

## **“Unfreezing” Year-Round Programming: A Case Study of Organizational Change in Summer Camps**

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The term *summer camp* may not immediately bring to mind images of kids tobogganing, ice skating, and building snowshoes, yet increasingly, summer camps are running year-round programs. There are many benefits to summer camps that choose to expand their programming year round. These benefits include additional marketing for the summer camp program (Schenk, 2017), serving new populations that would not be reached through the summer program (Yeager, 2002), and the opportunity to create deeper and more genuine relationships with community members and partners (Davies et al., 2013). There are also challenges for summer camps that transition into year-round programs. These include not only the initial financial capital to ensure the site of the camp is physically able to support campers throughout the year, but also building program sustainability (Maguire & Gunton, 2000; Miner & Erpelding-Welch, 2012), as well as other practical issues such as finding trained staff to run programs (Parry, 2011; Speelman & Wagstaff, 2015).

Generally, there is a paucity of research relevant to how summer camps approach the transition to year-round programming. My study aimed to fill this gap by examining both the formation and process of creating year-round programming within summer camps in Ontario, Canada. The two primary research questions were: (1) in what ways have camps become year-round programs? and (2) what has been learned by individuals involved in creating year-round programming? In-depth interviews were conducted with camp directors from six camps who had created year-round programming in Ontario.

In light of the purpose and research questions, my study was theoretically framed within the organizational change literature. Although the word organization is historically difficult to define (Daft, 2013) what is agreed upon is that organizations change (Boje, Burnes & Hassard, 2012). Kurt Lewin is often seen as the founder of the organizational change discipline (Burnes, 2012). Lewin created a three-step model for organizations to follow when they wanted to enact planned change. The first step is termed “unfreezing” and involves an organization’s equilibrium being destabilized (Burnes, 2012). The second step is the “changing” phase, when the actual change occurs. This is a period of instability for the organization. The final phase is called “refreezing” and is the restabilization of the organization after this period of uncertainty.

I employed descriptive case study methodology. Yin (2014) describes a case study as an “empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the ‘case’) in depth and within its real-world context” (p. 16). Furthermore, the descriptive aspect of a case study is defined as a “detailed account of the subject of study” (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 155). In line with that methodology, I purposefully sampled from 26 camps, based on the criteria that the camp had created year-round programming. The sampling resulted in 6 camps who participated in my study.

Interviews with camp directors were recorded on an audio device and transcribed into Word documents. The transcription was coded using NVivo, a computer assisted qualitative data

analysis software. Eight themes emerged from that coding process and included: (1) inherited or donated, (2) planning, (3) correctly the first time, (4) marketing, (5) relationships, (6) staffing, (7) benefits to other seasons, and (8) financial justification. Using Lewin's Three Step model of planned change, themes were characterized into one of Lewin's stages of "unfreezing," "changing," and "refreezing." These thematic results provide insights into the ways in which the model of organizational change can inform summer camp directors and staff on "best practices" for quality programming and inform decisions about creating year-round programming. For example, although it may seem beneficial to use volunteer labour to construct facilities, one camp found that they regret their decision as things were not constructed to the highest quality and now there is no one to turn back to in relation to the issues. The camp wishes they had done things "correctly the first time." A major benefit of being open year-round noted by many camp directors was the opportunity to have salaries in place for positions such as a kitchen manager and maintenance person. This keeps the staff coming back year after year and is a place the staff can invest time and effort in, as opposed to just being hired for two months as is the case with typical summer camps.

Through these eight themes, it was determined all of the themes were connected and created what may be an optimal process in order to create year-round programming in summer camps. Hypothetically, having large donations or features given to the camp enables planning for the year-round program to more easily occur. With better plans come better buildings and structures and the careful planning to ensure they are built correctly the first time. A better structure or building allows for easier marketing to a wider number of groups as the facilities are more comfortable and not as "rustic." With more groups using the site, the potential for more relationships to be built and maintained is increased. As more groups are using the site, more staff can be hired year-round which allows for more people to be invested to improve the program. A better program will also attract more clients which means it is easier to justify being open year-round. And through all of this, other unseen benefits will begin to emerge.

My study has many practical applications relevant for summer camps, board of directors and camp directors. Each of the eight themes discovered through the study is practical in its own right. Additionally, simply the sharing of ideas and strategies that have worked for certain camps already involved in winter programming has applications for others. For example, staffing was highlighted as the biggest issue among study participants and directors were finding unique solutions to this program. One director stated his camp provides room and board to students during the year in exchange for a certain number of hours per week around the site. This solves the problem many camps have in finding staff to work inconsistently throughout the year.

As mentioned, my study aimed to fill a considerable gap in the camp research by examining both the formation and process of creating year-round programming within summer camps in Ontario. The two primary research questions were: (1) in what ways have camps become year-round programs? and (2) what has been learned by individuals involved in creating year-round programming? Eight practical themes emerged from the data providing numerous practical applications to both camp directors and members of boards of directors.

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Summer Camps

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## Abstract

The term *summer camp* does not often bring to mind tobogganing and ice skating, yet more and more frequently, summer camps are transitioning into programs capable of running year-round. This study aimed to examine both the formation and process of creating year-round programming within summer camps in Ontario. A descriptive case study was employed to uncover answers to the study's research questions: (1) in what ways have camps become year-round programs? and (2) what has been learned by individuals involved in creating year-round programming? Interviews were conducted with camp directors from six camps who had created year-round programming. Narratives and themes were identified from the interviews with eight major themes highlighted. These eight themes were "inherited or donated," "planning," "correctly the first time," "marketing," "relationships," "staffing," "benefits to other seasons" and "financial justification." Using Kurt Lewin's Three-Step model of planned change, themes were characterized into one of Lewin's stages of "unfreezing," "changing," and "refreezing." Two themes did not pertain to one of Lewin's stages, but were still relevant. Although listed individually, the themes were all connected in order to prescribe what may be an ideal process of creating year-round programming.

Keywords: organizational change, summer camp, year-round, outdoor education

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Thanks must also be awarded to my participants who took time from their already full schedules to discuss what creating year-round programming looked like for them.

This thesis would not have been completed without the many “breaks” I took, whether an afternoon hike through the woods, a weekend backpacking trip or a summer spent at camp. All my breaks included time spent outdoors and through these exposures, I was able to process not only this project, but myself and how I fit into this incredible, beautiful world that surrounds us.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Introduction

The term *summer camp* is familiar to most people, yet those words likely evoke a certain picture in one's mind that is different for each individual. Some individuals may imagine summer camp as canoeing down a pristine river in the middle of northern Ontario surrounded by graceful wildlife and captivating forests. Others may imagine learning about coding computer programs on a university campus while for others the thought conjures up memories of sleeping in cabins with new friends and singing songs around a glowing campfire. Meier and Henderson (2012) define camp as "being comprised of a community of people living together as an organized group, usually in the outdoors, under the direction of designated leaders" (p. 5). As per the definition, none of the above mentioned images would be inaccurate, but the differences do point to the complexity and wide-ranging nature of summer camps. Camps are typically categorized in one of four ways: "1) organizations or agency not-for-profit camps 2) independent for-profit or private camps 3) religiously affiliated camps 4) government-sponsored camps" (Meier & Henderson, 2012, p. 8).

Additionally, summer camps are also no longer operating solely during the summer season. Camps are often choosing to serve various groups during other parts of the year, including the winter. These camps that have opted to expand the camping season to year-round programming have undergone many changes (Burke & Tavener, 2007; Yeager, 2002).

This introductory chapter provides an introduction to my research study which explored camps that have created year-round programming and what has been learned

through that process. The chapter will begin with the context of my study followed by a brief literature review. I will identify the primary research questions that guided my study. A description of my theoretical framework will be presented next followed by my research methods. The chapter concludes with researcher reflexivity, a discussion of my paradigm and how both of these informed my study.

### **Study Context**

Historically, recreation camps for children in Ontario operated solely during the summer months (Wall, 2010). During the winter months, programs would cease and the site would remain vacant for ten months before opening again the next summer (Paris, 2008). Most camps in Canada were constructed to be used only in the summer months, as the summer season was when children could attend camp. As a result of only being used in the summer, the buildings and facilities on the camp site were most often built solely for this season. In recent years, numerous camps have extended their programming into the spring and fall seasons to accommodate more campers for various uses. This transition is relatively simple because the buildings and site structures can withstand the temperature range seen in these surrounding seasons. A camp that runs in the spring, summer and fall is often referred to as a three-season camp, or a camp that runs three-season programming. Programming, or a camp program, consists of the day-to-day activities and offerings a camp provides. As Stryker (2008a) states, “program is what makes camp, camp” (p. 71).

The extension of programming from summer to three seasons is relatively straightforward. On the other hand, in order to become a camp that runs year-round programs, several challenges arise. The need for a winterized facility to protect those

using the site from the harsh winter conditions of northern climates seen in most of Canada is one of the most significant challenges. Despite that challenge, certain camps are seeing the benefit and opportunity to remain open year-round. These camps often continue as outdoor education centres in the winter months providing students with programming that is different from the regular routine of the traditional classroom (Borland, 2015; Timmerman & Bialeschki, 2010; Yeager, 2002). Yeager (2002) states that “an increasing number of camps are finding it smart business and economically feasible to remove their ‘closed for the winter’ signs and keep their operations running throughout the year” (p. 48).

Extending programming to the winter season is a topic that can be categorized under the broader literature base of organizational change. To go back even further, it must be recognized that summer camps are a type of organization. Daft (2013) offers a useful definition of organizations given the context of this study. He states “organizations are (1) social entities that (2) are goal-directed, (3) are designed as deliberately structured and coordinated activity systems and (4) are linked to the external environment” (p. 12). Boje, Burnes and Hassard (2012), note that as organizations change, “they grow, they adapt, they evolve” (p. i). Considering summer camps are organizations, the same logic can be applied: “they grow, they adapt, they evolve” (p. i). With this in mind, the next section will provide a brief literature review of previous research relating to summer camps and organizational change.

### **Previous Research**

The changes that camps undertake in creating year-round programming, and the lessons that have been learned as a result, have not been empirically studied, or at least do

not appear in the academic literature. Much of the literature that does exist comes from anecdotal sources such as *Camping Magazine*, which is the official publication of the American Camp Association (ACA) (Camping Magazine, n.d.). *Camping Magazine* is published for the camp community, (i.e. camp directors and administrators) and not necessarily for academic audiences as it often provides practical tips and guidelines. The practicality of the research and the fact that it is published by the ACA, means that there is no peer-review process or empirical basis for many articles published, making it different from academic journals.

Although much of the literature that does exist is anecdotal, there were two prominent lessons that arose when conducting the literature review of these anecdotal sources. One of these major lessons involved creating a plan (Barstead, 2011; Purvis, Cross, Jones & Buff, 2012). The other major lesson or theme that I discovered through the literature review was the importance of evaluation (Hardin, 2010; Purvis et al., 2012; Yeager, 2002). I will more fully present these and additional themes in chapter 2. The lack of peer-reviewed evidence addressing organizational change in summer camps points to a gap in the literature which I hope to fill with my study.

Furthermore, it is important to recognize the vast benefits of both summer camp and outdoor education programs not only from the business side, where a longer season means more participants and increased profits, but also from the side of the participants. There have been numerous research studies looking at the benefit of camp for different populations, but only recently has there been research conducted relating to the benefits of camp for the typical child (Glover, Chapeskie, Mock, Mannell & Feldberg, 2011). Glover et al. conclude positive development in five main areas including self-confidence

and attitudes toward physical activity amongst others. The benefits of outdoor education have also been widely studied, and research suggests that outdoor education may reduce behavioural issues in the classroom (Fiskum & Jacobsen, 2012), increase attendance in school (Basham, Kelley, Hara & Prince, 2015), improve nonverbal emotional cues (Uhls, Michikyan, Morris, Garcia, Small, Zgourou, & Greenfield, 2014), increase the ability to independently form personal identity (McGowan, 2016) and improve health (Flett, Moore, Pfeiffer, Belonga, & Navarre, 2010). The next section will outline the study purpose and research questions used throughout my study.

### **Study Purpose and Research Question**

My study aimed to explore the topic of organizational change relating to summer camps. Specifically, the purpose of my research study was to explore camps that have created a year-round operation. Two primary research questions guiding this study were: (1) in what ways have camps become year-round programs? and (2) what has been learned by individuals involved in creating year-round programming?

### **Theoretical Framework**

A theoretical framework "...is a structure that is intended as a guide for thinking about the research subject..." (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 134). A theoretical framework helps situate a study in a body of literature (Rocco & Plakhotnik, 2009). My study was framed by the literature in the field of organizational change. Kurt Lewin, a prominent social psychologist in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, is often considered by many to be the founder of the organizational change field (Burnes, 2012). Lewin created a simple framework to understand and ease the process of planned change in organizations.

Lewin's model was the theoretical framework used in my study. A more detailed explanation regarding this framework will be discussed in chapter 3.

I used Lewin's model of planned change to frame the transition seen in camps as they progress to year-round programming.

## **Methods**

Using Lewin's model of planned change as a theoretical framework, I conducted a case study with six summer camps that have progressed to provide year-round programming. Throughout the research process, I did not encounter any camps that regressed from previously existing winter programming. This concept is known as a negative case. According to Fletcher and Plakoyiannaki (2010), negative cases "give the maximum variation and limits to conclusions" (p. 838). Having a negative case would have increased the conclusions uncovered, but as stated, I did not discover any negative cases. I conducted in-person and telephone interviews with camp directors. The data was analyzed with a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software called NVivo. The result of the analysis produced six narratives regarding the way in which camps create year-round programming, thus answering my first research question. The second research question was answered as a result of eight themes that were revealed through the data analysis as well. A full discussion of my research methods is found in chapter 3. The next section will provide an overview of my personal position relating to my research project.

## **Researcher Position**

A main difference between qualitative and quantitative researchers is the position the researcher claims through the research process. All research is subjective, yet quantitative researchers often attempt to adopt an objective position when it comes to

research whereas qualitative researchers understand the subjectivity of their own work (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). All researchers enter into their projects with preconceptions, or ideas formed beforehand with little evidence to their truth (Stevenson & Lindberg, 2011), but as Malterud (2001) says, “preconceptions are not the same as bias, unless the researcher fails to mention them” (p. 484). This section provides context regarding my preconceptions and the background with which I entered this project, followed by a section containing my views of the world.

I was seven years old when I first attended an overnight summer camp. As I grew older and continued to attend each summer, I discovered camp was a place where I thrived and a place where I fit in. During my later camper years, I began to admire the camp staff, wishing I could be like them one day. As time went on, my wish turned into a reality. I became a staff member and continued to flourish at camp. My summers as a staff member were incredibly rich. As the years went on, I continued to work my way up the various positions at camp and eventually became the director. This is the position I held until very recently at Crag Lake Camp (a pseudonym).

The camp I previously directed is in the process of building a winterized facility in order to run programming year-round. The camp is running programs during three seasons at this time. With the addition of a winterized facility, programs will occur twelve months of the year. The upcoming construction at Crag Lake Camp is what sparked an interest in conducting the current research project. In talking with other camp colleagues, it became evident many camps have made this transition to become outdoor centres who run outdoor education throughout the year, but little of the process has been formally documented or researched. Much of the evidence discovered in my literature

search came from either the summer camp literature or the outdoor education literature with little research bridging the gap between these two.

Relevant to the study purpose and research questions are the ways I view the world both in relation to this study, and also how I view and construct reality in general. My view of the world in relation to this project is as someone who has thrived in the summer camp setting for much of my life and has seen the substantial benefits and value of summer camp, not only in myself, but also in other staff and campers who attend summer camp. Every summer has provided me with new experiences and different lessons, adding to my view of camp as an extremely valuable place. This view of camp and the experiences I have had incites me to hold an exceptional passion and a genuine love for camp. This love for camp extended to this project and impacted the research process including the research design, the data collection methods, the way in which I interacted with participants and my interpretations of the results. The exact method of how my views and preconceptions impacted the research is hard to articulate, but this, in no way, means the impact was any less important.

Not only is it important to consider my view of the world in relation to this project, but also to consider how I view the world in general. The next section will briefly explain my world view or paradigm.

### **Paradigm**

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), a paradigm is a worldview or system of beliefs that provides a guide for the researcher and the research process. Being aware of, and articulating, my worldview is important in order for me to better understand the decisions I made during the research process, which allowed me to carry out better

research (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). The paradigm that resonates the most with me is called poststructuralism. Poststructuralism is a reaction and ultimately a criticism to the branch of theory called structuralism, which preceded poststructuralism. Structuralism follows the belief that everything, especially text, has a structure to it, and that structure can be broken down into basic building blocks which make up all similar structures. Structuralists believe in an objective reality and search for an objective knowledge of their world (Güney & Güney, 2008).

On the contrary, poststructuralists believe there is no objective reality, “only ‘manufactured reality’ that is constructed by words” (Güney & Güney, 2008, p. 221). Poststructuralists believe language constructs reality on an individual basis, meaning everyone’s reality is different and is created as a result of how they interpret the texts and language surrounding them (Bertens, 2014). Although poststructuralists often state that language is constricting, language is still used as a means of communicating. Obviously, language was prominent in my study as I used interviews as a method of data collection as well as expressing myself through my own written words. As a poststructuralist, I acknowledge that the way I interpret and articulate these texts may be quite different from how another individual may interpret the same texts. This does not mean either of us is wrong, but it does indicate that our own situatedness impacts how we “read” text (Bertens, 2014).

Similar to how my background in organized camping had an effect on the research process, so too did my world view of poststructuralism. Again, it is difficult to articulate the exact method with which the research process was affected, but nonetheless, aspects of the research design as well as decisions made through the process,

were influenced, and acknowledgement of so remains important. Poststructuralists believe that texts build our interpretation of the world (Güney & Güney, 2008), and it is my hope this text will positively contribute to the interpretation of your world.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter introduced my study and how I answered my research questions which were: (1) in what ways have camps become year-round programs? and (2) what has been learned by individuals involved in creating year-round programming? Brief context and an overview of methods were provided. The next chapter contains a more in depth literature review. Chapter 3 provides a comprehensive discussion of the methods to be used through this research process as well as a more complete description of the theoretical framework. Chapter 4 will present the results of the study and chapter 5 will be comprised of the discussion.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter, I will present an overview of research relating to organizational change relevant to my research topic of planned change in summer camps. In recent years, research relating to summer camps has been scarce (Glover, 2011, Henderson, Bialeschki, & James, 2007). Furthermore, the limited research relevant to summer camps often focuses on “special” populations (for example, see Salazar & Heyman, 2014; Zimmerling et al., 2013; Zwicker et al., 2015) and rarely relates to the benefits of camp to the typical child (Glover, 2011), let alone transitions or changes in summer camp organizations (Henderson, Bialeschki & James, 2007; Bialeschki, Fine, & Bennett, 2015). With a paucity of peer-reviewed research relating to change in summer camps, the literature that is reviewed forthcoming is drawn from a variety of sources. Some research comes from the organizational change discipline (Arneil, 2010) while other relevant literature comes from outdoor education research (Borland, 2015). Some of the research detailed below comes from publications of significant organizations (American Camp Association, Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario). Consideration of the quality of this variance of literature sources will be discussed later in the chapter.

The following chapter will be divided into six major sections. The first section will include definitions and a general overview of organizational change. The second section will examine non-profit organizations given the study’s focus on non-profit camps. A discussion of planned and unplanned change in non-profit organizations such as camps and outdoor education centres will comprise the third section of this chapter. The fourth section will consist of a discussion of the influences that may lead a camp or

outdoor education centre to plan change. The fifth section will consider two major outcomes of planned change relating to camps and outdoor education centres: 1) program changes and 2) physical changes. The sixth and final section will explore the lessons learned from camps and outdoor education centres that have undergone change, as well as articles that provide advice to camps and outdoor education centres who are planning to create change in their organization.

### **Organizational Change**

Despite being a familiar term, the word *organization* has historically been difficult to define (Ouchi, 1980) and continues to be even more so recently (Daft, 2013). Various definitions are available, yet none seemingly encapsulate the entire essence of an organization. A definition commonly used in research to define the term organization is a group of individuals who are working towards an explicit goal (Blau & Scott, 1962); yet as Ouchi (1980) notes, individuals in organizations rarely have a common understanding of the goals. Perhaps the most relevant definition for my study is proposed by Daft (2013) who states that “organizations are (1) social entities that (2) are goal-directed, (3) are designed as deliberately structured and coordinated activity systems and (4) are linked to the external environment” (p. 12).

Regardless of the definition of an organization, what is uniformly understood is that organizations change (Boje, Burnes & Hassard, 2012). “They grow, they adapt, they evolve” (p. i). The academic study of organizational change is a relatively recent development. Many academics see Kurt Lewin as the founder of the discipline because of his research conducted in the 1940s with the Harwood Manufacturing Company (Burnes, 2012). Lewin worked with this company for many years both researching and working

with employees and eventually developing a procedure about how to approach planned organizational change in order to successfully adopt change (Burnes, 2012). Lewin's approach is described next.

**Kurt Lewin's approach to planned change.** Lewin's approach is titled the Three-Step model of planned change and is the theoretical framework that was used in my study. The Three-Step model provides simple stages to be followed in order to create lasting change in organizations (Burnes, 2004; 2012). Lewin's steps are "unfreezing," "changing," and "refreezing."

Step 1: Unfreezing. The unfreezing step requires the quasi-stationary equilibrium supported in the field as described by Field Theory to be deconstructed or destabilized. This needs to occur "before old behaviour can be discarded (unlearnt) and new behaviour successfully adopted" (Burnes, 2004, p. 985). Lewin also realized different situations would require different types of unfreezing. Schein (1996), referring to Lewin's ideas, noted it is important to recognize that change is a dynamic process and also a psychological process. Concerned parties or employees who are expected to change must feel safe from loss before they can accept the new behaviours and reject the old.

Step 2: Changing. The changing (or moving) step is the time when the actual change occurs. This results in instability within the system and a high amount of flexibility is needed in both the planning and implementation of the change (Burnes, 2012). Lewin (as cited in Burnes, 2004) saw this step as a process in which one located all the forces at work to determine all available options on a trial and error basis. This is the exact process proposed by Action Research (Burnes, 2004; 2012; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2008).

Step 3: Refreezing. The final step in the Three-Step model is termed refreezing. It seeks to restabilize the group after the instability occurred during the second step. This restabilization works to discover a new quasi-stationary equilibrium to ensure “new behaviours are relatively safe from regression” (Burnes, 2004, p. 986). Lewin notes change is likely short-lived unless reinforcement is introduced (1947). The “refreezing” step acts to ensure reinforcement is present and the change solidifies to a new equilibrium.

Lewin’s model was the framing for my study, suggesting that camps undergo a time of “unfreezing,” a period of “change,” followed by an interval of “refreezing.”

Lewin and other academics after him (such as Bavelas, French, and Coch, as cited in Burnes, 2007) became interested in organizational change after they were asked to help at the Harwood Manufacturing Company. For over 30 years, Lewin and others assisted the company when dealing with change and it is through these studies that Lewin’s theories were refined (Burnes, 2007). Since Lewin’s successor’s work, little empirical research has been conducted using Lewin’s Three-Step model. Sarayah, Khudair and Barakat (2013) indicate most organizational change theories have little empirical research to support them, with few organizational change theories being used in studies (for an exception, see Medley & Akan, 2008). Elrod and Tippett (2001) indicate that there is a lack of research directly applying Lewin’s model but that the majority of new theories or models of organizational change that do exist trace back to Lewin’s Three-Step model. (For examples of newer models, see Galpin, 1996; Judson, 1991; Kotter, 1995). The next section will discuss types of case study.

Since Lewin's initial studies at Harwood, and the creation of his Three-Step model, the field of organizational change has continued to grow in multiple ways with theorists both agreeing (see Boje & Rosile, 2010; Kippenberger, 1998) and criticizing (see Dawson, 1994; Hatch, 1997) Lewin's fundamental theory of planned change (Burnes, 2012). The field continues to expand into different types of organizations as well. Although Lewin's theory was originally developed at a for-profit company (Harwood), it can be applied to non-profit organizations as well (Medley & Akan, 2008). The next section will discuss non-profit organizations and how camps are classified as non-profit organizations.

### **Non-profit Organizations**

According to the Canada Revenue Agency, a non-profit organization is "a club, society, or association that's organized and operated solely for social welfare, civic improvement, pleasure or recreation, or any other purpose except profit" (Canada Revenue Agency, 2012). Non-profit organizations "do not exist to make a profit to enrich private owners..." (Tschirhart & Bielefeld, 2012, p. 7). But this does not mean that non-profit organizations cannot make a profit. Any profits that non-profit organizations make should be redistributed to completing the organization's mission (Tschirhart & Bielefeld, 2012).

In consideration of the topic of organizational change, change in non-profit organizations can occur for a variety of reasons. Oftentimes, change is process-driven, but the process that is driving the change depends upon the situation (Tschirhart & Bielefeld, 2012). One type of process-driven change is organizational goal setting (Tschirhart & Bielefeld, 2012). This type of change is purposeful and the results are

achieved according to the goals of the organization. Arad, Hanson and Schneider (1997) argue that goals require intentions and only people can have intentions, so an adequate definition of organizational goal setting would be “aggregates of the intentions of individuals within an organization” (p. 49). It is important to connect organizational goal setting with the planning strategy to promote strategic action thereby promoting change (Aaltonen & Ikävalko, 2002; McHatten, Bradshaw, Gallagher, & Reeves, 2011). The next section in this chapter will examine both unplanned and planned aspects of change in non-profit organizations such as summer camps.

### **Unplanned and Planned Change**

The following section will discuss unplanned change, how unplanned change can lead to planned change and finally planned change. Unplanned change, also known as emergent change, is, in essence, change that was not intended (Pettigrew, 2000). Most research relevant to organizations revolves around planned change, meaning little research has been conducted on unplanned change (Kezar, 2001). Stryker (2011) mentions that, in certain instances, unplanned change can be avoided. For example, with an old building, a professional can be hired for an assessment to determine the state of the building and recommend any updates. By conducting an assessment, a camp may be able to solve any problems before they become disastrous. Although some instances of unplanned change can be avoided, more often than not, unplanned change does still occur. Unplanned change can occur for a variety of reasons in summer camps and typically involves a problem that cannot be prevented.

**Unplanned change.** Change as a result of politics can be classified as unplanned change. Borland (2014; 2015) has done considerable research regarding the status of

outdoor education centres in Ontario. His PhD dissertation (2015) involved an intense examination into the history of school board-operated outdoor education centres in Ontario. He determined changes in politics led to changes relating to school curricula as well as funding provided to the education sector. These changes in curricula and funding eventually influenced outdoor education centres and the changes that occurred in them throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For example, between 1992 and 1995, provincial grants were cut which meant that many school boards were forced to decrease their funding to support secondary services such as outdoor education centres (Borland, 2015). This type of political action seen in the provincial government created unplanned change in outdoor education centres. Political action can also affect outdoor education centres not directly funded by the government through teacher strikes and work-to-rule protests (Dyment, 2005).

**Unplanned change leading to planned change.** There is an interesting intersection between planned and unplanned change. In certain cases, unplanned action can result in necessary change but an organization can also intentionally direct the path of change, meaning the change can be planned to an extent. The line between planned and unplanned change is not always discreet. The situation of unplanned change leading to planned change can best be exemplified through two camping organizations over the past century, the Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA) and the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) (Arneil, 2010). Both the GSUSA and BSA organizations flourished in the beginning to middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with continuous increases in member numbers into the early 1960s (Arneil, 2010). In the late 1960s, the counterculture of a society beginning to celebrate rebellion began to disagree with the traditional notions of both the

GSUSA and the BSA (Arneil, 2010). This clash between “rebellious” citizens and the traditional ways of the GSUSA and the BSA caused membership numbers to decline severely, with the GSUSA reporting a “33 percent drop in membership” (Arneil, 2010, p. 57) through the 1970s, and the BSA losing just under 900 000 members through this same time period (US Census 2000, 2006). Where things change, Arneil (2010) argues, is in the reactions each of these organizations had to this decline in membership. In short, the leaders of the BSA clung to their traditional roots, not being willing to change to the ways in which society surrounding them was changing. Adversely, the directors of the GSUSA were able to embrace change more freely and adjust their organization to society around them because of origins built on contradictions such as challenging gender roles. In short, the BSA wanted society to change to fit their organization, whereas the GSUSA changed their organization to fit society. As a result of these changes, the BSA membership numbers continued to decline from 1985-2006 whereas the GSUSA numbers steadily increased through this time (Arneil, 2010). As the BSA discovered, unplanned change can lead to organizational decline, but more importantly, the GSUSA discovered organizations can influence the direction of their path as an organization and effectively coordinate change.

Arneil (2010) also points out the importance of strong leadership through key figures, which caused the difference in reactions to the counterculture of the 1970s in the GSUSA versus the traditional leadership figures seen in the BSA. This theme of strong leadership will be a theme seen through the research regarding lessons learned to be discussed in the sixth section of this literature review (for example, see Yeager, 2002).

**Planned change.** Planned change is a process that summer camps often experience (Barstead, 2011; Grove, 2000; Ruch, 2004). Surprising to me is that I was unable to uncover any empirical studies regarding planning for change in summer camps. Past studies that are relevant to my thesis topic mainly originated in the *Camping Magazine* journal, which is the official publication of the American Camp Association (ACA) (Camping Magazine, n.d.). Considering *Camping Magazine* is the publication for the ACA, it is more anecdotal than empirical, offering practical advice to camp professionals, as well as narratives often written by those in the camp industry. Despite the practical nature of the articles, many of the articles addressed planning in the change process and how this step was incredibly important in changing a camp (Hughes Astle, 2001; Ruch, 2004; Stryker, 2003; 2006b; 2008a). Within the planning process, some articles mentioned strategic planning (Grove, 2000; Ruch, 2004) with varying opinions relating to differences between strategic planning and operational planning. Ruch (2004) states that strategic planning is different than operational planning in the sense that strategic planning is long term planning offering a vision of a camp's future whereas operational planning relates to work projects often completed in one year or less. On the other hand, Grove (2000) uses the term strategic planning for completing tasks of all kinds relating to a camp. Regardless of how it is defined, strategic planning contributes to planned change. In the next section, I will describe various influences that lead a camp to begin the process of planned change.

### **Influences Leading to Planned Change**

As seen above, with the example of the Girl Scouts of the United States of America and the Boy Scouts of America, aspects of society can lead to planned change.

Other themes seen in the literature that can lead to planned change are programming and research. All three of these themes and how each can lead to planned change will be discussed in this section.

Society has undergone incredible transformations in recent years. In order for camps to survive and sustain themselves in this ever-changing society, camps need to commit to evolving (Jameson, 2014; Newfoundland and Labrador Camping Association Report, 2014). It is unfair and potentially devastating to ask society to change in order to fit into camps (Shelton, 2006a). For example, Shelton (2006a) wrote about a camp director who wanted to invite children to summer camp from a specific cultural background different than the camp's typical population. The director considered language barriers, but did not consider other aspects necessary for this population to enjoy their camp experience such as food preferences and hygiene practices. As a result of not considering all the changes that needed to occur, many of the children did not enjoy their stay at camp and the camp was not successful in encouraging other campers from the same ethnic group to attend camp (Shelton, 2006a). In recent years, camps have had to adjust both their programs and their sites because of many different societal reasons. These two general themes of change (program change and physical change) will be discussed next.

Louv (2005) in his book *Last Child in the Woods* argued that children are not spending as much time outside compared to previous generations and this is becoming increasingly harmful to both children and society. Louv adopted the term *nature deficit disorder* to describe this phenomenon. Children spending less time outside may translate to less desire and lower registrations for summer camps from children, especially as

parents' concerns increase regarding children being outside (Garst, Gagnon, Hall, & Clemson, 2015; Louv, 2005). This combination of children spending less time outside and the growing concern of parents (Hardin, 2010) paired with the rise of childhood obesity (Roberts, Shields, de Groh, Aziz, & Gilbert, 2012) has influenced camps to change and find creative ways to continue to bring campers back year after year.

In recent years, there has been an influx of camps directed at certain specific populations as research has recognized the positive benefits camp can have on all children (Moola, Faulkner, White, & Kirsh, 2014). For example, the Barton Center for Diabetes Education is a camp that runs programs for children with diabetes and their families (Yeager, 2002). *Camping Magazine* dedicated an entire issue (volume 77, issue 4) to camps offering programming to specific populations titling the issue "Promoting Diversity Through Innovation Programs." Because of this rise in specialized camps, as well as other organizations that offer summer programming such as community centres or summer school, parents have multitudes of options when considering how their child will spend the summer (Hardin, 2010).

Another change-oriented factor impacting camps is the topic of diversity and inclusivity. Society is becoming more diverse in many ways. For example, this diversity can present itself through culture (Thompson & Horvath, 2007), through gender (Gillard, Buzuvis, & Bialeschki, 2014), through those with chronic health problems or disabilities, and many other avenues (Shelton, 2006a). As a result of this diversity, camps need to not only be willing to accommodate diverse groups, but ensure *everyone* feels welcome and comfortable so each child can enjoy the many, vast benefits of camp (Smith, 2004). Ball (2010) notes it took over twenty-five years for some camps in the United States to re-join

the American Camp Association (ACA) after the ACA mandated changes in 1966 allowing African American campers to attend camp. The previous example points to the fact that change can take a very long time, but it does not mean the change is any less important. As society leans toward a more open and inclusive atmosphere, this will likely provoke camps to change the program at their camp, whether it be adding cultural activities, revising policies and procedures or adding more money into the budget for new equipment needed for specialized populations.

Planned change can also occur from a desire to change the programming at camp. For example, many camp properties are vacant for up to 10 months of the year. Considering camps are often in wonderful, nature-laden locations, more and more camps are finding it appropriate and even advantageous to keep their camps operating year-round (Madeyski, 2000; Yeager, 2002). This decision to go year-round lends itself to a desire to continue programming in order to reach and impact more campers than was possible through just the summer months. After a decision has been made, in order to be as successful as possible, the long planning process begins. Stryker (2008a) reminded us of the saying: “fail to plan and plan to fail” (p. 71).

Research can have an impact on summer camps and outdoor education centres and their programs, should camp practitioners be able to access and understand the research (Fine, 2013). Stephen Fine, a prominent researcher and camp director in Canada, understood research can be hard to implement and mobilize to the camp population as well as to parents (Fine, 2013). He suggested various methods of doing so, in order for parents and camp administrators, and therefore camps, to benefit from the valuable research conducted on summer camps recently (specifically Glover et al., 2011; 2013).

For example, one method Fine suggested is simple, face-to-face communication. He recommended telling parents of campers and prospective parents about research findings. This can easily be broadened further to telling camp directors and administrators about research findings considering many may be unaware of the current research related to summer camps.

In 2000, McKenzie conducted a literature review about program outcomes in adventure education. McKenzie suggested further research be done in order to provide adventure educators with information about why programs work and how the programs can be adjusted to increase effectiveness. Ardoin, Biedenweg and O'Connor conducted a similar literature review in 2015 and the same results were found. In addition, Vroegop (2014) recommended using research to develop outdoor education programs. Research can be a beneficial tool for camps and outdoor education centres when developing or adapting their programs.

### **Outcomes of Planned Change**

Planned change in camps can have many outcomes. Most of these outcomes can be grouped into two categories: physical changes and program changes. As alluded to previously, planned change may occur in camps for social reasons such as nature deficit disorder (Louv, 2005) and the increase of diverse populations (Shelton, 2006a), but also for reasons such as impacting more children and simply finding it economically feasible to be open year-round (Yeager, 2002).

The two main categories of physical change and program change are also interconnected. Although it is possible for camp programs to change without physical change occurring, the opposite is unlikely to be true in the case of winterizing. With the

construction or winterization of a building at a camp, comes the need to change the program to incorporate the extended time the camp can be open and in use. As Yeager (2002) stated, year-round programs are incredibly important and should not be treated differently than the summer camp program, even though the summer camp program may be larger. While untrue for winterizing, program changes leading to physical changes can still occur.

Camps changing their program may lead to physical changes. For example, as society understands and progresses more to adopting the idea that children can identify as transgender, it is important for camps to change their program, or aspects of their program to accommodate this. Transgender is an “umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth” (GLAAD, 2016). Camp programs may be willing to support children of all types, but the site may not be ready to fit these changes yet. Children who identify as transgender may be faced with challenging situations if bathrooms and changing areas are not private and other campers discover the camper has sexual organs that do not align with his or her gender expression, leading to teasing and bullying (Gillard et al., 2014). This situation can be avoided if camps revise or add bathrooms and changing areas that are private, such as single person washrooms. This addition of a washroom, or renovation of a current changing space, is an example of a physical or site change.

Other outcomes of planned change may be discovered after the change occurs. For example, camps that operate year-round have the option to supplement the costs of summer camp with revenue generated during the offseason. Camp Maple Leaf provides

campers who would otherwise be unable to pay for the cost of camp with subsidies funded from Maple Leaf Outdoor Centre, an outdoor education centre that runs throughout the year catering to school groups and rental groups such as athletic teams and youth retreats (Maguire & Gunton, 2000).

### **Consideration of Literature Reviewed**

It is evident, through a review of the literature, that many lessons have been learned from camps that have transitioned from summer or three-season facilities to year-round facilities or programs. Much of this evidence contains self-reported narratives regarding individual experience. I found no empirical research in tier 1 journals regarding lessons that were learned in camps that have transitioned to year-round facilities. The majority of research was found in what might be considered professional journals such as *Pathways* and *Camping Magazine*. *Pathways* is the Ontario Journal of Outdoor Education and is published by the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario (COEO) and *Camping Magazine* is published by the American Camp Association. Because the associations themselves publish these journals, the articles in the journals do not go through the same peer review process that top tier peer-reviewed journals would. Papers that undergo a peer review process (the process where experts in a given research area serve as anonymous editors to provide feedback and to judge the quality of the study) are considered to be a higher quality of research compared to articles and narratives written in journals such as *Pathways* and *Camping Magazine*. What follows in the next section are descriptions of the lessons that have been published in the journal articles mentioned above and advice, from those same journals, that is given to camps considering these changes. Advice was often given from camp directors who have assisted a camp

transition (for examples, see Maguire & Gunton, 2000; Yeager, 2002) or experts in a field such as construction (for examples, see Stryker, 2003, 2006a, 2006b). Many of the lessons have not explicitly stated “these were lessons that we learned,” but instead mentioned different aspects that were complex, or unexpected benefits from the transition.

### **Lessons Learned Through Change**

Some camps understand that in order to be successful, they must always be changing, whether it be improvements to certain buildings or incorporating a new activity, a process known as operational change (Ruch, 2004). This is not the type of change to which I am referring. Planned change is on a much larger scale compared to operational change.

When transitioning to year-round programming at a camp, a new building is not the only requirement for change. As stated above, with year-round capabilities comes the need for an extension and perhaps an overhaul of the current program (Yeager, 2002). As a result of both physical and program changes occurring through a transition, what has been learned should not be related only to what has been learned regarding winterizing or construction of a new building, but also what has been learned through program changes. Because physical change and program change are so closely connected, and can be dependent on each other in many cases, the lessons learned will not be discussed separately for these categories. The following lessons apply to both physical changes and program changes.

As mentioned above, the majority of the following lessons were not discovered in top-tier peer-reviewed journals. The lessons described below come from *Camping Magazine* or *Pathways* or similar sources (for an exception, see Arneil, 2010).

There were two major lessons, or pieces of advice given that were found in relation to both program changes and physical changes. The lessons, or pieces of advice, were to plan and to evaluate.

**Planning.** The idea of planning, or creating a plan, was a theme that was most frequently cited in the literature I reviewed. The theme of planning arose through articles about summer camp (Barstead, 2011; Stryker, 2008b), outdoor education (Maguire & Gunton, 2000; Yeager, 2002) or articles relating to organizational change (Purvis et al., 2012). This theme also had relevance for program change (Barstead, 2011) and physical change (Stryker, 2008a). Many articles stated the importance of planning early and completely (Grove, 2000; Ruch, 2004; Stryker, 2006a; 2008a; 2008b). Ruch (2004) articulated planning for camps should happen twenty-four to thirty-six months in advance. Ruch noted this large timeline allows for flexibility in the ever-changing market of the camp industry. Other articles placed emphasis on creating a plan specific to each individual camp (Barstead, 2011; Shelton, 2007a) articulating that a specific plan “does exactly what you want it to” (Barstead, 2011, p. 48). Similarly, Shelton (2007a) illustrated each camp has its own culture, and therefore it is important to assess the individual culture considering a technique may be effective in one camp but completely ineffective in a different camp. Many articles mentioned or recalled the importance of planning in general (Hughes Astle, 2001; Molloy, 2006; Stryker, 2003; 2006b; 2011; Yeager, 2002). Hughes Astle (2001) in her article “Planning for Growth” discussed the

process Camp Henry underwent in order to provide year-round programming to their clientele. In her article, Hughes Astle indicated how important a strategic plan was, and how Camp Henry implemented one. This strategic plan first involved creating a task force of key individuals from the camp itself as well as from the Board of Directors. This task force evaluated the camp's future needs and recognized that major building projects were necessary and then created a comprehensive list of building needs for the future. This plan helped to lay out a timeline and provided a path to follow for the future.

**Evaluation.** Along with planning, evaluating was also a major theme seen through many articles, both relating to programs (Bourke, 2011; Purvis et al., 2012) and physical changes (Benton, Guzik, & Nozak, 2005). Although some authors discussed evaluating after a change had occurred (Bourke, 2011; Hardin, 2010), many others identified the need to evaluate throughout the change by critically monitoring the change process (Benton et al., 2005; Grove, 2000; Yeager, 2002). The authors of these articles understood that challenges will continue to arise and that change is a continuous work in progress (Barstead, 2011; Fortin, 2000; Maguire & Gunton, 2000; Purvis et al., 2012). Grove (2000) noted "the end is just the beginning" (p. 23). Jeronen, Jeronen and Raustia (2009) conducted a study on environmental education in Finland and explicitly stated teachers did not "take into account the meaning of evaluation" (p. 19) with no teachers mentioning it as a part of their environmental education program. The authors state program evaluation would be an appropriate way for students and teachers to strive towards set goals. Evaluation was deemed an important lesson in many situations at camp, but especially so when an organization is changing.

**Funding.** One prominent theme related to funding and financial issues. Funding had relevance in both program changes and physical changes. Issues related to funding were different in each article reviewed. Borland (2015) found funding was cut in Ontario school board-operated outdoor education centres leading to some centres closing. Sharpe and Breunig (2009) found there was inadequate funding for environmental education programs leading to cutbacks. Maguire and Gunton (2000) discovered it was difficult to find funding in the first place. For Cedar Ridge Camp, the completion of the transition to year-round programming was well beyond the projected budget (Burke & Tavener, 2007). Yeager (2002) recognized the importance of funding after completion of a carefully prepared plan. She noted funding will likely be more successful if potential donors can clearly see that the plan will lead to more campers being served. She suggested that funding initiatives should begin with current donors and then expand out from there. She also advised participation in marketing efforts such as media coverage. Yeager proceeded to indicate the success her program and outdoor centre experienced as a result of media coverage and how it has helped the reputation, visibility and credibility of her program and outdoor centre. Gillard et al. (2014) noted the risks of implementing changes in summer camps as possible avenues of losing important stakeholders, but also mentioned how changes can attract new stakeholders.

**Mission statement.** The importance of maintaining, or creating, a strong vision or mission statement was another theme seen through many articles (Barstead, 2011; Berti, 2000; Burke & Tavener, 2007; Hughes Astle, 2001; Yeager, 2002). Camp Tawingo and Tawingo College, a summer camp and private school in Huntsville, Ontario began as just a summer camp and has transitioned into an outdoor education centre, and then more

recently, to a private school. In an article written by their program director at the time, Fortin (2000) stated, “the transitions have not always been easy...” (p. 7) and oftentimes the question of what to do now comes up. For Fortin and Camp Tawingo, the answer has always been to rely on their vision.

**Goal-setting.** Related to the topic of visions and missions, it was also concluded that setting goals was important. One of the goals for Cedar Ridge Camp through their transition was to design programs that would combine both their mission and be applicable to each group that attended (Burke & Tavener, 2007). Ruch (2004) also indicated the importance of goals in building a strategic plan when he stated that goals should be realistic and attainable, but also important to the stakeholders of the camp. Grove (2000) agreed that goals should be specific or else completing the goal “makes the process that much harder” (p. 21).

**Correct the first time.** Another theme included doing things correctly the first time to save time, effort and money later (Benton et al., 2005; Shelton, 2007b; Stryker, 2008a; 2008b). Stryker (2003) mentioned “if it’s worth doing, it’s worth doing right” (p. 55). For example, Shelton (2007b) discussed building sustainability into any change process at camp. He stated that this is an effective method to demonstrate to funders and stakeholders that the change will continue to thrive after original funding is depleted and go on to be a long term benefit rather than simply a short term success. This sustainability is important because if it is not built into the plan, or considered before the change process, it is possible the camp will need to undergo a similar change process in the near future and therefore reach out to funders again. Considering that funders for summer

camps are small in number to begin with, requesting funds after an unsuccessful project can be devastating for camp-funder relationships (Gillard et al., 2014).

**Strong leadership.** Another important theme that was identified in the articles included the importance of having strong leadership (Arneil, 2010; Purvis et al., 2012; Shelton, 2006b; Yeager, 2002). As previously touched upon, effective leadership was essential to the successful change seen in the Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA) in recent years (Arneil, 2010). Arneil indicated it was the openness and willingness to change of the crucial leadership figures that transformed the GSUSA organization leading to increased membership. On the other hand, the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) leadership team continued to stick to their traditional notions refusing to change or be open to transformation in order to become an inclusive organization. This lack of willingness to change led to devastating loss of membership numbers within the BSA (Arneil, 2010). Yeager (2002) also mentioned the importance of strong leadership indicating “leadership must be willing to work hard toward new goals with one eye on the horizon and the other on the balance sheet” (p. 49). Finally, Shelton (2006b) emphasized the importance of strong leadership through a change process indicating organizational change will be unsuccessful unless camp leaders possess appropriate abilities. Some of these abilities, stated Shelton, include openness, positivity, personality strength and a willingness to change. Shelton discussed the importance of evaluating the potential leaders to determine if he or she possesses the appropriate skills and abilities to lead the organization through the change process.

**Monitoring progress.** Another major theme that I recognized from my review of literature was the idea of monitoring the progress of change (Grove, 2000; Stryker,

2006b). For example, Grove (2000) suggested “monitor[ing] the process closely” (p. 24) and being willing to change throughout the process should it be deemed necessary. In relation to physical change, Stryker (2006b) proposed each project should have a detailed construction timeline and the camp should have a copy of this timeline in order to gauge progress to determine if the work is on time or behind schedule.

**Change initially met with trepidation.** Some authors uncovered that the change process was initially met with trepidation (Grove, 2000; Purvis et al., 2012; Yeager, 2002). Purvis et al. (2012) indicated “readiness [was] a central issue” (p. 14) in relation to organizational change. Yeager (2002) discussed camp leaders as initially apprehensive, bringing to light the many questions that followed after a brainstorming session bringing up the possibility of running offseason programming. These questions were related to funding, concerns about lack of participants, and lack of clarity regarding who the expected participants should be.

**Time.** One final major theme seen in the literature related to time. Throughout the change process, time was often mentioned as a factor from personal experience (Burke & Tavener, 2007; Maguire & Gunton, 2000). Burke and Tavener (2007) indicated that the change process was completed “long past our self-imposed deadline” (p. 8) and Maguire and Gunton (2000) stated that developing a plan suitable for the Board of Directors took time. Time was also mentioned as a potential factor (Barstead, 2011; Stryker, 2008a). Barstead (2011) pointed out many camps likely do not change their programs often because “time is precious” (p. 47) and if the program is working, it is not a high priority on the endless to-do list of a camp director or a volunteer Board of Directors. Stryker

(2006b) warned against rushing through the planning process to try to fit construction projects into timelines that are implausible.

### **Conclusion**

The above review of literature relating to organizational change in summer camps and outdoor education centres provided: 1) a comparison of planned change and unplanned change, 2) the influences leading to planned change, 3) the outcomes of planned change and 4) what has been learned through the process of change in various organizations as well as advice given to organizations looking to plan change in their own organization.

## **Chapter 3: Methods**

### **Introduction**

This chapter provides information about the research methods for my study and details about how I conducted the project. The chapter includes an overview of information broken down into subheadings. These headings include the theoretical framework, study purpose and research questions, qualitative research, case study methodology, the role of theory in case study, and types of case study. Additional sections relating to data collection and data analysis are also included followed by ethical considerations, trustworthiness, limitations and a conclusion.

### **Theoretical Framework**

A theory aims to explain, predict, understand and grasp notions such as “individuals, groups, structures, concepts, processes and artefacts” (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 89). Theories and theoretical frameworks are closely connected. In research, a theoretical framework acts to relate the theory to the present study (Swanson, 2013). Put a different way, a theoretical framework “is a structure that is intended as a guide for thinking about the research subject” (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 134). A theoretical framework helps situate a study in a body of literature (Rocco & Plakhotnik, 2009). Kurt Lewin’s theoretical framework in relation to planned change (as overviewed by Burnes, 2004; 2012) helped to frame my study within the organizational change literature given my study’s focus on exploring camps that have created year-round programming. A more comprehensive discussion of this theoretical framework and its application to my study will be discussed in a subsequent section. The purpose of my study and research question will be discussed next.

## **Study Purpose and Research Questions**

The aim of my study was to explore the topic of organizational change in relation to summer camps. Specifically, the purpose of my research study was to explore camps that have created a year-round operation. Two primary research questions guiding this study were: (1) in what ways have camps become year-round programs? and (2) what has been learned by individuals involved in creating year-round programming? The next sections provide information about qualitative research and case study methodology.

## **Qualitative Research**

Qualitative research is defined as “meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and descriptions,” (Berg & Lune, 2012, p. 3) which is in stark contrast to the “counts and measures” (p. 3) seen in quantitative research. A primary objective of qualitative research is to study groups and individuals in various social settings (Berg & Lune, 2012). According to Savin-Baden and Major (2013), qualitative research is “subjective and personal” (p. 16). Qualitative researchers understand and acknowledge that research is subjective because of the many influences the researcher has on the project, from the topic of study to the research questions to the participant selection process. All of these influences affect the nature of the study and the decisions that are made throughout.

Qualitative research is a large umbrella term for many different approaches and methodologies. Examples of these methodologies include phenomenology, action research and case study research (Creswell, 2013).

## **Case Study Methodology**

My research employed case study as its specific methodology. Case study is defined as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the ‘case’) in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (Yin, 2014, p. 16). Case study research can be further broken down into explanatory, exploratory and descriptive case studies (Yin, 2014). These three separate types of case study have different purposes correlating to different research designs. In light of my study purpose, I employed descriptive case study, which “involve[d] a detailed account of the subject of study” (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 155). This descriptive lens allowed for an in-depth view not possible in explanatory or exploratory case study designs.

As Ellinger, Watkins and Marsick (2005) note, “case study research is not as routinized as other strategies” (p. 337) meaning the researcher needs to be open to change, while at the same time, continue to direct attention to the current purpose statement and research question. Because of the lack of routine seen in case study, a theory is often used to ground the study.

## **The Role of Theory in Case Study Methodology**

Both theory and theoretical frameworks are relevant in case study research. Yin (2014) suggests the role of theory in a case study is to “have a sufficient blueprint for your study” (p. 38). Yin is ultimately referring to a theoretical framework. Rosenbaum (2002) recommends, for studies not involving experiments, that theoretical statements be employed to discuss a pattern of the expected results before data collection begins.

Thinking through this pattern of expected results allows the researcher to determine what

he/she expects to find. The pattern of expected results can also “provide surprisingly strong guidance in determining the data to collect and the strategies for analyzing the data” (Yin, 2014, p. 38). The theoretical framework I chose to guide my study was Kurt Lewin’s model of planned change. Chapter 2 provides a summary of Lewin’s approach to planned change (see page 12). The next section discusses types of case study.

### **Types of Case Study**

There are many different approaches to designing case studies (Yin, 2014). Basic types of case study include two variables, the number of cases and the unit of analysis. Relating to the former, case studies may involve a single case or multiple cases. Regarding the latter, a unit of analysis is defined as “the major entity being analyzed in the study” (Fletcher & Plakoyiannaki, 2010, p. 838) and is highly relevant to the research questions proposed. Case studies can be holistic, meaning they have a single unit of analysis, or case studies can have multiple units of analysis known as embedded case studies. With these two variables, there are four possible types of basic case studies: single-case holistic, single-case embedded, multiple-case holistic and multiple-case embedded. My study was a single-case, holistic design. These variables are outlined in more detail next.

**Single case study.** A single case study research project “tends to examine the global nature of a...program” (Xiao, 2010, p. 867). Yin (2014) describes instances when single-case studies are appropriate. Two situations fit into the rationale for my study. The first rationale for using a single case study is when the case is exploring or investigating a well-formulated theory. Lewin’s theory of planned change is an extensively used and well-known theory (see Burnes, 2004, 2012; Cummings and Worley, 1997; Marrow,

1977) and as a result, using a single-case design is appropriate. The second rationale for using a single-case design is when the study occurs over time. Although my data collection only occurred at one point, the goal of the data collection was to reflect on the past and how the process developed over time. As Yin (2009) writes, in a longitudinal study, “The theory of interest would likely specify how certain conditions change over time” (p. 49). This is exactly what Lewin’s theory discusses, how the organization is modified throughout a planned change process.

A single-case design still allowed me to consider numerous processes of transition and creation of year-round programming through having multiple sites and participants. Having numerous sites and participants enabled a broader understanding of not only what has been *learned* through creating a year-round program but also *how* year-round programs are created.

It is important to note the difference between a multiple case study and a multi-site case study. As Bishop (2010) states, “a MultiSite case study offers a means of understanding an individual, event, policy, program, or group, via multiple representations of that phenomenon” (p. 587). My design was a multi-site case study, but was still a single-case design. Therefore, the single case I studied was camps in Ontario that have created year-round programming.

**Holistic case study.** In case study research, the number of units of analysis determines if the design is holistic or embedded. A holistic case study has one unit of analysis whereas an embedded case study has multiple units (Yin, 2014). My research project was a holistic design, meaning I had one unit of analysis, to be described in more detail next.

*Unit of analysis.* As part of the research design, Yin (2014) expresses the importance of describing the unit of analysis for the study. The unit of analysis is the level at which the data will be analyzed. Yin (2014) suggests considering two steps when describing the unit of analysis: defining the case and bounding the case.

When defining the case, the “tentative definition of your case (or of the unit of analysis) is related to the way you define your initial research question(s)” (Yin, 2014, p. 31). Baxter and Jack (2008) suggest asking questions such as, “Do I want to ‘analyze’ a program? Do I want to ‘analyze’ a process?” when considering the unit of analysis. In my situation, I specifically analyzed what was learned from the process of creating year-round programming. Therefore, more generally, my unit of analysis was the process of creating year-round programming.

The second step in defining the unit of analysis is bounding the case. Bounding the case occurred after the general definition of the case had been established (Yin, 2014). Bounding the case in relation to the unit of analysis involved defining where the line was drawn in terms of who participated in the study, both in the general sense of which camps participated and the more specific sense of individual participants. This bounding of the case will be described in more detail throughout the next sections of this chapter, starting with site selection.

### **Site Selection**

As mentioned above, the current research project was a single case study. As noted by Fletcher and Plakoyiannaki (2010), “Adequacy of sample size in case study research is relative and dependent on the type of research question posed” (p. 838). Yin (2014) states the decision of how many sites to use will be “discretionary, not formulaic”

(p. 61). Yin (2014) also provides guidelines relating to the strength of the theory being used stating if the theory is well-tested and strong, the number of sites can be fewer compared to a study that employs a theory that is less refined. The theory I employed, Lewin's theory of planned change, is a well-developed and straightforward theory (see Burnes, 2004, 2012; Cummings and Worley, 1997; Marrow, 1977). In light of the above and relevant to this project, six sites were chosen which allowed for "richer and deeper understandings of [the] phenomenon" (Bishop, 2010, p. 587) as seen in multi-site case studies. A detailed description of how the six sites were chosen and entry was gained is described next.

**Site sampling.** Sites were selected using purposeful sampling, and more specifically, convenience sampling. Patton (2002) recommends that sampling in case study research be done purposefully, not randomly. Purposeful sampling involves "selecting *information-rich cases* for study in-depth" (emphasis in original) (Patton, 2005, p. 2). Fletcher and Plakoyiannaki (2010) note convenience sampling is a type of purposeful sampling. Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016, p. 2) state convenience sampling occurs when participants in the desired population "meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity...or the willingness to participate" and as such, are included in the current research study. Using convenience sampling was deemed necessary for the project as it was more difficult than expected to find research participants. Six cases was an appropriate number when considering the scope of a master's thesis. The specific sites in this single-case study consisted of six camps that have created year-round programming in a variety of ways.

Camps were initially contacted based on weighted descriptive criteria. Camps were assessed based on their similarity to the following criteria listed from most heavily weighted to least heavily weighted: a) location (Stake, 2006) b) budget/profit c) camper and staff numbers d) existing programs prior to transition (i.e. spring and fall programming) and e) Christian affiliation. Camps that met the descriptive criteria weighed more heavily were contacted first.

**Gaining entry.** An initial list of five potential camps that met the above mentioned descriptive criteria was compiled through a combination of a Google search as well as word of mouth at a camping conference I attended. Initial contact, via the email correspondence (see Appendix A) and a letter of invitation (see Appendix B), was made to the five camps who fit the criteria. My initial email inquired about the camp's interest in the project. Included in the initial communication was the letter of invitation that included brief information about: 1) the research study's aims, 2) what was required of the camp in terms of timing and access, 3) the timeline of the project, and 4) the benefits the camp would receive (Brewerton & Millward, 2001). The email correspondence included information about why I believed the camp was a good fit for my study (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2011). Of the five camps emailed, I heard positive intentions from one camp, but she stated she would need to ask permission from the camp's board of directors. She eventually replied stating she received permission and could participate in the study.

It quickly became evident I would need additional participants. I continued to do research looking more broadly for camps in Ontario that support year round programming. I compiled a list of six camps, deeming they were relevant to my study by

researching their website. I emailed the camps in the same process as described above. Two of the six camps replied saying they were interested. It was at this point I discovered changes might need to be made to my proposed research design because of the variety of different situations discovered. One of the interested camps had bought a camp that had year round capabilities which differed from my desire of camps transitioning into year round programming. Another camp had transitioned twenty years ago, and so did not have documents to share. I weighed the benefits and disadvantages of including these camps in my study and spoke to my supervisor regarding these inquiries. We decided these camps would be included and the research design changed as it was becoming difficult for me to find participants that fit my initial research design.

Over the next few months, I emailed nine additional camps using the same method as described above. Many of these camps did not reply to my email, others had always been year round, and some simply declined the invitation. Two of the nine camps replied with positive intentions and would eventually become participants in the study. Dan, who had already committed to my project, convinced Cody, the director of Camp Sunset Yellow to join my study. Cody had initially declined my invitation to participate. This yielded six camps who would become participants in my study. Six additional camps were emailed. Five of the six camps did not reply and one replied declining the invitation. It was after this time I decided six camps would be the number of cases in my study. Table 1 outlines the six participating camps.

Table 1				
Basic Information of Study Participants				
<u>Camp Name</u>	<u>Camp Director</u>	<u>Date Camp Originated</u>	<u>Date Winter Program Started</u>	<u>Type of Camp</u>
Camp Maple Oak	Megan	1989	1998	Non-profit
Camp Sunset Yellow	Cody	Early 1900s	2014	Non-profit
Divine River Camp	Scott	1985	Early 2000s	Religiously affiliated
Golden Maple Camp	Dan	1930	~2010	Non-profit
Orange Ridge Camp	Kayleigh	1960	2011	Religiously affiliated
Sunny Grove Camp	Greg	2005	2005	Private

Soon after receiving commitments from each camp, I sought consent by requesting a letter of permission be received from each camp. The letter articulated that the camp provided consent for me to conduct research in relation to the organization as desired by the Research Ethics Board at Brock University. A template of the letter (Appendix G) was provided to each camp. The person writing the letter was the director of the camp, and the participant for that organization. Additional information regarding the participants will be presented in the next section.

### **Participant Selection and Sampling Procedures**

Fletcher and Plakoyiannaki (2010) note that sampling in case study research involves both the initial selection of cases, but also other instances such as sampling participants known as within-case sampling. Participants were selected using purposeful sampling for the same reasons purposeful sampling was used to select cases. Purposeful sampling involves selecting participants who can provide valuable, rich information to the study (Patton, 2005).

Baker and Edwards (2012) compiled a review paper examining how many qualitative interviews are sufficient and the overwhelming message from expert researchers was, “it depends.” Similarly, the *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research* (Mills, Durepos & Wiebe, 2010) contains no article regarding participants and therefore no indication of an appropriate number of participants to be used in case study research. The participants in my study consisted of the current camp director at each of the six different camps. The camp director was an appropriate person to use as a participant as he or she had the most current and up to date knowledge about the workings and history of the camp. Four of the participants were male and two were female. The current camp director was also the person I initially contacted to inquire of the camp’s interest in the research study. This meant each participant had already received the letter of invitation and all the information relevant to the study. Prior to scheduling an interview, the informed consent form (Appendix F) was sent to each participant.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

Case study research encourages various sources of data to be collected (Yin, 2014) but “does not claim any particular methods for data collection” (Merriam, 1998, p. 28). That said, Yin (2014) discusses relevant principles to follow for data collection in case studies: utilizing multiple sources of evidence, creating and using a case study database, and upholding the chain of evidence.

In terms of multiple sources of evidence, the first principle, a case study finding is “likely to be more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information” (Yin, 2014, p. 120). Collecting data from both interviews and documents, as was originally intended, would have provided compelling findings on their own and then

even more when compared to each other, but throughout the data collection process, it was determined that it would not be feasible to collect documents as a part of this project. A further discussion on why documents were not used will be discussed in a subsequent section.

The second principle for data collection is to create and use a case study database. A case study database is simply a place where the data collected can be organized and later retrieved if necessary. The database can consist of field notes, documents and audio recordings (Yin, 2014). The data I collected was stored on a password-protected Google Drive account. Field notes I made after each interview were logged in a notebook and stored in a secure location.

The final basic principle of collecting case study evidence to be discussed is upholding the chain of evidence. The chain of evidence is sometimes referred to as an audit trail (Ward & Street, 2010). Throughout the chain of evidence, or audit trail, any finding or conclusion made in the study should be able to be traced back to its original location. A way to uphold the chain of evidence is through well-documented procedures and an organized case study database. An additional method of keeping the chain of evidence is through the use of a computer assisted qualitative data analysis software, which was used in the analysis of my data. The chain of evidence acts to increase the reliability of the study in order for findings and conclusions to be traced back to their initial sources (Yin, 2014). Data collected through interviews will be discussed next.

**Interviews.** I conducted individual interviews with camp directors. Each camp director, or participant, engaged in a primary interview and then one participant, Megan, was asked to take part in a follow up interview. I felt the initial interview with Megan did

not cover the range of topics I desired. For example, in the follow up interview, I asked the question “how is the site used in the offseason?” This was not covered in the initial interview, but was a relevant topic regarding my research questions.

The interview sessions occurred in one of three locations: (1) at the site of the camp, (2) at the camp office, or (3) over the telephone. For Divine River Camp and Golden Maple Camp, the interviews took place at the camp. The Camp Maple Oak initial interview took place at the camp office (located in a separate city from the camp). Phone interviews were completed for the Camp Maple Oak follow up interview, Camp Sunset Yellow, Orange Ridge Camp and Sunny Grove Camp interviews.

The main interview sessions lasted between forty-five minutes and one hour, and involved the participant and me. The interviews consisted of questions about the creation of year-round programming, as well as how the camp came to run winter programs. The interview was guided by the interview questions found in Appendix G. At the beginning of the interview, I verbally informed the participant of his or her rights using the script in Appendix E and ensured I had a signed consent letter prior to beginning the interview, whether electronically or in hard copy. Each participant was asked for consent regarding recording the interview using a digital voice recorder. All participants agreed to allow the interview to be recorded.

The follow up interview occurred for Megan a few months after the initial interview. This interview lasted fifteen minutes and was conducted over the phone. Megan agreed to have the phone interview recorded and the interview was guided by the notes I took after the initial interview, as well as other questions relevant from interviews with other participants. I created a separate interview guide for Megan’s follow up

interview (see Appendix H). After each interview, I documented my thoughts in relation to the interview in a journal. An anecdote on documents is presented next.

**Documents.** In my research proposal, I indicated I would be collecting data from both documents and interviews. The literature suggested this would provide stronger findings as data would be collected from multiple sources enabling “*converging lines of inquiry*” (emphasis in original) (Yin, 2014, p 120). Through the process of recruiting camps, it was discovered that collecting data from documents would not be feasible for multiple reasons. Some camps simply did not have documents related to the creation of a year round program. For Divine River Camp, the transition occurred too long ago and the records do not exist. For Sunny Grove Camp, the documents did not exist as they bought a camp with year-round capabilities. Other camps were unable to provide documents to me because of confidentiality reasons (Orange Ridge Camp and Camp Sunset Yellow). If I limited the camps to those only able to provide documents, I would have been left with two camps. I deemed two camps an insufficient number for this project, so I decided to include more camps that were unable to provide documents.

While looking at the documents I did receive, I compared the information with what was discussed in interviews. One of the documents received from Maple Oak stated what the primary year-round programs will be at the new Maple site and then other activities that will occur on site. This document stated Maple Oak would rent to other groups with similar demographics to their own, but through the interview with Megan, it was determined one of the longest standing groups with Maple Oak is a university residence that does not have the same demographic as Maple Oak. This comparison was further proof that in my situation, collecting data from documents would not have been

beneficial. Additionally, documents that were provided from Golden Maple were strategic plans for camps. These documents were created before the transition and therefore did not reflect the fact that plans change and need to be altered throughout the change process (Ruch, 2004). Consequently, the documents did not correspond with the processes as described by the directors through interviews. How the data was prepared is described in the next section.

### **Preparation of Data**

Before analysis could begin, the raw data needed to be prepared (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). For my research, this preparation involved transcribing the audio recordings from each interview and replacing confidential information such as camp names and participant names with pseudonyms.

**Transcription.** Transcription is defined as the “translation of audio or video data into a written text document” (Lapan, Quartaroli, & Riemer, 2011). In the most basic form, there are two types of transcription: denaturalized and naturalized. Over the years, confusion has arisen regarding these terms (see Barnes, 2013). My thesis will employ the terms as originally described by Bucholtz (2000). Denaturalized transcripts are those transcribed verbatim, whereas naturalized transcripts have adjustments made throughout the transcription process. The naturalized approach was appropriate for my study as I was interested in the information that would be discovered from the interviews rather than the analysis of “actual speech patterns *between* people” (emphasis in original, Oliver, Serovich, & Mason, 2005, p. 1275) seen in denaturalized techniques.

For my study, I chose to transcribe the interviews adopting a naturalized approach. Personally transcribing the interviews provided me with an in-depth view of

the data which later assisted in analysis. This naturalized method involved excluding filler words such as “um” and “ah.” If part of a sentence was repeated, I only wrote it once. For example, if the recording said “I had to, had, I had to do...” this was written as “I had to.” Punctuation was added throughout with commas occurring at pauses and periods occurring when an old thought finished and a new thought began. Each transcription was written double spaced in a Microsoft Word document and saved in Google Drive, protected by a password. After completing each initial transcription, I read over the full transcription again for spelling and grammar errors, correcting these as necessary. I also checked the document to edit out any repeating words or parts of sentences I missed the initial time through the process. For example, in Dan’s transcription, I had written Dan as saying “it was just fun, it was like, it was like a hobby.” This was changed to “it was just fun, it was like a hobby” in the second draft of the transcription.

The edited transcription was then returned to the participants to engage in a process known as member checking. Member checking involves providing drafts to participants “for confirmation and further illumination” (Stake, 1995, p. 171-172) and acts to establish credibility (Creswell & Miller, 2000). In my study, participants received a copy of their transcript and were asked to verify the transcription to determine if I accurately portrayed their thoughts and opinions, as well as asked if there was anything the participant would like to add (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). The participants had two weeks to send a response. Two transcriptions and the one follow up transcription were returned to me. In only one case was the transcription returned with minor suggestions. Those changes involved a date that was incorrectly stated and a monetary figure noted

that was also incorrect. The inaccurate values were replaced with the correct ones. Four transcriptions were never returned. In these cases, I used the original transcription.

**Pseudonyms.** I created pseudonyms for the name of every camp and participant in each transcription document. I also created pseudonyms for any identifying features within the transcription document such as names of buildings or other staff members. Pseudonyms for camps were chosen strategically, ensuring the camp name was not the name of a pre-existing camp. This was confirmed by conducting Google searches of the pseudonyms. The newly revised, anonymized document was the one used in analysis as described in the next section.

## **Data Analysis**

The goal of data analysis, in its most basic form, is “to make sense out of the data” (Merriam, 2009, p. 203). Case study proposes different techniques when analyzing data (Yin, 2014). The two techniques I employed will be discussed next. The first technique involved the analysis of raw data. The approach was called thematic analysis (Lapadat, 2010). In brief, thematic analysis utilizes coding to help a researcher look for common themes throughout the data. After thematic analysis, an analytic technique called pattern matching was used, a method often used in case studies (Yin, 2014). Pattern matching involved relating the themes found in thematic analysis back to theory, and in my case, Lewin’s model of planned change. The next sections provide more in-depth discussions of how data analysis occurred.

**Thematic analysis.** Thematic analysis was the first step in analysis. It is an appropriate method to use with case study research (Lapadat, 2010). I engaged in a two stage process relating to thematic analysis: coding and interpretation of the codes to

produce themes. Coding required me to “closely inspect [the] text to look for recurrent themes, topics, or relationships, and [to] mark similar passages with a code or label to categorize them for later retrieval” (Lapadat, 2010, p. 926). This later retrieval involved interpreting the codes to produce themes relevant to my research questions. Both stages will be discussed in more detail next.

**Coding.** Coding was conducted using a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software called NVivo. NVivo is often used in case study research (Bassett, 2010). Before coding, I created an initial list of themes that were discovered from the literature review I had conducted and inputted these into NVivo. The initial list totaled ten themes. Lapadat (2010) states “identification of themes can be done deductively” (p. 926) by using research questions or theory-driven categories as a start list for coding documents within case study research. Before I began coding, I read through each transcription to re-familiarize myself with the data, as is important for qualitative analysis (Harding, 2013).

I began coding the data next by reading through the transcripts and sorting the data into different themes. For example, Dan stated: “the timeline I’ve pieced together was that around 1998 to 2000, there was a ten-year master plan created.” This piece of data was coded to “planning.” The same data could fit into multiple themes if I deemed it relevant. For example, Scott discussed the importance of a new winterized building meeting the needs of the summer program, but also accommodating offseason needs. This was coded to “correctly the first time” as he was thankful the building was constructed correctly as well as “benefits to other seasons” because the building not only benefited the winter program, but the summer program as well. If data did not seem to fit

into any existing theme, I created a new, relatively broad theme. Using the above example, I created the “benefits to other seasons” theme. Lapadat (2010) also notes inductive approaches to coding in case study research are acceptable as well stating “themes...are grounded in the data.” (p. 926). By combining both deductive and inductive approaches to thematic analysis, I was able to have a starting point with expected themes from the literature review, but not be bound by these themes throughout analysis.

Coding was completed for all seven transcripts in the same manner as described above. After completion, I had two main categories, each relating to one of my research questions. One of the main categories was “transition story.” This category was relevant to the first research question which asked “in what ways have camps become year round programs?” This category had eight themes in it. The second major category was “lessons learned from transition.” This related to the research question of “what has been learned by individuals involved in creating year round programming?” This category had twenty-two themes in it. In total, I had thirty themes. The coding aspect of analysis was completed and a more thorough interpretation of the data was conducted next.

***Interpretation.*** The step that followed this thematic categorization was the interpretation of the themes I had created. Harding (2013) states the “figure to use as a ‘threshold’ is one of a number of subjective decisions” (p. 105) made by the researcher. In my data, I chose to focus on themes with evidence from five or six participants, hence producing twelve themes. After re-reading the data for each of the twelve themes, I realized that some of the themes I created inductively were quite broad. For example, in the “financial” theme, I simply grouped all data related to money and finances, not

separating into specific themes. By reading the data again, I sought to ensure there was not only enough evidence for each theme, but that the evidence was relating to the same points within the theme. For example, it was discovered that the “financial” theme had evidence relating to three separate categories: staffing, infrastructure and financial justification. The “financial” theme was then split up, with the data being grouped into these other themes. Other similar changes occurred through this re-reading process to whittle the twelve themes down to seven.

The findings of thematic analysis from interview transcripts was further analyzed using a technique called pattern matching, as described below.

**Pattern matching.** The resulting themes as determined through thematic analysis underwent an analytic technique called pattern matching. Pattern matching “compares an empirically based pattern with a predicted one...” (Yin, 2014, p. 136). Pattern matching can occur in descriptive case studies “as long as the predicted pattern of specific variables is defined prior to data collection” (p. 137). The themes discovered from the data were compared to the steps in Lewin’s Three-Step model of planned change (1947). The three stages of Lewin’s model: “unfreezing,” “changing,” and “refreezing” acted as three distinct parts and themes were analyzed according to where the data fit in each stage. For example, the planning theme fit into Lewin’s first stage of “unfreezing” as planning was necessary in order for change to occur in the camp. Throughout the pattern matching process, it was discovered that not every prominent theme fit into one of Lewin’s three stages. The themes that fit into the stages will be reported as such in the findings chapter, but all seven relevant themes will be discussed as well. The next section moves into the ethical considerations of my study.

## **Ethical Considerations**

In the following section, I provide an overview of the ethical considerations of the study. I submitted an application to the university's Research Ethics Board (Brock, REB) to receive study approval. Approval was granted on October 20, 2016 with the file number of 15-313. Informed consent, confidentiality and the benefits and risks of the study will be discussed below.

**Informed consent.** An email (see Appendix C) was sent to each camp asking for a letter of permission as requested by the Brock Research Ethics Board (REB). A template (see Appendix D) of a suitable letter of permission was also sent. Every individual interviewed was also provided with informed consent (see Appendix F) and made aware that his or her participation in the study was voluntary. Each participant was also made aware that he or she may decline to answer any question, decline to participate in any aspect of the research, as well as withdraw from the study, without penalty up until the end of data collection. Participants in the study were also made aware the findings may be published in various journals and presented at conferences. Participants could choose to be provided with a summary of the final report at the end of the research process.

**Confidentiality.** Participants' information as well as interview transcripts were kept confidential and participants' names and identifying features were masked by pseudonyms. Information regarding the camps was also kept confidential and a pseudonym was provided for the camp name, and any identifying features discussed in the interview such as names of camp buildings and staff members.

***Benefits and Risks.*** Benefits of the study include the fact that findings in the final report may further inform the camp's development. This report may help the organization understand its current programs and also may allow the organization to potentially improve its current operations. Not insignificantly, the study also fills a gap in the relevant research literature as no previous studies exist regarding the creation of year round programming in camps.

Participants may have been exposed to social risk through the interview process. Participants were asked to explain shortcomings or challenges they encountered. Discussing these areas may have caused distress or embarrassment. The social risk was mitigated by outlining the participant's rights prior to the interview both in writing and verbally as overviewed in the informed consent section above. No participant withdrew from the study.

### **Trustworthiness**

Lincoln and Guba (1985) outline four constructs related to ensure trustworthiness within a qualitative research project: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. These four components will be discussed in relation to my research study.

When seeking credibility, researchers "attempt to demonstrate that a true picture of the phenomenon is being presented" (Shenton, 2004, p. 63). A technique to establish credibility includes member checking. Member checking occurred two times throughout the research process. Interview transcripts as well as the transition descriptions of each camp were sent to participants to review as mentioned above.

The second construct of transferability is addressed by providing sufficient detail to show the reader that the findings have applicability in other contexts (Shenton, 2004).

A facet to demonstrate transferability is thick description. This occurred by providing sufficient detail to the reader, allowing the reader to evaluate whether the conclusions drawn could be applied to other contexts. Another component of transferability is generalization. It is unreasonable to assume the small sample sizes seen in case studies could be generalized to other contexts – the concept known as statistical generalization (Yin, 2014). Instead, case study strives for analytical generalization or generalizing the theory used in the study to other contexts (Yin, 2014). The theoretical concepts to be generalized through my study were Kurt Lewin’s planned approach to change.

The concept of dependability can be difficult in qualitative research (Shenton, 2004). It involves revealing that the findings are consistent and if another researcher repeated the study, the same results would be found. Two techniques to establish dependability are to employ the case study protocol and to develop a case study database. The case study protocol was followed closely using a variety of prominent sources including *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* by Robert Yin, *The Art of Case Study Research* by Robert Stake and the *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research*. A case study database was also constructed throughout the research process ensuring data collected was organized and available for later retrieval.

The final concept of trustworthiness is confirmability. Confirmability is the concept that the findings of the study were identified from the data and not from any predispositions of the researchers. Ways to improve confirmability include producing an audit trail and partaking in reflexive practices. The findings from my study can be traced back to their sources, thus producing an audit trail. I also engaged in reflexive practices

by recording notes and thoughts within a journal after each interview and throughout the research process.

These four facets work to improve the trustworthiness of qualitative research in general and my study in particular.

### **Limitations**

There were four main limitations in my study that will be discussed: bounding the case, myself as the sole researcher, lines of inquiry and generalizability. One limitation of case study research is the difficult concept of bounding the case. Bounding a case refers to defining the boundaries around which a case will be constructed (Elger, 2010). The boundaries around a case can be drawn from many places. Theory and/or the research problem generally define(s) the boundaries of the study (Ellinger, Watkins & Marsick, 2005), but temporal, spatial and monetary factors are also important to consider (Elger, 2010). Considering this project is a master's thesis, the temporal, spatial and monetary factors were more apparent and caused restrictions to various aspects of the study. For example, space was a factor in why some interviews needed to occur over the phone. Additionally, the findings of this study became apparent only from camps within Ontario that I could locate. There was not an exhaustive list of camps in Ontario that supported year-round programming so recruitment occurred through various Google searches and emails. There are likely other camps in Ontario that would have participated in my research, but I was simply unable to find them. Furthermore, additional findings would have been discerned had I widened the margins of my search to other parts of Canada and the United States.

Another limitation of the study is that I was the main researcher and as such, I conducted all of the data collection and data analysis. This is a limitation as the findings are only a result of my interpretation through a very select view and singular lens. Differing results may have occurred or alternative findings identified if another researcher viewed the same data. Additionally, the data and process was likely influenced by my personal background as a camp director of a camp making the transition to run year-round programming. It is probable the questions I asked or way I analyzed the data was a result of my background experiences and this could lead to bias within the discussion. As I value and understand the benefits of camp, it is likely I attempted to encourage participants to share that passion and did not focus as much on listening to the negative effects of year-round programs.

Yin suggests collecting data from multiple sources improves the findings of a study as it allows “*converging lines of inquiry*” (emphasis in original) (2014, p 120). Although initially intending to collect data from multiple sources and participants at each location, I ended up only collecting data from one source (interviews) and only from one participant at each camp. This weakened the strength of the findings as data could not be immediately corroborated between the different sources of data from the same camp. Alternatively, this limitation was mitigated by recruiting more than the initially proposed number of camps, allowing for more data to arise.

The final limitation of my study, as in most case studies, is generalizability, specifically statistical generalizability. It does not make sense to statistically generalize from a case study as the sample size is often too small, but instead to use analytic

generalization (Yin, 2014) which, in my case, is Kurt Lewin's planned approach to change.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter provided an overview of the methods that I employed to answer my research queries, which were: (1) in what ways have camps become year-round programs? and (2) what has been learned by individuals involved in creating year-round programming?

## Chapter 4: Results

### Introduction

In the following chapter, I present the results that I identified from my study in relation to my research questions: (1) in what ways have camps become year-round programs?; and (2) what has been learned by individuals involved in creating year-round programming? The chapter will be split into two sections and themes will also be related back to Lewin's theory of planned change.

The first section consists of brief narratives regarding the way each camp transitioned to create year-round programming thus answering my first research question. One lesson that I discerned from the transition stories along with seven major lessons that were learned from the camp directors in relation to creating year-round programming will be included in the second section. All eight of these themes were supported by evidence from five or six participants. Six of the eight themes were associated with a stage in Lewin's model of planned change. The two themes that did not align with any of Lewin's three stages will be discussed nonetheless as a result of inductive analysis. The sections are titled transition stories and lessons learned.

### Transition Stories

What follows are brief descriptions of the transition of each of the six cases chosen for my research project. Pseudonyms have been employed and the narratives have been member checked as described in the Methods chapter. The cases are presented in alphabetical order.

**Camp Maple Oak.** In 1996, Camp Maple Oak was looking to expand their operations but expansion on the current island site was not possible. A parent of a staff

member who was well connected within the community spearheaded the leasing of a new site. The second site, named the Maple site, was a huge undertaking, with the case of support requesting \$5 million to fund and develop the project. On top of this, the majority of the work and construction for the site was done in kind or with volunteer labour. Work began on the second site in 1996 and was completed in 1998, with its first summer program being held that year.

**Camp Sunset Yellow.** The transition of Camp Sunset Yellow began in 2009 with a plan that proposed to upgrade buildings to be four season buildings and to construct three new accommodations for groups staying in the winter. Before the plan could be approved, the camp needed to apply for a square footage allowance increase. Eventually, the plan was approved and funding was received from the government as well as from the overseeing organization. The renovations and construction began around 2010. Three years and \$8.4 million later, the site had been upgraded. The first full winter outdoor centre season at Camp Sunset Yellow was in 2014.

**Divine River Camp.** Divine River Camp's parent organization oversaw an international school and constructed a winterized building on the camp property where students stayed year-round. The construction of the building happened around 2000. A few years later, the organization shut the school down because of a lack of interest. As the building was still up to code and already on site, Divine River Camp inherited the winterized building to use as their own. Divine River Camp has since constructed another winterized building to meet the standards desired by parents for their children in the summer months. This building was completed around 2011.

**Golden Maple Camp.** In the late 1990s, the Board of Directors at Golden Maple Camp created a ten-year master plan to winterize the site. Because the dining hall was already winterized, the largest project in the plan was to create winterized sleeping accommodations. Five of the current cabins were renovated and retrofitted so they could be used in the winter months as well as the rest of the year. This involved insulating and putting in heat sources. Cost saving occurred as the work was entirely done by the maintenance workers from the camp. The site became useable throughout the year around 2010.

**Orange Ridge Camp.** A local teen health centre ran outreach programs, one of which was a high ropes course program, located just down the road from Orange Ridge Camp. The health centre found the rent to be too high and decided to create a partnership with Orange Ridge Camp and therefore move onto the site of the camp. Unfortunately, it was not long before the teen health centre needed to cut back on programs, one of them being the high ropes course program. Luckily this was beneficial for Orange Ridge Camp as they inherited the ropes course at no charge and began to run the existing ropes course program year-round.

**Sunny Grove Camp.** Sunny Grove Camp was in a slightly different situation as the director had a friend approach him to create a partnership and eventually the friend bought the land of a previously existing camp. Although all the buildings were on site, the camp was not in use prior to the purchase. The camp had a lodge that was already winterized and one additional cabin that was useable throughout the year. Despite the fact that these structures were in place, upgrades were necessary. Sunny Grove Camp spent

much of the first year making needed repairs to the infrastructure of the site. Sunny Grove Camp has been operating winter programs since 2005.

### **Lessons Learned**

The above narratives relate to my first research question, but do not cover what has been learned through a transition process, as posed by my second research question. The ensuing sections delve into Lewin's three-stage model of planned change in relation to my research. Lewin's model is a three-step model consisting of the stages "unfreezing," "changing," and "refreezing" and is a method to enact planned change within an organization. The sections of this chapter are split up by stages of Lewin's model and furthermore by themes within those stages. Two themes are presented at the end that did not correlate to a stage in Lewin's Three-Step model. The description of each theme will begin with a brief overview of the theme as a whole followed by how the theme relates to Lewin's model. Following this, different aspects of the theme will be presented with supporting evidence from participants. Certain themes have differing results depending on the camp. Oftentimes camps approach situations in different ways, or solve problems with answers specific to their camp, because they are independent organizations. Nonetheless, the overall theme is still present within the camp. It is for this reason that many of the theme titles are quite vague as they are all encompassing for the differing nature of each camp.

**"Unfreezing."** The first stage in Lewin's model is "unfreezing." The "unfreezing" stage is a breaking down of the previous equilibrium in order to prepare for the upcoming change. "Unfreezing" needs to occur before the actual change process can occur (Burnes, 2004, 2012). "Unfreezing" in an organization is incredibly important

because if done incorrectly, the attempted change might not result in sustained change (Schein, 1996). Two prominent themes arose out of the analysis of data relevant to “unfreezing”: “inherited or donated” and “planning.”

*Inherited or donated.* I recognized the “inherited or donated” theme from the research in relation to my first research question: in what ways have camps become year-round programs? This theme corresponded with the “unfreezing” stage of Lewin’s model because changes became possible for the camps as a result of inheritances or donations. The inheritance or donation effectively “unfroze” the organization to begin either the planning process of creating year-round programming or the actual process of running year-round programming.

Results relevant to five of the case participants corresponded with this theme, with no two participants (out of those five) reporting the same experience. Greg was the only director who did not report on this theme as it was irrelevant to Sunny Grove<sup>1</sup> because of their position of purchasing a camp. Orange Ridge and Divine River inherited crucial items in order to become year-round. Golden Maple, Sunset Yellow, and Maple Oak received large and well-timed donations to spark year-round programming at their camps.

For Orange Ridge and Divine River, the inheritance of large features allowed their camps to start year-round programming. Orange Ridge inherited the ropes course on their site “for no fee basically” (Kayleigh, Orange Ridge) which also came with the perk of being an already established program that serves “over 5000 kids a year.” Divine River was the recipient of an important inheritance as well. The camp’s parent organization

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<sup>1</sup> From this point on, names of camps will not include the word “camp” for simplicity’s sake.

constructed a winterized building on site to be used to house students for an international school. The school lost traction and was shut down, which meant Montgomery Hall, as Scott reported, “ultimately became 100% ours.”

Dan (Golden Maple), Cody (Sunset Yellow) and Megan’s (Maple Oak) reports related to large donations. Golden Maple’s donation dated back to the 1960s when “a really good general contractor was involved and donated a lot of time and materials” (Dan, Golden Maple) to creating a winterized dining hall. For Sunset Yellow, the plan to winterize came first, but the funding followed shortly after from federal and provincial grants as well as an “influx of money” from the camp’s association as they “were coming up to [their] 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary” (Cody, Sunset Yellow). Cody went on to say, “when we had some time and some money is really what made a change to say, ‘Let’s actually try this.’” Maple Oak’s expansion was an example of the importance of networking, as the driving force to successfully leasing their new site was the parent of a staff member and as a result, the site was leased at an incredibly affordable rate. Furthermore, the development of the site involved a large case of support and a great deal of volunteer builders. The case of support for the Maple site development was \$5 million and although “a lot of people were involved in raising that \$5 million,” (Megan) Maple Oak also hired a fundraiser to submit grants and request donations.

Large scale donations and inheritances were a major theme that arose in relation to summer camps that have created year-round programming.

**Planning.** I discovered the “planning” theme from my initial review of literature and was also prominent in my data. The theme “planning” was discovered to be an integral component to the start of any transition process and therefore this theme fell

under the “unfreezing” stage of Lewin’s theory of planned change. Five of the six participants referred to the importance of plans. Greg was the only camp director who did not report on this topic as the situation surrounding Greg’s camp was not a transition from a pre-existing site, but an acquisition of a new, already winterized site. My research uncovered the fact that planning allows an organization to “unfreeze” in order to be ready and prepared for the upcoming change.

The plans that participants shared were incredibly varied because of the unique situation of each camp. For some camps, detailed and descriptive plans were necessary, as was the case for Golden Maple, Maple Oak and Sunset Yellow. The other three camps were in unique situations in which the same scope of plan was not needed.

Golden Maple created a “ten-year master plan” (Dan, Golden Maple) to implement winter programming at their site. Twenty years later, the plan continues to be in place, but has changed immensely. Dan noted, the plan “hasn’t been implemented the way the ten-year plan wanted it to be, but that’s pretty typical.” For example, Dan showed me a document picturing where the new septic bed will sit at Golden Maple and when asked if there was anything unexpected that occurred, he replied stating, “I would say the cost of our septic system...I don’t think people realized how much more it was going to be.” It is adjustments such as these that gave rise to changes in Golden Maple’s plan.

Megan (Maple Oak) and Cody (Sunset Yellow) conducted focus groups with various community members including current camp families, current staff, past staff, outdoor centre clients and other camp professionals understanding “input from others...is so important and so vital” (Megan, Maple Oak). These focus groups allowed them to

better create their strategic plan with a view toward understanding the needs and wants of their clients.

Cody (Sunset Yellow) discussed the helpfulness of the focus groups after hearing the feedback generated from participants. The planning team at Sunset Yellow initially discussed adding washrooms into the cabins used in the spring, summer and fall seasons, but the results of the focus groups showed clients “wanted the need to actually walk to the washroom in those spring, summer and fall months” (Cody, Sunset Yellow). Cody went on to say sometimes the focus group participants stated, ““Wow, we don’t need [you] to go that far, what we have is great.”” With a project as big as this, Cody explained, “We start to assume that people are going to want more and when [we] really asked them, it wasn’t the case.” The biggest benefit Cody identified regarding these focus groups was that it “solidified your ideas” relating to the overall plan.

The other three directors (Greg, Kayleigh and Scott) suggested they were in unique situations in regards to the topic of planning. Greg and Sunny Grove moved into a site that already had year-round capabilities meaning a plan was not needed in order to transition the camp. Kayleigh and Scott both inherited large features that would essentially jump start their winter programming. In Kayleigh’s case, it was the inheritance of the ropes course and the connections already established through that program. Kayleigh used this opportunity to “introduce more of a winter program” to Orange Ridge including adding different facets such as snowshoeing and orienteering rather than comprising of just a high ropes program. For Scott, it was inheriting a fully functional winterized building, already located on their site. Since that time, Divine River has constructed an additional winterized building, and received feedback from camper

families prior to construction. Considering the new building was constructed for their summer camp program, the leadership team at Divine River was less focused on how it could accommodate winter groups. This, combined with the fact that Divine River already had a winter program, suggested the idea that an extensive plan was not necessary.

Interestingly, Scott was the only director who commented on the idea of including a specific focus or mission statement into their plan. Scott termed it “primary focus” and stated “our primary focus here really is camp, so when we’re building, planning, the focus really is how can this benefit our camp program.” No other camp director mentioned including a mission statement or primary focus into their plan.

Plans and planning are an important aspect of transitioning to year-round programming and this was discerned through the interview data.

**“Changing.”** The “changing” stage of Lewin’s model is the second step and is when the actual change to the organization occurs. The “changing” phase is one of high instability as the organization tries to progress to a new level of function. Only one theme discovered through my research fit into this topic: doing things “correctly the first time.”

***Correctly the first time.*** Ensuring processes were done “correctly the first time” was a concept mentioned by every participant. This theme fit into the “changing” stage of Lewin’s theory as the data reported occurred while the organization was in the process of changing, relating either to a physical change or a conceptual change. Topics related to this theme include infrastructure and programming as well as less tangible concepts such as relationships and processes. One of the main topics participants discussed related to infrastructure.

Greg (Sunny Grove) expressed the importance of “infrastructure investments” and stated he was thankful his team “put a lot of money...into our main dining hall.” Greg reported it is “now really paying off” as the team at Sunny Grove looks to expand the foundations of their main building. Dan (Golden Maple) reported being grateful the previous director “invested in the capital” and did not try to “jerry-rig things” to make them work. Scott was thankful their new winterized lodge was built correctly in that it could be used in the summer and offseason months.

Megan (Maple Oak) reported learning the importance of doing things correctly the first time twenty years after Maple Oak’s transition. Megan, while discussing the construction of the Maple site, stated we “used a lot of our connections to try and get things done in kind and I would not recommend this any longer.” What Megan is discovering now is that “corners were cut, mistakes were made and now we’re paying for it.” Megan recognized it saved a lot of money and she was incredibly thankful to all the volunteers who donated their time to create the Maple site, but as such, there is no “company to go back to and say, ‘Hey, the building isn’t what it’s supposed to be.’”

Relating to the program aspect, both Kayleigh (Orange Ridge) and Dan (Golden Maple) discussed the significance of purchasing aspects related to their programs. Kayleigh mentioned the importance of spending additional money to add new elements to the high ropes course located at Orange Ridge. Spending the money up front allowed the program to excel and the benefits to pay off for years. Dan (Golden Maple) stated, “I’m thankful that somebody had the courage to spend a lot of money on a program area” that was not really justified. Dan was talking about purchasing program equipment for the winter such as cross-country skis, and said it was “a lot of money spent...for a revenue

source that wasn't huge" at the time. But this initial investment is "paying off years later" because, as Dan reported, "when the groups come up, we have everything they need."

Other, less tangible, concepts were disclosed as well. If Cody (Sunset Yellow) were to engage in a similar process again, he would ensure all neighbouring associations were kept up to date and he would "overshare like crazy with...any other bodies around." He suggested sharing "each step of the process and have them involved as much as you can." Cody and his team thought they were sharing enough, but the neighbouring association felt differently and this reportedly produced some disagreement between the two groups.

Another less concrete concept occurred at Golden Maple. The previous director had prepared a budget predicting a low revenue and in doing so, the Board of Directors came to be nervous. Typically, with a low revenue predicted, cuts need to be made, and the obvious place to cut is the winter season. Luckily for Dan and Golden Maple, the "budget was just wrong" and they "did quite well" financially meaning the winter program was able to continue. As a result, Dan warned of the "importance of writing a decent budget."

Doing things "correctly the first time" was a lesson that most participants could appreciate rather than regret, with a few exceptions. As an example of doing things incorrectly the first time, Megan continues to discover the results of Maple Oak's mistake.

**"Refreezing."** The "refreezing" phase of Lewin's model is the third and final stage. This stage places value on the organization attempting to create a new equilibrium after the instability of the "changing" phase. The final step also seeks to restabilize the

organization and create a new equilibrium in order to not regress to the previous level (Burnes, 2004, 2012). Three themes fit into the “refreezing” phase of Lewin’s theory: “marketing,” “relationships,” and “staffing.” These three themes were critical in order for camps to maintain and continue to grow the winter and year-round programs offered at their camps. Various examples of how these themes reportedly helped to restabilize the equilibrium of the organization disrupted by the “changing” phase are demonstrated, beginning with “marketing.”

*Marketing.* “Marketing” was a theme I discovered from the interviews for five of the six camp directors. Participants reported falling on either side of the “marketing” theme as some directors (Dan, Greg and Kayleigh) discussed having difficulty promoting the winter season, and other participants (Scott and Cody) seemed to have no quandaries enrolling groups through those months. Megan was the only participant who did not report any data related to marketing. Marketing is an important aspect related to “refreezing” the organization, as correct and efficient marketing can help to stabilize the organization much more rapidly than poor marketing.

At Golden Maple, the marketing aspect is part of the assistant director’s job description. According to Dan, there was unfortunately a large turnover of assistant directors in the past ten years, averaging about an assistant director a year meaning “there [are] growing pains” (Dan, Golden Maple). Because of the huge turnover, marketing has not been a priority as it can “take a year to get to know the job” (Dan, Golden Maple) and then once the assistant director is comfortable, they “can have more time to do marketing” (Dan, Golden Maple).

Greg (Sunny Grove) admitted their formal marketing campaign has not produced

as many groups as he would like as he stated there is only one group “that we currently have that has found us through marketing, everything else has been through word of mouth.” Although not often portrayed as marketing, word of mouth was an important aspect of marketing because it can have both positive and negative effects. If the service provided is poor, word may spread and as Scott reported, “If you mess up one [group], it can really affect other aspects of your offseason bookings as well.” As described by most camps, word of mouth generally worked in their favour. Greg reported the very first winter group at Sunny Grove was the outdoor group from his high school. He still had a connection with the teacher and asked if they wanted to come for a trip. As Sunny Grove began to grow, a staff member suggested the outdoor club from their university visit Sunny Grove for a winter retreat. The outdoor club is now one of the longest standing groups who use Sunny Grove. Furthermore, one of the students in the outdoor club became a graduate student at another university and a group from that university now comes up each year.

Kayleigh (Orange Ridge) reported struggling with marketing as she noted, “The ropes course is well known amongst teachers” but in regards to Orange Ridge Camp as a whole, “people don’t really know about it as much as they should.” Therefore, Orange Ridge’s biggest challenge, as Kayleigh stated, is “getting our name out there.” Greg (Sunny Grove) advised there are “still groups that want space” in those harsher winter months, “it’s just about finding them.”

Scott reported having found those groups to fill the winter months, but it did not come without hard work and “quite a bit of marketing” (Scott, Divine River). After Divine River inherited the building on their site, Scott started advertising to groups that

already rented the site, informing them Divine River now had more capacity. Staff at Divine River also asked if they knew of other groups who would like to use the space, and finally staff members “banged on a lot of doors and handed out information...pre email era.” Scott stated if it were not for all this hard work, “we wouldn’t have the reach that we have today.” That time spent marketing has since paid off for Divine River as they report being consistently booked throughout the winter. Other camps are not so lucky and “can’t afford to pay much for marketing or anything like that” (Dan, Golden Maple).

Another aspect of marketing for year-round programs is the opportunity to promote different programs to clients. For example, Scott reported mentioning the summer program to many Girl Guide and school groups that attend Divine River throughout the year. Scott stated, “it’s a great lead in to say, ‘hey, come back in the summer time and do some more.’” Considering “a couple thousand” students attend Divine River’s programs throughout the year, Scott takes advantage of this opportunity to increase attendance in the summer program.

Reflecting on the fact that Sunset Yellow has a large participant capacity with a prominent overseeing organization, it is likely a well-known camp within camping circles and it is reportedly used for many different purposes and groups. Cody listed a variety of groups who use the site including colleges, universities, camping conferences, meetings, and training courses but mentioned the majority of the groups using the site are schools. In essence, Cody did not report having the same issue as Kayleigh regarding “getting [their] name out there” (Kayleigh, Orange Ridge) as the Sunset Yellow name already appears to be “out there.”

“Marketing” was a theme in which the reports of camp directors varied with some camps having successful marketing campaigns and others still trying to build their clientele base.

***Relationships.*** The “relationships” theme was one I recognized noticeably throughout all interviews. The theme of “relationships” relates to the “refreezing” stage of Lewin’s model. If strong relationships are built and upheld, more users and groups will continue to utilize the site enabling the organization to restabilize faster. I identified two main topics relevant to the “relationships” theme: relationships with individuals and relationships with groups. The first topic related to relationships with teachers and community group leaders (essentially the people involved in booking the trip) and the significance of maintaining those relationships over the years. The second concept related to the relationships with the groups on site and the importance of providing good services so the group would want to return.

Megan (Maple Oak) outlined the importance of working with significant individuals when she stated, “I think the key is building that relationship” with those who use the site. Kayleigh (Orange Ridge) simply advised, “You need to find a lot of teacher friends and stay in tight with them.” Kayleigh reported that one method to achieve this was by having the Orange Ridge name on the school board “shortlist” for outdoor education trips. This is an automatic way to “stay in tight” with teachers as it makes it much easier for a teacher to book a trip because the site is already approved (M. Cerminara, personal communication, Dec. 13, 2017). Additionally, Orange Ridge provides teachers with activities and curriculum aspects students can participate in when they are back in the classroom. Having supplementary curriculum helps solidify what was

learned at the camp and teachers appreciate the extra effort this entails, therefore maintaining relationships.

Greg from Sunny Grove shared that he knew the importance of building and maintaining relationships as they started with no connections or existing networks. Purchasing a camp meant there were no previous relationships to rely on and so growth for Sunny Grove “has been through teachers and through relationships” (Greg, Sunny Grove). Greg reported,

Probably the biggest way we’ve grown our winter programs is the teachers that came up the first year, they came up from a school, a teacher left and went to another school and then contacted us that year saying I want to do the winter trip. Then a teacher went to another school and then said okay I want to get my school in as well. (Greg, Sunny Grove)

Additionally, Greg noted the importance of keeping up to date with networks or users in order to “keep those relationships going” once they have been started. Greg suggested ways of doing this could include taking clients out to dinner every so often and showing up to events put on by schools.

Megan has been witness to the importance of relationships as Maple Oak recently increased their rental fees in order to make the camp more financially sustainable. Maple Oak has found that even in doing so, “the same groups are coming back” (Megan, Maple Oak) which Megan equated to the groups enjoying the site and getting a good experience for their money. The willingness to return also points to the importance of the relationships created between the rental groups and Maple Oak.

Maintaining relationships with key individuals is important, but the short-term

relationships with all users of the site is paramount as well. Scott stated the majority of Divine River's business consists of repeat clients and they "focus more on providing a good service so that the people that come, want to come back" (Scott, Divine River). Dan (Golden Maple) stated, "We just have to give good customer service, good food and be very transparent because it's a winter site that doesn't have fancy accommodations." Cody and the staff Sunset Yellow say "if you keep them happy, they'll keep coming back" indicating the importance of keeping those relationships with existing groups. It is these components that are the foundation of building a quality relationship with clients.

Both Megan (Maple Oak) and Greg (Sunny Grove) acknowledged the disadvantages of hosting weddings on their sites because "Weddings are successful when they're there, but it's dealing with one person, one time, as opposed to year after year and building that relationship" (Megan, Maple Oak). Greg (Sunny Grove) stated one of the only groups that do not return year after year to Sunny Grove are weddings, as people "tend not to get married every year." Maple Oak is now trying to steer away from hosting weddings as "it's a lot of work on our end, with not as much return" (Megan, Maple Oak).

Cody and Sunset Yellow learned the importance of relationships with community members the hard way. A neighbouring association felt as if they were not well-enough informed about the plan surrounding the expansion and winterization of Sunset Yellow. Cody and others at Sunset Yellow felt as though they were sharing information to the association, but it quickly became evident not enough sharing had occurred. Cody reported that this led to a hostile relationship and the neighbouring association "lost some trust in [Sunset Yellow]" (Cody). Cody indicated that the relationship was eventually

remedied but “the learning from that would be to overshare like crazy with any other bodies around you to each step of the process and have them involved as much as you can” (Cody, Sunset Yellow).

The theme of “relationships” was a clear theme I extracted from the data with many different varieties of relationships manifesting. The overall message relates to the idea that building and maintaining relationships is of incredible value when running a year-round program.

*Staffing.* The most prominent theme throughout all the interviews was related to the topic of “staffing.” All six participants reported on the topic of “staffing.” The concept of “staffing” is placed into the “refreezing” stage of Lewin’s model because having year-round staff provides additional resources and investment into the year-round program, therefore helping the organization become more stable. The participating camps ranged from having two staff members working ten months of the year (Orange Ridge) to ten employees working year-round (Sunset Yellow). Three major topics arose through the theme of “staffing.” The topics included how having year-round staff increased the investment of those staff members’ into the camp, the loneliness that can be associated with working year-round on a secluded site and how camp directors managed the overall issue of staffing for year-round programs. The concept of staffing for year-round programs is where creativity shone and the camp directors demonstrated extremely creative solutions to this often difficult situation. Those solutions, as well as the two other topics, are described next, beginning with the topic of year-round staff members and their investment into their own camps.

Dan (Golden Maple) discussed how being open year-round is sufficient, but the

real benefit is that “it justifies having the salaries in place” for year-round staff such as the kitchen manager and maintenance person. He reported that these salaries keep those staff invested and coming back to the summer program year after year. Even if the winter program just breaks even, Dan (Golden Maple) observed, “we’re still paying the benefit of having these great people year-round.” Megan (Maple Oak) noted a positive aspect of being open all year is “the year-round employment it creates for people like my kitchen manager.” Cody (Sunset Yellow) highlighted the benefit of having year-round staff as he stated, “having ten people...invested instead of two or three, and really developing the site and the programs and working with a staff team has only been able to make things better faster.”

Cody (Sunset Yellow) also mentioned there are “pros and cons of living on site” and touched on the potential loneliness of working at a camp year-round as it can be “tough for people to have that work life balance.” Golden Maple has reported a large turnover in assistant directors in recent years and Dan disclosed it might be that Golden Maple “require[s] that whenever there’s a group here, [the assistant director] has to be here.” This means the assistant director can live on site for free, but “it’s isolated” (Dan, Golden Maple) and if “it’s not very busy through the winters...they’re just alone up here” (Dan, Golden Maple).

Kayleigh (Orange Ridge) experiences disadvantages as well as she is merely one of two staff who work only ten months of the year at Orange Ridge, the other being a maintenance person. Therefore, Kayleigh is the only staff who works in the office. She stated, “it’s kind of a one-man show the majority of the time” as Orange Ridge is currently in a “refurbishing phase” to ensure buildings are maintained. Therefore,

Kayleigh disclosed, money cannot go towards hiring other year-round staff, although she reported, “it’s something that we’re hoping to grow into.” This means everything to make the camp run year-round falls under Kayleigh. This includes all the bookings, the scheduling, the correspondence, the camp registration, and the hiring of staff for the summer and year-round programs. Of all the difficulties related to staffing, the topic of finding staff to work in the offseason was most apparent. There does not seem to be one set solution and different camps approach the issue in different ways.

Greg (Sunny Grove) stated this past year they were “quite fortunate” with respect to hiring for the offseason as “a couple of staff members [were] kind of hanging around ‘til the summer and were more than happy to come up” and help out when required. Greg then immediately went on to say, “But every year it is a struggle” to find staff for those offseason months. Greg did mention a possible solution to the staffing issue would be “just taking the financial hit and committing to staff members” but admitted Sunny Grove is not there quite yet. Orange Ridge has the added challenge of not only finding staff but finding staff that have the correct certifications in order to run their ropes program. Kayleigh (Orange Ridge) stated, “There’s difficulty when hiring for the ropes facilitator because that’s a tough position to fill and then...at this point in time, we can’t offer full time employment.”

The directors at Divine River have created a unique solution to the staffing issue many other camps face, as they offer volunteers room and board in exchange for “a certain number of hours per week to help with cleaning or prep[aration] or program.” The volunteers live at Divine River throughout the year and they “basically work off room and board.” This model was created in response to the staffing issue at Divine River as

Scott disclosed that the biggest challenge of the year round program is the topic of staffing. He reported, “as you transition into a year-round facility, obviously your staffing model changes drastically.” Scott became aware of this and created a model that, in his words, “works for us.”

Greg reported one reason Sunny Grove does not have to worry about staff as much is because he and the assistant director are, “after eleven years, still doing the program.” This is a choice Greg prefers as he stated, “I didn’t come to camp to sit back in the city behind the desk. I came to be out there snowshoeing with the kids and having fun.” Another way Greg tries to remedy the staffing problem is to “contact other camps and try to share employees” but he noted, “it usually doesn’t work as well” as it should as “the times that we’re busy, other camps are too.” Finally, the way Cody (Sunset Yellow) makes staffing work is by simply hiring enough staff to work year-round for the groups who will participate in their winter programs.

Staffing in relation to camps open year-round appears to be a sizable point of contention as many aspects of staffing were reported by participants throughout the interviews.

**Additional themes.** The themes “benefits to other seasons” and “financial justification” were two themes I inductively identified from the data and do not pertain to any stage of Lewin’s theory of planned change. These themes are discussed next, beginning with the theme “benefits to other seasons.”

***Benefits to other seasons.*** The theme “benefits to other seasons” was a broad topic that I discovered from the interviews and related to the benefits of being open year-round to seasons other than winter. As Dan (Golden Maple) stated, “there are huge

tertiary benefits to being year-round that aren't directly related to the winter operations.”

Three major benefits were noted: 1) winterized buildings increase capacity in other months, 2) offseason programming supplements the summer program and 3) opening the camp each spring is easier.

The first benefit related to the capacity of the camp. Cody described how the new winterized buildings “increased our capacities for other seasons” (Cody, Sunset Yellow). Scott (Divine River) noted their new, smaller winterized lodge is a “dual purpose” building as it accommodates their “camper needs and offseason needs as well.” With more capacity, camp directors reported the ability to have more participants experience their programs throughout all seasons of the year as Scott revealed, “we wouldn't have the reach that we have today” running only as a seasonal operation.

Another benefit noted by multiple participants was the importance of the offseason programming in relation to the summer camp program. Scott (Divine River) simply stated, “I would definitely say the success of our camping program [summer program] relates directly to our successful offseason programming.” Dan (Golden Maple) noted, “the winter, in my opinion, is a vessel to make the year-round operations of the whole organization that much better.” Kayleigh also drew attention to this concept as she mentioned the spring field trip and ropes programs at Orange Ridge bring in a multitude of funds and the summer program “just kinda get[s] by.” This benefit can also be seen at Maple Oak. Campers that attend Maple Oak in the summer attend free of charge and as a result, the rentals and fundraising done by staff in the offseason ensure programs can remain free for participants. The year-round program can benefit other seasons in a variety of ways.

One final benefit noted by two directors was the specific benefit of the camp not needing to fully re-open the site in the spring each year. Dan (Golden Maple) noted, “There’s a ton of cleaning to be done when you open up a summer camp” at the beginning of the season. Camps that are not year-round go stagnant over the winter months meaning many camp buildings are homes for animals throughout the offseason. When spring comes, there is no shortage of “carcasses and mouse turds” (Dan, Golden Maple) that need to be cleaned up. Having the site open year-round means this frustrating exercise can be avoided. As Dan reported, all that needs to happen is “you pull everything out of storage and put it on the waterfront” and then “we’re pretty ready to go” (Dan, Golden Maple). As Greg (Sunny Grove) expressed, “when you have the year round staff, you never close down. It’s a little easier to open the doors for the season.” Although additional benefits relating to other seasons were mentioned throughout the data, the three described above were the most prominent.

***Financial justification.*** The theme of “financial justification” was a result of data relating to the question of “is it financially sustainable to be open year-round?” The answers to this question varied between participants with a range of responses. No participant answered the question with a certain “no” but four directors, namely Dan, Greg, Kayleigh and Megan displayed less confidence in their answers. Cody and Scott’s answers were reported as being quite certain.

Some participants noted the huge expense of simply keeping the camp open year-round, as Dan (Golden Maple) noted, “To keep this dining hall heated is expensive, even just to keep it just past the point of the pipes freezing when there’s nobody around, still

costs money.” Megan (Maple Oak) also stated, “I’m paying for the cost of that site whether someone’s in it or not.”

Maple Oak sometimes has a hard time justifying the winter program. When asked the question of whether it is cost efficient to have the site open year-round, Megan stated, “Yes and no. I struggle with that.” She noted it depends on the groups that are in that winter. She also acknowledged the schedule of the bookings can be tricky too, with groups wanting to rent at the camp’s busiest times.

Dan (Golden Maple) talked about the importance of how the winter program is framed, as he stated, “you can’t frame it that it’s a money maker...cause it could not” make money one winter. Instead, Dan justified it by saying, “it’s really good for the organization sustainably year-round, for all the different things that come from it” such as saving wages on staff to open the site up in the spring as discussed in the “benefits to other seasons” theme.

Greg reported, “One of the ways we can make the budget work...is myself and my assistant director are, after eleven years, still doing the program” (Greg, Sunset Yellow). Having Greg and the assistant director running programming means less program staff need to be hired and savings can occur both through the salaries of the staff members not hired, and the time it would take to interview and employ them.

Typically, the high points of the year for camps are those with the nicest weather, generally spring, summer and fall, as evidenced from Greg when he stated, “It’s easy to book out certain times of camp. Our May ‘til mid-October is just full. Every single day is booked.” Some camps “have been really successful in booking November, December, kind of like the bad weather, fringe kind of months” (Greg, Sunny Grove) but Greg

acknowledged Sunny Grove is not there yet. Scott, at Divine River, reported discovering a solution for those perimeter months of November and December by catering to groups that “aren’t doing a lot of outdoor activities” and are more interested in questions such as “How comfortable are the facilities? How good is the food? [And] how good’s the service?” Scott stated the winter program has “provided a consistent, healthy revenue that has only grown over the years.” Scott reported part of the reasoning behind this might be the location of Divine River as they are “an hour away from a couple million people” and clients “don’t want to pay for transportation anymore” to get to camps further north.

Cody reported no difficulties in finding groups to book the site and listed a large number of users, indicating Sunset Yellow is sufficiently booked. He briefly mentioned how much money has been put into systems that people do not see such as septic tanks and electrical systems. When reporting this, he never stated that it affected the organization financially.

The topic of “financial justification” varied across camps with some willing and able to justify being open year-round with no contentions, and others struggling with that same concept.

## **Conclusion**

The results chapter provides narratives of the way in which camps created year-round programming and an overview of the main themes discovered through the data analysis process. There were eight major themes I identified, six of which related to a stage in Lewin’s model of planned change. The themes “inherited or donated” and “planning” related to the “unfreezing” stage. “Correctly the first time” corresponded to the “changing” phase and “marketing,” “relationships,” and “staffing” were linked to the

“refreezing” stage of Lewin’s model. There were two themes that did not relate to Lewin’s stages. These themes were “benefits to other seasons” and “financial justification.” The next chapter will provide a discussion of the study themes relevant to the larger body of literature.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

### Introduction

This discussion chapter provides commentary and interpretation of the results that I discovered through data analysis and allows me to ultimately answer my research questions: (1) in what ways have camps become year-round programs?; and (2) what has been learned by individuals involved in creating year-round programming? The chapter will include headings and subheadings consisting of a similar structure to that found in the results chapter. The themes will be related to the current literature and Lewin's theory of planned change, and a view toward relevant practical applications will be presented. The two themes that do not pertain to a stage in Lewin's theory, as presented in the Results chapter, will be discussed last. The chapter will close with notes on limitations and suggestions for further research as well as a conclusion.

### Lessons Learned

The following discussion consists of eight themes that I recognized through the data and relate to the lessons that were learned from ways in which camps have become year-round programs, including what was learned by individuals involved in creating year-round programming. The themes are split up into the three stages of Lewin's model: "unfreezing," "changing," and "refreezing."

**"Unfreezing."** As mentioned in the Results Chapter, two themes fell under the "unfreezing" stage: "inherited or donated" and "planning." The "unfreezing" stage is the time when an organization needs to prepare for change and this process involves the removal of restraining forces so that when change occurs, it can be successful. The "inherited or donated" theme related to the first research question of the ways in which

camps became year-round programs and “planning” related to the second research question of lessons learned throughout the transition.

*Inherited or donated.* Large scale donations and inheritances were evident in my data, even within my small sample size of six camps. Kayleigh and Scott inherited major components that allowed them to consider and engage in year-round programming. Cody, Dan, and Megan’s reports of their experiences all involved large donations either before or after the planning phase of creating year-round programming.

The *New York Times* notes summer camps are facing new and different circumstances than ever before as the economy continues to change (Singer, 2011). A recent news article outlines the unfortunate outcome Girl Guide camps are facing as they are selling their 17 Ontario camps because the cost to maintain them is too high (Xing, 2017). Additionally, in twelve years, 23% of United Church of Canada camps have shut down (B. Oag, personal communication, Oct 24, 2016). Amidst these staggering numbers, it is possible the six camps that I studied have remained open and operational in large part due to sizable donations and inheritances. Miner and Erpelding-Welch (2012) state, “Whether an organization is looking to build new facilities...or starting a whole new program from scratch, new funding sources can be critical for success” (p. 79). This is exactly what Megan and Cody reported experiencing as they were able to proceed with construction on their various sites because of new funding sources. For Megan, it was the \$5 million case of support that was successfully raised. In Cody’s case, it was the “influx of money” from the government and the overseeing organization. It is certainly plausible these camps would not have become operational year-round if it were not for generous donations and inheritances.

No literature relating to camps inheriting integral components of their program was discovered. However, there is literature relevant to the impact of donations and funding on outdoor programs. Miner and Erpelding-Welch (2012) discuss sources of funding for outdoor programs. These include government sources, corporations and private individuals amongst others. These three sources were reported as being used by my participants. The team at Sunset Yellow received funding from the government. In the 1960s, Golden Maple received help and guidance as well as funding from a prominent member of a corporation and the \$5 million for Maple Oak's case of support was likely funded through a combination of corporations and private individuals.

The donations and inheritances also sparked the change process for these camps, and therefore relate to the "unfreezing" stage of Lewin's model. In the case of Scott, the inheritance of Montgomery Hall allowed him to begin in-depth and practical planning related to a winter program at Divine River and this meant he could focus less on the infrastructure and more on program planning. For Cody, the "unfreezing" happened after the plan to become winterized was in place, as Sunset Yellow received large donations from the government and from their overseeing organization. As Miner and Erpelding-Welch (2012) state, "the organization...can take giant strides forward with [the] help of new monies" (p. 82). The "giant strides" Sunset Yellow took were reported as the more tangible aspects of their plan such as construction of three new winter accommodations. Donations and inheritances helped camps "unfreeze" in order to begin the change process.

*Practical applications.* There are practical applications related to some aspects of this theme. It is not plausible for camps to expect inheritances as these often occur when

the timing and situation are perfect and cannot necessarily be planned, but a different conclusion can be stated for donations. Maple Oak had a case of support for \$5 million, and although “a lot of people were involved in raising that \$5 million,” Maple Oak did have a fund developer whose main task was to approach businesses and community organizations asking for funding for their new site. Maguire and Gunton (2000) note raising funds can be tricky and Miner and Erpelding-Welch (2012) agree stating, “generating serious funding through writing proposals is a *lot* of work (emphasis in original, p. 79). Maple Oak and Sunset Yellow were both testaments that raising funds and receiving donations can be done. Simply stated, “Without new sources of funding, new initiatives...will not become reality” (Miner & Erpelding-Welch, 2012, p. 82). As a result, if camps want to move into year-round programming, reaching out to large scale donors and funders is a crucial aspect.

***Planning.*** The theme of “planning” was expected to arise as planning was a major theme that was identified through my literature review. Camps in my study generated their own plan, specific to the culture and atmosphere of their individual camp. Some study participants did not report the need for a large plan as the basis for their winter program was created through other means. For example, Orange Ridge’s year-round program began as a result of the inheritance of a ropes course.

Shelton (2007a) discusses not only the importance of a plan, but the importance of a plan specific to an individual camp. He notes each camp has its own culture and what works at one camp might not work at another camp. In relation to the outdoor program industry, this is a typical practice. Although there are guiding steps and questions for creating strategic plans within the outdoor industry (see Caspari & Caspari, 2016; Miner

& Erpelding-Welch, 2012; Molloy, 2006; Ruch, 2004) there is no set template to follow and prominent members of the camp must create a plan that is suitable for their organization. The board of directors at Golden Maple created a “ten-year master plan” to engage in winter programming and teams at both Maple Oak and Sunset Yellow engaged in planning processes specific to their camp as well. Scott and Kayleigh provided great examples of plans unique to their camps. Their plans did not need to be as intricate or extensive as was seen by other camps because of the inheritances they received. Kayleigh focussed more on creating and planning curriculum and programs for the schools and Scott and his team spent a lot of time marketing and reaching out to groups.

Barstead (2011) highlights the importance of creating and planning quality programs, which is what Orange Ridge was able to focus on because of their ropes course inheritance. Kayleigh stated after the ropes course became Orange Ridge’s, she could “introduce more of a winter program” rather than just the one-dimensional high ropes program previously in place. She bought snowshoes and created an orienteering course in order to make the program more dynamic. Previous studies alongside my results and my participants agree that planning is a critical component of creating year-round programming.

Planning is a crucial aspect when it comes to “unfreezing” an organization. As Barstead (2011) states, a plan “does exactly what you want it to” (p. 48), which, in the case of many camps, is to gather everyone on the same page and think through the next steps. Plans, in essence, prepare members of the organization for the upcoming change. Miner and Erpelding-Welch (2012) suggest asking the question of: who will be involved in creating the strategic plan for an organization? and recommend asking further

questions such as “Are students or clients included? What about including outsiders for an objective perspective?” (p. 73). As Cody and Megan understood, it is not just the staff that need to be prepared of the change, but user groups and community members as well. This is why Cody and Megan both conducted focus groups with various collections of people such as current families, current staff, alumni, and outdoor education clients to both gather feedback and make them aware of the plans. In Lewin’s model, part of the unfreezing process is to remove restraining forces. Creating a plan helps to remove restraining forces by breaking down what is known about the future of the organization and allowing differing alternatives to arise. Plans also provide a guideline for the future and next steps of the organization.

Much of the literature relating to strategic planning for camps includes the importance of the mission statement and relying on the statement to guide the plan and planning process (Barstead, 2011; Berti, 2000; Burke & Tavener, 2007; Caspari & Caspari, 2016; Hughes Astle, 2001; Miner & Erpelding-Welch, 2012; Yeager, 2002). Interestingly, no camp directors reported including their mission statement in their plan or using it to guide decisions. Scott was the only camp director who reported on a similar topic. Scott talked about the idea of a primary focus and stated, “our primary focus here really is camp, so when we’re building, planning, the focus really is how can this benefit our camp program” (Scott, Divine River). It is intriguing that more participants did not report on this topic as the literature shows it can be an essential part to a successful plan (Miner & Erpelding-Welch, 2012).

Another interesting observation to note was that no data relating to either “unfreezing” theme (“inherited or donated” or “planning”) was reported on by Greg. The

situation of Sunny Grove was different compared to the other participating camps as Sunny Grove was purchased as an already winterized camp. Therefore, it appears Greg did not need to go through the same planning processes compared to the other camps. Strategic plans are incredibly important in the creation of year-round programming, and there are implications for practical applications of this theme, discussed next.

*Practical applications.* The idea of planning has many practical applications, mainly that camps should engage in it (Caspari & Caspari, 2016, Grove, 2000; Ruch, 2004; Stryker, 2006a; 2008b). Planning is important for many reasons as it can allow discussion of the next steps of the camp, measure organizational progress (Caspari & Caspari, 2016), and involve important stakeholders and funders to ensure continued commitment (Bradach, Tierney, & Stone, 2008). Grove (2000) states plans are essentially a “road map to follow” (p. 20) for the organization. Planning can be a monumental task, but it is integral for the organization in order to continue to thrive (Caspari & Caspari, 2016).

Ruch (2004) suggests planning should occur 24 to 36 months in advance. It is this large timeline that allows camps to realize things do not always go according to plan and often need to be altered throughout the process. This advance planning allows for adjustments to be made prior to the enactment of the plan (Ruch, 2004). Benton, Guzik and Nozik (2005) note one should not assume that plans will be followed exactly as there are always extenuating circumstances, even with the best planning. As Dan stated, Golden Maple’s plan “hasn’t been implemented the way the ten-year plan wanted it to be, but that’s pretty typical.” When asked if there was anything unexpected that occurred, Dan replied stating “I would say the cost of our septic system...I don’t think people

realized how much more it was going to be.” Golden Maple had planned for a new septic system, but not to the extent that was necessary. It is adjustments such as these that gave rise to changes in Golden Maple’s plan.

Miner and Erpelding-Welch (2012) comment on this topic as well stating “changes that couldn’t be foreseen at the time of writing are going to significantly impact the plan” (p. 74). They also advise, “A strategic plan is not written in stone; be ready to adapt it, letting go of goals that are no longer relevant or practical and adding ones that become so” (p. 74). Planning is a crucial aspect in the creation of year-round programming, and just as important is the knowledge that the plan should be fluid and adaptable to change. As seen in the next section, flexibility in plans is important, but too much of it can be detrimental.

**“Changing.”** One prominent theme from the findings pertained to the “changing” stage of Lewin’s model: doing things “correctly the first time.” The “changing” stage is the time when the actual change occurs within an organization and is a period of high instability.

***Correctly the first time.*** All participants in my study reported on the importance of ensuring matters were done correctly the first time. Differences varied in the concepts described as Dan, Greg, Megan, and Scott discussed infrastructure, whereas program aspects were noted by Kayleigh and Dan. Furthermore, less tangible concepts were discussed by Cody and Dan such as maintaining positive relationships with neighbouring associations and creating an accurate budget.

The idea of doing things correctly the first time seems intuitive but the practice is not always followed by camps. Stryker (2003) strongly advises against the desire to cut

corners in order to save money saying, “There is often a temptation to convert previously unoccupied spaces into occupied ones by remodeling. The material costs are generally pretty low, and the scope often looks like a prime target for volunteers on the weekend” (p. 55). Maple Oak is a prime example of the detriment of this. Maple Oak tried to work as cheaply as possible and in doing so have since seen the consequences. They have realized throughout the construction and development of their second site, “corners were cut, mistakes were made, and now [they’re] paying for it” (Megan, Maple Oak). Maple Oak should have heeded Stryker’s (2003) advice: “if it’s worth doing, it’s worth doing right” (p. 55).

Four of the other camps did take Stryker’s (2003) advice and are now able to be thankful of the work of previous directors who built sustainability into the original plans. Sustainability involves thinking long term and the understanding that for projects such as year-round buildings, there will be more than just the initial cost of the project (Shelton, 2007b). As Benton et al. (2005) note after the building is finished, there are still continuing “operation costs for many years to come” (p. 26). Ensuring investments are completed correctly the first time allows the limited funds at summer camps to be put solely towards operating costs rather than repair and operating costs. Greg is thankful of the work done in the early stages of Sunny Grove as he stated his team “put a lot of money...into our main dining hall” and it is “now really paying off” as they look to make further infrastructure improvements. Dan is also thankful a contractor who was connected with Golden Maple in the 1960s had the foresight to build sustainability into the main dining hall by ensuring it was winterized when it was constructed.

Shelton (2007b) states building sustainability into a process is an effective method

to demonstrate to funders and stakeholders that the change will continue to thrive after original funding is depleted. Sustainability also allows projects to go on to be long term benefits rather than simply short term successes (Shelton, 2007b). Miner and Erpelding-Welch (2012) note, “Funding sources want to know that their investment will continue after their funding is over. They want to know about long-term impact” (p. 81). “Long-term impact” can occur more easily if things are done correctly the first time. Scott understood the importance of this and ensured the inheritance of Montgomery Hall did not go to waste. Scott and his team continued to work and improve the year-round program at Divine River through various means. As a result, Scott engaged in another planning process and this effort has since paid off as Divine River now has an additional winterized lodge to show for it.

Stryker (2008a) also discusses the importance of planning in relation to doing things correctly the first time. He suggests to “make sure all the bits and pieces are accounted for before you unveil the future of camp...so when you’re ready to start building, you’re truly ready to go” (p. 71). Sunset Yellow is a prime example of understanding the importance of this as Cody reported changes occurred to the facility plans because of information that arose through focus groups held by the camp. For example, the leaders at Sunset Yellow reportedly assumed their clients would appreciate if the camp constructed washrooms in the cabins used during the spring, summer and fall seasons. When this topic arose during the focus groups, the community members reportedly stated they did not want that addition and “wanted the need to actually walk to the washroom in those spring, summer and fall months” (Cody, Sunset Yellow). Examples such as these altered the plans thereby ensuring the accommodations Sunset

Yellow constructed were the “correct” ones.

In regards to a less tangible concept, Dan discussed the “importance of writing a decent budget” as the previous director of Golden Maple wrote a budget forecasting a low revenue. As Moore and Harrison (2012) write, “When budget forecasts are completed, outdoor program administrators can then analyze projected revenues against projected expenses and make adjustments to ensure that the overall program plan is fiscally responsible” (p. 122). In order to make the program fiscally responsible, Dan reported the board of directors at Golden Maple thought they might need to cut some programs because of the low projected revenue. Dan stated, “First thing you think about with cost savings: ‘why are we open year-round?’” Dan then went on to report the winter program is “an easy place to cut” costs. Luckily for Golden Maple, it did not come down to cutting the winter program because the budget was incorrect. The importance of doing things “correctly the first time” can be seen in examples with both concrete and abstract elements.

Although aspects of this theme could fall under the “unfreezing” stage of Lewin’s model, the bulk fit into the “changing” phase. This theme addresses the actual elements of change and acknowledges the need for them to be done correctly the first time. Although a high amount of flexibility is needed throughout the “changing” phase because of the instability in the organization provoked by the change, it is also important to not be too adaptable as this can lead to detrimental outcomes in the long-term. Megan reported the steering committee at Maple Oak decided to complete everything as inexpensively as possible. As a result, the organization allowed for too much flexibility throughout their construction process, not realizing the effects it would have in the long term. Golden

Maple, on the other hand, had a community member who invested heavily in the camp and ensured their dining hall was built sustainably, and would last for years to come. The importance of doing things correctly the first time was a theme that noticeably arose among all participants.

*Practical applications.* This theme has practical applications related not only for camps transitioning to year-round programming, but all camps in general. The idea of doing something correctly the first time can be tough to manage in camp settings where funds are not in excess, but longer-term thinking is still important. It will likely save time, effort and money in the long run if processes are carried out correctly the first time. This can range from constructing buildings, but can also relate to smaller and less tangible aspects such as creating budgets and maintaining relationships. The topic of doing things correctly the first time is in itself a practical lesson, meaning much of the literature presented in this section relates to the practical nature of this theme. As a result, few previous studies are presented in the application section because the relevant literature is described throughout the entire section. The importance of intentional and precise work to ensure processes are done correctly the first time cannot be emphasized enough.

**“Refreezing.”** The “refreezing” stage was the step with the most themes as three prevalent themes corresponded with this stage: “marketing,” “relationships,” and “staffing.” The “refreezing” stage is the time after the change process and involves the organization setting a new equilibrium in order to not regress to the previous level before the change.

**Marketing.** “Marketing” was a prominent theme that I discovered through the data. Five of the six participants mentioned aspects related to marketing. As with many of

the themes or lessons learned, there were participants who fell on different sides of the topic. Participants either struggled with marketing for their winter program (Golden Maple, Orange Ridge, and Sunny Grove) or had little difficulty filling their sites throughout the winter (Divine River and Sunset Yellow).

Marketing can prove to be difficult for many camps. In terms of campers attending summer programs, as many as 80% of campers first attend because of a recommendation of a friend or family member (Barstead, 2011) yet few organizations have a marketing strategy for word of mouth marketing (George, 2013). Participants in my study reported on the importance of word of mouth marketing, but no participant mentioned a specific strategy to enhance word of mouth marketing. In the textbook *Outdoor Program Administration* (Eds. Harrison & Erpelding, 2012), the topic of word of mouth marketing is only mentioned in one instance stating “Word-of-mouth marketing can spread the word about an organization more effectively and less expensively than any other marketing effort” (Harrison & McIntosh, 2012, p. 143). The textbook provides no explanation on how to improve this method of marketing, simply stating ways in which it happens.

The importance of word of mouth marketing is not lost in relation to groups using the site year-round. Word of mouth is just as, if not more, important for those winter months. As Greg from Sunny Grove stated, there is only one “group that we currently have that found us through marketing, everything else has been word of mouth.” Considering many of the associations using the site are schools and community groups, there is no shortage of discussion amongst those groups. As the saying goes: “bad news travels quickly.” If a poor service is provided, other potential groups will hear about it

and begin their search for other locations. Therefore, it is important that camps provide good quality programming and continue to be reliable in all aspects (American Camp Association, n.d.). Scott at Divine River understood this as outlined when he was discussing bookings in the winter months stating, “if you mess up one, it can really affect other aspects of your offseason bookings as well.” Word of mouth marketing is important and effective, but work is needed in order to begin the process. This work often relates to reaching out into the community to create partnerships and relationships. Anderson (2013) proposes an additional reason to visit schools.

Anderson (2013) suggests camps need to go and visit schools in order to convey the message that camps are interested in children’s development as well. Schenck (2017) agrees, stating her program “involves visits to the schools participating in [her] programs” (p. 64) and also notes to “network with camp families” (p. 64) in schools. The American Camp Association (ACA) put out a guidebook (n.d.) for camps hoping to create partnerships with schools throughout the year and in doing so have various suggestions of how to market and create those partnerships. One suggestion put forth by the guidebook is to start “close to home” (p. 22) when it comes to finding schools that may be interested in your program. The guidebook suggests asking staff, board members and others involved in the camp if they know of anyone who works in nearby schools or has a child who attends those schools. The guidebook suggests to use that person as the connection into the school. This technique was used by Greg at Sunny Grove multiple times. The very first winter group at Sunny Grove was the outdoor group from Greg’s previous high school. He still had a connection with the teacher and asked if they wanted to participate in a program. As Sunny Grove began to grow, a staff member brought the

outdoor club from their university for a winter retreat. The outdoor club continues to come back year after year and have been one of the longest standing groups who use Sunny Grove. One of the students in the outdoor club became a graduate student at another university and now a group from that university comes up each year as well. Greg's reports touch on the importance of word of mouth marketing, but also the significance of connections with schools.

Another benefit of school partnerships is that "They are great marketing for summer camp" (Schenck, 2017, p. 64). Scott touched on this topic stating that because of their large school program, where they bring in a "couple thousand kids" each year, they are able to promote Divine River's summer program to those students. He stated quite a few Girl Guide groups come and participate in the horse program and "it's a great lead in to say, 'hey, come back in the summer time and do some more.'" Scott went on to say they do get quite a few campers enrolled in their summer program because of the experience they had at Divine River in another season. O'Donnell (2002) highlights this fact through the use of a case study. He discusses Triangle YMCA Ranch and how having school groups has increased the number of campers who attend the Ranch in the summer as "many students who attend school camp choose to return for summer programs" (p. 36). Marketing in relation to year-round programs has many benefits if done successfully including supplementing the summer program both with funds and campers.

Marketing is a theme that falls within the "refreezing" stage of Lewin's model. In my research, marketing was defined in relation to the winter program, and so marketing, in essence, helped to restabilize the organization after the uncertainty brought upon by the

“changing” phase. Another goal of the “refreezing” stage is to create a new equilibrium for the organization and marketing assists in that process. It helps stabilize the organization as the goal of marketing is to promote the camp to the wider community. Marketing can be difficult. One of Orange Ridge’s biggest ongoing challenges, as Kayleigh reported, is “getting our name out there.” But if done successfully, community groups and schools will begin to book retreats and outdoor education experiences at the camp and the camp will develop a new stabilized routine fit for the winter months. As the ACA guidebook (n.d.) notes once the camp is established in the community and amongst schools, “marketing gets easier as word of mouth tends to take over” (p. 21). Marketing for year-round programs was mainly conducted through word of mouth.

*Practical applications.* Marketing for camps has many practical applications. Divine River is a testament to the importance of a successful marketing campaign as they “wouldn’t have the reach that [they] have today” if it were not for those off season programs, pointing to the work and effort to establish that “reach.” Scott went on to indicate it was not easy and a lot of work went into their initial marketing campaign. They began with groups that already rented the site, asking if they wanted to come in the winter or if they knew of another group that might want to book a retreat. Staff at Divine River also went into the community and “banged on a lot of doors and handed out information” (Scott, Divine River) about their site and programs.

Marketing at summer camps is understood to be important. There are numerous articles, posts and blogs online to assist with camp marketing (simply Google “summer camp marketing” for a list of applicable websites) and the Canadian Camping Association has a page on their website dedicated to marketing resources

(<http://www.ccamping.org/camp-directors/marketing/>). In relation to camps, Stryker (2008) notes the old adage “if you build it, they will come” does not apply. Ensuring a site is winterized and able to use year-round is important, but what can be even more important is promoting and marketing the program that goes along with the brand new facility.

***Relationships.*** The importance of relationships was a theme that I recognized noticeably throughout the data, with all six participants reporting on it. I discovered two main topics relevant to the “relationships” theme: relationships with individuals and relationships with groups on site. The first topic related to relationships with teachers and community group leaders and maintaining those relationships over the years. The second concept related to the relationships with groups on site and the importance of providing good services so the group would want to return.

In the ACA guidebook (n.d.) on partnerships with schools, the importance of developing lasting relationships is highlighted as it states creating partnerships is about “building relationships that you hope will last a long time” (p. 21). The YMCA of Victoria in Australia (2013) has put out a “practical guide” for developing an outdoor recreation program for those living with mental illnesses, but the advice can be applied to my research as well. The document puts it plainly: “For any program to be successful it is essential that a working relationship is established between the relevant parties” (p. 17). Parry (2011) suggests to “really partner with schools” (p. 18) and that “regular and thorough communication with faculty cannot be underemphasized – the more, the better” (p. 18). Kayleigh (Orange Ridge) put it plainly declaring “you need to find a lot of teacher friends and stay in tight with them.” With clear and concise communication,

relationships begin to build. Dan acknowledged this when he stated, “We just have to give good customer service, good food and be very transparent because it’s a winter site that doesn’t have fancy accommodations.” Transparency involves good communication so both partners can understand the expectations.

Davies et al. (2013) highlight the importance of partnerships stating, “The careful creation and management of...partnerships are crucial” (p. 87) to the organization. Miner and Erpelding-Welch (2012) agree stating, “building and maintaining collaborative relationships can be critical to effectively managing threats before they appear” (p. 76). Maple Oak needed to test the value and management of the relationships they had built as the team at Maple Oak recently realized the threat of financial decline in their organization. The solution Megan and her team came up with was to increase the rental fees to ensure the camp would remain a sustainable business. For some renters, this meant a doubling of their fees. Megan approached the conversations carefully and cautiously and hoped the relationship she had built would remain strong. To Megan’s delight, all of the groups agreed to the price adjustment and continue to use the space at Maple Oak. Megan said “building that relationship has been really, really helpful.”

Another suggestion put forth by the ACA guidebook (n.d.) related to camp-school partnerships is to set the expectation that the “program will not end when the buses leave camp” and suggests teachers extend the learning that occurred at camp back into their classrooms. O’Donnell (2002) agrees stating, “building post-camp lesson plans...into curriculum design” (p. 36) is an effective way to “help teachers tie the camp experience back into class work” (p. 36) after the camp experience is over. Kayleigh has reported having already attended to this suggestion. She supplies teachers with resources to take

back to school in order to follow up on the lessons taught at camp and encourages teachers to engage in them back in the classroom. This can solidify learning in students, something teachers very much appreciate. Not only does it solidify learning, but also solidifies the relationship, as teachers begin to understand that camps and outdoor education centres value the education of students as well (Anderson, 2013). As the ACA guidebook (n.d.) reveals, engaging in this act can help to “lay the groundwork for an ongoing relationship with the school” (p. 28).

Miner and Erpelding-Welch (2012) discuss the importance of collaboration and ongoing relationships in relation to outdoor programs. Simply stated, “Outdoor recreation programs need to build and maintain relationships with a variety of players and units inside and outside of their organization” (Miner & Erpelding-Welch, 2012, p. 75). The authors discuss how relationships can help build social capital, defined as the good will, positive awareness, and networking collected by an individual or an organization (Fields, 2003). This social capital can lead to a concept known as “building the brand.” “Building the brand” entails providing successful experiences to participants. Over time, these successes will begin to build a reputation and soon an emotional connection between the organization and participants emerges. This reputation and emotional connection results in support. As the authors say, “people, be they upper administration, donors, funders, or participants, want to support success and winners” (p. 77) therefore laying the groundwork for relationships to be built. This is why Scott chooses to “focus more on providing a good service, so that the people that come, want to come back.” By focusing on this, Scott is breeding success and therefore furthering relationships within the community. The concept of relationships was a theme largely important to directors as all

participants reported on it.

The “relationships” theme was a part of the final stage in Lewin’s theory: “refreezing.” Similar to the “marketing” theme, relationships help foster restabilization of the organization by providing sufficient bookings. Most participants alluded to the idea that having good relationships with clients meant those clients would return. As Cody simply stated, “if you keep them happy, they’ll keep coming back.” In essence, good relationships foster consistent clients. Having consistent clients maintains the incoming revenue and allows for a more stable organization.

*Practical applications.* The advice and study results summarized above have many practical implications that point to successful relationships with users of the site. Simply stated, building relationships and networks is so crucial in a field such as summer camps and outdoor education centres. In terms of how to build those relationships, Kayleigh (Orange Ridge) suggested that you need to “find a lot of teacher friends, and stay in tight with them.” Greg (Sunny Grove) explained “you need to keep up to date with that network” by doing things such as taking clients out to dinner every so often and showing up to events at the schools in order to “keep those relationships going” (Greg, Sunny Grove).

Another practical application would be to focus on the camp or outdoor education centre securing a spot on the school board approved list for outdoor education trips within the camp’s region. Being a part of that list ensures the credibility of your program and can bring more groups in (M. Cerminera, personal communication, Dec 13, 2017), therefore providing the opportunity to create more relationships. Kayleigh has seen the benefit of this for the winter program at Orange Ridge, as they are on the list for their

local school board. Most of all, Anderson (2013) encourages camps to be persistent in creating relationships as they can take time. Additionally, Miner and Erpelding-Welch note building the brand “doesn’t happen quickly” (p. 77). Relationships are crucial to the overall well-being of the organization, but can take time and patience to manifest.

*Staffing.* The final theme related to Lewin’s third stage of “refreezing” is staffing. This theme related to the concept of year-round staff and as was typical through the data, the way staffing models were executed at each camp was largely different. Orange Ridge was the smallest organization in terms of staffing for the year-round program with two staff members who worked ten months of the year. Sunset Yellow was the largest staffing organization with ten full-time employees working year-round. The other camps ranged somewhere in between these extremes.

Previous studies related to staffing in summer camps is extensive in relation to the summer program (see Duerden, Garst, & Bialeschki, 2014; Edwards, Henderson, & Campbell, 2013; Gundersen, 2013; Marshall, 2016; McCole, Jacobs, Lindley & McAvoy, 2012) but is few and far between for centres running programming year-round. In my review of the literature, the majority of articles I came across involved recommendations for those running outdoor education centres, and not research regarding staff at those centres. The idea of little research being conducted on staff in year-round programs is fascinating considering staffing was the topic discussed the most by participants. That being said, a few articles had very small sections related to staffing and will be discussed next. The most relevant research came from Yeager (2002) who discussed one reward of year-round programming is having professional “staff who can now count on a year-round paycheck and benefits” (p. 49). Megan (Maple Oak) agreed as she stated a benefit

of being open all year is “the year-round employment it creates for people like my kitchen manager.” Dan expressed even if Golden Maple does not necessarily fare well financially one year, they are “still paying the benefit of having these great people year-round.” Cody also reported on the benefit of having staff year-round. He stated, “having ten people...invested instead of two or three, and really developing the site and the programs and working with a staff team has only been able to make things better faster.”

It seems Yeager (2002) underwent a similar process to Cody at Sunset Yellow, as Yeager discusses the growth of her organization and therefore the number of year-round staff hired over the years at her centre. She started with a staff of five moving to thirteen employees throughout their transition. Sunset Yellow previously employed two to three staff who would only be at the camp six months of the year and would be working in an office for the other six months. They now hire ten full time, year-round employees who are based out of the Sunset Yellow site.

Yeager (2002) mentions a finding not discovered through my research. She states recruiting volunteers for off-season programming is easier as the programs are generally shorter compared to those run in the summer. The participants in my study reported disagreement with this statement and found staffing for the winter and offseason months quite difficult, with the exception of Sunny Grove who happened to have a good year in terms of staffing. Greg stated, “this year we’re quite fortunate with a couple of staff members kind of hanging around ‘til the summer.” No other participants mentioned finding staff for the offseason programs was easier than the summer season, in fact many had the opposite view. Greg went on to mention, “every year it is a struggle” to find staff for the winter program. Erickson and Erickson (2006) highlight the importance of

exceptional staff in running environmental education centre programs. They discovered “a good staff was essential to running a successful program” (p. 4). Unlike the findings discovered through my research, Erickson and Erickson (2006) did not mention if finding exceptional staff was difficult or not.

“Outdoor programs often experience high turnover in part-time, seasonal, and volunteer staff” (Turner & Jackson-Magennis, 2012, p. 200). As a result, it is important to the organization to think critically about the staffing aspect before diving fully into the project. This is something Scott wished that he had done, as he stated the biggest challenge of the year-round program is the staffing aspect. He reported, “as you transition into a year-round facility, obviously your staffing model changes drastically.” Related to this, the ACA guidebook on camp-school partnerships (n.d.) has a section on questions to ponder before creating partnerships with schools. Questions include, “Is your current team large enough to do the job?” (p. 13), “Do they have proper credentials? Will they need additional training?” (p. 13). These are questions all camps need to consider when finding staff to run their programs.

Turner and Jackson-Magennis (2012) note one factor to keep in mind in relation to staffing is the “types of services...that the organization does and expects to offer” (p. 200). The types of services the organization offers “should be reflected in the process that guides staffing decisions” (p. 200) meaning the programs offered should factor into the types of staff hired. Kayleigh needs to pay special attention to who she hires because not only does she need to find staff for programs throughout the year, she needs to find staff that are certified to run the high ropes program. The certification required is quite specialized and often expensive (Open-Enrolment Training Calendar, n.d.). Parry (2011)

mentions the importance of certified staff as well stating that employing qualified staff “creates expertise and legitimacy (not to mention safety!)” (p. 17). Speelman and Wagstaff (2015) agree stating, “Having qualified staff implementing programs will assist in keeping students physically safe” (p. 96).

Parry (2011) touches on another characteristic of staff, as he suggests having tenure and continuity in staff, something Golden Maple has reportedly struggled with over the past ten years. Dan reported speculating that there has likely been one assistant director per year at Golden Maple for the past ten years. Having this much turnover is not ideal for continuity and relationship-building with clients. For example, clients that return year after year at Golden Maple must familiarize themselves with a new assistant director who might have slightly different procedures than the previous assistant director. Having a new assistant director each year may affect the overall running of the winter program because of the lack of consistency.

Dan reported a reason Golden Maple might have a huge turnover in assistant directors is the loneliness that can occur when living on site if there are not many bookings throughout the winter. Thomas (2002) discovered a factor that contributes to work related stress in outdoor educators is the strain it can put on relationships with family and friends. Cody mentioned a similar point when he noted the potential for loneliness for staff at Sunset Yellow when working year-round on a removed site with minimal people. He observed it can be “tough for people to have that work-life balance.” Therefore, “it is critically important for outdoor program administrators to work with their supervisors to create a work-nonwork balance” (Turner & Jackson-Magennis, 2012, p. 203). As detailed, staffing is an incredibly complex topic that is a necessary component

of a year-round program.

The topic of staffing fits into Lewin's stage of "refreezing" as having staff in an organization helps to solidify the working environment. Of the participants I interviewed, it seemed only Cody was at the stage of staffing in this sense. Cody stated "having ten people...invested instead of two or three, and really developing the site and the programs and working with a staff team has only been able to make things better faster." For Sunset Yellow, having staff employed throughout the year has worked to restabilize the organization. One method Greg has used to begin to stabilize Sunny Grove is the fact that Greg and the assistant director are, "after eleven years, still doing the program." Greg prefers this to running the camp from behind a desk removed from the whole operation. Solutions to staffing issues specific to individual camps seemed to be the most effective solutions for my participants.

*Practical applications.* The theme of staffing has many practical applications, but these can sometimes be hard to attain. When asked about a solution to solving the staffing issue at Sunny Grove, Greg stated "a variety of things. One would be just taking the financial hit and committing to staff members." Greg went on to note this has additional complications such as feeding those staff members, which then entails employing a cook. The other solution Greg suggested was the idea of sharing staff with other outdoor education centres, but he reported this sounds promising in theory, but does not always work well in reality. Oftentimes, Greg reported, "the times that we're busy, other camps are too" meaning there are no available staff to "share." Thomas (2003) discusses creative ways to increase job satisfaction, one of which is providing "access to cheap/free accommodation" (p. 60). Scott used this idea at Divine River by offering volunteers room

and board in exchange for “a certain number of hours per week to help with cleaning or prep[aration] or program.” In relation to the topic of staffing, different camps are creating their own original solutions in order to continue to run programming year-round.

**Additional Themes.** There were two prominent themes that I recognized from the data that did not relate to any stage in Lewin’s model. These were “benefits to other seasons” and “financial justification.” These themes will be discussed next, beginning with “benefits to other seasons.”

***Benefits to other seasons.*** This theme outlined three major benefits to other seasons that surfaced because the camp was running programming year-round. The benefits noted were the fact that having winterized buildings increased the capacity of the camp in other months, offseason programming supplements the summer program and opening of the camp each spring is much easier.

In relation to the first benefit, Yeager (2002) mentioned the “biggest reward” (p. 49) of being year-round is serving new populations that could not otherwise be reached in the summer months. Scott and Cody both highlighted a benefit of being open year-round was an opportunity to serve more campers through their “dual purpose” (Scott, Divine River) buildings and an increased capacity for seasons other than the summer.

Regarding the second benefit noted, O’Donnell (2002) states camps use programming in the offseason to “extend their revenue opportunities” (p. 33) and for some camps, “the extra cash flow was essential to get them through the winter” (p. 33). O’Donnell, when discussing Triangle YMCA Ranch, states, “the school programs keep the Ranch’s facilities in use, generating much needed income in the camp’s ‘off season’” (p. 36). Scott reported agreeing with these statements stating, “I would definitely say the

success of our camping program [summer program] relates directly to our successful offseason programming.”

Miner and Erpelding-Welch (2012) discuss the topic of multiple revenue streams. Because of the transition to year-round programming, my participants created another revenue stream in order to continue to support the summer program. For example, campers who take part in Maple Oak programs in the summer attend free of charge. This means in order to cover the expenses, the staff at Maple Oak engage in a considerable amount of fundraising, but they also use the revenue from rentals to help support their summer program. Kayleigh also drew attention to this concept as she mentioned the spring field trip program and the ropes program at Orange Ridge bring in a multitude of funds and the summer program “just kinda get[s] by.”

In relation to the topic of “benefits to other seasons,” few previous studies have been conducted, other than the above three pieces of literature. No research was discovered regarding the idea that the camp is easier to open in the spring if the site is used year-round. Possible reasons for not uncovering relevant studies include a lack of research related to camps that run both summer programs as well as year-round programs. Furthermore, there is even a smaller extent of research corresponding to the interactions of those programs.

*Practical applications.* Although this theme does not relate to Lewin’s theory of planned change, there are still many practical applications that can be drawn from it. As Dan (Golden Maple) noted, “there are huge tertiary benefits to being year-round that aren’t directly related to the winter operations.” Making the transition to year-round will create these benefits that directors might not have considered or been conscious of, but

are important nonetheless. In the case of Divine River, Scott stated “I would definitely say the success of our camping program [summer program] relates directly to our successful offseason programming.” Although only three major benefits were mentioned, there were many other benefits commented on by participants. As is often the case, each camp seems to discover benefits unique to their organization. Embarking on the process of becoming year-round can be unnerving but as uncovered by my participants, there are additional benefits outside of the winter program that transpire.

***Financial justification.*** “Financial justification” was another theme that I uncovered through the data but did not relate to a stage in Lewin’s process. Participants had many comments on the question of whether it was “worth it” to run camp year-round with no clear, resounding answer. Some camps, such as Divine River, had no problem justifying the year-round program as Scott stated the winter program has “provided a consistent healthy revenue that has only grown over the years.” Other camps, namely Maple Oak, reported being unsure of the answer. Megan (Maple Oak), when asked the question of whether it was “worth it” to be open year-round, disclosed, “yes and no. I struggle with that.”

Although there have been multitudes of research related to funding in relation to summer camps and outdoor education centres (Borland, 2015; Maguire & Gunton, 2000, Sharpe & Breunig, 2009), little research has been conducted regarding financial justification of maintaining those summer camps and outdoor education centres. Some outdoor education centres rely on funding from outside sources such as the government. In these centres, political changes can affect the status of the outdoor education centres (Borland, 2015). This was not the case for any of my participating camps. All the camps

in my study did not depend on outside funding and many operated as distinct organizations.

Miner and Erpelding-Welch (2012) discuss the concept of sustainability in relation to outdoor programs. The authors define sustainability as relating to five different topics, two of which are relevant to this section, developing multiple revenue streams and writing grants. As discussed in the “benefits to other seasons” theme, developing multiple revenue streams is important for organizations as it allows the organization to be more financially stable by depending on different sources of revenue. Scott has been successful in creating different revenue streams, even through the winter months by catering to groups that are not necessarily looking for outdoor activities, but are more interested in questions such as “How comfortable are the facilities? How good is the food? [And] how good’s the service?”

Writing grants can be incredibly important for camps as well as “new projects or programs often require funding beyond current fees or budgets” (Miner & Erpelding, 2012, p. 81). Grants from the provincial and federal government helped Cody successfully complete the transition process at Sunset Yellow.

Although the theme of financial justification does not have direct practical applications, there are steps that can be put in place in order to reach a point where financial justification is possible. Essentially, this involves an integration of many of the other themes that were discovered. This integration will be discussed next.

### **Connectedness**

When thinking more broadly about the themes that I revealed, I ascertained they could all be connected. Hypothetically, having large donations or features given to the

camp enables planning for the year-round program to more easily occur. With better plans come better buildings and structures and the careful planning to ensure they are built correctly the first time. A better structure or building allows for easier marketing to a wider number of groups as the facilities are more comfortable and not as “rustic.” With more groups using the site, the potential for more relationships to be built and maintained is increased. As more groups are using the site, more staff can be hired year-round which allows for more people to be invested to improve the program. A better program will also attract more clients which means it is easier to justify being open year-round. And through all of this, other unseen benefits will begin to emerge.

The above mentioned path can most easily be seen through the example of Sunset Yellow. Cody stated, “when we had some time and some money is really what made a change to say, ‘Let’s actually try this’” in relation to creating year-round programming. That time and money allowed for precise and accurate planning to occur. Accurate planning brought buildings and processes that were done correctly the first time, and built to a high standard. From here, many groups began to use the site at Sunset Yellow and continue to do so as Sunset Yellow has a “90% return rate.” Having multitudes of groups enhances the number of relationships the camp can create. Having more groups also increases the number of staff that can be hired as Sunset Yellow went from a staff of two or three to ten which “has only been able to make things better faster.” Other benefits have arisen throughout the process as well as Cody stated, the new buildings have “increased our other capacities for other seasons.”

The above sections discuss the results of my study and integrate the findings into the literature as well as provide a commentary related to Lewin’s theory of planned

change and practical applications. The next section discusses suggestions for future research.

### **Future Research**

It is clear there is a lack of evidence regarding summer camps that run programs throughout the year, whether the programs be providing space for rentals or running outdoor education trips for schools. Research has been conducted related to summer camps, and to outdoor education centres as separate entities, but little about camps and centres that run both types of programming. Moreover, there is little to no research regarding the benefits or disadvantages of running a year-round program. Research related to this topic of year-round programs as a whole needs to be conducted. More specifically, research related to the interaction of these seasons is called for as well. Does a year-round program supplement the summer program? Are there benefits of running year-round programming that involve other aspects of the camp? Finally, the transition of creating or transitioning to year-round programs comprises another gap in the literature that is largely under-researched as a whole. Basic processes and information about the transition to become winterized are additional areas of research that needs to be conducted.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, my study aimed to fill the apparent gap in the literature related to camps creating year-round programming. In doing so, I aimed to answer two research questions: (1) in what ways have camps become year-round programs? (2) what has been learned by individuals involved in creating year-round programming? Through my research, it was evident that camps become year-round programs in many different and

unique ways. Additionally, eight themes were identified in regards to my research questions, all of which were interconnected. Having “donations” enabled more time to allocate for “planning” which ensured things could be “done correctly the first time.” “Marketing” a site that has things done correctly is much easier and leads to fuller and longer term “relationships” with clients. Better relationships make possible an increase in group attendance and therefore “staff” can be hired year-round. “Benefits to other seasons” also arise throughout the transition process and all of these elements factor into the question of whether being open year-round is “financially justifiable.”

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## Appendix A

### Email Correspondence

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Hannah Dabrowski and I am currently a graduate student in the department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at Brock University. I am also the director at Cave Springs Camp, a United Church Camp.

My research topic of interest is change in summer camps. I am emailing you to inquire of your camp's interest into a research project I am undertaking. Your camp has been deemed a prospective camp because of your transition to a year-round facility, I believe. Please note my intention is to interview individuals involved in the transition process. I am unsure of exactly when your camp transitioned, so if it is not possible to meet with those involved in the process, please let me know. Please find attached a letter of invitation that provides more details into what would be required of your camp.

Should you have any questions relating to this research project, feel free to email me and I will do my best to answer your questions.

Should your camp be interested in participating in this research project, please reply to this email stating so.

If, for any reason, this email does not work, I can also be reached at [dabrowski.hannah@gmail.com](mailto:dabrowski.hannah@gmail.com).

Thank you for your consideration.

Hannah Dabrowski

M.A. Candidate  
Department of Recreation and Leisure  
Brock University



Appendix B

Niagara Region  
1812 Sir Isaac Brock Way  
St. Catharines, ON  
L2S 3A1 Canada  
T 226 792 8689

Letter of Invitation

October 25, 2016

hannah.dabrowski@brocku.ca

**Title of Study:** Summer Sessions Growing into Winter Lessons: A Case Study of Organizational Change in Summer Camps  
**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Mary Breunig, Associate Professor, Department of Recreation and Leisure, Brock University  
**Student Principal Investigator:** Hannah Dabrowski, MA

Student, Department of Recreation and Leisure, Brock University

I, Hannah Dabrowski, MA Student, from the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, Brock University, invite you to participate in a research project entitled Summer Seasons Growing into Winter Lessons: A Case Study of Organizational Change in Summer Camp.

The purpose of this research project is to explore camps that have progressed from a three-season program to a year-round program. Should you choose to participate, your camp will be asked to provide documents important to the transition from a three-season program to a year-round program. Individuals associated with your camp such as camp directors and members of the camp committee or board of directors will be asked to participate in an in-depth interview session followed by one or two follow-up interviews at least a week following the initial in-depth interview. Therefore, the entire process would take approximately two to three weeks for each participant.

The expected duration of your camp’s participation in the project is split into different components consisting of different durations. One component involves copying and scanning documents. This component will take a few hours at your convenience that we will mutually schedule. The second component involves participants being interviewed. The timeline surrounding this aspect of the project is expected to include up to three interviews with the initial interview lasting one hour and up to two follow up interviews lasting twenty minutes each. Interviews can be scheduled at the participant’s convenience.

This research should benefit your camp with potential improvement of camp programs in your own camp resulting from the reflexive process of being a study participant. You will likely also discover new learnings as an individual participating in this study. The study also aims to fill a large gap in the literature relating to change in summer camps and your participation will contribute to that gap.

If you have any pertinent questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Brock University Research Ethics Officer (905 688-5550 ext 3035, [reb@brocku.ca](mailto:reb@brocku.ca))

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (see below for contact information).

Thank you,

Dr. Mary Breunig  
Associate Professor  
905-688-5550 Ext. 5387  
mary.breunig@brocku.ca

Hannah Dabrowski  
MA Student  
hannah.dabrowski@brocku.ca

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through Brock University’s Research Ethics Board (file# 15-313).

## Appendix C

Email to camps requesting a letter of permission

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study called Summer Sessions Growing into Winter Lessons: A Case Study of Organizational Change in Summer Camps. Because I am studying your camp as an organization, it is required that I receive a letter of permission from your organization allowing me to conduct research. This letter should be written by a person able to make this decision on behalf of your organization. The letter simply needs to include the name of your camp and that you grant Brock University, Dr. Mary Breunig and Hannah Dabrowski permission to conduct research relating to your camp and the transition process in question.

If you have any questions regarding the content of this letter or anything else, please do not hesitate to ask.

Thank you,

Dr. Mary Breunig  
Associate Professor  
905-688-5550 Ext. 5387  
mary.breunig@brocku.ca

Hannah Dabrowski  
MA Student  
hannah.dabrowski@brocku.ca

## **Appendix D**

### Letter of Permission Template

Dear Dr. Mary Breunig, Hannah Dabrowski and the Research Ethics Board at Brock University,

I grant Dr. Mary Breunig and Hannah Dabrowski permission to use [INSERT CAMP NAME HERE] for Hannah Dabrowski's Master's research project. This includes access to documents as agreed upon by both parties, as well as contact information for potential interview participants. Dr. Mary Breunig and Hannah Dabrowski may also use the site of [INSERT CAMP NAME HERE] to conduct interviews, should this be the most convenient location for participants.

I understand that I may withdraw my camp from the study at any time before the end of data collection, and if I have any questions, either Dr. Mary Breunig or Hannah Dabrowski would be open to discussing these.

Thank you,

## Appendix E

### Script – Informed Consent for Participants

To be read by Hannah Dabrowski directly prior to each initial interview

Hello \_\_\_\_\_,

You are invited to participate in a study that involves research. The purpose of my study is to explore camps that have progressed from a three-season program to a year-round program.

You will be asked to participate in a primary interview followed by one or two follow up interviews. Participation will take approximately one hour of your time for the primary interview and approximately twenty minutes for each follow-up interview. With your permission, I will record the interviews with an audio recording device in order to type them up after (a process called transcribing).

By participating in the research, there is a potential for improvement of your own camp programs as a result of the reflexive process of being a study participant. You will also be contributing to a large gap in the research literature relating to transitions in summer camps. There are no known or anticipated risks associated with participation in the study.

Any and all information you provide will be kept confidential and your name will not be used in any thesis or report, but with permission, short anonymous quotations may be used.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may decline to answer any questions or participate in any component of the study. You may also withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits.

Additional information regarding the consent process is provided in the informed consent letter. Please take some time to fully read through the letter and if you agree, sign and date the bottom of the form.

## Appendix F

### Informed Consent for Participants

To be placed on Brock letterhead

Date: **[Insert Date]**

Project Title: Summer Sessions Growing into Winter Lessons: A Case Study of Organizational Change in Summer Camps

Principal Investigator (PI): Dr. Mary Breunig, Associate Professor  
Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies  
Brock University  
(905) 688-5550 Ext. 5387  
mbreunig@brocku.ca

Principal Student Investigator: Hannah Dabrowski, MA Student  
Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies  
Brock University  
hannah.dabrowski@brocku.ca

#### INVITATION

You are invited to participate in a study that involves research. The purpose of this study is to explore camps that have progressed from a three-season program to a year-round program and what has been learned through that process.

#### WHAT'S INVOLVED

As a participant, you will be asked to participate in an in-depth interview followed by one or two follow-up interviews. Participation will take approximately one hour of your time for the in-depth interview session and twenty minutes of your time for each of the follow-up interviews. With your permission, I will record the interviews with an audio recording device in order to type them up after (a process called transcribing). Interviews can be conducted in person in a place that ensure confidentiality or over the phone.

#### POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS

Possible benefits of participation include potential improvement of camp programs seen in your own camp resulting from the reflexive process of being a study participant. Reflexive processes can be helpful because of the intentional thought needed to provide answers to the questions in the interviews. By providing these answers, unseen benefits or additional ways to improve the camp program will likely surface. You will likely also discover new learnings as an individual participating in this study. This research also intends to fill a large gap in the literature relating to transitions in summer camps. You may be exposed to very moderate social risk through the interview process. You may be asked to explain shortcomings or areas you could improve upon. Discussing these areas may be hard for you to share. As stated in the voluntary participation section below, you have the option to not answer any question you are uncomfortable with, and may withdraw from the study at any time until the completion of data collection without penalty.

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

The information you provide will be kept confidential. Your name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study; however, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Within a week following the interview, I will send you an electronic copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or clarify any points that you wish. You will have approximately two weeks to complete this review process and it is expected to take no more than 30 minutes. It may be that you indicate that there are no changes and in that event, I will use the original document for the research study purpose.

Data collected during this study will be stored on a password protected hard drive or in a locked filing cabinet. Data will be kept for two years following the collection of data after which time the physical files will be shredded, the electronic data will be deleted and the hard drive wiped clean.

It is important to understand although confidentiality will be kept, anonymity cannot be fully guaranteed as you are a part of a select group of camps, and it is possible camps and employees may be identifiable by readers.

Access to this data will be restricted to Dr. Mary Breunig, the study supervisor, and Hannah Dabrowski, the graduate student who is undertaking the study.

**VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION**

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you wish, you may decline to answer any questions or participate in any component of the study. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time until the completion of data collection and may do so without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled.

**PUBLICATION OF RESULTS**

Results of this study may be published in professional journals and presented at conferences. A summarized copy of this study will be available from Hannah Dabrowski ([hannah.dabrowski@brocku.ca](mailto:hannah.dabrowski@brocku.ca)) after the completion of the project at which time a summarized copy will be sent to you if desired. See below for details about receiving a copy of the final thesis.

**CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE**

If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact Dr. Mary Breunig or Hannah Dabrowski using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University (file#15-313). If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, [reb@brocku.ca](mailto:reb@brocku.ca).

Thank you for your assistance in this project. Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

**REQUEST OF FINAL THESIS**

**If you would like to receive a summarized copy of the final thesis document, please indicate where you would like the document to be sent:**

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

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Province:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Postal Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**My interviews can be audio-recorded for research purposes related to this study:**

**Yes** \_\_\_\_ **No** \_\_\_\_

**CONSENT FORM**

I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information-Consent Letter. I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time.

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

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix G**

### **Interview Guide**

#### **Questions before transition**

1. Are you currently affiliated with [name of camp]?
  - a. If yes: How are you currently affiliated with [name of camp]? How long have you been affiliated with this camp?
  - b. If no: How have you been affiliated with this camp in the past?
2. Describe your position at [name of camp] prior to it transitioning to a year-round facility.
3. Tell me about your responsibilities in the position of [position stated above].

#### **Questions about transition**

4. When did [name of camp] transition into a year-round facility?
5. Tell me about your involvement in the decision to become a year-round facility.
6. Describe the position you held when the camp was transitioning into a year-round facility.
  - a. What were your major responsibilities related to the transition?

#### **Questions reflecting on the transition**

7. Describe a practice you engaged in or a measure that you took prior to the transition for which you were thankful.
  - a. Were there any other practices or measures for which you were thankful?
8. Provide an example of a challenge you encountered during the transition and how you overcame that challenge.
  - a. Were there any other challenges you overcame?
9. Provide an example of an unexpected turn of events and describe your actions relating to handling the situation.
  - a. Were there any other unexpected turn of events that occurred?
10. Tell me about an unexpected benefit that arose as a result of the transition.
  - a. Were there any other unexpected benefits?
11. If you were to be involved in a similar transition to this at a different camp, what, if anything, would you do differently?
  - a. Is there anything else you would do differently?

#### **Questions about current practice**

12. If participant is a camp director: Describe a typical day in the winter season at camp. How, if at all, is this different than a typical day in the spring or fall season?

## Appendix H

### Follow Up Interview Guide

1. Describe a typical day in the offseason at camp in terms of your work.
2. How is the site used in the offseason?
  - a. What kind of groups use the site?
3. Do you find it to be cost efficient to have the site open in the offseason?
4. Is there anything you've learned related to having these rentals/groups coming in?  
For example, challenges, or unexpected turns of events?