

THESIS

This is to certify that the  
dissertation entitled  
A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF EDUCATORS AS  
ADULT LEARNERS IN  
STAFF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

presented by  
JUNE M. SCHAEFER

has been accepted towards fulfillment  
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in Education

Charles A. Blackburn  
Major professor

Date August 5, 1986



RETURNING MATERIALS:  
Place in book drop to  
remove this checkout from  
your record. FINES will  
be charged if book is  
returned after the date  
stamped below.

100-100000  
100-100000  
100-100000

OCT 23 1995

FEB 02 1998

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF EDUCATORS AS  
ADULT LEARNERS IN  
STAFF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

BY

JUNE M. SCHAEFER

DISSERTATION

Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

College of Education

1986



Copyright by  
JUNE M. SCHAEFER  
1986

## ABSTRACT

### A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF EDUCATORS AS ADULT LEARNERS IN STAFF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

By

June M. Schaefer

The school district environment can serve as a resourceful setting for staff development activities if there is a focus on learning within the context of the work-site. The routine activities that occur on a regular basis such as staff reassignments, new program implementation, curriculum review, and general problem-solving in the district can all serve as rich adult learning experiences for educators. How the planning/development and implementation phases of a new program provided a variety of learning experiences for the educators involved is illustrated through this study.

In this study, the researcher served as a participant observer in a school district for fifteen months to gather qualitative data on the activities which the educators participated in and on the perceptions which they developed about themselves as adult learners within these and other activities. The data consisted of extensive field notes, formal and informal interviews with the educators involved in this project and related written documents.

The major contribution of this study is that it provides educators with "another look" at what they are already doing, a look through which an additional dimension for staff development planning can be seen: revisiting the existing district activities in view of expressed staff needs, adult development principles, extension/refinement of thinking skills, group dynamics and potential leadership development. Such a focus on the "development" of the educator through meaningful adult learning experiences nurtures and cultivates the attitude of lifelong learning.

To Fred

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The process involved in completing this study has served as a major learning experience for me. The completion also signifies an opportunity for reflection on the dimensions which "emerge" for future learning experiences. The key person who unlocked these opportunities for me is Dr. Charles A. Blackman, my committee and dissertation chairman. When he ventured to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan to promote Michigan State University's doctoral program, he became the "link" to the fulfillment of a lifelong goal. Throughout this time he has generously adapted his schedule to accommodate my travel arrangements for "collaborative discussions" on my program. These discussions have assisted to focus my thinking, refine my objectives and to "revisit" my experiences enabling me to discover expanded insights. For these discussions, I will always be grateful.

The other members of my committee have each served as a catalyst for learning in a distinctive area. Dr. Samuel A. Moore has challenged me to explore philosophical perspectives in education which have significantly expanded my frame of reference in leadership responsibilities. Dr. Richard Gardner stimulated my interest in adult/leadership development which led to my research on the adult learner. Dr. George Ferns assisted me in reconceptualizing the variety of options available for all adult learners. Together these four people have guided my interests and encouraged me to productively reconstruct experiences in furthering my professional development.

My good friends, Lyle and Sydelle Ehrenberg, have been my best teachers of the teaching/learning process. Their ability to transfer research into meaningful implementation strategies clarified the mission of education for me. For their guidance and interest in my life, I will be eternally grateful.

Collegiality was a term that I discussed "loosely" three years ago--I have now internalized the essence of this concept through the support and sharing of my "U.P." friends and colleagues--Jeff Miller, Margaret Ritenburgh and Bill Korpela.

I have been most appreciative of the flexibility extended by Cynda and Doug as they met my typing schedules and for Noreen who supported me through her professional assistance at the office.

My deepest appreciation is extended to my "key informants" at my Young Fives site. Dr. "Sarah Sullivan" opened the doors for my research and "Jackie Collins" shared her professional life with me for fifteen months. All of the Young Fives staff extended themselves and their classrooms to make my research site a "second home". To all of these people at the "Red Rock" Area School District, I owe a debt of gratitude.

Throughout my years as a consultant and an administrator, I have received encouragement and professional guidance from Lou Myefski. As a colleague and a Superintendent he has assisted in shaping my career; I thank him for his interest.

My parents, Wesley and Lempi Myllyla, provided the early initiative for lifelong learning through guidance in my childhood experiences. As opportunities presented themselves, they nurtured my interest in learning through their encouragement, challenge and direction. It was very meaningful to share this particular accomplishment with them.

The person who has been most patient, understanding and supportive throughout these long hours of research, study and writing has been my husband, Fred. His love and encouragement have been continuously energizing--now we can take our vacations!

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>CHAPTER</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. THE STUDY	
Purpose of the Study . . . . .	1
Research Questions . . . . .	7
Site . . . . .	9
Background of the Study . . . . .	12
Methodology . . . . .	16
Future Implications of the Study . . . . .	17
Organization of the Study . . . . .	21
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	
Introduction . . . . .	23
Staff Development for Educators . . . . .	25
Perspective of the Adult as a Learner . . . . .	38
Self-Directed Learning . . . . .	58
Social Transmission/Interaction/Collegiality . . . . .	63
III. RESEARCH PROCEDURES	
The Researcher . . . . .	70
Entry/Schedule of the Study . . . . .	75
Methodology . . . . .	81
Analysis . . . . .	89
IV. PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS	
Introduction . . . . .	93
Planning and Development Phase--Young Fives . . . . .	102
Implementation Phase--Young Fives . . . . .	141
Adults as Learners . . . . .	198
Summary . . . . .	207

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary . . . . .	213
Conclusions . . . . .	232
Implications for Educational Practice . . . . .	235
Recommendations for Further Research . . . . .	246

REFERENCES . . . . .	251
----------------------	-----

APPENDICES

Appendix A . . . . .	259
Appendix B . . . . .	260
Appendix C . . . . .	262
Appendix D . . . . .	264



## CHAPTER I

### THE STUDY

#### Purpose of the Study:

Staff development issues have predominated the professional literature in the past decade; frequently the labels have changed, but the concepts have remained similar. Terms such as inservice education, professional development, staff development, and personnel development have been common references for those in the educational sector. Training has become a popular term in the industrial sector. All of these terms refer to the idea that adults in employment situations require continued educational experiences to maintain and/or improve their performance and self-esteem. The education process is naturally correlated with learning, thus these references identify a large population of "adult learners."

Only recently has the field begun to associate the concept of adult learning with staff development/training issues. Due to this rather recent collaboration of concepts, the knowledge base in this area is limited (Warnat, 1980).

Furthermore, the relationship between adult learning concepts and educators as a specific adult learner population is even less formulated in the research. As Cook (1982) points out, "We have learned the importance of treating children and young people as individual learners. It is high time that we treat teachers with the same kind of care and respect as people who learn at different rates and in different ways, whose 'maturity' depends on a wide range of interrelated variables, and who bring to the learning task a tremendous variation in prior knowledge, interest and investment." (p. 11) Most staff development literature focuses on methodology, strategy or knowledge-based issues for educators. There is a very limited sequence of specific research on educators as adult learners.

It appears that the profession needs to address this need as a significant response to "futures" planning in education. Educators are presently "borrowing" from the research of various social scientists to compile a theoretical notion of adult learning in relationship to staff development issues. As pointed out by Warnat (1980), "Adult learning needs to be concretely incorporated into inservice education activities, since it penetrates the core of learner motivation and adaptation to the learning process based on developmental changes which occur throughout the life span." (p. 11) Educators have a responsibility to assess themselves as a profession in regard to learning needs and a need to correlate these data with known

principles of adult learning. This professional "responsibility" which educators need to address is emphasized by Erickson (1985) when he compares professional practices regarding research. He indicates:

. . . it is routine for practitioners (in the fields of medicine, law, social work) to characterize their own practice, both for purposes of basic clinical research and for the evolution of their services. . . . By contrast, the teacher's own account of his or her practice has no official place in the discourse of schooling, particularly in teacher evaluation, staff development, and/or debates about the master teacher role and merit pay that have been stimulated by recent reports and proposals for educational reform. (p. 176)

He goes on to emphasize how critical it is that educators assume ownership for assessing themselves as a part of their professional responsibilities when he adds:

If classroom teaching in elementary and secondary schools is to come of age as a profession--if the role of teacher is not to continue to be institutionally infantilized--then teachers need to take the adult responsibility of investigating their own practice systematically and critically, by methods that are appropriate to their practice. . . . Interpretive research on teaching, conducted by teachers with outside-classroom colleagues to provide both support and challenge, could contribute in no small way to the American schoolteacher's transition to adulthood as a professional. (p. 177)

Educators also have a need to assist peers in education to study adult learning principles, promote lifelong learning concepts, and encourage growth and development in order to improve performance and self-esteem. As illustrated by Fenstermacher (1984), "The critical task of education is to enable people to weave tapestries, not to be idle observers of them. Our job is to help people conceive of the future and direct their talents and energies toward that future--to enable them to know where they want to end up." (p. 326) Should it not be most important for educators to concentrate on their own "weaving" to assist others in creating their own "tapestries" of professional growth?

This emphasis on self-study by educators has formulated some research questions which have recently emerged as being functionally salient--What is it that we need to know about ourselves as educators? How do we process our work? What thoughts do we have about our work/our profession? What thinking occurs in our daily patterns of work? As pointed out by Brophy (1980), a focus on such questions in the educational research arena has been largely neglected:

Research on teaching, at least in the United States, largely ignored the mental life of the teacher until the last five years. . . . Much of the explanation for this neglect of the mental life of the teacher lies in the pervasive influence of behaviorism on American social science research. . . . Most contemporary American social

scientists, including educational researchers, remain more interested in studying teachers' behavior than in studying what is on their minds. (pp. 1-2)

Some researchers are beginning to address this issue in a concentrated plan. The Institute for Research on Teaching at Michigan State University is an example of such emphasis. Lezotte (1980) relates a goal focused on by IRT researchers which confirms these concepts for study:

IRT's orientation is based on the assumption that much more needs to be known about the mental life of teachers than is currently known. While we at the Institute recognize that teacher behavior is an important factor in teaching and learning outcomes, we also feel that how teachers behave and what they do is directed in no small measure by what they think, believe, feel and perceive. The relationship between teacher thought and action is the critical issue and central focus of all our inquiries. (p. 2)

Educators have a need to integrate the concepts which have been discussed thus far--staff development, educators as adult learners, and the personal reflections of educators as they participate in their profession. If education is to "mature" as a profession, educators must openly continue to study how the integration of such concepts can expand the knowledge base regarding functional staff development issues, clarify and extend their attitudes regarding educators as professional learners and hopefully improve

their skills as leaders in the vast field of human services.

Specifically there are elements which emerge within this discussion that this researcher feels a need to explore further. Examples of the elements relating to this study include:

- purpose of the staff development activity;
- expectations of the staff development activity;
- motivators (intrinsic and extrinsic) of the staff development activity;
- personal/social/interactional experience/cognitive processing in the staff development activity;
- opportunities for self-directed/on-going learning experiences within the staff development activity and
- transfer of learning (performance effects) to the worksite following the staff development activity.

All of these elements need to be studied intensively in order to draw conclusions as to how the staff development activities are significantly affecting the learner. Such issues will be approached in this study through direct contact with educators who represent "adult learners" and are actively engaged in staff development activities within their work-site. This qualitative research method will focus on the information shared by the adult learners as they perceive their staff development experiences, observe their own behaviors and plan for carry-over from the experiences. As noted by Bogdan and Biklen (1982), the qualitative researcher:

. . . is bent on understanding, in considerable detail, how people such as teachers, principals, and students think and how they develop the perspectives they hold. This goal often leads the researchers to spend considerable time with subjects in their own environs, asking open-ended questions. . . . Qualitative researchers go to the particular setting under study because they are concerned with context. (p. 2)

Additional insights will be sought in the field itself as ethnographic research is noted for emerging issues throughout the research process. Further field study will illuminate and enrich the dimensions of the problem for this researcher. As Schatzman and Strauss (1973) point out, ". . . field method process of discovery may lead the researcher to his problem after it has led him through much of the substance in his field. Problem statements are not prerequisite to field research; they may emerge at any point in the research process, even toward the very end. (p. 3)

### Research Questions:

In this ethnographic study, the overarching questions include:

- How does the educator perceive him/herself as an adult learner in the context of staff development experiences?

- What is significant to note about the adult learner's (educator's) perceptions in a staff development process?
- How does this information relate to the effects of such experiences on one's performance in the worksite (classroom, etc.)?
- How does this information relate to the observations one makes of oneself in this learning process?

More specifically, the researcher will seek data regarding the elements noted earlier:

- How does the learner/educator approach the staff development experience?
- How does the purpose of the activity affect the learner/educator's perception?
- What expectations does the learner/educator have from the staff development experience?
- What differences are noted if expectations are also defined by others (e.g., administrators)?
- What motivates the learner/educator to participate in this staff development activity? How does the perceived motivation affect one's level of participation? How does the motivation affect the degree to which transfer of learning occurs at the worksite?
- What is the frame of reference one brings to the staff development experience? How does this affect the thinking that occurs during the experience? How does this affect the outcome from the experience for the adult learner/educator?
- What social and interactional experiences occur during the staff development sessions? How do these affect the quality of learning? How are they perceived by the learner/educator? What role do they play in follow-up activities? What "collegial relationships" result from such experiences? Are these different for adults than children? If so, how are they different?
- What cognitive processing occurs during and after the staff development experiences? How is this defined by the learner/educator? To what degree is this processed with others? What elements are transferred to the activities at the worksite? What are the



effects on oneself?

- In what format does the learning experience seem most comfortable for the learner/educator? What factors affect this? To what degree are self-directed learning activities observed? How do they transfer to the worksite?
- What differences seem to be observed in the performance of the learner/educator at the worksite? To what degree has the staff development experience influenced this? How does this become internalized in the learner/educator's frame of reference?

Such questions will frame the general context of the study. As is true in ethnographic research, questions give rise to more questions; this type of inquiry will give rise to other issues which evolve during the study. As Bogdan and Biklen (1982) point out, "Qualitative researchers in education can continually be found asking questions of the people they are learning from to discover what they are experiencing, how they interpret their experiences and how they themselves structure the social world in which they live." (p. 30) The relationships noted here for study will undoubtedly surface other meaningful dimensions which need to be addressed in the adult learning/staff development context.

Site:\*

The focus of this study takes place in the Red Rock

\*The names of all persons and places have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.

Area Public Schools, a rural school district in the Midwest. Due to the nature of the study, no one school building was involved. Staff members participating in the staff development activities represented various elementary school buildings and supportive service areas.

The student population in the Red Rock Area Public Schools is 4,714, K-12. This represents 2,307 students in elementary buildings and 2,386 at the secondary level. In addition, 131 students are enrolled in adult/community education high school completion programs. Approximately 1,000 persons attend adult/community education classes weekly (enrichment and high school completion). There are also two elementary level parochial schools within the district; they serve a total of 267 students. The district represents a population base of 23,288 persons living within the boundaries of the Red Rock District; the county population is 74,101. The district employs 413 staff with an additional number of part-time employees in a variety of situations.

The 1985-86 school year ushered in the first strike experienced by the Red Rock Area Public Schools. All three unions representing teachers, bus drivers/custodians and clerical support personnel joined together to walk the picket lines for eleven days. The strike delayed this researcher's access into the district by two weeks in September, 1985.

Due to the near-by University campus, there are many opportunities for staff development through formal coursework, seminars, lectures, etc. throughout the year. The Red Rock Area Public Schools have some formalized agreements for shared-time programs at the secondary level with the University. The University has had a history of being a "teachers college", but this has changed as the employment field for educators was affected. The emphasis at the University has transferred to a variety of other technical and professional fields which have emerged as occupational opportunities.

The Red Rock Area School District represents a community largely made up of workers in human service establishments. The largest employers include the University, a regional hospital and related medical services, a state prison, state/regional/local offices, public schools and a host of support services. The tourist industry is a major economic contributor as is, as well, a major Air Force Base, located 20 miles away. Due to the decline of the near-by mining industries, this area has been affected by a serious unemployment problem in the past five years. Other sources of revenue are continuously pursued for expanding economic development.

The Red Rock Area Public School District is the largest of thirteen local school districts within the Intermediate School District serving this two-county area. The total student population of the thirteen districts is 14,955. Due

to the location of this district within the Intermediate School District and the other economic factors of the area which are noted in this section, many staff development opportunities have historically emerged through the Red Rock Area Public Schools.

Background of the Study:

The Red Rock Area School District recognized a need to study the "at risk" kindergarten student population. This need was supported not only through local district data, but also through statewide data developed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction (1984). A statewide survey was mailed to 558 local districts with 518 responses revealing the following information:

- 187 school districts offer pre-kindergarten programs for children not 5 by December 1. Thirty-two districts planned to implement programs in 1984-85.
- 161 school districts offer readiness kindergarten programs for children 5 by December 1, but developmentally younger. Sixty-seven districts planned to implement programs in 1984-85.
- 102 school districts offer first grade readiness programs for children who have completed kindergarten, but are "not ready" for first grade. Thirty-seven districts plan to implement programs in 1984-85.
- the Gesell School Readiness Screening test is used by a majority of the districts to determine placement in readiness kindergarten and kindergarten programs.

In response to this need, the District approved a position of Teacher Coordinator for the 1984-85 school year. This position was funded through Chapter I and II\* funds. The planning objectives for the Teacher Coordinator included research and planning/development activities focusing on a Young Fives/Kindergarten Program. This program development was based on the Gesell Institute model and identified by the Red Rock School Board for implementation in the 1985-86 school year.

Initiation of this new program concept provided a fertile site for this researcher to study adult learning in action at the work-site as a part of a district-approved staff development program. Entry was made in the fall, 1984, to determine the dynamics of the program and to seek approval for ethnographic research. It was determined through a meeting with the Red Rock Director of Curriculum and the newly appointed Teacher Coordinator that this researcher could gain open access to the staff development activities of the project.

As a prelude to the study, during the 1984-85 school year, the researcher participated in meetings in the district to conceptualize the District's approach to the Young Fives Program, determine the feasibility of the study, and identify the staff development activities available for

\*Chapter programs are referred to frequently in the text; these titles refer to the funding sources of the program(s).

study. This included attendance at meetings and training sessions from September, 1984 through June, 1985.

It became apparent quickly that the nature of the study would focus on the "learning" occurring with the new Teacher Coordinator as she participated in her new role as well as with the teaching and support staff involved in the project. They all represented adult learners in action!

The 1984-85 school year was fruitful for study as it was filled with planning activities by the staff in preparation for implementation of the program the following year. A Planning Committee of six persons representing administration, staff and parents met regularly to guide the program development activities; the coordination of this Committee was led by the Teacher Coordinator.

The Young Fives Planning Committee began their work on September 20, 1984, and focused on the following tasks at their monthly meetings held throughout the 1984-85 school year:

- examination of the Gesell Kindergarten Screening Test and program models;
- planned and developed a screening system in accordance with the Gesell model;
- developed a program model for Young Fives implementation in the Red Rock Area Schools;
- assisted with technical/logistical details such as procedures, applications, inservice information;
- reviewed the proposal and formulated recommendations which were forwarded to the Curriculum committee and the School Board;

- reviewed the District's Early Entrance Policy and made recommendations for change, and
- reviewed current research related to kindergarten entrance age, Young Fives implementation and related early childhood issues.

The Young Fives concept was introduced to the elementary principals at a meeting on September 13, 1984. The kindergarten teachers also met on September 13, 1984, to begin their review of the Gesell materials. In addition, meetings and training sessions were held throughout the school year with kindergarten teachers, Chapter I (Reading) teachers and various support staff (school psychologists, school social workers, etc.).

The proposal for the Young Fives Program was adopted by the Board of Education on December 10, 1984. A three-day workshop was held to train district staff in the Gesell screening process on January 30, 31 and February 1, 1985. Parent meetings held in various schools culminated the initial planning processes for the district during the spring of 1985.

During the fall, 1985, the research continued with interviews of the staff who participated in the variety of training and implementation activities relating to the initiation of the Young Fives program. During the fall/early winter of 1985, the researcher became a "participant observer" in the actual implementation of the Young Fives program and the staff development sessions which correlated with this implementation.

### Methodology:

The research design employed in this study through qualitative research methods was flexible. In contrast to quantitative researchers, the qualitative researcher avoids going into a study with hypotheses to test or specific questions to answer. As Bogdan and Biklen emphasize, "the study itself structures the research, not preconceived ideas or any precise research design." (p. 55)

The researcher proceeded on theoretical assumptions regarding adult learning experiences through educational staff development activities. The researcher felt the importance to investigate what specific perceptions certain educators had regarding staff development activities that were integrated into the work-site. The researcher was also interested in how educators perceived their role responsibilities as contributing to professional growth and what conditions for learning seemed to be most productive within the context of the work-site.

Given these assumptions, the researcher entered the site to learn about the setting, the educators in the setting and other factors contributing to their learning experiences. This report provides a narrative that describes the data gathered in this particular setting.

Throughout this study, the researcher recognized the limitations which needed to be stated. This project was not



initiated to provide generalizability regarding the broad concepts of staff development and adult learning, but rather to focus on educators as adult learners in a variety of staff development activities. The researcher suggests that the data gathered in this study with a select group of educators in a specific program can be helpful to the educators in this school district or to other educators who are involved in the process of staff development. The concentration was on the general Young Fives planning/development/implementation process which was employed in the study as perceived through the functions and reflections of the participants. This study contributes one "piece" of work towards the broader field of grounded theory relating to educators as adult learners in staff development activities.

#### Future Implications of the Study:

The focus of this study was to gather data forming a descriptive study of educators as adult learners in staff development situations within their work-site. It is intended that this study will generate qualitative research which will assist in addressing the staff development needs of the field through principles of adult learning. Questions need to be answered in regard to--how educators grow, learn and transfer that learning to other situations,

and what conditions need to be present for educators to utilize their learning effectively. Given the limitations of this study having been conducted in one site, it is the intent that these data will assist in establishing another link in the chain of research which can provide a basis for further theory development. As Warnat (1980) has emphasized so strongly--these theories have not yet been formulated substantially in the literature.

It is also recognized that the existence of the study will result in increased learning opportunities for the participants. Through the questions explored in the process of the study, participants will have the opportunity for self-reflection, self-analysis of cognitive processing and learning styles and focused recall of discussions with peers. All of these experiences should assist the participants in developing processes for future self-directed learning activities. These activities should also assist the participants in formulating concepts relating to "what they are about" as educators/adult learners.

In addition to the analysis of the learning experiences of the Young Fives participants, the researcher suggests some further areas for study which would contribute to the growing body of knowledge known as grounded theory in educational research (Yinger, 1978). Grounded theory, a method for discovering theory from data, can also be considered "developmental" if one views theory as process

(Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This study focuses on specific elements of adult learning experiences in education through on-site staff development opportunities; such analysis can be further integrated in a broader perspective through research on related topics. As Yinger (1978) indicates, "More general theories of teaching and learning will emerge (if they are possible) only through the summarization and integration of many smaller grounded theories." (pp. 13-14)

Conclusions drawn from the incidents/activities in this study can also lead to the generation of prescriptive theory (Yinger, 1978) in the areas of correlating adult learning principles with staff development models. As Yinger (1978) points out, "Research in education should be concerned about 'what should be' in teaching and learning as well as with 'what is'. . . . Research needs to establish a dialectic between theory and practice since neither source alone is sufficient as a basis for prescriptive models of action." (p. 23) This study should yield substantive statements regarding specific experiences for educators as adult learners in staff development experiences. These conclusions can then be extended to generalizations which more universally address the "what should be" perspective which Yinger emphasizes.

Another implication of this study should result in a broader consciousness of self-directed learning experiences which can lead to a clarified and expanded concept regarding the attitudes of lifelong learners. The current emphasis on

career development for teachers has often resulted in "career ladder" models which have directed teachers out of the classroom in order to achieve higher salaries. This study will focus on the internal attributes which are cultivated as educators reflect on self-directed learning experiences at the work-site and continue to participate in their current roles. As Mitchell (1979) indicates,

The teacher must be a learner as well as a leader, a consumer of education as well as a coordinator. The practice of lifelong learning is essential for the educational leader as well as for the clients served by the schools. The need for continuous growth as a lifelong learner applies to the development of the educator as well as to others. The educator must not only be a creator and operator of a system coordinating all useful learning resources, but must also be a living participant in the process. (p. 169)

This perspective of self-directed/lifelong learning will undoubtedly raise questions regarding staff development models, but the researcher does not propose to identify any singular staff development sequence. In contrast, she proposes to highlight the need for options in staff development activities in order to meet the variety of needs of educators as adult learners. If one subscribes to Overly's (1979) notion regarding lifelong learning, "that participants should be involved actively in the process of realizing their own potential, of becoming self-directed and responsible for their own learning" (p. 182), then one needs

to analyze comprehensively the conditions under which this can occur. The researcher intends to identify attributes which must be considered when developing meaningful staff development options that will lead towards self-directed, lifelong learning educators in the profession.

### Organization of the Study:

As introduced in this chapter, issues are emphasized in this study that relate to educators as adult learners in staff development activities. In the following chapter (Chapter II), a frame of reference is developed for the reader in the following areas:

- staff development for educators
- perspective of the adult as a learner
- self-directed learning
- social transmission/interaction/collegiality

Chapter III includes a description of the research procedures utilized in this study which employ qualitative research methods. In this section one will find detail regarding the role of the researcher, the schedule of the study and the specific procedures for methodology and analysis.

The findings of the study will be detailed in Chapter IV. The findings have been organized into three sections:

- planning and development phase
- implementation phase
- adults as learners

Chapter V contains a summary of the study, conclusions from the research findings, implications for educational practice and recommendations for further research and reflections drawn by the researcher.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction:

With the context of this study focusing on the professional educator as an adult learner within the work-site, the review of literature has been approached through the following concepts:

- staff development for educators
- perspective of the adult as a learner
- self-directed learning
- social transmission/interaction/collegiality

All of these concepts revolve around a central theme relating to the "growth of the individual." In this study specific emphasis is placed on the growth of the professional educator as an adult learner within the work-site; thus the literature review has been developed to assist the reader in formulating this frame of reference.

Dewey (1938) shared some perceptions regarding the educator's role in the growth process which are still very appropriate today as one analyzes this issue from the perspective of the educator as an adult learner. They serve

well to open this chapter which focuses on the educator as a "developing individual." Dewey states:

. . .if he is an educator, (he must) be able to judge what attitudes are actually conducive to continued growth and what are detrimental. He must in addition, have that sympathetic understanding of individuals as individuals which gives him an idea of what is actually going on in the minds of those who are learning. (p. 39)

He raises a question regarding learning experiences that ought to be continuously on educators' minds as they consider staff development responsibilities: "Does this form of growth create conditions for further growth, or does it set up conditions that shut off the person who has grown in this particular direction from the occasions, stimuli and opportunities for continuing growth in new directions?" (p. 36) Dewey sums up the mission in education succinctly as he states, "In a certain sense every experience should do something to prepare a person for later experiences of a deeper and more expansive quality. That is the very meaning of growth, continuity, reconstruction of experience." (p. 47)

These prophetic thoughts from Dewey serve as an introduction to this chapter and provide the reader with a frame of reference for review of the material which illustrates a summary of the researcher's study within each of the four areas listed above.



### Staff Development for Educators:

A theme that is very prevalent in the current literature regarding staff development for educators focuses on the need for educators to work with each other in this process. For years, educators have been familiar with staff "inservice days" or "conference days" when all staff from a district or even combined districts gathered in assembly-type fashion to hear an "outside expert" who was noteworthy because he/she represented the "outside". The current literature reveals a different type of staff development emphasis for today's educators, particularly teachers. Some of these attributes of effective staff development programs are identified in a synthesis of ideas prepared by the ERIC Clearinghouse (1980):

- concrete and aimed at specific skills
- emphasize demonstrations and opportunities for staff to practice the new skills and receive feedback
- individualized to address the requirements of each participant; relate to on-the-job needs
- on-going, stretching throughout the school year
- held at school, rather than elsewhere

- include opportunities to observe other teachers who have mastered and are practicing the skills being taught.

These points provide a base of commonalities identified in several staff development reviews--as a contrast to earlier emphasis on large group one-time sessions. They are, however, limiting in that they do not focus on the "developing individual" through learning experiences. This changing emphasis, albeit limiting, is encouraging in regard to the needs of educators as adult learners. It has also been noted that educators need to look beyond their own profession to study a successful emphasis on individualized growth experiences. Pelaia (1986) recently pointed this out:

We need to take our cue from the private sector and make an investment of time, energy and funding in the fundamental well-being of those individuals whose role is so vital to our society. . . Viewing teachers as people and organizing our staff development programs to acknowledge this reality are important steps toward upgrading the quality of the work. Helping teachers should not preclude helping people. (p. 37)

This perspective was supported in a recent study by McLaughlin, Pfeifer, Swanson-Owens and Yee (1986) at which time they studied the professional life of 85 teachers. They concluded:

Teachers' needs for professional development vary according to their skills, their teaching assignments and their experience. Guiding individual teachers to appropriate workshops, grant-funded projects, professional conferences and graduate programs is an activity that school districts rarely approach in any systematic way. Management development programs in the private sector, by contrast, treat such activity as an integral part of the personnel function. (pp. 425-26)

Peters and Waterman (1982) explicitly supported this notion as they reviewed the elements of success in 62 different companies. They concluded that a key factor that emerged throughout their study was the emphasis on people, ". . .people are our most important asset. The excellent companies live their commitment to people." (p. 16)

The sensitivity towards individualized, on-going, localized learning experiences with a focus on educators "helping one another" appears to this researcher to be a true sign of "healthy growth" in this profession. As Madeline Hunter stated (1985), ". . .educational theorists and practitioners badly need each other. . .it is high time to tap each other's strengths rather than zap each other's perceived flaws."

Staff development is still ranked as the top training need by principals (1985), but there is a great need to individualize the approaches in order to increase the effects. This requires direct involvement by the teachers in the planning of staff development efforts. As stated by

Sugarman (1985), "Teachers, like any students, need to be involved in their own learning if they are to develop as professionals. Teachers are their own best resources for staff development and growth." Warnat (1980) has comprehensively surveyed the staff development efforts in regard to the adult learner. She emphasizes that ". . .diversity is indeed a major characteristic of adulthood--as we mature, we become more and more unique as "unduplicatable" individuals. Yet training practices continue to lump participants into homogeneous groups with homogeneous expectations and anticipated outcomes." (p. 13)

It becomes very clear that educators themselves desire a change in the type of staff development programs provided in the schools. The elements most commonly addressed as needs relate to principles of adult learning, but as Wood and Thompson (1980) point out, ". . .the major flaw in staff development appears to be that we have ignored what is known about the adult learner and adult learning, just as we have accused teachers of ignoring the individual child and how he or she learns." (p. 375)

Cook (1982) has focused on "teachers as learners" as he emphasizes, "adult development not only suggests, but demands an expanded concept of teacher education." (p. 6) He further identifies that teachers as learners must be actively engaged in their own learning; teachers should participate in planning; teacher education should meet perceived needs and programs should allow participants to

translate theory into practice. Cook lists some elements which identify successful inservice programs; they include:

- sessions based on teachers' expressed needs
- programs which included teacher input early in the program
- plans which provided teacher training prior to the onset of a new program
- programs which employed activities for teachers that paralleled those to be used with children, thus creating a model for subsequent classroom application

These attributes are selected from an analysis of needs/theories which Cook has synthesized from his research. He concentrates on the differences which each teacher brings to the particular staff development experience. For example:

Conventional staff development programs have tended to treat adult learners as identical, mature thinkers who are able to process information in any way that the teacher educator elects to present it. A variety of studies, however, have indicated that effective adult learning is dependent not only upon the person's intelligence, but also upon the ability to establish conceptual systems and upon personal learning style. Moreover, there are complex relationships between these more stable factors and other more fluid or situational factors, such as prior experience, level of prior achievement or match of learning style between teacher and teacher educator. (p. 8)

. . .We have learned the importance of treating children and young people as individual learners. It is high time that we treat teachers with the same kind of care and respect as people who learn at different rates and in different ways; whose "maturity" depends on a wide range of interrelated variables, and who bring to the learning task a tremendous variation in prior knowledge, interest and investment. (p. 11)

Christensen, Burke, Fessler and Hagstrom (1983) identify teacher career growth as a corollary of adult growth. They review adult learning principles in view of this concept and suggest that educational programs have not been designed for adults, but rather for youth only. They point out Knowles' concepts that "adult learners tend to concentrate on problems, preferring to redefine problems as they learn, and approach learning through an "experiential imperative". . .adult learners tend to budget their learning time on projects that meet personal needs." (p. 8) They identify a "psycho-social portrait of the adult" as one who emulates a "continuously evolving individual possessed of powerful needs for autonomy, competence, stability, and self-knowledge; guided by a uniquely adult approach to learning and blessed with great resourcefulness." (p. 8)

Through a synthesis of their research on adult development and teacher growth, they have identified career-stage theory. This specifies needs and behaviors of teachers participating in staff development in the early,

middle and later years of teaching experience. Important differences are cited at each stage.

McLaughlin and Berman (1977) emphasize a similar point when they state that learners, namely principals and teachers, have different needs at different times as staff development is perceived to be an adaptive learning process. Learners must know what it is they need to know; they must be willing and able to participate in staff development activities. They conclude that effective staff development depends much more on the district's point of view about principals and teachers as learners than on the specifics of the staff development program.

Recently the Advisory Panel of the National Center for the Improvement of Learning (1984-85) identified seventeen exemplary staff development programs in our nation's schools. Within these programs, adult learning principles are evident throughout the staff development activities. Examples of the concepts represented include:

- personal professional growth plans as designed by teachers/approved by principals
- experienced teachers working with novice teachers
- opportunities for teachers to select, adapt and try-out new professional behaviors in real and simulated work settings
- school-based inservice training

- peer coaching/peer observation/  
teacher exchanges
- mentor meetings
- nonthreatening atmosphere
- individual study options at  
different times throughout the  
year
- staff member evaluates his/her  
own improvement each year

As one would note, these concepts are basic to effective adult learning activities. The districts cited for these programs integrated concepts such as these throughout the staff development activities; these are the types of experiences which "made a difference" in the outcomes of the participants.

Such concepts of integration are substantiated and compiled in a review by Burrello and Orbaugh (1982) as they report on extensive studies conducted throughout the United States and U. S. Territories regarding effective in-service education. Six major attributes of effective in-service programs which promoted the concept of "learning to teach and teaching to learn" (p. 386) were described as follows:

- designed so that programs are  
integrated into and supported by  
the organization within which  
they function
- designed to result in  
collaborative programs
- grounded in the needs of the  
participants



- responsive to changing needs
- accessible
- evaluated over time and be compatible with the underlying philosophy and approach of the district

Recently staff development literature is focusing on new labels such as "career ladder plans" or "career development plans." There are significant differences in the philosophies inherent in each concept according to several commentaries, but the movement is rapidly progressing. As Cornett (1985) points out, in "the 1985 legislative sessions, seven states passed legislation to develop statewide career ladder programs or pilot projects." (p. 6) In addition, many other states are implementing various performance-based incentive programs. Recent feedback on such plans (Shanker, 1985; Fallon, 1985; Rodman, 1985; and Bacharach, 1986) identify some plans to emphasize varying job roles for educators as an inherent focus (job ladders) while others concentrate on the development of educators in their present job roles (career development). Some plans emphasize both concepts concurrently as Hanes, Mitchell (1985) purport the Charlotte-Mecklenburg plan to do. It is apparent through the recent emphasis on "excellence" in our schools that pay incentives are often correlated with performance and this in turn is causing an increased interest in staff development programs.

Not all staff development programs currently being highlighted are linked to pay incentives. Examples of such programs which place emphasis on lifelong learning, improvement of instructional capabilities, improved communication among educators, better research on teaching and the mental life of teachers are found as follows: Madison Workshop Series (Henderson, 1986); staff development consortium (Marchand, 1986); learning community model (Dodd, Rosenbaum, 1986); staff development centers (Lezotte, 1980); professional dialogue (Eaton, 1985); cooperative learning (Johnson, Johnson, Johnson, Holubec, Roy, 1984) and teacher planning/thinking/decision-making (Brophy, 1980).

This discussion has surveyed a variety of staff development ideas that are currently being implemented. It is equally as important to investigate whether adult learning principles are considered in the preparation of the educator. There are some preservice programs which have integrated components of adult learning principles into the continuum. One such program which advocates such concepts is the Integrated Day Programs at the University of Massachusetts (Roose, Mitchell, Rudman, 1985). This program has a comprehensive selection process for preservice elementary education majors and actively involves students (graduate and undergraduate) in their educational process. The attributes of the program which identify adult learning principles are as follows:

- students' active involvement in their own learning
- students' building on their strengths rather than focusing on their weaknesses
- students' benefiting from feedback and support from others
- students' participation in shared decision-making
- students' individual needs being met
- students' movement toward self-initiated and self-directed learning

Effective staff development programs are also correlated with effective leadership. The literature suggests that leadership development is a very important issue. The career ladder/career development studies identified earlier in this chapter relate to the different roles which educators serve as they assume leadership responsibilities. Cunningham (1985) studied the leadership skills which are likely to be needed in the future and suggests that these skills will be needed at every level in education:

- ability to focus on the present and future simultaneously
- ability to bridge gaps between different interest groups (internal and external)
- ability to scan, monitor and interpret events

- ability to appraise
- ability to trust one's own intuition
- ability to manage symbols of the office and of leadership generally along with symbolic values
- ability to lead as a "teacher"/project the image of a leader as a teacher

In private industry, Peters and Waterman (1982) found that effective leaders in staff development issues focus on a few key business values and objectives at a time. They found the role of the leader to be considered that of "orchestrator and labeler." It may be necessary for educators to once again visit the private sector for expanding their dimensions in leadership development as a component of staff growth.

The notion that leadership development experiences ought to be included in the staff development process in education was highlighted by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development when they adopted their 1980 resolutions to include, ". . .Educational leaders responsible for staff development must be given formal opportunities for gaining expertise in planning, implementing and evaluating instructional and staff development programs." This researcher feels that an additional skill needs to be included in this resolution and also that it hasn't been emphasized sufficiently in the contemporary literature on leadership in staff development

programs. Cunningham (1985) hints at it, but does not explicitly label it; it is the ability to assist others through change.

Staff "development" implies that change is occurring; the literature reviewed in this section identifies various degrees of the change process integrated into the components. This study will have a special focus on how an educational leader faces the challenge of assisting colleagues with change. Garmston (1985) shares an interesting conception of the change process through a formula attributed to David Gleichey of Arthur D. Little Company:

$$ch = a \cdot b \cdot c > x$$

change equals the product of  
 (a) a shared dissatisfaction,  
 (b) a shared vision of an ideal state, and  
 (c) knowledge of practical steps needed to attain the vision, provided this product is greater than  
 (x) the cost of change (p. 25)

Staff development processes inherit many risks if they are to focus on the growth of learners as identified by Dewey at the beginning of this chapter. One of those risks is to create the conditions in which the adult learner can grow. It is now important to review some of the research conducted on adult development and adult learning in order to substantiate the staff development needs of educators from this perspective.

### Perspective of the Adult as a Learner:

In order to study adequately the adult as a learner, it is necessary to approach this topic from two dimensions:

- 1) What is there that has been found to be significantly different about adult development from child development? How has adult development been characterized?
- 2) How does adult development affect adult learning experiences? What principles have been formulated about adult learning?

#### 1) Adult Development:

This researcher selected to study relatively current theorists who focused on adult development in order to develop a perspective which would coincide with what is also being studied in the areas of adult learning principles and staff development. This section represents concepts of adult development that have emerged as the results of the following adult theorists: Sheehy (1977), Schlossberg, Troll, and Leibowitz (1978), Krupp (1981) and Benjamin and Walz (1982).

A commonality that emerges quickly in all of these works is that adulthood is perceived as a time of continuing development, change and a variety of transitions. It is a time of growth, of challenges, of new horizons, of applications of experiences, of emerging dimensions and positive movement throughout life. A key factor that makes adult development different from child development is the

degree of experience which adults bring to each "stage" of development. It is from these experiences that adults can draw reflection "data" and move on to another period. The cumulative experience becomes much more significant in adult development than is possible in child development.

This sense of "movement" in adult development is identified by Schlossberg, Troll and Leibowitz (1978) when they differentiate the assumptions from which two viewpoints of adulthood are formulated--static vs. dynamic:

A focus on the state of being an adult (static) implies that the adult years are stable. . . many schools of analysis and therapy assume that there is a "right" way of being an adult. . . adjustment to some absolute norm of adulthood. . . . On the other hand--a focus on the process of being an adult implies a more fluid definition of the adult years. They may be seen as a period of change, as the middle of life, not the end of the line. . . . (dynamic) (pp. 25-26)

Sheehy (1977) popularized the concept that adult development was "real" and a topic to be acknowledged by all adults as she collected 115 life stories from adults ages 18 to 55, in all walks of life and published her conclusions in a widely-read, contemporary book, Passages. She received an Alicia Patterson Foundation Fellowship to study adult development which assisted her in her quest to look at the stages of adulthood, as she explains,

It occurred to me that what Gesell and Spock did for children hadn't been done for us adults. . . where were the guidelines on how to get through the Trying Twenties, the Forlorn Forties? Could folklore be trusted, for instance, when it tells us that every seven years we grown-ups get an itch? (p. 15)

Sheehy emphasized that adulthood ought to be viewed on a continuum or through a developmental perspective:

Until recently, whenever psychiatrists and social scientists did address themselves to adult life, it was only in terms of problems, rarely from the perspective of continual and predictable changes. . . a new concept of adulthood, one that embraces the total life cycle, is questioning the old assumptions. If one sees the personality not as an apparatus that is essentially constructed by the time childhood is over, but as always in its essence developing, then life at 25 or 30 or at the gateway to middle age will stimulate its own intrigue, surprise, and exhilaration of discovery. (pp. 17-18)

During this "process" of adulthood, varying interpretations regarding the developmental sequences are noted. This researcher feels that it is essential to review some of these concepts as they directly affect the work of staff development planners in education.

Krupp (1981) identifies adulthood as a "time of continual development and change" (p. 1) in which changes are:



- age-linked, not age specific
- sequential, not hierarchical
- overlapping and connecting to create an organic whole
- all pervasive

She sees adult development as "nothing more than the evolution of the life structure (underlying format to a person's life that influences that person's means of solving different developmental tasks at different ages), the evolution of the way the self interpenetrates the world." (p. 4) She identifies the periods of adulthood that alternate throughout life as:

- Stable periods are times when key choices have been made and structures are built around those choices. These periods tend to last six or seven years.
- Transitional periods are times of questioning and reappraising with an exploration of possibilities and movement towards commitment to a new stable period. These periods last four to five years.

Specific elements within this context include concepts identified by Krupp as:

- Developmental task: a job that defines the period and creates a teachable moment. There is a readiness for learning that occurs when a task is prominent in the mind of an individual. Teachable moments are part of such tasks as a job change, entering a mentoring

relationship, dealing with death, becoming a parent, etc.

- Marker event: a milestone such as marriage, death of a loved one, serious illness/accident. They can occur at any age; they do not define the period, but the period in which the event takes place does affect the marker event.
- Crisis: a time of profound inner conflict--a full crisis can result in loss of rationality. People have mid-life transitions, but they don't have to have mid-life crisis. This is dependent upon a person's internal and external resources.

Schlossberg, Troll and Leibowitz (1978) also indicate that adulthood is a time of change and individual development evolving through patterns "characterized by periods of relative stability, bridged by transitions or turning points." (p. 14) They have identified themes of adulthood to include stress, stock-taking, shift in time perspective and locus of control. The period that seems important to note in this study is that of "stock-taking" as it relates to Krupp's concept of "teachable moments" (during developmental tasks). This confirms that there are periods which could be more open to developmental decision-making--for which educators should concentrate on in promoting change within educators. Stock-taking is identified by Schlossberg, Troll and Leibowitz as a time when people approach transitions that may involve changes in life structure. They pause to take stock of

themselves--their dreams, achievements and options. Sometimes this reassessment leads to the "difficult realization that one has not lived up to earlier expectations and aspirations" (p. 17), or, on the other hand, it can "produce in some people a renewed self-confidence at having triumphed over difficulty and gained new coping strength." (p. 18)

These theories regarding adult development all conclude that change occurs at various times and in various formats during one's lifetime. It seems important to this researcher that educators must also be cognizant as to how they and their peers react to change if staff development efforts are to be successful. Schlossberg, Troll and Leibowitz (1978) identify that human beings respond to change in one of four ways:

- 1) They may shut it out, denying the existence of anything that is new or that contradicts previous experience.
- 2) They may open up to it all the way, to seek new experience constantly; this can lead to the danger of becoming too fragmented or the inability to cope.
- 3) They can respond with a minimal restoration of equilibrium--may compensate for change just enough to return as closely as possible to a previous state of balance such as a retiree transferring all energies to a hobby or a mother transferring all attention to a husband and treating him as a child after children leave home.

- 4) They may respond through growth and development by incorporating the new experiences and information in such a way that the system itself is changed and the person becomes more complex.

If the turning points in life are to be the occasion for changes in life structure and in personality, two factors will determine the kinds of change that can result:

- 1) individual's degree of openness
- 2) individual's degree of control over that openness.

The human being must have good coping skills to be just open enough, to accept just the right amount of new experience, so that true development will result.  
(p. 34)

If educators are concerned with how to affect change in the profession through staff development efforts, this researcher feels that they also need to know how to conceptualize effectively and label the developmental notions that an adult must experience in change. It appears that Schlossberg, Troll and Leibowitz's fourth response to change would be the ideal to work with in staff development activities, but it is still important to understand what adults confront within themselves as they "incorporate new experiences and information" into their system. Educators find some assistance in understanding these stages of development from Sheehy and Benjamin and Walz.

Sheehy (1977) accentuates the inevitable that occurs as adults process change and vividly describes the events that occur within one's self throughout this experience:

The years between 18 and 50 are the center of life, the unfolding of maximum opportunity and capacity. But without any guide to the inner changes on the way to full adulthood, we are swimming blind. When we don't 'fit in,' we are likely to think of our behavior as evidence of our inadequacies, rather than as a valid stage unfolding in a sequence of growth, something we accept when applied to childhood. (pp. 15-16)

. . . everyone has difficulty with the steps of inner growth, even when the outer obstacles appear easily surmountable. . . . (p. 27)

With each passage from one stage of human growth to the next, we too, must shed a protective structure. We are left exposed and vulnerable--but also yeasty and embryonic again, capable of stretching in ways we hadn't known before. These sheddings may take several years or more. Coming out of each passage, though, we enter a longer and more stable period in which we can expect relative tranquility and a sense of equilibrium regained. (p. 29)

Sheehy prefers to label the critical transitions between stages as passages to avoid the "confusing label--crisis." But she describes these times as periods leading toward growth:

The work of adult life is not easy. As in childhood, each step presents not only new tasks of development but requires a letting go of the techniques that worked before.

With each passage some magic must be given up, some cherished illusion of safety and comfortably familiar sense of self must be cast off, to allow for the greater expansion of our own distinctiveness. . . .Times of crisis, or disruption or constructive change, are not only predictable, but desirable. They mean growth. . . . (p. 31) Growth demands a temporary surrender of security. It may mean a giving up of familiar but limiting patterns, safe but unrewarding work, values no longer believed in, relationships that have lost their meaning. (p. 513)

Benjamin and Walz's work also contributes to the concepts regarding transitions in adult development, but they take this effort a step further and focus on counseling adults through these stages. They focus on life planning issues which this researcher feels can be useful to educators in personal or peer counseling/mentoring/coaching situations. Benjamin and Walz (1982) discuss the need to consider possible, probable and preferred futures:

Possible futures encompass all that we imagine can conceivably occur, an almost limitless array of potential lifestyles and outcomes. Imaging probable futures begins the narrowing process and identifies from among the possible futures those which we believe have the greatest chance of becoming real. Our personal choice from among the probable futures then becomes our preferred future, the future that we would most like to experience. (p. 76)

A study that supports the notion that attention to transitional behaviors, feelings and life planning issues ought to be considered with educators, is found in Crow's (1985) review of the female educator at mid-life. She conducted a national study of working women between 1980-84 of which 146 were educators. Of the 146, 67 percent reported that they have experienced or are experiencing a mid-life or mid-career crisis which started about age 42 and lasted about 5 years. Those educators ranked four factors as "triggers" or causes:

- 1) concern over their own careers
- 2) concern over the meaning of life
- 3) home and family concerns
- 4) concern over their own  
psychological and physical  
health

It was also noted that "Women who focused more strongly on their careers were also more likely than their less-career-oriented colleagues to experience a mid-life crisis." (p. 283) However what was significant to note in this study, in relationship to the preceding discussion regarding the change or "transitional" process, was that 33 percent of the 146 educators and 24 percent of the total group of 1,100 working women managed to avoid a crisis (she doesn't define crisis specifically). Those who did experience one found they could shorten the crisis period or lessen the severity of these symptoms. Many emerged as

healthier and better-functioning individuals--had taken control of their lives and opened new options. One noted "crisis only occurs when you have no options". (p. 284) Crow goes on to conclude, "The women in my study who coped with a mid-life crisis most successfully were those who turned the crisis to their advantage, making it an opportunity to renew their minds, their bodies, their careers, their relationships and--ultimately--their lives." (p. 284)

With some current perceptions regarding the significance of adult development in mind, and even more specifically such development as related to a group of educators, it is important to attend to the corresponding needs of the adult as a learner--the emphasis of this study. This next issue will be addressed within the context of the "developing adult" that has been established in this portion of the chapter.

## 2) Adult Learning:

Continuing to review the broad "perspective of the adult as a learner", the reader will now focus on some specific concepts which further build on the information shared in the preceding section. Given the context of an adult as a "developing" individual, this researcher has selected to highlight the work of Knowles, Warnat, Taylor and Krupp in describing the adult as a learner.



This nation's recent experiences in observing the efforts of Christa McAuliffe's attempt to bring learning to every child and adult in the United States through her work on the space shuttle, Challenger, ought to remain as a lasting example of how effective learning principles can be implemented. She embraced the nation and encouraged everyone to join in her own learning experiences on a regular basis; she elicited a nation of "self-directed learners" as perhaps no other educator has attempted in history. Everyone was captivated by Christa's information which she shared willingly as a result of her developing experiences as an astronaut. This strategy was illustrative of a key principle in adult learning theory--that adults are themselves a rich resource for learning due to the foundation of experience from which they can relate new experiences; new learnings tend to take on meaning as they are related to past experiences (Knowles, 1970).

Malcolm Knowles is considered one of the foremost theorists on adult learning. He initiated the term andragogy--the art and science of helping adults learn. This term was officially accepted by Merriam-Webster in 1968 as Knowles investigated a method of making a clear distinction regarding the differences between youth and adults as learners (Knowles, 1970). Andragogy is premised on at least four main assumptions that differentiate the characteristics of adult learners from those regarding child learning (pedagogy). Knowles (1970, 1973) indicates that as

a person matures:

- 1) his self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality toward one of increasing self-directedness; andragogy assumes that the point at which an individual achieves a self-concept of essential self-direction is the point at which he psychologically becomes adult,
- 2) he accumulates an expanding reservoir of experience that causes him to become an increasingly rich resource for learning, and at the same time provides him with a broadening base to which to relate new learnings,
- 3) his readiness to learn is increasingly the product of the developmental tasks required for the performance of his evolving social roles; andragogy assumes that learners are ready to learn those things they "need" to because of the developmental phases they are approaching in their roles as workers, spouses, parents, organizational member/leaders, leisure time users, etc.
- 4) his time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge (as that of a child's) to immediacy of application and accordingly his orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of problem-centeredness. They engage in learning largely in response to pressures they feel from their current life situation.

Knowles' concepts regarding andragogy have impacted the field of adult education, industrial/business training programs and other fields involving adult learners. They are a necessary element of consideration in linking the field of adult learning and staff development for educators.

Winifred I. Warnat has comprehensively reviewed the development of adult learning theory and concluded with relationships that emerge as prominent staff development issues. Warnat (1980) synthesized the findings of adult educators who have made significant contributions toward building adult learning theory. Those whose work she considered for this category include Lindeman, 1926; Houle, 1980; Tough, 1971; Boshier, 1977; Kidd, 1973; Knox, 1977; Cross, 1979; Knowles, 1972, 1978; Simpson, 1979. Key concepts regarding adult learning theory as related to this study and those which directly provide linkages to the work of Knowles are outlined next.

In her analysis of the current status of adult learning, Warnat (1980) emphasizes that Edward Lindeman laid the cornerstone of modern theory in adult learning. His early work identified the following:

- 1) adults are motivated to learn as they experience needs and interests that learning will satisfy
- 2) adults' orientation to learning is life-centered

- 3) experience is the richest resource for adults' learning
- 4) adults have a deep need to be self-directing
- 5) individual differences among people increase with age

This early emphasis on the adult as a learner encouraged those mentioned previously to follow in their studies of adult learning theory. This group of adult educators identified different elements representative of current theory and emphasized planning of programs for adult learners. Warnat (1980) drew conclusions regarding their work:

- Although no learning theory exists that is truly holistic, these adult educators acknowledge the need and desirability of such.
- Theory building in adult learning has tended to focus on relevance for practice, rather than on interpreting the individual adult learning process.
- We have yet to explain how the learner's analysis of personal life experiences reflects the intrinsic nature of the learning process.
- These adult educators expressed common concerns about the intrinsic aspects of adult learning in terms of learner motivation, self-directed learning, developmental changes, over the life span, and the obstacles or inhibitors faced by the adult learner.

As pointed out by so many of these researchers, there are differences in the needs of adult learners which require adaptations primarily in the approach taken by the instructional leader, staff development specialist, etc. This was confirmed again in a study by Taylor (1981) as she intensively observed the behaviors of twelve different adult learners, all human service professionals who had at least one university degree. She identified four stages or "seasons" of learning through her research: divergence, engagement, convergence and detachment. In addition, she identified several points which consist simultaneously as conditions "within" the adult learner as follows:

- 1) the learning event must be experienced as a voluntary act by the learner
- 2) it has to be okay to be confused
- 3) it must be possible to be open to and receive affirmation from significant others, one of whom may be the instructor
- 4) students and teachers must come to understand, trust and work with intuition
- 5) students must be able to initiate collaborative relationships with others with whom they can exchange on complimentary or similar questions and searches
- 6) learners must withdraw from busy activity and find time to reflect in solitude

- 7) it is important for learners to evolve their own versions of a new understanding in their own time and for this discovery to matter to someone else.

Currently the work of Judy-Arin Krupp has begun to raise the consciousness of educators as she has studied the needs of the adult learner and actively relates it to elements of staff development planning in her various presentations to administrators, staff development leaders and teachers. Krupp (1982) thoroughly identifies the characteristics of the adult in the following areas--experiential, physical, role/relationship, personality, developmental, environmental and learning. For the purpose of this study a review of the learning characteristics will be listed as they succinctly draw together the areas focused on in previously discussed adult development and adult learning theory. Krupp identifies adult learning characteristics as follows:

- 1) adults are continuously growing and learning
- 2) adult learning is often self-initiated and aimed toward an immediate goal
- 3) adults learn and process materials through multitudinous means
- 4) people have subject matter or skills about which they prefer to learn

- 5) adults use only part of their intellectual potential during their lives

This review reflects elements of adult learning which are not often mentioned in staff development planning strategies. Experience in the field has indicated that too frequently the planning is only focused on task orientation. Many of these adult learning principles need to be woven into the "tapestries" of staff development strategies in order to bring about the expected outcomes. As Moore (1979) emphasizes in his discussion on possible failures in professional development activities, "Poor planning also includes not determining what knowledge and skills participants bring with them. Absent of our determining this, we can really insult people by plowing over ground which already has been well planted. Or, at the other extreme, we can initiate activities at such a level of abstraction for participants that they have to tune us out to preserve their sanity. (p. 10) It would appear necessary to plan staff development activities with the participant "viewed from a 'total' adult perspective, as well as one that encompasses the diversity of the adult learning process of each individual." (Warnat, 1980, p. 10)

Krupp (1982) confirms this perspective as she states that the adult learner:

. . .is in the process of becoming. . .becoming aware of one's identity, a lifelong process to which learning is continuously

related in one way or another. . . concern for the adult learner means concern for the individual as a person in all aspects of his or her existence. . . . (p. 3) We as educators have an obligation to each adult learner that supersedes our particular area of expertise. It is the obligation and responsibility to build on the learner's sense of worth, to help each learner be all he or she can be: in short, to be the unique person we each are. (p. 219)

Warnat (1980) feels that educators have only scratched the surface in regard to adult learning potential. She explores other dimensions relating to staff development, specifically the human mind and self-imposed limitations. She also asserts that researchers in adult learning are relying increasingly on a qualitative rather than on a quantitative interpretation that allows for the integration of the humanness factor in the adult learning process. As an example, self-imposed limitations, (mental barriers that an individual builds to protect him/herself from what one does not know or understand) as expressed through attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviors, affect staff development efforts regularly. The relationship between adult learning and staff development is viewed as "a symbiotic one that makes them virtually inseparable, even though there is an absence of cogent adult-learning theory" (p. 59); she feels that it is a concept "starting to take hold."



It is an established fact that our nation faces an increasingly large number of adult learners, particularly those approaching mid-life. Weinrauch (1984) has studied adult learning needs in relationship to the large numbers of adult learners who will be interested in various forms of continuing education experiences in the future. As he points out, by the year 2000, there will be 81 percent more adults aged 35-44 than at present and the number of people over 55 will have increased by 27 percent. In contrast, the 18 to 24 year old population will have decreased significantly. As Weinrauch states, "Previous teaching methods will not suffice in the growing, heterogeneous and dynamic field of adult education. In the future, a predominantly adult culture will have profound implications on educational content, format and pedagogical techniques." (p. 37) Krupp (1982-83) adds to this emphasis as she points out, "Sparkling an aging staff is a never-ending job of daily staff development that requires constant attention by administrators." (p. 13)

The needs of adult learners have been emphasized in this section in addition to the fact that staff developers must address this continuum of needs. It appears that adult development, adult learning and staff development have an integrated field of research from which to draw. Krupp (1981) confirms this integration of concepts, "Only the educator familiar with all areas related to staff development can individualize and view the adult learner in

a holistic manner. . . . It is only through a holistic view of the adult, a view of the adult in all possible aspects, that staff development can hope to be successful." (p. 147)

### Self-Directed Learning:

Within the larger context of adult learning principles is the concept of self-directed learning. Inherent in this study the researcher investigates the self-directed learning processes of a variety of educators. It is essential to focus on what dimensions self-directed learning experiences can take.

Knowles (1975) defines self-directed learning as:

. . . a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes. . . self-directed learning usually takes place in association with various kinds of helpers, such as teachers, tutors, mentors, resource people, and peers. There is a lot of mutuality among a group of self-directed learners. (p. 18)

Later Penland (1981) identifies the self-directed learner as one who is capable of directing his/her personal life through reasoned choice. The learner takes charge of selecting the following:

- learning needs, goals and strategies
- times dedicated to learning episodes
- places for learning to occur
- social setting or participation
- human and non-human resources for planning
- learning methods

Self-initiated and self-planned learning is powered by motives (situational perception), guided by goals (diagnosed opportunities) and controlled by skills (interpersonal tactics). . . . (p. 7) Self instructional learning emerges from the happenings and the environments encountered in everyday life. As the individual's initiative is strengthened in these encounters, situations are increasingly created within which learning is planned and developed around personal objectives to be achieved. The sequence of planned events may include some that are created by others such as teachers and other resource persons; but regardless of the proportion of such additions, the individual learner remains squarely in control. (p. 27)

An important concept in self-directed learning revolves around the need for reflection. In this study the researcher is concerned with the opportunity for educators to reflect on their experiences as adult learners and how that relates to their educational responsibilities. But, as Erickson (1985) contends, this may be infrequently requested:

Teachers in public schools have not been asked, as part of their job description, to reflect on their own practice, to deepen their conceptions of it, and to communicate their insights to others. As the teaching role is currently defined in schools there are external limits on the capacity of a teacher to reflect critically on his or her own practice. There is neither time available, nor an institutionalized audience for such reflection. (pp. 175-176)

As Collins (1981) points out, ". . .we do not grasp the meaning of an action while we are caught up in its performance; rather we turn back upon the flow of the action to capture its meaning in reflective advertence." (p. 13) He suggests that we face a challenge in facilitating a learning society in which "reflective inquiry is preferred to the prescriptive formulations of standardized curricula." (p. 15)

Weisbeck and Buchmann (1981) studied the process by which teachers develop reflective skills beginning with the initial training process. They focused on the learning which occurred by a preservice teacher who participated in an ethnographic study allowing her to share insights drawn from her reflections in these initial teaching experiences. This study indicates how this preservice teacher "learned to stretch beyond her personal feelings to engage in the professional reflection that accompanied research involvement." (p. 15) In addition this experience helped her to "acquire what Feiman (1979) calls 'professional

discipline: a reflective or inquiring stance; the capacity for informed and independent judgment; the commitment to study and learn from one's own experience'. (p. 15)

Weisbeck and Buchmann summarize their assertion from this study regarding reflection. ". . . Reflection requires detachment and an open mind. In a more detached attitude, people stop taking things for granted. Detachment allows for the surprise that accompanies some of the most significant learning. For teachers to be flexible and open-minded may be more important than to be right, since "being right" is a context-dependent and time-bound phenomenon." (p. 1)

Another dimension of the need for reflection in the educational process is explored by Sergiovanni (1985) as he shares how essential this process is in supervision,

Supervision as a reflective practice. . .requires that teachers join supervisors in trying to make sense of complex situations, in sharing perceptions, and in arriving at 'treatments' and other courses of action together. The teacher is not dependent upon the supervisor. Instead the supervisor needs the teacher's involvement in order to fully understand what is going on. . .reflective practice seeks to establish augmented professional intelligence. . .augmented professional intelligence serves to inform the intuitions of supervisors as they practice. As this process unfolds, practical knowledge is created in use as unique 'treatments' are developed, applied, refined and shared with other supervisors. (pp. 16-17)

Blackman, Crowell, Holly and Van Voorhees (1982) support this need for reflective thinking as a means for growth as they focus on how writing and discussion provide opportunities for educators to analyze the complexity of teaching. "Reflection and writing are personal and self-directed professional processes which draw from practice. They serve to extend practice and to enable communication to develop on a professional level. As teachers think more deeply about what they do, they pose questions to themselves and others on significant aspects of teaching." (p. 9)

Journal writing has been emphasized as a strategy for self-directed learning through a reflective process. As Holly (1983) points out, "As we write about our activity and as we return to it later, we lend two additional perspectives to it. We begin to differentiate when our activities are consistent with our aims and when they might inadvertently be working against them." (p. 22) Jackson supports this thesis (Holly 1983) in stating, ". . .in order to benefit from experience, we must reflect on it, cogitate over it, and try to make sense of it from a distance. Recording our thoughts and feelings in a journal enables us to return to them from a different perspective." (p. 56)

Self-directed learning is an integral element in adult learning/staff development notions as the intrinsic factors play an important role in improving/changing performance. The degree to which self-directed or self-initiated learning

occurs beyond the staff development activity directly relates to the degree of transfer one will observe in the classroom.

There are some graduate programs which are focusing on pulling the dimensions of adult learning and self-directed experiences together with the work situation. Kane (1984) describes one which prepares educators for nonschool settings called PEEP. She indicates that this program integrates many principles advocated by Knowles such as written contracts, self-directed learning, seminars with peer discussions, etc. As she points out, "PEEP offers students the kind of educative experiences that John Dewey advocated--experiences that increase perceptions of connections and continuities of the activities in which we are engaged and that translate subsequently into self direction and control." (p. 624)

Another important facet in the process of adult learning and effective staff development experiences hovers around the interaction amongst peers or participants in the learning process.

### Social Transmission/Interaction/Collegiality:

Piaget is the foremost researcher on the role of social transmission in the learning process. He utilizes the concept in relationship to the influence of the culture on

the child's thought. "The social transmission of knowledge promotes cognitive development. The accumulated wisdom of a culture passes down from generation to generation, and enables the child to learn through the experience of others. Because of social transmission, the child need not completely reinvent everything for himself." (Ginsburg/Opper, 1978, p. 211) Ehrenberg (1983) illustrates Piaget's notion of social transmission as simply, "the need for learners to consistently and productively communicate what they are learning to other people." (p. 82)

The research is noteworthy in its absence for openly tying Piaget's concept of social transmission with adult learning/staff development principles. Kidd (1973) does, however, make reference to it as a useful concept to note in adult education. There is a rising emphasis and interest in the related concepts of collegiality and interaction amongst peers--all of which focus on similar results.

Barth (1984) articulates collegial relationships very succinctly when he identifies collegiality as the presence of four specific behaviors:

- 1) Adults in schools talk about the practice of teaching and learning frequently, continuously and in concrete and precise terms.
- 2) They observe each other teaching and administering. These observations become a practice they reflect upon and talk about.



- 3) They work on the curriculum together by planning, designing, researching and evaluating it.
- 4) They teach each other what they know about teaching, learning and leading.

The above interpretation of collegiality would seem to have some similarities to Piaget's emphasis on social interaction among children (Kamii, 1984). Piaget argued that exchanging points of view is indispensable for a child's moral development and for the development of logic. Perret-Clermont's research (Kamii, 1984) concludes that when children confront the ideas of other children for as brief an interval as 10 minutes, higher levels of logical reasoning are often the outcome. "Clearly, social life in the classroom affects children's intellectual development. Exchanging points of view also contributes positively to children's social, affective, moral and political development." (p. 414)

Phillips (1969) has taken interaction a step further as he interprets Piaget's concept of egocentrism and relates the importance of social interactions in this process:

The ability to take the view of the other (without losing his own) and the corresponding social norm of logical consistency are acquired gradually, through repeated social interactions in which the child is compelled again and again to take account of the viewpoints of others. This social feedback is extremely important in developing the capacity to think about his own

thinking, without which logic is impossible. (p. 63)

This study emphasizes the role that social interaction plays while educators "take account of the viewpoints of others" and how this relates to the thinking of the participants. This concept of expanding thinking skills through interaction is also supported by deBono (1983) as he states "a natural synergy exists between thinking and the expression of thought in language (p. 705). . .directly or indirectly, discussion must be the most widely used method of teaching thinking--the aim is to provide practice in thinking." (p. 706)

Educators can transfer these research findings to their assumptions of adult learning and the need for interaction which can be labeled by concepts such as social transmission and collegiality. The current research is heavily endowed with supporting evidence that there is a need for adult learning activities/staff development opportunities that allow for open interaction and communication among participants. Sparks (1983) synthesized staff development research and states that "staff development efforts were most likely to be successful where a norm of collegiality and experimentation existed. (p. 66) Joyce and Showers (1983) found that "the mastery of complex academic content and new teaching strategies requires an active state of interchange. . .critical is the creation of a productive social system so that those in the most active states of



growth help others to reach out more powerfully into their environments. The key is in the development of an energizing environment within the workplace of teachers." (p. 31)

Cruickshank and Applegate (1981) describe a project in which the emphasis is on helping teachers reflect on their work and discuss openly with their peers as to what the teaching/learning processes were like for them. "This reflective activity with the whole group encourages the discussion of alternative teaching methods. . . .During the feedback and reflection sessions the teachers openly discussed their difficulties. . . .Teachers find themselves engaged in a meaningful process of inquiry which leads them toward renewed self-esteem and interest in teaching." (p. 554)

Eaton (1985) confirms the need for teachers' interactions regarding their professional work and identifies the role that programs such as the Written Literacy Forum can serve to meet this need.

If teachers are to behave like the professionals many want them to be, they must be given the opportunities for professional dialogue...Traditional in-service workshops don't provide those opportunities. Teachers sit and listen to 'experts' instead of sharing what they know with each other. Nothing in the current school structure enables teachers to come together as professionals. (p. 24)

According to Erickson, Campbell and Navarro (Eaton, 1985), who work with the Written Literacy Forum,

Teachers know more than they realize and more than they can say...They are not used to having to articulate their knowledge because few people, if any, ask teachers to explain what they do and why. Further, the working lives of teachers leave little time for reflection. As a result, say the researchers, 'What they know is often implicit, just below the edge of conscious awareness.' (p. 25)

Anang's research (1982) focuses on teacher/developer interactions. She identifies that the "concept of staff development has been broadened by first recognizing the importance of the communicative act in actual face-to-face interactions. By focusing on the process of staff development rather than the input or output, the complexities and the sources of ambiguity have become visible and open to systematic observation of how they function. . . . It has been learned that staff development is. . .mutually dependent on all participants and is, in fact, a social transaction." (p. 202)

It appears as though there is sufficient evidence to promote the need for further study on the importance of interaction/social transmission/collegiality in the adult learning/staff development process. This research project will emphasize that dimension of adult learning. As Madeline Hunter (1985) points out, "To respectfully address another person's point of view is a master, master step.

Until we accomplish it in our own profession. . . . I see very little hope for it in our community, in our cities, in our nation and in the world."

In summary, the four concepts which have been reviewed from the literature--staff development, the adult as a learner, self-directed learning and social interaction--provide a frame of reference for this study in the Red Rock Area School District. Through qualitative research methods, the researcher provides data in Chapter IV as to how this specific group of educators, working with the Young Fives Program, perceived their learning experiences through on-site staff development activities.

CHAPTER III  
RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The Researcher:

The researcher is a Special Education Director for the Intermediate School District; the Red Rock Area Public Schools is one of the thirteen constituent school districts served by the Intermediate School District. Due to the fact that the Red Rock School District has a sufficient school population to warrant a Special Education Director internally, this researcher does not spend as much time in direct communication with Red Rock staff as in other small local districts. Her work in this district is primarily accomplished with the school administrators and local school board. As a result, this project opened up some direct contact with new school district staff--primarily the teacher coordinator, assessment/diagnostic personnel who screen for the Young Fives Program, and the teachers who were hired to implement the Young Fives Program. These individuals represent the "adult learners" in this study; all of these persons are relatively new acquaintances of the researcher. On the other hand, the researcher has known the

District Director of Curriculum, Dr. Sarah Sullivan, for a long period of time. They had met initially when the researcher was student teaching in 1966 as they were working in the same middle school building. Following this, they became friends and have retained this friendship through various personal and professional moves over the years. This relationship assisted the researcher in initial entry into the Red Rock School District as Dr. Sullivan knew the researcher was pursuing her dissertation project, but it also forced the researcher to pursue access to a project which was operating independently of Dr. Sullivan's daily contact. They discussed this need and opportunity for the researcher to establish key informants who were new acquaintances and had had no experience in working with the researcher previously. A preference for a project relating to the elementary schools was discussed due to the researcher's previous work with more middle and secondary staff.

The researcher is normally a familiar figure in the school district facilities as she attends many meetings in the various buildings on special education needs/issues. It is not unusual to find her in the middle/secondary buildings of the district several times each week due to supervision of Intermediate School District staff in those buildings. Presence in the elementary buildings is not as frequent--perhaps on a bi-weekly/monthly basis. However, due to this project, the 1984-85 school year found the



researcher increasing her time in the buildings as she attended various meetings on the Young Fives Program. It was essential that the researcher attended a variety of meetings in the various buildings in order to gather data on the "development process" as perceived by a variety of district staff and parents. This type of data could not be collected through any other method. As Yinger and Clark (1985) indicate, ". . .in experimental research, the researcher uses data collection instruments, while in naturalistic research the researcher is the data collection instrument." (p. 25)

The researcher found it necessary to assimilate how the Red Rock Schools were incorporating the Young Fives Program into their curriculum at the elementary level. This necessitated attendance at staff meetings, planning sessions, parent and board meetings. As a result, the researcher became known as a "regular" figure to be present if Young Fives was on the agenda. This involvement proved to be very helpful in establishing a frame of reference for the more specific research questions/issues. During that period of time the researcher concentrated on how the school district was planning a new program. This led her to understand the conditions in which the educators as adult learners would be introduced to the new Young Fives concepts, new roles, the level of administrative and board support and the attitudes of district staff and parents which would eventually be critical in terms of the program's

implementation. This process assisted the researcher in conceptualizing the nature of the study which was evolving in her mind concurrently with the district's sequence of planning. Such activity is encouraged by Yinger and Clark (1985),

. . .in naturalistic studies, researchers are advised to immerse themselves in a research setting until a set of interpretive frameworks emerge from the data. In addition, these frameworks should be the ones that convey meaning not only to the researcher as an outsider to the setting but ones that are meaningful to the research participants as insiders. (p. 26)

Becoming familiar with the content associated with the Young Fives Program assisted the researcher in later observations which occurred from September-January of the 1985-86 school year. The initial orientation to Young Fives allowed her to focus on the process which was involved in assimilating staff in a new learning situation. Once the content started to become repetitious, the researcher intensified her focus on the essence of fieldwork research as described by Erickson, Florio and Buschman (1980):

- 1) What's happening in this field setting?
- 2) What do the happenings mean to the people involved in them?
- 3) What do people have to know in order to be able to do what they do in the setting?

- 4) How does what is happening here relate to what is happening in the wider social context of this setting?
- 5) How does the organization of what is happening here differ from that found in other places and times?

Through regular attendance at Young Fives meetings, the staff participating did not appear to observe the "transition" of the researcher's focus. They had already concluded that she was interested in the content/curriculum of Young Fives; they had not associated her presence with a study of their behavior/growth in this project. The entry-level participation developed a "sense of trust" for the researcher/staff relationship. As Peshkin (1978) pointed out in his initial work in Mansfield, "The details of the person I announced myself to be at the start of my work in Mansfield were of less consequence than the person I demonstrated I was. Once accepted, I was trusted. . . (p. 1)

Because of the length of time this researcher has worked for the Intermediate School District (16 years), the Red Rock Area Public Schools have been a major focus of administrative attention due to the district size and logistics. The Intermediate School District offices are located within the Red Rock District and several special education classrooms are located within the buildings of this district. In this context, it has been important for the researcher to focus on the concept in ethnography known

as "making the familiar strange." Making the familiar strange continues to be a basic problem in the anthroethnography of schooling in our society (Spindler, 1982). But as Spindler points out it is possible to make the "cultural translation from familiar to strange and back to familiar" (p. 24) when working in schools.

This concept is supported by Peshkin (1982) as he discusses the close association that must exist for the researcher in ethnographic research. He identifies the four R's of research: 1) researcher (who, in terms of personal qualities and background, is doing the study); 2) research (what is studied); 3) researching (how the study is conducted); 4) results (what is found in the data). As he states, "Investigators of social phenomena, which we are, always run the risk of finding in their data not what is there but what is in their beholding eye. Though the risk never can be reduced to zero, it can be minimized by the effort to "know thyself." (pp. 50-51) This researcher has sought to maintain this perspective throughout this project in an effort to retain understanding of this research association.

#### Entry/Schedule of the Study:

The research study was initiated in September, 1984, when the researcher "gained entry" into the district for

orientation regarding the Young Fives Project. This was accomplished through a meeting with the Red Rock Area Public School Director of Curriculum, Dr. Sarah Sullivan. The concept of ethnographic research regarding educators as adult learners was focused on; the researcher requested information regarding district programs which might be appropriate for such research. This is described in the following excerpt from fieldnotes:

Researcher: (explaining interest in researching a setting) where educators were learners--working on a new program in which they were not totally familiar--required new learning experiences for them--and that I could "somewhat inconspicuously" observe over a period of time as approved by the district.

Sarah: (thought for a few moments)--something that would be perfect would be our Young Fives Project--we're just starting it this year--we're doing our planning now--Jackie Collins has been assigned as Teacher Coordinator to head up this project--I bet it would work! I talked to Jackie already and mentioned the possibility, but I needed to hear more about your plans--now that they seem to mesh--I think this could work.

Researcher: What kind of time frame are you projecting for the Young Fives?

Sarah: This year we're planning and selling--the Board has got to be convinced that this is what the district needs--those of us who have been in the Gesell workshops are convinced (with affirmation)--but we have to lay

the groundwork for it in the district and complete the research on our kindergartners. See, we've been studying our kindergarten programs ever since the days of the Developmental Kindergarten--we're not satisfied yet--we have to do something to help these kids who are just not ready for school even though they're 5 years old! Developmental Kindergarten--at least the way it was run here--wasn't the answer--we think this is (Young Fives).

Researcher: What opportunities would there be for staff development activities?

Sarah: Well, let's see--this year everyone will be learning--principals, teachers, parents, the Board, me!--we all have to be convinced that it is the way to go--so there would be a lot of meetings. Jackie will be responsible for working this information out and presenting at these meetings--later we'll have the Gesell Training session--we've already tentatively planned for that in late January--then, of course there will be lots of other folks who will, ah--"want to know" what's going on as they hear about something new--we wouldn't start the classes until Fall, 1985--so teachers won't be involved until then (in classrooms with children).

Researcher: Well, I know you're busy--I'd be very interested in this project--would you have any questions/reservations about my work?

Sarah: No, June, I think it'd work out well--here, let me introduce you to Jackie--(went out to get her)--June, this is Jackie Collins--she'll be directing the Young Fives Project (Jackie's eyes got big--and she giggled a little)--yes, she's got a big job

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

on her hands--Jackie, June is interested in the project for her research study--you remember I told you she was meeting with me--maybe the two of you could get together to talk in more detail--

Researcher: Hi, Jackie--so you already know I'm interested in "following you around"?

Jackie: Yes, Sarah told me you were meeting--I'm excited! (Again with a giggle and big eyes)--let's set up a time to talk more (we pulled out our calendars as we walked down the hall).  
(FN: 09/21/84)

This initial "introduction" to the Young Fives Program and to Jackie Collins, the Teacher Coordinator for the project, established the base for the sequence of activities that followed for the balance of the 1984-85 school year and the first semester of the 1985-86 school year.

During the 1984-85 school year the District held 28 meetings to which the researcher was invited and which were exclusively related to Young Fives planning/development/training. Other meetings were held, but were not considered as relevant. These sessions, which were representative of Young Fives Planning, were organized as follows:

- District-wide Kindergarten teachers planning sessions--four sessions (these teachers also participated totally in the nine Gesell Training sessions, the two Board meetings and the four parent meetings and they had a representative on the planning committee)



- Young Fives Planning Committee--four sessions (these members also participated in a large variety of the other meetings that were held throughout the year)
- Chapter I teachers meeting--one (this group met on a monthly basis, but the researcher only attended the one meeting in which Young Fives was the exclusive topic; a Chapter I teacher was on the Young Fives Planning Committee and all Chapter I teachers participated in the Gesell Training sessions)
- Board meetings--two (this included the session regarding orientation to Young Fives and the session in which the Board took action to adopt the program; in addition Board members discussed Young Fives at their Board Curriculum Committee meetings, but the researcher did not participate)
- District-wide parent meetings--four (two of these meetings were PTO meetings at which times Young Fives was introduced and discussed in terms of district implementation; one was a meeting for all parents of kindergarten-age children for the Fall, 1985 entry to school and one was a meeting of all parents who had children identified for Young Fives programs through the Kindergarten Screening Program--using the Gesell instruments)
- Building-level staff meetings--three (these were opportunities for general introduction of the Young Fives Program into the district)
- Training sessions--nine (these were Gesell training/staff development on how to administer the Gesell instruments for kindergarten screening; included formal training and follow-up practice sessions)
- Elementary principals meeting--one (the elementary principals meet regularly with the Director of Curriculum and Instruction; this was the initial introductory session to Young Fives. The principals designated a representative to the Young Fives Planning Committee; this representative attended a variety of other meetings throughout the year regarding Young Fives, as their designee)

During the 1985-86 school year, the Young Fives Program was actually implemented in the Red Rock Area Public School District. Initially, three teachers were hired to teach

Young Fives. However, due to a large class in one building, this was eventually split into two sections and another section was opened. Four teachers were employed, in all, to teach Young Fives. The Teacher Coordinator, Jackie Collins, continued to be responsible for overall coordination and implementation of Young Fives, but in addition she was also assigned other district-wide responsibilities such as Chapter I and other federal and state grants.

In 1985-86, the focus of the researcher's study shifted to the Young Fives teachers as adult learners, the Teacher Coordinator as an adult learner in a changing role responsibility and the implications of their work in the program that the District had planned so intensively. The researcher's schedule during the period from September, 1985, through early February, 1986, included 34 hours of participant observation and interview sessions which were organized as follows, in 31 different sessions:

- Interviews individually with the Teacher Coordinator--11
- Young Fives classroom observations--four (one in each program)
- Staff development sessions for the Young Fives teachers facilitated by the Teacher Coordinator--four
- Young Fives Planning Committee (same group as in 1984-85)--one
- General staff development sessions in the district--two (focusing on effective staff development issues for educators)

- Interviews with Young Fives teachers and other significant educators involved in Young Fives staff development sessions--nine

The researcher formally exited the site following the first week of February, 1986. There have been follow-up contacts for specific information regarding the research study and a number of informal contacts with personnel involved, but the researcher no longer attended the Young Fives teacher meetings or other sessions directly related to this program.

#### Methodology:

Peshkin (1982) personalizes his biases for ethnographic research which also portray the preferences of this researcher. He describes this selection as follows:

What choice of methodology comes down to for many of us, I suspect, is personal taste: the sense of adventure which I like in research is present for me under the circumstances of the ethnographic research. Moreover, I like the literary style that ethnographies permit. Finally, I am attached to the particular way good ethnographies powerfully portray and illuminate concepts and relationships. In light of this acknowledgment, perhaps it is not too far-fetched to hypothesize that some researchers have methodological commitments in search of a study. (p. 53)

55

12

15

7

12

1

1

2

2

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

As Schatzman and Strauss (1973) point out, "method is seen by the field researcher as emerging from operations--from strategic decisions, instrumental actions, and analytic processes--which go on throughout the entire research enterprise." (p. 7) The "method" in this project includes data gathering strategies encompassing participant observation, interviewing and review of relevant documents. In addition, on-going literature review was conducted to supplement the other data gathering strategies. Schatzman and Strauss (1973) focus on the practical element of data gathering as they define a field researcher to be a "methodological pragmatist"--one who "sees any method of inquiry as a system of strategies and operations designed--at any time--for getting answers to certain questions about events which interest him. As a methodological pragmatist, the field researcher concerns himself less with whether his techniques are "scientific" than with what specific operations might yield the most meaningful information." (pp. 7-8) This approach is supported by Erickson (1985) as he explains the role of data gathering:

When we consider fieldwork as a process of deliberate inquiry in a setting we can see the participant observer's conduct of data collection as progressive problem solving, in which issues of sampling, hypotheses generation and hypothesis testing go hand in hand. The fieldworker's daily presence in the setting is guided by deliberate decisions about sampling and by

intuitive reactions as well. When and where the observer goes, who she talks to and watches, with whom she participates with a more distanced observational stance--all of these involve strategic decisions about the nature of the key research questions and working hypothesis of the study. (p. 97)

Participant observation occurred in the setting in which the educators work. For the Teacher Coordinator, this included observations in staff development sessions, assessment/diagnostic sessions and other related activities. For the teachers in Young Fives, this occurred in the classroom, school meetings, staff development sessions and some informal activities. Erickson (1985) refers to this focus on context as "social ecology"--a need to address the process and structure of the environment and to gather "meaning-in-action." As Bogdan and Biklen (1982) point out, "Qualitative researchers go to the particular setting under study because they are concerned with context." They go on to describe this relationship to context as follows:

. . .the researcher is bent on understanding, in considerable detail, how people such as teachers, principals, and students think and how they come to develop the perspectives they hold. This goal often leads the researcher to spend considerable time with subjects in their own environs, asking open-ended questions such as "what is a typical day like for you?" "What do you like best about your work?" and recording their responses. The open-ended nature of the approach allows the subjects to answer from their own frame of

reference rather than from one  
structured by prearranged  
questions. (p. 2)

Another major source of data-gathering for this project included interviewing the educators who participated in the adult learning experiences associated with Young Fives. This strategy yielded most insightful perspectives from the participants themselves as to their observations about their own learning experiences. As Schatzman and Strauss (1973) indicate, "A dialogue with persons in their natural situation will reveal the nuances of meaning from which their perspectives and definitions are continually forged." (p. 6) In addition, this interviewing process surfaced questions which were pursued in the study due to the experiences in which the Teacher Coordinator and teachers were involved on a daily basis. The researcher maintained an opportunity to follow-up these questions/comments as she continued her interviews. This concept is supported by Shulman (1979), "We find problems addressed in the terms of those who experience them, rather than exclusively in terms of a dominant discipline." (p. 12)

It is critical to utilize the educators as key informants in the research process of this study due to the nature of the data needed for this research, but it is also important to remember the role that educators need to play in continuing development of theory related to the profession. Florio (1980) identifies this relationship well in her statement:





Teacher participation in fieldwork research that takes the form not only of answering researchers' questions, but of sharing the activities of question framing, data gathering, and drawing and testing inferences can yield multiple professional benefits. By means of their participation, teachers not only stand a chance of enhancing the quality of theory about their practice, but they develop inquiry skills and experience that may stand them in good stead as they approach daily problems within that practice. (pp. 16-17)

Interviewing the educators provided a two-way experience--that of significant data-gathering for the researcher and that of reflection/insights for the respondent. The combination of these purposes yielded "thick description" as defined by Bogdan and Biklen (1982). In addition, certain insights were gathered as follow-up discussions to the interviews that would not have otherwise been possible for the researcher. The combination of the researcher's observations along with the integration of the participants insights yielded a perspective far greater than one gained independently. Such a concept is encouraged in theory-building by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as they describe methodological corollaries:

. . .the researcher can get--and cultivate--crucial insights not only during his research (and from his research) but from his own personal experiences prior to or outside it. . .such insights need not come from one's own experience

but can be taken from others--convert these borrowed experiences into his own insights. (p. 252)

The interviewing strategies were guided by the following frame of reference identified by Gorden (1980):

- a) discovering the respondent's paths of association regarding a certain topic, situation or event;
- b) discovering the relative importance of various aspects of a topic, situation, or event experienced by the respondent;
- c) discovering the frame of reference used by the respondent in observing, analyzing or acting in a situation;
- d) discovering the chronological order of the respondent's experiences in a given situation;
- e) discovering the vocabulary used by the respondent in discussing certain aspects of a topic, situation or event.

Schatzman and Strauss (1973) also caution the researcher in preparing for interviewing strategies as they suggest that the interviewer does not use a specific, ordered list of questions/topics as the formality "would destroy the conversational style." They encourage flexibility which represents a "natural" style to the respondent and the interview situation.

Interviewing in this project was an emphasis due to the degree of insights which the researcher was proposing to seek from the participants. Most of these interviews were scheduled after working hours when the respondent(s) felt there was time to reflect on their behaviors/thoughts/actions of the day/week/month. A goal for this research was to seek the "richest data" from interviews, as Gorden (1980) points out, ". . .planning of an interview is a creative art and its execution is a performing art." (p. 479)

Review of relevant documents included meeting notices, agendas, background material shared with the staff on Young Fives, assessment/diagnostic information, school newsletters, and other related information. This continued on an on-going basis as the Teacher/Coordinator was very open in sharing materials. In addition the researcher viewed videotapes from the Gesell Training Center regarding their process of assessment and staff training for Young Fives.

In this project, data gathering was on-going and intensive. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) describe qualitative researchers in education as those who can be continually found asking questions of the people they are learning from to discover "what they are experiencing, how they interpret their experiences, and how they themselves structure the social world in which they live." (p. 30) This type of research study necessitated a variety of strategies for

177

178

179

180

181

182

183

184

185

186

187

implementation and to assure credibility. Conveying credibility is one of the problems which fieldworkers must consider throughout the study so that appropriate data are gathered in order to describe the experiences vividly. Glaser and Strauss (1967) state that the data need to be described so vividly that "the reader can almost literally see and hear its people." They define the standard devices which the researcher can utilize to convey credibility:

He can quote directly from interviews or conversations that he has overheard. He can include dramatic segments of his on-the-spot field notes. He can quote telling phrases dropped by informants. He can summarize events or persons by constructing readable case studies. He can try his hand at describing events and acts; and often he will give at least background descriptions of places and spaces. Sometimes he will even offer accounts of personal experience to show how events impinged upon himself. Sometimes he will unroll a narrative. (p. 229)

It is also important to seek verification of the data which are gathered through multiple methods. This process is known in ethnographic research as "triangulation" and described by Gorden (1980) as follows:

Often the nature of the problem under investigation demands a multimethod approach because the various methods give totally different kinds of information that can supplement each other, because we do not know how to interpret some of the information unless we

can couple it with other information or because we need a cross-check to verify the validity of our observations. (p. 21)

In summary, ethnographic research requires a multi-dimensional approach to data-gathering as does anthropology. Kimball and Partridge (1979) correlate the two fields often and identify succinctly how the researcher approaches the field: "Anthropologists carry not only cameras, tape recorders, notebooks and supplies with them into the field, they also carry conceptual and methodological tool kits." (p. 1)

### Analysis:

Analysis of data can occur in two phases. First, it can begin while still working in the field; the second option is to wait until all data are collected before beginning the analysis (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982). This researcher combined these options to a certain degree. Some analysis began in the field as it assisted in determining what further data were needed in the study. Reflection on the data gathered at certain intervals assisted in creating further direction as assertions were in the process of being formulated.

This researcher followed the procedures defined by experienced field researchers (Erickson, Glaser and Strauss, Bogdan and Biklen, Yinger, Buschman and others) to initiate



the analysis process. This began with multiple readings of the entire set of fieldnotes in order to begin a construction of the data into a conceptual framework. The specifics had to be organized into meaningful units of information carefully identifying what commonalities were noted in each group that created a conceptual idea. Erickson (1985) describes the amount of detail which must be investigated in the analysis process:

. . .the basic units of analysis in the process of analytic induction are instances of action in events that take place between persons with particular statuses in the scene, and instances of comments on the significance of these commonplace actions, and on broader aspects of meaning and belief, from the perspectives of the various actors involved in the events. The instances of actions are derived from analysis of formal and informal interviews with informants. (pp. 138-139)

This process is expanded to a broader overall study which is known as comparative analysis. This concept is integral in the process of theory building through grounded theory. (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Yinger, 1979) Yinger (1979) is guided in his statements by the work of Glaser and Strauss when he defines theory as:

A strategy for handling data in research. . .theory should  
1) provide modes of conceptualization for describing and explaining behavior, 2) provide categories and hypotheses clear enough to be verified in present



45

[illegible]

22

11

• • •

100

10

100

10

42

1994

1

10

37.

22.

is

2.

De:

154

to

204

757.

and future research, and 3) be readily understandable by researchers of any viewpoint, by students, and by lay persons and practitioners. (p. 11)

As developed in sociology and social anthropology, comparative analysis is the major method advocated for discovering grounded theory. As Yinger (1979) notes, "Comparative analysis as a strategy for theory generation is concerned with two major activities: the generation of conceptual categories and their conceptual properties, and the development of hypotheses about the relations among these categories and their properties." (p. 12) At this point the researcher is focusing on the interpretation of data leading to formulation of generalizations. But as Erickson (1985) indicates, the primary concern of interpretive research is "particularizability rather than generalizability" in which case one "discovers universals as manifested concretely and specifically, not in abstraction and generality." (p. 50)

Analysis, as stated earlier, continued throughout the study. As Schatzman and Strauss (1973) point out, analysis is "the working of thought processes" (p. 109)--this requires continuous attention in such a complex task. The perceptions gathered and transformed in this study are intended for utilization in further research issues relating to educators as adult learners in staff development activities. Erickson (1985) confirms this researcher's perspective ". . .the central questions of interpretive

research concern issues that are neither obvious nor trivial. They concern issues of human choice and meaning, and in that sense they concern issues of improvement in educational practice." (p. 14)

CHAPTER IV  
PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

Introduction:

The purpose of this study was to gather descriptive data on a specific group of educators participating in staff development experiences. In the context of this study, the worksite is considered to be a significant resource for long-term staff development activities. In addition, it was necessary to establish a site in which educators participated as adult learners in a variety of professional growth experiences which had direct application to their interests and/or role responsibilities.

Given these parameters, the researcher selected the Young Fives Program at the Red Rock Area School District for fieldwork research. This program provided the researcher an opportunity to observe educators in two distinct phases of the Young Fives Program--a) the planning and development phase of a new district project and b) the initial implementation phase of a new project. Each of these periods provided staff development activities unique to each phase and allowed for a wide variety of adult learning

experiences for the educators participating. The study was initiated in September, 1984, and was concluded in February, 1986.

The researcher observed the work of Teacher Coordinator, Jackie Collins, who was assigned leadership responsibilities for the Young Fives Program throughout the period of time from September, 1984, through February, 1986. During the 1984-85 school year, the key groups of people with whom Mrs. Collins interacted consistently included the district kindergarten teachers, the Young Fives Planning Committee, Chapter I teachers, assessment/diagnostic personnel and the parents of prospective kindergarten children. In addition, Mrs. Collins conducted numerous presentations for all levels of district staff and parent-teacher groups. This study focuses on her work throughout these experiences which occurred during the developmental phase of the project.

During the remaining period of the study, September, 1985, through early February, 1986, the emphasis of the study shifted to the implementation of the Young Fives Program. The researcher continued to observe the work of Jackie Collins, but intensified the data gathering process by conducting interviews with her during these months. The researcher met with her every other week for an interview session alternating with participant observations conducted in various meetings which Jackie held with Young Fives staff.

In addition to Jackie Collins, the researcher focused significant attention on the four teachers hired to teach in the Young Fives Program. Participant observations were conducted in each of their classrooms and at their Young Fives meetings. Between December, 1985, and early February, 1986, interviews were conducted with each of these teachers. Interviews were also conducted with two persons who served as assessment/diagnostic personnel; they participated in the Gesell training experiences in the 1984-85 school year and conducted Young Fives screening in May, 1985. In addition, two other teachers were interviewed--one kindergarten teacher who was actively involved in the developmental phase of the project in 1984-85 and one other teacher from an elementary building who was minimally affected by the project.

The broad overarching questions in this study include:

- How does the educator perceive him/herself as an adult learner in the context of staff development experiences?
- What is significant to note about the adult learner's (educator's) perceptions in a staff development process?
- How does this information relate to the effects of such experiences on one's performance in the worksite?
- How does this information relate to the observations one makes of oneself in this learning process?

More specifically, the researcher sought data on the following points in this study:

- How does the learner/educator approach the staff development experience?
- How does the purpose of the activity affect the learner/educator/s perception?
- What expectations does the learner/educator have from the staff development experience?
- What differences are noted if expectations are also defined by others (e.g. administrators)?
- What motivates the learner/educator to participate in this staff development activity? How does the perceived motivation affect the degree to which transfer of learning occurs at the worksite?
- What is the frame of reference one brings to the staff development experience? How does this affect the thinking that occurs during the experience? How does this affect the outcome from the experience for the adult learner/educator?
- What social and interactional experiences occur during the staff development sessions? How do these affect the quality of learning? How are they perceived by the learner/educator? What role do they play in follow-up activities? What "collegial relationships" result from such experiences?
- What cognitive processing occurs during and after the staff development experiences? How is this defined by the learner/educator? To what degree is this processed with others? What elements are transferred to the activities at the worksite? What are the effects on oneself?
- In what format does the learning experience seem most comfortable for the learner/educator? What factors affect this? To what degree are self-directed learning activities observed? How do they transfer to the worksite?
- What differences seem to be observed in the performance of the learner/educator at the worksite? To what degree has the staff development experience influenced this? How does this become internalized in the learner/educator's frame of reference?

The findings from the study are shared through responses to the questions identified. The organization of

this information is developed from specific to general, that is, the responses to the more specific questions are covered first; the responses to the broader, overarching questions are covered in the latter part of the chapter. The findings are further organized in regard to the two phases of the study--the planning/development phase and the implementation phase. A third section on adult learners concludes this chapter.

Prior to a review of the data, it is helpful to "conceptualize" the key informants in this study. A brief description of the Teacher Coordinator and Young Fives Teachers is included to assist in establishing a frame of reference for the balance of the study.

Jackie Collins, Teacher Coordinator:

Jackie is an attractive, tall, effervescent young woman. She is an avid sportswoman who enjoys downhill skiing in the winter and selects running, biking, and tennis during the warmer months. Jackie's expressive eyes dance with enthusiasm and excitement--capturing one's attention when conversing with her. She has a ready smile and a distinctive "giggle" which seems to add a touch of "genuine warmth" upon contact. Her ability to communicate clearly and concisely with a wide variety of personalities emphasizes her leadership potential and desire to "be in



charge."

Jackie's seven years in education have been spent as a substitute teacher, kindergarten teacher, guidance counselor and most recently as a Teacher Coordinator--all with the Red Rock Area School District. Previously she served as a counselor in Student Support Services at the local University. She aspires towards an educational administrative position and has achieved her Education Specialist degree in that area. Jackie is married to a teacher who is also an area businessman and has one son. She is a busy career-oriented woman who combines an active professional, personal and civic life. In carrying out her responsibilities, Jackie reports directly to Dr. Sarah Sullivan, Director of Curriculum.

#### Young Fives Teachers:

Due to the fact that Young Fives is a new program in the Red Rock Area School District, all of the four teachers have previously been in other assignments. They represent a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

Lois Gates is a former speech and language therapist who has nine years of experience in special education. She has a Master's degree, is married and has two young children. She was the special education representative on the Young Fives Planning Committee and expressed her

interest in joining the Young Fives Program through a combined professional and personal perspective:

As a speech therapist, I was always the first referral source--I was intrigued by the developmental approach--again in later grades--I was the first referral source. Literally spent 9 years testing children and said--I don't know what's wrong, but this child isn't clicking--carried a lot of these kids on my caseload as language-delayed kids, but by second grade they were LD kids. Also, then my son has an October birthday (described his testing results) and I had to decide whether to send him to kindergarten as a 5 year old, and possibly then repeat kindergarten, or do I give him an extra year? From the parent's perspective I knew how tempting it was--with the magical age I could have sent him, but I waited for a year. So, with my educational background and being a mom of a fall son--I was intrigued with Young Fives. I walked into the Planning Committee last fall, having waited that year--and knew that it made all the difference in the world. (INT - 12/5/85)

Sandy Clark pursued a Young Fives position due to her interest in young children. This was her first full-time teaching responsibility, having done her student teaching in the Red Rock Area School District at the kindergarten level. She combines a busy life of teaching and being the mother of a baby born just before school started for the 1985-86 year. She has plans to return to college during the summer, 1986 session, to secure additional credits for the continuation of her teaching certificate. Sandy's zest for the Young

Fives Program is explained:

I've done an awful lot of work with young children--worked in preschool and did my student teaching in kindergarten--I feel very natural with it--thoroughly enjoy it! The longer I've worked--I enjoy younger children--I like this type of curriculum--the open, exploring type. . . . I've done a lot of volunteering--I feel I know the preschool child well.  
(INT - 1/30/86)

Peggy Little saw the opportunity to teach in Young Fives as a "dream happening." She started her career as a speech therapist and has since served as a Chapter I teacher in the elementary schools for several years. This year she teaches one section of Young Fives in the mornings and teaches Chapter I in the afternoons in the same building. She has requested a full-time position with Young Fives for the 1986-87 school year. Peggy's interest in this program continues to expand:

I'm even more interested now--I'm pursuing additional credits in Early Childhood--feel I need it as well as my interest--I just love it--those kids--the biggest reason is when working as a Chapter I teacher for all those years--I've said if we could only start "way back when"--it's a dream happening. . . . (INT - 2/5/86)

Valerie Peters is an experienced kindergarten teacher, having taught elementary music prior to that. She did not start out the year teaching Young fives as she had two

kindergarten classes. However, Peggy Little's Young Fives class had too many children; Jackie Collins and Sarah Sullivan knew that a change had to be made. Another section of Young Fives was opened as an afternoon group--in the room Peggy Little used in the morning for Young Fives. The principal at the St. Clair Elementary School talked with Valerie about taking the position for a year as he knew of her intense interest in the development of the program. Valerie had been active in the planning process and worked hard to sell the concept in the district. In addition, she had previous experience teaching a Developmental Kindergarten for the district. She decided to take the position for one year in response to the situation:

At this point my interest comes after the fact that there was a need--in my heart this is not really the level that I want to teach, but I felt like I have the background. If (referring to other kindergarten teachers) would have had to take it, it wouldn't have been fair to them or the children--you know, all of the teaching I've done is really a concern for the children that motivates me--they were in a bind, they needed someone. . . . I feel this is something Peggy Little really wants. . . . I want to return to kindergarten.  
(INT - 2/5/86)

As one would note, the variety of experiences of these five people created an interesting cross-section of individuals culminating in a Young Fives "team." A commonality that was observed among all five was the strong

interest in the young child, the intense belief that the school system needed the Young Fives program to meet the developmental needs of five-year-olds and their genuine love of children. Their differences became clear as one observed this "team" implementing a new district-wide concept--each in her own style within her respective site.

The other educators interviewed are briefly described within subsequent sections of this chapter.

#### Planning and Development Phase--Young Fives:

As a school district decides to initiate a new program, especially one as comprehensive as Young Fives, careful planning is necessary. The purpose of this study was not to evaluate the Red Rock Area School District's planning/development process, but rather to follow the lives of representative persons involved and affected by the process. This project created a number of staff development activities within the district in which a significant number of educators participated--and in some cases this may have been their first experience in such an activity. As stated in an earlier chapter, this provided "fertile" opportunities for observing educators as adult learners in a series of new learning experiences. In Chapter II of this text, the reader has been reminded of the need for educators to be involved in their own learning experiences; the Young Fives

project provided such involvement and investment for specific groups of Red Rock School District personnel--the kindergarten teachers, the Chapter I teachers, assessment/diagnostic personnel, administrators and representative parents. The concept of the Young Fives Program was initiated when a small, core group of educators attended a Gesell Training Session with Dr. Sarah Sullivan. This concept became a reality through the combined leadership efforts of Dr. Sullivan and Jackie Collins. This leadership was evident in the planning/development phase which was a collaborative effort with the kindergarten teachers, Chapter I teachers and the Young Fives Planning Committee. This study provides descriptive examples of how these educators participated in their district as adult learners throughout the 1984-85 school year and assumed the task of "selling" the Young Fives Program to their colleagues, the parents, and the Board. The questions which guided this study serve as the organizational format for sharing the data gathered during each phase.

How does the learner/educator approach the staff development experience?

Differences can be noted in the methods which were utilized to introduce the Young Fives Program into the Red Rock Area School District. These differences directly

relate to the particular group which was involved in the staff development activity and the degree to which the group would be involved on a long-term basis.

The Chapter I teachers were one of the groups which had a vested interest in the implementation of Young Fives. These teachers worked daily with children who had specific learning difficulties which were, in part, attributed to developmental learning factors. They expressed great support for the Young Fives Program, had a representative on the Planning Committee and appeared to be a core group expected to participate in the actual kindergarten screening with the Gesell School Readiness Test. They requested that Jackie Collins provide a demonstration utilizing this instrument at their first meeting in the fall, 1984. The following excerpts from the researcher's fieldnotes illustrate their high level of interest in this procedure as they participated in a staff development activity for a total of two hours and fifteen minutes:

Seven Chapter I teachers gathered in a semi-circle as they seated themselves at the primary-level table in the Chapter I classroom at the Washburn School. Based on their comments as they were entering the room, they had eaten lunch together--a "tradition" they carry out before their monthly Chapter I meetings. It was now 1:00 P.M. and they were ready to start their meeting. Maggie Kraft, "senior Chapter I teacher," served as the coordinator of the group. Following some opening announcements, Maggie announced that "Jackie Collins will conduct a

Gesell screening with a kindergartner from the Washburn School to demonstrate the procedure and to provide an orientation on the elements of the testing procedure for the Chapter I teachers because we will be involved in this process."

Jackie opened by explaining the seating procedure that she would use with the child, Lindy, which had the child seated at a small child's level table with chair. Lindy would be facing the teachers so that they could observe her work during the screening and Jackie would be seated at Lindy's left. She then announced to the teachers that the "head person of the Gesell Institute, Jackie Haines, will conduct the training session in late January for the Red Rock Area staff participating." She emphasized the "head" person and the teachers looked at each other with eyes wide, nodding their heads up and down and comments such as, "Boy, aren't we lucky. . . . That's great! . . . We got to have the best . . ." were heard.

Before the child entered, Jackie Collins gave each teacher a copy of the test "so they could follow along" and she explained some of the key portions for them to observe. She also indicated that "later I'll give you a copy of the one I'm using with all of my notes from Lindy's testing so that you can use it as an example as you begin to orient yourself with the recording procedures--today I just want you to become familiar with the format of the test, how a child proceeds generally, and how I behave in response to the child's responses in each section--don't take notes, just observe--and we will have no discussion until after Lindy leaves--any questions?--Oh, I might add that parents are always welcome to come," and she pointed to the general location where she would ask the parent to sit and



explained the directions she would give to the parent. "Lindy's mom has given us permission to use her in this demonstration today, but mom will not be here."

Jackie left the room to get Lindy from her classroom and while she was out, Maggie commented, "Isn't it wonderful that we'll have Jackie Haines in our district." (Maggie was designated the Chapter I representative on the Planning Committee and had heard Mrs. Haines at a conference during the summer of 1984 where she had been oriented in the Gesell School Readiness procedures; Maggie had also done some practicing with the test as a result of her exposure.) "We have to convince everyone in this district as to how important development is in the teaching process--and what this can mean later to the child in terms of academics--this program is really something!"

Jackie re-entered the room with Lindy, explained to Lindy, "these people are my friends and they are interested in what I'm doing today--they'd like to watch us work together for a little while--we can go ahead and get our things here on the table. . . ." The teachers were rapt with attention--their eyes did not leave Lindy and Jackie during the process, their bodies were all leaning forward with an indication of eagerness and desire to "catch everything." When Lindy carried out a task well, the teachers looked at each other and smiled.

At 1:59 P.M. Lindy was finished, Jackie thanked her and brought her back to her classroom. Immediately as they left the room, the teachers started to talk, "she never stopped smiling . . . wouldn't you love to have her in reading? . . . Wasn't she great--and with us watching!" Maggie started to explain some of the testing procedures as they

discussed sections of the instrument, "Won't this be helpful as we talk to parents about where the child is developmentally--we'll have concrete examples to show them--it won't be so much guessing."

Jackie returned to the room with copies that she had made of the recording she had done during Lindy's testing. As a group they huddled around in their semi-circle with Jackie at the center and everyone concentrated on the sheets that Jackie had distributed. They went through each of the sections and discussed Lindy's results as well as the range of possibilities which might be performed in each section. At 2:48 P.M. the teachers and Jackie were still intensively reviewing these sections; the teachers were making their own notes on their copies and asking questions along the way, such as, "Why were you clicking? (the stopwatch), What happened with the tower? . . . How do you know what symbols to use? . . . How long does it take to figure these symbols out? . . . Can you make up your own?", etc.

At 3:00 P.M. Maggie encouraged the group to "stop and let this jell--we can keep covering this at future meetings." Jackie commented that "You are already so far ahead of others who usually go through training."

The teachers were appreciative of Jackie's demonstration, "You really did a good job on presenting this. . . . Thanks for doing this with us . . . we are so happy to know more about it . . . how will the testing be done for the district? . . . Who will do all the testing?" Jackie said "At this point, you need to digest this--and I want to work with you and others to decide how you want to get it done--there will be 25 people trained." Everyone repeatedly thanked Jackie for her work, Maggie

announced the next meeting date and the teachers slowly disbanded at 3:15 P.M. (FN - 10/3/84)

As noted, the Chapter I teachers demonstrated an interest in the specifics of the Gesell Screening Test and already viewed themselves as a part of the implementation process. They worked directly in the schools where the Young Fives Programs would be housed and conveyed an ownership to the details of the project. They also respected the direct link to the planning process through their staff representative, Maggie Kraft.

In contrast, teachers in the middle and secondary buildings of the Red Rock Area School District did not have as direct an interest in the Young Fives Program. However, the Planning Committee and Jackie Collins felt that it was critical to inform them of the program's direction and to provide them an opportunity to ask questions regarding the program before it went to the Board of Education for action. They sensed that some of the staff would be concerned as to the "financial priorities" of the district. Jackie explained to the researcher that the teacher's union was concerned about new program development because it affected "the amount of money available for salary settlements--they are concerned about financial priorities in the district." She indicated that the teachers on the Planning Committee were trying to "keep the ranks informed of the need for the Young Fives Program and how funding was to be handled." Some of these concerns became evident through the questions

of the teachers from the Baltic Middle School. Jackie made a presentation to all building staffs in the district during the fall, 1984, to assist in minimizing the concerns regarding new program development and to keep the total district staff informed of the need for Young Fives. On December 4, 1984, she presented a brief outline of the district's previous Kindergarten Screening process to the Baltic Middle School staff at their regular staff meeting. Through this outline, she defined the results of previous screening through the use of the DIAL instrument and compared some of the results with the Gesell device. This section of narrative is representative of presentations made to other building staff meetings:

Our past records indicate that about 57% of our kindergarten children attend kindergarten screening; it has been voluntary. On the DIAL, about 32% were not ready for kindergarten but 26% enrolled in kindergarten--we have a high percentage of high-risk children in kindergarten. When we have tested some of these children this year on the Gesell School Readiness instrument, we have found some children to be operating as low as the 2 1/2 year level--and in kindergarten. Most of the parents have chosen to keep their children in kindergarten, some for financial reasons--sitters and things.

With the Gesell data, (showed charts on overhead) they have found sometimes as high as 30-50% of those enrolled in kindergarten to be developmentally much younger than five years--by fourth grade level, this type of child "bottoms out" in their area of

strength--Gesell shows that these children rarely "catch up." Over 1/3 of our students are overplaced and the results include psychosomatic illnesses, passive/resistance, college dropouts, etc.

We are suggesting that the child who is developmentally younger than five years be given time to develop. For those children we feel the Young Fives Program would be more appropriate than kindergarten. We see that we would have approximately the same number of kindergartens as now, the transportation would follow the kindergarten bus schedule and instructional supplies would be allocated from the building budgets. We would not be adding children, but restructuring the program to allow for this modification. (FN - 12/4/84)

Following the presentation which lasted approximately ten minutes, she opened the meeting to discussion and questions. The questions raised at this meeting are representative of other staff meetings which focus on awareness of Young Fives as the purpose:

Teacher--How do you test for social/emotional development?

Jackie--(showed a transparency on scoresheet and explained)

Teacher--Any feedback from parents on options for kindergarten placement?

Jackie--From discussion with other districts, the most difficult year is the first year--after that it goes more easily.

Teacher--Is this a public school nursery?

Jackie--No, these children would be in kindergarten anyway as we are responsible, but the curriculum of Young Fives would be different.

Teacher--What about funding--where are the dollars coming from?

Jackie--We have 16 kindergartens--some of these would become Young Fives, but we can't predict exactly--would need to see the Gesell Readiness results for accurate numbers.

Teacher--On DIAL, did you look at failures in terms of birthdays?

Jackie--Red Rock data show 30% that were high risk (of the 57%) were fall birthdays.

Teacher--Do they go from Young Fives to kindergarten?

Jackie--Yes, this is different from our previous developmental kindergarten--then they went to first grade.

Teacher--What about a transition room?

Jackie--Some districts have looked at it, but we have not at this time.

Teacher--Isn't there a state law on changing the entry date for kindergarten?

Jackie--It has been studied--other areas are being studied rather than changing entry date--especially because of minority children.

Teacher--What about the funding of your position?

Jackie--My position may be discontinued after this year--now it is from Chapters I and II--other questions?

There were none and the meeting ended at 3:25 P.M. The staff walked out quietly--no further discussion on Young Fives was overheard. (FN -12/4/84)

As noted in these two examples, the degree of interest in Young Fives and the degree of specific involvement requested by the staffs are different. The Chapter I teachers requested future information and direct involvement; the Baltic Middle School staff did not seek either.

As one explores how the purpose of the staff development activity affects the educator's perception, one can once again refer to these examples cited. The Chapter I teachers initiated their participation in the kindergarten screening activities as they foresaw their direct involvement with some of these children in the elementary buildings. There is a relevancy between this program and their work that encouraged them to focus on this district need. However, the Baltic Middle School teachers will not see these students for approximately six years; the immediacy of the situation is not as critical to seek "direct" involvement. Through this and other observations, it was evident that the overall concern of teachers who were not "directly" involved focused on the potential financial implications which such new program development might have

while the teachers who were directly involved focused on content and procedural issues regarding implementation.

How does the purpose of the activity affect the learner/educator's perception?

The kindergarten teachers met regularly with Jackie Collins to review the planning and development processes for the Young Fives Program. They were key participants in this process as they were the teachers who worked with the children being discussed. Their purpose for seeing the Young Fives Program implemented was even more immediate than for the Chapter I teachers. This project could impact their kindergarten classes during the following school year! Through observations it became obvious that they were working intently to encourage the implementation of the program. They demonstrated this by meeting with Jackie Collins monthly to gain further information and to assist in the program planning and development process. These two examples of fieldnotes highlight the kindergarten teachers purpose in promoting Young Fives; these comments are representative of their interest in the planning process:

- Seven of the nine kindergarten teachers were already present as I arrived in the library at the Vilders School for their 3:15 P.M. meeting. They were seated in a circle around a round table waiting for Jackie (Collins) to



begin her discussion about the Young Fives planning process. Their comments were in progress ". . . Which kids do you have who would probably be in Young Fives? . . . How many of those are also late birthdays? . . . I don't know how I'm going to make it through the year with this kid--he just isn't ready for school. . . . What do you do at this point--the parents just don't see what we see. . ." (FN - 11/14/84)

- Jackie reviewed the proposal on Young Fives that would be presented to the Board for action at their next meeting.

Jackie--All kindergarten teachers presence will be appreciated--my support crew's presence will be expected! It will be first on the agenda, then you can leave--but let's not be real obvious about it. Let's think through the questions that we should be ready to field--

Teacher--(Carol Parker, the kindergarten teacher's representative on the Planning Committee) mandatory testing is what is important, because if they don't--we'll be in the same boat that we've been in up to now.

Jackie--Here are the two areas where mandatory testing is included in the proposal (pointing to the sections)--and I have two letters of support on this--Task Committee #3 and the Parochial Principals. Also one's coming from Peter Kline's office (Regional Education Office).

Teacher--What about the children who show up in the fall and they haven't gone through screening?

Jackie--The Core Team can do the "makeup" work for any new students--and for transfer students during the year too.

Teacher--You don't want to tell parents about fall screening now.

Jackie--That's true--but we must place the emphasis on mandatory screening if its going to work.

Teacher--Meeting with the school secretaries may be important to do to explain the process.

Jackie--Have planned to go over this with secretaries after the Board acts on it. That will happen.

Teacher--Kindergarten teachers will get results?

Jackie--Yes, they'll be in the CA60. (FN - 12/5/84)

As noted earlier with the Chapter I teachers, the kindergarten teachers demonstrated an intense sense of interest in the implementation of this new project. Their purpose was "problem-centered" as identified by Knowles in research on adult learners, due to their daily work with the children.

What motivates the learner/educator to participate in this staff development activity? How does the perceived motivation affect one's level of participation? How does the motivation affect the degree to which transfer of learning occurs at the worksite?

During the planning and development phase of the Young Fives Program, a high degree of motivation was observed in a variety of settings by a variety of the participants. However, a notable degree of motivation was observed when the decision was made on the district's plan to conduct the Gesell School Readiness Screening. This required new assessment/diagnostic skills for those educators conducting the screening. Staff members who were assigned to conduct the pre-kindergarten screening for the district attended a three-day Kindergarten Screening Workshop which was conducted by Jackie Haines, Chief Developmental Examiner for the Gesell Institute. The focus of this workshop included an orientation to the development of four-to six-year-old children, observation of testing children with the Gesell School Readiness Test and a discussion regarding the interpretation of the results. This session was conducted in one of the Red Rock Public school buildings from 9:00 A.M. - 3:30 P.M. on January 30, 31 and February 1, 1985 (see sample program in appendix). Included in the training were kindergarten teachers, Chapter I teachers, assessment/diagnostic staff, and other select special services staff members.

Following this initial training program, the staff participated in an intensive practice schedule developed by Jackie Collins. Beginning on February 4, 1985, the staff were asked to practice various sections of the Gesell School

Readiness Test with children each week through May 3, 1985. During this time period, Jackie scheduled six follow-up sessions for all the staff who had been trained; each of the sessions focused on a different portion of the test. At these sessions an extensive walk-talk through demonstration of the specific section was conducted by Jackie. Then the participants practiced with each other in conducting and scoring that section of the test. This provided them with an initial skill level that was then further refined through practice with children. Questions regarding their learning were discussed at the subsequent practice session before a new section of the test was reviewed. Practice sessions were held on February 18, February 27, March 20, March 27, April 17 and May 8, 1985 from 2:00 - 3:30 P.M. The actual pre-kindergarten screening was conducted between May 13-26, 1985.

This assignment strongly motivated participants to develop their skills in conducting the Gesell School Readiness Test appropriately as they were all working on building teams to screen pre-kindergarten students for the district. They wanted to perform well in this capacity as they realized that the decisions regarding which youngsters would be placed in Young Fives would be made on the results of their work. Through this experience, their decisions would result in children actually being recommended for a program which the district had never had before. The role that they played motivated them to learn the mechanics of

the test well during this three-month period. An example of this motivation is shared through fieldnotes from one of the practice sessions which focused on the motor development section of the test:

I walked into room 103 of the Gillespie School a few minutes after 2:00 P.M. just as the fourth practice session was beginning. The room was arranged as in previous sessions with small tables, standard office desk size, lined three across and five down throughout the room. Two persons sat comfortably at each of the tables. There were two "odd-size" tables at the back of the room--the speech therapists and occupational therapists sat there. I found a chair (with arm attached) near the rear of the room (my normal spot) and quietly sat down. No one even noticed my entrance. Jackie (Collins) was announcing a date change for a practice session--from May 1 to May 8. I jotted that in my calendar quickly.

Jackie was in her usual location--near the front of the room--her "teacher" position--standing next to the overhead projector which she used in each of these sessions. I quickly counted 35 staff present (normal number).

Following her announcement, Jackie asked for questions on the previous portions of the test that they had worked with in earlier weeks--paper/pencil tasks, cubes, the initial interview, DASE, and animals/interests. A few questions were asked, but sounded like people were getting pretty comfortable with these sections. But then a question emerged--"What about the age of kids when they go to kindergarten, first grade--and if they have to be retained--won't

they be pretty old in their classes--have we thought about this?"--this resulted in a lot of discussion regarding their developmental progress over their chronological age, etc.

Jackie broke in, "Ok, let's move on to the motor part of the test--we have a lot to cover." She handed out the recording sheet for this section and gave instructions for this section. "Who will volunteer to be our five year-old today?" No one stood up, so Jackie urged Maggie Kraft--"Maggie, why don't you come up so we can see how you hop, jump, etc. today?" Maggie laughed, "Why not--I do very well at the five year level!" Everyone laughed.

Maggie did each of the activities that Jackie requested of her--stand on one foot, hopping on one foot, beanbag throw and beanbag catch (see appendix for administration directions and motor recording sheet). Staff recorded responses as Maggie completed each task. Following the set of tasks, Maggie sat down--and questions were handled, e.g. "Can we record hand dominance?" (from the occupational therapist)--

Jackie: "We'd like to stay with the basics this year--we'll leave it so that you can record it if you wish" (not required on recording sheet).

At 2:55 P.M. everyone was still on task, asking/responding to questions. Jackie broke in, "now we'll break into little groups--everyone can leave at 3:15 today (normally stay until 3:30)--only have to give two tests this week (normally they give four-five practice tests per week) due to Easter break and parent conferences."

At 3:15, two-three people left--majority showed no signs of leaving. They were in groups of three--four practicing on each other--lots of "on task" talking, checking out questions on clarity with each other--"How did you mark how he balanced? What if you forget to click the stopwatch on--should you re-do it? What if they "side-arm" instead of overhand/underhand?, etc." Lots of biting fingernails, re-reading materials, scrunched brows, intense eye contact with one another, no one was watching the clock, rechecking answers on previous sections of the tests. (Appeared that everyone was relaxed in their work with one another--intense/on task, but enjoying it.) Jackie was rotating from group-to-group--answering questions and making suggestions. She raised her head at one point--"with parent-teacher conferences, could the special services staff practice with kids in the afternoons?" Kindergarten teachers and special services staff discussed and arranged option for this. The School Social Worker, Bart Duncan, added, "I can still get four kids in before kindergarten if I get there at 8:00." (Sounds like he's trying to keep a lot of practice sessions going even with his busy schedule from school to school).

At 3:25 P.M. only two more had left (Jackie said they could leave at 3:15--good indication that they are still interested). Lots of discussion still going on--questioning one another, making notes. Jackie is still side-by-side with staff up and down the aisles/groups. Now at 3:29 P.M. a couple heads look up at the clock, starting to gather papers and putting them in bags, but still talking and putting notes down on paper as they prepare to leave. Jackie reminds them, "You can leave

anytime, but I'll stay if anyone needs more help." By 4:00 P.M. everyone but one group of three had slowly walked away--most leaving in groups of 2-3-4 people--still talking about their recordings, possible behaviors of children and experiences from their practice sessions. Jackie, still talking to the group of three, put her books, transparencies and other materials in her bag, nodded at me and walked out--still engrossed in discussion with the group at 4:04 P.M. (FN - 3/27/85)

This activity serves as an example of the persistence which the majority of the staff demonstrated during the practice training sessions. The motivation to do well on the pre-kindergarten screening was evident; they knew that the children screened for Young Fives would soon be named and discussed with parents. Everyone appeared helpful to one another--giving suggestions and options to consider; consistency in recording procedures was observed as a great concern. They wanted interpretations to be based on similar data from the children. The motivation to work as a team was obvious in each session--no one practiced alone.

What is the frame of reference one brings to the staff development experience?

During the planning/development phase of Young Fives, the general frame of reference shared by Jackie Collins was one of information sharing, communication link for Young



Fives, coordinator of the groups having a significant interest--kindergarten teachers, Chapter I teachers and the Planning Committee. She openly discussed the Gesell research on the development of young children in each meeting with staff and parents. Following is an example of fieldnotes taken during her presentation to a Parent Teacher Organization at the Washburn Elementary School with approximately 60 people present. This narrative is representative of other parent group meetings:

What can we do--what can we change to better meet the needs of kindergarten readiness--30 to 50% of the kindergartners are not developmentally ready for school according to the Gesell Institute. Let's look at what it means to be ready--(showed a chart labeled The Total Child and broken into four sections):

<u>Social</u>	<u>intellectual</u>
<u>physical</u>	<u>emotional</u>

A child who is ready to cope with the school environment is ready in all four areas (gave some examples in each area). Previously here in the Red Rock Area School District, we have used the DIAL screening instrument for kindergarten screening. The main results we received from this gave us mental age--we feel we need more--so we are preparing to give the Gesell School Readiness Test instead--(showed another chart) so we can determine if some children are overdeveloped in some areas and underdeveloped in others. For example, a child I recently tested was a good example of a child who seemed very intelligent in a number of areas, but when I gave the paper/pencil test he said, "This

pencil seems extremely thin, do you think I could have another as it seems very awkward" (she explained where this boy would be on her chart).

What can we offer you, as parents? Gesell research has shown that in schools where developmental programs are developed--based on children screened through the School Readiness Test--retention rates have dropped, referrals for special services have dropped and the need for alternative programs has dropped. We are working with the Planning Committee to implement a program curriculum for children who are 4-4 1/2 years developmentally. If a child comes in at this point, 4-4 1/2 years developmentally, then what can we offer?--a Young Fives curriculum--for children who still like to move--an activities-oriented curriculum, where we accept them for what they are--they are not ready for workbooks. The teacher/pupil ratio will be lower--the following year the children will go to kindergarten--we suggest that these children need a gift of time--now, let's open to questions. . . . (FN - 10/8/84)

This presentation, which was similar to all that she made to parents throughout the district, expressed a positive step for the school district--to recognize the needs of the developmentally 4-4 1/2 year old child--and to develop a program to meet those needs. It brought out questions and also comments at the Washburn meeting regarding the importance of the parents' role in decision-making for the children:

Parent--Do parents have a choice in placing their child in Young Fives or regular kindergarten?

Jackie--Yes, parents always have the final say.

Parent--Our child was in kindergarten--and at the end of the year, we were told he should stay in kindergarten for another year--he did repeat--he's now doing well--we as parents have to be involved.

Parent--Our son was not held back--we asked the school to hold him back--he wasn't ready.

Jackie--There's no better time to give your child this time to grow than at this early level--later the thrust is very academic--these first two years are much easier to give this opportunity.

Teacher--I'm new to this first grade position in this school--some of my students are frustrated, I am frustrated--if we give these students this extra time--it'll be beneficial to everyone.

Jackie--I'll be available after to talk--or call me--our goal is to offer your child the most successful learning experience possible.

Jackie received a resounding "hand" as she sat down. (FN - 10/8/84)

This type of presentation appeared to create a positive frame of reference regarding Young Fives throughout the district--no one challenged the concepts presented; they all seemed to accept that this would be "good for kids." In addition, Jackie's presentations were clear, concise and full of "energy" and enthusiasm. This was transferred to

staff also as was noted at the Fralick Elementary School staff meeting. After Jackie's usual "upbeat" presentation, there was a series of questions promoting much enthusiastic discussion about the developmental needs of children. Finally, one teacher asked Jackie:

Teacher--Could we say you are real excited about the program?

Jackie--Yes! Didn't think you could tell!

Another Teacher--Well, now I am too! (FN - 10/8/84)

This "promotion" stressing a positive frame of reference along with Jackie's confidence and effective communication skills made a difference in "selling" the program. From the observations it became apparent that the adult learners--teachers and parents--felt that the district was considering a good program for kids.

What social and interactional experiences occur during the staff development sessions?

During this planning/development phase, many opportunities for interaction became available. The key groups who worked with Jackie Collins became "interactional" on a regular basis--the kindergarten teachers, the Chapter I teachers, the Planning Committee and the thirty-five people who participated in the Gesell training/practice sessions.

Some of this interaction has already been illustrated in previous examples. Previous to the Young Fives project, only the Chapter I teachers had met on a regular basis. Years previously the kindergarten teachers had met periodically but that practice had waned. The regular meetings of the kindergarten teachers encouraged discussion of other mutual topics such as kindergarten curriculum, report cards, sharing materials and other resources. However, as the year moved on, the discussion regarding the Young Fives implementation became more concrete in nature. Initially everyone was excited about the process, their involvement and the progress that was observed. After Jackie's presentations to the various faculty meetings and parent groups, more discussion regarding the implementation of Young Fives began to "jell" in people's minds. Now, personnel in the district were asking the teachers, who were directly involved in the planning, for more information and generally discussing the impact that this would have on the district financially. As was noted earlier, new program development was a concern raised through the teachers' union due to financial priorities--the union contract was expiring on June 30, 1985. There was much discussion "beginning to bubble" in the teachers' lounges and in other locations. The meetings of the Young Fives groups--specifically the three--kindergarten teachers, Chapter I teachers and the Planning Committee--served as a vehicle for information exchange on the "latest developments" regarding Young Fives

and also a time for the supporters of the program to "strategize" a little in regard to how Young Fives could continue as a priority in view of the upcoming contract negotiations. These particular groups of teachers wanted both ideas to survive--Young Fives and increased salaries--and they knew that among the teachers' union members, discussion was in progress as to what priorities needed to be considered. An example of this occurred in a kindergarten teachers' meeting in January, 1985, following a viewing and discussion of a video tape on the Gesell training package. As the teachers were "wrapping up" their discussion, it became obvious that Hilda, from the St. Clair Elementary School, had more to discuss. Jackie was sensitive to this and encouraged her to go ahead:

Hilda--I've got some "concerns" about Young Fives that we have to talk about--I have a concern about the flyer that went out--it looks like this program is at no cost to the district--what about sub time, equipment needed, materials and what else--we are lying to the taxpayers and the Board if we say that--who will teach these classes--volunteers? How will it be assigned? What about the number of kindergarten teachers for future displacement--what about the ripple effect? What about 1/2 time Young Fives and kindergarten? Have all these things been thought out and considered?

Jackie--(quietly, slowly and with direct eye contact responded not only to Hilda, but to the other kindergarten teachers--she was seated in a semi-circle with them) The subs, training costs and my

salary are grant funds--also the training funds for the Young Fives teachers will come from this--the dollars for materials, equipment--the kindergarten children will come to school anyway. We will not order workbooks and other materials for them--each building budget will handle this for Young Fives instead. We'll get state aid for them--the Young Fives and kindergarten children--they're both eligible.

Another teacher--What about science materials? What areas have been addressed for materials?

Jackie--These have to be considered in the curriculum planning--we will try to make an effort to plan ahead as much as possible.

Hilda--You know that we are going for salary raises--this is a big thing this year--new programs are going to be hit hard in negotiations--we've got to be clear on all this stuff--where are we going to be? How many rooms? And who's going to teach Young Fives--I, for one, do not want to be reassigned.

Jackie--We do not know where the Young Fives rooms will be yet--this proposal is also built around the redistricting plan of the Board--you know this is also a goal of the Board this year (she covered some other details on redistricting).

Hilda--I'm not really asking for answers--I'm asking you to serve as a conduit on these questions to central administration--

Hilda and Valerie-- We're troubleshooting ahead for the problems that will come up--you get cynical about these things after past experiences like the math program that was tried--

Jackie--I really appreciate you sharing these ideas and concerns--so I can also support you in your teaching assignments, room selection and other things.

Libby--Do we have a commitment from anyone that it will last five years--so it gets a hold?

Jackie--No, we don't. We'll have to tackle that one year at a time and hope that the program sells itself--Other questions?

(It was now 4:53 P.M. the teachers had stayed late--but intensely involved in the discussion--Now they started to leave--still talking to one another as they left--this was the first time the meeting had become so closely tied to personal concerns--good opportunity for "open discussion" on the issues). (FN - 1/9/85)

This discussion was an example of how interaction was needed to "vent" some of the concerns which had been developing. This kindergarten teachers session provided a "productive environment" for handling these concerns. The atmosphere was not negative, but a certain amount of "tenseness" was observed in airing these issues. As Hilda stated, she wanted Jackie to serve as a "conduit to the central administration". She felt that she had "productively vented" as she had a "pipeline to the system". Such interactional opportunities appear necessary to consider for adults as they "work through" a new program concept and adjusted roles in communicating proposed implementation. This discussion also serves as an example



of the cognitive processing which occurs with learners as they participate in a planning experience; they initially think the new concept is totally acceptable if they have been intimately involved in creating the concept. However, as time and experience with the new concept are increased, questions begin to arise of a different nature. As with the kindergarten teachers, they had now experienced some challenge with their concept--it was now January and other people were asking questions. They found themselves representing both groups--the Young Fives supporters and the teachers' union. They needed to find a vehicle to get their union concerns voiced early enough to the "central administration" so that it wouldn't appear that their work in the Young Fives planning had been incomplete. This discussion serves as an example of the cognitive processing which can occur during staff development experiences. It can serve as useful information to administrators and staff development leaders--teachers need to share their roles from a variety of perspectives. This discussion is also representative of the process involved in the following question.

What cognitive processing occurs during and after the staff development experiences?

As stated in the preceding section, teacher questions and discussion can reflect the stage of cognitive processing which is occurring at a given time. This is how one can best "observe" cognitive processing--by noting the questions and comments which are being shared. This is utilized every day in the classroom with children; it can be just as useful to observe in the adult learner.

Another group of adults who were "active learners" during this study were the parents who had children entering kindergarten in the fall, 1985, and would have their children screened through the first year of implementation of the new pre-kindergarten instrument--the Gesell School Readiness Test. An example of their cognitive processing was discovered in March, 1985, when the Young Fives Planning Committee hosted a meeting for all parents of prospective kindergartners for the 1985-86 school year. The Planning Committee was expecting approximately 50-75 people to attend; they arranged the meeting in a section of the cafeteria at the Gillespie School--a central location in the city of Red Rock. When this researcher arrived at 7:20 P.M. (for the 7:30 meeting), the room was filled and persons were scrambling for more seats. School officials were opening the dividers in the cafeteria for more seating. The researcher counted 100 people before 7:30 P.M.; more continued to arrive steadily. By 7:45 P.M. a rough count was up to 175 persons. As Dr. Koerner, School Superintendent, welcomed the people, he asked, "How many of

you will have your first child attending kindergarten next fall?" A large majority of the hands went up. It was obvious this group of adults was largely experiencing school entrance for the first time as parents. The program started with the Planning Committee's presentation on the Gesell research, the need for change in screening at Red Rock and an overview of the screening procedure and Young Fives Program. It is interesting in this section to review the specific questions which the parents asked--given the fact that they had relatively no experience yet as parents of youngsters in the district. This is an example of the cognitive processing which was occurring with these parents--and that which the Young Fives Planning Committee could "record" for future reference. Only the questions are listed from the fieldnotes to serve as an illustration for this section; answers were provided in the session by the Planning Committee to the following:

- Will there be Young Fives in all elementaries?
- Will classes be both in the mornings and afternoons?
- Should underplacement be a concern?
- How do you meet the individual needs of children?
- How big will Young Fives classes be?
- Age--what are we looking at--five in May or by December 1?

- Will Young Fives replace Headstart?
- What's the advantage of placement in Young Fives over preschool?
- Any disadvantage if child is familiar with the tester?
- If child is recommended for kindergarten, could parent elect to go with Young Fives?
- What are the hours for school?
- If recommended for Young Fives, could we meet the teacher, see the room--before we have to make a decision?
- When will we know who the Young Fives teachers are?
- Will the tester know the child's date of birth?
- Will this sway the decision?
- Will a late fall birthday be recommended for kindergarten?
- What size is a regular kindergarten?
- If one child is over-quota, how would this be handled?
- Give the details of experience that the examiners have had?
- Who have teachers (examiners) used for "practice kids"?
- How can you test the readiness of a child emotionally/socially?
- I'm a Headstart parent, the teacher will be "nuts" with 15-18 "four year olds" at one time! Will there be extra help?  
(FN - 3/26/85)

Following responses to this long list of questions, parents were excused at 8:41 P.M., but encouraged to stay if they wished. At this point, many left the hot, stuffy room, but a large number ventured to the front of the room for further discussion with Planning Committee members. This provides an example of how eager parents are to learn about their child's first educational experience. Their questions are active indicators of their cognitive processing at this stage of their experience.

In what format does the learning experience seem most comfortable for the learner/educator? To what degree are self-directed learning activities observed?

During the planning/development phase, the major learning activities regarding Young Fives included the following formats:

- orientation to Gesell research and training at conference in the summer, 1984, by Jackie Collins, Maggie Kraft, Carol Parker and Dr. Sarah Sullivan
- self-directed plan for targeted implementation developed by Jackie Collins (see appendix)
- ongoing committee structure for key participants--kindergarten teachers, Chapter I teachers and Planning Committee

- three-day intensive training session with six follow-up practice sessions for all persons conducting pre-kindergarten screening
- one-time presentations for district staff and parent groups
- two presentations for the Board of Education
- specific presentations for all parents of potential kindergartners and a follow-up presentation for all parents of children identified as eligible for Young Fives Program
- individual opportunity for consultation for parents of children identified as eligible for Young Fives Program with Jackie Collins

A variety of self-directed learning projects was initiated by the committee members actually involved in the project. Examples included the presentations developed for staff, board and parents, the charts and other resource materials provided throughout the year. A booklet, Growing, was adapted by the Chapter I teachers for parents. In addition, the components for the curriculum were developed by the members of the Planning Committee. A synthesis of this self-directed project was shared by Carol Parker, kindergarten teacher representative on the Planning Committee, at the parent meeting in March, 1985:

Carol Parker explained some of the significant differences between the Young Fives curriculum and the kindergarten curriculum. Her comments highlighted these areas:

- Young Fives will be filled with open-ended experiences, hands-on activities that will last for shorter periods of time than in kindergarten, there will be a changing tempo throughout the day. All four areas of development will be integrated into the activities--social/emotional/physical/intellectual. Some specific differences between Young Fives and kindergarten will be:
- Young Fives reading readiness will be a total language experience approach--lots of talking, listening, using puppets, fingerplays, songs; kindergarten will use the McMillan beginning reading program.
- Young Fives will use pencils at the end and then only to write their first name; kindergartners will use pencils earlier to write their first and last names and to do other printing. Young Fives will make letters out of dough and use magnetic letters.
- Young Fives math will focus on counting things as they observe them from 0-10; no books will be used. Kindergartners will count to 0-20 and use the Heath math series. Young Fives will talk about shapes, feel them, find them, etc. Kindergartners will also draw them.
- Young Fives will have art as a process-oriented experience while kindergartners will move towards a product oriented experience.
- Young Fives science will be "hands-on" with real, concrete items; kindergartners will expand to the Silver-Burdette science program.

- Young Fives will focus on themselves and some community helpers in social studies; they will be great visitors. The kindergartners will focus on the family, school workers and relate these to themselves.
- Generally Young Fives will focus on process--an active experience where kindergartners are more heavily moving to product-oriented experiences because they are developmentally ready for them. Kindergarten will not be a repeat of Young Fives--it will be a different approach.  
(FN - 3/26/85)

This short description represented a cumulative project that Carol Parker and Jackie Collins had been developing to illustrate the differences between kindergarten and Young Fives. Materials and guidebooks were being developed to prepare Young Fives teachers in the specific areas. Many ideas were being "packaged" from other Young Fives teachers throughout the country.

All of these learning experiences seemed to play an important role in the planning/development phase. Again, these experiences were determined in conjunction with the purpose of the learning activity. What is important to note is the variety of learning experiences that these adults needed in the staff development activities.

What differences seem to be observed in the performance of the learner/educator at the worksite? How does this become



internalized in the learner/educator's frame of reference?

Throughout the 1984-85 school year, there was a growing sense of confidence observed in Jackie Collins' behavior. The various staff members involved demonstrated a better knowledge base regarding the development of young children, but Jackie had internalized it through her immersion in the project. This was observed through comments she made over time. In early October, 1984, at the Chapter I teachers meeting, she missed a section of the test when she was demonstrating for just seven people:

As Jackie reviewed her recording sheet with the teachers she noted, "And staring me in the face--I forgot the tower--that was a part of my nervousness!" (FN - 10/3/84)

In contrast, by June, 1985, she met with approximately 50 parents of children who had been identified for Young Fives through the Red Rock pre-kindergarten screening held in May. She made an effective presentation, using overhead transparencies and noting examples from each section of the test as to how a Young Fives child might have responded in comparison to a kindergarten child. Then, following the question/answer session which went smoothly, she set up an opportunity for further consultation on each set of results that evening:

I will now be available to meet with you individually, across the hall, to discuss your child's results. We can only take a few minutes with each set of parents tonight, but you can schedule a follow-up visit with me in the next two weeks--Or if your schedule doesn't allow you to stay tonight, please call me for an appointment. I want you to feel free to review in detail how your child performed on the screening instrument. I have reviewed all the recommendations for Young Fives myself--and feel confident in our information. Please review it so you, too, understand why we are suggesting Young Fives for your child. (FN - 6/4/85)

Observing the degree of competency that Jackie Collins acquired from September, 1984, to June, 1985, provided a concrete example of how educational leadership can be developed when individuals are given the opportunity to be involved in a new learning experience. As an adult learner, one also needs the opportunity to reflect on how these learning experiences have affected their growth. In September, 1985, Jackie was meeting with the researcher to outline the Young Fives implementation process. Along with other discussion, the researcher asked Jackie what were some significant areas of learning for her during the previous year. Jackie thought for a few moments and commented:

Of course all the information on the development of young children, the Gesell research and the testing process were extremely important in my battery of knowledge, but a few things that really stand out for me are aside from those--those were

giveness for what I was doing--there were other things that stood out--first, my ability to speak to groups--in high school my Dad tried to get me to take speech and I didn't do it--took data processing instead. Thought about that a lot last year as I had to give speeches--Don't like to use notes, so I'd try to remember my key points in my head for each group.

Researcher--You certainly acquired the skill quickly--the presentations were well done.

Jackie--Thanks, June! I was pleased too and it got easier as time went on--what was really nice was when people called me or came to see me--specially to give me feedback--that really was encouraging!

Another thing that I learned was all the different processes that are needed and have to be covered in order to set up a program--WOW! There's a lot of steps and you've got to follow them step-by-step--its a lot of work, but I liked seeing it develop--then there was something that disappointed me too--people not taking responsibility for their appointed jobs that were supposed to be theirs--that was frustrating, but. . . .  
(INT - 9/23/85)

This reflection by Jackie was significant in that it began to indicate her expectations of others now that she was in a leadership role. It serves as a transition for the next stage of the Young Fives Program and for this report--a new cast of adult learners. Jackie remained in her position of working with the Young Fives Program, but acquired added responsibilities:

Last year Young Fives was a small isolated area of responsibility, this year I have Chapter I/language arts/teachers of reading as my primary role responsibilities--also support services in grant-writing, testing, the Bi-County High School support grant--and of course Young Fives--maybe something else too that I haven't found out about yet! (INT - 9/23/85)

This leads into the next phase of the study which focuses on adult learners in the implementation process of the Young Fives Program.

#### Implementation Phase--Young Fives:

The implementation phase of the Young Fives Program in the Red Rock Area Public School District began in September, 1985, following a two-week strike by the districts' staff. The strike did not appear to affect directly the initial stages of the program implementation--at least nothing was observed as different from any of the other district programs. However, it did cause a delay for the researcher in establishing observation experiences. Participant observations began on September 23, 1985, rather than on September 9, 1985, as was previously planned.

This section of the report will focus on data gathered during the implementation period of Young Fives from September, 1985, through early February, 1986. The

questions for the study will once again form the structural report of the findings.

How does the learner/educator approach the staff development experience?

As the 1985-86 school year began in late September for the Red Rock Area School District, the researcher interviewed Jackie Collins to find out how she was approaching the first year of implementation of the Young Fives Program. Her assignment was maintained as a Teacher Coordinator, but it appeared as though the "teacher" portion was dropped because she and another staff member with similar coordination responsibilities were no longer members of the union. Her responsibilities were changed to include coordination of Chapter I activities as well as grant writing, testing, Bi-County School support programs, and Young Fives. There were more "administrative-type" responsibilities, but according to Jackie, the lack of definition was frustrating:

Starting out this year was different than last year--some recommendations were not carried out in my role. I am not an administrator--there is a lack of definition--its frustrating. Last year as a Teacher Coordinator, people didn't think about it as much. As a Teacher Coordinator, I designed and developed the Young Fives Program so that it was ready

for implementation--and established an evaluation system. It was known as a one-year process, but the system indicated that a follow-through would be necessary if Young Fives was to be successful. The Planning Committee was instrumental in the follow through of this position in regards to Young Fives. . . . I like the change. . . will give me more experience in different areas--feel glad that I'll be officially in charge to work with the teachers now. . . but there's no salary change. . . disappointed about this. . . not a part of the union now. (INT - 9/23/85)

The researcher sensed in this approach a mixture of excitement with her new and expanded responsibilities and disappointment from the lack of administrative appointment as the new school year began. It was noted as an area for further observation as it related to the Young Fives implementation.

The newly hired Young Fives teachers also started out their school year with a mixture of excitement and disappointment. As with any new program, there were a number of details that had to be adjusted and a variety of program implementation strategies that required attention. All of these became evident at the first meeting of the Young Fives teachers which was held about two weeks after their classes had started. At this point, the researcher had met two of the teachers who had been assigned to Young Fives--Lois Gates and Peggy Little. Sandy Clark had just started that day; she had been on pregnancy leave and was

returning to work in her new assignment on this particular day. The teacher who had served as a substitute for Sandy was also present at the meeting. At this stage of implementation there were only three Young Fives teaching positions--Lois taught two sections (morning and afternoon), at the Pillsbury Elementary School, Peggy had one section (afternoon) at the St. Clair Elementary School and Sandy's program was located at the Washburn Elementary School with two sections (morning and afternoon). Excerpts from the researcher's fieldnotes of this meeting illustrate the initial problems with which the teachers were coping:

Entered the Board Room in the Administrative Offices at 3:15 p.m. Jackie Collins was the only person in the room--she was stacking papers for handouts to the Young Fives teachers and organizing other materials in boxes. She greeted me cheerfully as she continued working; we chatted for a couple of minutes and then Peggy Little arrived. The substitute teacher arrived next and Jackie introduced me to her--Jill Sawyer; she had subbed for Sandy Clark for two weeks while Sandy completed her pregnancy leave. Sandy and Lois Gates arrived next.

Everyone but Jackie looked tired--their bodies were dragging--shoulders slumped, no smiles, eyes down, slow pacing and they "dropped" into the soft armchairs in the Board room with "sighs" of exhaustion.

Jackie called the meeting to order with a bright smile, shoulders forward over the table and a look of interest and excitement in her big eyes--"Glad you could all make it after a busy day, let's follow the agenda for

openers and see how things are going." Jackie asked me to say a few words about my project--(no one seemed even interested, they were tired and appeared to have their minds on their classroom. They were not discourteous--just not attentive to any "projects". That was fine with me--I settled back and took notes--no one even noticed that I was busy writing.)

Jackie: So, how is everything going?

Lois: Haven't lost anybody yet, but we're going to if we can't get this transportation thing worked out--earlier this week we had two kids left at the wrong drop-off spot--they wandered around strange neighborhoods.

Jackie: (had known about this incident based on her head nodding)  
Lois, your letter to the administration--Superintendent, Transportation Supervisor--was well written--this shouldn't happen again.

Sandy: It was pandemonium! The addresses--not right, to get kids on the right buses is unbelievable!

Jackie: (gave Sandy some suggestions on organizing information during the first week, structure for bus preparation, etc.)

Lois: Call Lena--she's the secretary in Transportation--she knows what's going on--get an accurate list on where the bus stops are, addresses and whatever from her--she's been great to me.

Jackie: What else?

(Everyone started talking with one another about their "worst" situation for a couple minutes)



Peggy: My problem is having 25 kids (in one session!)--but--not only that--they, (the busses) leave early every day--not all the busses--but two busses leave early--at 11:20 instead of 11:35--I have to have two times for bus prep--the class leaves at two different times! What are we going to do?

Jackie: I'll talk to Sid (principal) to find out what's happening--in that school (St. Clair)--the principal prepares the transportation schedule--we'll figure this out, Peggy. . . . How's the curriculum going?

Lois: Social studies needs a lot of expensive props--very time consuming--lots of consummables--36 paper bags, paper plates, yarn, sand paper, oranges, pickles--lots of time getting these things.

Jackie: What about asking the art teacher for help?

Lois: Myrna (art teacher) says she can't even get crayons--and "she's" the one I'm dealing with (rolling her eyes with a look of hopelessness).

Jackie: Will you have to deal with these every year or is it a one time project?

Lois: They take the projects home--so yes, every year. . . .

Jackie: Make a list for each unit of what you need--we'll try to get the cheapest way possible--what about "Know Me/Know You"?

Lois: Have made it through 24 finger plays and finger puppets--I think!

Jackie: Great!

Sandy: Do you have time frames for these things?

(Further discussion on the sequence of the curriculum guide)

Lois: Lots of lessons have had to be axed due to maintenance problems--like making bus tags. . . .

Jackie: Back to "Know Me/Know You"--let's make a list of consumables between now and December--

Lois: I'm so swamped with everything in the curriculum (pointing to her guide and cards)--that I've been picking and choosing what I could do--based on time available--not going sequentially. . . .

(Discussion continued on a variety of details--classroom supplies, report cards, parent meetings, etc.)

At 4:30 P.M. . . . (as discussion was winding down on report cards)

Lois: We have so much "getting through life" at this point right now--could you (to Jackie) just revamp this basic report card right now and run it by us?

Jackie: OK, I'll try to pull together what was discussed and we'll meet again--what's a good time for our next meeting--2 or 3 weeks?--What about meeting in the classrooms--its energizing for me--what are your thoughts?

Sandy: That's fine!

Peggy: Come to "my house"--I need some H E L P!

Jackie: We'll get this bus thing  
straightened out, believe me. . . .

(Discussion continued until  
4:50 P.M.) (FN - 9/30/85)

The details of getting the Young Fives classrooms "rolling" were definitely the focus of the meetings which Jackie scheduled with the teachers during these initial stages of the implementation phase. It was interesting to note that at this point, all of the teachers were coping with similar problems, regardless of their previous teaching experience. They were all "new" in the implementation of the Young Fives experience. This was a commonality which was consistent for Jackie and the teachers as they approached the 1985-86 school year with a new series of staff development activities dealing with implementation.

How does the purpose of the activity affect the learner/educator's perception?

Following this initial glimpse at the approach these educators had of the implementation phase, it is timely to review the perceptions which they had regarding the purpose of the staff development activities. Beginning with the first Young Fives meeting on September 30, 1985, it is important to study the agenda items which Jackie Collins had prepared for this session:

## AGENDA

1. Review how curriculum lessons are going. Please bring your lesson plan books.
2. Bring your ideas regarding REPORT CARDS--we need these for Nov. conferences.
3. Open House--An open house for Young Fives will need to be scheduled in each building to meet Chapter I funding guidelines. Check with your building principal to see if a P.T.A. or parent meeting is scheduled in Oct. that you might be able to work this into. Parents will visit room and you will be expected to review with them the Developmental Philosophy of Gesell and your daily schedule, curriculum, etc.
4. In Oct. there will be an ON-SITE VISIT from the State Dept. to Chapter I and Young Fives classrooms. Lesson plan booklets, daily schedules will be reviewed. Part-time personnel will need their logs up to date as well.
5. Learning Centers--should be ready to go by Nov. 1. Learning center books from the curriculum workshop are being copied now so if you would like to get an early start-go for it!!!
6. Enclosed are some dough recipes for play dough, and projects etc.

Please send your weekly schedule to me by the 2nd day of school.  
(FN - 9/30/86, received at meeting from Jackie Collins)

At the meeting on September 30, 1985, the teachers were preoccupied with their transportation problems, scheduling difficulties and classroom supplies as indicated in the preceding section of fieldnotes. It was approximately one-third of the way through the meeting before Jackie focused the group on the first agenda item--review of curriculum plans. This discussion centered around a lack of supplies to implement the lessons in the curriculum guide (as noted in fieldnotes quoted earlier). Following this, Jackie tried to refocus the meeting to the second item on the agenda--report cards. An example from that section is shared from fieldnotes:

Jackie: Report cards--

Lois: On the math--(discussion about sequencing the presentation of unifex cubes and the appropriateness of this)--its heavy--over their heads (the other teachers nodded in agreement)--too many things missing in my book to teach this (as she pointed to lessons on various concepts).

Jackie: Just do it--go outside of the curriculum to do whatever you need to--get the pulse of your kids and do whatever you need.

Lois: I'm concerned about what we're all going to do in these areas--what's the consensus as to what we should do--what fillers should we use--what are the rest of you doing in response to the "book"? (pointing to curriculum guide)

Jackie: We have fillers to touch all areas--physical, academic, social, emotional--these are the common areas to be covered, but of course there are also other things that you all do--recess--

Peggy: I've only been out for recess once--with 25 kids, no aide. . . .

Jackie: Back to report cards. . . . (at this point discussion moved to "specials"--art and music schedules)

Lois: Back to report cards--I think we need a pre-assessment on each kid in order to support a progress report on November 1st so I can answer parent questions--like "How did you know that they didn't know colors, etc." when they came into the program?

Jackie: It sounds like a good idea, Lois--what do the rest of you think about that?

(Lois went on to describe her format that she had been working on--others observed her form and listened intently to her"

Lois: . . . takes a lot of time, but I feel its important enough to take it. . . .

Jackie: I did that too when I taught kindergarten and found it was invaluable--also used my assessment sheet when I had extra help in the room, so I could have parents and volunteers help in those areas. Now, we have to decide if we all want to do that--(everyone nodded their heads in agreement). . . . I'll make a form to help you get ready for this--OK--on report cards--what other areas would you like to have on the cards (referenced handout). . . it's now 4:15--due to time, let's identify the areas that

we want to concentrate on and continue with detail another time--

Lois: There was one in our book--in "report form" section of the book that seemed to be good--also what about the new revised kindergarten form--would that have some similarities to Young Fives--

Jackie: Other ideas? (none). . . I'll make a copy of the developmental information that Lois has--(at this point, even though it was late, it seemed that the energy level had picked up a bit--not as negative, but still overwhelmed by it all). . . . Back to report cards--

Lois: Keep it simplistic--

(As discussion was winding down on report cards.) We have so much "getting through life" at this point right now--could you (to Jackie) just revamp this basic report card right now and run it by us?

Jackie: OK, I'll try to pull together what was discussed and we'll meet again--what's a good time for our next meeting--two or three weeks? . . .

Lois: What is the Chapter I audit?

Jackie: (described the purpose, procedure, etc.) Don't lose sleep over it.

Lois: What about this clay--its terrible (described consistency).

Jackie: So you guys need play-dough--how much? (discussion on ingredients for play-dough and it moved on to flannel boards)

Sandy: What about magnetic letters--I have a board, but no letters--

Lois: What about potential handouts for parent meeting?

Sandy: I'm developing a file on items to share with parents--right now I've got an article on "how to stress-proof your child."

Jackie: Each teacher needs to have a parent meeting to inform them generally of what's going on in the program--some buildings have fall open houses--this could be done in conjunction. . . . (They discussed suggestions.) We'll need dates for parent meetings--and Peggy, Sandy--will need copies of your weekly schedules by the end of the week--don't need lesson plans--just general schedule (showed them a sample). . . . Anything else? (It was almost 5:00 p.m.--individuals stood up slowly gathered materials--still talking to one another and to Jackie--everyone looked tired--like they were "dragging their tails.")  
(FN - 9/30/85)

Upon reviewing the outcome of the meeting with Jackie Collins the next week, the researcher probed at Jackie's perceptions as to what purpose was intended and what she thought had happened:

Researcher: What were your perceptions of the meeting last week with the Young Fives teachers?

Jackie: Real frustrated with the amount of direction they are needing at this point.



Researcher: What did you expect?

Jackie: (with a glint in her eye--and a chuckle) Ideally--to have them look at the curriculum--digest it--and implement it in the classroom!! Their need for approval bogged me down.

Researcher: What did you feel that you were trying to accomplish at the meeting?

Jackie: Felt they needed attention--I stayed "with them"--it seemed like they were responding as if I brought a workbook and had they all completed the workbook--it would have been fine--I don't want this--there's no growth in this type of activity.

Researcher: What do you think is happening?

Jackie: No classroom experience--especially in kindergarten--Lois' needing lots of quality control--from her federal program experience--pre and post everything. Peggy's at the opposite end of the spectrum--she'll let things slide--Jill (the sub) had a "better grip" than anyone else--Sandy came in from the first day in her program and has not had the Gesell training because of her pregnancy--she's threatened. . . (discussed individual teacher's needs further). . . . Yea, who would have thought that Peggy's class would have to be changed--oh, by the way--your need to know--Peggy's class will be divided--Valerie Peters has volunteered to teach the other section of Young Fives at St. Clair--she'll also teach a section of kindergarten--this should be a real asset--am anxious to have Valerie come aboard--she volunteered to share the teaching

responsibility in kindergarten and Young Fives!--we'll be back to stage one at our next meeting though because we'll be adding Valerie's involvement--well, that's the way it goes! (INT - 10/7/85)

As one can note from Jackie's assessment of what had happened at the September 30 meeting, her idea of the purpose of the meeting was changed. She had intended to concentrate heavily on curriculum and report cards, but the teachers' current needs had to take priority. As Knowles would state in such a situation, the teachers' needs were "problem-centered" which is typical of adult learners. At this point, Jackie was beginning to observe how the needs of her "adult learners" are somewhat different than what she had anticipated. As Jackie and the researcher were leaving the interview session on October 7, she turned and said, "This has helped me to look at myself as a learner--studying what the teachers are going through is helping me to look at myself as a learner." (INT - 10/7/85)

As a follow-up to this reflection, Jackie scheduled the next Young Fives staff meeting at the St. Clair School on October 14, 1985, and only listed one agenda item--review of the report card. She sent the meeting notice/agenda to the researcher along with a note on it, "June, one agenda item--hope we get that far!" (10/9/85) Jackie viewed this meeting with more success in regard to purpose:

Researcher: How did you feel things went last week at the meeting?

Jackie: Things went much better--Valerie brings down to a lower level of importance all the problems that people were bringing up before--she's a great asset--Valerie stuck right with going over the report card--related it to the curriculum discussion and pulled it together.  
(INT - 10/21/85)

It appeared as though a correlation between purpose and implementation of meaningful staff development activities was beginning to be observed by Jackie Collins at this point. The implementation phase was well on its way with an "active" group of educators as adult learners.

What expectations does the learner/educator have from the staff development experience?

By December, 1985, the Young Fives teachers were deeply engrossed in implementing their approaches to the curriculum; modifications were being made in each classroom based on the philosophy, personality and experience of the teacher. It was now time for the Young Fives Planning Committee to meet and review the progress of the program in the district as well as to determine the focus of the Program for 1986-87. This activity required the members to gather some information on how the Young Fives Program was

meeting the expectations of the various educators in the district. The committee initiated its data-gathering process internally with input from Lois Gates, the Young Fives teacher representative to the group:

I think the classrooms are going well--in mine I had 18 sets of behaviors to shape up and this was such a challenge--we (teachers) weren't prepared for that many children being that far off task for that long--couldn't get into curriculum as soon as we wanted--we've all been pleased with the language arts curriculum--the math series has not been appropriate and the science series has come in late, but good so far. Know Me/Know You (social studies) is excellent--so 3/4 have been great--maybe math will be when we get to that level--manipulatives have been good. Pleased with parent conferences--in my room 33 out of 34 showed up--parents said they were pleased with the children's enthusiasm. . . .

Maggie Kraft: How could we have helped you more in the beginning?

Lois: Behavior system might have been adjusted--behavior mod could have been together--next year we will all have the same plan--assertive discipline--Sandy's using it now--could be more helpful--

Jackie: the "specials" have also asked for it--assertive discipline. We have discussed everyone using the same three rules at the beginning of the year--so we're all consistent--1) listen to each other. 2) stay in your own space and 3) one talks at a time--next year we will all have to remember to start with these basic rules and everyone will use them to help the

children settle in. . . in terms of our meetings. . . it seems that we have 4 different philosophies in terms of what's important in the curriculum.

Maggie: I'm not surprised--it happened in Title I--it didn't happen overnight--its taken sharing, talking, time. . . .

Jackie: Everyone working towards similar goals--

Lois: Two of us are trying to do a little bit of each area regularly--two are emphasizing some things that are different. . . .

(further discussion)

Lois: There is positive feedback from kindergarten teachers--these kids being screened out has helped them out--I'm very pleased with the testing--in that it was very accurate--I'm very comfortable with all who were placed in my classroom. . . .

Maggie: hearing a lot more about how this is affecting kindergarten in our building--so much better. . . we need to keep looking at older grades--for developmental programming. . . . (FN - 12/4/85)

This feedback regarding the kindergarten teachers' perception of the positive impact of Young Fives was confirmed later by Libby Harris, a kindergarten teacher at the Fralick School:

We--the kindergarten teachers--are the ones that see it firsthand--definitely see the difference! The first year--we had to sell the program--to parents who were apprehensive, hopefully parents who see the results will be

asking to be placed in it--that they can understand it developmentally--that some kids need the "gift of time"--as a classroom teacher this year--to have a group of children who are "ready"--you can feel comfortable and kids there who are feeling good about themselves--and the teachers!  
(INT - 1/28/86)

The positive impact regarding Young Fives, such as those noted, assisted the district staff in planning for future program implementation. Details on pre-kindergarten screening and parent meetings were well underway by January, 1986, for the 1986-87 school year. For the district as a whole and specific staff members within the district, the Young Fives Program had met the expectations envisioned to warrant continuation.

What differences are noted if expectations are also defined by others, e.g. administrators?

During the planning and development phase of Young Fives (1984-85), the district administration directed the activities through the leadership of Jackie Collins, Teacher Coordinator. In turn, Jackie worked with the various staff representatives (kindergarten teachers, Chapter I teachers and the Planning Committee) to develop the specific activities incorporated into this phase. During the implementation phase (1985-86), the activities of the Young

Fives Program were much more directly influenced by the four teachers in the program with consultation and coordination from Jackie Collins. There was a consensus from the staff involved with Young Fives that it was a good program and that the Board's decision to implement it was beneficial for children. This statement is substantiated by comments from representative staff members:

- The program has been very beneficial--definitely agree with the testing-mandatory evaluation of all kids coming in--its something we ought to be involved in. . . my friends have kids in the program--they feel real good--real happy about it--real happy about what its done--the parents are very supportive--the kindergarten teacher at St. John's is very happy with it because she has 26-28 kindergartners--if she would have Young Fives's kids--she doesn't know what she'd do.  
(INT - 2/4/86)
- Am not sure that it would have been successful without the Board--the Superintendent specifically--get them behind you first! (INT - 1/20/86)
- Board action was necessary--that's a tough one--I have lots of complaints from other teachers about adding "this new program and that new program"--but it was necessary to have Board action--it's still not a priority for some in the district, some are just not real interested, but Chapter I and kindergarten teachers really see a difference! Kindergarten teachers really see a difference--they've all said it here (three kindergarten teachers

in that building).  
(INT - 2/5/86)

- I definitely feel its necessary--very pleased that they (Board) have--very concerned that it would be deleted--other teachers have also felt its very necessary--the kindergarten teachers most especially--they feel their rooms are totally different now with developmentally young children in Young Fives. Upper grade teachers are very anxious to see what will happen--haven't had anyone who has not supported--parents are pleased that their children are so happy.  
(INT - 1/30/86)
- Young Fives decision was excellent! It's developmental.  
(INT - 2/5/86)
- Really believe in Young Fives--wish it would not have been involved with federal funding--I have trouble with programs that are federally funded due to past experiences.  
(INT - 12/5/85)

In regard to the decision of naming a Teacher/Coordinator to direct the efforts of Young Fives, the following comments were received:

- I think in anything there always needs to be a coordinator--or if not one person--a team of people--otherwise there's not organization--I'm a real organized person, and I need that! Things would be too sporadic--I'm glad that they've had a coordinator, but I feel they've given Jackie too many hats to wear and she hasn't been able to spend enough time with us--yes, it was definitely



necessary in the preparatory time, but its also necessary now--our heads are on the chopping block--this program is going to fly if we can do it, but we need someone to coordinate it--for at least the first three years. (INT - 1/30/86)

- She (Jackie Collins) plays a major part--a very major part--having Jackie Haines here was important--she was our resource, very informative, but after three days--she was on the airplane--back to New Haven, Connecticut--we needed "our person now"--that we looked to--for questions to be answered. She was our core person and I think you have to have a core person in any learning situation--here to have "your leader"--the person who's in charge--she did an excellent job of adjusting our levels of concern as we went along, making us feel successful--working with us in a very professional and genuinely personal way--she did an excellent job--it made us feel good to go to her--asked our silly questions--we all learned together and she would let us know that this was new to her too--and sometimes she would have to doublecheck--we were all in this together--she was the person we relied on to lead us through our meetings--to put it all together--she had the task of putting it all together. (INT - 1/28/86)

- As much as I hate to say it--someone has to be more of an authority figure--defining that there is an intent and a purpose in the curriculum for children--that children will learn from them, and that maybe you shouldn't stick on a tangent. If there's going to be a person overseeing all of this, I'd

rather have that person take a stronger role--I'd be able to buy into what's best for kids--even if it wasn't my idea--but I don't know if the others would. . . . I think it was essential for someone with her skill in communicating--for someone of her caliber to be able to have the time to invest her time in the project. I don't know of any teacher who can teach all day--and then be able to invest that kind of time into the hardsell of the concept--it was essential. . . . We did our hardsell in the ranks--you need a core of people in the ranks to hardsell--we did it in special education, Chapter I and kindergarten at least.  
(INT - 12/5/85)

- She's (Jackie) excellent at keeping track of information and sharing it with others, but no experience to base it on--does not fulfill the quality that is needed--its a surface sort of thing--she's a fine, industrious sweet gal--I love her dearly, but she hasn't had the experience, its frustrating to me--whatever Gesell training--she hasn't had the chance to put it to work.  
(INT - 2/5/86)
- We need some direction, so we're kind of at the same goals/objectives--Jackie's work has been helpful--I feel I need guidance from her--am open to it--I think Jackie's help is needed by all Young Five's teachers. (INT - 2/5/86)
- I think whether its Young Fives or anything else--unless a project has a "champion"--it won't happen--like they say in the private corporations--that Peters/Waterman stuff--Jackie was the "champion of Young Fives"--there's so much inertia

in any organization, new ideas  
will just be squashed. . . I  
admire her. (INT - 2/4/86)

The decision by the Red Rock Area School District Board and Administration to name a coordinator for the program appears to have been beneficial. The lack of experience which Jackie has had with this particular level of program did create some problems, but overall, the expectations of the staff involved have been met through this decision.

What motivates the learner/educator to participate in this staff development activity? How does the motivation affect the degree to which transfer of learning occurs at the worksite?

In this study it became evident that the quality of the Gesell Kindergarten Screening and Training Program was a major factor in motivating the staff to be involved in Young Fives. It seemed to provide the "missing link" in the staff's concept of a meaningful developmental experience for young children. The program itself "drew" participants like Libby Harris into being a "convert". Libby is a kindergarten teacher who had recently come back into the teaching force on a full-time basis after five years of raising her children and working part-time. She's a very dedicated teacher who often returns to her classroom in the evenings and on the weekends to prepare lessons, develop

materials and parent worksheets for her students. She describes her motivation for the Gesell workshops:

I didn't have a great deal of knowledge--had heard good things--went into the workshop--motivation wasn't as intrinsic at that point--I was there as a kindergarten teacher--when I really got involved with the workshop--I became a convert--then the motivation was intrinsic--I really wanted to be there--I believed in what the Gesell people were talking about--I became a convert--it was like "coming home"--things in education that I believed in, what I had experienced--someone was now telling me why and giving me specifics--making me feel good about things that I had been doing--as the workshops, practice sessions continued--it was a learning experience that I felt--that here is all this information that I knew all along, but hadn't put it all into any type of practical situation and testing situation--I found it very exciting to get involved--I knew more about it--its like anything--you do feel more comfortable when you become more knowledgeable. . . the content--was so "coming home"--the research that she (Jackie Haines, Gesell Institute) had done--the years and years of research--the things that we had seen as teachers--the information she was telling--we could look and smile at each other--and say "a-hah, a-hah"--we'd known this--it confirmed so many things that we had seen and that we were trying to share with other upper grade teachers, administrators--and parents, yes, with parents. . . in some cases you need a little nudging--if someone hadn't told me as a kindergarten teacher to be at Gesell--maybe I would have thought

it was a great program and read about it, but would I have gotten as actively involved--it affected me as a teacher--so I really wanted to be there--I had motivation!. . . the Gesell was all a challenge--it definitely was--it was the hardest test I have ever given--the most difficult to assess--no black and white or right and wrong answers--it was probably one of the most ultimate for me--and will be again this spring--we'll be giving the test again in May--each testing brings with it something different--every child comes in as a unique human being--you're never quite sure--what they're going to say or do--and you have to react subjectively through that whole process--its a challenge. . . besides reaffirming what I was already doing, it opened new doors--we were struggling with some concepts in the MacMillan program--then we found out about when a child is ready to make two oblique lines in relation to his ocular development--it made sense. . . . I felt good--I was there--we had worked so long and hard. . . its the single "most-best" thing that's happened to me as an educator--that's how strongly I feel! (INT - 1/28/86)

Another kindergarten teacher, Valerie Peters, was very impressed with the quality of the screening and training program. She had taught a Developmental Kindergarten at one point, but never really felt that she had understood the assessment data. Through her understanding of the material in Gesell, she became motivated in Young Fives. In fact, due to the large number of children referred to Young Fives, an extra section had to be opened at the St. Clair School where Valerie taught. She volunteered to help the

district this year by teaching a Young Fives section. Valerie describes her impressions of how this program has motivated her and how she immediately puts it to work in her classroom:

It (Gesell) was excellent--it really was--new approach to testing was really, not only a great opportunity because we were involved--we understood--where we used the DIAL before and the only person who understood the results was the tester--and we weren't involved. When we got the test, we really didn't comprehend what the numbers meant. . . finding the Gesell so much more revealing as to where the child really is--and then comparing that to the small amount of information that we were really getting out of the DIAL--was really a revelation to me--that was my problem when I had the Developmental--was trying to get information--where they were--what they need. . . when I look at these Gesells--there are children who need help--there are differences--we can work on these right away at the onset of the year--so we've picked up on these lags--I can give them that one to one attention--I feel like I've been doing a better job of teaching if I can understand what the children need. . . the Gesell training in March--I wouldn't miss that for anything! (INT - 2/5/86)

Sandy Clark has been motivated by how the screening selected appropriate students for her Young Fives classroom:

Only training I've had is in the Gesell testing--has helped me tremendously--seeing the reinforcement of those that belong in here--all the information and

how the children complete the test--I'm seeing these children over and over again in my classroom--its very significant--there was immediate transfer. I wish I could have gone to the training in the summer time--I feel like I'm a little behind the other teachers, but its helped having my experience with preschool, kindergarten and young children. (INT - 1/30/86)

Another dimension of motivation was shared by Lois Gates. She was already familiar with the benefits of the Gesell School Readiness Screening as she had been on the Planning committee; she was "intrigued by the developmental approach." The turning point which motivated Lois to seek a teaching position in a Young Fives classroom was the opportunity to work with young children on a daily basis:

I guess I always like young children--even with my speech therapy caseload I saw bigger changes with the young children. My favorite times were with preschool children--would walk into that room and say, "Gee, that would be fun to be in here every day." Although I like the speech therapy work, I thought the time was right and also I knew that there were a lot of other people waiting for jobs--it was now or never--if I didn't make a stab at it--others would love it. . . . There's a lot of joy in this age group--when I have everything mastered--I'll really enjoy it. . . . I'm here until 7-8-9:00 at night just getting "prepped" for the next day--down the road I'll know the fingerplays, science, math. . . . (INT - 12/5/85)

It is evident from listening to the teachers and observing them in their classrooms that the Gesell research components on developmental needs of young children convinced them to be involved in the Young Fives Program and that they are transferring that degree of motivation into productive learning experiences for the children.

What is the frame of reference one brings to the staff development experience? How does this affect the outcome from the experience for the adult learner/educator?

During the fall, 1985, another area school district conducted a Gesell training session with Anita Davison as leader. Due to the proximity of her presence and an opening in her schedule, Jackie Collins arranged for Anita to meet with the Young Fives teachers on October 21, 1985, at 4:00 P.M. This staff development session unveiled the types of questions which were pervasive in the minds of the Young Fives teachers. It was an opportunity to observe the frame of reference which the teachers had developed in their initial weeks of curriculum implementation and to seek out "experienced" answers and reflections regarding the program from Anita. In her local school district, Anita serves as a Young Fives teacher; she is released a few days each year to conduct Gesell training throughout the United States. This degree of experience provided a wealth of information for



the eager Red Rock Area Young Fives teachers; their inquiring minds were like sponges--soaking up every idea possible.

The questions which the teachers raised at the meeting are indicators of their frame of reference in Young Fives in October, 1985. These questions are shared in an abbreviated section of fieldnotes to provide the essence of this session. The discussion started with a review of a sample report card for Young Fives that Anita was sharing; following this Anita provided general information about her school district, the administrative philosophy and the financial status which has defined the staffing realities--"no specials" (art, music, physical education).

Teacher: What is your maximum/minimum number of students in Young Fives?

Anita: Try to stay with 20, but we've had a group of 9--that will grow--have to be honest about the 20. . . sometimes I take in "crying children" who stand outside the door because they don't like kindergarten. . . .

Teacher: Do you have an aide?

Anita: No aide.

Teacher: What math and reading skills do you teach?

Anita: Exposure to everything--very much language (explained modifications in the curriculum to adapt to students' needs). . . need to emphasize language all the time--they can write their own stories--parent volunteers come in to help make

these into books--then we read the books--that's our library--builds so much language and they see how stories develop. . . .

Teacher: What about math?

Anita: We use no math series at all--but we use materials to do things with (gave examples). . . there's so much with your normal day--take a walk outside and count the kids, trees. . . set the table, count the napkins. . . concrete experiences for math. . . the best ideas come from the kids (described examples of how "Cooperation Day" and "Outdoor Day" were initiated through ideas that were nurtured out of children). . . .

Teacher: How about social studies and science?

Anita: Most like dinosaurs. . . Young Fives teachers can group together and exchange projects and materials. We have an "Elmer's Glue Group"--we teachers stick together until we can work things out that we can all use--then we pass them on during different times of the year--all the materials are always there--and the teacher using it decides how long they need it--it works very well--keeps us together and yet gives us flexibility.

Teacher: Don't we need to do things based on children's needs?

Anita: Yes, exactly--but always language arts--always, always.

Teacher: I believe that this should be the majority of the day.

Anita: (described book-making project in detail)

Teacher: I'm interested in your parent involvement.

Teacher: What about behavioral techniques for kids who are mean and aggressive?

Anita: Check on diet/nutrition. . . do not believe children come to school as mean/aggressive. . . . I like some of the assertive discipline aspects (went to explain and gave examples). . . .

Teacher: How do you handle the thing on the blackboard with names for four year-olds?

Anita: (explained the system)

Teacher: Do you use marbles?

Anita: Yes, we catch them being good--it has to be an observation--kid can't tell you that they did it--you have to catch them being good. . . .

Teacher: I'd like to know more about parent support.

Anita: Has to be done carefully--(explained system). . . start slowly. . . teachers of young children work too hard--if you are doing 80% and the children are doing 20%--you are working too hard--have to turn this around--children can be great helpers--you have to help them know how--teachers can't do everything--you need to be able to participate with the children--see what's happening--helping them to do things--that's how they learn. . . don't try to do too much--try one project at a time (gave lots of examples--described how she helped children learn to cut, had a Christmas concert, etc.). . . .

Teacher: How do you plan your day--structure your day?

Anita: Play time first--gathering around--doing what's right for them--then we gather for a story--then back to play--play--play--with interruptions for "lessons"--then back to play. . . (gave examples of lessons/projects). . . remember, if you're doing more than 20%--you're doing too much (gave more examples). . . .

Teacher: How much time do you devote to play?

Anita: About 60% in the beginning--it works down to 40%, but you must remember what play is--its learning by doing--they must touch, feel, and that comes through play. . . (it was now 5:00 p.m.). . . . Be brave in what you're doing--support each other--we went to each others' buildings a lot--even supported each other at parent meetings. . . . I believe that teachers of kindergartners and Young Fives are at the top of the pecking order. . . we are influencing the world, but we have to believe that and enjoy what we are doing. (questions continued as she was preparing to leave, such as:

- Do you monitor the learning centers that kids go to?
- Do you let kids use hammers, nails and saws?
- Do you have free art every day?  
(FN - 10/21/85)

This staff development session with Anita Davison reshaped the frame of reference for these Young Fives

teachers. At this point they started to develop a conceptual framework enlarged by the addition of Anita's experiences which were now being internalized. They no longer had to rely totally on their brief experience of teaching Young Fives--they could "borrow" from others who had a wealth of experience. As adult learners they were clarifying and extending their concepts of teaching in the Young Fives Program.

The outcome of the teachers' work in the classroom was affected by this staff development session. This was observed immediately by Jackie Collins as she visited Young Fives classrooms in the next two weeks:

I have been to every classroom since that meeting--and everybody seems to be a lot more relaxed. . . they were receptive to what she was saying in terms of ". . .don't worry about that--its OK--you're not going to be able to follow your plans every single day--it may take a week to get through some things. . . . I think the timing of the meeting was good--to facilitate those things. . . being flexible with the curriculum, how to handle specific areas. . . Anita said that the questions that these teachers had were very similar to other teachers she meets with throughout the United States--she was not surprised by the detail that came out in the questions, she say that as normal for the people at this stage of their work.  
(INT - 11/4/85)

This observation made by Jackie was confirmed by Sandy Clark as she reflected on Anita's visit with the teachers:

Anita was tremendously helpful--I think because she's been in the classroom--its not somebody theorizing about it--she knows! I kept badgering her with questions--but she was tremendously helpful--one of the things that I kept wondering about--is that no matter how much we do--in our curriculum--is that a child is going to develop at their own rate and all we can do is expose them--and she said, "You said it!" I remember that--and I keep thinking about it--not so concerned about the end product--but with what's happening--like today with Erik, he kept going on about this experience that he had--and we just listened--I learned a lot about Erik during that time--so did the other kids--I keep telling myself that its not so important that a center "work", but that the kids learn on their own--they learn so much better at this if they get to actually manipulate it--or actually problem-solve--and I can see direct application in myself--because I don't like it when someone sits there and lectures to me and I have to take notes--and I have to spit it back out--I learn so much better if I can jump right in and do it myself--I can use as many senses as I possibly can--it sticks!--and then observe what I've done and how I've done it. (INT - 1/30/86)

Even for Valerie Peters, a veteran kindergarten teacher, Anita's session on Young Fives was productive:

Anita--she was wonderful! She gave so many examples--that's what helps--everyone was "hearing" what she was really saying--it made sense--we could all glean what we wanted and needed to hear--I was really interested in the open-ended ideas, the parent involvement and

how they developed their report cards--in kindergarten we've just been through a lot of work on report cards--now I'm into it on Young Fives--her ideas were good--her experience! (INT - 2/5/86)

Frame of reference is a very fluid and conditional concept--all relating to the degree of experience one has had with a topic or idea. For Jackie Collins, the Young Fives Program was a new experience for her at the Red Rock Area Public Schools and in the company of Anita Davison, Jackie represents a "beginner". However, in another situation Jackie becomes the "expert". The following excerpt from fieldnotes provides this example:

On December 16, 1985, Jackie Collins was presenting to a group of 6 elementary teachers and the district superintendent from a small, rural district in a neighboring county. This district was concerned about their kindergarten enrollment--several children were not "ready" for school experience as defined in their kindergarten. The teachers and superintendent had met a few times--and then heard about Young Fives at the Red Rock Area Public Schools. They invited Jackie Collins to speak to them on Young Fives and Jennifer Sanders to discuss possible assessment of their kindergarteners with the Gesell School Readiness Survey.

Jackie presented the background of the Red Rock Area School District's concern with their kindergarten enrollments and the experience with Developmental Kindergarten. Then she covered the research from the Gesell Institute on children who were not

developmentally ready for kindergarten (as she had done in the 1984-85 meetings in her own district). Following this she described the planning and development process which the Red Rock Area Schools completed. Examples of how the fall, 1985 implementation of Young Fives was progressing completed her presentation. This was followed by a question/answer session on specific concerns in this small rural district along with possibilities for exploration. Jennifer Sanders then developed a plan with the staff to conduct a series of School Readiness tests on the children in need.

(Jackie had an excellent presentation--clear, articulate, meaningful and full of examples from their experiences. Also q/a session was handled well--gave the staff a lot of thoughts to consider.) (FN - 12/16/85)

This observation was made by the researcher in an effort to compare how Jackie Collins "experience" was perceived in another setting away from her home school district. In this setting, Jackie's degree of experience provided a conceptual frame of reference from which these staff members could "borrow" to build their ideas on how to affect change in their district. As Anita Davison assisted the Red Rock Young Fives teachers through initial stages of implementation, Jackie Collins was now assisting this district's staff in planning and development by sharing Red Rock's experiences.



What social and interactional experiences occur during the staff development sessions? What "collegial relationships" result from such experiences? In what format does the learning experience seem most comfortable for the learner/educator?

In the research cited in Chapter II the perceived "isolationism" of teachers was identified as one of the main occupational hazards--teachers do not have opportunities to talk with each other. Piaget's notions on social transmission and how this concept affects the learning process is also emphasized in Chapter II. These issues were studied in terms of how the Young Fives staff perceived the need for interactional experiences and what role such experiences play in the learning process of these adults.

The data revealed an overwhelming need for interactional staff development experiences to best accommodate learning needs. All of the staff interviewed expressed this need openly in their comments; some information revealed selectivity. Due to the strong emphasis on how interaction affects the adult learner, excerpts from each of the staff interviews are shared to confirm this point:

- I have grown the most in "rapping" with others--first-hand experience--scouting out people, calling people--nit-picking people to the point that I'm a pest--to ask questions. . . we're all in it for the same

reason--the people I have contacted have all shared, offered suggestions--I found that to be the most helpful--getting together with others--finding out what was successful, not successful in their experience--I've always been that way too--anything that's worked for me. . . I'd give it away--because its for the kids. . . like to see inservice where someone comes in and shares their most wonderful ideas that worked for them. . . rather than having the mystery speaker come in. . . this summer I went to a session with a teacher--she brought in her entire library--everything that she had developed on Young Fives--it was just wonderful--and then she asked the teachers to share. . . it was excellent--the most rewarding conference that I had ever been to--I can take that kind of information back and use it in my classroom. . . I'd be willing to meet after school--I'd like to see a plan from your research or other research--that teachers learn from other teachers--a jam session to share with others--at grade levels--also release time for prepared activities that teachers would do--I'd like to see that be a given. (INT - 12/5/86)

- You learn, you share, you communicate--I think the learning process is broadened. . . we were all together--learning about what to use in our district. . . it (Gesell training) was a real growing process and it continues with the training sessions--we'd share with each other so we could feel good about it. . . it enhanced the experience being with your own colleagues--whenever its a new learning experience going in--everybody had a little

uneasiness at first. . . with complete strangers you can't share in the same way--you can't communicate--it was a real plus to be with other staff members--that we all had this "commonness". . . now we're meeting as kindergarten teachers--on-going projects. . . I'm the only one in my building and others are too--its sharing--its a way of growing--aloneness causes us to seek each other out--sharing is important. . . . I'd like to get together more frequently. . . input from the staff is critical--topics that are relevant and important from the teachers--where do we need help? What do we need growth in? . . . teachers know best what needs are best--then let's find a resource to meet those needs. . . "hands-on" experiences are the best--not just sitting and listening. . . . I also had the opportunity to educate my staff in my building (on Young Fives)--I wanted to get their support--they were overwhelmed by what we had to do--they were surprised--and saw that it was a big project. (INT - 1/28/86)

- . . . I'm constantly trying to talk to other people and say, "How do you do this? What worked for you?"--I've used a lot of the people here (at her school) as sounding boards--enjoy learning from other people. . . to me if someone's tried it, they can give me a better perspective than a book. . . cause I can get feedback--I can say, "What if I went about it this way?"--its on-going communication while I'm with someone. . . I don't particularly care to sit and just be lectured to--involvement is a key factor. . . at the last Young Fives meeting--we kept badgering Jackie--I think the teachers feel

the same way as I do--we did hash it out--I came back with a better understanding of some of the things I was having problems with--and I think Jackie "heard" us--we don't want to just be clinical--we want to talk about what's happening--I'm hoping that we can get more of that. . . I'd like one afternoon a month or even a full day a month--that we could have a sub come into our class--and we would work with Jackie--and spend the full time--get down to working on the curriculum. . . I really want to know how every teacher approaches things differently. . . would like to work together as a group--really important to get involvement from the outside too--parental involvement/support. . . . Anita said it was important to get a parent support group together--I just haven't had time. . . the staff here (in her building) has been exceptional to me. . . they've been very good resources for me--very good sounding boards. . . . I wish we could have more of that in Young Fives--I really think we need to give each other feedback because it's so new--to all of us. . . that's the way I know I work best--if I have that kind of support system. . . the "soap in the bucket" idea from the last meeting--its worked out just fine! That was great!  
(INT - 1/30/86)

- People around me are critical--particularly with the communication--openness--I go to people involved in my field, visit other programs, meeting with other teachers--like in the Gesell training sessions--they were critical as follow-ups. . . we became much more proficient in procedure. . . initially I said I'd never be able to do this--to

know a "developmental four year old"--but we didn't have to worry--everyone helped each other--it promoted a tremendous amount of comraderie. . . . I don't know how anyone could have learned that testing without the follow-up training. . . involvement with people is critical. . . . I'm a team player and verbalizing with someone else--being able to say I'm learning at this and I'm going to need your help--that openness about that--its not necessarily having all the answers--its the "give and take" of the information--I learn well from others--the key is communicating.  
(INT - 2/3/86)

- This summer--the inservice was very helpful--it was talking with other teachers--you just don't get that at college and I've been teaching 10 years, but when you start something new--sharing with other teachers. . . the support that it gives--that there are other people out there who are going through a trial and error period--that there's not just one right way--that there's several ways of doing it and that you have to try all of them. . . like to learn from people who have had experiences and I learn from experience. . . sharing with other teachers--with a lecture you have a 50/50 chance, but with the other--you can't lose! There's so many ideas--so much to choose from--there's so much to tap into--you can be selective--I have a need to tap people to find what's usable to me.  
(INT - 2/3/86)
- I like to observe--watch other people--I observed in the kindergartens to get a "feel" at the beginning of the year--I probably learn best that way--then discuss. . . like to

learn from people in the same area--the discussion of other people's "hands-on" experiences are helpful--what works, doesn't work--I might try it--and could modify it in my work from their experience. . . . I didn't participate in the summer training, but the March session is coming up. . . would like to keep the regular Young Fives meetings--in Chapter I we meet once a month--its really helpful--a good information exchange. (INT - 2/5/86)

One of the teachers explained her need to be selective in how she spends her time interacting with other teachers due to her years of experience:

At this stage in my teaching. . . I want to be there by choice because I want to feel that there's something valuable that I'm going to take away from this--and that I'm going to implement and its going to help my children--I feel very harassed at having to attend groupings where its covering something that in my past learning experiences I've already developed. . . last year I applied for a visitation day and went to (another school district in the county)--and that was marvelous--I had never seen an all-day kindergarten--and the methods she uses are based on Gesell--that was beyond what I was exposed to--that was very beneficial--we had a lot to talk about. . . as far as methods and activities--I am just saturated with choices and resources--what I need is the time to refine and fine tune and stay in that area. . . . I would have enjoyed seeing the Headstart Program because many of our children come from Headstart--I would have liked to see what

they're dealing with and how they're dealing with the situations--and work on communication with them--we had a real gap over (student), it took until after Christmas to get her records--she should have had OT in September--I should have known about exercising those eyes--there was a lack of communication--a breach--now this was something that was really important and it would have been relevant to me--and then I could grow--I could have something--we can share things with one another and I'm willing to do that. . . we don't want to waste time--that precious time--want to learn something new--very selective, searching--to expand. . . the Gesell training in March--wouldn't miss that for anything! (INT - 2/5/86)

An assessment/diagnostic staff member was also selective in how he perceived his need to interact. This was an interesting difference because he does interact with educators all day. His conditions of employment are different from the teachers as he serves several school buildings and talks to professional staff in other agencies on a daily basis. His needs are defined:

I am a self-directed learner and I need to go a little in the other direction, but I'd like to have a mentor--somebody like that--somebody you'd talk to once a month--to touch base--to bounce ideas off--its something I've thought about--I'm going to have to consider getting a teaching certificate, but the thought of sitting in a class and having assigned readings is bugging the heck out of me. . . if I go to the university again, it'll be like I

was 20 years old again and a dummy and didn't know how to do anything on my own. . . when I get a chance--I like to go to conferences--largely because I'm doing the other (meeting with others in education) every day--don't get any opportunities to go to conferences due to budget. (INT - 2/4/86)

Jackie Collins reflected on the need for the Young Fives teachers to interact from her perspective in the program:

Its been real important for them to meet and discuss their program--one reason is that they've been able to voice their concerns, complaints, criticisms to a group that's had an intellect of what's been going on there--so in voicing these concerns, not only can they get an appropriate response rather than a reaction of "Oh, my God--what's going on here--what's going on in this district!"--and the negative flowing throughout--its for the most part been able to be tabled right within the setting--so I feel good about that--the other thing--I feel that people being able to socialize like that--they've been able to feel confidence in what they're doing--and to strengthen their weak areas. . . adults need times that are both non-threatening and well-defined--an agenda set ahead of time so they know what to expect--so it gives them some control over what's going to happen--and the opportunity to interact--to participate--there are times to be informal or formal--it depends on the goals--it should be informal if the goal asks mostly for participation and it should be a shorter agenda. (INT - 1/20/86)



The educators in this study all felt that staff development experiences need to include social/interactional opportunities. For some people, these activities may need to be selected with others outside of the school district buildings to provide a more meaningful experience, but opportunities to interact with others is clearly considered a priority by this group of educators. Anita Davison referred to such a group of Young Fives teachers as the "Elmer's Glue Group--keeps us together, yet gives us flexibility."

What cognitive processing occurs during and after the staff development experiences? How is this defined by the learner/educator? What differences seem to be observed in the performance of the learner/educator at the worksite? How does this become internalized in the learner/educator's frame of reference?

In staff development activities, a key person is the coordinator or facilitator of such experiences. Often the "development" which this individual experiences is not highlighted. It seems important to review the cognitive processing which occurred with Jackie Collins during this period of time in reference to her own staff development experience. It provided an opportunity to reflect on one's processing over time while one experiences change. The

conceptualization of one's professional role through systematic observation and reflection assists in internalizing the realities of the role and the decisions one has to make for future planning.

The period of this review encompasses the implementation phase of the study--September, 1985, through early February, 1986, with reflection on the 1984-85 planning and development phase throughout. Discussion of this period will be followed chronologically to allow for observation of development in Jackie's perceptions of herself in her role.

In September, 1985, Jackie was made aware of a change in her responsibilities; she would now have coordination of Chapter I as a primary responsibility along with grant writing, testing, Bi-County school support services and Young Fives. These areas required more "administrative-type" responsibilities than she had in 1984-85, but there was no salary change. Her perceptions on these changes:

I like the change. . . will give me more experience in different areas--feel glad that I'll be officially in charge to work with the teachers now. . . but there was no salary change. . . disappointed about this. . . not a part of the union now. (INT - 9/23/85)

There was a mixture of excitement with the new challenges that she would encounter and disappointment over the lack of an administrative appointment. This study only covered

Jackie's Young Fives assignment; discussion was focused only on that portion of her work.

At this point Jackie also reflected on the significant areas of learning for her in the 1984-85 planning and development phase of Young Fives. They included three main observations:

- ability to speak to groups was improved. . .
- learning the different processes that needed to be covered in order to set up a new program. . .
- people don't always take responsibility for their appointed roles. . .  
(INT - 9/23/85)

The implementation phase of Young Fives brought some new and different learning experiences for Jackie. Now she was assisting a staff of four teachers in their adjustment to a new program at the same time that she was adapting to the changes in her role. The differences between planning and development leadership and implementation leadership began to emerge. This discussion took place after a Young Fives teachers' meeting at which time a number of curriculum implementation and procedural concerns were raised:

Researcher: What were your perceptions of the meeting last week with the Young Fives teachers?

Jackie: Real frustrated with the amount of direction they are needing at this point.



Researcher: What did you expect?

Jackie: (with a glint in her eye--and a chuckle) Ideally--to have them look at the curriculum--digest it--and implement it in the classroom!! Their need for approval bogged me down.

Researcher: What did you feel that you were trying to accomplish at the meeting?

Jackie: Felt they needed attention--I stayed "with them"--it seemed like they were responding as if I brought a workbook and had they all completed the workbook--it would have been fine--I don't want this--there's no growth in this type of activity. (She went on to describe her observations of each teacher's level of experience and how this related to their new assignment). (INT - 10/7/85)

At this time Jackie did not feel the teachers were handling change very well and she described some specific examples of their behavior which convinced her of that. It was then interesting to note her observations of her own difficulty in handling change:

Researcher: Let's switch gears a little--you are obviously trying to be very helpful to all the teachers--and things are hectic right now--what are you noticing about yourself?

Jackie: I have to instill some patience in myself--acceptance--hardest thing for myself is to keep it cool--high anxiety--could be in (name of an area mental institution given jokingly)! I'm aware of our own district timeline for Young Fives--and the one I've developed--it's almost November,

but I think we are in August on my timeline!

Researcher: Think about what's happened to affect the timeline.

Jackie: Yea, who would have thought that Peggy's class would have to be changed--oh, by the way--you need to know--Peggy's class will be divided--Valerie Peters has volunteered to teach the other section of Young Fives at St. Clair--she'll also teach a section of kindergarten--this should be a real asset--am anxious to have Valerie come aboard--she volunteered to share the teaching responsibility in kindergarten and Young Fives!--we'll be back to stage one at our next meeting though because we'll be adding Valerie's involvement--well, that's the way it goes!

Researcher: Let's look back at you, Jackie--what's your support system?

Jackie: Reach out to Sarah! (Sullivan)--she's calm--brings me back down to ground. If something was really a problem--she would help me out with procedures--or anything. Also Joe (another administrator in central office) has really been supportive--like a "puppy dog"--its been nice. (INT - 10/7/85)

Following more discussion on the different ways that the Young Fives teachers approach things, the researcher started to leave. Jackie stopped her and commented:

This has helped me to look at myself as a learner--studying what the teachers are going through is helping me to look at myself as a learner. (INT - 10/7/85)

The researcher noted that Jackie was smiling again, talking at a slower pace and her usual "bounce" appeared to have returned to her walk.

At the next interview Jackie discussed the positive influences which Valerie had brought to the Young Fives meetings and how this helped to keep the session on focus. She then went into a lengthy review of how each teacher was adapting--or not adapting, whichever the case. In addition Jackie described a visit with one of the teachers in which they worked out some needs in a personal situation and then she reviewed the changes occurring at the St. Clair School with the new Young Fives section that Valerie was teaching. The adjustments were working out well and this was reflected in her observations of herself.

Researcher: Let's switch gears now--how are you doing this week--there have been a lot of changes--what's happening with you?

Jackie: Very relieved this week!

Researcher: Why do you say relieved?

Jackie: All the things about St. Clair--the overflow of kids--that's taken care of with Valerie's class added--I was worried that some parent would call me about this--it's been a "time bomb" ready to explode! Now I'm feeling better about it--even if Valerie needs her own set of curriculum materials, things have got to be better with this change.

Researcher: So, what does this mean for you?

Jackie: Maybe now its time for my agenda--we can start looking at some things that I feel are important now. (INT - 10/21/85)

Following this interview Jackie asked the researcher some questions about adult development. A week prior to that Judy Arin-Krupp had been a speaker at a local professional development workshop. Jackie knew the researcher had purchased Krupp's two books; she asked to borrow them when it would be convenient.

During the latter part of October, 1985, the Young Fives teachers met with Anita Davison, a trainer for the Gesell Institute. In addition, Jackie continued to visit the Young Fives classrooms and met with teachers on an individual basis to discuss her observations. She was very pleased with the results of the meeting with Anita, but she was observing many adjustment problems which the teachers were having at this time. The teachers were all at different stages in their curriculum implementation and each of them had different perceptions of what exactly needed to be implemented. This caused confusion at their meetings and consensus on any one procedure/decision was not possible. Jackie was struggling with how these differences could be resolved, how her expectations could be met and how the teachers could progress from this particular phase. She references her role in this set of dynamics which illustrates her thinking at this point:





Researcher: What do you think would be happening with the teachers if you were not here to work with them now?

Jackie: I think Young Fives would come close to falling apart--it could turn out to be real negative-- backstabbing-- inconsistencies among the programs-- blaming.

Researcher: What do you see as the key factor right now in your role?

Jackie: In their perception, if there's things they need--like all these math items--I could get those things--someone to call if there's a problem--but in my perception, I'm the one who they can take all their negative feelings out on, instead of taking them back to the faculty and the public--also some of the detail things (mentioned some specifics on furniture requests).

Researcher: Do they pursue their principal at all for support?

Jackie: (after pausing) I don't think so, because they'll typically come to me with things that they need and ask if I've checked in my office--even when there's no way that I can get these things--something that is different too--for Lois and Sandy, this is their first year of working with these principals; I am sure that Valerie and Peggy would go to Sid for support more frequently than the others would because of their years together. (INT - 11/4/85)

As the month went on, Jackie started to experience the realities of "routine" and what this means during program implementation. She started to become aware of how this

change in the teachers' behavior affected her decision to be involved in a leadership position and what the implications of such leadership can entail. It was noted that these reflections signaled a turning point in her personal observations:

Researcher: What types of activity have you had with Young Fives teachers since we last met?

Jackie: None!

Researcher: How has this changed since the beginning of the year and why?

Jackie: Think it's because they have been "settling in" and doing the things in the programs which they have been talking about--and not needing me in the process like they did in the beginning--which has quite frankly been good because of the many tasks that I have been given since the beginning of the year!

Researcher: How have you adjusted to the changes?

Jackie: This is the first time that I have been in a job in which I'm doing some of the same things two years in a row--that of teacher coordinator--involves maintenance things with Young Fives--not necessarily the same effort of having to "sell" the program to everyone--it's going on its own.

Researcher: How is this affecting you?

Jackie: Do not have the challenge--the "hype" of doing something that could fail--when I'm working on something with a lot of risk, I get excited--its like getting ready for a NASTAR ski

$\mathcal{O}(\epsilon^2)$  and  $\mathcal{O}(\epsilon^3)$  terms are given by
 
$$\begin{aligned}
 \mathcal{O}(\epsilon^2) &= \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{\partial^2 \mathcal{L}}{\partial \mathbf{u}^2} \right) \mathbf{u}^2 + \frac{1}{6} \left( \frac{\partial^3 \mathcal{L}}{\partial \mathbf{u}^3} \right) \mathbf{u}^3 + \frac{1}{24} \left( \frac{\partial^4 \mathcal{L}}{\partial \mathbf{u}^4} \right) \mathbf{u}^4 + \dots \\
 \mathcal{O}(\epsilon^3) &= \frac{1}{6} \left( \frac{\partial^3 \mathcal{L}}{\partial \mathbf{u}^3} \right) \mathbf{u}^3 + \frac{1}{24} \left( \frac{\partial^4 \mathcal{L}}{\partial \mathbf{u}^4} \right) \mathbf{u}^4 + \dots
 \end{aligned}$$

race--I get all excited--almost "losing it" often, but then go on and do it--its almost anticlimactic at the end--the thrill is in the anticipation. My life has changed a lot too this year in other ways--I'm married now--so I know where that's going, my job has some of the same elements as before--so there's not so much going on that's new and different. . . .

Researcher: What type of "agendas" are you planning to cover at the next meeting--what do you want to accomplish?

Jackie: To be more directive (referred me to a handout)--it'll be the most directive that I've been with the teachers up to now--I'll be curious to see how they react--I've given them assignments to read and we will cover them at the meeting. . . .  
(INT - 11/18/85)

Indeed Jackie was more directive at the next Young Fives meeting. She reviewed the "total child" in terms of Gesell research and led a discussion that resulted in a consensus that the "social/emotional" area of growth and development was the first priority in the Young Fives classroom. During the next few weeks, Jackie spent considerable time with individual teachers in their classrooms and in individual conferences. These experiences led to a level of acceptance from Jackie's perspective. After discussing the adjustments that the teachers had been making, Jackie shared some of her own perceptions of her adjustment:

Researcher: Where do you see yourself at this point?

Jackie: I see myself as accepting where everything is at and being able to look ahead and realize that everything this year won't be what I had hoped. . . its OK--that it's moving along--

Researcher: Why your "peace of mind"?

Jackie: Visiting the classrooms in November--fewer complaints about details--now I realize that the teachers are serving as facilitators of learning--I don't care if we don't get to workbook page 22--the kids are being taken care of--

Researcher: Appears as though you've done some thinking in your observations--

Jackie: Yes, remember the "social/emotional" discussion we had at the meeting--next year this is where we have to start--"You too, Jackie"--(pointing finger at herself with emphasis)--I've learned a lot in the process and I didn't know it--nor do I think those teachers are perceiving their growth! (INT - 12/16/85)

The holidays were approaching and the teachers didn't want to have too many visitors as their children were getting very excitable with the holiday preparations. During this time Jackie traveled to a district in a neighboring county and presented an overview of the Young Fives planning and development process; she was now "experienced" in relationship to this group of educators who knew nothing of the Young Fives background. After the



holidays, Jackie picked up her visitation and meeting schedule once again. During the final interview with the researcher in January, Jackie made some significant observations in regard to how she perceived her degree of interest in handling on-going projects. As she stated in November, she enjoys the challenge and risk of working with a new project; she finds it difficult to deal with maintenance issues which require time and patience. This is confirmed in her final reflections:

The most significant thing and the most difficult for me to accept is that things take time and they don't happen overnight as I would want them to--so I've learned that just reinforcing that patience is necessary--that's the most significant thing I've learned. . . . I enjoy putting more energy into new things rather than maintaining them--that's the biggest single thing--the other thing is that I really want things to happen right away--and patience is real important--my perspective has changed from dealing with the expectations of children--but applying it to adults--it's a different perspective than before. . . the Young Fives Program has been real important to me--the first part was the most exciting--the "movement" on the training, the follow-ups, selecting the teachers--the most difficult has been the maintenance and having to deal with all these little things. (INT - 1/20/86)

At the conclusion of this study Jackie had just begun her involvement in a long-term staff training program which the Red Rock Area School District initiated in late January,





1986. She will now have the opportunity to face challenge once again in the planning and development phase of Essential Elements of Effective Instruction.

Following the study it was learned that Jackie has begun conducting training sessions for others on the Gesell School Readiness Instrument. As of this writing, she is training the group of educators in the neighboring county, who participated in her awareness session on Young Fives in December, 1985. Perhaps this combination of activities will provide a "challenge" to her and will assist in balancing out the "maintenance" portions of the Young Fives implementation.

#### Adults as Learners:

The overarching question in this study was:

How does the educator perceive him/herself as an adult learner in the context of staff development experiences?

This is the question that is the essence of what this researcher intended to glean from the educators at the Red Rock Area School District. It was necessary to observe their learning activities at length in order to establish the "fabric" of the larger frame of reference that made up their cumulative experiences. It was such a context that

the Young Fives Program provided--an extensive array of staff development activities at the worksite over a long period of time (15 months) which included a planning/development phase and an implementation phase. Each of these phases provided a unique set of adult learning activities which related to the specific purpose of the respective phase. The previous data presented in this chapter have been descriptive of the learners' experiences within the Young Fives Program.

Given that context and frame of reference, the researcher now shares the perceptions of these educators as they experience learning in a broader perspective. This information shared by the participants is a synthesis of their reflections on past and present learning experiences. It may not be reflective of just the Young Fives activities between 1984-86 as other life experiences are incorporated into their thinking.

The data gathered in response to this overarching question is conceptualized in two main categories:

- a) perceptions that appear to  
initiate significant learning  
for the educator
  
- b) perceptions regarding conditions  
for learning which appear to  
make a difference in the

## receptivity for continuation

a) Initiating Significant Learning:

In this study the educators described situations which seem to promote growth and motivation for significant learning at a given point in their lives. The main factor that appeared to be consistent in determining what prompted the learning at that particular time was related to a change in role assignment, expectations correlated with the role assignment, a task that needed to be accomplished, or a personal or professional decision to accomplish something individually. The majority of the educators interviewed were experiencing a change in role assignment due to the Young Fives Program and the expectations correlated with that assignment. Others were faced with tasks that needed to be accomplished while others referred to individual goals that were in process.

Within this context, specific descriptions of the educators' perceptions revealed commonalities as to what makes a difference in the initiation of a significant learning experience. Challenge was one of the points noted by several of the participants as a stimulant of learning. Examples of how challenge is perceived as a factor are noted. Jennifer Sanders, an experienced pre-school consultant, describes her recent change in role:

- My first reaction was to say "no" to the role--didn't feel I had enough time to "get ready", but I saw it as a challenge--an opportunity to use some of my previous training. . . the challenge of trying something new--forced me to change--try something new--I don't know where I go from here, but change is critical--there's an opportunity to grow through that change.  
(INT - 2/3/86)

Libby Harris, an experienced kindergarten teacher, relates to her challenges at work and in her personal life:

The Gesell was all a challenge. . . you have to react subjectively through that whole process--it's a challenge. . . perhaps as you relate to skiing where sometimes I will jest about a new learning situation because I'm not totally comfortable in that situation yet, but I wouldn't be there if I didn't have the motivation and desire to be there--with stability, there's no growth--if everything is wonderfully fine and straight across the board--no growth. I'm the kind of person that doesn't want to stay on this solid, straight line--I want to go up--going up there are the hills--up and down like in skiing and Gesell training--you remind yourself of what point you're at. . . life gets very complicated, but all of these things are learning experiences. . . I won't remain stagnant--there are lots of new things that come about.  
(INT - 1/28/86)

Jackie Collins, Teacher Coordinator, needs challenge in her life to perform well. She aspires to be an administrator and she likes the development phases of projects more than

maintenance activities. She describes the element of challenge that she misses in maintenance-type of activities:

Do not have the challenge--the "hype" of doing something that could fail. . . when I'm working on something with a lot of risk, I get excited--it's like getting ready for a NASTAR ski race. . . .  
(INT - 11/18/86)

In addition, she sees her learning experience in Young Fives as helpful in future challenges for her professionally:

I've been motivated in this program, but I also look for advancement--what kinds of opportunity might be open to me--on a quality level--what doors might this open. . . . (INT - 1/20/86)

Another factor that was significant in the adult learning experiences was the response to change. Coping with change presented new learning experiences and broadened perspectives resulting in an expanded and clarified frame of reference of one's learning process. Some found this process of learning through change to be overwhelming and difficult; they gained new insights into themselves as they struggled. Jennifer Sanders describes her observations as she initiated new learning through a role change:

Initially it was hard, very difficult--was just me--I'm the type of personality that if I do something well, I want to do it very well on day one--that wasn't realistic--in turn that's part of the challenge--picking up a journal at night, even if you're



tired--it's exciting--  
 challenging. . . but my  
 first-initial response was "no"--it  
 was purely out of being scared with  
 a new frontier--now that I look  
 back--I've learned. . .but there  
 was a fear of the unknown--the most  
 difficult part in a new  
 situation--am I what I'm perceived  
 to be? (INT - 2/3/86)

Sandy Clark shares her perceptions of how the frustration of  
 change inspires her to learn more:

I feel that I am open--I feel like  
 the more I learn, the more I don't  
 know--and the more inept I find  
 myself--which sends me back to  
 learn more--a cycle which is very  
 frustrating at times because I feel  
 overwhelmed--I constantly feel that  
 way in here (classroom) because I  
 go over everything I did each  
 day--and say "scratch this"--it  
 didn't work at all--or it worked  
 great. . . I feel that I enjoy  
 learning. (INT - 1/30/86)

Lois Gates had nine years of experience in education before  
 taking a Young Fives teaching position. She identifies the  
 key elements in her new role that made change difficult, but  
 also predicts these factors to be positive motivators in the  
 future:

My new job has been very  
 overwhelming--I was very naive--in  
 speech therapy you only have 2-3  
 children at a time--behavior was no  
 problem--now to have 18 kids "at  
 me" at one time--this is a  
 monumental change! I walk out of  
 this classroom just whipped! Every  
 ounce of energy is drained--where  
 in speech therapy--the investment  
 of total energy wasn't there. . .





it's a lot harder than I thought it would be. . . but the first year in anything is the most horrendous year. . . when I have everything mastered--I'll enjoy it. . . there's a lot of joy in this age group--the change of kids each year will be nice. (INT - 12/5/85)

Another factor that initiated learning on the part of the educators in this study centered around the need to "gain control" within a new and different situation. Through this process they eventually could sort out that which was essential to focus on and that which could be delayed or discarded. Lois Gates struggled with the establishment of the new curriculum in Young Fives; she felt that the four teachers should be more consistent in this area to tighten up the program:

I don't think we are all in the same track. . . . I would like to see more of a "match" in the curriculum with each of us having our own fillers. . . . I'd like to see us in that direction. . . be sure that the curriculum was in place. (INT - 12/5/85)

Valerie focused her energy on controlling her independence and sought the opportunity to refine all that had been shared with them:

I am very independent. . . . I don't feel that anyone can tell any teacher at any level what they should teach other than your basic curriculum. . . . I feel right now as far as methods and activities--that I am just saturated with choices and

resources--what I need is the time to refine and fine tune in that area. . . . I have to decide what the needs are--and what resources I have--sort out all the materials I have and think I need--that will help me strengthen the area that I need to help a child--to get a well-rounded impression--then delve into the information.  
(INT - 2/5/86)

Dolly Leonard, also an experienced teacher, was in the process of a role change. She identifies her need for control:

I don't like being put in a situation where I don't feel like I'm in control. . . . I gained it by just coming in every day and "working it"--going through the day to day experience of coming up with different situation and having to deal with it. . . . I fell back on my previous preschool experience and read, studied--now I'm more knowledgeable. (INT - 2/3/86)

All of these situations which Lois, Valerie and Dolly shared were learning experiences accrued through the process of gaining control over their particular teaching assignment; the situation forced them to persevere towards the level of quality that each identified for themselves.

b) Perceptions regarding conditions for learning which appear to make a difference in the receptivity for continuation:

Each educator interviewed identified certain conditions which encouraged learning for them as adults. The majority of the persons in this study favored collaborative interactional styles of learning with others in their field. The extensive evidence for this can be found in the detailed section in this chapter regarding the need for interaction as it relates to learning. Meeting to discuss common instructional responsibilities, methods and resources was the highest priority in terms of format of learning activities. These data also indicates that teachers in this study see themselves and their colleagues as important resources for learning. Also judging from the consistent attendance and active participation in the Young Fives, Chapter I and kindergarten teachers' meetings, they also prefer mutual planning sessions for their respective programs. Bart Duncan, Valerie Peters and Jackie Collins expressed the need for selective learning experiences for themselves, but all felt that the need for interaction and collaborative planning was important.

Also noted and cited earlier in this chapter was the notion that typical university classes and lectures were not the choice of these educators as they pursued staff development options. Several mentioned that they have had to attend university classes for securing credentials, but they perceived this as a "necessity", not necessarily a preferred choice in staff development. As Bart Duncan, who has a Master's Degree and over ten years of experience

states:

If I go to the local university again, it'll be like I was 20 years old again--and a dummy and I didn't know how to do anything on my own. . . there are some things I'd like to learn, but maybe I've worked to have enough self-confidence that to do these Mickey Mouse things--that somebody who has never set foot in a school, other than a student, has to do--doesn't make a bit of sense.  
(INT - 2/4/86)

All of the adults in this study were active, involved learners as observed by the researcher in their classrooms, in staff development sessions and through the interviews. But as adult learners they had distinct preferences for their learning activities. They wanted some ownership in defining this experience.

### Summary:

A synthesis of data gathered over a fifteen-month period of field research in the Red Rock Area School District has been reported in this chapter. During this time the researcher served as a participant observer in the planning/development phase of the Young Fives Program and in the initial stages of the implementation phases of Young Fives. The following statements serve as a summative response to the questions which guided this study:

Planning/Development Phase:

-The teachers whose roles linked them directly with very young children focused on Young Fives content and procedural issues during this phase, while the teachers in the district who had an indirect role (with this specific age-group of children) focused more on the potential financial implications of new program development.

-The kindergarten teachers had a significant interest in the district's policy regarding mandatory screening of all pre-kindergarten children. They strongly encouraged this component of the Young Fives Program as they now saw an optional placement available for the children who were assessed to be developmentally younger than five years.

-A significant motivator for expansion of knowledge and skills by the staff directly involved in this phase was the team approach to conducting the Gesell School Readiness Assessment. They strived for similar competency levels and wanted to assure appropriate selection of children for the Young Fives Program.

-The positive, functional approach of responding to the developmental needs of young children provided an effective frame of reference for "selling" the Young Fives Program. It also provided an "education" for staff and parents as to the latest research on the development of young children.

-The interactional planning experiences of the kindergarten/Chapter I teachers and the Planning Committee not only provided opportunities for gaining knowledge regarding Gesell research on young children, but also provided opportunities for "venting" on district concerns, divergent thinking in regard to the support of the program, and, due to the impending union questions, provided a collaborative "in house" support group for planning concise responses to peer questions/concerns.

-A study of the questions raised by staff and parents during awareness sessions on Young Fives reflected thinking that represented a high degree of interest in the research regarding the development of young children and support for applying that knowledge in the district's program. An additional factor noted was the high degree of curiosity regarding the many "details" of school-entry from parents of children entering school for the first time.

-The educators in this study needed a variety of learning experiences to prepare themselves successfully for implementation of the Young Fives Program including: large group awareness experiences, small group interactional experiences, small group guided-practice sessions, individualized guided-practice sessions and individual/small-group self-directed experiences.

Implementation Phase:

-All of the Young Fives teachers experienced a significant degree of "cognitive dissonance" during their initial weeks of implementing the new program. Their learning from previous teaching experiences did not transfer immediately to this situation which incorporated a new curriculum, a new program structure and a different developmental level of children.

-The Teacher Coordinator found it necessary to adjust her plans for assisting the Young Fives staff members during the initial two-three months. The meeting agendas had to be limited to one or two items to allow for flexibility in discussing the many adjustments that the teachers were experiencing. The Teacher Coordinator's role had to focus on assisting the teachers through the process of change during this period.

-The Young Fives Planning Committee concluded from observations and feedback received from staff and parents that the implementation of the program was meeting their expectations. They established an expanded goal of meeting the "developmental" needs of children at other levels.

-Persons involved in the Young Fives Program concluded that the program could not have been implemented successfully without strong Board-level support or without a leadership person directing the activities of the planning/development process.



-The effective dissemination of quality research regarding the developmental needs of young children successfully motivated this Young Fives staff to participate actively in the implementation of this program.

-Successful experience in Young Fives was considered a valued resource by the young Fives teachers in the "change process."

-The educators in this study strongly expressed a need to have time to interact with other educators regarding common programming areas.

-The Teacher Coordinator's observations throughout the planning/development/implementation stages led her to expanded insights regarding appropriate leadership strategies during these respective periods. She also developed insights as to her own preferences regarding work in each of these stages.

-Educators in this study perceived that significant new learning experiences are stimulated for them when they encounter personal/professional challenge, a change in role/expectation or a need to gain control within a new or different situation.

-Educators in this study identified the following points as considerations for staff development:

1) they prefer opportunities for collaborative, interactional learning experiences with others in their field;

2) they see themselves and their colleagues as important resources for learning;

3) they prefer mutual planning sessions for their respective programs, and

4) the typical "lecture-type class sessions" were not a preferred choice for extended learning opportunities.

The broader conclusions of the study along with implications for educational practice and recommendations for future research will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V  
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary:

The objective of this study was to gather descriptive data on educators participating in staff development experiences within their work-site. The purpose of the study was to analyze these data to determine how adults perceive themselves as adult learners in the context of staff development experiences within their work-site. The overarching question which guided the researcher throughout the study was:

How does the educator perceive him/herself as an adult learner in the context of staff development experiences?

The study was conducted in the Red Rock Area Public School District between September, 1984, and February, 1986. The specific program within that district that served as the focus of this study was the Young Fives Program, a new program established for children who are chronologically

eligible for kindergarten entry, but developmentally younger than five years as determined by the Gesell School Readiness Assessment.

The researcher served as a participant observer in the planning and development phase of the program (September, 1984 - June, 1985) and again in the initial stage of the implementation phase (September, 1985 - February, 1986). The design of the research model was developed on accepted principles for qualitative research (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982; Spindler, 1982; Peshkin, 1978; Schatzman and Strauss, 1973; Gorden, 1980; Kimball and Partridge, 1979; Erickson, Florio and Buschman, 1980; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Yinger, 1979; and Erickson, 1985).

The researcher proceeded on theoretical assumptions regarding adult learning experiences and staff development activities as defined in Chapter II of this study. She also felt the importance of investigating what specific perceptions that this particular group of educators had regarding their staff development activities as integrated into the work-site through the Young Fives Program. Due to Young Fives being a new program implemented in the district, the researcher found it interesting to pursue the educators' perceptions of how the change in role responsibilities affected their learning experience within a professional and personal context.

In reporting the findings, the researcher found it necessary to distinguish between the data in the

planning/development phase and in the implementation phase of Young Fives. This need for difference in detail emerged as the researcher analyzed the data. It became necessary to organize the narrative report in such a format to allow the reader the opportunity to conceptualize the "development" of the program and to gain a view of the educators involved. Following these sections, the researcher discussed the educators' perceptions regarding adult learning which were cumulative reflections from the planning/development and implementation phases, along with other respective learning experiences.

A summary of the findings in each phase of this study follows. This section is followed by a synthesis of the major findings from the planning/development and the implementation phases.

#### Planning/Development Phase:

-The teachers whose roles linked them directly with very young children focused on Young Fives content and procedural issues during this phase, while the teachers in the district who had an indirect role (with this specific age-group of children) focused more on the potential financial implications of new program development.

-The kindergarten teachers had a significant interest in the district's policy regarding mandatory screening of

all pre-kindergarten children. They strongly encouraged this component of the Young Fives Program as they now saw an optional placement available for the children who were assessed to be developmentally younger than five years.

-A significant motivator for expansion of knowledge and skills by the staff directly involved in this phase was the team approach to conducting the Gesell School Readiness Assessment. They strived for similar competency levels and wanted to assure appropriate selection of children for the Young Fives Program.

-The positive, functional approach of responding to the developmental needs of young children provided an effective frame of reference for "selling" the Young Fives Program. It also provided an "education" for staff and parents as to the latest research on the development of young children.

-The interactional planning experiences of the kindergarten/Chapter I teachers and the Planning Committee not only provided opportunities for gaining knowledge regarding Gesell research on young children, but also provided opportunities for "venting" on district concerns, divergent thinking in regard to the support of the program, and, due to the impending union questions, provided a collaborative "in house" support group for planning concise responses to peer questions/concerns.

-A study of the questions raised by staff and parents during awareness sessions on Young Fives reflected thinking that represented a high degree of interest in the research

regarding the development of young children and support for applying that knowledge in the district's program. An additional factor noted was the high degree of curiosity regarding the many "details" of school-entry from parents of children entering school for the first time.

-The educators in this study needed a variety of learning experiences to prepare themselves successfully for implementation of the Young Fives Program including: large group awareness experiences, small group interactional experiences, small group guided-practice sessions, individualized guided-practice sessions and individual/small-group self-directed experiences.

-The staff working on the planning/development phase of Young Fives not only internalized the details of the Gesell research on young children, but they also internalized the processes involved in establishing a new program within the district.

#### Implementation Phase:

-All of the Young Fives teachers experienced a significant degree of "cognitive dissonance" during their initial weeks of implementing the new program. Their learning from previous teaching experiences did not transfer immediately to this situation which incorporated a new curriculum, a new program structure and a different

developmental level of children.

-The Teacher Coordinator found it necessary to adjust her plans for assisting the Young Fives staff members during the initial two-three months. The meeting agendas had to be limited to one or two items to allow for flexibility in discussing the many adjustments that the teachers were experiencing. The Teacher Coordinator's role had to focus on assisting the teachers through the process of change during this period.

-The Young Fives Planning Committee concluded from observations and feedback received from staff and parents that the implementation of the program was meeting their expectations. They established an expanded goal of meeting the "developmental" needs of children at other levels.

-Persons involved in the Young Fives Program concluded that the program could not have been implemented successfully without strong Board-level support or without a leadership person directing the activities of the planning/development process.

-The effective dissemination of quality research regarding the developmental needs of young children successfully motivated this Young Fives staff to participate actively in the implementation of this program.

-Successful experience in Young Fives was considered a valued resource by the Young Fives teachers in the "change process".



-The educators in this study strongly expressed a need to have time to interact with other educators regarding common programming areas.

-The Teacher Coordinator's observations throughout the planning/development/implementation stages led her to expanded insights regarding appropriate leadership strategies during these respective periods. She also developed insights as to her own preferences regarding job roles/responsibilities in each of these stages.

-Educators in this study perceived that significant new learning experiences are stimulated for them when they encounter personal/professional challenge, a change in role/expectation or a need to gain control within a new or different situation.

-Educators in this study identified the following points as considerations for staff development:

- 1) they prefer opportunities for collaborative, interactional learning experiences with others in their field;

- 2) they see themselves and their colleagues as important resources for learning;

- 3) they prefer mutual planning sessions for their respective programs, and

- 4) the typical "lecture-type class sessions" were not a preferred choice for extended learning opportunities.

In this section, a synthesis of the major findings drawn from the planning/development and implementation

phases in the study are shared. These statements are each followed by summative discussion relating to the specific finding. This section is followed by the major conclusions drawn from the study and a discussion of implications for educational practice as perceived through reflections from this study. The culminating section of this chapter incorporates some of the researcher's questions which have evolved through this study and could be considered as further research recommendations. The chapter closes with a section on reflections by the researcher.

#### Findings--Planning/Development and Implementation Phases:

1) A year devoted to planning and development activities for the Young Fives Program resulted in multi-dimensional long-term benefits for the district which include: a) a successfully implemented Young Fives Program serving approximately 100 students, with little or no negative feedback from the community or staff, and was initiated during a time when new program development was evaluated scrupulously by the three unions in the district; b) an accepted district procedure for pre-kindergarten screening, using the Gesell School Readiness Assessment, and a core staff trained to conduct it annually, and c) the introduction of the concept of "developmental programming" to meet the individualized needs of children to all the

staff in the district and a significant number of parents in the community.

The investment which the Red Rock Area School District made in the planning/development phase of the Young Fives Program yielded productive long-term results in areas far broader than the four programs (six different sessions) for children. As was noted in Chapter IV, the district staff were preparing their "negotiation strategy" during the 1984-85 school year; Young Fives was reviewed internally by the staff in relationship to the overall district funding considerations. The fact that the recommendation for the program was not challenged by the unions and that it did not become an issue during the strike in September, 1985, was significant. This leads one to assume that the need for the program and the perceived quality of the program were effectively communicated during the planning/development process.

One of the great concerns raised by the kindergarten teachers specifically, and others more generally, was the district's pre-kindergarten screening procedure. They felt that the previous assessment provided only an indicator of potential intellectual development; development in the physical, social and emotional areas was not addressed. The Gesell School Readiness Assessment provided this look at the "total child." In addition, the decision to train kindergarten and Chapter I teachers plus all assessment/diagnostic personnel in the implementation of

this process, created a core group of well-educated internal staff who would be long-term supporters of the program. These "adult learners" will continue their refinement of their knowledge and skill in this area on an annual basis. They have already had follow-up sessions in March and May, 1986, to prepare for the 1986 screening procedures.

Due to the comprehensive planning/development sessions held in 1984-85, the district provided an awareness of "developmental programming" to a wide array of people--this "seed" has already been planted positively in the minds of many. If further programming needs are addressed in this area, there is a large nucleus of educators who have strongly accepted and internalized the concept and others who could be at "teachable moments" (Krupp, 1981) as the concept is reviewed for extended application in the district.

In summary, the investment that the district made in educating their staff and community will provide an on-going resource for refining the present Young Fives and kindergarten programs and for extending these concepts to other levels. The number of adults involved in this learning process will expand through further implementation strategies.

2) The educators involved in the various committees of the planning/development phase of the Young Fives project had specific learning experiences that went beyond the

internalization of the knowledge from the Gesell research and skills developed on the Gesell School Readiness Assessment. They also a) attained knowledge about how a district introduces a new program; b) acquired the skills and knowledge needed to "sell" a new program to colleagues, and c) participated in an "attitude-sharing" experience with the administration as co-supporters of a new concept.

The learning experiences that the Teacher Coordinator, kindergarten teachers, Chapter I teachers, Planning Committee and assessment/diagnostic staff participated in throughout this project's planning/development phase clarified and expanded their concepts and attitudes about how decision-making processes work in their school district. They prepared for the Board meetings with the administrative representatives, they rehearsed the questions which opponents to the program might ask in difficult situations, and they reaffirmed their own knowledge base on the Gesell research in order to respond to questions and to defend adequately the strong belief they had in the Young Fives Program. Through these learning experiences, they developed confidence in their abilities to participate at this level as they observed the success of their work--the implementation of the program. Support for such concepts of staff development through integrated learning experiences at the work-site is reflected in the work of Dewey (1938), Cook (1982), McLaughlin and Berman (1977), Burrello and Orbaugh (1982), Marchand (1986) and Brophy (1980).

3) The leadership attributes of the Teacher Coordinator, which were integral to the success of the planning/development phase of the Young Fives Program, included the ability to a) organize information into meaningful components; b) internalize key concepts in order to highlight them appropriately, and c) communicate the essence of this information in a variety of settings.

Although this role represented an initial leadership experience in her district, the Teacher Coordinator was praised in these areas by her colleagues in the Young Fives Program for her work in the 1984-85 planning/development phase. In 1985-86 as she reflected on her preferences relating to her role responsibilities over the two years, she cited the "selling" experiences as being most challenging, exciting and rewarding. Through this experience of orchestrating the planning/development process, the Teacher Coordinator reflected the attributes of a self-directed learner as defined by Knowles (1975) and Penland (1981) as well as demonstrated several elements of successful staff development leadership skills as suggested through the work of Peters and Waterman (1982) and Cunningham (1985).

4) During the initial months of the implementation phase of the Young Fives Program, the learning experiences which evoked the most discussion by the four teachers and the

Teacher Coordinator revolved around a) assimilating new role responsibilities; b) the accommodation of the new curriculum expectations, and c) the emphasis required on detail "management" issues.

The experiences which these educators were participating in during these initial months of the implementation phase of Young Fives parallel closely the concepts addressed by Schlossberg, Troll and Leibowitz (1978) and Krupp (1981) as they discuss elements of adult development. The teachers had all adjusted to a "norm" in their previous employment situations. Now they were in "process" of a "transitional period" which required new and different learning experiences. They were each at a very "teachable moment," but also in various stages of "cognitive dissonance." Some indicators of these stages were noted. They became very focused on either implementing the total curriculum package at one time or in trying just portions of it at a time for fear that wouldn't be "enough." They wanted to "do the right thing," but had not experienced observing a successful Young Fives program so their concept of "rightness" was vague. This was especially evident when they met with Anita Davison, the Young Fives teacher who visited with the teachers. Their questions of her signified an intense desire to compare and contrast in their own minds what differences could be noted so they could individually assess their progress at that point. The difficulties that they discussed about this period reflected their struggle in

assimilating these new role expectancies which were not modeled anywhere in the district at that point. These difficulties also reflected the adjustments needed while accommodating the new knowledge of curriculum and developmental needs of their students within the existing frame of reference that each teacher had developed from previous experiences. This was a very critical period in their work as it began to challenge their basic assumptions of what they already knew and forced new learning to "find a place" in this structure. As Piaget has noted through his research with children, this is how learning occurs. Such experiential learning is most valuable in regard to the long-term process of internalization and insight development.

The degree and kind of support that the teachers needed at this phase of implementation was different from the leadership that was needed in the planning/development phase from the Teacher Coordinator. This change in emphasis was an adjustment for the Teacher Coordinator. She struggled with some of the same experiences of assimilating a new set of role expectancies and accommodating a different "leadership curriculum" with no previous teaching experience in Young Fives. She was surprised by the attention to detail required for program implementation. Many management issues resurfaced at every meeting--bus problems, equipment needs, lack of teaching supplies, scheduling problems, etc. These details surprised her because she had not previously



managed the implementation phase of a new program before. This experience started to move her into the "stock-taking" stage of her career aspirations as identified by Schlossberg, Troll, and Leibowitz (1978). She began to identify her dreams, aspirations and options with an expanded frame of reference regarding leadership responsibilities.

In summary, these educators demonstrated signs of adjustment in new and different learning experiences and they reflected on their feelings about this change which was occurring in a variety of ways. It was perceived as a "difficult, overwhelming" time; growth did occur as they all revisited their roles with a new and broadened perspective after the holiday period, 1985. They have all survived and the program has received many positive statements from staff and parents.

Through this portion of the study one notes the degree of emphasis and attention which educators must give to the change process of adults and the new learning experiences which need to be addressed in staff development efforts.

5) During the planning/development and implementation phases of the Young Fives Program, it was important to the participants to have created group interactional opportunities among the colleagues as these experiences provided the staff with a) an internal support system; b) an opportunity to hear themselves "think out loud" about the

new concepts and skills; c) a system in which they viewed their colleagues and other Gesell trainers as on-going resources, and d) the motivation to move on a continuum from more directed instruction towards self-directed learning.

During the interview process of data-gathering, the researcher learned that the most preferred format for learning was that of interaction with other colleagues in one-to-one or small, "workable" group situations. The classroom teachers often referred to the "aloneness" or isolationism that was also studied by McLaughlin, Pfeifer, Swanson-Owens and Yee (1986). The Young Fives teachers frequently discussed the stimulation which interaction with colleagues brings. The element of "collegiality" was interpreted to serve as an internal support system to their respective roles and responsibilities. It helped to diffuse the notion of isolation which results when the bulk of one's daily interactions are with young children.

The opportunity to "think out loud" and to listen to others exposed the various assumptions that the staff members had made at any given point in time. The interactional opportunities provided for clarification, extension and expansion of these assumptions with their colleagues and other resource people. Such experiences opened up new questions, more divergent thinking and conclusive agreements on issues such as curriculum and child development. This type of learning opportunity illustrates Piaget's notion of social transmission as an interactive

means of learning and communicating educational insights--which promotes cognitive development.

Through this interactional process of Young Fives meetings and Gesell training sessions, the staff openly utilized one another as key resource people. During interviews they expressed this as the preferable method for new learning. It was observed that supplementary reading and study was occurring between sessions due to the ideas that were introduced, but the conceptualization and interpretation processes appeared to be stimulated by the open, divergent discussions. It was noted that the degree of experience represented by various resource persons was highly regarded by the Young Fives teachers. The new Young Fives colleagues were drawing from this wealth of background and later reconstructed this experience into their own frame of reference. As a result, this internalization assisted them in moving from a more directed need for instruction to a degree of self-directed application and learning skill. The self-directed approach further increased their confidence level which promoted a feeling of "executive control" as defined by Joyce and Showers (1983).

This study confirmed the need for interactional opportunities among educators who are participating in staff development experiences.

6) Time specifically set aside for the intensive focus on the Young Fives Program allowed for consistent

planning/development processes to occur and provided for interaction opportunities during the implementation phase; however, more adequate time for curriculum development by the teachers was needed.

The resource of time, which is so often overlooked, provided the educators in the Young Fives Program an opportunity to pursue intelligently the steps necessary to develop this program. By scheduling the activities in the 1984-85 planning/development phase, priority was placed on the issues related to Young Fives. It received the attention of many people in the district because it was on their calendars and they focused on it at their meetings. Due to this time and focus, the persons involved in planning/development had the opportunity to go beyond awareness levels to conceptualize the implementation needs. As a result, the types of questions that develop over time--developed. Through consistent meeting schedules and representation of various groups, the Planning Committee was prepared to respond to many concerns ahead of implementation. They also found out what the major inhibitors might be and developed alternatives in some cases. The fact that the planning/development process was completed over a year's period of time also communicated a message of importance; if a whole school year is devoted to one idea--it must be important to consider. The attendance at the various meetings--kindergarten teachers, Chapter I teachers, Planning Committee and Gesell training sessions

was excellent. This signaled interest and willingness to give of their time which was often after school.

However, during the implementation phase the Young Fives teachers only met to discuss concerns and curriculum implementation strategies after school. This time was important to the teachers, but three of the four teachers expressed that the meetings did not allow enough time to internalize the new experiences adequately. All four of the teachers felt that more time was needed for alternative staff development experiences such as visitations to other programs, consultation time with other staff or agency personnel who may work with the children, or curriculum clarification and internalization. The researcher observed that perhaps a couple of days during the first semester could have been devoted to the development of curriculum materials and strategies. This would have allowed the teachers to work on these items when they were at a high energy level. The teachers were in their classrooms on a regular basis until 5:00 or 7:00 P.M. in the evening trying to prepare the many lessons for such an active group of children. They needed time to reflect on what they were doing during the "teaching" hours and time to re-energize for the next day. New program implementation requires more planning time than that which was allocated.

In summary, it is highlighted throughout this study how one district's process of new program planning, development and implementation also served as a rich resource for adult

learning experiences for the staff involved. The activities described in this study demonstrate how on-site staff development opportunities can exist in day-to-day operations within a district if there is a focus on learning through the experiences. By focusing on additional dimensions of learning in given situations, a district can integrate adult learning experiences into their staff development plans without a significant investment of additional resources. Examples will be provided in the discussion on implications for educational practice.

The major contribution of this study is that it provides educators with another look at what they are already doing and suggests an additional dimension to consider for staff development planning--to revisit the existing district activities in view of potential on-site adult learning experiences for the staff. This type of perspective should contribute in promoting the attitude of lifelong learning within a district.

### Conclusions:

Major conclusions drawn from the study are reported in this section. Further implications regarding their usefulness in educational practices generally are discussed in the next section.

1) School district leadership personnel need to incorporate strategies for effective education of the district's total staff and representative community members when preparing for the implementation of a major program change. This step can be considered a good long-term investment in the district's overall educational program.

2) Effective use of the existing school activities/environment for staff development experiences can encourage educators to observe the multi-dimensional opportunities for learning within their day-to-day worksite.

3) When selecting leadership personnel for school district staff development efforts, key attributes which deserve attention in the decision-making process should include:

- a comprehensive understanding of the adult development process and the ability to respond effectively to individual needs and differences within that process;

- relevant experiences in the area(s) which the staff are working and the ability to communicate effectively regarding the intergration of these topics into practice;

- demonstrate self-directed learning practices on a regular basis and demonstrate the ability to guide

others through a variety of self-directed learning activities within their roles.

4) School district leadership personnel need to be sensitive to the degree of effect which change has on educators within their district. The perceived degree of change by the leadership may not be consonant with the degree of impact as perceived by the educator(s) carrying out the role responsibilities. Opportunities for communicating about these differences are essential for collaborative program development.

5) Opportunities for interaction/exchange among educators promotes cognitive development in the individual. Such experiences stimulate thought to be clarified and expanded. They also encourage divergent higher level thinking. Through such stimulation, more self-directed learning opportunities emerge.

6) School district leadership personnel need to address time as a key resource which must be available in developing effective staff development programs. Learning requires time on task, time for interacting with others and time for reflection. Adults in learning experiences must have time allocated for these purposes if the staff development program is to reach the goals identified.



Implications for Educational Practice:

During the busy routine of an educator's day, there is not much opportunity for reflection regarding "what else" should be done because the effort of merely surviving the present workload and demands on one's time are often the major goal. However, this cycle of "staying on top" of the crises often results in decreased productivity and negative attitudes among educators; the "cumulateness" of it all becomes difficult to sort out. An exciting alternative to consider is how the work-site can become a motivating and resourceful environment for new learning experiences. This study has focused on how many meetings and other job-related activities occur within a single project in only one district during a given period of time. These activities can often be turned into effective learning experiences with some creative planning and minimal resources.

Another focus within the study was on how the educator represents an adult learner in on-site staff development activities. Sometimes that is all that is needed--a specific focus on a dimension of learning. This researcher suggests that an emphasis be considered within the educational setting that promotes learning on a regular basis. A beginning goal might be:

Encourage educators a) to be more effective learners and b) to be more effective teachers of adult learners.

Some ideas are shared which might promote discussion on these topics.

Assisting Educators to Become More Effective Learners:

1) Encourage the extension/refinement of thinking skills in staff development activities.

As was noted in this study, the various types of activities in the planning/development and implementation stages required different preparation and implementation strategies. Such strategies require divergent and comprehensive thinking skills such as the ability to conceptualize, interpret data, form conclusions and generalizations about the data and to apply the data appropriately.

The difference in implementing an ordinary program and a highly successful program often hinges on the quality of the strategies developed. As Sternberg (1981) points out, "Some people have the capacity to act effectively on what they know. Other people seem to lack this capacity or to possess it only in limited degree. Yet it is this skill that spells the difference between mere learning on the one hand and performance that reflects learning on the other." (p. 19) The successful implementation of the Young Fives Program in this study reflected a performance that reflects learning. The planning/development phase was well

executed in terms of overall strategy.

Sometimes logical thinking does not resolve impending problems. In such cases, more divergent means need to be considered. As deBono (Brodinsky, 1985) suggests, it may involve ". . . disrupting a sequence and arriving at the solution from another angle." (p. 13) He refers to this as lateral thinking. Educators need to be effective strategists. Experience in alternative thinking styles can prove to be helpful in the classroom, during interactional experiences with colleagues, or during program planning or parental involvement.

Another dimension of thinking that is critical is the ability to think about one's own cognitive processes; this process is referred to as metacognition (Day, 1981). In this study it was noted at various intervals in the implementation stage that the teachers were experiencing adjustments to change that were demonstrated in their behaviors and questions at their meetings. Piaget refers to this as cognitive dissonance. When asked by the researcher about these experiences, the majority of responses focused on how they felt during the process; it was not easy for them to process mentally what was happening to them cognitively at that point. Experience with metacognition assists one in the adjustment process. Educators need to be observant of their own cognitive processing due to the complexities of the demands in their lives. Recent interpretations regarding the definition of intelligence are

furthering discussion on the insights derived from one's observation of oneself and others and how this affects human cognitive competence. Within the theory of multiple intelligence (Link, 1985), two of seven distinct concepts are defined in this area--interpersonal intelligence and intrapersonal intelligence. In this study, such observations were available for interpretation at each step of the way. Experience with such observations could have provided even more meaningful dialogue among the participants.

2) Become students of adult development/adult learning principles.

As noted in Chapter II, principles of adult development and adult learning coincide with purposes related to staff development, but are often considered separately. Through this study the researcher sought out insights which integrated these principles and provided a more meaningful interpretation of "what was happening" in the site at various intervals. Educators need to investigate opportunities in which these concepts could be integrated for staff development activities. Cross (1981), who has developed the Chain-of-Response (COR) model for understanding participation in adult learning activities and Characteristics of Adults as Learners (CAL), states:

I believe that the single most important goal for educators at all levels and in all agencies of the learning society is the development of lifelong learners who possess the basic skills for learning plus the motivation to pursue a variety of learning interests throughout their lives. (p. 249)

3) Encourage participation in interactional learning experiences on a regular basis.

As was noted in this study, a key format for learning as perceived by the educators was meeting with colleagues to learn from one another. Such experiences can encourage educators to communicate to others about learning which instills motivation and clarifies thinking. As noted by Lochhead (1981), "Putting thoughts into words helps to clarify thinking and gradually develop more and more refined reasoning strategies." (p. 69)

Through such interactive sessions, experiences can be shared which enhance the frame of reference of the learner. As observed in the study through the meeting with Anita Davison and the Young Fives teachers, Anita's experiences were soon "borrowed" by the less-experienced teachers. This synthesized learning experience became evident in all four classrooms soon after as expanded frameworks for instruction were introduced. Dewey (1938) refers to the concept of reconstruction of experience as essential in fostering learning. Educators can participate in this process at no cost on a daily basis with their colleagues. Herbert Simon (Peters and Waterman, 1982) refers to the years of

experience one acquires as a "rich vocabulary of patterns." (p. 67) The wealth of experience available in school districts should not be overlooked as a valuable resource for creating exciting learning possibilities among colleagues.

Mentoring relationships are becoming more popular in the educational setting. This model can provide for effective adult learning experiences. Hanes and Mitchell (1985) identified that the highest rated staff development item among beginning teachers was informal conversation with their mentors. In the Young Fives study, mentoring was noted as a preferred form of staff development by experienced staff who sought selective learning experiences. As Gray and Chanoff (1984) suggest, "age-mixing in education" allows people to learn from others "a few steps behind and a few steps ahead." (p. 611)

#### Assisting Educators to Become More Effective Teachers of Adult Learners:

Another focus which emerged through this study was the need for educators to assist one another in becoming more effective teachers of adult learners. As participants in the study noted, most often they chose collaborative learning activities with their colleagues as a preferred choice to lectures or university classes. They cited the

ineffectiveness of many educators in responding to needs of other adults. Some factors which might be considered in developing effective options for adult learners include:

1) Determining the appropriateness of individualized and group learning activities.

As noted by the educators in this study, they sought opportunities to learn from others most frequently, but sometimes this was not most appropriate in a group setting. Often staff development is perceived as a large group activity, which often is staged as a lecture. As one of the teachers noted, lectures are a "50/50 chance." Sometimes educators need to pursue projects on an individualized basis leading to a self-directed plan.

As noted by this researcher, the more experience one has had in education, the more quickly that individual moved on the continuum from more directed instruction towards more self-directed learning. Annual staff evaluation experiences in schools allow for excellent opportunities to develop self-directed learning plans. Based on a mutually agreeable goal between the supervisor and staff member, the staff member can pursue a learning plan that can selectively make a difference in his/her performance during the next year. Such individualized efforts can also accommodate differences in learning styles of

adults. (Guild and Gager, 1985)

Individualized learning plans could serve as a motivator to encourage educators to participate in educational research. It is often difficult for teachers to participate in research activities during their typical schedule, but a growing concept which can encourage such activity is through teacher collaboration with other researchers. In this study, the Young Fives staff found it interesting to be a part of a research project. One of the teachers was very happy that the interviewing process was implemented so that she could "really find out" what the researcher wanted to know. Involvement in research also encourages educators to use research as was cited recently in the Research Bulletin. (Phi Delta Kappa, 1986)

Groups can also serve as effective learning formats. The participants in this study strongly supported "working groups" as resourceful learning experiences. Knowles and Knowles (1972) identify when a group is an effective instrument for change and growth in individuals. This occurs when:

- a) Those who are to be changed and those who are to exert influence for change have a strong sense of belonging to the same group.
- b) The attraction for the group is greater than the discomfort of the change.



- c) The members of the group share the perception that change is needed.
- d) Information relating to the need for change, plans for change, and consequences for change is shared by all relevant people.
- e) The group provides an opportunity for the individual to practice changed behavior without threat or punishment.
- f) The individual is provided a means for measuring progress toward the change goals. (p. 62)

2) Scheduling time for learning activities and focus on learning in a variety of regular functions.

Time became a critical factor in the study. As was highlighted, the significant period of time devoted to planning/development resulted in many district-wide benefits for long-term planning. However, the initial stages of implementation could have included more time for curriculum development and integration.

Educators are typically busy people. They have very little time in a normal work day to reflect on learning experiences of their own as they are so involved with the lives of others. This researcher feels that in order to provide effective teaching for adult learners, time must be allocated for learning experiences--both during and after the school day. Many of the routine matters can be handled after the school hours in group or individualized meetings, but

some intense focus must be given to other issues during longer sessions. Upon reflection of this study, the researcher feels that one day a month would have been adequate for the Young Fives teachers during the first semester of the 1985-86 year for intense focus on curriculum implementation. This would have allowed for productive reflection within the group when energy levels would have been more appropriate for learning and participation.

During regular meeting functions, an emphasis on learning can occur by encouraging focused recall on some of the experiences since the last meeting. This allows the participants the opportunity to "participate," even if for a brief period of time, and reflects an attitude of interest in learning from the leadership. It also reflects the attitude of "ownership" in the learning activity by members involved. This type of routine practice (as appropriate) can raise the consciousness of various activities in one's daily experiences and increase the possibility for self-observation and analysis.

### 3) Providing on-site leadership training experiences for educators within the district.

Sometimes role assignments in education become inflexible and opportunities for leadership experiences and training are not extended. As was noted in this

study, the need for leadership during the planning/development stage was different from that of the implementation stage. The details of implementation and change came as a surprise to the Teacher Coordinator.

Leadership training in adult development, coping with change and life transitions, counseling and consultation are all very meaningful issues, but are seldom addressed in leadership development. Some of these areas could be developed through "in-house" internships from time to time. If a staff member is considering a leadership opportunity, perhaps some time could be appropriated for an internship experience with a "seasoned" professional who can assist the colleague through guided practice and focused reflection. Another similar concept has been classified as "advising" by Little (1985).

Small adjustments in role assignments can also be considered to allow for an educator to investigate a leadership experience within the district which might evolve through a self-directed learning plan. It may result in a short-term mini-project that can benefit the district and the individual and create a renewed interest in learning for the individual. Perhaps such experiences could be mutually explored with representatives from a university. This would provide the added resources of university personnel in guiding

the learning activities of the educator(s).

In summary, these implications for educational practice focus on practical, inexpensive applications through which educators can infuse effective adult learning opportunities within the work-site. Over time, such implementation can result in expansive lifelong learning experiences for educators.

#### Recommendations for Further Research:

It was highlighted throughout this study how one district's process of new program planning, development and implementation also served as a rich resource for adult learning experiences. The results shared through this report ought to encourage educators to revisit existing district activities as potential on-site learning experiences for staff. Such a focus would develop a frame of reference toward an integration of lifelong learning activities into daily practice.

Through the experience of this study the researcher raises some potential areas for consideration as future research questions:

- How can educators assist other professionals in human service fields to integrate adult development/learning concepts into their staff development experiences?

- How can professional preparation programs effectively integrate the concepts of adult development/learning into the curriculum for leadership development?
- How does one actually develop the attitude of becoming a lifelong learner?
- To what degree do one's professional life experiences affect lifelong learning goals?
- How can one more effectively assess one's thinking skills in relationship to potential job performance?
- What else does one need to know about the teaching/learning process of adults in order to strengthen the theory of andragogy?
- How do logical and lateral thinking skills differ in educational practice for adults?
- To what degree can verbal interaction among adults be an accurate indicator of thinking skill development?
- To what degree have educators successfully been assimilated as private sector leadership development specialists? What factors have been significant in this

professional transfer?

The findings in this study represent a synthesis of perceptions regarding educators as adult learners in on-site staff development experiences. But as one reflects on the need for further study, the future research options offer as many dimensions as Christa McAuliffe's "lessons from space." It provides for a future of lifelong education.

Reflections:

As this researcher reflects upon the work accomplished in this study over the past two years, it becomes clear that the goal of this work has merely begun. Research such as this stimulates a degree of thinking which could be characterized as "opening Pandora's box."

Educators have only observed the "tip of the iceberg" in regard to the needs and options of adult learners. Much of the research in the adult learning field has been conducted within typical adult education populations--not by educators studying other educators at work in their own professional activities. A major emphasis of this study needs to continue--to encourage others to revisit the potential for staff development by observing within the existing activities of an educator's day--and sharing these observations with one another. Such communication will stimulate divergent discussion regarding the learning needs

of educators, which is sorely needed to continuously refine concepts and interpretations in the field.

This researcher has observed that all too often studies such as this do not continue, but get "shelved" due to the "completion" of the study. Perhaps this occurs because educators have often paralleled their work with the "beginning and end" concept of their school year--as something is "completed" it is laid to rest. There is a challenge that presents itself in this issue as it relates to educators as adult learners. As those who have studied adult development/adult learning (Chapter II) have suggested, learning and development are continuous, process-oriented stages from which perspectives change over time. Educators also change over time. Studies of educators as adult learners ought to reflect how continuing professional experiences affect the perceptions and performance of themselves and their peers over time. Such research needs to be supported internally within school districts and other institutions of higher learning. There is a story to be told about the education profession which needs to be communicated more emphatically to others. How educators grow, develop and learn as professionals while simultaneously focusing on their work objective as teachers of the learning process is indeed a most complex task. What conditions need to exist for such learning experiences to occur? What attributes should educational leaders seek in prospective candidates which correspond to lifelong learning

attitudes--a most timely consideration in the wake of retiring faculties. How does the profession communicate these needs to decision-makers in the general public who have not yet transferred lifelong learning concepts into local, state and federal budget priorities?

All of these questions stimulate the need for continuing research on these "subjective" issues. This researcher has found that through such study, other professions such as the variety of health-related fields are also seeking assistance on such issues. Health educators are finding that they have not been trained in the "process" of educating others as their formal preparation focused on "content". Now the field is emphasizing patient education, but the health professionals have had little or no preparation for this type of educational activity. Such a situation begs for an interdisciplinary approach to assisting one another through the professions. Are educators prepared to assist other professionals as others begin to focus on the adult learning process?

This researcher has observed that on-going studies of professionals "at work" in the field can yield insights which greatly add to the literature regarding adult learners. These data can also be shared with other professions. Such sharing of research on adult learning experiences in the workplace will eventually broaden the scope of findings and refine the present assumptions regarding lifelong learning.



## REFERENCES

- Advisory Panel of the National Center for the Improvement of Learning. Exemplary staff development programs. The School Administrator, February 1985, 42 (2), 16-18.
- Advisory Panel of the National Center for the Improvement of Learning. Exemplary staff development programs. The School Administrator, March 1985, 42 (3), 22-25.
- Anang, A.J. The hidden dimensions of staff development: a study of negotiations in teacher/developer interactions. Michigan State University, 1982.
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Promising theories die young. ASCD update, May 1985, 27 (3), 1,3.
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Synthesis of ASCD resolutions through 1984.
- Bacharach, S. Career development, not career ladders. Education Week, November 13, 1985, V (11), 5.
- Barth, R.S. Sandboxes and honeybees. Education Week, May 9, 1984, 24.
- Benjamin, L. & Walz, G.R. Enhancing the adult experience: Counseling approaches and activities. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, ERIC/CAPS, 1982.
- Beyer, B.K. Common sense about teaching thinking skills. Educational Leadership, November 1983, 41 (3), 44-49.
- Blackman, C.A., Crowell, R.A., Holly, M.L., Van Voorhees, B. Teachers as organizational staff members: The foundation for staff development/school improvement. Presented at The National Council of States on Inservice Education, Atlanta, Georgia, 1982.
- Bogdan, R.C., & Biklen, S.K. Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, Inc., 1982.

- Brodinsky, B. Tackling problems through lateral thinking (An interview with Edward de Bono). The School Administrator, March 1985, 42 (3), 10-13.
- Brophy, J.E. Teachers' cognitive activities and overt behaviors. (Occasional Paper No. 39). East Lansing: Institute for research on Teaching, Michigan State University, October 1980.
- Burrello, L.C. and Orbaugh, T. Reducing the discrepancy between the known and the unknown in in-service education. Phi Delta Kappan, February 1982, 63 (6), 385-388.
- Center on Evaluation, Development and Research. Helping teachers use educational research. Research Bulletin/Phi Delta Kappa, March 1986.
- Christensen, J., Burke, P., Fessler, R., Hagstrom, D. Stages of teachers' careers: Implications for professional development. National Institute of Education, 1983. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 227 054).
- Collins, M. Phenomenological perspectives in adult continuing education: Implications for research and practice. Kansas State University, Manhattan College of Education, 1981. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 202 993).
- Cook, G.E. Teachers as learners: Approaches to professional education. Presented at the National Council of Teachers of English Spring Conference, 1982. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 219 801).
- Cornett, L.M. Trends and emerging issues in career ladder plans. Educational Leadership, November 1985, 43 (3), 6-10.
- Cross, K.P. Adults as learners. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1981.
- Crow, M.L. The female educator at midlife. Phi Delta Kappan, December 1985, 67 (4), 281-284.
- Cruickshank, D.R. & Applegate, J.H. Reflective teaching as a strategy for teacher growth. Educational Leadership, April, 1981, 38 (7), 553-54.
- Cunningham, L.L. Leaders and leadership: 1985 and beyond. Phi Delta Kappan, September 1985, 67 (1), 17-20.

- Day, M.C. Thinking at Piaget's stage of formal operations. Educational Leadership, October 1981, 39 (1), 44-47.
- deBono, E. The direct teaching of thinking as a skill. Phi Delta Kappan, June 1983, 64 (10), 703-8.
- Dewey, J. Experience and education. New York: Collier Books, 1938.
- Dodd, A.W. and Rosenbaum, E. Learning communities for curriculum and staff development. Phi Delta Kappan, 67 (5), 380-384.
- Eaton, J. It's important to treat teachers as professionals. Michigan School Board Journal, October 1985, XXXII (9), 24-25.
- Ehrenberg, L.M., How to ensure better transfer of learning. Training and Development Journal, February 1983, 81-83.
- ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, Synthesis of research on staff development. Educational Leadership, November 1980, 38 (2), 182-185.
- Erickson, F., Florio, S., & Buschman, J. Fieldwork in educational research. (Occasional Paper No. 36). East Lansing: Institute for Research on Teaching, Michigan State University, August 1980.
- Erickson, F. Qualitative research on teaching. (Occasional Paper No. 81). East Lansing: Institute for Research on Teaching, Michigan State University, February 1985.
- Fallon, M. Proposals to strengthen California teaching profession unveiled. Education Week, November 13, 1985, V (11), 7.
- Fenstermacher, G.D. Nineteen eighty-four: The latest educational reform proposal. Phi Delta Kappan, January 1984, 65 (5), 323-26.
- Florio, S. Very special natives: The evolving role of teachers as informants in educational ethnography. (Occasional Paper No. 42). East Lansing: Institute for Research on Teaching, Michigan State University, May 1980.
- Garmston, R. Are teachers motivated to teach thinking? Developing minds: A resource book for teaching thinking. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1985.

- Ginsburg, H., Oppen, S. Piaget's theory of intellectual development. (2nd edition). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1979.
- Glaser, B.G. & Strauss, A.L. The discoveries for grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research. Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1967.
- Gorden, R.L. Interviewing: Strategy, techniques and tactics. Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1980.
- Gray, P. & Chanoff, D. When play is learning: A school designed for self-directed education. Phi Delta Kappan, May 1984, 65 (9), 608-611.
- Guild, P.B. & Garger, S. Marching to different drummers. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1985.
- Hanes, R.C. & Mitchell, K.F. Teacher career development in Charlotte-Mecklenberg. Educational Leadership, November 1985, 43 (3), 11-13.
- Henderson, H. The Madison workshops--one approach to staff development. Phi Delta Kappan, January 1986, 67 (5), 384-385.
- Holly, M.L. Keeping a personal-professional journal. Victoria, Australia: Deakin University, 1983.
- Johnson, D.W., Johnson, R.T., Holubec, E.J., Roy, P. Circles of learning: Cooperation in the classroom. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1984.
- Joyce, B.R. & Showers, B. Power in staff development through research on training. Association for Supervision and Curriculum, 1983.
- Kamii, C. Autonomy: The aim of education envisioned by Piaget. Phi Delta Kappan, February 1984, 65 (6), 410-415.
- Kane, P., PEEPing out of the ivory tower--preparing educators for nonschool settings. Phi Delta Kappan, May 1984, 65 (9), 621-624.
- Kidd, J.R. How adults learn. Chicago: Follett Publishing Co., 1973.
- Kimball, S.T., Partridge, W.L. The craft of community study. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1979.

- Knowles, M.S. & Knowles, H. Introduction to group dynamics. New York: Association Press, 1972.
- Knowles, M.S. The adult learner: A neglected species. Houston: Gulf Publishing Co., 1973.
- Knowles, M.S. The modern practice of adult education: Andragogy versus pedagogy. New York: Association Press, 1970.
- Krupp, J.A. Adult development: Implications for staff development. Colchester, Connecticut: Project RISE, 1981.
- Krupp, J.A. Sparking an aging staff through increased awareness of adult developmental changes. SAANYS Journal, Winter 1982-83, 9-13.
- Krupp, J.A. The adult learner: A unique entity. Manchester, Connecticut: Adult Development and Learning, 1982.
- Lezotte, L.W. How can evaluation of staff development centers be made useful to researchers? (Occasional Paper No. 32). East Lansing: Institute for Research on Teaching, Michigan State University, June 1980.
- Little, J.W. Teachers as teacher advisors: The delicacy of collegial leadership. Educational Leadership, November 1985, 43 (3), 34-36.
- Marchand, J. Professional development: It's a necessary step for school improvement. Michigan School Board Journal, January 1986, XXXII (12), 21-25.
- Lochhead, J. Research synthesis on problem solving. Educational Leadership, October 1981, 39 (1), 68-70.
- McLaughlin, M. and Berman, P. Retooling staff development in a period of retrenchment. Educational Leadership, December 1977, 35 (3), 191-194.
- McLaughlin, M.W., Pfeifer, R.S., Swanson-Owens, D., & Yee, S. Why teachers won't teach. Phi Delta Kappan, February 1986, 67 (6), 420-426.
- Michigan Department of Education. Superintendent's early childhood study group report summary. Lansing: Michigan Department of Education, 1984.

- Mitchell, E. Educational leadership--coming to terms with responsibility. In N.V. Overly (Ed.), Lifelong learning: A human agenda. Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1979.
- Moore, S.A. Avoiding some of the pitfalls in professional development activities. Principal, October 1979, 10, 26.
- Nickerson, R.S. Thoughts on teaching thinking. Educational Leadership, October 1981, 39 (1), 21-24.
- Overly, N.V. Coming to terms with Monday morning. In N.V. Overly (Ed.), Lifelong learning: A human agenda. Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1979.
- Pelaia, W.A. Focus on the individual in staff development. The School Administrator, January 1986, 43 (1), 37.
- Penland, P.R. Towards self-directed learning theory. Presented at Commission of Professors, 1981, and Annual Meeting of Adult Education Association, 1981. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 209 475).
- Peshkin, A. Growing up American: Schooling and the survival of community. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.
- Peters, T.J. & Waterman, R.H., Jr. In search of excellence: Lessons from America's best run companies. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1982.
- Phillips, J.L., Jr. The origins of intellect: Piaget's theory. San Francisco: W.H. Freeman & Co., 1969.
- Resource Bank Abstracts. Principals say staff development is chief concern. The School Administrator, June 1985, 42 (6), 33.
- Rodman, B. Boyer, citing recent gains for teachers, offers improvement plan. Education Week, November 13, 1985, V (11), 5.
- Roose, D., Mitchell, S. & Rudman, M.K. Selecting the brightest and the best. Phi Delta Kappan, November 1985, 67 (3), 219-221.
- Schatzman, L., & Strauss, A.L. Field research: Strategies for a natural sociology. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973.

- Schlossberg, N.K., Troll, L.E., & Leibowitz, Z.  
Perspectives on counseling adults: Issues and skills.  
Monterey, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.,  
1978.
- Sergiovanni, T.J. Landscapes, mindscapes, and reflective  
practice in supervision. Journal of Curriculum and  
Supervision, 1 (1), 5-17.
- Sheehy, G. Passages: Predictable crises of adult life.  
New York: Bantam, 1977.
- Shulman, L.S. Relating theory to practice in educational  
research. (Occasional Paper No. 12). East Lansing:  
Institute for Research on Teaching, Michigan State  
University, October 1978.
- Sparks, G.M. Synthesis of research on staff development for  
effective teaching. Educational Leadership, November  
1983, 41 (3), 65-72.
- Spindler, G. (ed.) Doing the ethnography of schooling:  
Educational anthropology in action. New York: Holt,  
Rinehart and Winston, 1982.
- Sternberg, R.J. Intelligence as thinking and learning  
skills. Educational Leadership, October 1981, 39 (1),  
18-20.
- Sugarman, J. Teaching teachers to be critical thinkers.  
Education Week, June 12, 1985, IV (38), 23.
- Taylor, M. The role of adult experience in learning:  
Consequences for the classroom. Presented at the Joint  
Conference of the Association of Community Colleges  
in Canada and the Canadian Vocational Association,  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, 1981. (ERIC Document  
Reproduction Service No. ED 215 085).
- Walters, J.M. & Gardner, H. The development and education  
of intelligence. In F.R. Link (Ed.), Essays on the  
intellect. Alexandria, Virginia: Association for  
Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1985.
- Warnat, W.I. Overview of training practices incorporating  
adult learning: Adult learning in inservice training  
and staff development. Adult Learning Potential  
Institute, Teacher Corps, The American University,  
Washington, D.C., 1980. (ERIC Document Reproduction  
Service No. ED 198 365).

- Weinrauch, J.D. Educating the entrepreneur: Understanding adult learning behavior. Journal of Small Business Management, April 1984, 32-37.
- Weisbeck, C. and Buchmann, M. Learning the lessons of experience: A field study in teacher education. (Research Series No. 96). East Lansing: Institute for Research on Teaching, Michigan State University, September 1981.
- Wood, F.H. and Thompson, S.R. Guidelines for better staff development. Educational Leadership, February 1980, 37 (5), 374-78.
- Yinger, R.J. & Clark, C.M. Using personal documents to study teacher thinking. (Occasional Paper No. 84). East Lansing: Institute for Research on Teaching, Michigan State University, February 1985.
- Yinger, R.J. Fieldwork as basis for theory building in research on teaching. (Research Series No. 19). East Lansing: Institute For Research on Teaching, Michigan State University, January 1979.



## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A



*An opportunity to observe master trainers model developmental testing.*

*A chance to address critical issues: pros and cons of length of day, reading in kindergarten, appropriate early childhood curriculum, and school entrance policies.*

### Outcome of Workshop

Understand the theory of developmental testing and its background based on the child development research of Arnold Gesell

Recognize the characteristics of various age groups

Assess children who will be entering kindergarten using the Gesell Developmental Test

# Kindergarten Screening Workshop

## Making the Transition to School a Success

### Agenda

Our program usually runs for three days. The day is composed of a morning lecture and discussion and an afternoon demonstration with children of various ages.

9:00 – 12:00 Lecture presentations

1st Day Overview of philosophy and practical effects of developmental placement

Description of the Gesell Kindergarten Screening Assessment

2nd Day Cubes

Initial Interview

Letters and numbers

Copy forms

3rd Day Incomplete Man

Animals and Interests

12:00 – 1:15 Lunch (Participants will make their own luncheon arrangements, unless otherwise indicated).

1:15 – 3:15 Two children, a boy and a girl, will help demonstrate a test each day.

1st Day 1:15 4½ year old

2:15 5 year old

2nd Day 1:15 5 year old

2:15 5½ year old

3rd Day 1:15 5½ year old

2:15 6 year old

Participants will be able to observe the testing and see the range of responses as well as the differences between age groups. In this workshop participants will not test children themselves.

### Discussions will include:

- Growth and development
- Parent conferencing
- Community education
- School placement

### Participants

Staff who are interested in learning to assess children will want to attend the total session.

Gesell Institute of  
Human Development



## APPENDIX B

## APPENDIX B

(Reference for  
FN - 3/27/85)

### GROSS MOTOR ADMINISTRATION

Stands on One Foot - "Show me how you can stand on one foot like this, while I count"

Demonstrate. As soon as the child picks up one foot begin slow count OUT LOUD, one number to a second, and continue until child's lifted foot touches the ground or the child leans on something.

Allow 3 TRIES if count remain below ten. Use a stop watch while counting.

Hopping on One Foot - Demonstrate hopping forward on one foot. Then say,

"Show me how far you can hop along here." Indicate a line of 6 feet. Add,  
"Can you go all the way to the end?"

Beanbag Throw - HAND the child the beanbag. Stand 6 feet away and say,

"Throw it to me."

3 TRIES

Beanbag Catch - "I'm going to throw the beanbag to you. See if you can catch it."

3 TRIES

### EVALUATION

Stands on One Foot -	1-2 sec. =	3½ years
	2-7	4
	8-12	5
	12+	5½

KDG. Readiness

Hops on One Foot	(G) by age 3½
	(B) by age 4½

They perform all task  
Balance 7+ sec.

Beanbag Throw	(G) by age 4½
Overhand	(B) 5½

Hop  
Throw  
Catch

Beanbag Catch	By age 4
	(B) by 4½
Hands	(G) by 5½

If a child is successful with all of the above, score a D.Q. of 5.  
If not, determine weak areas and downgrade D.Q.

Example:

If a child

balances-4 sec.	4	SCORE 4
Hop- O.K.	5	
Throw - underhand	4	
Catch - NO	.	

APPENDIX B

MOTOR -- RECORDING SHEET

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

---

Stands on One Foot	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attempts with/without hand held
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Momentary balance
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Balance of 1-2 seconds
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Balance of 4-8 seconds
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Balance of more than 8 seconds

---

Hops on One Foot	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hops with both feet off the ground
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hops on one foot

---

Beanbag Throw	<input type="checkbox"/>	Throws underhand
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Throws overhand
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced throwing
		(advances--with opposite foot)

---

Beanbag Catch	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attempts but misses
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Catches with arms against chest
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Catches with hands against chest
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Catches with hands alone

---

COMMENTS:

## APPENDIX C

# P R O P O S E D P L A N

## Kindergarten Services - Chapter One

### Planning Objectives for 1984-85:

- (1) implement a plan to monitor, evaluate, report according to the Child Study model on students diagnosed "at risk" by the Kindergarten Screening Program.
- (2) research, plan, and develop a Young Fives Kindergarten Program for students diagnosed "at risk" with developmental delays.

(1)

#### Child Study Plan

Plan: Elementary principals with "at risk" students will convene a Child Study on a quarterly basis (prior to report cards) to evaluate student development and progress in kindergarten, assist kindergarten teachers with planning and with resources to help students, and to recommend student placement; principal will assume responsibility of reporting to parents.

Funding: No cost

Staff: Child Study Staffing:  
Teacher-Coordinator  
Elementary Principal  
Kindergarten teacher  
Chapter I teacher

As Needed:  
Social Worker  
Psychologist  
Grade I teacher  
LD teacher

June, 1984

(2)

#### Young Fives Program Plan

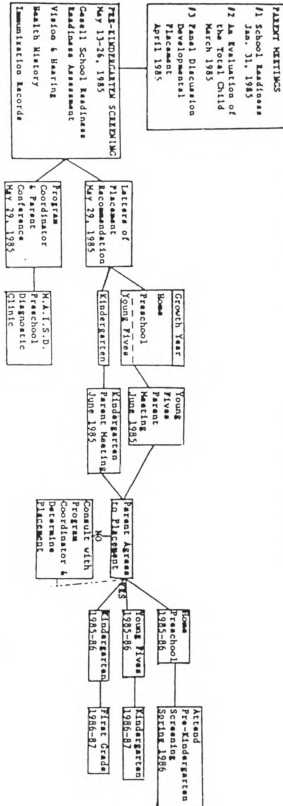
Plan: Teacher-Coordinator will research, plan, and develop a Young Fives Kindergarten program according to the Gesell Institute model; plan to be developed as a proposal for approval by the School Board; in-service school staff, parents, and community; coordinate entrance and developmental testing with Chapter I staff; plan in conjunction with school Planning Committee.

Funding: Chapter I funds to support 1/2 time Teacher-Coordinator

Staff: Teacher-Coordinator  
Planning Committee:  
Chapter I teacher  
Kindergarten teacher  
Central Administration/Curriculum  
Elementary Principal  
Special Education  
Parent



# APPENDIX C



Students who are eligible for the traditional Kindergarten or Young Five's program for the 1985-86 school year must be 5 years old by December 1, 1985. They must be screened with the Cassell School Readiness Assessment, attend or show evidence of vision and hearing screening and provide proof of immunizations prior to school entry in the fall of 1985.

## AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRE-KINDERGARTEN SCREENING PROCESS

## APPENDIX D

## APPENDIX D

### THE RESEARCHER . . . A PERSONAL GLIMPSE

Education was a major focus in the rural, practical farmlife which shaped my personal experiences. The seventeen-hour "work day" that conditioned the family lifestyle was peppered with daily educational experiences which of course included the formal process of attending small, rural schools, but also included the often more significant informal learning opportunities which emerged through the "natural consequences" of farm life. These latter experiences were guided by wise and loving parents who had achieved sixth and eighth grade educations respectively, but placed education as the highest priority for their five children. My parents nurtured my initial quest of becoming a lifelong learner.

Supported by the rigors and discipline acquired through farmlife, education became a chief motivator in my life. Not only did I "love" school, maintaining a perfect attendance record for fear that I would "miss something", but I "conducted" school for all my cousins and friends who came to visit our home. My mother told me at the early age of four, ". . .you will be going to school for the rest of your life!" Not only was she accurate in her prediction, but this early influence and encouragement made a difference in my degree of perseverance. . . or else I was trying to

convince my parents that I did not intend to milk cows all my life. . . whichever, it worked!

This degree of encouragement was sustained in my adult life through my husband's support of my interests. The many weekends, nights and vacations have required a regular integration of "school-work" along with our personal activities over the past eighteen years of marriage. This type of scheduling has become accepted practice in our household--I have never observed a complaint or retort when I have retreated for study or writing or when I have traveled throughout the United States for classes or consultation. Those "seventeen-hour" farm days have continued into my adult life--filled with professional and civic activities. For such personal and professional flexibility in our relationship, I will always be grateful.

Sharing these comments of personal background is important to this study because of the message that I have found reflected in my research on adult learners. Learning is a long-term, developmental, time-consuming process which is nurtured through certain conditions. People make that difference for one another. I have had the opportunity to grow through my learning experiences as a child, student, teacher, consultant, administrator, wife, parent, community leader--because I have had the privilege of sharing my life with others who supported me in those efforts. Throughout my personal and professional life, I have found the relationships that I have had with others to be my most

resourceful learning experiences. These relationships have also extended my learning as I could draw insights by vicariously living through the experiences of others. This study represents such an experience. The educators in the Young Fives Program permitted me to "walk beside them" in their daily activities and openly share their thinking each step of the way. This type of learning experience was most exciting as it allowed me to gather descriptive data on their perspectives from each situation which were somewhat different from mine. Internalizing the scope of their experiences and structuring a means by which to communicate this to others became the most challenging task in the study. Again, it's a long-term, developmental, time-consuming process--and the people made it a rich experience.

Currently I work as a Special Education Director in a regional service unit serving thirteen local school districts. Such a position provides me with a broad array of learning experiences. Daily I have the opportunity to counsel, supervise, guide, consult, direct, teach, console, support and encourage people--students, parents, teachers and administrators. My goal is to help them to see the myriad of learning which is available to them in their daily lives--if they permit themselves to reflect on their behavior and that of those around them. My life has included these options at the local, regional, state and national levels, but it was only through the superb guidance

of a few good "teachers" that I developed the necessary skills to internalize these insights. My desire is to share this richness of thought with others so that they too can become "connoisseurs" of life experiences.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIV. LIBRARIES



31293010673147