticipated honor to express my gratitude for those people who have assisted me in making this dissertation and completion of my doctoral studies possible.

First, I would like to thank Victor Pantesco, Ed.D., my dissertation chair and advisor, and my committee members, Jim Graves, Ph.D. and Deborah Wasserman, Ph.D., for all their time, energy, and expertise. Dr. Pantesco delivered patience, support, and the timely nudging throughout the course of this winding journey. His intellect, keen attention to detail, and ability to help me refine the initial scope of the project were crucial to moving toward completion. Dr. Graves provided his enthusiasm and confidence in me, rekindling the notion that the best dissertation is a done dissertation, and a done dissertation opens the doors to all the other endeavors I have been anxiously awaiting. Dr. Wasserman unselfishly immersed herself in this project beyond any of my expectations after my "Ah ha!" moment discovering her model and work. To say her expertise and passion for systems-based program evaluations and rites of passage thinking were invaluable would be a drastic understatement.

Next, two individuals provided conversation, support, and encouragement that initially sparked my passion for youth and community development through rites of passage thinking. David Blumenkrantz, Ph.D. gave his time and decades of experience doing this work to make this topic real for me. His invitation to experience aspects of ROPE® firsthand went above and beyond, and he helped make descriptions and ideas on paper come to life. Len Fleischer, Ed.D. is, in many ways, at the heart of this project, having opened the door to key experiences and connections to this initiatory, transformative process. His expertise, compassion, and guidance helped ground me so that I could walk my own path, bringing my passion and gifts to "this side of the trees."

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for their presence, encouragement, and unfailing belief in me along this journey. Julie, my wife, for her unceasing support and unflinching belief in me throughout this entire process. This doctoral degree is yet another series of experiences when I am bluntly reminded of how immensely blessed I am because of her love and presence in my life. This degree would not have happened without her. Aiden and Chase, my wonderful boys, for their unbounding energy and pure ability to refocus me on the important things in life. I love you both to the stars and back, one hundred gazillion times. Samson, our yellow lab now resting in peace, for being at my feet during countless hours of doctoral work, soul-centering walks, and gift of his unconditional love in every lick, stare, smile, and nuzzle. My mom, dad, and sister, on our own journeys of trials and discoveries during this same period, for never letting me forget that no matter how difficult things get, our gifts and our love will see us to wonderful things.

For those mentioned and unmentioned, you are all gifts to me. Thank you.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Abstract

This project presents a pilot program evaluation model for measuring the effectiveness of rites of passage strategies for youth and community development. It begins by clarifying the key elements and meaning of modern day, community-based rites of passage experiences for youth transitioning into and through adolescence. An effective rite of passage for adolescence is an intentional and transformative process that increases the youth's community status while supporting and challenging youth to adopt attitudes, behaviors, and skills for a healthy transition through this developmental period and beyond. Next, the project applies a systems-based program evaluation model (Wasserman, 2010) to a rite of passage strategy in order to measure the effects of this experience on both youth and community members. A review of the relevant literature focuses on the current understanding and application of rites of passage experiences for youth and community development, the challenges in defining and measuring this bidirectional process, and the application of Self-Determination Theory to the program evaluation model with the goal of improving the capacity to measure locally meaningful outcomes. The pilot model provides a method for measuring the often assumed, yet key, bidirectional interactions and relationships in effective rites of passage processes. Guided by the application of select pulse points, the model introduces research questions as starting points for stakeholders to measure the effectiveness of these strategies in relation to the program outcome: Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction in relation to authority. A discussion of data collection and analysis, possible results and implications for the research questions, limitations, and future directions follows.

Keywords: rites of passage; self-determination theory; program evaluation; youth and community development; youth development; community development

Chapter 1

"We must work to reclaim passage from anonymous hands, offer youth clear and respected borders for passage, and restore significant formational practice to a place in a deliberate process of coming of age in our culture."

(Scott, 1998, p. 334)

There is little debate that large forces have shifted our social and cultural landscapes in recent decades. These changes have known and unknown effects on youth, their families, and the layers of systems they are nested in. The same holds true for the cumulative influence youth and their families have on the surrounding systems. Likely as a result, there are decreasing numbers of societal structures and institutions once tasked with supporting and assisting our children and adolescents on their journey to an authentic adulthood. To fill this void, youth have turned to themselves, their peers, and the media to inform them of what it means to be an adult, creating their own forms of community whose values may not run parallel to those of the local community.

In an effort to foster positive youth development, address problematic youth behaviors, and generate a stronger sense of family and community life, an expanding number of communities, researchers, policy makers, and practitioners have turned to community-based youth programming. To assist youth in their transition towards adulthood, communities may look to Boys and Girls Clubs of America, 4-H Youth Development, YMCA, Boys Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA, religious organizations, and other youth development programming (Scheer, Gavazzi, & Blumenkrantz, 2007).

One such approach, a rites of passage framework, has been around for centuries yet has

significant relevance even today. This approach can prepare and assist youth with their transition into and through the period of adolescence. Youth acquire skills and expand views of themselves as more responsible, mature, aware of what they need in order to healthfully navigate adolescence, and rooted within their local community.

A rites of passage framework tasks individuals in the surrounding systems with the responsibility to be dependable, initiated themselves, and able to meet the evolving needs of all youth during this major developmental transition. Youth are challenged with creating a new identity that is separate yet still a part of their family and larger community. Community members are challenged with viewing their initiated youth as members rather than children. Even more unique to this approach, yet often not integrated into theoretical discussions and program designs, is the key notion that dynamic, responsive communities encourage the voices of initiated youth, even if those voices go against the status quo or push communities beyond their comfort zones (D. Wasserman, personal communication, November 25, 2011).

A core assumption within rites of passage thinking is that one of the outcomes of going through an elder-driven, intentional rite of initiation, is the youth's self-discovery of their voice, their gift to offer back to the community. It is the feedback, the "messages" from the new community members, that reinvigorate a community, potentially bring about a renewed vitality, and keep a community from ossifying (Blumenkrantz & Wasserman, 1998; D. Wasserman, personal communication, November 25, 2011). More positively framed, a community's intentional participation during a youth's coming of age process enables a greater sense of identity and cohesion as a group, as a community (Blumenkrantz & Wasserman, 1998).

Youth, their community members, and the larger community's sense of connection to one another and their well-being are thought to increase as a result of this process. This bidirectional

interaction between youth and their contexts, their systems, expands upon itself, creating sustainable structures for the local community. Too often discussions on rites of passage as a template for youth development stay mainly one-sided, and youth are sent on a journey of self-discovery, only to be returned to a close-minded and possibly even dysfunctional system (D. Blumenkrantz, personal communication, December 18, 2009). Yet, the structures created by an effective rites of passage process provide meaning and guidance for community members, and more basically and importantly, are thought to increase the likelihood of survival of individuals and communities (Foster, 1998).

This project presents a pilot program evaluation model for measuring the effectiveness of rites of passage strategies for youth and community development. It begins by clarifying the meaning and key elements of modern day, community-based rites of passage experiences for youth transitioning into and through adolescence. Next, it applies a systems-based program evaluation model to measure the effects of this experience on both youth and community members. Essential to this project, two key elements, bidirectionality and local importance, are highlighted and applied within each purpose in an attempt to merge theory and practice, intervention and evaluation. Just as rites of passage thinking is rooted in an interactive systems model, so too should the evaluation method. Similarly, the creation of rites of passage needs to be meaningful to the local community, necessitating flexibility of the evaluation process. These two elements are highlighted throughout the project. There are few resources available to communities describing a leading edge conceptualization of rites of passage programming and a standardized way of measuring its effectiveness. This project seeks to fill that gap by creating a pilot program evaluation model.

Background

There are potential consequences of a lack of intentional community participation (Benson, 1997, 1998; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Damon, 1997; Trickett & Mitchell, 1992), and specifically rites of passage (Blos, 1979; Blumenkrantz, 1992; Foster, 1980; Campbell, 1988; Somé, 1996; Meade, 1993) in the lives of today's youth. These writers assume that youth development could be improved and problem behavior could be reduced if only "the village" did more to raise the child. There are also those who extend this thinking, suggesting that the health of the village itself could improve through these community-based efforts (Benson, 1998; Blumenkrantz & Wasserman, 1998).

The Committee on Community-Level Programs for Youth, a project of the National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine, reported that approximately 25% of adolescents in the United States are "at serious risk of not achieving 'productive adulthood' and face such risks as substance abuse, adolescent pregnancy, school failure, and involvement with the juvenile justice system" (Eccles & Gootman, 2002, p. 2). One could assume that the remaining 75 percent are on a smooth trajectory for healthy adolescence.

Data from multiple sources suggest a less secure outlook. Dryfoos (1990) estimated that 50% of all 10- to 17-year-olds are at significant risk for veering off a healthy trajectory due to risky behaviors, such as teenage pregnancy, substance use, academic failure, crime, and violence. Moore and Glei (1995) report on the National Survey of Children which found 68% of males and 55% of females had engaged in some form of high-risk behavior (e.g., use of hard drugs, running away from home, voluntary premarital sex, premarital birth, and dropping out of school) before the age of 18. More recently published data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention illustrates a varied landscape for high school youth's health-risk behaviors (Centers for Disease

Control [CDC], 2012). While percentages of youth engaged in some health-risk behaviors have decreased over the last two decades overall, there are significant variations in prevalence data for various risky behaviors depending on gender, geographic demographics (e.g., states; urban, rural, suburban areas), race and ethnicity, and age (CDC, 2012). Moreover, this survey assists in expanding the category of health risk behaviors, moving beyond drug and alcohol use, sexual intercourse, and smoking to include other causes of morbidity and mortality, such as bullying, eating habits, physical exercise, and safety measures (CDC, 2012).

The absence of high-risk behaviors may not necessarily signal healthy or optimal youth development. Researchers suggest that passivity, alienation, and indolence are signs of environments lacking conditions necessary for the natural human inclination towards curiosity and motivation (Larson, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Increasing numbers of adolescents report feeling bored and unexcited about their daily lives, regardless of their social class, academic achievement, and involvement in delinquent activities (Larson & Richards, 1991). Some authors conceptualize and ascribe problem and risk-taking behaviors as a lack of engagement in a positive life trajectory (Larson, 2000).

In his discussion of American adolescents and the increasing rates of health compromising and risky behaviors, Benson (1998) suggests that the degradation of family and community supports, a loss of consistency in the socialization of adolescents, and a real sense of disconnection have contributed to the deterioration of traditionally organically occurring relationships necessary to activate developmental assets and community processes leading to healthy development. Benson (1998) also states that in order to increase the probability of youth acquiring these protective developmental assets, communities are challenged with mobilizing and advocating at a local level to create innovative approaches to enhance the well-being of

youth. Solutions targeting more family and community involvement and healthier school environments are clear paths to bolstering the health and protective factors of individuals and community systems (CDC, 2012).

It is generally accepted in mainstream U.S. culture that certain amounts of risk taking are a part of "normal" adolescence. In addition to these social and cultural components, research shows that the adolescent brain may be somewhat hardwired for risk-taking behaviors, as executive functioning has yet to fully develop (Blackmore & Choudhury, 2006; Spear, 2000). Yet, a growing number of potentially unhealthy adolescent behaviors are viewed as attempts by youth and their peers to create more formal events, or rituals, to mark their transitional experiences into and through adolescence. Behaviors conceptualized in this manner include: African-American youth violence (Alford, 2007), male youth violence (Pollack, 2004), gang activity (Sanyika, 1996), Russian adolescent drug use (Scheer & Unger, 1997), alcohol abuse (Crawford & Novak, 2006), teen pregnancy (Dash, 1989), and suburban female delinquent behavior (Merten, 2005).

In response to the calls for communities to be more actively engaged in the lives of their youth, there has been a shift in thinking and public policy in recent decades (Benson, 1998; Blumenkrantz, 1992; Grimes, 2002; Mahdi, Foster, & Little, 1987; Perkins, 1985; Somé, 1993). This shift has led to increases in funding, studies focusing on pinpointing the processes at work during this developmental transition, and programs available to individuals and their communities. This movement has veered away from a deficit model of development with its primary focus on deterrence, and has shifted toward positive youth development, summarized by the phrase "problem free is not fully prepared" (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003a, p. 170). Another key aspect of this increasingly popular philosophy is the view that youth are "resources to be

developed rather than as problems to be managed" (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003b, p. 94). This thinking extends beyond the level of the individual, moving to incorporate the larger contextual systems influencing youths' lives. Communities that offer both a breadth and depth of developmental opportunities for adolescents decrease risk factors and increase rates of positive development, and public and private funding continues to grow in support of this new paradigm (Eccles & Gootman, 2002).

There have been many attempts at creating effective programming specifically targeting youth's transition into and through adolescence through a rites of passage framework. But, there are two challenges to bringing this culturally embedded, coming of age experience into the arena of modern psychology. The first challenge is to clearly define and clarify the meaning of "rites of passage." Therefore, literature from various fields will be reviewed in order to form a working definition with a focus on its application to youth and community development. In addition, two key concepts, bidirectionality and local importance, inform the working definition, as they harness the meaning and zeitgeist of an effective rite of passage experience. These concepts, or elements, are rarely combined or applied to both program design and program evaluation. This pilot evaluation model suggests a method for accomplishing this.

The second challenge, directly related to the first, is to discover and apply an evaluation model that is designed to capture the unique elements and key concepts within the process of rites of passage experiences. It is only during the past few decades that attempts at quantifying rites of passage experiences have been scrutinized. The majority of current program evaluations target only a handful of specific youth outcomes, and these are generally measured only at the level of the individual youth. Yet, this area of study calls for evaluation approaches consistent with the driving systemic thinking inherent in a community-based rites of passage experiences.

Unfortunately, there are few published studies measuring systemic effects of this dynamic, interactive experience at various levels between and among the provider and target systems. These interactions and relationships between and among systems provide key data points, yet are often assumed or merely addressed as discussion points (Wasserman, 2010). It is just these interactions and relationships that have the potential to set rites of passage strategies apart from typical positive youth development activities. Finally, program design, implementation, and evaluation results need to be relevant not only to the growing bodies of positive youth development and rites of passage literature, but relevant, just as importantly, to the local community's unique needs and wishes for their youth and themselves. Without flexibility to accommodate various applications, a program evaluation model reduces its ability to contribute to this area of study.

Conclusion

This project intends to advance the capacity to measure effective community-based initiatory experiences for youth by offering: a refined definition focused on clarifying the meaning and essential components of "rites of passage" as it pertains to youth and community development; the selection of program outcomes, program theory and a broader contextual foundational theory (Wasserman, 2010) relevant to good science, local needs, and systemic thinking; and a program evaluation model flexible enough to meet a local community's needs and values and to gather critical information on the interactions of the local target and provider systems. Addressing these two challenges may address the demands from funders, policy makers, and others involved in the lives of youth to quantify the value, including financial, of this type of experience in the lives of youth and their communities (Simon, 2005).

Chapter 2: A Literature Review

Rites of Passage

The term *rites of passage*, whether used colloquially or more academically, carries images of indigenous tribal ceremonies, the first day of grade school, one's first road trip without parental supervision, marriage, the death of a parent or spouse, or any number of experiences many people pass through that can transform them to one degree or another. The term rites of passage is used in fields as diverse as anthropology, theology, sociology, and psychology, and the diversity of its meaning and application is significant. Even within the field of community psychology, for example, different cultural, racial and ethnic groups apply different criterion and meaning to rites of passage programming. As community-based and youth development programming expand to implicitly or explicitly incorporate rites of passage concepts from conceptualization to implementation, it becomes increasingly important for stakeholders to have a robust working definition, shared language and meaning.

This project aims to clarify the meaning and application of rites of passage, specifically as it pertains to youth's movement from childhood into and through adolescence. The project focuses on establishing a community-based rites of passage experience as a key vehicle for empowering and guiding communities to discover what this movement means for their youth and themselves. While the construct of adolescence itself is defined by its transitionary nature between childhood and adulthood (Benson, 1998), it is up to a local community, a local system, to create and execute a clear vision of what the "other side" of this period looks like, including the attitudes, skills, and worldviews they would like transmitted to their youth. Erickson's (1963) description of the psychosocial moratorium recognizes that mastery of the identity versus role confusion stage hinges, in part, on the fulfillment of an adolescent's inherent need for his

surrounding environment and context to provide the adequate markers and confirmation of their passage (Dunham, Kidwell, & Wilson, 1986; Lertzman, 2002; Scheer et al., 2007). Adolescence also "represents a developmental transition that presents not only opportunities for cognitive, physical, and social-emotional growth but also vulnerabilities related to the presence or absence of certain internal characteristics and certain features of the individual's environment" (LeBlanc, 2008, p. 258). In modern society, community-sanctioned markers confirming one's passage are generally absent or inconsistent, and communities often lack a cohesive, sustainable setting for moving their children toward becoming responsible and accountable adolescents.

Traditionally, the goals of youth and community programming, from a clinical perspective, often address specific disorders and problems, including high-risk behaviors, using traditional treatment approaches. Positive youth development (PYD) programming, often applied outside of a clinical domain, seeks to mobilize an individual's developmental assets using a primary prevention approach (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003b). Yet, for intervening in the lives of youth, the lines designating the "who needs what" are often blurred, and gaining access to youth becomes a challenge (Tremblay & Landon, 2003). Research clearly shows that consistent attention to youth, in multiple social contexts, simultaneously working to reduce negative behaviors and increase positive behaviors, has been effective for participating in their lives (Catalano, Hawkins, Bergland, Pollard, & Arthur, 2002; Small & Memmo, 2004; Youngblade et al., 2007). Effective rites of passage programs have been shown to simultaneously reduce problem behaviors and reinforce positive ones (Scheer et al., 2007).

Rites of passage experiences, or rituals of initiation, can be conceptualized as a map or set of developmental processes guiding and supporting youth's transition into and through adolescence (Scheer et al., 2007). During this experience, values, attitudes, skills, and

worldviews are transmitted and passed on from older to younger generations, and youth are supported and guided in handing over one social status for another (Blumenkrantz, 1992; Lincoln, 1981; van Gennep, 1909/1960). This process requires increased opportunities for connecting youth to their place in the world, such that they are actively encouraged to become more responsible and held accountable for their capacity to positively contribute to their communities (Sullwold, 1998). Communities are responsible for confidently and clearly coming to a consensus and answering the question, "Initiated into what?" which is an initial step that can differentiate successful from unsuccessful implementation (D. Blumenkrantz, personal communication, November, 30, 2009). Without clarity about the vision and destination, the entire experience quickly veers away from the conceptualization, as defined in this paper, and as a result, can fall short of its potential.

The specific activities, settings, and other vehicles by which this initiatory passage occurs may be as unique as each individual, culture, or community engaging in this intentional process. The basic requirements include: developmentally appropriate activities for youth; the selection and integration of elders and community representatives into the design; community orientation and training; the community's recognition of and commitment to this endeavor as a crucial marker of development; and marking these events with public recognition via ritual or ceremony (Blumenkrantz, 1992; Dunham et al., 1986; van Gennep, 1909/1960). These core requirements create a foundation with which a sustainable process can be generated that facilitates the transformation of youth to a new identity, new role, or new status (van Gennep, 1909/1960; Dunham et al., 1986), as well as invigorate and energize the community supporting their youth (Blumenkrantz & Wasserman, 1998).

A community may understand the initiatory process to last throughout the middle school

years, or possibly include a longer-term timeline lasting through the high school years. The community should also come to an agreement of what they want to transmit to their youth during this experience. For the purposes of this dissertation, activities understood to be "developmentally appropriate," regardless of the type, setting, or duration, are those that satisfy a youth's basic psychological needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Scales, 1996). Therefore, to be developmentally appropriate, the "what" youth are initiated into must be inclusive of the diversity of thought, characters, abilities, and worldviews of newly initiated community members (D. Wasserman, personal communication, November 26, 2011). A community's efforts may be ineffective if the majority of the initiatory process is developmentally inappropriate. This is a key point and is elaborated on in subsequent sections of the project, in particular describing Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and the program evaluation model (Wasserman, 2010).

A community's optimal involvement is understood to hinge on its commitment to creating emotionally impactful events that signify or mark this transformative shift (Scheer et al., 2007; Sullwold, 1998). Youth's interpretation of the activities and events along the way is also seen as a crucial factor (Scheer et al., 2007). Memorable or emotional experiences "help sear these lessons into the psyche of the youth in ways that can guide and inform their future behavior" (D. Blumenkrantz, personal communication, November 30, 2009). Currently there are active research projects focused on surveying rites of passage programming to catalogue the core requirements and additional elements that that should be applied to all community-based rites of passage designs regardless of the community's cultural or ethnic identification (D. Blumenkrantz, December 18, 2009, personal communication). One such project has catalogued twenty core components that communities and program designers can use as a guide for the

creation of this type of programming (Blumenkrantz & Goldstein, 2010).

The rites of passage model created by French ethnographer, Arnold van Gennep, is often used as a guide for creating and selecting events and activities for these initiatory processes. He catalogued patterns within these transitional experiences, leading to a tripartite model (van Gennep, 1909/1960). There have been updates and expansions to this model, including research focused specifically on the adolescent developmental process (Dunham et al., 1986). The three phases of van Gennep's tripartite model are separation, liminality, and reincorporation (van Gennep, 1909/1960). The first phase, separation, is the period when an individual departs from a previous identity. This includes periods of either physical separation from the local community (Lertzman, 2002) or creative applications of settings already embedded in a local community (Blumenkrantz, 1992; Sarason, 1974) while the youth is prepared and trained to navigate the upcoming activities. The second phase, liminality, is generally recognized as the transitionary period, of being neither the old nor the new, and essentially betwixt and between (Turner, 1969). The third phase, reincorporation, signals the integration of the individual's newly acquired values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors into the self and into the community (Scheer et al., 2007).

The individual's journey through these three phases occurs internally, such as through the acquisition of knowledge, attitudes, social and coping skills, and externally, through various physical and memorable settings over time (Scheer et al., 2007; Blumenkrantz & Wasserman, 1998). Once youth return from this initiatory journey and are reincorporated into the community, as stated earlier in the paper, it is imperative the community welcome youth to the table even if they possess new knowledge, strengths, gifts, and ideas that differ from what has been done in the past. In this way, a youth's movement through these stages can have positive

effects on non-youth participants at various locations within the local system, reinforcing a community's vitality (Blumenkrantz & Wasserman, 1998; Scheer et al., 2007). One of the outcomes of this pilot evaluation model is the development of a method for determining how non-youth's basic psychological needs, as conceptualized by Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000), are impacted during community-based rites of passage experiences.

Refining the definition and meaning. A contextually defined and locally embedded community-based rites of passage experience for adolescents is a bidirectional exchange between an individual and a local system. A pioneering work in the field establishes that, "The purpose of the initiatory experience, rites of passage, is to help people transcend their present state and transform themselves into a new way of being human. It also supports the integration of the individual's transformation into the community" (Blumenkrantz & Relock, 1981, p. 1). Moreover, research on key sub-processes occurring in successful youth transformations indicates:

> A modern-day rite of passage is achieved when parents and the community create and participate in experiences that are perceived to be transformative by youth, offer them increased status within the community, and facilitate their healthy transition through adolescence. (Blumenkrantz & Wasserman, 1998, p. 250)

Scheer et al. (2007) suggest that rites of passage programming during this developmental period are "not a stop-gap approach for prevention and intervention programs, but rather are thought to be a set of developmental processes to be employed with youth throughout their approach to adulthood" (p. 6). This long-term and dynamic thinking is key yet infrequently mentioned or integrated into program conceptualization and design. It is also important that

communities, in consultation with "elders," or those initiated themselves, design rites of passage programming that integrates specific cultural expectations or values of the local minority groups (Rudkin, 2003; Scheer et al., 2007). While general knowledge of a multicultural perspective is helpful, effective rites of passage programming takes into account the specific needs and values of the local community (Scheer & Unger, 1997; Maloney, 2005).

Description of a real world intervention. In order to give more texture to the picture of effective rites of passage for youth and community development, the following section describes the Rite of Passage Experience© (ROPE®), an initiative created by Dr. David Blumenkrantz in 1981 (Blumenkrantz & Reslock, 1981). The ROPE® manual and published information, including the main website, are the sources for this section, though it is beyond the scope of this project to attempt to describe the many layers and idiosyncrasies that go into the design and implementation of a process such as this. Housed by The Center for the Advancement of Youth, Family and Community Services, Inc., ROPE® has engaged over 100,000 youth and their families through a modern-day initiatory experience and is a strategy for guiding communities through three phases of interconnected training, consultation and intervention over the course of six years (Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993; The Center for the Advancement of Youth, Family and Community Services, Inc., n.d.a). The center's mission is:

> to promote positive youth development and to assist children in the transition through adolescence to becoming healthy adults connected to their communities. We accomplish this by creating effective school and community-based strategies in partnership with parents, teachers, counselors, and community leaders. (The Center for the Advancement of Youth, Family and Community Services, Inc., n.d.a)

Implemented in schools and communities of various sizes and locations throughout the

United States and Canada, ROPE® is designed to guide middle and high school youth through adolescence to prevent unhealthy risk taking behaviors by integrating "the lessons of our ancestors with contemporary social and behavioral science to produce a positive effect on the confidence and judgment of children and teens" (The Center for the Advancement of Youth, Family and Community Services, Inc., n.d.a). ROPE® has been recognized as an exemplary program by the National League of Cities and the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management, as well as named to the Child Welfare League of American program exchange (Blumenkrantz, 1992). While there are numerous unpublished manuscripts with quantitative and qualitative data on ROPE®, including evidence of increasing youth's sense of mastery, competence, confidence, resiliency, and sense of community (Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993), evaluation of a systemic, primary prevention program such as ROPE® presents many challenges (Blumenkrantz, 1992; D. Blumenkrantz, personal communication, December 18, 2009).

This strategic training and consultation strategy facilitates the mobilization of a community's unique resources so that youth experience a supportive environment that transmits essential attitudes, beliefs, and skills necessary for the survival, growth, and well-being of current and future generations, as well as the survival and thriving of the community itself (Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993; Blumenkrantz & Wasserman, 1998). Integrating ceremonial processes into a community intervention, the ROPE® process seeks to maximize a community's commitment to raising healthy youth through the creation of a modern day ritual of initiation (Blumenkrantz & Reslock, 1981; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). Through this bidirectional process, youth develop a deeper sense of who they are, including their acceptance by, membership in, and connection to the community, which in turns strengthens the community and

keeps it vibrant (Blumenkrantz & Wasserman, 1998; Scheer et al., 2007).

Getting started. While the core of the ROPE® process is the establishment of a three-phase set of interconnected community interventions, constructing a comprehensive rite of passage is a challenging process, including a key initial step: the creation of a core group of approximately 12-15 adults that serves as Guiding Elders (The Center for the Advancement of Youth, Family and Community Services, Inc., n.d.b). This group is expected to offer leadership, direction and a commitment to primary prevention and positive youth development (Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). This should be a diverse group from the community, consisting of individuals from various roles and systems within the community, such as families, schools, police, government, business, religious institutions, and community agencies. In consultation with ROPE® staff and representing the values of the community, this group must work collaboratively to develop and implement "a meaningful, culturally relevant and developmentally appropriate rite of passage" (Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993, p. 203).

The local community is tasked with supporting their youth's movement into and through adolescence toward adulthood, as well as teaching skills and beliefs necessary to become a healthy, responsible, and productive member of the community (Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993; Scheer et al., 2007). This process begins with a two-hour orientation meeting, consisting of school personnel, community leaders, parents and their children, usually at the end of their elementary school year, around eleven or twelve years old. The groups of adults and youth are split up. The meaning, purpose, and need for rites of passage, as well as parental participation, are stressed. A five-day community training follows as the core group, or Guiding Elders, refines the content to meet the needs of their local community and begin to assemble the resources needed for implementation (Blumenkrantz & Reslock, 1981;

Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993; Scheer et al., 2007).

First phase. A twenty-one hour, thirteen session strategy is the foundation of the first phase with the goals of building youth's life skills, specifically around self-esteem, resiliency and problem-solving (Blumenkrantz & Reslock, 1981; Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993; Scheer et al., 2007). Youth "learn how to cooperate, make decisions, and solve problems, and they develop a sense of confidence and mastery in their abilities–essential to the formation of a healthy identity" (The Center for the Advancement of Youth, Family and Community Services, Inc., n.d.b). As mentioned during the initial two-hour orientation meeting, this is a period of change and transition for the youth, their parents, and the community. True to van Gennep's tripartite model (van Gennep, 1909/1960), this phase focuses on separation as it occurs in the upcoming transition from elementary school to middle school, as well as the early steps youth take in separating from their parents during this time (Blumenkrantz, 1992).

The sessions occur in small groups, often 10-13 students led by two ROPE® guides. These sessions are meant to have a ceremonial feel, such that the creation of setting (Sarason, 1974; Blumenkrantz, 1992) and the time spent together have the capacity to be thought and feeling provoking, helping youth explore what it means to be an adult and the purpose of challenges in their lives (Blumenkrantz & Reslock, 1981; Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). Learning occurs via metaphor, dialogue, stories, discussions, processing, and a breadth of cognitive and physical activities, optimally perceived by youth as increasingly challenging yet fun and meaningful. ROPE® guides use teachable moments, lessons, and insights to focus youth's experiences on their initiation and awakening into adolescence and beyond (Blumenkrantz & Reslock, 1981; Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993).

As the sessions continue, youth are immersed in positive and challenging experiences

addressing problem-solving skills, trust and peer pressure, cooperation, clarification of values, self-esteem, and the link between success and having fun (Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993; Blumenkrantz, 2000). The experiential activities become more difficult, and ultimately, youth's emotional engagement and commitment to the process and their growth increase, resulting in the acquisition of new skills and perspectives on what it means to become an adult: active and committed, challenged and successful, healthy and vibrant (Blumenkrantz & Reslock, 1981; Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). ROPE® guides sow the seeds for the second phase as groups begin to brainstorm positive leisure activities they can participate in beyond elementary school that continue experiences of putting their time and efforts into healthy endeavors and having fun (Blumenkrantz, 1992, 2000; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993).

As the first phase nears completion, youth participate in an activity, a "culminating challenge," selected by the community requiring youth to put into practice many of the skills developed and lessons learned in the previous ROPE® sessions (Blumenkrantz, 1992). This endeavor could be an extended hike, ropes course challenges, camping overnight, orienteering, or other meaningful event challenging youth physically and cognitively (Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). Frequently reported by youth as a significant event in their lives, this challenge is often cited by youth, parents, community members, and ROPE® facilitators as an example of their growth as individuals (D. Blumenkrantz, personal communication, December, 18, 2009). The last session consists of a review of what has been learned and experienced, and it shifts youth's attention towards the need to navigate around and through the upcoming challenges in their lives (Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). Unhealthy paths to adulthood, such as offered by drugs and alcohol, sexual promiscuity and delinquent behaviors, are countered with healthy and fun options provided by their schools

and communities. Youth, along with their parents and ROPE® guides, create a contract describing what positive leisure time activities (e.g., hobbies, clubs, art, individual and team sports, faith organizations) they will try during the next phase, as well as how their parents and community can assist them in carrying the contract out (Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993).

Second phase. Once the skill-building foundation of the first phase has been established as youth transition from elementary school to middle school or junior high, the second phase of ROPE® continues with the key theme that adulthood can be both healthy and fun (Blumenkrantz & Reslock, 1981; Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). The second phase focuses on youth's experimentation with positive leisure activities and the community's commitment to providing ample resources for guiding parents and youth towards developing skills in healthy activities (Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). As community, school, and family resources are mobilized and coordinated, youth are able to develop and expand their relationships to adults and other leaders within their area, promoting a sense of community, altruism and cooperative values through these interactions and connections (Blumenkrantz, 1992; Scheer et al., 2007).

It is during this second phase of ROPE® that the bidirectional nature of an effective rites of passage process becomes overt. In order to increase the likelihood of establishing an effective community-based rite of passage, two essential "ingredients" need to be established (Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). First, the local system needs to provide an array of these positive leisure activities so that all middle school aged youth see fun, interesting, and rewarding options that optimally reinforce the skills youth learned during the first phase (Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). Communities are challenged to offer options for youth and their families that

occur during the week after school, on weekends, at varied locations, and with coaching and guidance to encourage participation (Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). Secondly, local schools are expected to offer opportunities for parents and community members to participate in "school related enhancement activities" in order "to support and enhance a child's connection to the community and academic achievement" (Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993, p. 207). Informed and selected by the group of community elders, these opportunities enable direct community contributions to the initiatory process, further transmitting the desired attitudes, behaviors, beliefs and values to youth, as well as having potential positive effects on themselves (Blumenkrantz & Wasserman, 1998; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993).

Third phase. The final phase of ROPE® takes place during youth's high school years and focuses on supporting their movement through adolescence and deepening their connection to their community. This is accomplished through a community service requirement and human development/relations learning. Youth learn the importance of helping others through actual community service experiences, as well as the values of altruism, compassion, cooperation and giving (Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). These giving and helping behaviors are direct experiences for youth to see their contributions to their communities and feel needed by the adults around them who often do not see burgeoning adolescents as equals or deserving of responsibilities (Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993; Blumenkrantz & Wasserman, 1998). Youth may be paired with mentors, serve as student mentors for the youth going through the first two phases of ROPE®, or offer their time in childcare facilities, care of the elderly, or local community services (Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). In addition to community service, communities would ultimately add child and human relations/development courses into their school's curriculum, including hands-on experience in a childcare facility (Blumenkrantz &

Gavazzi, 1993). If appropriately trained and supervised, adolescents could greatly contribute to a local need while learning firsthand the massive responsibilities of parenting during a period of their burgeoning sexuality (Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). This is also another simple example of the bidirectional nature of the initiatory process, as the developmental needs of both youth and community are addressed in positive ways (Blumenkrantz & Wasserman, 1998).

Opportunities for youth to practice the skills learned in earlier phases is limited only by the creativity and efforts of the community itself (Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). The community's best interest, its survival and thriving, is served by investing time and energy in this process (Blumenkrantz & Wasserman, 1998). The focus on community service and parenting skills is to make explicit the expectations that our broader culture has for individuals to be helpful to others and to be competent parents (Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). The social and institutional supports are generally not in place, and "these important societal beliefs and behaviors are left to the family, churches, or chance" (Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993, p. 208). Moreover, even if communities have conversations about these values, it is the youth and the community that miss out if there are not actual experiential opportunities to learn what is expected (Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). Unfortunately, this phase of ROPE® is often difficult to implement on a large scale due to the limitations of school resources and academic requirements. ROPE® facilitators continue to be available to help youth find meaningful volunteer opportunities, and the selected community elders continue to develop creative ways to establish youth's community involvement (Blumenkrantz, 1992; Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993).

Program Evaluation

As attention to systems thinking and communities becomes increasingly popular for

conceptualizing theory and programming for youth, it is a ripe opportunity to consider systems-based program evaluations for measuring these endeavors. If researchers, clinicians, parents, youth, and other community members are to better understand the many subtle dynamics involved in successful youth and community interventions, methods are needed to standardize the means of collecting data on less overt interactions between individuals at various locations or levels of systems. Provider systems can improve their effectiveness if they consider the local needs and contextual setting when intervening at a community level (Tremblay & Landon, 2003; Wasserman, 2010). In addition to local needs and context, when multiple layers of a community are taken into consideration during an evaluation process, the level of complexity increases significantly as the intervention affects the system. Despite its intentions, an intervention responds to both intended and unintended system outputs, outcomes, effects on relationships within the system, and reflective human perspectives about those outputs, outcomes and relational effects (Cabrera & Colosi, 2008). Taken in parts or wholes, this system feedback itself can change the system, and the feedback loop continues (Cabrera, Colosi, & Lobdell, 2008).

This project examines a systemic program evaluation model (Wasserman, 2010) that affords standardization while remaining flexible to local needs and complexities, naturally inherent in human systems and imperative to the design of effective rites of passage programming. Robust program designs acknowledge the "delicate balance" of how the initiates change their local system and how the local system supports the initiates (D. Wasserman, personal communication, November 26, 2011). Robust program evaluations are sensitive to the subtle shifts from the dynamic feedback loop between those providing services with those receiving services, as well as vice versa. True systems thinking in program evaluation focuses on this dynamic feedback between provider and target systems along with the varying

perceptions of those dynamic relationships (D. Wasserman, personal communication, November 26, 2011).

Frequently, logic models are the means for tracking the optimal utilization of a human service program's resources, activities, and effects (Wasserman, 2010). Program evaluations are a common method for parsing out the relationships between programmatic activities, resources, and outcomes (Wasserman, 2010). From a systems-thinking perspective, a program consists of two types of systems interacting with each other: the provider system and a target system made up of multiple participant systems. The provider system contains the program activities and contains an expanding set of nested relationships, from "a program provider within a program within an organization within a larger environment of practices, programs, policies, resources and norms (the program's macroenvironment)" (Wasserman, 2010, p 70). The target system expands from the program's targeted individuals to their families, communities, school programs, larger health initiatives, and macroenvironment (Wasserman, 2010). When the relationships between provider and target systems overlap or influence one another, or when the various perspectives on those relationships differ (both essential elements of rites of passage programming), evaluations often are ill-equipped to capture or isolate them for additional analysis. They are often assumed to be constant (e.g., "parents will (or won't) respond to achievement test results; community elders will respond to student feedback with the students' best interests in mind). During the typical, less systems-oriented program evaluation process, these "otherwise assumed effects" and "contextual relationships" may be measured or addressed in some way, though more often than not they are merely discussion points (Wasserman, 2010, p. 67).

If these interactions, relationships, and perspectives can be better explicated, it is possible

that program evaluations can improve their usefulness with expanded validity, meaning, and utility (Wasserman, 2010). Within each human service delivery system, the providers, participants, and other stakeholders bring various perspectives to the value of programmatic activities and outcomes. It is possible that those in academia may consume and interpret the results differently than a local community. A program may or may not be deemed successful depending on the perspective of the various stakeholders involved (D. Wasserman, personal communication, April 16, 2010). The interactions within and between the provider and target systems include many assumptions about how program providers and the intended individual targets interact, as well as features of these interactions that potentially provide key information (Wasserman, 2010).

For example, a community may participate in an intervention to boost the grade point averages of its middle school students. If this group valued high grades above all else, the program would be viewed as a success if the main outcome, grade point average, increased. The perspectives of multiple individuals and groups (e.g., parents, teachers, administrators, and program providers) within the system may support this value, and the program receives additional funding for the following year. At the same time in a neighboring community, the key stakeholders may have decided they value student well-being, relational connection, and internal motivation as much as high grades. For the initial year, GPAs decreased but their targeted outcomes improved. They were defunded. If a deeper evaluation of the available data took place, the community with improved GPAs may have demonstrated increased alienation and less motivated students, resulting in longer-term problems. Whereas in the second community, if given a chance in the longer term, GPA may have improved as a result of the improved motivation. Examining various perspectives within and outside of the target systems may

provide key data for evaluating an intervention's capacity to respond to the needs or values of a local community (Wasserman, 2010).

Within the theory-driven evaluation literature (Chen, 2004), the main components of a logic model can be classified as a program's change model (Wasserman, 2010). A change model (Chen, 2004) includes numerous conditions, such as program activities necessary to produce outcomes, intended intermediate and longer-term outcomes, and "intermediating 'determinants'" (Wasserman, 2010, p. 69). Causative theories explain change models by positing how specific conditions lead to particular outcomes within the target system, as well as why these outcomes occur (Chen, 2004; Wasserman, 2010). Yet there are limits to the change model, including its ability to explain contextual factors and unexpected outcomes, such as the increased student alienation in the hypothetical example above, that fall outside of the change model (Wasserman, 2010).

Those tasked with evaluating the effectiveness of programs may need to adapt and expand their goals to measuring interactions that fall outside of the change model by integrating both a way to capture them and apply a theory that explains why and under what conditions these unexpected results occur (Wasserman, 2010). Chen's (1990) theory-driven evaluation framework also adds an action model in order to explain those results that are often not addressed by a program's change model and causative theory (Wasserman, 2010). These "contextual system factors" and assumptions (Wasserman, 2010, p. 69) have previously been addressed in the literature as "influential factors" (W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004) or "ecological context" (Chen, 2004). Yet they are often disorganized or not systematically measured during the intervention or evaluation processes (Wasserman, 2010). For example, a set of activities for 6th graders participating in a rites of passage program may include multiple

experiences outside in natural settings. It is possible that an indirect factor such as weather conditions could affect the frequency of weekly activities of a 9-month program, having an effect on program outcomes and perspectives of these outcomes. The program's causative theory of the change model would likely address issues around dose or regularity of programming. What might not be explained by the causative theory are the parents' responses to changes in the schedule or what happens at home during cancelled activities due to bad weather.

The action model attempts to account for contextual influences, which may include: the program or organizational climate; the participant's family, community or other programs; human service delivery protocols; and the provider's ability to produce program activities (Wasserman, 2010). Normative theories explain the action model by describing how previously unaccounted for variables support the change model. Normative theories also attempt to give more robustness to the evaluation process by capturing the relationships between contextual variables and their contribution to the change model (Wasserman, 2010). But some argue that there are few social science theories that effectively apply to action models (Chen, 2004).

As a result, applying an overarching theory, hereto called a foundational theory, that is less specific than the change model's causative theory but carries more explanatory power than typical normative theories, is one method of expanding our understanding of what can be systematically measured by program evaluations (Wasserman, 2010). A foundational theory "explains why and under what conditions the causative theory will be valid" (Wasserman, 2010, p. 69). In this project, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is the foundational theory that explains "Why?" and "Under what conditions?" well-being may increase during rites of passage experiences. In this case, well-being, or youth sense of competence, connectedness to their community, and enthusiasm to participate, may increase or diminish as a result of the group

sessions and activities, interactions with elders, or the development of a psychological sense of community. Provider (i.e., counselors, community elders) sense of competence, connectedness, and enthusiasm may also be affected. When both the provider and target systems, as well as their interactions, are addressed, program evaluations can be more responsive to the expanding demands on and requirements of the program (Wasserman, 2010), in this case, rites of passage programming.

As previously noted, typically a program's change model is informed by a causative theory (Chen, 2004) to explain, "why and how program activities will lead to intended outcomes" (Wasserman, 2010, p. 69). In theory-driven evaluations, directed by the causative theory, data supporting the change model are systematically collected. But the change model's causative theory, often a testable social science theory, can be heavily textured with an action model's nuts and bolts components, for example, organizational, family, or community quantities and quality of engagement (Wasserman, 2010). Chen, a pioneer and founder of theory driven evaluation, laments that the nuts and bolts components of the action model, informed by a normative theory, are more difficult, if not impossible to define and measure in hypothesis testing formats (Chen, 2004) and data therefore rarely systematically collected (Wasserman, 2010). Wasserman (2010) argued that a foundational theory that explains the processes by which the elements of both change model and action models interact to affect outcomes can provide the missing avenue for systematically collecting action model data to systematically illuminate the effects of contextual factors and feedback. She suggested Self-Determination Theory as a useful foundational theory for this purpose (Wasserman, 2010). This pilot evaluation model provides a map for applying Self-Determination Theory as a foundational theory to explain the interactions between the change and action models involved in rites of

passage programming.

The bidirectional nature of community-based rites of passage efforts makes measuring the effectiveness challenging. The action model is as important as the change model. The delicate bidirectional relationship between the effect of programming on a community and the effect of a community on the programming, described earlier in this section as the dynamic feedback loop (Cabrera & Colosi, 2008; Cabrera et al., 2008), makes using a typical causative and normative theory model inadequate. Rites of passage thinking demands an evaluation model that will track the influence in both directions, such that there is both flexibility and standardization to assign a specific value to program success in one direction at the expense of the other (D. Wasserman, personal communication, November 30, 2011).

The following is a simplified example. Causative theory (change model) may predict that youth moving through a rites of passage process increases school commitment, the community's desired outcome. Normative theory (action model) may predict that competent and motivated rites of passage facilitators are more effective at bringing about increases in youth's need satisfaction and school commitment. It is unlikely that a community would view the experience implementing a rites of passage process as a success if ratings of school commitment decreased while facilitators were evaluated as competent and motivated. Similarly, facilitators lacking competence and motivation may be less effective delivering the intended program, negatively affecting the school commitment outcome.

Therefore, creating a program evaluation model, rooting the change and action models within systems thinking and a foundational theory, enables stakeholders to more systematically measure the often assumed "operative relationships and perspectives" that influence the interactions within and between systems (Wasserman, 2010, p. 69). If the effects of these

relationships could be measured and controlled, stakeholders could expand the meaning, validity and utility of the common program evaluation based primarily on outcomes (Cabrera et al., 2008; Chen, 2004; Wasserman, 2010). Evaluation models used to measure the effectiveness of rites of passage strategies necessitates this subtlety, often excluded in typical causative theory models. The delicate bidirectional relationship between the effect of programming on the community and the effect of community on the programming is a key feature of this process, and positive change in one direction at the expense of the other does not define a successful implementation (D. Wasserman, personal communication, June 12, 2012).

Wasserman's model (2010) attempts to map the interactions, or contextual relationships, that occur within and between the target and provider systems of human services interventions. Specifically, the map contains suggested locations for these interactions, called pulse points. Each pulse point assesses a different relationship within and between systems (Wasserman, 2010). They are used to augment measurements typically found in the change model, not necessarily replace them (D. Wasserman, personal communication, November 30, 2011). The change model measures the quantity of outcomes, while the SDT-based model measures the quality of the outcomes. The change model measures quantity and degree of activities, while the SDT-based model measures the effect of program activities on well-being during the time of the activities (D. Wasserman, personal communication, November 30, 2011). Appropriate research questions measured at each of these pulse points enable a program evaluation to integrate multiple perspectives into the research questions. In the case of rites of passage work, the interactions between youth and the rest of the contextual systems can be tracked such that the bidirectional influence, often just assumed to be functional, can be measured and monitored. Wasserman (2010) describes eight such pulse points. Figure 1 provides a map, and Table 1

describes the contribution of causative, normative, and foundational theories to understanding each pulse point.

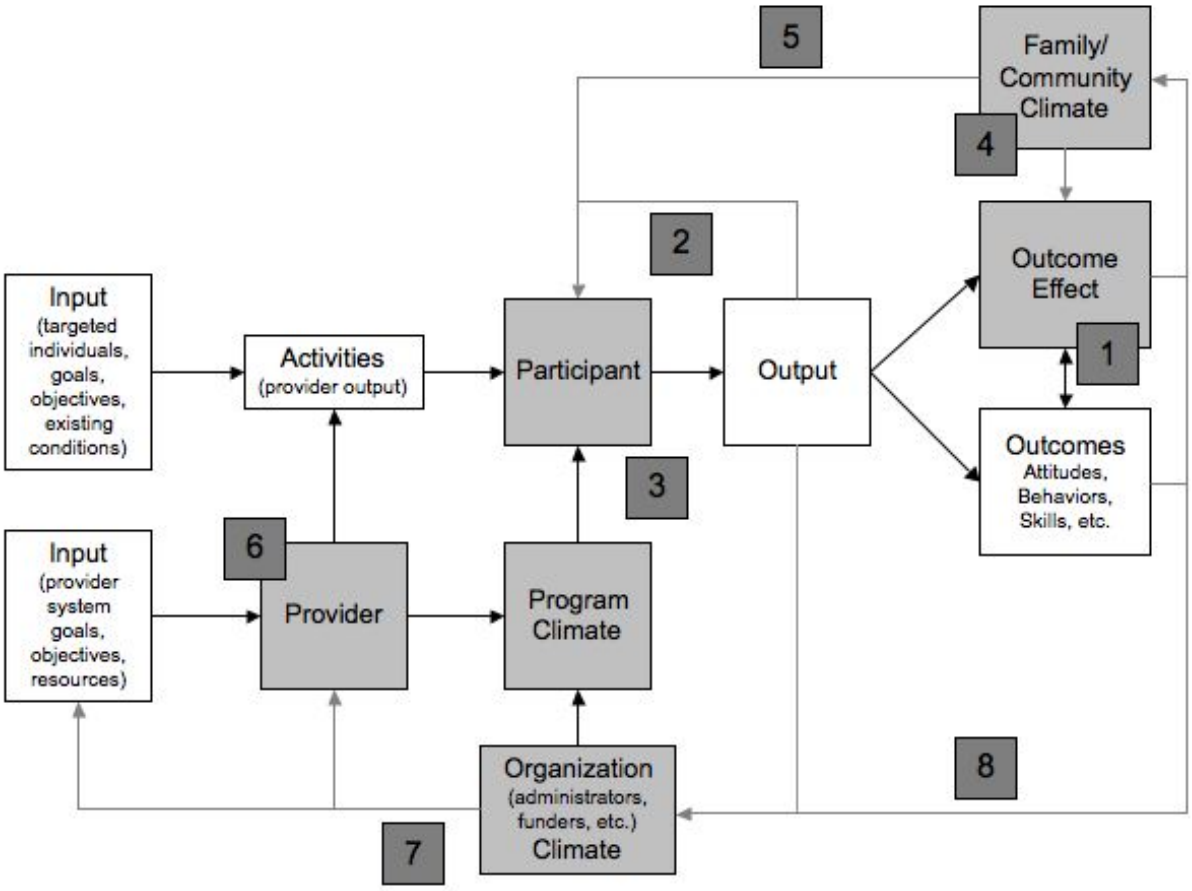

Figure 1. A generic program model with eight pulse points for measuring inter and intra-system functioning. White boxes = change model; grey boxes = action model; dark grey boxes = pulse points. Reprinted from "Using a Systems Orientation and Foundational Theory to Enhance Theory-Driven Human Service Program Evaluations," by D. L. Wasserman, 2010, *Evaluation and Program Planning, 22*, p. 70. Copyright 2009 by Elsevier Ltd.

Table 1

How Causative, Normative, and Foundational Theories Contribute to the Explanation of Program System Relationships (as Organized by Pulse Points)

	Causative theory explains	**Normative theory explains**	**Foundational theory explains**
Overall purpose	How participants' interactions with program activities are expected to produce targeted outcomes.	How context and feedback variables are expected to influence the program and outcomes.	How (and why) the perception, definition, and value of the relationships very within and between perspectives.
Program model	Change model.	Action model.	How various perspectives affect and respond to the effectiveness of the distinctions and relationships in both change and action models.
Pulse point relationship			
#1 Participant to outcome	Intended intermediate and long-term outcomes and how they can be measured.	(Assumes the targeted outcomes are functional)	How human beings value changes in attitudes, skills, behaviors, etc.
#2 Participant to program activities	The amount and nature of interaction with activities necessary to produce outcomes.	Contextual influences expected to affect the quality of the activities.	How human perception/experiences of an activity affects the outcomes the activities produces.
#3 Participant to provider	Expected quality of the provider-participant relationship.	Contextual influences expected to affect the quality of the provider-participant relationships.	How human perceptions of relationships affect the relationship and its outcomes.
#4 Family, community, and the other programs on the participant's program outcomes	(Assumes relationship is functional)	Expected family, community and other program influences on program activities, program participation, or outcome sustainability.	Quality of influence of support networks.
#5 Family, community, and the other program's functionality as buffers to formal and informal evaluation results	(Assumes relationship is functional)	Expected social network participants' response to evaluation results and how those responses affect the production of targeted outcomes.	Human response to performance indicators and its effect on motivation, productivity, etc.
#6 Providers to their outputs (program activities)	(Assumes relationship is functional)	Expected contextual influences on providers' abilities to produce program activities.	How human perception/experience of an activity affects the outcomes the activity produces.

(table continues)

Table 1 (continued)

	Causative theory explains	**Normative theory explains**	**Foundational theory explains**
#7 Providers to sponsoring organization	(Assumes relationship is functional)	Expected organizational supports for providers' ability to produce program activities.	How human perception/experience of the workplace effects motivation, productivity, creativity, adaptability, etc.
#8 Provider's functionality as a buffer of evaluation results	(Assumes relationship is functional)	Expected provider response to evaluation results and how those responses will affect the production of outcomes.	Human response to performance indicators and its effect on motivation, productivity, etc.

Note. Reprinted from "Using a Systems Orientation and Foundational Theory to Enhance Theory-Driven Human Service Program Evaluations," by D. L. Wasserman, 2010, *Evaluation and Program Planning, 22*, p. 71. Copyright 2009 by Elsevier Ltd.

Pulse points and rites of passage programming. Wasserman's (2010) pulse-point framework can be applied to rites of passage strategies. The first three pulse points describe system relationships in the change model (Wasserman, 2010). Pulse point #1 assesses the relationship of the participant to program outcomes, providing data about the value of the outcome to the program participant. For instance, a rites of passage program may seek to help young people be able to know, communicate, and exhibit behaviors important to the community. One problem with achievement-based programs, however, is that, as behaviorists know so well, when working with human beings and with the right rewards and punishments, just about any behavior can be produced—without regard for the personal well-being of the manipulated individual. For instance, in a rites of passage program, youth may receive ample rewards for enumerating the ten commandments and behaving as their church prescribes, but for some, their own personal exploration may be squelched, leading, for instance in Eriksonian terms, to the negative qualities of a foreclosed identity. Measuring this first pulse point monitors for these kinds of negative effects and helps to prevent an evaluation from rewarding, as Wasserman

(2010) wrote, “the achievement of narrowly focused outcomes while disregarding broader, potentially negative unintended and unmeasured consequences of achieving those outcomes” (p. 71).

Pulse point #2 assesses the relationship of the participant to program activities. Consider, for instance, a youth in the church rites of passage program mentioned above. This young person attends the program to satisfy the wish of a highly influential grandparent. But when involved with activities, she feels disliked by the staff and other youth, feels bored and disconnected while wishing she were home with the grandparent instead. She has incorporated all the values of the grandparent which are in line with those of the church and chooses freely to behave accordingly. These successes however are due to the grandparent, not to the rites of passage program. According to Wasserman (2010), measuring this second pulse-point, such as the quantity and degree of activities required to produce the program’s outcomes, “leads evaluators to question the validity of attributing to the program, outcomes achieved in the absence of cooperative and productive relationships between the participant and program activities” (p. 71).

Pulse point #3 assesses the quality of the relationship between the participant and the provider. In school, health care, or family settings, relationships exist between “providers” and “participants.” These relationships tend to influence the relationship of the participant to the program activities (pulse point #2). For instance, consider a bored, alienated participant in the church program. A caring counselor might help alter program conditions to become more inviting and engage this young person’s interests, helping to make the program more effective. “Explanations for what makes these relationships successful as perceived from varying perspectives inform both their measurement and strategies to improve program results” (Wasserman, 2010, p. 71).

The remaining five pulse points generate information on relationships among context and feedback variables of the action model (Wasserman, 2010). Pulse point #4 evaluates the influence of the family, community, and other programs on the participant's program outcomes. Again, considering the bored young person in the church program, a measure of this person's relationship to her grandmother would show a strong positive influence to the program's intended outcomes. On the other hand, consider a highly motivated participant who may be returning home to an environment of family members who denigrate the achievement of these outcomes, or a home environment that makes participation difficult in some tangible way (financial limitations, transportation, etc.). Monitoring these conditions and relationships to them allows an evaluator to provide the program with information about conditions that support or impede the achievement of program outcomes (Wasserman, 2010).

Pulse point #5 addresses how formal and informal evaluation results are received by families, communities, and other service providers. This perspective "often determines program effectiveness," and there is no more salient example than how parents respond to report cards, potentially affecting the student, teachers, and the larger school system (Wasserman, 2010, p. 71). Returning to the church program example, the youth and her family may receive negative feedback about her behavior during activities. If her parents do not feel their needs or their daughter's perspective of the problem situations are taken into consideration, this could result in a decrease in the youth's engagement in activities or the family choosing to end her participation in the program all together. As a result, program outcomes, participant's need satisfaction, and the health of the church system could potentially suffer.

Pulse point #6 looks at the relationships of the providers to their outputs. While the provider's outputs, which are the program activities (embedded in the change model), can be

manualized and standardized, “the quality of the program activities and their ability to produce outcomes still depends on the relationship of the human being producing the activities to the conditions of producing them” (Wasserman, 2010, p. 72). This pulse point shifts back to the program providers and their perception of their basic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Gathering data at this pulse point, church administration personnel may find that the individuals leading youth activities do not experience the curriculum as enhancing their ability to initiate youth into the church community. The youth leaders may not have the internalized motivation to utilize the curriculum, but rather are motivated by external factors (e.g., avoiding job loss, positive job evaluation feedback).

Pulse point #7 is intended to evaluate the quality of support from the organization to a provider, whose performance “is influenced by the support received from the organization that administrates the program” (Wasserman, 2010, p. 72). Youth leaders may experience autonomous support from the church administrative committee, even in the midst of challenging situations during the overall program. SDT hypothesizes that the fulfillment of youth leaders’ basic psychological needs will lead to internalized motivation and more effective program delivery.

Relatedly, pulse point #8 measures the effect of evaluation results on the providers’ production outcomes. The perception of organizational support and the perception’s effect on the provider’s performance can be influenced by evaluation feedback (Wasserman, 2010). Data gathered at this point may enable the church administrative committee to discover that youth leaders have a negative perception of the evaluation process. This may create stress and additional pressure on youth leaders to generate positive program outcomes, negatively affecting their day-to-day performance with the youth.

The pulse points provide data on the relationships within and between the provider and participant systems, which in turn provide contextual information about the "functionality" of these interactions (Wasserman, 2010, p. 72). This could include tracking an individual program provider's level of interest in providing a program's services or provider's level of well-being during service delivery. This contextual information could provide data extending the evaluation's findings that influence not only the data's interpretation but also areas for program improvement. When a program is mapped as in Figure 1, and when questions asked at each pulse point are informed by a foundational theory, a program evaluation can systematize contextual data that is frequently left out (Wasserman, 2010).

Self-Determination Theory as a Guide to Measuring the Pulse Points.

Wasserman (2010) has suggested that Self-Determination Theory [SDT] (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000) can function well to guide the measurement of the eight pulse points. It is particularly appropriate for this project because it can be applied as the foundational theory for systems-based program evaluations of community-based rites of passage strategies. SDT contributes by applying a theory that connects a program's intervention goals to the actual methods used to evaluate the goals. SDT is also an appropriate fit for youth and community development through rites of passage because this theory enables a local community system to measure outcomes related to more typical outcome and process positive youth development variables (e.g., GPA, self-esteem, problem solving skill development), as well as provide a method for answering, "Do these outcomes really matter to us?" The project expands on the relevance of SDT to the literature on positive youth development and rites of passage experiences for youth and communities. The project also expands the breadth of SDT's utility by applying this research theory into the real world of youth and community services.

SDT is an empirically-based theory of motivation, utilizing a systems perspective, to explain human motivation, personality, and productivity (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). The theory's premise rests on the understanding that humans have inherent and universal growth and integration tendencies and naturally existing self-motivation. This motivation is influenced by the quality of social contexts at intra- and interpersonal systemic levels, the fit with one's social environment, and one's experience of three basic psychological needs for a sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. This theory posits that these needs are not acquired goals or motives but innate, universal ingredients essential for psychological growth, integrity, and well-being. Optimal human functioning leads to positive social development, performance, well-being, and productivity (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness can be supported in various social contexts (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000), and individual contexts can elicit variable degrees of need satisfaction among individuals (Ryan, 1995). Table 2 provides definitions and examples of these three psychological needs. Deci and Ryan (2000) predict that if social environments do not provide the ingredients for experiencing the three needs, reactive autonomy occurs. More specifically, they stated that, "when one's context is excessively controlling, overchallenging, or rejecting – they will, to that degree, be supplanted by alternative, often defensive or self-protective processes, which no doubt also have functional utility under nonsupportive circumstances" (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 229). The presence of ongoing satisfaction of the three basic needs indicates a healthy functioning system, and these healthy systems cause people to report need satisfaction (Ryan et al., 1997).

SDT posits that individuals have intrinsic motivation to pursue the three basic psychological needs, and individuals fall within a continuum of five classifications of motivation

in relation to the degree of need satisfaction (Deci & Ryan; 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). These five types of motivation are functionally distinct and described further in Figure 2. The first type is intrinsic motivation (internal), and the remaining four are extrinsic motivations (two internal: integrated and identified; two external: introjected and external). Internal motivations satisfy basic psychological needs to varying degrees while external ones oppose them. Finally, amotivation refers to the absence of motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Deci and Ryan (2002) have found that programmatic outcomes associated with the three internal motivations predict long-term well-being better than those outcomes associated with the two external motivations.

When choice making in relation to social contexts, comprised in part of individuals or systems perceived as authorities, is free from pressure, tension and ambiguity, Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction increases (Gagne, Ryan, & Bargmann, 2003; Grolnick, Ryan, & Deci, 1991; Williams & Deci, 1996; Williams, Rodin, Ryan, Grolnick, & Deci, 1998). These autonomy supportive environments enable individuals to experience a greater sense of choice and volition of their own behaviors (Williams et al., 1998; Williams, Cox, Kouides, & Deci, 2000). Koestner and Losier (1996), as described in Wasserman (2010), found that need satisfaction generated by internalized motivations can be most generally measured as need satisfaction in relation to authority. More specifically, they established that among college students, reactive autonomy (a sign of the absence of basic psychological need satisfaction), could be detected when sense of relatedness was measured in relation to authority, although undetected when measured in relation to peers. Therefore, to detect the more hidden forms of reactive autonomy, and therefore, the most general measure of basic psychological need satisfaction, Wasserman (2010) recommends measuring basic psychological need satisfaction in relation to authority.

Self-Determination Theory as the foundational theory in a systems-based program evaluation model may be a promising method for measuring the effectiveness of rites of passage strategies for youth and community development. The fulfillment of Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction contributes to enhanced well-being of individuals and groups. Measuring it can be used in program evaluations to determine a program's capacity for influencing internalized motivation (Wasserman, 2010) and consequently, longer-term well-being. In light of the bidirectional interplay between youth and community throughout the initiatory experience, SDT provides a tool for measuring multiple key factors during this process.

When the programming fails to meet the basic psychological needs of youth, stakeholders should determine whether or not activities or any other program components are developmentally appropriate. Moreover, internalized motivation leads to more durable and healthier long-term program outcomes, whether for youth, community elders, or more peripheral community systems. The detection of externalized motivation may occur even in light of, for instance, positive outcomes such as increased GPA and graduation rates. In this way, measurement of Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction gives stakeholders an indication of the influence and effectiveness of the programming itself relative to the overall health of individuals and the larger system. When measured at the specific pulse points provided, SDT can potentially enable more effective quality improvement and operationalize the many components of the change and action models. When working within the core assumptions of rites of passage strategies, SDT provides a method for the measurement of the probability of enhanced, long-term contributions of individuals to a community, and the community's long-term contributions to individuals.

Table 2

Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction (BPNS) Definitions and Examples

Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Definitions (Deci & Ryan, 2000)	Examples of questionnaire items
Sense of competence: the self-perception of being engaged in optimal challenges and experiencing the ability to effectively affect both physical and social worlds.	I feel very capable and effective. I seldom feel inadequate or incompetent.
Sense of relatedness: the perception that one is both loving and caring for others while being loved by and cared for by others in a social system.	I feel loved and cared about. I seldom feel a lot of distance in my relationships.
Sense of autonomy: the perception of having organized one's own experience and behavior, *and* this self-organized activity maintains an integrated sense of self while serving to enhance the satisfaction of the other two needs.*	I feel free to be who I am. I seldom feel controlled and pressured to be certain ways.
* This second facet of the definition distinguishes sense of autonomy from independence, individualism, detachment, selfishness, or internal local of control. Sense of autonomy involves internal regulatory schemas consistent with a sense of an integrated, joyful self rather than extrinsic regulatory schemas associated with experiences of tension, and ambivalence due to extrinsic pressures (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). SDT researchers have distinguished integrated from non-integrated choice making by the terms *reflective autonomy* for the former and *reactive autonomy* for the latter (Koestner & Losier, 1996).	People experiencing sense of reflective (versus reactive) autonomy will experience these feelings even in the presence of authority figures such as teachers, parents, popular peers, employers, police and corrections officers, etc. (Koestner & Losier, 1996).

Note. Reprinted from "Using a Systems Orientation and Foundational Theory to Enhance Theory-Driven Human Service Program Evaluations," by D. L. Wasserman, 2010, *Evaluation and Program Planning, 22*, p. 73.

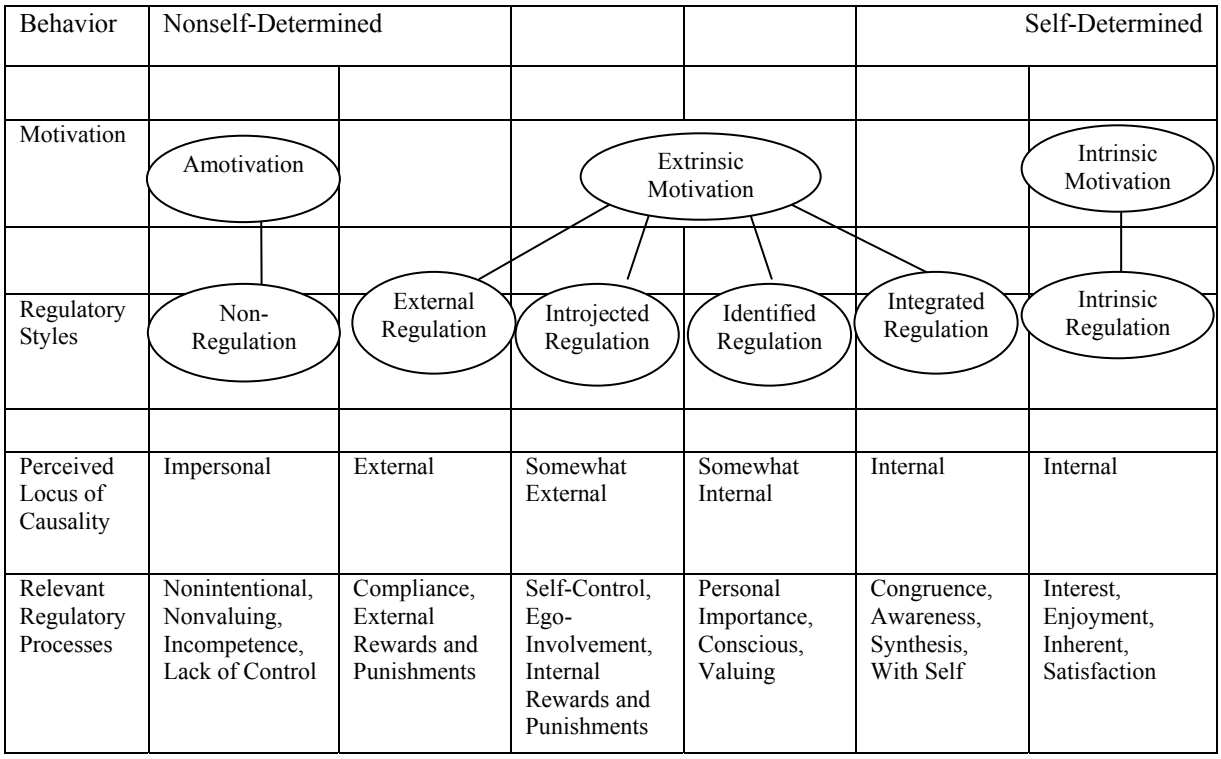

Figure 2. The self-determination continuum showing types of motivation with their regulatory style, loci of causality, and corresponding processes. Reproduced from "Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being," by R. M. Ryan & E. L. Deci, 2000, *American Psychologist, 55(1)*, p. 72. Copyright 2000 by the American Psychological Association, Inc.

Chapter 3: Methods

Description of Setting

This pilot program evaluation model for the community-based rite of passage intervention, following the three-stage strategy of ROPE®, occurs during Phase One. The majority of the sessions take place after school at a public middle school in a suburban town on the east coast of the U.S. It is the only public middle school in the town, and it is fed from the school district's four elementary schools. This is the first year students attending public school are in the same school. There are 1,089 students in grades 6-8, evenly divided between females and males. The school has 90 teachers giving it a student-to-teacher ratio of approximately 12:1. The school is composed of an ethnic diversity represented by the following: 76% White, 14% Hispanic, 5% Asian, 4% Black, and 1% unknown. 6% of students are eligible for free lunch, while 1% of the students are eligible for reduced lunch (Public School Review, 2012).

Participants

Ultimately, the full-scale community intervention would be open to and include all 6th graders in the area, including those not attending the public middle school. For the purposes of the pilot model, Phase One will engage all 6th grade youth in one of the school's four multi-graded "houses," each consisting of one sixth, seventh, and eighth grade team. These multi-graded houses are designed to provide a climate of a school within a school, such that students experience a more intimate environment. There are approximately 300 students per house, evenly divided among the three grades.

For the pilot evaluation model, youth participants are those in one sixth grade team, comprised of approximately 100 youth ages 11-12. Additional participants evaluated include the community's Guiding Elders, the selected group of 12-15 diverse community members leading

to co-create the modern-day rite of passage experience for their youth. While these adults are not facilitating the group sessions, they are responsible for the overall design and zeitgeist of their community's process, in consultation with the outside ROPE® experts. In this manner, it is hypothesized that both the bidirectional nature of an effective rite of passage process and the Guiding Elders' autonomy supportive or controlling orientation will influence both their own and youth's Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction.

Research Design and Procedures

The pilot model predominately uses a pretest-posttest design (Kazdin, 2003). The evaluation utilizes Wasserman's systems-based program evaluation model (2010) as a guide for selecting the pulse points in the system for assessment administration. There will be no control group, as the intervention, Phase One of ROPE®, applies to the entire 6th grade cohort in the public middle school. Moreover, the research questions examined pertain to the need satisfaction of members of this community, providing information for formative monitoring purposes and for summative outcome purposes. While comparisons to other communities may provide helpful data, it is beyond the scope of this project to look beyond the bidirectional effects of a rite of passage strategy within this one community. Future studies would do well to employ, for example, a quasi-experimental design following Wasserman's (2010) model utilizing a demographically similar community not engaging in this type of youth development strategy as a control group.

The measures will be administered to youth and adults just prior to start of Phase One in the beginning of the academic year and at the end of the school year upon completion of all ROPE® sessions and activities. Two ROPE® guides will lead the sessions, and other participants or local "elders," such as high school students and parents, may also be present at

times. The Institutional Review Board will approve all procedures and informed consents will be collected prior to assessment administration. Permission will be sought to administer the scales to the youth during one of their "house" meetings. Adults will be given a website link to complete their scale online.

Selection of pulse points. Although there are eight pulse points embedded in Wasserman's model, it is uncommon for program evaluations to use all of the them (Wasserman, 2010). The model is often applied in conjunction with more standard process and outcomes variables, quickly increasing the scope of any program evaluation. While all the pulse point information is important, this pilot model is focused on the outcomes of youth's and Guiding Elders' need satisfaction before and after Phase One of ROPE®. As a result, data can be gathered on the bidirectional quality of the rite of passage process during Phase One, which is a direct indication of the quality of the community system's functioning. To accomplish this, the evaluation utilizes three pulse points: #1, #2, and #8, shown in Figure 3. Inclusion of pulse points in future studies would enable evaluators to examine even more influential factors on the health of the system, such as family influence on youth's experience or administrative support of facilitators' efforts.

Pulse point #1. Pulse point #1 assesses the relationship of the participant to intended intermediate and longer-term program outcomes, providing data about the value of the outcome. Measurement at this point provides information evaluating achievement outcomes in relation to overall need satisfaction, enabling stakeholders to see how the program effects overall youth well-being. In the example of a community's goal to increase youth's cultural knowledge of their community, results may indicate that while measures of cultural knowledge increases, youth report feeling less competent, autonomous, or related in their lives. It would then be up to

the community to decide what is the more important value for them, cultural knowledge or youth's well-being.

For this study, measurement at this point assesses the program outcome, youth's need satisfaction, by answering the following research question: *did program resources and activities lead to enhanced participant basic psychological need satisfaction in relation to authority?*

Pulse point #2. Pulse point #2 assesses the relationship of the participant to program activities, such as the quantity and degree of activities required to produce the program's outcomes. Measurement at this point provides information evaluating achievement outcomes in relation to the programming itself, enabling stakeholders to see if the program resources and activities led to participants' internalized motivation to achieve program outcomes. In the case of rites of passage strategies, high school youth, after progressing through all three phases of ROPE®, may report a decrease in drug and alcohol use. Yet, if they report low need satisfaction relative to ROPE® programming, stakeholders are able to see that the decrease is not attributable to the intervention.

For this study, the research question at this pulse point is: *did the program resources and activities lead to participants' internalized motivation to achieve program outcomes?*

It should be noted that pulse points #1 and #2 were selected to evaluate youth's need satisfaction and well-being before and after the first phase of the rite of passage intervention. As previously mentioned, this evaluation model often has additional outcome achievements that can be evaluated relative to the amount of need satisfaction reported. For example, longer-term program outcomes for youth participating in a rite of passage strategy may include an increase in critical thinking skills or cultural knowledge, or a decrease in drug and alcohol use.

Pulse point #8. Pulse point #8 is used to assess the provider's response to evaluation

results, and this response could affect the provider's production of outcomes. Guiding Elders are key individuals in this strategy even if they do not facilitate ROPE® sessions or have children in the intervention. Due to the bidirectional nature of the rite of passage experience and the assumptions that a healthy system provides ongoing satisfaction of an individual's basic psychological needs, one would expect the Guiding Elders to report feeling autonomous, competent and related (the three basic psychological needs according to SDT). But the real tests for Guiding Elders come when the youth approach them, during or after the intervention, unhappy with the program, with diminishing need satisfaction, or with suggestions that go against the community's status quo. Will these elders still be autonomy supportive or controlling, self-determined or non self-determined, intrinsically motivated or extrinsically motivated (Deci & Ryan, 2000)? Adapting to this critical feedback while taking into account the youth's needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness is essentially what separates effective rites of passage programming from the majority of primary prevention or other youth interventions. It is a goal of this project to provide communities with a means to measure this.

The research question at this pulse point is asking: *do Guiding Elders experience themselves as autonomous, competent, and related in relation to their participation with the rites of passage process, even when they hear negative feedback?*

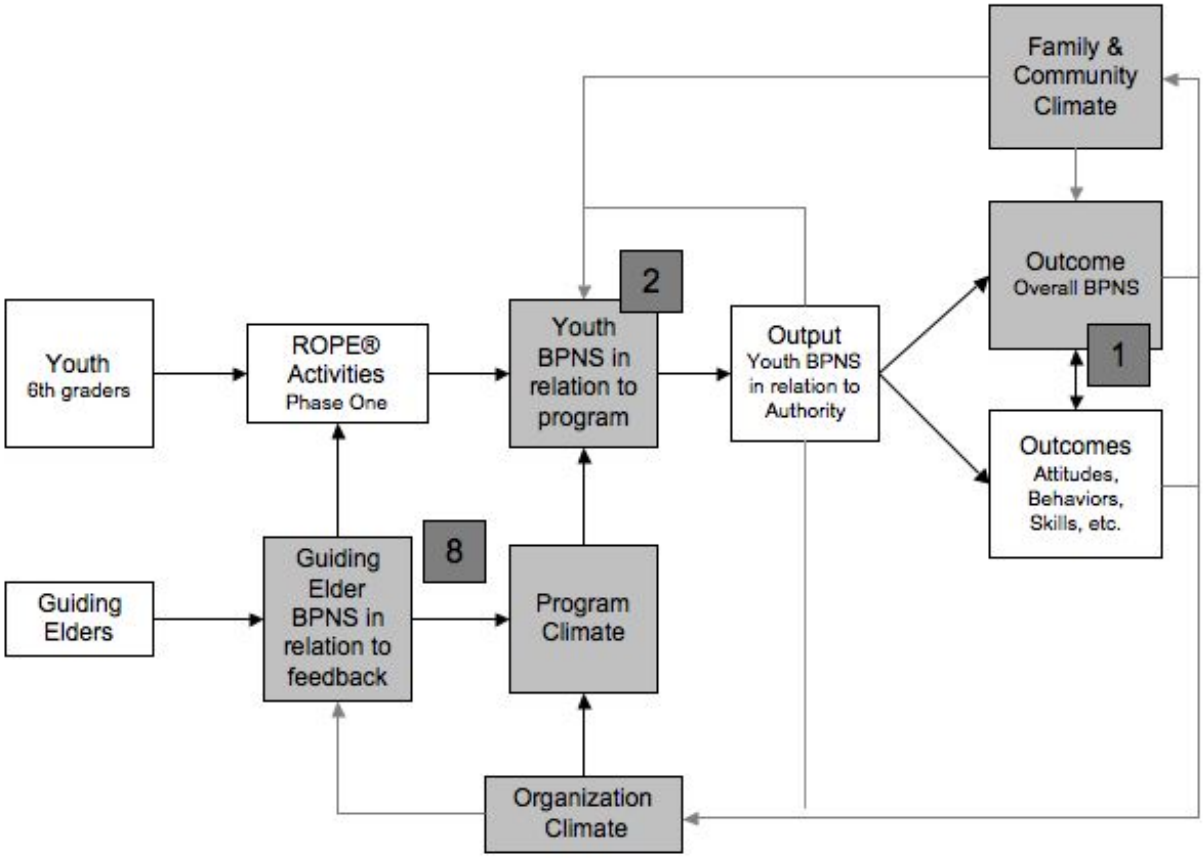

Figure 3. Map of a pilot evaluation: SDT-based program model using three pulse points. White boxes = change model; grey boxes = action model; dark grey boxes = pulse points. Adapted from "Using a Systems Orientation and Foundational Theory to Enhance Theory-Driven Human Service Program Evaluations," by D. L. Wasserman, 2010, *Evaluation and Program Planning, 22*, p. 70. Copyright 2009 by Elsevier Ltd.

Measurement

Levels of engagement. Youth attendance of the ROPE® sessions is tracked. Guiding Elders attendance of their meetings and events is also tracked.

Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction (BPNS). The original scale has 21 items measuring the three basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). The short form of the Basic Psychological Needs Scale (La Guardia, Ryan, Couchman, & Deci, 2000) will be used to assess intrinsic need satisfaction for both 6th grade youth and Guiding Elders. The 9-item questionnaires consist of three items for autonomy, three times for competence, and three items for relatedness. All participants will respond on 7-point, Likert-type scale, 1 (not true at all) to 7 (very true), the extent to which the psychological needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence are generally satisfied in relation to the social context being evaluated. Because an individual's Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction is sensitive to time and place, the scale items are meant to be reworded to reference a single individual, a group of individuals, an activity, organization, or life in general (Wasserman, 2010).

The three pulse points utilized in this study necessitate three different versions of the wording of scale items. For pulse point #1, the project is looking for the general program outcome of change in need satisfaction for youth, which is referred to as need satisfaction in relation to authority, or program effect on general BPNS (see Appendix A). This is the most general measure of need satisfaction. Example items include, "When I am with the people who judge me and tell me what to do, I feel free to be who I am" (autonomy), "When I am with the people who judge me and tell me what to do, I feel admired and cared about" (relatedness), and "When I am with the people who judge me and tell me what to do, I feel not good enough, like I

don't do anything right" (competence, reversed). For pulse point #2, this project is looking at youth's need satisfaction in relation to the program (ROPE®) (see Appendix B). Example items include, "When I am at ROPE® activities, I feel like I have a say in what happens, and I can voice my opinion." (autonomy), "When I am at a ROPE® activity, I often feel a lot of distance from other participants" (relatedness, reversed), and "When I am at a ROPE® activity, I feel very capable and effective" (competence).

Pulse point #8 is a bit more complicated to parse out, as Guiding Elders are in a unique role of influencing the focus and direction of the rite of passage strategy, though not directly facilitating ROPE® sessions or having a great deal of face-to-face contact with the participating youth. There is a complex and dynamic balance between a community elder's understanding of the culture to be passed on to youth and the elder's respect for contributions of initiated community members. An assumption from the SDT literature would be the more internalized the elder's commitment to the community value system, the least threatened that individual will be by challenges to it. This author feels this is new territory that should be explored. Scale items are worded in order to best measure Guiding Elders' need satisfaction in relation to the program evaluation feedback, particularly their response to negative feedback or criticism (see Appendix C). Example items include, "If a ROPE® youth or facilitator criticizes the program in a way that challenges my values or how I want to do things, I feel like a competent person" (competence), "If a ROPE® youth or facilitator criticizes the program in a way that challenges my values or how I want to do things, I have a say in what happens, and I can voice my opinion without feeling tension, pressure, or ambiguity" (autonomy), and "If a ROPE® youth or facilitator criticizes the program in a way that challenges my values or how I want to do things, I feel warmly about the person challenging me, and I believe that underneath the criticism, that person

feels warmly towards me" (relatedness).

Overview of Data Analysis

A minimal level of youth and Guiding Elder participation, in their respective ROPE® activities, needs to be determined in order to set a cutoff point for each group for their BPNS data to be utilized. This level could vary by community, and the results of future studies would help refine the categories of participation, engagement, and minimum dose. This model uses a 75% youth attendance rate and a 75% Guiding Elder attendance rate as cutoff points. Those individuals whose attendance falls below this rate do not have their BPNS data used in the analysis.

For each of the three versions of the BPNS administered, the average of the nine questionnaire responses, including accounting for reversed scores, is the final score. The data analysis utilizes both the absolute and change scores in order to control for positive movement, negative movement, as well as starting positions. To accomplish this, three categories for the final absolute and change scores are used: Low/Diminished, Moderate, and High/Improved. The use of these categories is to control for the ceiling effect, such that those that start high or low in the pre-test are not considered a failure or success due to their starting points. Any pre-to-post change scores greater than one (> 1) are recorded in their respective Diminished or Improved category. For example, a youth whose pre- and post-test scores for general BPNS (pulse point #1) is 6.5 is not considered a program failure due to a zero point change in her score. Similarly, a youth starting out in the Low category with a BPNS score of 2.0 would end up in the Improved category after a post-test score of 4. The algorithm and cutoff points for each category are shown in Table 3.

The three versions of the BPNS, two for youth and one for Guiding Elders, are

administered at various times in this pilot model. To answer the research questions at pulse points #1 and #2, the two scales for youth, BPNS in relation to authority and BPNS in relation to the program (ROPE®), follow a pre- and post-test format. The pre-test for the general scale is administered before the first activity of Phase One of ROPE®, and the post-test is administered at the end of Phase One (Table 4). Measuring BPNS in relation to ROPE® follows a slightly different course. Since youth need to have a degree of relationship to the programming in order to measure youth's BPNS in relation to the program, the pre-test will occur two months into Phase One. The post-test is administered at the end of Phase One (Table 5). This pre-test delay is necessary, although future studies may alter the length of the delay, eliminate a pre-test altogether, or use the post-test of Phase One as the pre-test for Phase Two.

To answer the research question at pulse point #8, the scale for the Guiding Elders, BPNS in relation to program evaluation feedback, is only administered at the end of Phase One (Table 7). The absolute scores, rather than change scores, are used because Guiding Elders will likely not have had enough time in Phase One to report their relationship to any negative feedback they may receive. Similar to the suggestion above, future studies may do well to use the post-test of Phase One as the pre-test for Phase Two.

Table 3

Algorithm for Determining Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Categories

Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Categories	Pre-test	Post-test	Change
Low Diminished	< 4	< 4	< -1
Moderate	<= 5.5 and >= 4	<= 5.5 and >= 4	
Improved High	5.5	>5.5	>1

Note. Adapted from "Miracle-Gro Capital Scholars Program at COSI Evaluation Report: Effect on Non-Academic Factors for Successful College Experience," by D. L. Wasserman, 2012, unpublished manuscript.

Table 4

Changes in General Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction (in Relation to Authority)

General Need Satisfaction Group	2 months into	At the end	Change	Phase One N
Low	< 4	< 4		
Diminished			< -1	
Moderate	<= 5.5 and >= 4	<= 5.5 and >= 4		
Improved			>1	
High	5.5	>5.5		

Note. Adapted from "Miracle-Gro Capital Scholars Program at COSI Evaluation Report: Effect on Non-Academic Factors for Successful College Experience," by D. L. Wasserman, 2012, unpublished manuscript.

Table 5

Changes in Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction in Relation to the Program

ROPE®-Related Need Satisfaction Group	2 months into	At the end	Change	Phase One N
Low	< 4	< 4		
Diminished			< -1	
Moderate	<= 5.5 and >= 4	<= 5.5 and >= 4		
Improved			>1	
High	5.5	>5.5		

Note. Adapted from "Miracle-Gro Capital Scholars Program at COSI Evaluation Report: Effect on Non-Academic Factors for Successful College Experience," by D. L. Wasserman, 2012, unpublished manuscript.

Table 6

Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction in Relation to Evaluation Feedback

Guiding Elders' Need Satisfaction	At the end of Phase One	Phase One N
Low	< 4	
Moderate	<= 5.5 and >= 4	
High	>5.5	

Note. Adapted from "Miracle-Gro Capital Scholars Program at COSI Evaluation Report: Effect on Non-Academic Factors for Successful College Experience," by D. L. Wasserman, 2012, unpublished manuscript.

Chapter 4: Discussion

A rites of passage strategy should be in place long before the youth of a community begin participating in the formal initiatory process. A core group of community leaders needs to be selected in order for the diverse, local wants and needs are heard and integrated into the overall strategy that is transmitted to their youth. One of the key tasks of the initial exploratory meetings of the community leaders is to come to an agreement as to what will be considered a successful implementation of a rite of passage strategy. It would be a lofty expectation to have complete clarity of the definition of success if a community had never gone through such a process. This project, the application of three of eight pulse points in Wasserman's program evaluation model (2010) to rites of passage strategies, can be used as a guide. The following four sections discuss possible outcomes and implications for the research questions.

Possible Outcomes for the Research Questions

Pulse point #1. The research question at this pulse point was: did program resources and activities lead to enhanced participant Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction in relation to authority? Taken on its own in this project, this pulse point appears as a more typical program outcome measure. The application of this evaluation model often combines traditional outcomes (e.g., GPA, self-esteem, problem solving skill development) with BPNS, enabling stakeholders to ask if the traditional outcomes are successful in light of increasing or diminishing need satisfaction. In this model, the outcome at this pulse point is a youth's general need satisfaction.

While the depth of this evaluation approach is apparent once various pulse points are compared to one another, falling into the High category would indicate that somewhere in the youth's life, she feels competent, related, and autonomously supported in the presence of self-perceived authority figures. It would be premature at this point to conclude that ROPE®

was the cause of this effect. Those in the Moderate category would likely be experiencing various degrees of need satisfaction, but not overwhelmingly so. Those in the Low category would not be experiencing much need satisfaction in the majority of their lives. The change categories, Diminished and Improved, indicate that something is going on in their lives positively or negatively, respectively, shifting the experience of need satisfaction.

Pulse point #2. The research question at this pulse point was: did the program resources and activities lead to participants' internalized motivation to achieve program outcomes? This pulse point begins to narrow down a stakeholder's ability to attribute program effects to the ROPE® strategy and activities. Similarly to pulse point #1 above, when more traditional outcomes are evaluated in light of youth need satisfaction scores, stakeholders are able to make judgments about those outcomes. In this study, the outcomes at this pulse point are a youth's need satisfaction as it directly relates to the ROPE® strategy and activities.

Individuals falling into the High category would indicate that somewhere in the youth's experience of and relationship with ROPE®, she feels competent, related, and autonomously supported. Those in the Moderate category would likely be experiencing various degrees of need satisfaction, but not overwhelmingly so while participating in ROPE®. Those in the Low category would not be experiencing much need satisfaction in relation to their experience in ROPE®. The change categories, Diminished and Improved, indicate that something in ROPE® is occurring, resulting in positively or negatively, respectively, shifting the experience of need satisfaction.

Pulse point #8. The research question at this pulse point was: do Guiding Elders experience themselves as autonomous, competent, and related in relation to their participation with the rites of passage process, even when they hear negative feedback? The research question

at this pulse point was phrased in this manner because one could quite confidently assume that the experiences of hearing positive feedback would yield unsurprising data. Moreover, the role of a community elder is that of a leader who is tasked with being inclusive of diverse points of view and able to change course as a result of feedback, even if from local youth. The often neglected premise of rites of passage endeavors is the elder's and community's obligation to welcome back and possibly adapt newly initiated youth's ways of being upon reintegration into the community. In this pilot model, this pulse point provides information on the health of the community system, the leadership group, as well as the fit of the individual Guiding Elder to this important role.

This pulse point is only evaluating the Guiding Elders' need satisfaction at the end of Phase One and does not include change scores. Individuals falling into the High category are experiencing autonomy, competence, and relatedness even in light of negative feedback. They are feeling fulfilled by their participation in the ROPE® process. Those in the Moderate category would likely be experiencing various degrees of need satisfaction, but not overwhelmingly so while hearing negative feedback from youth or others engaged in ROPE®. Individuals in the Low category indicate the dynamic, bidirectional relationships in the system during this initiatory process are imbalanced in some way. If low Guiding Elder need satisfaction continued, one could predict that the youth's need satisfaction would eventually decrease, possibly as a result of feeling welcomed by the community only if they deliver praise for the program. Unless this was addressed, the community could see increases in risk-taking behaviors, feelings of exclusion, withdrawal, or other manifestations of an unhealthy system.

Interaction of Pulse Points #1 and #2. It is in the interactions of the pulse points that allows this program evaluation model to provide key, often overlooked, data for measuring

effectiveness and performing quality improvement. In this project, evaluating the interaction between pulse points #1 and #2 provides a starting point for comparing program outcomes in a more standardized manner, while also narrowing down the influential or causal factors for program success or failure. Unique to rites of passage strategies for youth and community development, the bidirectional influence of community on youth, youth on community, and community on programming, when evaluated relative to the ongoing satisfaction of basic psychological needs, indicates the health of the system and effectiveness of the strategy.

The interaction of the two pulse points is shown in Table 7. The first group of the interaction between general Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction (G-BPNS) and Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction in relation to the ROPE® programming (BPNS-P) is the High/Improved G-BPNS category and High/Improved BPNS-S category. While this would indicate a healthy community system and programming, it would be difficult to determine the influence of each without further assessment. Nonetheless, a community could confidently view the strategy as a success. The second group, High/Improved G-BPNS and Low/Diminished BPNS-P, indicates that that while something positive is providing need satisfaction in youth's lives around different authority figures, it is not due to program effect, and ROPE® would not be seen as contributing to G-BPNS. Communities might view the programming as successful after determining that the majority of scores in the Low/Diminished category result from a too-low cutoff point rather than diminishing need satisfaction in relation to the programming. The third group, Low/Diminished G-BPNS and High/Improved BPNS-P, has a good chance that ongoing programming will have a positive effect on the G-BPNS. It indicates that youth enjoy being in the program and are benefiting from it, and even in light of negative influences on G-BPNS, need satisfaction in relation to ROPE® is still positive. At the same time, factors in the youth's

lives may become overpowering, negatively influencing the youth's ability to participate in the programming. It may be outside of the scope of the local communities' implementation of a rites of passage strategy to intervene in a youth's life outside of the activities, but this group shows signs of an imbalance that could be addressed. The fourth group, Low/Diminished G-BPNS and Low/Diminished BPNS-P, would be a program failure and an indication that the strategy is not working to positively influence youth need satisfaction.

Implications. The information from the pulse points and their interactions enables communities and other stakeholders to evaluate their strategy's effectiveness, determine next steps in the programming, and locate areas for quality improvement. If Phase One is not determined to be a success overall, do youth continue to Phase Two or go through Phase One again? Are those youth with Low or Diminished BPNS given extra programming to increase their experience of autonomy, competence, and relatedness? Does a community see an increase in externalizing or internalizing behaviors from those reactively autonomous youth? Are parents and teachers offered extra training to help them create and maintain autonomously supportive environments? Are ROPE® experts consulted for program design improvements pertaining to the developmental appropriateness of the activities? Are there common attributes to those with High or Improved BPNS? Have the Guiding Elders created an environment and expectation more similar to indoctrination rather than initiation? Qualitative data and additional measures at additional pulse points may provide helpful answers during this process.

Table 7

Possible Determination of Program Success: Interaction of Pulse Points #1 and #2

	Youth Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction in Relation to the Program	
	High/Improved	Low/Diminished
Youth General Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction		
High/Improved	Success	Questionable success
Low/Diminished	Possible success	No success

Note. Adapted from "Using a Systems Orientation and Foundational Theory to Enhance Theory-Driven Human Service Program Evaluations," by D. L. Wasserman, 2010, *Evaluation and Program Planning, 22*, p. 76. Copyright 2009 by Elsevier Ltd.

Summary

A contextually defined and locally embedded community-based rite of passage experience for youth is a bidirectional exchange between an individual and a local system. Establishing this structure within a modern community is more challenging than merely taking a manual and going through a few steps, putting youth in front of "experts" for a few hours a month (Blumenkrantz, 1992). There are ingredients and elements, processes and common requirements to be considered a rite of passage. Yet, it is the sum of numerous intentional and calculated efforts for the community to "achieve" the establishment of an effective rite of passage, just as it is the community's goal to help their youth achieve an adult status. It is in the essence of this bidirectional responsibly, community to youth and youth to community, that appears to show the most promise for returning to a more systematic and healthy way to raise our youth and proactively assist them in successfully transitioning into and through adolescence

(Blumenkrantz & Wasserman, 1998). The ROPE® strategy is one such approach for making this a reality.

Yet, this process by which youth are initiated and communities are able to stay vibrant and adaptive is likely only as good, and funded, as the data showing its effectiveness. The challenge for decades has been how to translate this process, part art form, into quantitative data (Blumenkrantz, 1992). Glowingly positive qualitative data from hundreds and even thousands of individuals who have gone through effective initiations often fails to convince today's funders. Moreover, communities want to know if programming for their youth is developmentally appropriate, fulfilling basic human needs, effective and relevant to their local values. Achieving an outcome for the sake of an outcome may make program designers happy, but it may not be entirely relevant to a community's local needs.

The application of a foundational theory, and in this case, specifically Self-Determination Theory, in a systems-based program evaluation model provides an additional layer of information about a community's efforts (Wasserman, 2010). Effective initiatory processes engage youth in conversations that matter. Using Self-Determination Theory as a foundational theory to supplement more traditional outcome and process evaluations allows evaluators and stakeholders to ask questions that matter about outcome data, such as "Does this matter? Do we value this result?" One of the additional outcomes of this pilot evaluation model is the clarification of a method for determining how non-youth's basic psychological needs are impacted during community-based rites of passage experiences.

Moreover, there does not appear to be research on simultaneously evaluating an individual's well-being and basic psychological need satisfaction while also providing a method for evaluating the uniqueness of the bidirectional process inherent in the initiatory process. The

initiation process stirs up the questions: Who I am in relation to community and how is community related to me? Growth and expansion of the community is thought to result in part from the activity of raising youth, and in welcoming back, inviting, and adapting to their youth getting to know themselves and their uniqueness in the expanding contexts around them (Blumenkrantz & Wasserman, 1998). A community committed to providing a healthy environment for the growth and need satisfaction of their youth and themselves should demand methods to evaluate their efforts in order to improve and grow. This project attempts to link these pieces together and provide such a method.

Limitations and Future Directions

The limitations of this proposed evaluation model for rites of passage strategies invite ripe areas for future work. First, the research questions at the three pulse points focus solely on Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction for youth and the selected community leaders. This program evaluation model essentially provides an unlimited array of questions to ask at numerous locations in a system, and future work should compare more traditional youth outcomes (e.g., GPA, self-esteem, problem solving skill development) with BPNS. In accordance with the needs of a local community, the customization of this evaluation model will provide more nuanced data on why and how these strategies affect the lives and health of youth and communities.

Second, an evaluation model utilizing a quasi-experimental design may lend itself to more information regarding the effectiveness of rites of passage programming. An evaluation design using a demographically similar control group would contribute to current sparse literature on effectiveness data for rites of passage strategies.

Third, while Wasserman's model does not require the application of all eight pulse

points, the added layer of data and analysis expands the scope of a program evaluation into quite a large endeavor. Financial, human, and physical resources may be limited, and this requires even more diligence during the initial planning stages in order to generate questions and results that matter most to a community. As a result, a goal of this project was to provide a basic model with fewer pulse points as a starting point for the initial foray into combining community-based rites of passage strategies with systems-based program evaluations embedded with a foundational theory. As has been stressed, a cookie cutter approach to rites of passage programming and subsequent program evaluations misses the uniqueness and potential of these processes. Expanding resources to include the measurement of need satisfaction among program providers and measures of organizational climate (autonomy supportive versus controlling) can only add to the creation of authentic rites of passage experiences.

Finally, the scope of a strategy such as ROPE® is also quite large and demands an enormous commitment from stakeholders. Communities may be tempted to pick and choose from the three phases, or even focus on smaller aspects of one of the phases. There are few communities who have moved through all three phases while gathering data along the way (Blumenkrantz & Gavazzi, 1993). Again, there are significant demands on financial, human, and physical resources to implement this type of strategy, and the demands only increase when executing longitudinal empirical studies. Even the most motivated communities will be challenged to design, implement, evaluate, and then adapt during this process.

Conclusion

The combination of effective rites of passage programming with innovative program evaluation methods is an exciting and promising area. There is something unique about the interactions between youth and community development through rites of passage,

Self-Determination Theory, and systems-based program evaluations that holds much promise. There will likely always be a tension between the demands for good art and good science, between synergy and deconstruction, especially in the creation, delivery, and evaluation of human services. This project is an attempt to take some initial steps into this fresh territory. Healthy youth and healthy communities, vibrant and motivated, are necessary for more than good grades and working economies, but are required for survival.

Reflection

There are ample reasons, as argued in this paper, to invest attention to the creation, implementation, and evaluation of rites of passage strategies for developing healthier youth and communities. As a way to conceptualize youth development, rites of passage experiences have the potential to both initiate youth and strengthen communities. Communities should not hesitate to take ownership of the potential to fulfill their own needs and increase their own vitality as a result of investing in this process. This is serious business. Fortunately, the bidirectional nature of initiating and welcoming back new initiates has a synergistic quality to it yet to be fully discovered and tapped into.

It is this same unknown that, in part, enables doctoral candidates to complete the journey for their "initiation." During the completion of this project, I was continually reminded of how my doctoral journey paralleled the initiatory process. There are clear delineations of, intentionally placed or not, separation, liminality, and reincorporation. There were countless moments spent apart from family, friends, and old routines. There were many unknowns about clinical placements, course material, dissertation topics, and effects this process would have on our personal and professional lives. Finally, there is the relief, quiet confidence, and deep satisfaction from being welcomed as an equal upon completion of the journey.

Yet it is the realization of those synergistic qualities generated along the way that has surprised me most upon this journey. The strength and perseverance to continue on in light of massive life struggles is just that – life. Doctoral candidates are far from the only ones who face physical, emotional, relational, intellectual, and financial challenges. But just as raising youth and strengthening communities is serious business, so too is this. Within my own cohort, we have individually and collectively experienced the majority of major life stressors along the way, including the shocking passing of two of our classmates. Do we have strategies in place for when we cross these thresholds (Kiley, 2009)?

In light of all of these experiences, I am humbled at the time, energy, creativity, collaboration, and hard work it takes to create, guide, evaluate, and improve any type of healthy initiatory experience. They do not happen on their own, and the consequences to passivity can be quite harmful. I hope that through my own initiatory journey I have learned from the experiences and those around me, becoming a more responsible and accountable professional, psychologist, learner, and human.

References

Alford, K. A. (2007). African-American males and the rites of passage experience. In S. Logan, R. Denby, & P. A. Gibson (Eds.), *Mental health care in the African-American community* (pp. 305-319). New York: Hawthorn Press.

Benson, P. L. (1997). *All kids are our kids: What communities must do to raise caring and responsible children and adolescents*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Benson, P. L. (1998). Mobilizing communities to promote developmental assets: A promising strategy for the prevention of high-risk behaviors. *Family Science Review, 11*(3), 220-238.

Blackmore, S.-J., & Choudhury, S. (2006). Development of the adolescent brain: Implications for executive function and social cognition. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 47*(3/4), 296-312.

Blos, P. (1979). *The adolescent passage: Developmental issues*. New York: International Universities Press Inc.

Blumenkrantz, D. G. (1992). *Fulfilling the promise of children's services*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Blumenkrantz, D. G. (2000). Let's play: Initiating youth into the healthy world of play. In T. Gullota (Ed.), *Developing competent youth and strong communities through after-school programming* (pp. 67-114). Washington, D.C.: CWLA Press.

Blumenkrantz, D. G. (2009). Rites of passage in a world that is not flat. *The Systems Thinker, 20*(8), 8-10.

Blumenkrantz, D. G., & Gavazzi, S. M. (1993). Guiding transitional events for children and adolescents through a modern day rite of passage. *The Journal of Primary Prevention, 13*(3), 199-212.

Blumenkrantz, D. G., & Goldstein, M. B. (2010). Rites of passage as a framework for community interventions with youth. *Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice, 1*(2), 42-50.

Blumenkrantz, D. G., & Reslock, B. (1981). *Rites of passage experience (ROPE): Guide for promoting healthy youth & community*. Glastonbury, CT: Associates in Counseling and Training.

Blumenkrantz, D. G., & Wasserman, D. L. (1998). What happens to a community intervention when the community doesn't show up? Restoring rites of passage as a consideration for contemporary community intervention. *Family Science Review, 11*(3), 239-258.

Cabrera, D., & Colosi, L. (2008). Distinctions, systems, relationships, and perspectives (DSRP): A theory of thinking and of things. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 31*, 311--334.

Cabrera, D., Colosi, L., & Lobdell, C. (2008). System thinking. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 31*, 299-310.

Catalano, R. F., Hawkins, J. D., Berglund, M. L., Pollard, J. A., & Arthur, M. W. (2002). Prevention science and positive youth development: Competitive or cooperative frameworks? *Journal of Adolescent Health, 31*(6), 230-239.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2012). Youth risk behavior surveillance – United States, 2011. *MMWR Surveillance Summaries, 61*(4), 1-162. Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/ss/ss6104.pdf

Chen, H. T. (1990). *Theory-driven evaluations*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Chen, H. T. (2004). Practical program evaluation: Assessing and improving planning, implementation, and effectiveness. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Crawford, L. A., & Novak, K. B. (2006). Alcohol abuse as a rite of passage: The effect of beliefs about alcohol and the college experience on undergraduates' drinking behaviors. *Journal of Drug Education, 36*(3), 193-212.

Damon, W. (1997). *The youth charter: How communities can work together to raise standards for all our children*. New York: Free Press.

Dash, L. (1989). *When Children Want Children: The Urban Crisis of Teenage Childbearing*. New York: William Morrow and Company.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985*). Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. New York: Plenum.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry, 11*(4), 227-268.

Dryfoos, J. G. (1990). *Adolescents at risk: Prevalence and prevention*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Dunham, R. M., Kidwell, J. S., & Wilson, S. M. (1986). Rites of passage at adolescence: A ritual process paradigm. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 1*(2), 139-154.

Eccles, J. & Gootman, J. (2002). *Community programs to promote youth development*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

Eccles, J. S., Templeton, J., Barber, B., & Stone, M. (2003). Adolescence and emerging adulthood: The critical passage ways to adulthood. In M. H. Bornstein, L. Davidson, C. Keyes, & K. A. Moore (Eds.), *Positive development across the life course* (pp. 383–406).

Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Erickson, E. H. (1963). *Childhood and society* (2nd Ed.). New York: W. W. Norton.

Foster, S. (1980). *The book of the vision quest: Personal transformation in the wilderness*. New York: Prentice Hall.

Foster, S. (1998). The yellow brick road: Coming of age in the wilderness. *The Humanistic Psychologist, 26*(1-3), 199-216.

Gagne, M., Ryan, R. M., & Bargmann, K. (2003). Autonomy support and need satisfaction in the motivation and well-being of gymnasts. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 15*(4), 372-390.

Gavazzi, S. M., & Blumenkrantz, D. G. (1993). Facilitating clinical work with adolescents and their families through the rite of passage experience program. *Journal of Family Psychotherapy, 4*(2), 47-67.

Grolnick, W. S., Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (1994). Inner resources fro school achievement: Motivational mediators of children's perceptions of their parents. Journal of Educational Psychology, 83(4), 508-517.

Kazdin, A. E. (2003). *Research design in clinical psychology* (4th Ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Kiley, M. (2009). Identifying threshold concepts and proposing strategies to support doctoral candidates. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 46*(3), 293-304.

Koestner, R., & Losier, G. F. (1996). Distinguishing reactive versus reflective autonomy. *Journal of Personality, 64*(2), 465-494.

La Guardia, J. G., Ryan, R. M., Couchman, C. E., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Within-person variation in security of attachment: A self-determination theory perspective on attachment, need

fulfillment, and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 79*, 367-384.

Larson, R.W. (2000). Toward a psychology of positive youth development. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 170-183.

Larson, R. W., & Richards, M. H. (1991). Boredom in the middle school years: Blaming schools versus blaming students. *American Journal of Education, 99*, 418-443.

LeBlanc, G. (2008). A developmental-ecological perspective on the role of spirituality in the development of meaningfulness in adolescent boys. *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion, 19*, 255-277.

Lertzman D. A. (2002). Rediscovering rites of passage: Education, transformation, and the transition to sustainability. *Conservation Ecology, 5*(2), 30. Retrieved from: http://www.consecol.org/vol5/iss2/art30/

Lincoln B. (1981). *Emerging from the chrysalis: Rituals of women's initiation*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Mahdi, L. C., Foster, S., & Little, M. (1987). Betwixt and between: Patterns of Masculine and Feminine Initiation. LaSalle, IL: Open Court.

Maloney, M. E. (2005). Evaluating a rite of passage program for adolescent Appalachian males. In S. E. Keefe (Ed.), *Appalachian cultural competency: A guide for medical, mental health, and social service professionals* (pp. 317-334). Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press.

Meade, M. (1993). *Men and the water of life: Initiation and the tempering of me*n. New York: Harper Collins.

Merten, D. E. (2005). Transitions and "Trouble": Rites of Passage for Suburban Girls. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly, 36*(2), 132-148.

Moore, K. A. & Glei, D. (1995). Taking the plunge: An examination of positive youth development. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 10*, 15-40.

Perkins, N. E. (1985). *Harvesting new generations: The positive development of black youth*. Chicago: Third World Press.

Pollack, W. S. (2004). Male adolescent rites of passage: Positive visions of multiple developmental pathways. *Annals of New York Academy of Sciences, 1036*, 141-150.

Roth, J.L., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2003a). Youth development programs: Risks, prevention and policy. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 32*, 170-182.

Roth, J. L., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2003b). What exactly is a youth development program? Answers from research and practice. *Applied Developmental Science, 7*(2), 94-111.

Rudkin, J. K. (2003). *Community psychology: Guiding principles and orienting concepts*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Ryan, R. M. (1995). Psychological needs and the facilitation of integrative processes. *Journal of Personality, 63*(3), 397-427.

Ryan, R. M., Chirkov, V. I., Little, T. D., Sheldon, K. M., Timoshina, E., & Deci, E. L. (1999). The American dream in Russia: Extrinsic aspirations and well-being in two cultures. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin, 25*(12), 1509-1524.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 68-78.

Sanyika, D. (1996). Gang rites and rituals of initiation. In L. C. Mahdi, N. G. Christopher, M. Meade, and M. Meade (Eds.), *Crossroads: The quest for contemporary rites of passage* (pp. 115-124). Chicago, IL: Open Court.

Sarason, S. B. (1974). The psychological sense of community: Prospects for a community psychology. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Scales, P. C. (1996). A responsive ecology for positive youth adolescent development. *Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Research, Controversy and Practices, 69*, 226-230.

Scheer, S. D., Gavazzi, S. M., & Blumenkrantz, D. G. (2007). Rites of passage during adolescence. The Forum for Family and Consumer Issues, 12(2). Retrieved from: http://ncsu.edu/ffci/publications/2007/v12n2-2007-fall/index-v12n2-nov-2007.php

Scheer, S. D., & Unger, D. G. (1997). Russian adolescent drug use and comparisons to United States adolescents. *Substance Use & Misuse, 32*(14), 2151-2162.

Scott, D. G. (1998). Rites of passage in adolescent development: A reappreciation. *Child & Youth Care Forum, 27*(5), 317-335.

Simon, P. (2005). Review of 'Community Programs to Promote Youth Development'. *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, 26*(5), 390.

Small, S., & Memmo, M. (2004). Contemporary models of youth development and problem prevention: Toward an integration of terms, concepts, and models. *Family Relations, 53*, 3-11.

Somé, M. P. (1993). Ritual: Power, healing and community. Portland, OR: Swan Raven and Company.

Somé, M. P. (1996). Ritual, the sacred, and community. In L. C. Mahdi, N. G. Christopher, M. Meade, and M. Meade (Eds.), *Crossroads: The quest for contemporary rites of passage* (pp. 17-25). Chicago, IL: Open Court.

Spear, L. P. (2000). The adolescent brain and age-related behavioral manifestations. *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews, 24*, 417-463.

Sullwold, E. (1998). Swimming with seals: The developmental role of initiation rituals in work with adolescents. *Child & Youth Care Forum, 27*(5), 305-315.

The Center for the Advancement of Youth, Family and Community Services, Inc. (n.d.a). Mission. Retrieved from http://www.rope.org/center.php

The Center for the Advancement of Youth, Family and Community Services, Inc. (n.d.b). ROPE® curriculum three phases. Retrieved from http://www.rope.org/ROPE_curriculum.php

Tremblay, G. C., & Landon, B. (2003). Research in prevention and promotion (adults & children). In M. Roberts & S. Ilardi (Eds.), *Methods of research in clinical psychology: A handbook* (pp. 354-373). Oxford, U. K.: Blackwell Publishers.

Trickett, E. J., & Mitchell, R. E. (1992). An ecological metaphor for research and intervention. In M. S. Gibbs, J. R. Lachenmeyer, & J. Sigal (Eds.), *Community psychology and mental health* (2nd Ed., pp. 13-28). Lake Worth, FL: Gardner Press.

Turner, V. (1969). *The ritual process: Structure and anti-structure*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine De Gruyter.

van Gennep, A. 1960 [1909]. *Rites of passage*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

W. K. Kellogg Foundation. (2004). Using logic models to bring together planning, evaluation, and action: Logic model development guide. Retrieved from: http://www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf

Wasserman, D. L. (2010). Using a systems orientation and foundational theory to enhance theory-driven human service program evaluations. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 33*, 67-80.

Wasserman, D. L. (2012). *Miracle-Gro Capital Scholars Program at COSI evaluation report: Effect on non-academic factors for successful college experience*. Unpublished manuscript.

Williams, G. C., Cox, E. M., Kouides, R., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Presenting the facts about smoking to adolescents: The effects of an autonomy supportive style. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, 154*(3), 314-315.

Williams, G. C., & Deci, E. L. (1996). Internalization of biopsychosocial values by medical students: A test of self-determination theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 70*(4), 767-779.

Williams, G. C., Rodin, G. C., Ryan, R. M., Grolnick, W. S., & Deci, E. L. (1998). Autonomous regulation and long-term medication adherence in adult outpatients. *Health Psychology, 17*, 269-276.

Youngblade, L. M., Theokas, C., Schulenberg, J., Curry, L., Huang, I.-C., & Novak, M. (2007). Risk and promotive factors in families, schools, and communities: A contextual model of positive youth development in adolescence. *Pediatrics, 119*, S47-S53. doi: 10.1542/peds.2006-2089H

Appendix A

Program Effect on General Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction

How I feel about myself....

As a youth ROPE® participant, think about being around people in authority, people who can tell you what to do – like parents, teachers, police officers, or popular peers. These next statements are about how you feel around those kinds of people. Mark how true each statement is for you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all true			Somewhat true			Very true

1. When I am with the people who judge me and tell me what to do, I feel free to be who I am.

2. When I am with the people who judge me and tell me what to do, I feel like a competent person.

3. When I am with the people who judge me and tell me what to do, I feel loved and cared about.

4. When I am with the people who judge me and tell me what to do, I often feel inadequate or incompetent.

5. When I am with the people who judge me and tell me what to do, I have a say in what happens, and I can voice my opinion.

6. When I am with the people who judge me and tell me what to do, I often feel a lot of distance in our relationship.

7. When I am with the people who judge me and tell me what to do, I feel very capable and effective.

8. When I am with the people who judge me and tell me what to do, I feel a lot of closeness and intimacy.

9. When I am with the people who judge me and tell me what to do, I feel controlled and pressured to be certain ways.

Appendix B

Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction in Relation to the Program

How I feel about myself....

As a youth ROPE® participant, think about being around people involved in ROPE®. These next statements are about how you feel when participating in ROPE® activities. Mark how true each statement is for you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all true			Somewhat true			Very true

1. When I am at ROPE® activities, I feel free to be who I am.

2. When I am at ROPE® activities, I feel like a competent person.

3. When I am at ROPE® activities, I feel loved and cared about.

4. When I am at ROPE® activities, I often feel inadequate or incompetent.

5. When I am at ROPE® activities, I feel like have a say in what happens, and I can voice my opinion.

6. When I am at ROPE® activities, I often feel a lot of distance from other participants.

7. When I am at ROPE® activities, I feel very capable and effective.

8. When I am at ROPE® activities, I feel a lot of closeness and intimacy.

9. When I am at ROPE® activities, I feel controlled and pressured to be certain ways.

Appendix C

Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction in Relation to Program Evaluation Feedback

How I feel about myself....

As a Guiding Elder who helped set up the ROPE® strategy, think about receiving any form of negative feedback or being challenged by ROPE® participants or facilitators. Mark how true each statement is for you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all true			Somewhat true			Very true

1. If a ROPE® youth or facilitator criticizes the program in a way that challenges my values or how I want to do things, I feel free to be who I am with no tension, pressure, or ambiguity.

2. If a ROPE® youth or facilitator criticizes the program in a way that challenges my values or how I want to do things, I feel like a competent person.

3. If a ROPE® youth or facilitator criticizes the program in a way that challenges my values or how I want to do things, I feel warmly about the person challenging me, and I believe that underneath the criticism, that person feels warmly towards me.

4. If a ROPE® youth or facilitator criticizes the program in a way that challenges my values or how I want to do things, I often feel inadequate or incompetent.

5. If a ROPE® youth or facilitator criticizes the program in a way that challenges my values or how I want to do things, I have a say in what happens, and I can voice my opinion without feeling tension, pressure, or ambiguity.

6. If a ROPE® youth or facilitator criticizes the program in a way that challenges my values or how I want to do things, it creates more distance in my relationship with that person.

7. If a ROPE® youth or facilitator criticizes the program in a way that challenges my values or how I want to do things, I feel very capable and effective in my ability to listen to that person and utilize the criticism effectively.

8. If a ROPE® youth or facilitator criticizes the program in a way that challenges my values or how I want to do things, I feel more connected and closer to that person.

9. If a ROPE® youth or facilitator criticizes the program in a way that challenges my values or how I want to do things, I feel pressured to defend the way we have already chosen.