

Arts-based activities:  
Adolescents' perceptions and parents' influence

A thesis submitted to  
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research  
in Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Masters of Arts

by

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Abstract

Previous research into adolescent's extra-curricular activities has been directed primarily towards sports, while arts programmes have received less attention. Additionally, while adolescents typically seek increasing independence, parental support and involvement is essential for activity participation. The purpose of this study was to examine adolescents' arts-based extra-curricular activities. The outcomes of participation, along with the implications of parental involvement, were explored in terms of adolescents' self-esteem and life satisfaction. Recruitment of 126 adolescent and parent pairs took place through arts activity organisations. Higher numbers of arts activities were expected to be associated with higher reported self-esteem and life satisfaction. It was also expected that adolescent perceptions of parental support or pressure, or differences in expectations between parents and adolescents, would moderate this relationship. Results indicated that greater arts participation was associated with higher self-esteem scores, as was perceived parental support. Anticipated moderating effects were not found.

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### Arts -based activities: Adolescents' perceptions and parents' influence

The characteristics of children's and adolescents' pursuits have undergone dramatic change over the last two hundred years as the concept of their leisure time has developed and grown. Whereas prior to, and during, the Industrial Revolution, children were widely regarded as part of the workforce, the advent of formal schooling and minimum age limits for work began to change the complexion of children's time use. As they were no longer expected to contribute to the family economy, the concept of childhood as a time of play without enforced work became established (Miller, 2002). The after-school programmes of today, which grew from a need to provide care until parents returned from work, introduced a more organised approach to previously unstructured and spontaneous playtime (Kleiber & Powell, 2005).

More recently, the concept of an intensified dynamic between childhood and mothering has been proposed through sociological research. This is characterised by a societal construction whereby mothers are seen as responsible, and obliged, to provide all the nurturance needs of their children (Bell, 2004). These needs have, in turn, become commoditised, with the implication that they can be met best by providers external to the family (Katz-Rothman, 2000, cited by Caputo, 2007). Together, these elements have served to increase the pressure on parents, particularly mothers, to create and access the modes of recreation provision most likely to conform to current conventions of society.

One aspect of this responsibility involves supporting the development of children's and adolescents' self-esteem. Characteristics of the interactive approach used by parents have been associated with differential outcomes, so that children of parents using a positive and authoritative approach exhibit a higher sense of self-esteem.

Conversely, children of authoritarian and permissive parents tend to have less advantageous outcomes in terms of self-esteem and risk behaviours (Berk & Shanker, 2006; Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, Dornbusch, 1991).

At the present time, children and adolescents' declining levels of physical activity, and the increasing numbers who are overweight or obese, have been the subject of official health reports and discussion in the popular press (Canning, Courage, & Frizzell, 2004; Tremblay, Katzmarzyk, & Willms, 2002). As awareness and concern about these issues has grown, many parents have responded by enrolling their children in extra-curricular programmes, particularly in sporting activities.

One of the serendipitous benefits of this trend is the creation of new opportunities for research to explore the effects of participation in extra-curricular activities, and the outcomes for children and their parents. To that end, research in the area of children's extra-curricular activities has proliferated in quantity and intricacy in response to new findings and the challenges of generalising results. These challenges come from the wide range of types and levels of activities, in addition to the implications of differing experiences for participants based on age, developmental changes, and gender (Brustad, 1992; Green & Chalip, 1997; Hofer, McKenzie, Sallis, Marshall, & Conway, 2001; Ullrich-French & Smith, 2006).

Overall, the bulk of extra-curricular activity participation research findings suggest that participation leads to a complex array of interrelated expectations, demands and satisfaction for parents and children. This interplay also appears to be arbitrated by the personalities, previous experience and motivational approach of stakeholders. Complexity is indicated, in part, by the theoretically diverse range of research that has

been drawn upon in order to explain or relate findings to established conceptual frameworks, including explanations of motivation (Dempsey, Kimiecik, & Horn, 1993; Jambor, 1999), comparisons between academic and recreational settings (Woolger, 1993), and the effects of parental involvement and children's self-perceptions (Bois, Sarrazin, Brustad, Chanal, & Trouilloud, 2005; Brustad, 1992; Wuerth, Lee, & Alfermann, 2004).

The majority of children and adolescents enrolled in extra-curricular programmes are involved in sporting activities, thus most of the research into extra-curricular activities has been pursued in the sports context (Feldman & Matjasko, 2007). Other types of pursuits are also available, however, such as arts-based activities through private lessons and organisations. Out of these, music has received the most attention from researchers. Furthermore, children's participation in sports or arts is not mutually exclusive. Feldman and Matjasko (2007) describe activity portfolios for adolescents that include two, three, or four different types of pastime.

Insofar as parents appear willing to facilitate children's participation in non-sporting activities, it is possible to speculate that they may also expect benefits for their children that are broadly similar to those from sporting activities. In terms of overall effects, parents hope that activity involvement will foster an awareness of competence and efficacy in their children, thus promoting a genuine and appropriate sense of positive self-esteem (Dempsey et al., 1993; Ullrich-French & Smith, 2006; Woolger, 1993). However, this desire has received little research attention in the context of arts activities to date. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the area of arts-based extra-curricular activities in order to explore the potential benefits to adolescents and parents.

*Parental involvement in adolescents' extra-curricular activities*

*Selection and facilitation of activities*

Parents have a distinctive role in adolescents' extracurricular activity participation, beginning with the acceptance that the onus for enrolment, funding, transportation and support rests with them. For example, when children are young or the sports facility is some distance from home, transportation provided by parents is considered essential to enable participation. It may also be instrumental in supporting continued participation when children are older, particularly when there are competing demands of homework, part-time employment, and other activities (Hoefler et al., 2001). Perceptions of the potential dangers of social safety such as strangers and concerns about road traffic may also result in parents feeling compelled to provide transportation (Timperio, Crawford, Telford, & Salmon, 2004).

Once parents have assumed the obligations of children's and adolescents' participation, the choice of activity needs to be made. Initially, the selection of an activity from the range available would seem to fall within the purview of the individual intending to participate. However, Howard and Madrigal (1990) found that primarily mothers made the choice of activity, with fathers tending to defer to maternal suggestions. Children and adolescents were referred to at the point of final decision, but had remarkably little say prior to that. There appears to be a slight increase in the amount of input as children age, but the ultimate choice still rests with mothers (Howard & Madrigal, 1990).

Mothers based their decision, in part, on practicalities including financial requirements, the needs of other family members and factors such as transportation

demands (Hoefer et al., 2001; Howard & Madrigal, 1990; Jambor, 1999). Mothers' opinion of the likelihood of the activity offering appropriate physical, sporting and social benefits was also an important contributing factor in choice. At the same time, mothers factored in their own needs in terms of meeting fellow parents or having something to do while their child was engaged in the activity (Jambor, 1999).

This method of choosing an activity appears to owe little to the virtues of any particular sport and more to the expected overall benefits of participation and accommodating the demands of family schedules. A similar process may govern the choice of arts-based activities, as parents have been found to look for broader educational gains, rather than responding to specific talents in their children. Dai & Schader (2002) have reported that parents tend not to view musical participation as a long-term prospect, unless a strong talent becomes evident; while Denny (2007) describes adolescents' music participation as unrelated to their own keenness for it, but significantly related to parental interest in music.

In the sports context, once the decision has been made, there appears to be scant opportunity for children to provide feedback regarding their satisfaction with the choice. Green and Chalip (1997) found that there were almost no communication pathways through which the decision could be reviewed. Instead, it seems that parental satisfaction with the programme is signified by children meeting parental expectations in conjunction with the commitment of the organisation to serving parents' perceptions of children's needs, although these tend to be defined imprecisely (Jambor, 1999).

Hence, in terms of activity choice, it appears that children and adolescents have little influence, and activities are selected for what they may bring to the child or

adolescent, rather than in accordance with where their talents or interests actually lie. Therefore, one goal of this study will be to investigate the satisfaction adolescents feel regarding the selection of activities in which they are involved.

### *Parents' expectations*

#### *Direct benefits of participation*

In the context of sports participation, research indicates that parents expect activities will provide children and adolescents with a variety of opportunities for fitness and enjoyment through physical exercise, to learn about a sport, acquire and improve competence, socialise with peers, participate as a member of a team, develop leadership skills, and maximise personal sporting potential (Jambor, 1999; Mahoney, Larson, Eccles, & Lord, 2005; Ullrich-French & Smith, 2006; Woolger, 1993). Parents of adolescents also appear to foresee and promote the longer term benefits of participation in structured activities; emphasising the value of physical and mental revitalisation and life-skill learning through sports, while downplaying factors of fun and enjoyment (Shannon, 2006).

Within the realm of arts activities, where music learning and participation has received the majority of the research attention, it may be that parents are responding to research linking early music training with intellectual or academic gains for children (Bilhartz, Bruhn, & Olson, 2000; Firth, Godfrey, Yoshikawa, Bloom, Singer, & Hodges, 2007; Schellenberg, 2006). As an alternative, or as a complement, they may wish to extend parenting practices and beliefs that include music (Custodero, Britto, & Brooks-Gunn, 2003; Denny, 2007; Ilari, 2005). Parents may also seek to offer their children or adolescents an opportunity for relaxation through the pleasure of playing music. Links

between music education and reduced levels of stress indicators such as cortisol, suggest that this might be a route to increased well-being (Lindblad, Hogmark, & Theorell, 2006).

*Indirect benefits of participation*

Parents may see participation in any organised activity as serving a protective function against unwelcome influences from inside the home, such as television; and outside, such as undesirable and risk-related behaviours or unstructured socialising with peers. Parents of youth making the transition from childhood into adolescence may attempt to pre-empt problems by ensuring participation in structured activities. By their nature, activities are arranged to present challenges and goals, both in the long and short term, which require sustained effort and personal commitment to achieve. Since the amount of time required to accomplish these goals reduces the time available for unstructured activities, parents may appreciate and feel supported by the consistently constructive messages they anticipate their adolescent children will hear from all areas of influence in their lives, such as home, school, recreational and community organisations (Mahoney et al., 2005).

Support for this perception comes from findings suggesting adolescents' free time spent with peers and away from adult supervision is associated with negative and risk behaviours and lower academic achievement (Mancini & Huebner, 2003; McHale, Crouter, & Tucker, 2001). Although Mancini and Huebner (2003) found that involvement in structured activities conferred a reduction in risk behaviours, sometimes serving as the only affirmative context in the lives of youth, this effect accounted for less than a quarter of the variance. The effects of positive attachment with parents and school

were stronger influences, along with school success. The influence of friends and peers appeared to be a mixed benefit, especially if participants were older, male youth, or if time was spent with only one friend (Mancini & Huebner, 2003). Furthermore, time spent in unstructured outdoor activities has also been associated with lower school grades and emotional adjustment. A possible explanation for this is that this social context attracts youth who are less likely to conform to the requirements of a structured environment (McHale et al., 2001).

Television watching is often identified as a major component of children's and adolescents' leisure time and has been the subject of extensive research. Goldfield et al. (2007) report relationships between television watching and increased calorie consumption, through a form of classic conditioning in which TV is associated with food. TV also appears to operate as a prompt for food intake, encouraging the eating of snacks through advertising, while also interfering with cues of fullness and satiation. The desire to watch TV can represent a strong preference over reading or alternate home-based activities, and research has suggested that obese children may be more attracted to TV watching than children of normal weight (Goldfield et al., 2007).

Other reported effects of TV watching include a negative correlation with children's and adolescents' interactions with siblings or parents, even if siblings and parents are watching TV together, and decreased time spent on homework and creative play has also been reported (Vandewater, Bickham, & Lee, 2006). This echoes the finding that TV watching is associated with detrimental effects on high school graduation and university degree attainment (Hancox, Milne, & Poulton, 2005). Consequently, parents may feel compelled to control TV watching in response to these concerns.

Additionally, parents may be sensitive to children's and adolescents' apparent isolation if they perceive low levels of social interaction, and may seek to address this through extra-curricular activity involvement. Solitary activities, such as reading, have been associated with depression (McHale et al., 2001), which may prompt parents to provide opportunities for increased social interaction.

With these thoughts in mind, it is possible that parents conclude that any extra-curricular activity could hold potential rewards, as participation would necessarily reduce the amount of time spent unoccupied or in inappropriate activities. Just as being active in sports would bring these benefits, parents of children and adolescents in arts or interest activities might anticipate a similar effect. However, little research has been done to measure parental expectations directly in either sporting or arts situations. Thus, the nature of parental expectations will be a question addressed in this study.

#### *Adolescents' expectations*

While there has been considerable research into parental involvement in terms of activity choice and facilitation, the area of children's and adolescents' expectations of activity involvement has received less scrutiny. Nonetheless, expectations of fun and enjoyment in the activity have been recognised in some sports-activity research and have been highlighted as a factor that can influence continued participation (Gould, Tuffey, Udry, & Loehr, 1996; Scanlan, Stein, & Ravizza, 1989). Similar expectations have been identified as a source of the value that adolescents assign to activity participation. Eccles et al. (1983) describe four types of activity valuation, *intrinsic*, *achievement*, *utility* and *cost*; in which the *costs value* marks the negative side of each of the other three dimensions.

Adolescents construe *intrinsic value* from an activity when they gain enjoyment from the social aspects of new friendship opportunities through meeting peers, and also from the positive input of people who are important to them. Specific characteristics of the activity are another source, as youth reported relishing aspects such as sensations of movement and speed, the knowledge that spectators enjoyed watching their performances, or the tendency to allow music playing to dominate other aspects of life (Moore, Burland, & Davidson 2003; Scanlan et al., 1989; Stuart, 2003).

Enjoyment was undermined by attractive alternative activities and by poor social connections. In addition, recreational and elite youth athletes have identified anxiety, regarding fear of injury or poor performance, as a negative influence (Gould et al., 1996; Scanlan et al., 1989; Stuart, 2003). Interestingly, this last aspect mirrors findings suggesting that low fear in childhood has an incremental association with later sporting success at the competitive level (Poulton & Milne, 2002). It is perhaps not surprising that enthusiasm for activity involvement declines or is non-existent when enjoyment is not a factor.

Some adolescents also appear to value tokens and indications of success, termed by Eccles et al. (1983) as *attainment value*, which enhanced their sense of enjoyment. However, fear of injury or performance can again undermine this sense of achievement, as can alternative sources of reward, the low valuation of rewards by individual participants, and negative support from significant others (Poulton & Milne, 2002; Stuart, 2003). For adolescents in the context of music learning, the attraction of awards can also be weakened by the judgments of peers whose disparaging comments may devalue

achievements that are perceived to contravene gender or age-appropriate stereotypes (Kane, 1988; O'Neill, 2005).

Further value was given to activity involvement when participants were able to anticipate that their learning or experience in sports would accrue future career or life benefits, described as *utility value* by Eccles et al. (1983). A similar process may be at work in non-sporting activities, as students taking music lessons have been found to hold higher career ambitions than their peers (Denny, 2007). Perceptions of the current benefits and future advantages of structured and unstructured activities are likely to be reinforced through the input of parents (Shannon, 2006). Once again, however, perceptions of value were reversed when individuals experienced performance anxieties or were attracted by alternative activities (Stuart, 2003).

#### *Adolescents' motivation to participate*

In order to participate effectively, maintain a level of effort and achievement, and be able to satisfy their expectations, adolescents need to experience a sense of motivation. Findings from sports research contexts suggest that children and adolescents initially acquire a style of motivation through observations of behaviour modelled by their parents. Although this generally serves as a background influence (Dempsey et al., 1993; Jambor, 1999; Trost, Sallis, Pate, Freedson, Taylor, & Dowda, 2003), it can be sufficient to encourage continued participation (Brown, Frankel, & Fennell, 1989; DiLorenzo, Stucky-Ropp, Vander Wall, & Gotham, 1998).

From research in academic settings, a personally generated sense of motivation appears to develop according to one of two orientations. Individuals with the first approach use *mastery goals* to accept challenges, learn and improve skills, view setbacks

as a component of learning, and use progress and improvement to mark achievement. Children and adolescents with the second orientation use *performance goals* to focus on the specific outcomes of each task, seek to outshine peers, consider setbacks as failures, and use the evaluations of others to signify success (Ames & Archer, 1988). Taking these tendencies as a template, similar motivational orientations have been found to apply in the context of sporting activities (Brustad, 1992; Woolger, 1993). With regard to arts activities these factors are largely unexplored, so this study will investigate the motivations of adolescents, and compare them with parental expectations and goals.

#### *Extra-curricular activity participation and self-esteem*

For parents, one of the most frequently expressed goals of their children's participation in any extra-curricular activity is to provide the circumstances that will foster the development of a positive sense of self-esteem (Dempsey et al., 1993; Ullrich-French & Smith, 2006; Woolger, 1993). *Self-esteem* has been described as a hierarchical concept, in which the sense of self rests on individual perceptions and evaluations of competence across the spectrum of life experiences. For children and adolescents, these have been found to correspond to various sub-categories including *cognitive self-esteem*, *social self-esteem* and *physical self-esteem*, which contribute to an overall sense of *general self-worth* (Harter, 1982).

As an individual's self-esteem appears to be based on perceptions of the self through the impressions of others, it can be a nebulous concept to outline. Generally, positive self-esteem is experienced as personal feelings of confidence and approval, which confer a supportive basis from which individuals can face life's challenges. Negative self-esteem can be characterised by unfavourable self-regard, lower self-

confidence and a sense of dissatisfaction with specific components or with general self-worth (Bowker, Gadbois, & Cornock, 2003; Harter, 1982).

The elements that combine to support the development of a positive or negative sense of self-esteem have been described through research in academic and sporting contexts. Essentially, children and adolescents fare better in terms of feelings of competence, self-esteem and sense of reward when presented with goals that combine challenge with awareness that achievement is a possibility. Activities that present excessive or undemanding expectations appear to frustrate or weaken motivations to succeed, resulting in stress and/or a lack of enjoyment for the participants (Gould et al., 1996; Hellstedt, 1987).

#### *Parental support and pressure*

In support of their children's participation, and their own expectations, parents appear to assume responsibility for providing continuous motivation, evaluation and encouragement. Such involvement manifests through a range of characteristics and intensities so that the combination of diverse levels, in association with children's or adolescents' stress or enjoyment, exhibits curvilinear relationships: a 'U' shaped direction with stress, and an '∩' orientation for enjoyment (Stein, Raedeke, & Glenn, 1999; Woolger, 1993). Parents who are accepting of their children's performance, and who model and facilitate constructive behaviours, tend to promote a positive and rewarding atmosphere for activity participation. The opposite is seen when parents use rewards and punishment as a source of motivation; demonstrate high levels of *directiveness*, defined as the level and type of instructions parents give to children or adolescents; or develop a pathological regard of successes or disappointments as

reflections of themselves, termed the *Achievement by Proxy Distortion* (Anderson, Funk, Elliott, & Hull-Smith, 2003; Scanlan et al., 1989; Tofler, Knapp, & Drell, 1999; Woolger, 1993).

Similar processes have been reported in the context of music learning. Moore et al. (2003) report that children and adolescents are more likely to continue as adult performers if their first teachers created a positive learning environment that did not emphasise a high level of technique. It is possible that demands for an elevated level of skill during the initial stages of learning would diminish enjoyment and confidence, as can be seen when expectations are too high in the area of sports activities (Anderson et al., 2003; Stein et al., 1999; Woolger, 1993). However, if music participation is maintained, students appear to thrive on increased instructional challenge, in addition to opportunities to perform (Moore et al., 2003).

Additionally, children and adolescents learning to play music benefit in terms of self-efficacy and motivation when they enjoy positive parental involvement and support for skill learning, in concert with effective communication, control over their progress, and a sense of partnership between themselves, their parents and their teacher (Creech & Hallam, 2003; O'Neill, 2005). Parents need not be knowledgeable in the area of the activity in order to achieve this, but their support and facilitation of learning and practice does seem to be important (Moore et al., 2003). While the benefits of constructive support are clear, limited parental competence may be beneficial to young musicians by reducing a potential sense of inadequacy through comparison, and avoiding the temptation for parents to teach or coach skills themselves. This may be paralleled in sports activities, where parental modelling and previous sporting experience conveys

only a slight influence on child and adolescent involvement, but parental facilitation and support are important components of participation (Dempsey et al., 1993; Jambor, 1999; Trost et al., 2003).

The effects of motivation and achievement-orientated influences are not uniform, however. Individual differences in response to support or pressure can be a determining factor between rewarding or disheartening experiences in sporting activities (Gould et al., 1996; Scanlan et al., 1989). Young athletes at all levels of sports have been found to detect less pressure and more support than their parents estimate they receive. Athletes who are successful perceive more praise and understanding from early on in their careers. For them, higher parental involvement has been associated with greater progress in terms of skills and overall athletic development (Wuerth et al., 2004). It may be the case that parents who have little or only introductory knowledge about their child's specific activity, are inclined to view progress more favourably than parents with related knowledge would do, thus resulting in high levels of approval. Differences based on gender have also been observed in that mothers direct their support towards praise and understanding; whereas fathers demonstrate more directive behaviour, and this has been found to correlate with perceived pressure (Wuerth et al., 2004).

A further element that influences the self-esteem of children and adolescents participating in sporting activities is their perception of the appraisals of their competence by important others such as parents and peers, known as *reflected appraisals*. Children are accurate in their detection of such appraisals, and are more likely to use them to judge self-competence, particularly where others assess their competence to be low (Bois et al., 2005). Negative appraisals by peers seem to originate, in part, from a perception of

gender appropriateness for sports activities and in music participation. However, when individuals were secure in their choice of musical instrument, it is possible that they were sufficiently motivated to defy the stereotype, thus confirming their decision (Kane, 1988; O'Neill, 2005). Positive reflected appraisals tend to support higher motivation and competence and are reinforced by positive peer and parental relationships (Kimiecik, Horn, & Shurin, 1996; Weiss & Duncan, 1992).

As individuals move away from childhood and towards adolescence, the importance of parental appraisals diminishes while those of peers gain significance (Buhrmester & Furman, 1987; Pomerantz, Ruble, Frey, & Greulich, 1995). As a result, affirmations of competence and acceptance by peers serve to strengthen perceptions of self-competence, confer greater motivation and enjoyment in the activity, reinforce beneficial relationships with team mates, and may act as a buffer against the risk of mistakes during participation, especially while under the scrutiny of other parents and peers (Babkes & Weiss, 1999; Moore et al., 2003; Ullrich-French & Smith, 2006).

Self-evaluation also appears to be subject to developmental processes, as children and adolescents advance personal assessments of their own competence in sports or arts-based activities (Kimiecik et al., 1996). Children's initially optimistic opinion of their competence become increasingly pragmatic as they approach adolescence, with the most acute declines of self-competence noted for reading and instrumental music. Perhaps not surprisingly, interest in these activities declines in a similar way at this time (Freedman-Doan et al., 2000; Wigfield et al., 1997). It has been found in the sporting context that when self-perceptions conflict with the opinion of parents and coaches, feelings of pressure to participate, stress and depression can result (Gould et al., 1996). Conversely,

elite athletes report understanding and enjoying their capabilities and that this contributes to the sense of reward they obtain from their sport (Scanlan et al., 1989).

Parental perceptions of children's musical competence have also been reported as undergoing dynamic change. In this process, as parents realised the extent of their children's talent and abilities, they revised their approach from an initial stage of exploration, through being supportive in the expansion and maturation of skills, to the dedication of resources and effort in pursuit of a musical career (Sosniak, 1997). This change may be due to the fact that parents tend to consider talent and motivation as a combined entity, whereas children perceive them separately (Nicholls, 1989, cited by Dai & Schader, 2002). In this scenario, additional parental involvement would only seem worthwhile when talent and ability became obvious; whereas if children's motivation was low, parents may consider this as an indication of their aptitude, and participation would not warrant serious support (Dai & Schader, 2002).

Perhaps these findings are explained by differences between the expectations of participants in arts activities and those in sporting contexts, by which sports activities could be seen as holding more competitive components. Nevertheless, activities such as music and other arts occupations present competitive opportunities, on both team and individual bases. To date, few other types of activity have been investigated in terms of the recreational context. For example, studies of drama participation have tended to concentrate on the use of these activities as venues for investigating personality factors, giftedness, and for therapeutic purposes (Dutton, 2001). Given this, it may be erroneous to assume that mechanisms identical to the sports context apply in the sphere of arts activities. However this area of research has remained largely unexplored.

*The current study*

This study explored adolescents' participation in arts-based extra-curricular activities, and the expectations, motivations and sources of satisfaction they report. The effects of parents' involvement and input were also examined to investigate the influence they have on the experiences of adolescents.

Although previous studies have explored the number and types of activities in which adolescents are engaged, this question has usually been addressed in an exploratory approach, or as a counterpart of sports participation (Anderson et al., 2003; Feldman & Matjasko, 2007; Fletcher, Nickerson, & Wright, 2003). With regard to activity type, it was expected that most participants would indicate that they were involved in more than one programme, and that the array would involve combinations of arts, interests and sports activities. This would reflect previous findings that adolescents are engaged in assorted combinations of activities (Feldman & Matjasko, 2007). In this study, the number and combination of activities was evaluated in order to investigate potential links with ratings of self-esteem and life satisfaction. It was expected that respondents who were involved in higher numbers of activities would report higher levels of self-esteem and life-satisfaction. The study also explored the possibility that if the number of activities became onerous, life satisfaction would be reduced, producing a curvilinear relationship between activity load and perceived self-esteem and life satisfaction.

The amount of time involved in an activity, as well as the frequency and continuity of participation was also evaluated. It was anticipated that higher self-esteem

and life satisfaction ratings would also be associated with extended, regular and sustained participation.

The expectations of parents involved in adolescents' activities have been the subject of previous research, particularly with regard to sporting programmes (Dempsey et al., 1993; Jambor, 1999). Two aspects of expectations were addressed in this study. The first entailed a survey to ascertain parental expectations of the results of adolescents' participation, and the expectations that adolescents themselves anticipated from an activity. The second aspect involved an investigation of whether adolescents' expectations coincide or differ from those of their parents. While the structure and type of an activity may give parents and adolescents a basic idea of what is likely to be involved, their overall aspirations may diverge as a result of their different perspectives, goals and experiences through activity involvement. Based on previous research, it was expected that parents would entertain long-term goals, with a focus on beneficial future outcomes, whereas adolescents would be concerned with more immediate issues and their performance in the short-term (Shannon, 2006). It was anticipated that differences between expectations would represent a source of pressure or dissatisfaction and would act as a moderating factor, producing lower ratings of self-esteem and life satisfaction from adolescent participants.

In support of adolescents' activity participation, parents' motivations have been identified variously as the pursuit of long-term goals for educational benefit, the acquisition of opportunities for expanded social interaction, or the vicarious enjoyment of their children's success (Dai & Schader, 2002; Tofler et al., 1999). Adolescents' motivation has been considered in terms of the source and the style of task orientation it

brings (Ames & Archer, 1988). Generally, in the sports milieu, intrinsic motivation is associated with greater personal satisfaction in participation, and an advantageous pattern of goal orientation (Brustad, 1992; Woolger, 1993). It was anticipated that similar results would be found from the exploration of arts activities, in that adolescents who demonstrated higher levels of intrinsic motivation would score higher on measures of self-esteem and life satisfaction. Participants with a low intrinsic motivation tendency would be more likely to perceive pressure, and to report lower self-esteem and life satisfaction ratings.

Participation in extra-curricular activities is understood to create conditions which provide adolescents with positive experiences, and which contribute to the development of a positive sense of self-esteem (Bowker, 2006). In the sports setting, excessive parental involvement in the form of motivation, pressure to succeed or directive behaviours has been found to curtail the potential enjoyment experienced by participants (Stein et al., 1999; Woolger, 1993). It is possible that a similar effect exists within the realm of arts activities, and that this is accentuated where stakeholders may be limited to the young learner, the parents and the teacher (Creech & Hallam, 2003). Specifically, this study addressed the question of whether parental involvement, perceived by adolescents as excessive and as a source of pressure, would moderate fulfilment experienced from activities as indicated by lower self-esteem and life satisfaction scores.

The opportunity for adolescents to socialise with peers is one of the factors which parents seek to provide through extra-curricular activities. In addition, peer relationships become increasingly important through confidential friendships and support (Buhrmester & Furman, 1987; Pomerantz et al., 1995). This study explored the influence of peers in

arts activities with respect to self-esteem. It was expected that peer support would be positively associated with general self-esteem and life satisfaction.

## Method

### *Participants*

Requests for approval for the study were made to, and granted by, the Ethics Committee of Carleton University. Permission to recruit participants was sought from 73 arts organisations and individual teachers providing programmes, or individual or group lessons, for visual arts, drama and musical theatre, choral singing and music. Of these 19 agreed to allow recruitment and survey packages were distributed via classes, camps and rehearsals (see Appendix A). Several dance studios and schools were also approached but none agreed to participate.

Parents and adolescents received information pertaining to the voluntary nature of participation and confidentiality, an outline of the study, and signed their consent to participate (see Appendix B). Over 1200 surveys were distributed, and data were collected from 135 parents and 128 adolescents. Related parents (85 female) and adolescents (82 female) were combined into participant pairs, to give  $N = 126$ .

### *Procedure*

Data collection occurred from June to October. Adolescents and parents completed a series of surveys to determine the characteristics of arts activity participation and provision of supportive resources, and reported on their expectations from participation. Parents also completed a survey with respect to their approach to parenting, while adolescents responded to questionnaires regarding their motivational style, perceptions of peer support, perceptions of parental support or pressure, and their ratings of self-esteem and life satisfaction. Parents and children were asked not to share

their responses, to decrease the likelihood that answers would comply with family or peer expectations.

### *Measures*

#### *Self-esteem*

*Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents* (Harter, 1988).

Only one subscale of this measure was used in the present study: General Self Worth (see Appendix C). Participants were presented with 5 statements which identified opposing characteristics in terms of self-worth such as, “Some teenagers are happy with themselves most of the time BUT Other teenagers are often not happy with themselves”. Respondents indicated which side of the statement was either “Really true for me” or “Sort of true for me”. It should be noted that apparent difficulties using the Harter Self-perception scale for self-esteem reduced the number of completed responses for that measure to  $N = 83$ .

A total score, General self-esteem, was computed by taking the average of all 5 statements. This total score showed good internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha = .85).

#### *Life satisfaction*

*Students Life Satisfaction Scale* (Huebner, 1991)

The sense of life fulfillment that adolescents gain through participation in arts and interest-based activities was assessed using the *Students Life Satisfaction Scale* (see Appendix D). Participants recorded their responses to 7 statements such as, “My life is just right”, or “I would like to change many things in my life”. Answers could range from 1 = “Never”, to 5 = “Almost always”, on a 4 point Likert scale.

A new variable, Life satisfaction, was created by summing the scale items. Good internal consistency was shown by Cronbach's  $\alpha = .81$ .

*Activity participation*

*Amherst Health and Activity Study (AHA) Student Survey* (Available at: <http://www.drjamesallis.sdsu.edu/amhersthealthandactivitystudystudentsurvey.pdf>) This measure comprised a survey format which assessed the types of activities in which adolescents were involved at any time, and also features of participation such as the frequency, duration and recent engagement (see Appendix E). For this study the measure was adapted to include questions related to arts activities, in addition to the existing physical activity items. It was recognised that the list was not exhaustive, so provision was made for participants to enter other activities. The measure used a variety of response formats including indications of time, "Yes" or "No" answers, and Likert scales. Example questions are, "Which of the following activities have you been in during the past year outside of school: soccer, track and field, music, art, drama, other".

For this study, extra-curricular activities were defined as sports or arts-based recreational activities provided through organisations. Two new variables, Total arts activities and Total sports activities were created from these data by summing the total number of arts and sports respectively. A third variable, Total activities was created by combining the values of arts and sports totals. In this study, alphas ranged from .61 to .85 for these variables.

Three variables, Frequency of arts participation, Duration arts participation and Recent arts participation, were created using mean scores of adolescents' responses to these items. Adolescents reported the frequency of arts participation by responding to the

question, “How many time did you participate (in a given activity) in the last 7 days?”

For the duration of arts participation variable, using a 3 point scale, respondents indicated whether they had participated in arts activities for “Less than 6 months”, “6 months to a year”, or “More than 1 year”. The recent participation in arts variable asked “Did you participate in (a given) activity in the last 7 days?”, and respondents indicated either, “No”, “Yes”, or “Don’t Know”.

#### *Expectations of activity participation*

Parents and adolescents completed 17 items of their expectations of activity participation in the *Amherst Health and Activity Survey* (see Appendix E). Example questions for parents include “My child will meet new people”, and “My child will do better in school”. The same statements were worded to be appropriate for adolescent participants.

Principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation was used to identify themes within the combined expectations responses of parents and adolescents. Results initially revealed five factors which accounted for proportions of variance as follows: 26.88%, 20.88%, 11.90%, 6.14% and 5.91%. Of these, only the first three were interpretable. Thus, analyses were re-run forcing three factors, which were defined as Future success, Physical benefits and Social benefits, with Eigenvalues of 6.64, 1.97 and 1.54, respectively (see Table 1).

Tests of reliability on the factors supported the three factor model; for future benefits Cronbach’s alpha = .90; for physical benefits Cronbach’s alpha = .83; for social benefits Cronbach’s alpha = .72. In accordance with the factors for parents’ and

adolescents' expectations data, factor scores were also created for parents and adolescents separately, to allow for comparison between their respective expectations<sup>1</sup>.

#### *Peer support*

The *Amherst Health and Activity Survey* (see Appendix E) was also used to assess support of arts activities between peers using items such as, "During a typical week, how often... "Do your friends do physical activities or play sports with you?" "Do your friends do art or play music with you?" Mean scores of adolescents' responses were used to create a composite variable, Peer arts support. Good internal consistency was indicated, Cronbach's alpha = .87.

#### *Intrinsic motivation*

*Intrinsic Leisure Motivation Scale* (Weissinger & Bandalos, 1995). This scale is designed to assess the level of intrinsic motivation in the context of leisure participation (see Appendix F). There are 24 items, which are rated on a five point Likert scale from 1 = "Very strongly disagree" to 7 = "Strongly agree". Example questions are "I feel like I don't get to do what I want with my leisure time", and "I am willing to try the unknown in my leisure time".

The scale yields four factor scores with reasonable internal consistency: Self-determination motivation (Cronbach's alpha = .50), Competence motivation (Cronbach's alpha = .82), Commitment motivation (Cronbach's alpha = .62) and Challenge motivation (Cronbach's alpha = .71). Given the high inter-correlations between these items, a composite measure of Intrinsic motivation was calculated, based on the average of the four individual factors scores.

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<sup>1</sup> Similar factor component structures were found when parent and adolescent data were analysed separately.

*Parental involvement**Parental Involvement in Activities Scale* (Anderson et al., 2003)

Children and adolescents' perceptions of their parents' involvement were assessed using this scale, which presents 24 statements about two aspects of parental input (see Appendix G). Statements pertaining to the regularity and strength of parental involvement include, "My mom or dad try to make sure that I get to my games, practices, lessons, or performances", and the 4 point Likert scale of responses uses the terms, "Strongly disagree", "Disagree", "Agree" or "Strongly agree". The style of approach used by parents was evaluated using statements such as, "My mom or dad let me decide which activities or lessons to sign up for" and respondents indicated if this was the case, "Never", "Sometimes", "Usually" or "Always".

Variables were computed for parental support and parental pressure, as directed in the *Parents' Involvement in Activities Scale*. Reliability for these variables was satisfactory: for parental support Cronbach's alpha = .81, and for parental pressure Cronbach's alpha = .71.

*Parenting approach*

*Alabama Parenting Questionnaire - Short Form* (Elgar, Waschbausch, Dadds, & Sigvaldason (2007)

This scale uses parents' self-report to assess their approach to parenting in terms of three dimensions; positive parenting, inconsistent parenting and poor supervision (see Appendix H). Positive parenting is addressed through statements such as, "You compliment your child after he/she has done something well"; inconsistent discipline is evaluated using statements such as, "You threaten to punish your child and then do not

actually punish him/her”; and poor supervision is addressed via statements such as, “Your child is out with friends you don’t know”. Parents responded to 9 statements in all, using a 5 point rating scale, ranging from 1 = Never to 5 = Always.

New variables were created in accordance with the *Alabama Parenting Questionnaire - Short Form* to produce Positive parenting, Inconsistent parenting, and Poor supervision. Internal consistency was satisfactory and ranged from .73 and .79 in this study.

Table 1. Factor loadings of parents' and adolescents' expectations and (values not included in the factor components)

Item number and name	Component		
	Future success	Physical benefits	Social benefits
las408 Will do better in future career	.79		
las413 Will learn about organising time	.79		
las414 Will have more job or career opportunities	.87		
las415 Will learn about working in a team	.80		
las416 Will learn about being a team leader	.76		
las417 Parent-child relationship will improve	.79		
las407 Will improve health or reduce risk of disease		.79	
las409 Will improve heart and lung fitness		.79	
las410 Will feel better about body		.79	
las411 Will increase energy level		.67	
las412 Body will look better		.72	
las402 Will improve self-esteem			.84
las403 Will meet new people			.80
las404 Will do better at school			.81
las401 Will not feel bored			(.04)
las405 Will build up muscle strength	(.02)		
las406 Will feel less tension and stress	(.17)	(.48)	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

## Results

### *Overview of study*

The purpose of this study was to broaden the scope of research into extra-curricular activities by investigating outcomes for adolescents involved in arts activities. In particular, the study first considered adolescents' reported self-esteem and life satisfaction in regard to the number, duration and frequency of activities, as well as their motivational style. Secondly, as previous research suggests that the choice of activity involvement is generally the result of maternal preference (Howard & Madrigal, 1990), the study investigated the potential effects of differential expectations between parents and adolescents<sup>2</sup>. Thirdly, arts activity participation implies considerable parental facilitation and involvement at a time when adolescents typically seek greater independence. Thus, the study also sought to investigate the effects of parental involvement in terms of adolescents' perceptions of parental support and pressure. Descriptive statistics for participants and arts activities are shown in Table 2.

An alpha level of .05 was used throughout the statistical analyses.

### *Sample characteristics*

The data were assessed for normality, skew, kurtosis and outliers. One extreme outlier was identified and removed. Means and standard deviations of the variables of interest are presented in Table 3.

Demographic information for this sample was not collected. However, the majority of participants were Caucasian. Participating families were also able to afford to enrol and support their children in privately funded arts and sports activities, suggesting

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<sup>2</sup> As the majority of respondents were mothers, the results may more accurately reflect the maternal viewpoint rather than a broadly parental one.

at least a middle-class income. Although surveys were completed by mothers and fathers, mothers represented the majority of parental respondents as shown in Table 2.

Responses from parents and adolescent siblings were received from nine families. In each case, the parents completed a separate survey per adolescent.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for participants and arts activities

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	N
<b>Adolescents</b>					
Male	42				
Female	82				
Age	11	19	14.31	1.74	123
<b>Parent</b>					
Male	36				
Female	85				
Age	37	61	46.94	4.64	104
Total arts activities	0	9	4.40	1.79	126
Total sports activities	0	30	7.53	5.86	126
Total activities	3	36	11.93	6.78	126
Frequency of arts participation	0	14	6.46	2.98	120
Duration of arts participation	0	21	11.32	4.32	107
Recent arts participation	3	60	18.46	11.34	103

Table 3. Means, standard deviations and N of variables of interest

	Mean	SD	N
Expectations of parents			
Future life success	4.14	.66	124
Physical benefits	4.19	.73	124
Social benefits	4.44	.62	124
Expectations of adolescents			
Future life success	3.77	.89	124
Physical benefits	4.03	.77	125
Social benefits	3.93	.81	126
Peer arts support	3.00	1.27	124
Intrinsic motivations			
Commitment motivation	4.78	.83	125
Self determination motivation	4.79	.74	125
Competence motivation	4.99	.97	125
Challenge motivation	4.68	.89	125
Total intrinsic motivation	11.93	6.78	126
Life satisfaction	3.23	.53	124
General self-esteem	3.27	.68	83
Parental involvement			
Perceived parental support	3.46	.42	123
Perceived parental pressure	1.85	.41	124
Parenting			
Positive parenting	4.31	.56	125
Inconsistent parenting	1.96	.68	125
Poor supervision parenting	1.58	.60	125

*Adolescent sample differences on basis of age or sex*

For this study, the term adolescent refers to youth entering, or in, the teenage years. Two age groups were derived from the adolescent sample: ‘younger’ for participants less than 14 years; ‘older’ for participants equal or greater than 14 years old. The value of 14 years was used as it was the sample median and was close to the sample mean. A series of 1 way ANOVAs revealed no significant differences, on the basis of age group, between total arts activities,  $F(1, 123) = 2.90, ns$ ; total sports activities,  $F(1, 123) = 1.54, ns$ ; life satisfaction,  $F(1, 121) = .01, ns$ ; general self-esteem,  $F(1, 81) = 2.58, ns$ ; perceived parental support,  $F(1, 121) = 2.70, ns$ ; perceived parental pressure,  $F(1, 121) = .24, ns$ ; or perceived peer support  $F(1, 121) = 1.69, ns$ .

A second series of 1 way ANOVAs on the same variables revealed no significant differences on the basis of adolescent gender for total sports activities,  $F(1, 124) = .16, ns$ ; total life satisfaction score,  $F(1, 121) = 1.05, ns$ ; general self esteem,  $F(1, 81) = .13, ns$ ; perceived parental support,  $F(1, 121) = .532, ns$ ; perceived parental pressure,  $F(1, 121) = .567, ns$ ; or perceived peer support  $F(1, 121) = 1.10, ns$ .

Significant results were found on the basis of sex for total arts activities,  $F(1, 124) = 8.03, p = .005$ ; frequency of arts participation  $F(1, 118) = 8.30, p = .005$ ; and duration of arts participation  $F(1, 124) = 7.47, p = .007$ .

Despite this finding, the data were analysed together for two reasons. First, the creation of two groups on the basis of sex was not practicable due to the sample size. Secondly, the organisation of the activities did not differentiate on the basis of sex.

### *Correlation analyses*

#### *Arts activities and adolescent well-being*

Correlation analyses were used to assess the relationships between adolescents' self-esteem and life satisfaction responses and the activity variables. It had been hypothesised that individuals who were involved in higher numbers of activities would report higher levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction. As expected, self-esteem was significantly positively correlated with arts totals, sports totals, and total activities. Arts and sports activity participation were also significantly positively correlated.

Life satisfaction was not significantly associated with any of the total activity variables and was therefore dropped from subsequent analyses. Table 4 shows the findings of the correlation analyses.

#### *Activity load and adolescent self-esteem*

In order to assess the possible existence of a curvilinear relationship between the effects of the number of activities, i.e., the activity load, and adolescent well-being, self-esteem was used as an outcome variable instead of the non-related life satisfaction variable. The result of analysis for curve fit for total arts activities was non-significant. Total activities indicated a significant linear relationship with self-esteem,  $R^2 = .125$ ,  $p = .001$ , however more variance was accounted for by a curvilinear relationship,  $R^2 = .142$ ,  $p = .002$ . Results therefore supported the first part of the hypothesis, in that participants who engaged in higher numbers of arts activities recorded higher self-esteem scores. The second part of the hypothesis, that measures of adolescent well-being would show a curvilinear relationship with the number of arts activities, was not supported, but this relationship was found for total activities.

Table 4. Correlation of activity totals and measures of adolescent well-being

	Life satisfaction	Total arts activities	Total sports activities	Total activities
General self-esteem	.626**	.267*	.327**	.353**
Life satisfaction		.133	.045	.074
Total arts activities			.404**	.612**
Total sports activities				.971**

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

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

*Level of activity involvement*

It was hypothesised that higher self-esteem ratings would be also associated with frequent, enduring and recent participation in arts activities. Correlation analyses used to investigate the association between these variables and self-esteem showed that the relationship between duration of participation and self-esteem was non-significant, as was the correlation of rate of participation with general self-esteem. Correlation of frequency of arts participation and self-esteem revealed a significant, positive relationship. Thus, only the first hypothesis in this question was supported, in that children who reported more frequent arts activities recorded higher self-esteem scores. Correlation results are shown in Table 5.

*Parental support and pressure*

Correlation analysis was used to explore the relationship between general self-esteem and parental support and pressure, which indicated a significant positive association only between self-esteem and perceived parental support,  $R = .44, p < .001$ . Thus, while greater perceived parental support was positively related to general self-esteem, perceived parental pressure did not demonstrate the same association. Table 6 shows the results of this analysis.

*Peer support*

Correlations of perceived peer support and self-esteem were not significant, but perceived peer support was significantly positively correlated with total arts activities,  $R = .27, p < .002$ . This latter finding suggests that peer support and contact through arts activities might be related to continued arts participation. The results are displayed in Table 6.

Table 5. Correlation for level of activity involvement

	Frequency of arts participation	Duration of arts participation	Recent arts participation
General self-esteem	.349**	.224	.092
Frequency of arts participation		.785**	.593**
Duration of arts participation			.712**

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

Table 6. Correlation between self-esteem and measures of support and pressure

	Perceived parental support	Perceived parental pressure	Peer arts support	Total arts activities
General self-esteem	.441**	-.162	.119	.267*
Perceived parental support		-.362**	.052	.042
Perceived parental pressure			.038	-.024
Peer arts support				.270**

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

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

*Adolescent intrinsic motivation*

It was anticipated that adolescents who demonstrated higher levels of intrinsic motivation would report higher scores on measures of self-esteem. Participants with lower levels of intrinsic motivation would be more likely to perceive pressure, and to report lower self-esteem. No significant correlation was found between any of the leisure motivation variables and total self-esteem or total arts activities. It was noted that the motivation scores were moderately correlated with each other, possibly accounting for a proportion of the variance. Consequently, correlation between self-esteem and total intrinsic motivation was assessed. This also failed to produce a significant correlation with total self-esteem or with total arts activities.

*Adolescents' and parents' expectations*

With regard to the expectations of activity involvement, it was hypothesised that parents would entertain long-term expectations, with a focus on future outcomes, whereas adolescents would be concerned with more immediate goals and their performance in the short-term. It was also hypothesised that pressure or dissatisfaction would result from differences between parents' and adolescents' expectations, which would act as a moderating factor to produce lower adolescent ratings of self-esteem and life satisfaction.

Using parents' and adolescents' responses on the three factors of expectations, difference scores were calculated for each parent-adolescent pair. The adolescent's score was subtracted from the parent's score to produce three further variables of absolute scores: Difference scores for future benefits, Difference scores for physical benefits and Difference scores for social benefits.

Using the three factors of future life success, physical benefits and social benefits, a series of paired sample  $t$  tests were conducted to look for significant differences between parents' and adolescents' expectations. In all three cases, parents' scores were higher than adolescents' scores. Significant differences were found for future life success,  $t(121) = 3.82, p < .001$ , and social benefits,  $t(123) = 6.47, p < .001$ . The difference for physical benefits approached significance,  $t(122) = 1.85, p = .066$ .

Using the absolute value of the difference scores, correlational analysis revealed that only difference scores for physical benefits was significantly negatively associated with self-esteem, as shown in Table 7.

#### *Parenting approach*

Correlation analysis of the relationship between adolescents' self-esteem and the positive, inconsistent or poor supervision approaches used by parents did not reveal a significant association with positive parenting. Parenting approach was not found to be related to arts activities.

Table 7. Correlation between self-esteem and differences in expectations

	Difference score for future success	Difference score for physical benefits	Difference score for social benefits
General self esteem	-.033	-.327**	-.066
Difference score for future success		.274**	.472**
Difference score for future success			.169

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

*Regression analyses*

Although total arts activities and self-esteem were significantly correlated, it was hypothesised that this relationship could be moderated by factors such as differences between parents' and adolescents' expectations, or by the level of parental support or pressure. In order to investigate this, a series of hierarchical regression analyses was conducted. For each regression analysis, total arts activities was entered at Step 1, followed by the main variable of interest at Step 2 (e.g. perceived parental support) and then the interaction at Step 3 (e.g. perceived parental support x total arts). General self-esteem was the dependent variable, and standardised scores were used throughout the analyses.

*Parental support and pressure*

Regression analysis was used to investigate whether adolescents' perceptions of parental involvement as supportive, or excessive and a source of pressure, would moderate the relationship between general self-esteem and arts totals.

Total arts activities, entered first, accounted for a significant amount of the variance in general self-esteem ( $\beta = .270, p = .014$ ). At Step 2, parental support significantly increased the variance accounted for in self-esteem ( $\beta = .402, p < .001$ ). At Step 3, the amount of variance accounted for was not significantly increased by the addition of the interaction variables. Therefore, both arts activities and parental support were significantly and positively related to general self-esteem, but no moderating effect of parental support or pressure was found. Table 8 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 8. Prediction of self-esteem and moderation effects from parental support and pressure

	Variable	Cumulative R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Change	Beta
Step 1	Total arts activities	.073*	.073*	.270
Step 2	Parental support	.222**	.142**	.402
	Parental pressure			.010
Step 3	Parental support x total arts	.227	.005	-.717
	Parental pressure x total arts			-.298

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

*Parenting approach*

Regression analysis was used to determine whether any of the three variables of parenting approach, positive parenting, inconsistent parenting or poor supervision parenting, moderated the relationship between total arts activities and general self-esteem. None of the variables accounted for a significant amount of the variance in self-esteem and there were no significant arts by parenting interactions.

*Differences in parental and adolescent expectations*

In order to test a possible moderating effect of the differences between the expectations held by parents and adolescents, interaction variables were calculated for total arts activities with future, physical and social difference scores. A regression analysis was conducted using adolescents' reported general self-esteem as the dependent variable. Total arts activities was entered at Step 1, producing a similar result as in previous regression analyses ( $\beta = .279, p = .012$ ). Difference scores for future success, difference scores for physical benefits and difference scores for social benefits were entered at Step 2, with difference scores for physical benefits being the only significant predictor, ( $\beta = -.347, p = .002$ ). Thus, the extent to which parents and adolescents differed in their belief that leisure activity participation would have physical benefits suggested a negative effect on adolescents' self-esteem. At Step 3, the addition of the interaction variables did not increase the variance accounted for in self-esteem. Results are shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Regression results for self-esteem and moderation effects of differences in parental and adolescent expectations

	Variable	Cumulative R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Change	Beta
Step 1	Total arts activities	.078*	.078*	.279
Step 2	Difference scores for future success	.440*	.116*	.012
	Difference scores for physical benefits			-.347
	Difference scores for social benefits			-.011
Step 3	Difference scores for future success x arts	.447	.006	.214
	difference scores for physical benefits x total arts			.032
	difference scores for social benefits x total arts			-.295

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

Some statistical experts have expressed concern as to the use of difference scores, because they are considered to combine measurement error from two scores, each parent's and adolescent's scores in this case, into the difference score. In order to address this concern, and following Williams and Zimmerman (1982), regression analysis was repeated using standardised residuals for the difference scores in place of the difference scores themselves. For this analysis, interaction scores were created as follows: Standardised residuals of difference scores for future success x total arts; Standardised residuals of difference scores for physical benefits x total arts; Standardised residuals of difference scores for social benefits x total arts.

The same procedure for regression analysis was followed with total arts activities entered first producing a significant result ( $\beta = .279, p = .012$ ). At Step 2 the standardised residual scores for difference of future success, physical benefit and social benefits were entered, and residual scores for difference scores in physical benefits was shown to be a significant predictor of self-esteem ( $\beta = .351, p = .005$ ). The three interaction standardised residual scores were entered at Step 3, and no significant interactions were found.

The results produced the same significant predictors as had the actual difference variables: total arts activities was a significant predictor of self-esteem at Step 1; standardised residuals for difference scores for physical benefits were revealed as a significant predictor of self esteem at Step 2. Results are given in Table 10.

Thus, it was concluded that the use of difference scores was an acceptable method to assess parents' and adolescents' expectations in relation to each other and in relation to adolescents' reported self-esteem.

Table 10. Regression results for self-esteem and moderation effects of standardised residuals of difference in parental and adolescent expectations

Variable	Cumulative $R^2$	$R^2$ Change	Beta
Step 1			
Arts total	.078*	.078*	.279
Step 2			
Standardised residual difference scores for future success	.189*	.111*	-.020
Standardised residual difference scores for physical benefits			.351
Standardised residual difference scores for social benefits			-.019
Step 3			
Standardised residual difference scores for future success x arts	.206	.017	.000
Standardised residual difference scores for physical benefits x arts			-.010
Standardised residual difference scores for social benefits x arts			.450

\* $p < .05$

To summarise, the main purpose of this study was to explore the outcomes of adolescents' arts-based extra-curricular activity participation and to also investigate the outcomes of their parents' involvement. While arts activity participation was significantly predictive of greater self-esteem, none of the additional variables of interest moderated this relationship.

## Discussion

Research into the extra-curricular activities of adolescents has typically concentrated on sports programmes, with arts activities receiving less attention or included only as a supplement to sports research. As an additional component, the period of adolescence is characterised by a tendency towards increasing self-reliance and independence, yet the realities of arts activity participation mean that parental involvement is essential. The goal of this study was to examine arts activity participation in terms of adolescents' self-reported self-esteem and life satisfaction. In addition, the influence of parents' involvement was explored with respect to the role it plays in moderating adolescent outcomes via parental support or pressure, or through differences between parents' and adolescents' expectations.

### *Arts activity participation*

The results supported the expectation that participation in extra-curricular activities in general, and in arts activities in particular, would be positively associated with adolescent self-esteem. This result is in line with previous findings that suggest that extracurricular activity participation promotes positive self-esteem (Bowker, 2006). The complementary hypothesis for life-satisfaction was not supported.

Higher numbers of arts activities were found to predict higher levels of self-esteem. This, along with the positive relationship between the total number of activities and self-esteem, suggests that taking part in arts activities constitutes a rewarding experience for adolescents.

The frequency of activity participation during the week was also positively associated with self-esteem. This is not surprising given the association between arts

activities and self-esteem, but frequency may also promote and reinforce the beneficial effects of participation. It is possible that constant restatement or re-experiencing of the positive links between arts participation and self-esteem may have effects over and above the initial association itself.

In terms of the survey elements of the study, the findings of Feldman and Matjasko (2007) were repeated here, in that adolescents reported a varied array of activity involvement. The respondents in this study were able to blend sports and arts activities and to combine participation in a substantial number of programmes.

However, results for questions regarding the activity load for adolescents suggest that there may be an optimum range associated with positive effects on self-esteem. Adolescents engaged in numbers of activities above or below this range responded with significantly lower ratings of self-esteem. The curvilinear relationship found between total activities and self-esteem reflects Woolger's (1993) proposal of an optimum level of activity involvement. This argues towards the divergent effects of insufficient, or conversely, excessive, demands on time and the concomitant level of interest and engagement. If this were the case, activity levels lower than the optimum could be unstimulating and possibly encourage apathy. Excessively high levels may bring stress and pressure, with an imbalance between commitments, sense of control and sufficient restorative opportunities.

Overall, findings that the number of arts activities and also the total number of activities both predicted self-esteem suggest that adolescents enjoy participation, and that parents' aspirations for the promotion of positive self-esteem results are well placed.

*Parental factors*

Parental involvement in arts activities for adolescents appears to present an advantageous profile. Adolescents' perception of parents' supportive involvement was a significant predictor of self-esteem, while perceived parental pressure was not associated with self-esteem. The results suggest that the presence of parents represents a positive feature of arts activities for adolescents, but also that the benefits to self-esteem come from arts activities irrespective of the contribution of parents' involvement. This may be because, unlike many sports activities where parents are in attendance as spectators during practices and competitions, parents may only be present during performances at the culmination of sessions or camp activities. Therefore, their awareness of ongoing progress and challenges may be reduced and with it their opportunity to comment, advise or coach, all of which could otherwise be perceived by adolescents as pressure. Further to this, parents' only source of progress reports may come solely from their child, so they may receive limited or only positive information.

*Parenting approach*

The approach to parenting used by the parents of adolescents in arts activities did not predict or moderate the relationship between arts activities and self-esteem. This may further suggest that while the presence of parents is generically advantageous to adolescents' self-esteem, it has less bearing on the specific context of arts activities. It is also possible that the measure was not able to capture the characteristics of the relationships between parents and adolescents in this population.

*Peer support*

Peer support was significantly associated with arts totals, suggesting that positive peer relationships are part of the benefits of arts activity participation. The measure was not very refined, but the items did address peer support as a bilateral process. This may be illustrative of characteristics of arts activity participation that distinguish it from sports: perhaps adolescents experience greater peer support in pursuit of a creative, constructive process than within the more competitive area of sports. It may be the case that the format of frequent sports contests creates a different context of peer support, with different criteria. Nonetheless, competitive processes are a feature of arts activities, such as auditions or arts-based competitions, albeit that they occur less frequently than in sports, and this may also affect the complexion and function of peer relationships.

It is also possible that, if arts involvement includes longer-term projects and goals and, therefore, a higher continuity of participation, this might also lead to sustained and enduring relationships with peers which are based on common interests and shared positive experiences. Furthermore, involvement in creative processes may bring additional qualities to peer relationships which could be unique to the arts activity milieu.

An additional point to consider is the fact that there were almost twice as many girls as boys who reported participating in arts activities. It may be that this factor is related to adolescents' positive relationships with their parents and peers. Although the arts programmes did not differentiate on the basis of gender, further research to explore the implications in terms of friendships and responses to the activity programmes in general would be valuable.

*Intrinsic motivations*

The results of the study did not find any association between arts activities, self-esteem and intrinsic motivation. A possible explanation for this is that adolescents involved in arts activities are already highly intrinsically motivated, thus reducing the possibility of finding differences within the sample. This might be in contrast to sporting situations, where activity enjoyment is often connected to external goals such as winning a game. It is also possible that the measure did not address the most applicable features of motivations with respect to arts participation.

*Adolescents' and parents' expectations*

Parents had higher expectations than adolescents for all three categories; however, these differences did not translate into reduced adolescent self-esteem except in the case of physical benefits. With regard to the means of expectations, the values for parents and adolescents were very close, although future success and social benefits were both significantly different, suggesting that perhaps the differences were more of a statistical nature than of practical importance. The result suggests that the greater the difference in physical expectations, the lower the self-esteem of adolescents, but this also raises more points of enquiry. Perhaps it is the case that, as the mean value for parents' expectations was higher with less variance than adolescents', parents were more confident in their expectations and anticipated greater benefit. Furthermore, it may be that parents recognise the physical aspects of arts activities, or anticipate the benefits for adolescents of simply being removed from the television (Goldfield et al., 2007).

From the perspective of the adolescents, it is possible that they consider physical benefits as only coming from sports activities, which might originate in the messages

used to promote health and well-being. Moreover, if adolescents do not see arts activities as a source of physical benefits, further investigation might reveal the advantages that they do perceive.

#### *Limitations and future directions*

This study addressed adolescents' arts activities and the potential outcomes and influences. There were several limitations associated with this study, and these, in conjunction with aspects of the findings, suggest areas for future research.

One practical limitation relates to the seasonality of activities in Canada (McHale et al., 2001). This needs to be borne in mind as some pastimes, particularly sporting activities, may only be viable at certain times of year. Additionally, the amount of time spent in arts activities varied depending on whether the participant was enrolled in specialised summer camps, or the activity had an annual programme schedule. For example, although dance schools did not take part in the study, some respondents mentioned that they would have had higher number of hours in dance, except that the school was closed for the summer. This may, in part, account for the fact that no dance schools agreed to permit recruitment.

Additionally, this study used a cross-section design, and so the responses of adolescents and parents only provide evidence for a particular period of time, and cannot account for any changes in outcomes in the long term. The results of the study were mostly correlational, which implies ambiguity about the direction of effect. Thus, it could be argued that adolescents who report high self-esteem might also feel confident and would enjoy participating, and participating often, in arts activities.

In large part, the measures that were used in this research were adapted from the area of sports and leisure research. While these were adequate for data collection, the development of measures orientated towards arts activities would permit research to assess aspects of participation that are germane to the arts setting alone.

At the same time, previous research from sports can be useful as a guide with respect to potential theoretical starting points. The purpose need not necessarily be to compare sports and arts activities directly; instead sports research can serve as an initial frame of reference. The contexts of each probably differ in obvious and subtle ways and research in these areas together could also contribute to the understanding of extra-curricular activities in general. This would particularly be the case when adolescents blend their activities, presumably to gain benefits across the range of sports and arts.

This study was not intended to evaluate the experiences of sports versus arts participation, but in some respects this may yield valuable information. For example, arts activity participation may mean that adolescents need to hold longer-term objectives as skills and techniques may be slower to acquire than in sports. Future research would be able to examine whether this implies a difference in the expectations of arts participants or those who are engaged in many, varied activities.

The study addressed arts participation in terms of the number of activities but there may be additional information to be gleaned from research into the specific benefits. Qualitative studies may have to be undertaken first in order to establish the criteria and vocabulary that would effectively describe adolescents' and parents' experiences. This would allow measures for future research to be aimed towards this

distinctive area of extra-curricular activity, and would provide a basis for the development of arts-specific quantitative measures for future use.

This scenario could explain why the *Students Life Satisfaction Scale* (Huebner, 1991) produced non-significant results in association with arts participation, if the items in the scale were not specific enough to reflect the arts activities experience. Additionally, given that adolescence is a period of change and ambiguity, the scale items may not have adequately represented that, or adolescents may have felt that the measure did not accommodate a sense of uncertainty.

Further research is needed to investigate the effects of the intensified parent and adolescent contact which results from parental facilitation of activity participation. Both positive and negative outcomes should be assessed to ascertain if a highly supportive model of parenting is typical within the arts community. Although the results of this study suggest a positive profile for parent-adolescent interactions, continued investigation of this relationship is important because previous work has shown that young athletes perceive less pressure and identify more support than their parents consider they receive (Wuerth et al., 2004), and the detrimental effects of parental pressure have been shown in academic and sports research (Woolger, 1993)..

Considering the consistent picture of support found in this study, it may be that parents also perceive higher levels of support than pressure. High adolescent self-esteem might also colour perceptions of support and pressure, promoting a positive ambience. To this end, identifying a more pertinent, descriptive terminology, relating to adolescents' perceptions of arts participation, would allow greater accuracy in assessing the magnitude and mechanisms of parents' presence and involvement.

A case for additional research can also be made with regards to several aspects of this study. First, research is required to explore the possibility that arts activity participants demonstrate a high level of intrinsic motivation. Studies could include participants who concentrate on either arts or sports, as well as those who engage in both types of activities. This research may also help to refine the assessment of motivation orientations for adolescents generally.

Future research may also require the development of a parenting measure which will enable continued investigation of the positive approach shown here within the arts context. Potential modifications to reflect the positive parenting approach were echoed by several of the parent participants who commented that punishment was not within their disciplinary remit.

The implications of research on a technologically adept population bring specific challenges in relation to assessing the use of recreational time. The tendency for adolescents to multi-task their recreational time, e.g., listening to music while using the computer and near-simultaneously communicating via internet chat and texting, can also lead to challenges in assessing the way they spend their time (Moscovitch, 2007). For example, in this study, listening to music seemed to occupy much of adolescents' time, but it could be argued that this was done in conjunction with other activities. Moreover, technological innovation and related trends can develop quickly, so that the advent of quasi-virtual games may mean some sports and arts activities have digital and actual versions, which will require differentiation for future research. This may relate particularly to arts activities, where considerable disparity between virtual and genuine musical ability and technique might be observed.

Two issues arise in relation to considerations regarding future research. The first concerns the way adolescents negotiate their time-use, and applies particularly to those who are engaged in many activities. Research into the pressures of time-use, including strategies for the way it is organised, budgeted, traded and facilitated could be revealing in both this regard, and the way that activity participation is supported by parents. Included in this research should be aspects of the benefits of learning such skills, as well as the pressures, costs, sacrifices and trade-offs for adolescents.

Pressures of time appeared to relate directly to difficulties in the methodology of collecting data. Given the rate of return in this study, it may be that completing the questionnaires appeared to be an onerous task to adolescents and their parents. A possible solution to this issue may come through the use of technology to the benefit of the researcher. Perhaps using instant messaging or texting to send study questions at intervals would evoke a higher response rate. The number of items in the study would probably need to be reduced if this method was adopted, but it may produce data from a larger, more representative sample.

The second issue is one that has also occurred in sports research, and that is the problem of generalisation. For example, the effects of participation in visual and fine arts may differ from those of musical theatre. Additionally, arts and sports activities are not the only occupations in adolescents' extra-curricular time, with options including work around the home, hobbies, pastimes, and social activities (Feldman & Matjasko, 2007; Fletcher et al., 2003; McHale et al., 2001). This brings challenges when considering collectively such a variety of pursuits as extra-curricular activities. In order to resolve this and identify differences or similarities in extra-curricular arts activities, future

research will need to investigate specific segments of arts activities as well as individual and group lessons and activities.

Certain activities may also be problematic to categorise for future research. One example is mandated out-of-school volunteering, which might not be considered a pastime and may be confounded with volunteering through choice. A second area involves part-time work, which is not generally considered as economically essential and may be an activity of choice, but does not readily conform to the rubric of recreation.

Longitudinal studies could be used to address some of these issues. For example, incorporating assessments of factors of well-being before enrolment, as well as throughout activity involvement and after discontinuation, would help to establish the order of effects. This would also enable the assessment of outcomes that were considered lost after arts activity participation was concluded. Research over the long-term would permit the examination of characteristics of participation such as perseverance in specific activities and future aspirations. Along with this, assessments by teachers of adolescents with career-potential talent versus recreational talent would broaden the evaluation of the outcomes of arts participation.

The use of measures of health and physical fitness in longitudinal studies would establish whether extra-curricular activity, regardless of type, brings benefits for health. This might also account for the differences in parents' and adolescent's expectations with regard to physical benefits, and open another avenue towards promoting adolescent health and well-being.

Longitudinal studies would permit the potential effects of developmental changes to be investigated in greater detail with respect to relationships with parents and peers.

Their progress and change could also be evaluated using adolescent ratings of satisfaction with parents' involvement and with peer relationships, to determine if this varies across the developmental spectrum within arts involvement.

Although no demographic information was collected, it is reasonable to suppose that the sample consisted of those who could afford to pay for the arts activities. Future research could also involve the evaluation of potentially beneficial effects for youth in poverty, where there may be very limited access to arts programmes. Also of value would be studies to assess the usefulness of arts activities to new Canadians as a tool for relating to prior events, or to introduce and support cultural experiences.

For youth in poverty or at risk of school drop-out, access to activities that are associated with positive self-esteem could mean the difference between success and failure at the crucial, early stages of developing independence (Mancini & Huebner, 2003; McHale et al., 2001). Arts activities could also assist and support troubled youth to deal with problems, work through disconcerting experiences, or simply provide a mode of enjoyment and creativity within a personal realm that may offer few such opportunities. Moreover, arts activity involvement may open opportunities to learn pragmatic life skills that are associated with extra-curricular activities, such as group co-operation, personal discipline, leadership, self-expression, time management, and commitment to an activity. Additionally, the provision of arts activities would complement the range of opportunities for adolescents, as not everyone is talented or inclined towards sports. The inclusion of measures of social and academic behaviours could help to ascertain whether the protective effects of extra-curricular activities were

perpetuated through the arts, as a consequence of the demands of learning, practice, rehearsal and performance (Mahoney et al., 2005).

Extra-curricular arts experiences may supplement or substitute for reduced or limited experiences offered by schools programmes, particularly in the face of budget cuts and the current emphasis on academic achievement. The development of creative talents could be an important step in promoting inventiveness, innovation and advancement.

### *Conclusion*

In conclusion, the results of this study suggest that adolescents who participate in arts-based extra-curricular activities experience positive effects in terms of their self-esteem. These outcomes appear to be accompanied by supportive and positive relationships with parents and with peers in the same activities. Overall, this suggests that parents' expectations and motivations for enrolling and supporting adolescents in arts activities are well-placed.

As arts activities have received less research attention in the past, this result can be seen as encouraging for several reasons. First, in terms of recognising the contribution that arts activities make to the lives of adolescents and their parents. Secondly, in establishing that arts activities constitute another realm in which the lives of adolescents, and their relationships with parents and peers, can be explored. Thirdly, continued arts activity research would help to balance the picture of adolescents' arts activities in general.

The positive effects of arts programmes found in this study, and the outcomes for parents, may be of benefit to under-privileged or at-risk youth. Further research would

enable the development of arts activities for this cohort, and the assessment of their value.

If so, this research could eventually be extended into intervention and supportive programmes which could reach and assist a greater proportion of the adolescent population.

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Appendices

Appendix A

*Participating programmes and arts teacher organisations*

Amulet Studios

Broadway Bound

Gloucester Music Teacher's Association

Monart

National Association of Teachers of Singing

Nepean Creative Arts Centre

Ontario Registered Music Teachers Association

Ottawa Conservatory

Ottawa Folklore Centre

Ottawa Regional Youth Choir

Ottawa School of Art

Ottawa School of Speech and Drama

Ottawa Youth Orchestra Academy

Salamander Shakespeare Camp

Suzart

Suzuki foundation

Appendix B

*Participant information letter and consent forms*

Adolescents' Arts-based Activities Study  
Anne Bowker (Supervisor) & Belinda Boekhoven (Graduate Student)  
Department of Psychology, Carleton University

Dear Parent,

I am studying for a Masters degree in Psychology at Carleton University and I am interested in the effects of participation in arts activities for children and adolescents. Your child's arts activity organisation has agreed to let me present the Children and Adolescents' Arts-based Activities Study, and to ask permission for your son or daughter to take part. I would also like to invite the parent most often involved in this activity to participate as well.

The purpose of this research is to study youth participation in arts activities such as music, drama or fine arts. Recent research has concentrated on sports activities, but arts programmes have yet to receive the same attention. However, many children and adolescents are involved in arts activities, and I would like to investigate the influence this may have on their well-being. I would also like to explore the effects of parental involvement for children and adolescents. This research will help to inform programme organisers of the value of arts based activities, and may provide evidence to promote access to programmes for youth and adolescents who may otherwise not have such an opportunity.

Adolescents and parents will complete questionnaires about their arts and leisure activities, what they expect, the reasons they are involved, and their general sense of well-being. Adolescents' questionnaires will take about 15-20 minutes to complete; parents' questionnaires will take about 10-15 minutes. Completed responses will be returned in sealed envelopes.

All information and responses collected for study will be confidential. Participation by parents or children in the study is completely voluntary and can be discontinued at any time. As the purpose is to build knowledge about the experience of being involved in extra-curricular activities, all the information will be used collectively, and so no individual interventions or treatment will be involved.

If you would like to learn more about the positive effects of participating in extra-curricular activities, the following books and websites may interest to you:

- Books     *A parent's guide to building resilience and teens: Giving your children roots and wings.* (K.R. Ginsburg & M.M. Jablow, 2006).  
            *Organised activities as contexts of development: extracurricular activities, after-school and community programs.* (J. L. Mahoney, R. W. Larson & J. S. Eccles, (Eds.), 2005).
- Websites *Extracurricular Activity: How does participation encourage positive youth development?* Randy Brown, Ph.D. Area Extension Specialist Children, Youth, and Family Team, University of Nebraska.  
<http://www.unce.unr.edu/publications/files/cy/other/fs9932.pdf>  
*Extracurricular Activities*, in Teen Health, The Nemours Foundation, USA  
[http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/school\\_jobs/school/involved\\_school.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/school_jobs/school/involved_school.html)

If you have questions or are concerned about participation in this study, please contact

- me:                     Belinda Boekhoven  
                            Email: [abboekho@connect.carleton.ca](mailto:abboekho@connect.carleton.ca)
- or my supervisor:   Dr. Anne Bowker, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Psychology, Carleton University  
                            Tel: 613-520-2600 x 8218  
                            Email: [anne\\_bowker@carleton.ca](mailto:anne_bowker@carleton.ca)
- or:                     Dr. Adelle Forth, Associate Chair, Department of Psychology, Carleton University  
                            Tel: 613-520-2600 x1267  
                            Email: [adelle\\_forth@carleton.ca](mailto:adelle_forth@carleton.ca)

If you have concerns regarding the ethics of this study, please contact:

Dr. Avi Parush, Chair of the Carleton University Ethics Committee for Psychological Research, Department of Psychology, Carleton University  
Tel: 613-520-2600 x 6026  
Email: [avi\\_parush@carleton.ca](mailto:avi_parush@carleton.ca)

If you and your child agree to take part in this study on arts activities and their effects, please complete the three attached permission forms and the questionnaires. Please return the forms and questionnaires at the next class or practice.

Thank you for reading this letter. I hope that you and your child will be able to participate.

Yours sincerely,

Belinda Boekhoven (Graduate student)



Adolescents' Arts-based Activities Study  
Anne Bowker (Supervisor) & Belinda Boekhoven (Graduate Student)  
Department of Psychology, Carleton University

Form for parent's consent to participate

I understand that I have been asked to participate in the Adolescents' Arts and Activities study. I know that if I participate in this study, I will be asked to complete some questionnaires about the extra-curricular activities my child is involved in, and about how I am involved.

I know that I can take my time to complete the questionnaires, although they usually take about 15 minutes. I also know that I do not have to answer questions I do not want to, and that I can stop taking part at any time.

I know that my answers will be kept private and not be shown to anyone, except Belinda Boekhoven and her supervisor, Dr. Bowker. My answers will be identified by a participant number, and my name will not be used.

If I have any questions or problems completing this survey I can contact:

Belinda Boekhoven  
Email: [abboekho@connect.carleton.ca](mailto:abboekho@connect.carleton.ca)

or:

Dr. Anne Bowker, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Psychology,  
Carleton University  
Tel: (613-520-2600, x8218)  
Email: [anne\\_bowker@carleton.ca](mailto:anne_bowker@carleton.ca)

or:

Dr. Adelle Forth, Associate Chair, Department of Psychology, Carleton  
University  
Tel: 613-520-2600 x1267  
Email: [adelle\\_forth@carleton.ca](mailto:adelle_forth@carleton.ca)

If I have concerns regarding the ethics of this study, I can contact:

Dr. Avi Parush, Chair of the Carleton University Ethics Committee for  
Psychological Research, Department of Psychology, Carleton University  
Tel: 613-520-2600 (x6026)  
Email: [avi\\_parush@carleton.ca](mailto:avi_parush@carleton.ca)

I Agree \_\_\_\_\_ No Thank You \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Adolescents' Arts-based Activities Study  
Anne Bowker (Supervisor) & Belinda Boekhoven (Graduate Student)  
Department of Psychology, Carleton University

Form for adolescent's consent to participate

I know that if I participate in this study, I will be asked to complete some questionnaires about myself, the extra-curricular activities I am involved in, and about how my parents are involved.

I know that I can take my time to complete the questionnaires, although they usually take about 20 minutes. I also know that I do not have to answer questions I do not want to, and that I can stop taking part at any time.

I know that my answers will be kept private and not be shown to anyone, except Belinda Boekhoven and her supervisor, Dr. Bowker. My answers will be identified by a participant number, and my name will not be used.

If I have any questions or problems completing this survey I can contact:

Belinda Boekhoven  
Email: [abboekho@connect.carleton.ca](mailto:abboekho@connect.carleton.ca)

or:

Dr. Anne Bowker, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Psychology,  
Carleton University  
Tel: (613-520-2600, x8218)  
Email: [anne\\_bowker@carleton.ca](mailto:anne_bowker@carleton.ca)

or:

Dr. Adelle Forth, Associate Chair, Department of Psychology, Carleton  
University  
Tel: 613-520-2600 x1267  
Email: [adelle\\_forth@carleton.ca](mailto:adelle_forth@carleton.ca)

If I have concerns regarding the ethics of this study, I can contact:

Dr. Avi Parush, Chair of the Carleton University Ethics Committee for  
Psychological Research, Department of Psychology, Carleton University  
Tel: 613-520-2600 (x6026)  
Email: [avi\\_parush@carleton.ca](mailto:avi_parush@carleton.ca)

I Agree \_\_\_\_\_ No Thank You \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix C

*Self-perception profile*

For each statement, please choose which side (A or B) applies to you.  
 Choose only one side of each statement.  
 Then mark whether it is “Sort of true for you’ or ‘Really true for you’.

Here is an example:

	Really true for me	Sort of true for me	A	But	B	Sort of true for me	Really true for me
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers like ice-cream		Other teenagers prefer fresh fruit	<input type="checkbox"/>	X

	Really true for me	Sort of true for me	A	But	B	Sort of true for me	Really true for me
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are often disappointed with themselves		Other teenagers are pretty pleased with themselves	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers don't like the way they are leading their life		Other teenagers do like the way they are leading their life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are happy with themselves most of the time		Other teenagers are often not happy with themselves	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers like the kind of person they are		Other teenagers often wish they were someone else	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are very happy with being the way they are		Other teenagers wish they were different	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix D

*Life satisfaction scale*

This questionnaire is to find out how you feel about the way your life is going. Please respond to each item below by circling the number that best describes how you feel about your life.

Please use the following scale:

1 = Never

2 = Sometimes

3 = Often

4 = Almost always

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Almost always
1. My life is going well	1	2	3	4
2. My life is just right	1	2	3	4
3. I would like to change many things in my life	1	2	3	4
4. I wish I had a different kind of life	1	2	3	4
5. I have a good life	1	2	3	4
6. I have what I want in life	1	2	3	4
7. My life is better than most kids'	1	2	3	4

## Appendix E

*Leisure Activities Survey – Adolescents*

## Section 1:

Which of the following activities have you been in during the past year outside of school?

Please complete or circle the answer for each item that best applies to you.

	Do you participate in this activity?			How long have you participated in this activity?			Did you participate in activity in the last seven days?			How many times in the last 7 days?	How long, on average, did you participate in the activity?
	No	Sometimes	Regularly	Less than 6 months	6 months to 1 year	More than 1 year	No	Yes	Don't know		
1 Aerobics or fitness class	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
2 Archery	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
3 Art (painting, drawing, sculpture, collage)	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
4 Baseball or softball	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
5 Basketball	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
6 Bicycling or exercise cycling	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
7 Bowling	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
8 Choir/singing	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
9 Computer/video games (Wii, Xbox, Nintendo)	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
10 Internet (Facebook, MSN messenger, My space,	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours

## Section 1 continued...

	Do you participate in this activity?			How long have you participated in this activity?			Did you participate in activity in the last seven days?			How many times in the last 7 days?	How long, on average, did you participate in the activity?
	No	Sometimes	Regularly	Less than 6 months	6 months to a year	More than 1 year	No	Yes	Don't Know		
11 Crafts/hobbies (sewing, model building, collections)	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
12 Curling	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
13 Dance classes (ballet, jazz, modern, tap)	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
14 Dancing (social, recreational)	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
15 Dramatic arts (acting, improvisation, musical drama)	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
16 Fencing	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
17 Field hockey	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
18 Figure skating	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
19 Football	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
20 Frisbee games	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
21 Gardening, yard work, mowing	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
22 Golf	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
23 Gymnastics, tumbling, trampoline	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours

## Section 1 continued...

	Do you participate in this activity?			How long have you participated in this activity?			Did you participate in activity in the last seven days?			How many times in the last 7 days?	How long, on average, did you participate in the activity?
	No	Sometimes	Regularly	Less than 6 months	6 months to a year	More than 1 year	No	Yes	Don't Know		
24 Hiking	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
25 Homework, studying	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
26 Housecleaning	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
27 Ice hockey	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
28 Jumping rope/skipping teams	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
29 Laser tag	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
30 Lacrosse	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
31 Listen to music	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
32 Martial arts (karate, judo)	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
33 Play in a band, group, orchestra	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
34 Play computer/video games	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
35 Play a musical instrument	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
36 Photography	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
37 Racquet sport: tennis, squash etc.	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
38 Reading (not for school)	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
39 Ringette	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours

## Section 1 continued...

	Do you participate in this activity?			How long have you participated in this activity?			Did you participate in activity in the last seven days?			How many times in the last 7 days?	How long, on average, did you participate in the activity?
	No	Sometimes	Regularly	Less than 6 months	6 months to a year	More than 1 year	No	Yes	Don't Know		
40	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
41	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
42	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
43	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
44	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
45	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
46	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
47	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
48	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
49	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
50	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
51	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
52	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
53	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
54	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours

Section 1 continued...

	Do you participate in this activity?			How long have you participated in this activity?			Did you participate in activity in the last seven days?			How many times in the last 7 days?	How long, on average, did you participate in the activity?
	No	Sometimes	Regularly	Less than 6 months	6 months to a year	More than 1 year	No	Yes	Don't Know		
55	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
56	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
57											
	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
58											
	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
59	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
60	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
61	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
62	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
63	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours
64	0	1		0	1	2	0	1	2	_____ times	_____ hours

Section 2:

How much do you agree with the following statements?

Please circle one number for each item.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
1 At home there are enough supplies and pieces of sports equipment (like balls, bicycles, skates) to use for physical activity.	1	2	3	4	5
2 At home there are enough art supplies and instruments to play with.	1	2	3	4	5

Section 3:

How often has a member of your household:

Please circle one number for each type of person.

	None	Once	Sometimes	Almost daily	Daily	Don't Know
1 Encouraged you to do physical activities or play sports?						
A. Father	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Mother	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Other children	0	1	2	3	4	5
2 Done a physical activity or played sports with you?						
A. Father	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Mother	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Other children	0	1	2	3	4	5
3 Provided transportation to a place where you can do physical activities or play sports?						
A. Father	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Mother	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Other children	0	1	2	3	4	5
4 Watch you participate in physical activity or sports?						
A. Father	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Mother	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Other children	0	1	2	3	4	5
5 Encouraged you to engage in music or art?						
A. Father	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Mother	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Other children	0	1	2	3	4	5
6 Done arts or played music with you?						
A. Father	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Mother	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Other children	0	1	2	3	4	5

## Section 3 continued...

	None	Once	Sometimes	Almost daily	Daily	Don't Know
7 Provided transportation to a place where you can do arts or play music?						
A. Father	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Mother	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Other children	0	1	2	3	4	5
8 Watched you participate in concerts or art shows?						
A. Father	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Mother	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Other children	0	1	2	3	4	5
9 Told you that physical activity is good for his or her health?						
A. Father	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Mother	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Other children	0	1	2	3	4	5
10 Encouraged you to practice your new skills?						
A. Father	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Mother	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Other children	0	1	2	3	4	5

## Section 4:

This section is about some possible benefits of regular leisure activities. Beside each item, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement:

Please circle one number for each item.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
1 I will not feel bored	1	2	3	4	5
2 I will improve my self-esteem	1	2	3	4	5
3 I will meet new people	1	2	3	4	5
4 I will do better at school	1	2	3	4	5
5 I will build up my muscle strength	1	2	3	4	5
6 I will feel less tension and stress	1	2	3	4	5
7 I will improve my health or reduce my risk of disease	1	2	3	4	5
8 I will do better in my future career	1	2	3	4	5
9 I will improve my heart and lung fitness	1	2	3	4	5
10 I will feel better about my body	1	2	3	4	5
11 I will increase my energy level	1	2	3	4	5
12 My body will look better.	1	2	3	4	5
13 I will learn about organizing my time	1	2	3	4	5
14 I will have more job or career opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
15 I will learn about working in a team	1	2	3	4	5
16 I will learn about being a leader	1	2	3	4	5
17 My relationship with my parent(s) will improve	1	2	3	4	5

## Section 5:

During a typical week how often...

Please circle one number.

	None	Once	Sometimes	Almost daily	Daily	Don't Know
1 Do you encourage your friends to do physical activities or organize games or sports?	0	1	2	3	4	5
2 Do your friends encourage you to do sports or physical activities?	0	1	2	3	4	5
3 Do your friends do physical activities or play sports with you?	0	1	2	3	4	5
4 Do you encourage your friends to do art or play music with you?	0	1	2	3	4	5
5 Do your friends encourage you to do art or play music?	0	1	2	3	4	5
6 Do your friends do art or play music with you?	0	1	2	3	4	5

## Appendix F

*Leisure motivation scale*

Directions: This survey is intended to find you how you feel about the things you do in your leisure time. Please respond by circling the number that most agrees with how you feel.

Please use the following scale:

1 = Very strongly disagree

5 = Agree

2 = Strongly disagree

6 = Strongly agree

3 = Disagree

7 = Very strongly agree

4 = Neutral

---

	Very strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very strongly agree
1. I feel in control of my life during my leisure time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I am as dedicated to leisure as I am to other parts of my life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I know what I want from my leisure time activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I strive to be effective in my leisure pursuits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I like leisure time activities that are a little beyond my ability	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I feel like I don't get to do what I want with my leisure time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I am aware that I feel good about my ability to use my leisure time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. My leisure time activities absorb all of my attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. My friends think that I am skilled at leisure time activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I like a challenge in my leisure time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. My leisure time activities are a central part of my life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Leisure time is important in my life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Leisure is OK, but other things are more important in my life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I am willing to try the unknown in my leisure time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. I feel good when my leisure time activities challenge my skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. My participation in leisure time activities makes me feel competent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. The thing I like best about my leisure time is that I make free choices	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. I don't enjoy leisure time if it challenges my skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. I am not willing to compromise on my leisure time activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Leisure is what I am best at	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. I seem to know what will make my leisure time satisfying	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. The things I do in my leisure time make me feel good about my abilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. My leisure time activities make me feel like an effective person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. I listen to my own needs when deciding how to use my leisure time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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## Appendix G

*Parents' involvement scale*

This questionnaire is to find out how you feel about the involvement of your parents in your activity. Please respond to each item below by circling the number that best describes how you feel about your life.

## Part 1

For Part 1, please use the following scale:

1 = Strongly disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Agree

4 = Strongly agree

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. My mom or dad encourage me to sign up for activities outside of school, like sports or clubs	1	2	3	4
2. When I tell my mom or dad that I want to sign up for an activity or lesson, they think it's a good idea.	1	2	3	4
3. My mom or dad push me to sign up for activities or lessons that I'm not sure I want to.	1	2	3	4
4. My mom or dad give me special gifts or money so that I'll sign up for an activity or lesson	1	2	3	4
5. My mom or dad ask me if I want to be in an activity or take lessons before signing me up	1	2	3	4
6. My mom or dad try to talk me out of signing up for activities or lessons	1	2	3	4
7. My mom or dad try to make sure that I get to my games, practices, lessons, or performances	1	2	3	4
8. My mom or dad listen to me when I say I want to sign up for an activity or lesson	1	2	3	4
9. My mom or dad let me decide which activities or lessons to sign up for	1	2	3	4
10. If my mom or dad won't let me sign up for an activity or lesson, they get me a toy or something special	1	2	3	4
11. My mom or dad get upset when I don't do as well as they would like me to in my activities.	1	2	3	4
12. My mom or dad try to make sure I get what I need to be in activities or take lessons, like a uniform or instrument.	1	2	3	4
13. My mom or dad sign me up for activities or lessons without asking me if it's okay	1	2	3	4
14. My mom or dad ignore me when I say I want to sign up for an activity or lesson.	1	2	3	4
15. My mom or dad care about all of my activities	1	2	3	4

## Part 2

For Part 2, please use the following scale:

- 1 = Never  
 2 = Sometimes  
 3 = Usually  
 4 = Always

	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
16. My mom or dad want me to be in too many activities.	1	2	3	4
17. My mom or dad might be mad at me if I don't sign up for certain activities or lessons	1	2	3	4
18. My mom or dad only pay attention to some of my activities	1	2	3	4
19. My mom or dad would be upset if I dropped out of an activity	1	2	3	4
20. When it comes to my activities, my mom or dad expect too much of me	1	2	3	4
21. It is important to my mom or dad that I do well in my activities	1	2	3	4
22. When it comes to my activities, my mom or dad think that the most important thing is that I have fun	1	2	3	4
23. My mom or dad want me to spend too much time in activities outside of school	1	2	3	4
24. My mom or dad want to give an opinion about my activities	1	2	3	4

## Appendix H

*Parenting Questionnaire*

The following are a number of statements about your family. Please rate each item as to how often it typically occurs in your home.

Possible answers are:

1 = Never

2 = Almost never

3 = Sometimes

4 = Often

5 = Always

	Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
1 You let your child know when he/she is doing a good job with something	1	2	3	4	5
2 You threaten to punish your child and then do not actually punish him/her	1	2	3	4	5
3 Your child fails to leave a note or to let you know where he/she is going	1	2	3	4	5
4 Your child talks you out of being punished after he/she has done something wrong	1	2	3	4	5
5 Your child stays out in the evening after the time he/she is supposed to be home	1	2	3	4	5
6 You compliment your child after he/she has done something well	1	2	3	4	5
7 You praise your child if he/she behaves well	1	2	3	4	5
8 Your child is out with friends you don't know	1	2	3	4	5
9 You let your child out of a punishment early (like lift restrictions earlier than you originally said)	1	2	3	4	5