



## *Determining Direction: Mission Statements, Goals, and Objectives*

Whether public or private, agencies must identify the individuals they intend to serve and what it is they intend to accomplish. In doing so, a mission statement provides the agency with direction by defining its unique role and function in the community. Mission statements should therefore provide us with answers to the following questions:

- Who does the agency serve?
- What is the agency's purpose?
- What does the agency consider to be important?
- What distinguishes the agency from its competitors?

In order to be effective, mission statements are best suited to serve the agency when they are broad, flexible, succinct, and long lasting. Broad mission statements provide maximum flexibility for responding to changing environments and shifting customer demands and needs. For example, suppose your mission statement is: “to provide wilderness therapy programs for at-risk youth.” This may be fine now, but if the market became saturated with other businesses seeking to provide wilderness therapy programs for at-risk youth, would you be able to respond? Possible opportunities for a new direction for your agency might include choosing to provide wilderness therapy programs for another market, different types of programs for at-risk youth, or wilderness programs that are not necessarily therapeutic.

A mission statement that is succinct (brief, concise, comprised of few words) is more memorable, making it easier for customers to understand. This also enhances the ability of agency employees to use the mission statement to guide their daily work. Because mission statements work like a compass to guide an agency and provide it direction, they should withstand the test of time.

A well-written mission statement provides a framework for program planning, policy development, and other agency functions. Mission statements typically represent the long-term commitments of an agency. If a mission statement is not effective over a period of time, valuable resources could be wasted while the agency readjusts its efforts toward a new purpose. Mission statements are therefore not usually modified in the short run.

### **Examples of Mission Statements**

- **Outdoor Adventure Learning Community:** to enhance students' personal and academic development within a residential community by providing opportunities for recreation activities coupled with experiential education within a resident's peer group.

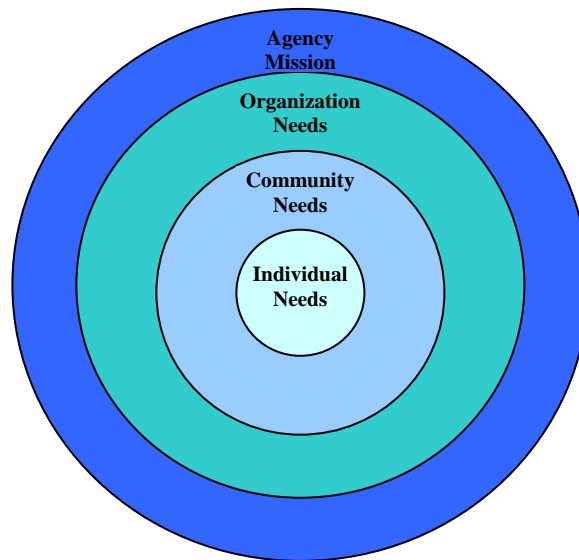
- **Asheville Parks and Recreation Department:** to enhance Asheville’s quality of life by providing diverse cultural and recreational experiences.
- **North Carolina Travel & Tourism Coalition:** to promote public policies that encourage the growth and development of North Carolina’s travel and tourism industry.
- **North Carolina State Parks:** to conserve and protect representative examples of the natural beauty, ecological features, and recreational resources of statewide significance; to provide outdoor recreational opportunities in a safe and healthy environment; and to provide environmental education opportunities that promote stewardship of the state’s natural heritage.
- **Élan Vacations in the Outer Banks of NC:** to provide a relaxing and fun-filled vacation experience with highly personalized service to guests and owners.
- **Appalachian State University Campus Recreation:** University Recreation provides structured and unstructured leisure time activities for students. It is through these activities that students learn life long skills that contribute to their social, physical, emotional, and intellectual growth and development. Correspondingly, University Recreation serves as a laboratory for training students in Recreation Management and related fields. Additionally, University Recreation is responsible for scheduling various athletic and recreational facilities.

## Developing Mission Statements

As the compass of the entire agency, the responsibility of the mission statement typically resides with the highest level of agency administration. Examples include Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Agency President, Agency Director, or Executive Director.

The development of a mission statement requires an analysis of internal and external environments. This can be accomplished by looking at three specific areas that can influence an agency: individuals, the organization, and the community.

- **Individuals:** Who will we serve? What do they need or want? What are the social forces effecting the population we serve (social, economic, political, technological)?
- **Organization:** What are our strengths and weaknesses? What types of services do we have a unique ability to offer? What resources do we have available? What is the public image of our agency?
- **Community:** What opportunities and threats are present? Where can we make a difference? What needs are not being met in the community? What relationships do we have or partnerships could we develop?



**Relationship of Mission to Individual, Community, and Organizational Needs**  
(Rossman & Schlatter, 2003)

**FUN FACT:** Need help creating your mission statement? Check out this official Dilbert Cartoon website: <http://www.unitedmedia.com/comics/dilbert/games/career/bin/ms.cgi>

## Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives are the means of operationalizing and measuring an organization’s mission statement. Although goals and objectives are often used interchangeably, there are subtle differences between them. Goals are broad statements of intent that indicate what an agency (or individual) plans to accomplish. They may be either short or long-term. Objectives, on the other hand, are specific statements of intent that focus behaviors and actions into measurable terms. They answer the questions of Who, What, When and sometimes How goals will be accomplished. If a mission statement is the compass that provides direction, goals and objectives are the paths that take the agency to where it is going. They also provide accountability to ensure that the agency is meeting the needs and wants of the people it wants to serve.

## Writing Goals and Objectives

Although goals and objectives can be written in several ways, the following method is recommended for beginners:

- Step 1:* Begin with **who is responsible** for the goal. For example, “Each group member will” or “Group member X.”
- Step 2:* Include an **action verb**. For example, “will develop” or “will distribute.”
- Step 3:* Include a **subject** that conveys what is going to be accomplished. There should only be one subject in each statement. Statements with two subjects can be broken down into two statements. For example, “a program” or “a flyer.”

*Step 4:* Include a **measurement device** that makes it clear how the accomplished goal or objective will be measured. It is important that measurement devices are quantified whenever possible. For example, if you plan “distribute flyers around town,” you still need to make the statement measurable. In more measurable terms, the statement would read, “distribute a flyer to each local church” or “hang a flyer in at least two businesses.”

*Step 5:* Include a **time frame** that makes it clear by when the goal is to be accomplished. For example, “within three weeks” or “two weeks prior to the event.”

A well-written goal or objective that contains all of the above information is SMART (it has a **S**ubject, **M**easurement terms and **A**ction verb, identifies who is **R**esponsible for it, and provides a **T**ime frame), but it may still not provide all of the details as to how it will be accomplished. For example, the goal “The Park Interpreter will provide three interpretive programs during Labor Day weekend” does not indicate which interpretive programs will be offered, on which days or at what times they will be offered, or whether or not the programs should generate a profit. These details will be determined later by the Park Interpreter. What is important in this goal is that the Park Interpreter knows what to do and when.

## Types of Goals and Objectives

**Program Development Objectives:** Focus on program specifics. They might include the type of program, the type or number of program participants, the individual tasks needed to provide the program. The following are examples of goals/objectives that the Programs Department at a large resort might undertake in the development of a Teen Talent Show:

- Our group will provide a Teen Talent Show on Saturday, August 8<sup>th</sup>.
- Our group will recruit at least 10 participants for the Teen Talent Show before Friday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Our group will recruit a popular guest or local celebrity to serve as the MC for the Teen Talent Show before Friday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Promotion Objectives:** Focus on the promotional efforts of the program. The following are examples of goals/objectives that the Athletics Coordinator of a municipal parks and recreation department might undertake in the provision of a youth basketball league:

- The Athletics Coordinator will create a letter by October 1 to distribute to children at local schools that describes how they can participate in the upcoming youth basketball league.
- The Athletics Coordinator will make copies of the above letter by October 8.
- Before September 15, the Athletics Coordinator will request a flyer from the department’s employee who is responsible for making flyers (two weeks before it is needed).

**Financial Objectives:** Focus on the financial aspects of the program. The following are examples of goals/objectives that an Outdoor Leader for a court mandated youth camp for juvenile offenders might undertake in the development of a new program:

- By March 1<sup>st</sup>, the Outdoor Leader will identify the names and contact information of at least 20 local businesses to solicit for sponsoring camp scholarships for those youth from families with an annual income of less than \$30,000.
- The Outdoor Leader will generate enough money (\$8000) before March 1<sup>st</sup> to be able to provide scholarships to at least 8 of the 16 participants in this summer's program.
- The Outdoor Leader will submit at least three grant proposals, for a minimum of \$1000 each, prior to November 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Performance Objectives:** Focuses on the behavior that the participant is expected to demonstrate. Therefore, performance objectives will always begin with “ The participant (guest, camper, customer, student, etc...) will...”. There are three basic types of performance objectives: cognitive, psychomotor, and affective.

- **Cognitive** (knowledge related):
  - ♦ The campers will demonstrate knowledge of Leave No Trace principles by correctly identifying at least six of the principles.
  - ♦ The guest will be able to play a hand of blackjack without assistance.
- **Psychomotor** (physical related):
  - ♦ The camper will make 7 out of 10 free throws.
  - ♦ The potter will use the wheel to create a vase.
- **Affective** (emotion related):
  - ♦ The seniors will demonstrate they enjoyed the dance by applauding at the end of the night when the Program Coordinator tells them “applaud if you had a good time tonight.”
  - ♦ The teens will demonstrate they enjoyed the dance by staying until it is finished.



<b>Directional Tool</b>	<b>Quick Description</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Mission Statement ↓	not measurable, defines purpose of agency	Agency Director, CEO, President
Long range planning goals ↓	outlines program development; defines basic areas of programming effort; identifies the types of activities, events, services or facilities that will be provided	Director with Unit Directors or Associate Directors
Short range planning goals ↓	specifies programs to accomplish; usually tied to budget preparation	Program Managers
Program design objectives	planning statements for the Manager and performance objectives for participants	Program Managers or Leaders
• Planning objectives	planning and logistics: program development, promotion strategies, financial strategies	Program Managers or Leaders
• Performance objectives	specifics of what participants will be able to do at the completion of the program	Program Managers or Leaders

**The Hierarchical Arrangement of the Mission Statement, Goals, and Objectives**

## ***After-School Programs Alter Lives of At-Risk Youth***

*Park and recreation department-sponsored programming is effective in reducing crime and educating children*

By Monica Hobbs Vinluan, J.D.

School typically lets out around 3 p.m. But most children's parents do not get home from work until 6 p.m. or later. What do children do during these crucial late afternoon hours? Across the country, local park and recreation departments operate after-school programs that provide quality educational and enrichment activities for kids while keeping them safe and out of trouble.

According to the Census Bureau, at least 7 million "latchkey children" return to an empty house on any given afternoon because their community does not offer sufficient, affordable after-school programs providing educational and enrichment opportunities. Children and their families need more after-school programs to fill this critical gap, and local park and recreation departments can help by offering more programs in their communities.

When left unsupervised, children are most at risk between 3 and 6 p.m. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, it is during these hours that children are most likely to commit or be victimized by crime; to smoke, drink or use drugs; to engage in premature sexual activity; or to get involved in gang-related activity. After-school programs have been proven in a variety of research studies to decrease juvenile crime and violence, reduce drug use, cut smoking and alcohol abuse, and decrease teen pregnancy. Furthermore, research demonstrates that in comparison to unsupervised peers, children who participate in after-school programs show improvement in standardized test scores and decreased absenteeism and tardiness.

### **Targeting At-Risk Children**

While structured after-school programs can provide positive environments for all young people, special attention should be paid to ensure that programs target the children most in need of supervised activity. Children who tend to enroll in after-school programs are often those who are already the most likely to participate in organized activity. Public park and recreation agencies need to reach those children who by other standards (socioeconomic status and school success) may be most

in need of, and most likely to benefit from involvement. By focusing on attracting students who stand to see the largest benefits from extra learning opportunities, park and recreation agencies can make a substantial impact on improving the well-being of today's youth.

To help attract the target audience, recreation program planners must design programs that involve activities, events and recreational outlets that are culturally sensitive and socially interesting. Program planners need to get to know the population they seek to target by engaging them and surveying their desires, interests and wants. For example, a program aimed at children in urban areas that invites them to hone their music-mixing skills or their DJ

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talents would have more success than a program that teaches kids how to play card games such as bridge in the same urban setting.

### **Federal Funding Solutions**

There are several federal funding streams that can offer local park and recreation agencies the money they need to implement after-school programs. The following is a sample of some of the federal grants that are available to local park and recreation departments. More detailed information including the application processes, matching funds requirements and contact information can be found at [www.afterschool.gov](http://www.afterschool.gov).

### **21st Century Community Learning Centers**

This U.S. Department of Education program awards grants for afterschool services. These grants are designed to expand academic enrichment opportunities for children attending low-performing schools. The idea behind the grants is to open the schools for broader use by their communities. These centers can offer students recreational programs that are designed to reinforce and complement the child's regular academic program.

### **Title V Incentive Grants for Local Delinquency Prevention Programs**

To keep all children safe and out of trouble, the U.S. Department of Justice offers grants to support youth development, prevention and intervention efforts. Title V provides states with matching funds for community-based prevention programs that include primary prevention aimed at high-risk youth with no prior contact with law enforcement.

### **Community Services Block Grant**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) sponsors these grants to support programs that alleviate the causes of poverty in distressed communities. The grants can fund programs designed to provide character building, sports and physical fitness activities for low-income children.

### **Safe School/Healthy Students Initiative**

These grants, offered by HHS, can be used to promote healthy childhood development and prevent violent behaviors through education, mental health, law enforcement and social services systems. Funds can be used for after-school programs that focus on violence prevention and intervention methods, including those taught through recreational activities.

### **Federal Child Nutrition Programs**

When after-school programs provide nutritious snacks and meals, they improve the health and well-being of the children they serve. These programs also play an important role in combating childhood obesity by reinforcing healthy eating habits and providing outlets for physical activity.

To receive federal nutrition program support, the activities that park and recreation agencies provide must include educational and enrichment activities. Sports and recreation can be part of these programs as long as participation is open to everyone, and only limited based on space or other programmatic concerns.

Three federal child nutrition programs provide funding for after-school programs to offer nutritious snacks and meals to the children in their care. The National School Lunch Program provides reimbursement to school-sponsored after-school programs for snacks. A school-sponsored program can be operated by a school or another organization, such as a local park and recreation department, and need not take place on school grounds.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program provides after-school programs with snacks, and in some cases meals, if the program offers educational or enrichment activities. To qualify, park and recreation programs must be located in a low-income area where 50 percent or more of the children in a nearby school qualify for free or reduced-price school meals. The program is reimbursed at the highest rate of reimbursement for the snack it serves. If the program is not located in a low-income area, then only children age 12 and under are eligible for snacks, and the reimbursement is based upon the household income of the child's family.

Finally, the Special Milk Program reimburses public park and recreation agencies at a percentage of the cost for each half-pint of milk they serve. Any child from a family that meets income guidelines for free meals is eligible to receive free milk.

Public park and recreation agencies can play an enormous role in improving the lives of at-risk children by offering interesting, stimulating and enriching after-school programs. Programs that can attract children and engage them in supervised activities will be the most successful at offering positive choices to turn kids away from risky behaviors. Yet, despite the obvious promise of after-school programs, funding and support for them remains tenuous— particularly with the current administration and Congress.

*Monica Hobbs Vinluan joined NRPA in January 2005 as the senior policy associate for health and wellness issues. She has more than six years of legislative and policy advocacy experience, working on various health promotion issues.*

## ***Bettering the Teen Scene***

### ***How one community saved its teens from committing crime by offering coffee and support***

Even though Lake Oswego, Ore., is considered a wealthy community, with a thriving park and recreation department managing more than 535 acres of park property, its teen population was not engaged. The suburban area just 10 miles outside of Portland has organized leagues geared for young children ages 4-13. Once a child graduates to high school though, there is no extracurricular activity to keep him or her busy and out of trouble on the weekends.

But the community was unaware of how serious the situation had become until a 1997 survey conducted by a local group of citizens revealed that out of the 2,300 high school-aged teenagers, 45 percent reported alcohol use within the past 30 days of taking the survey. Even more, 29 percent of them said they used marijuana once or more within the last year. By 2002, the city police department issued 145 minor-in-possession citations for alcohol, and 45 drug arrests of minors under 18.

To respond to the problem, Lake Oswego community leaders organized an asset builder's coalition to develop programs to solve the teen problem. "All kids are at-risk, it doesn't matter if they're rich or poor, they just need enough assets to help them learn to make the right decisions that will lead them to a successful life," says Terri Fackrell, recreation supervisor for Lake Oswego.

In 2000, the coalition held a teen workshop and asked its young adults what they wanted out of recreation, to which the teens responded: entertainment on the weekends.

For two years, Fackrell and three teen volunteers brainstormed weekly and eventually unveiled Java Jam--a monthly open mike night at a local coffee shop where teen bands could play in front of their peers. The monthly sessions had three bands each, and were held from 8-11 p.m.

The first night attracted more than 75 teens, and has consistently held this appeal since it began in 2002. On some months, the night draws more than 125 teens. Java Jam is free and open to anyone who wants to attend. The only cost to the park and recreation department is a sound technician for the bands, usually covered by a business sponsor.

Fackrell says Java Jam has already improved the community. When her department did an analysis from April 2002 to June 2003 (the first full year of Java Jam), the city saw a 47 percent decrease of juvenile problems on Java Jam nights. Another analysis conducted from October 2002 to April 2003, which looked at every Saturday in the month, found that on Java Jam Saturdays, there was a reduction in juvenile offenses versus other nights.

With all the success of Java Jam, it is still only one night. And Fackrell does not foresee expanding the recreational opportunity beyond once a month because there are not enough businesses who could afford to open their cafes for free one night every week to teens who

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don't usually buy refreshments. But, Java Jam is successful enough to host an annual summer jam fest, with two stages and enough bands to alternate for five hours at a local park.

Lake Oswego is also entertaining the idea of building an inter-generational recreation center, where teens can go for their own activities. Fackrell says she will work with the city to create a large teen room with a small stage and lights, but she says the teens will probably not prefer the teen room over an off-site Java Jam night. "The kids like the grownup atmosphere of going to a deli/coffee shop. They like ... that they're going to a business that likes to have them around, that isn't shooing them away and welcomes them," she says.

Fackrell says Java Jam can easily be replicated in any community nationwide, because of its low overhead and simplistic program. "It's not that hard to start if you can get a good group of students who will help get the word out, because it's really the students that make it successful," she says. "It wouldn't work if we did it ourselves."

For more information on Java Jam, please contact Terri Fackrell at [tfackrell@ci.oswego.or.us](mailto:tfackrell@ci.oswego.or.us).

## ***Recreation and Juvenile Delinquency Prevention: How Recreation Professionals Can Design Programs that Really Work***

by Wayne W. Munson

In 1999 there were 2.5 million arrests of persons under the age of 18. Twenty-seven percent of the arrests involved females, and 32% were youths under 15. Although arrests for violent and property crimes dropped 23% and 24% respectively from 1995 to 1999, the numbers are still staggering (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2000). Prevention has been a primary goal of law enforcement agencies and those in related fields who seek to divert youths from antisocial behavior at an early age. Comprehensive strategies involving health, family, employment, education and recreation can play an important role in preventing juvenile delinquency, defined as "criminal behavior committed by minors" (Siegel & Senna, 1997, p.10).

The popular press and criminology literature concur that there is a relationship between recreation and delinquency prevention. However, research on this relationship is lacking. This is unfortunate because leisure is a highly relevant factor in the lives of adolescents rivaling school, peers and family in importance (Adams & Gullotta, 1983; Munson, 1993; Silbereisen & Todt, 1994).

Social reformers in the mid to late 19th century advocated recreation as a means to combat delinquency (Cross, 1990; Larson, 1994; Witt & Crompton, 1997). Jane Addams, for example, believed that wholesome activities provided by public recreation organizations were "the only agency powerful enough to break into this intensified and unwholesome life" (Addams, 1913, p. 24). The belief among many professionals, past and present, is that with adult guidance, these activities promote "initiative, build character, discourage delinquency and provide laboratories for training in citizenship" (Larson, 1994, p. 46). Such activities are often referred to as "recreation," which is defined as "voluntary non-work activity that is organized for the attainment of personal and social benefits including restoration and social cohesion" (Kelly, 1996, p. 27).

While traditional beliefs suggest that recreation has the potential to prevent delinquency, most studies have not conclusively demonstrated that it does (Reed, 1948; Shanas & Dunning, 1942; Truxall, 1929). Carefully planned investigations are needed that explain relationships among critical variables,

and that determine effects from recreation activities and programs on youth's attitudes, beliefs and behaviors (McGuire & Priestley, 1985, Munson, 1988, Witt & Crompton, 1997). Programs should focus on prevention, have long-term goals and objectives, and be part of a comprehensive plan (Witt & Crompton, 1997). They also should be based on a theory that "determines the construction of programs" (Kralj & Allen, 1982, p. 224).

### **Why Are Some Juveniles Delinquent?**

Many theoretical models from the social sciences have been promoted to explain juvenile delinquency. Psychological approaches include: behavioral, psychodynamic, social learning, self

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concept and cognitive theory. Sociological perspectives used to explain juvenile delinquency include social disorganization, strain, and the sub-cultural deviance theory (Kratcoski & Kratcoski, 1996).

The social control theory provides an explanation of how recreation and juvenile delinquency are associated (Agnew & Petersen, 1989; Siegel & Senna, 1997). Control theories suggest that delinquent acts occur when a youth's bond to society becomes weak or is broken (Hirschi, 1969). Several social control theorists have tried to explain the association between recreation and delinquency (Gold, 1963; Nye, 1958; Schafer, 1969). Hirschi (1969) suggested that the probability of delinquency is reduced when an individual is high in one or more social bonds such as attachment, commitment, involvement or belief.

### **How Can Park and Recreation Programs Help Prevent Delinquency?**

Hirschi (1969) explains several ways to develop social bonds through attachments, commitment, involvement and bonds.

**Attachment**--Attachment refers to an individual's sensitivity to, interest in, and amount of affection and respect for significant others such as parents and teachers (Agnew & Petersen, 1989; Siegel & Senna, 1997). Hirschi (1969) indicated that these feelings are "the essence of the internalization of norms" needed for the attachment of the individual to others (pp. 18-19). Engaging in pleasurable leisure activities with parents and participating in recreation activities in school and community increase attachments to these institutions (Agnew & Petersen, 1989). Farrington, Ohlin and Wilson (1986) found weak affectional relations between parents and children were associated with antisocial behavior and that shared leisure activities were an important factor in family bonding and prevention of juvenile delinquency.

In one of the first comprehensive studies of leisure and delinquency, Agnew and Petersen (1989) hypothesized that participation in organized activities (i.e., highly supervised activities supervised by conventional adults) and pleasurable activities that include parents may increase attachment and commitment to conventional organizations (e.g., school), foster conventional beliefs, and reduce opportunities for delinquency. Their study indicated that delinquency was positively related to time spent in unsupervised peer-oriented social activities and least favored activities with parents. Time spent in organized leisure activities, passive entertainment and non-competitive sports were negatively related to delinquency. The researchers

concluded that certain types of leisure activities are unrelated to delinquency while other forms may foster it. Requiring youths to participate in disliked activities may do more harm than good. Thus, attachment or bonding to conventional norms may best be facilitated through participation in organized activities supervised by conventional adults, passive entertainment (e.g., reading, listening to records, watching TV) and noncompetitive sports.

**Commitment**--Personal commitment "involves time, energy and effort expended in pursuit of conventional lines of action" (Siegel & Senna, 1997, p. 189). If persons invest a significant amount of time and effort in the acquisition of a reputation based on virtue, they will consider the costs of delinquent behavior and the consequences of such actions and be less likely to engage in activities that might jeopardize their reputation (Hirschi, 1969; Schafer, 1969; Siegel & Senna, 1997). Recreation activities are believed to foster greater commitment to conventional institutions (Agnew & Petersen, 1989). For example, it is believed that the increased prestige and social status accrued from participation in high school athletics fosters commitment to more positive social attitudes and goals and deters delinquency (Landers & Landers, 1978).

To investigate the effects of participation in extracurricular activities on juvenile delinquency, Landers and Landers (1978) gathered archival data of 521 students from a northeastern high school. Students were grouped in the following activity categories: athlete, service-leadership, both or neither. After development of lists, names were taken to the town courthouse to determine the number of misdemeanor or felony offenses of students in each category. Results indicated a significant association between delinquency and extracurricular activity participation. Participants in the "neither" category were more likely to engage in delinquent acts than those in the athlete, service/leadership, or both categories. There was no support for the contention that athletics affords greater socialization opportunities than other types of extracurricular activities.

**Involvement**--If youths are involved in conventional activities, they will be too busy and thus less likely to engage in delinquent behavior (Siegel & Senna, 1997). For example, Hirschi (1969) believes that involvement in school, family and recreation activities insulates youths from delinquent behavior. Involvement includes more than simply keeping busy; it is more important how "engrossed and involved" adolescents are in the activities in which they are engaged.

Jones and Offord (1989) evaluated the effects of involvement in an after-school recreation program on low-income children, five to 15 years old, who reside in public housing in Ottawa, Ontario. The purpose of the program was to increase their involvement with pro-social youths and adults and for development and improvement of skills in sports, music, dance, scouting and other non-sport areas. After reaching a certain level of competence, children were encouraged to continue participation in on-going programs in the community such as leagues and other competitive activities.

Results of the program indicated that the number of arrests declined significantly (75%) for the experimental project and increased (67%) for those in the control project. Unfortunately, 16 months after the conclusion of the project, positive changes diminished significantly. However, the authors concluded that getting kids involved with pro-social recreation activities during after-school hours appears to have merit in reducing delinquent behavior in the community.

**Positive Beliefs**--Persons who live in similar social environments are assumed to share a common moral perspective or value system. They can espouse positive beliefs such as sharing, honesty, and responsibility. Control theories suggest that when such beliefs are weak or absent, people are more likely to engage in unlawful behaviors (Hirschi, 1969; Siegel & Senna, 1997). It is believed that certain types of recreation activities promote conventional values and prevent delinquency by impacting youths' bonds of beliefs.

In a test of Hirschi's (1969) social control theory, Larson and Richards (1989) hypothesized that adults maintain most extracurricular activities and that regular interaction among youths, sponsors, coaches and leaders facilitates pro-social beliefs, increases integration and suppresses delinquent behavior. Their sample included fifth to eighth graders who were studied at three points over four years. The results of the longitudinal investigation yielded the following:

**Athletics.** A negative relationship was found between sports and delinquency at the senior high school level, but not at the junior high school level. It appeared that this association increases with age, particularly for adolescents in the 11th and 12th grades. However, there was no indication that participation in sports increased pro-social behaviors nor did it suppress delinquency.

**Arts and Hobbies.** A modest negative relationship was found for all grade levels. The nature of this relationship suggested

that greater participation in the arts and hobbies in grades nine through 10 resulted in less delinquency in grades 11 and 12. It was concluded that participation in arts and hobbies might reduce delinquency during the senior high school years.

**Youth Organizations.** The pattern of this data was almost identical to that of arts and hobbies. There was a strong negative relationship between participation in youth organizations in grades nine through 10 and delinquency in grades 11 and 12. Participation in youth organizations may reduce delinquency during the senior high school years. Overall, the results of Larson and Richard's longitudinal investigation provide "preliminary proof" that youth organizations, art and hobbies promote pro-social integration of adolescents and "inculcate a resistance to delinquent behavior" (p.54).

The research does not conclusively "prove" that recreation prevents delinquency; however, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that it may make a significant contribution to prevention when it is guided by appropriate theories and research. Control theories suggest that the probability of delinquency is reduced when individuals are high in one or more social bonds: attachment, commitment, involvement or beliefs. Recreation may increase bonding to conventional norms when youths: (a) participate in activities that are organized and supervised by conventional adults and engage in passive entertainment and noncompetitive sports; (b) engage in after school activities that are socially rewarding and provide alternatives to boredom and association with antisocial persons; (c) are "engrossed and involved" in conventional activities that increase the opportunities for involvement with pro-social people and development and improvement of skills which make participation in delinquent activities less desirable; and (d) participate in art, hobbies and youth organizations that promote pro-social integration and resistance to delinquent behavior.

**Research into Action:  
Theory and Research as a Guide to Practice**

Can recreation prevent juvenile delinquency? Social scientists and recreation professionals have pondered this question for decades. Because juvenile delinquency is an interdisciplinary field of study, it is important for recreation professionals to become familiar with the various theories of delinquency so they are better able to develop meaningful preventive programs. Designing

program strategies using a theoretical base helps to avoid random musings, haphazard guessing, and cookbook approaches. This is key because it has been found that some programs do more harm than good.

#### **How To Use This Information**

- Provide attractive alternatives to delinquent activities. Organized programs designed to stimulate interests through novel experiences help youths to become more engaged and involved, avoid boredom and reduce their desire to participate in delinquent behaviors.
- Provide opportunities for youths to bond with conventional adults in pleasurable, interesting recreational pursuits. Reduce contact with negative role models and peers who are involved in antisocial behaviors. Adolescents are less likely to be delinquent when they share in the activities with their parents, concerned adults and prosocial peers. A sense of connection and caring is vital.
- Provide activities that focus on skill building that result in feelings of competence and control. Pro-social activities that focus on self-direction, skills and challenges create enjoyable and satisfying experiences. These activities help to curb negative actions and promote positive beliefs, attitudes and behaviors.
- Promote activities that encourage and teach the creation and development of friendships. It has been shown that friendships help fill gaps in emotional needs of youths by sharing common interests, helping to resolve conflicts, learning social skills and reducing loneliness and insecurity (Marcus, 1996).
- Offer activities that help youths develop an identity that has a future orientation. Adolescents need the opportunity to achieve a clear and consistent picture of who they are with respect to their past, present and future. Without a future orientation, youths are less inclined to become involved in school, club and youth organizations and also be less able to delay gratification. Recreation activities that provide a life-long learning perspective (such as hobbies, playing a musical instrument, art, crafts and participation in organizations) help to generate positive beliefs and attitudes about the future.

- Design programs that incorporate cooperation, collaboration, empathy and reflection. It has been said that empathy is the enemy of aggression (Garbarino, 1999). Activities that focus on working together, downplay competition, and promote caring for things (e.g., plants, animals, etc.) can help to create sensitive and nurturing human beings.
- Train staff and volunteers to recognize children at risk of becoming delinquent (e.g., those who have a history of abuse, demonstrate aggressive behaviors, are alienated from their peers, etc.) and to become competent in communicating with such children. Training staff to become better listeners and responders can help youths feel understood and connected.
- Develop theory-based, comprehensive and outcome-oriented programs. Programs incorporating theory and that are linked to other delinquency-prevention efforts in the community (such as health, family, employment, and education) have greater potential to prevent delinquency. Short and long-term goals and objectives are necessary to determine successful outcomes (e.g., reduction in crime, aggressive behaviors, and increased positive feelings about self and others). Programs based on theory that incorporate experimental or quasi-experimental designs in their evaluation schemes have a greater chance for success, demonstrate greater accountability and also contribute to the knowledge base on delinquency prevention.

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# Notes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 2.1

# Understanding Mission Statements



Locate the mission statement from one of your favorite Recreation, Parks or Tourism agencies (except for those listed within this chapter):

1. Who is the agency?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What is the mission statement of this agency?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Is the above mission statement:
  - a. broad?            Yes    No
  - b. flexible?        Yes    No
  - c. succinct?        Yes    No
  - d. long-lasting?    Yes    No

Describe/Explain:

4. Expand the mission statement into common everyday language. For instance, what does it tell you about this agency?

*continued* Σ Σ Σ

5. When developing Mission Statements you should look at three areas: Individuals, Organization, and Community. Refer to page 18 in the workbook and describe how the above mission statement addresses each of these areas.

a. Individuals:

b. Organization:

c. Community:

6. Imagine you are an entrepreneur interested in developing a new Recreation, Park, or Tourism-related business in Boone.

a. Identify the business.

b. For each of the three areas from Question #5, describe two things that would be important to know in the development of YOUR business's Mission Statement.

i. Individuals:

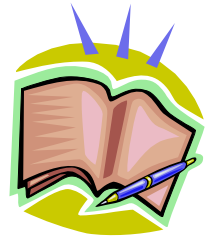
ii. Organization:

iii. Community

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 2.2

# Writing Goals and Objectives



The Watauga County Parks and Recreation Department wants to offer a new program.

1. Select one of the following programs identified during their needs assessment:
  - Guided hikes for tourists
  - Monthly dances for mentally challenged
  - Pottery class for senior citizens
  - Ropes course for ASU Conference attendees
  - Rock climbing class for teens
  - Fast-pitch softball clinic for young girls
2. Write goals and objectives for the program you selected in the areas below.
3. For each goal/objective, identify the SMART components by underlining each component and writing the appropriate letter above the word or phrase.

S = subject

MD = measurement device

AV = action verb

R = responsible person

T = time frame

Program development goal/objective:

Program promotion goal/objective:

Financial goal/objective:

*continued* Σ Σ Σ

Cognitive performance objective:

Psychomotor performance objective:

Affective performance objective:

**Additional Group Members:** \_\_\_\_\_

## In-Class Activity 2.1 Mission Statements



Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Directions:**

Answer the following questions about your agency:

- Who does the agency serve?
- What is the agency's purpose?
- What does the agency consider to be important?
- What distinguishes you from competitors?

Using your answers to the above questions, write a mission statement for your agency.

Propose an idea for a 4<sup>th</sup> of July Day Special Event *using your mission statement*.

How might it differ from 4<sup>th</sup> of July Events run by other agencies?







4. Each group member will distribute program fliers to the administrative assistant of one Watauga County elementary school within two weeks of the program.
5. On July 4<sup>th</sup>, the Trip Leader will provide a canoeing program at no cost to participants.
6. The Senior Center Supervisor will develop a Summer Kick-Off Program for Memorial Day weekend that includes dancing, eating and games.

Additional Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

## In-Class Activity 2.3 Performance Objectives



### Directions:

1. For each of the statements below, identify the type of performance objective it is: cognitive, psychomotor, or affective.
2. For each performance objective, identify the SMART components by underlining each component and writing the appropriate letter above the word or phrase.

S = subject

MD = measurement device

AV = action verb

R = responsible person

T = time frame

Example:           R           AV                   S  
Students will identify the components of  
goals/objectives,

                                  T                                   MD  
during an in-class assignment, without help from the  
instructor.

1. The parents of the Little League baseball players will demonstrate good sportsmanship by calling out only encouraging words to the players.
2. The bird watchers will demonstrate the ability to identify birds by correctly naming at least three different birds and giving an identifying characteristic (coloring, call, flight pattern, etc...) during the nature hike.
3. The children will demonstrate the ability to balance on the snow board and make three turns before reaching the end of the slope.

*continued* Σ Σ Σ

4. The rope course participants will express perceptions of increased teamwork within their group during processing following completion of the course by using words such as “cooperation,” “working together,” “helping each other,” “supporting each other,” etc.
  
5. The participant will hit the tennis ball, with a forehand stroke, into the backcourt on 5 out of 10 attempts from the baseline.